

**PRINTING
& BOOK CULTURE
IN LATE IMPERIAL
CHINA**

EDITED BY CYNTHIA J. BROKAW & KAI-WING CHOW

Printing and Book Culture
in Late Imperial China

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EDITED BY

Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow

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able, and often entertaining comments both enriched and enlivened the conference proceedings.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Aziatskii B. Ia. Vladimirtsov, "Mongol'skie rukopisi i ksilografy, postupivshie z Aziatskii Muzei Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk ot Prof. A. D. Rudneva," *Isvestiia Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk* n.s. 2 (1918): 1549–68
- BZM Walter Fuchs, comp., *Beiträge zur mandjurischen Bibliographie und Literatur* (Tokyo: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1936)
- Copenhagen Walther Heissig, *Catalogue of Mongol Books, Ms. and Xylographs* (Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 1971)
- CSJC *Congshu jicheng chubian* (Collected collectanea, first series) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1935–37)
- CU Columbia University
- CUM Walter Fuchs, comp., *Chinesische und Mandjurische handschriften und seltene Drucke nebst einer Standortliste der Sonstigen Mandjurica* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1966)
- DLC David M. Farquhar, "A Description of the Mongolian Manuscripts and Xylographs in Washington, D.C.," *Central Asiatic Journal* 1.3 (1955): 161–218
- DMB L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976)
- GBXQ *Guben xiqu congkan* (Old editions of traditional drama, collected and reproduced) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, first series 1954, second series 1955, third series 1957, fourth series 1958)
- Germany Walther Heissig, *Mongolische Handschriften, Blockdrucke, Landkarten* (Weisbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1961)

- Gest The Gest Library, Princeton University
- Guotu National Library of China (Zhongguo guojia tushuguan)
- GXCH Zhuang Yifu, *Gudian xiqu cunmu huikao* (Collected notes on extant classical plays), 3 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982)
- Harvard-Yenching The Harvard-Yenching Library, Harvard University
LC Library of Congress
- London W. Simon and Howard G. H. Nelson, *Manchu Books in London: A Union Catalogue* (London: British Library Board, 1977)
- LSZQ Mao Jin, *Liushi zhong qu* (Sixty plays) (Beijing: Wenxue guji kanxing she, 1955)
- Nantu Nanjing Library (Nanjing tushuguan)
- Paris Jeanne-Marie Puyraimond et al., eds., *Catalogue du Fonds Mandchou* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1979)
- PLB Walther Heissig, *Die Peking'er Lamaistischen Blockdrucke in Mongolischer sprache: Materialien zur Mongolischen Literaturgeschichte* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1954)
- QMM Huang Runhua et al., comps., *Quanguo Manwen tushu ziliao lianhe mulu* (Union catalogue of Manchu-language materials in the People's Republic of China) (Beijing: Shumu chubanshe, 1991)
- SBCK *Sibu congkan* (The four branches of literature, collected and reproduced) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1919-36)
- SKQSZB *Siku quanshu zhenben chujì* (First collection of rare works from the *Siku quanshu*) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1934-35)
- Tokyo Nicholas Poppe, Leon Hurvitz, and Hidehiro Okada, *Catalogue of the Manchu-Mongol Section of the Tōyō Bunko* (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko, 1964)
- Tōyō Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūjo, Tokyo University
- USA H. Walravens, "Vorläufige Titelliste der Mandjurica in Bibliotheken der USA," *Zentralasiatische Studien* 10 (1976): 551-613
- ZGGD *Zhongguo gudian xiqu lunzhu jicheng* (Critical writing on classical Chinese drama), 10 vols. (Peking: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1959)
- ZZYL Zhu Xi, *Zhuzi yulei* (Conversations of Master Zhu, arranged topically), 8 vols., ed. Li Jingde. Facsimile edition of Ming Chenghua period (rpt. 1962; Taipei: Zhengzhong shudian, 1973)

PART ONE

Introduction

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ONE

On the History of the Book in China

Cynthia J. Brokaw

No one would dispute the special importance of books and the written word in China. Few cultures have enjoyed such a long tradition of literary production and scholarship; few peoples have more consistently expressed their sense of the value of learning and the mastery of the written word. By the Song period (960–1279) at the latest, literacy and education, measured by a civil service examination system, were the gateways to social status, wealth, and political authority. In short, possession of—or at least access to—books was essential to respectable success in Chinese society.

Books were also highly valued as aesthetic objects and emblems of culture. Book collecting was a common hobby not only for scholars but also for wealthy merchants and landowners aspiring to higher social status: “the perfume of books” (*shuxiang*) lent a household a degree of respectability. Indeed, the written and printed word was believed by many to have a certain sacred quality or power. Popular religious texts commonly listed the ritual burning of even scraps of writing as a means of earning merit. By the later imperial period special societies, Sparing the Written Word Associations (*xizi hui*), whose purpose was to organize the collection and ritual disposal of such scraps, had developed.¹

Given the important role that books have played in Chinese history, it is not surprising that there is a long tradition of book study in China.² The modern scholar Cao Zhi, in his introductory text on the study of Chinese books, traces the origins of this tradition back to the Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), to the cataloguing efforts of Liu Xiang (ca. 79–6 B.C.E.).³ This early passion for books (and records about books) is reaffirmed throughout the course of Chinese history in the rich store of catalogues and bibliographies produced not only by government command, such as the *Yiwen zhi* (Literary annals) sections of the dynastic histories and the famous *Qinding Siku quanshu zongmu*

tiyao (Annotated general catalogue of the Complete Library of the Four Treasuries, authorized by the emperor) produced under the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–96), but also by individual book collectors and bibliophiles.⁴ In addition to these large-scale catalogues and bibliographies, scholars often produced reading notes (called “book discussions,” *shuhua*), comments about rare texts they had been able to examine in a variety of collections.⁵

Collectors and bibliophiles also devoted considerable time and money to the preservation and dissemination of earlier rare editions, printing, when possible, facsimile editions (*yingke ben*) of them. Perhaps most notable in this regard are the efforts of Mao Jin (1599–1659), whose studio–print shop in Changshu (Jiangsu), the Jigu ge, reproduced important Song and Yuan (1279–1368) editions (as well as a range of other contemporary works).⁶ Very closely linked to this tradition of facsimile reproduction is the interest, shared by book collectors and scholars alike, in authentication—that is, the determination of the date and provenance of rare works (or fakes masquerading as rare editions). Over the centuries there developed a range of techniques—analysis of carving styles, formatting and layout, binding, and paper quality—that, with the careful study of textual filiations and histories of editions, formed the basis for the evaluation of texts. This interest in authentication—and the techniques developed to support it—helped, with the rich bibliographic tradition and the practice of publishing facsimiles of rare texts, to lay the groundwork for the principles of the modern discipline of *banben xue* (the study of editions) in the mid-twentieth century.⁷

The twentieth century witnessed not only the development of the discipline of *banben xue* but also the first systematic efforts at the study of Chinese printing and book history. The pioneering works, Shimada Kan’s *Kobun kyūsho kyō* (Studies of old Chinese books, 1905), Ye Dehui’s *Shulin qinghua* (Plain talks about books, 1911) and *Shulin yuhua* (Further talks about books, 1923), and Sun Yuxiu’s *Zhongguo diaoban yuanliu kao* (On the development of Chinese printing, 1916), though written in the form of notes or citations from primary sources, established the foundations for later studies on printing, paper, bookbinding, publishing, book dealing, and so forth. Through the next several decades, scholars produced a host of studies on the origins of Chinese printing and its development from the Song through the Qing (1644–1911),⁸ woodblock illustrations,⁹ paper production,¹⁰ and the physical evolution of Chinese books,¹¹ all signaling the growing maturity of the field.¹²

Fortunately, there are few signs that the interest in the study of books in China is fading. There was, to be sure, a lull in published scholarship on books during the Cultural Revolution. But in the mid- to late 1980s, once again scholars were turning their attention to *banben xue* and the history of publishing. Emblematic of this shift was the publication in 1989 of Zhang Xiumin’s magisterial *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (History of Chinese printing), the finest and most comprehensive of the many secondary studies that appeared at

this time, which provided an impressive synthesis of previous Chinese scholarship and the author's own encyclopedic knowledge of Chinese publishing history. The decades since have witnessed an outpouring of general histories of Chinese printing,¹³ reference works,¹⁴ journals devoted to the book,¹⁵ union catalogues and collection-specific and subject-specific bibliographies,¹⁶ focused studies of provincial publishing industries,¹⁷ and histories of different printing technologies.¹⁸ These works, though varying widely in quality, open up exciting new opportunities for detailed study (including the collection of oral histories and other on-site sources) of specific publishing operations.¹⁹ They will eventually allow for the reconstruction of a more comprehensive and precise picture of late imperial Chinese publishing and book culture.

THE CULTURE OF BOOKS AND THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF PRINT IN CHINA

What is the need, in the face of this voluminous body of work on Chinese books and printing, for another study of books in China? The scholarship briefly outlined above provides fundamental information on the general history of Chinese printing and essential bibliographic guides to rare books (*shanben*, most recently defined as any book dating from the Qianlong era, 1736–96, or earlier).²⁰ But it does little to analyze the *culture* of books and the social history of print in China: the ways in which print technology and the structure of publishing concerns shaped book culture; and the impact that books—as commodities, as sources of information, as guides to trade secrets, as entertainments, as art objects—had on intellectual life, social interaction, literary communication, and the dissemination of cultural, political, and scientific information and religious beliefs.

Still to be fully explored, then, are the *social, economic, intellectual, and cultural* aspects of book history. What was the social and intellectual impact of the spread of printing, first in the Song and then more rapidly in the late Ming (1368–1644) and Qing? How were books published, marketed, and sold in the late imperial period? How were different publishing concerns—governmental, private, institutional, and commercial—structured, and how did they function as business enterprises? What were the major distribution patterns, and what do these tell us of the paths through which knowledge was disseminated in China? Did the expansion of the printing industry provide avenues for the expression of local identities, or did it encourage, rather, broader regional or national cultural unity? How did the proliferation of printed books in the Ming and Qing affect how knowledge was defined and classified? In what ways did the production and distribution of books influence politics and the operation of the imperial system?

These questions define what is a relatively new approach to the study of

the written word, an approach designated the “history of the book” (*histoire du livre*) by its Western founders. The history of the book (or, more aptly, the history of the book in the West) began as a distinct field of study in the late 1950s among scholars of the *Annales* school in France; Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin’s *L’Apparition du livre* (The coming of the book, 1958) was the first call for serious scholarly consideration of the “social and cultural history of communication by print.”²¹ Robert Darnton, a major scholar of the Western book, established a blueprint for the new field by setting research on a “communications circuit,” a circle that ties together authors, editors, publishers, printers (and their suppliers), shippers, booksellers, and readers, and that must be studied in terms of complex links, at each site, to intellectual influences, socioeconomic conditions, and political and legal sanctions.²²

Over the decades, Western scholars have responded to these challenges in a variety of ways—with exhaustive studies of individual printing houses and publishing projects,²³ with claims for print as a vehicle for scientific revolution and religious reformation,²⁴ with studies of changing literacy levels and the interaction of oral and written traditions,²⁵ with efforts to identify the social constitution of certain reading publics,²⁶ with research on varied reading habits,²⁷ and so forth. More recently, Western researchers have begun to look more closely at the printed book as a physical object and commodity and to link these concerns to studies of reading practices—how, for example, the codex form facilitated intellectual debate and argumentation by allowing the reader to move back and forth easily within a text, checking and cross-referencing passages, a much more difficult task when a text is in scroll form.²⁸ This growing concern with how books were read—not just how they were produced—has helped to create the work of reader-response criticism, an attempt to examine closely the reader’s role in constructing the meaning of texts.²⁹

The history of the book in China is no less interdisciplinary and multifaceted than its Western counterpart, in that it too touches on a range of issues in economic, social, intellectual, religious, literary, cultural, and even political history. For example, study of the structure and operation of publishing concerns, the costs of book production, and book prices relates the concerns of the economic and business historian to those of the literary and social historian by suggesting ways in which the distinctive form of Chinese publishing influenced publication choices, distribution of texts, and popular access to reading. In the realm of religious studies, research on the very important role that monasteries and temples played as publishers, of both manuscripts and imprints, will tell us a great deal about the organization and functions of religious institutions as well as the spread of printing from the Tang dynasty on. And surely the development of printing had an impact on

religious belief and education, too, by allowing for production of a broader range of scriptures and tracts and wider dissemination of these texts. For the political and legal historian, the study of publishing touches naturally on the issues of censorship and intellectual property: the government's failure to regulate commercial publishing effectively and comprehensively through most of the late imperial period, despite repeated attempts, raises questions about the institutional limitations of the Chinese state. And the only very tentative development of ideas of copyright reflects an understanding of property and of the functions of law that still has important repercussions in contemporary China.

The connections to literary, social, cultural, and intellectual history are too numerous to outline comprehensively here. Instead, I suggest just a few of the important issues. The frequent participation of publishers in the writing and editing process changes our understanding of the nature of authorship (particularly of popular fiction) and even the nature of the book itself in late imperial and early modern China. Information on the range of categories and the contents and language of books published will help social historians to piece together a clearer picture of reading audiences and thus of the scope and varieties in levels of literacy, among both men and women. Together with the study of book distribution patterns, this information will also enable us to understand more precisely the processes of the dissemination of knowledge and national or local cultural integration. For example: Did the circulation of certain popular texts (guides to etiquette and household management, vernacular novels, medical manuals, moral handbooks, etc.) contribute to the forging of a shared cultural identity? Or did the increased publication of more specialized local texts (employing a distinctive local vocabulary or prescribing restricted local customs) undermine the process of integration?

In the past two decades there have appeared a number of works, largely in Japanese or in Western languages, that begin to answer some of these questions about publishing and the role of books in Chinese life.³⁰ Most of them treat the impact of printing and books on intellectual and literary life among the elite,³¹ but there are also clusters of studies on manuscript culture,³² popular participation in book culture,³³ book illustration and calligraphy,³⁴ and censorship and state control,³⁵ as well as the organization and output of specific publishing industries.³⁶

The essays in this volume represent an effort both to extend and expand on this work and to focus scholarly attention more sharply and exclusively on the history of the book and book culture—in sum, to open up the study of the Chinese book in its full social, intellectual, political, and historical context. As the issues raised above would suggest, this volume is necessarily highly interdisciplinary; it brings together the work of scholars of Chinese

literature, intellectual, social, and political historians, and experts on Chinese art and *bamben xue*.

ISSUES IN THE HISTORY OF THE BOOK IN CHINA:
CHINA AND WESTERN EUROPE

How do we begin to define the history of the book in China? There is no question that this topic, as it is now defined, was inspired by the large body of scholarship produced by historians of the European and American book. Indeed, it is safe to say that almost all the contributors to this volume, in the general questions they pose about book culture, owe a debt to the Western field of the history of the book. This debt, as heavy as it is, should not obscure, however, the very real differences that inform the history of the book in the West and the history of the book in China. The issues that arise from the study of the book in China will inevitably be shaped by specifically Chinese political, economic, social, intellectual, and technological conditions. These issues need to be highlighted, not only to assert the independence of the study of China—so often conducted through historiographical concepts borrowed from western European history—but also to provide a way of reflecting on both the distinctive and important issues in the history of the Chinese book and the particularity of the European experience.

The Technology of Printing

The first and perhaps most obvious issue is that of the technology of printing. Here the contrast with the West is fairly clear. Before the twentieth century, Chinese printing was dominated by xylography, printing by making impressions on paper from a carved wooden block. To be sure, block printing was not the only technology available to Chinese printers; as Xu Xiaoman explains here in “‘Preserving the Bonds of Kin’: Genealogy Masters and Genealogy Production in the Jiangsu-Zhejiang Area in the Qing and Republican Periods,” movable-type printing had been developed in China as early as the eleventh century.³⁷ Xylography remained the preferred method, however. The nature of the Chinese language, which required the ability to reproduce up to several thousand characters, made the use of movable-type fonts financially impractical for most printers. It is hardly surprising that many of the texts produced through metal movable type in China were voluminous and sponsored by the government, which, unlike an individual printer, was able to supply the capital for the production of the necessarily huge font (estimated as requiring at least two hundred thousand Chinese types).³⁸ Wooden movable-type printing was somewhat more attractive and, indeed, increased in popularity from the late Ming on. But it was used largely for highly formulaic texts, such as genealogies, that employed relatively few

different characters, which were frequently repeated.³⁹ As long as carving costs remained low, xylography was the more attractive method for economically minded publishers.

This technological difference led to a long series of other differences. Movable-type printing, the dominant technology in the West from the late fifteenth through the nineteenth century, allowed the rapid printing of multiple copies of a single text. (It was perhaps the speed of this kind of printing that attracted the Chinese government, despite the high cost.) Given the labor involved in setting type, movable-type printing can be said to encourage the printing of a long run of a single text, for new print runs would require the laborious (and expensive) resetting of each page of the whole text.⁴⁰ The movable-type printer, then, made a large initial investment, first, in setting up his business and purchasing his font; and second, with every new text he printed, in printing more texts than he would need immediately and bearing the costs of storage and the risk of slow sales. The calculation had to be very fine: the printer had to balance his financial resources against his assessment of the popularity and “salability” of a title.

With woodblock printing, the issues were somewhat different. Clearly the greatest expenditure in the printing process was the initial carving of the blocks. This, however, might not be too onerous an expense, as block carving did not require long training or even literacy. And once the blocks were carved, the printer could produce as many or as few copies of the text as he liked or as he felt the market for it could bear. When there was a new demand for the text, no new heavy investment in labor was required; he could simply print off the original blocks. As Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) observed, “Their method of printing has one decided advantage, namely, that once these tablets are made, they can be preserved and used for making changes in the text as often as one wishes. . . . [W]ith this method, the printer and the author are not obliged to produce here and now an excessively large edition of a book, but are able to print a book in smaller or larger lots sufficient to meet the demand at the time.”⁴¹ Of course, the printer was confronted, as was his Western counterpart, with the problem of storage: the woodblocks, far bulkier than completed texts, posed a more serious problem for (and presumably an important factor in) his business calculations.⁴²

The technology of Chinese woodblock printing thus created a set of economic considerations different from those confronting the Western printer. It also affected the structure and organization of the book industry in a variety of ways. First, xylography allowed for greater mobility and decentralization in the organization of the printing industry. Woodblocks might not have been easy to transport,⁴³ but block carvers, requiring only an easily portable set of tools, could and often did travel, offering their services to individual literati interested in publishing a single text or set of texts or to religious establishments desirous of sponsoring the publication of sutras or re-

ligious tracts.⁴⁴ As long as the publisher (the literatus or religious institution) had access to the appropriate hardwood (pear, jujube, catalpa, camphor, etc.), paper, and printer's ink (which could be made rather easily in areas forested with pine), he could publish as few or as many texts as he could afford. Thus, though there were certainly clearly identified publishing centers in late imperial China, as there were in Europe, there was also a much greater opportunity for the diffusion of printing operations, particularly small-scale ones, in China.

Second, block carving did not require the technical skill or the level of literacy demanded of the series of workers—type makers, type composers, and supervising printers—who produced matrices for printing in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe. While type makers had to be skilled metalworkers, it seems that great manual skill was not a prerequisite for block carving. Though of course highly skilled carvers were in demand for the production of fine texts, carvers in China might go into business after a relatively short apprenticeship, perhaps two to three years.⁴⁵ Religious institutions might even employ nonprofessional labor—“religious devotees, women and idle peasants”—to carve blocks inexpensively.⁴⁶ Typesetters did not have to be fully literate; they needed to know only the letters of the alphabet. But even this degree of familiarity was, strictly speaking, unnecessary in block carving. Though literacy was desirable, as it enabled carvers to work with more confidence and to catch mistakes, it was, given the technology, not essential: since the characters were inked onto the blocks, all the carver needed to be able to do was to carve out the wood around the character shape.

Demographic Changes

The second factor that shaped the Chinese printing trade in distinctive ways was demographics. In the late Ming, China was entering a period of enormous population growth, a demographic change that would result, at the highest estimate, in the doubling of the population between 1500 and 1650.⁴⁷ Though population growth alone need not result in a greater demand for books, in the Chinese sociopolitical context it is safe to assume that it did. In a society in which passing a set of civil service examinations was considered a sure path to wealth and status, education was highly and widely valued as a means of getting ahead. The absence of severe social barriers to participation in the examination system—by the fifteenth century, theoretically and legally, most men could participate⁴⁸—created an interest in education that penetrated almost all social classes. To some extent this interest was stimulated in the late Ming by elite interests in popular education and the production of texts that attempted to introduce the “easier” Classics, usually the Four Books, to a wide audience.⁴⁹ More significantly, the period also witnessed the growth and spread of educational institutions—

private academies (*shuyuan*), community schools (*shexue*), and free or charity schools (*yixue*)⁵⁰—and a concomitant increase in the demand for books.

At the same time, the population growth served to keep labor costs down, so that the expense of book production did not rise with the greater demand. These two factors—an increase in demand coupled with stable or lower labor costs—help to explain the striking expansion of the publishing trade from the late Ming through the Qing. In contrast, Europe’s population at the time was considerably less, its social structure more rigid; in the absence of anything like the Chinese examination system, literacy was not such a widespread popular aspiration. In Europe, too, the relatively sharp cultural division between rural and urban meant that “literacy and book purchases were largely confined to the urban population.”⁵¹ Thus the book market in China, at least in the period treated here, appears to have been considerably larger and more widely diffused than that in Europe.

Language

Third, differences in the nature and function of language over time played an important role in conditioning the organization of the publishing industry and the diffusion and uses of print. In Europe, the “contest” between Latin and the vernaculars shaped the structure of publishing and literacy. In the mid-fifteenth century (roughly a century before the period designated “late Ming” here), Latin was still the dominant written language of Europe, but after the Reformation (and after the development of the press by Gutenberg) it gradually lost its hegemony to a variety of written vernaculars, a change that had the effect of fragmenting the publishing industry. Publishers began to focus on production for their own vernacular communities rather than for a linguistically united Europe.⁵² In China, in contrast, there was a common written language (by and large) universally comprehensible to any fully literate Chinese. To be sure, there were hundreds of dialects (*fangyan*)—and some texts published in written dialects—but the existence of these dialects, spoken and written, never significantly threatened the hegemony of the shared written language. Publishers, therefore, could imagine serving the entire country, whereas in Europe the geographic unity of the book market was gradually undermined with the decline of the Latin West in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

This is not to suggest that the linguistic situation in China served to create a simply unified book culture and a straightforward, clearly defined path to literacy. For written Chinese included many different, though often overlapping, linguistic “registers,” or types, each associated with a different genre or genres of writing, different literary values, and, to some extent, different levels of literacy and erudition. May Fourth scholars, committed to their own ideals of language reform for the goal of “modernizing” Chinese,

created an artificially sharp distinction for all of the premodern Chinese past between the classical written language—which was “bad” and elitist—and the vernacular written language—which was “good” and popular. Scholars now argue, however, that this moralistic division at the very least conceals the richness and variety that existed in both the classical and the vernacular written language, not to mention the complex and fluid interconnections between them and between the written and spoken languages.⁵³

The written vernacular might include a variety of forms. There was a relatively small body of literature in written dialect; works of performance literature in the Wu (Suzhou), Minnan (southern Fujian), and Yue (Cantonese) dialects in particular are relatively well known.⁵⁴ But by far the more commonly used written vernacular was a “semi-standardized version” of Northern-dialect *guanhua*, or officials’ language, based on “the educated speech of the capital.” *Guanhua* served as a “lingua franca for officials, merchants, and other travelers,” allowing communication between speakers of different dialect groups.⁵⁵ In its written form, it provided the foundation for what Glen Dudbridge has called a widespread, relatively homogeneous “metropolitan language culture.”⁵⁶ It was used to transcribe speech in official documents and court depositions.⁵⁷ It might also be used to record, in dialogue form (as *yulu*), the teachings of religious and philosophical masters,⁵⁸ or to provide simple explanations of classical texts intended for readers of only moderate education. And it was also the basis for what Stephen Owen has labeled the “novelistic vernacular”⁵⁹—the richly colloquial and sophisticated language of the short stories and great novels of the late Ming. The written vernacular, because of its obvious links to speech, was normally reserved for works that recorded speech and were designed for oral performance, or it was modeled to some extent on such works in order to simulate orality.⁶⁰ Doubtless for the same reason, it was defined by the literary value *su*, “vulgar” or “popular”—hence its association with *tongsu xiaoshuo*, or popular fiction.⁶¹

The designation “popular” does not, however, mean that all texts in the vernacular were necessarily easily accessible to “the people.” And although it is true that the different registers of classical or literary Chinese were generally associated with increasing levels of refinement and education, it is not the case that any text in classical Chinese would be difficult for the poorly or partially educated to understand. Since beginning education was largely in simple classical Chinese—in the easy rhymed couplets of texts such as the *Sanzi jing* (Three-character classic), for example—it might well have been the most widely accessible written language, as Wilt Idema has emphasized. Thus many of the military romances of the Qing, widely popular in their day but now largely forgotten, were written in a simple (and rather plodding) classical style, with occasional vernacular embellishments, a language that made them attractive to a broad readership, including the partially educated

as well as the fully literate.⁶² At the same time, most of the great masterpieces of Chinese fiction, the “literati” novels of the late Ming and Qing, were written in the “popular” vernacular—but in a highly sophisticated and richly colloquial vernacular that made them inaccessible to (or at least extremely difficult for) the poorly educated or semiliterate.⁶³ Naturally, too, genres linked to the upper registers of classical writing—for example, texts written in an archaic style, a euphuistic parallel prose, or a pure *guwen* (ancient-style prose)—would most likely not be comprehensible to the partially literate.⁶⁴ Thus authors, editors, and publishers, though unlike their European counterparts generally free from concerns about the geographic reach of their products, had to consider the sociolinguistic reach of different genres in calculating their audiences, as Anne E. McLaren has indicated here in “Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China.”

As has been hinted above, the lines between the different linguistic registers of the written languages were not necessarily hard and fast. There was a great deal of borrowing and overlap:⁶⁵ the simple classical language of the military romances might be enriched with some vernacular expressions, and texts in vernacular Chinese frequently borrowed pithy phrases and expressions from the classical language. The philosophical conversations of no lesser a figure than Zhu Xi (1130–1200), for example, were composed in a hybrid, semiclassical, semivernacular language.

This overlapping of written languages reflected the existence of a common store of cultural references that united—at least to some extent—popular and elite culture and even served as links between the reading and non-reading publics. In the late nineteenth century the missionary Arthur Smith wondered at the degree to which classical sayings were the property of all Chinese, literate and illiterate: “The classical wisdom of the Ancients is the common heritage of all the sons and daughters of Han, from Emperors to old women, and one stratum of society can quote them as well as another.”⁶⁶ One could argue, in fact, that the linguistic situation in China encouraged a somewhat fluid or relatively open relationship between social statuses and types of literacy, when compared to Europe during the period of Latin dominance. We certainly have plenty of evidence to suggest both that the Chinese literati avidly devoured “popular” fiction and that the semiliterate and even the illiterate were familiar, aurally and orally if not visually, with a host of classical phrases and allusions.

Here, however, the relative stability of the situation in China must be contrasted to the rather dramatic transformation of the linguistic landscape, linked to the rise of nation-states, in Europe. In China, the use of a universal written language—divided, to be sure, into different registers with their own rules of usage—persisted through the early twentieth century. Europe, well before that time, had witnessed the victory of a variety of distinct written-and-spoken vernaculars. At one moment in time, when Latin was still the

commonly used language of the elite and the written vernaculars were developing, it is likely that China, particularly in light of its heavy emphasis on the value of education, provided a linguistic context that offered more people greater opportunities for social mobility—or that, at the least, allowed for greater cultural communication between the highly educated elite and the partially educated or completely illiterate nonelites.

After the eclipse of Latin by the written vernaculars, however, we can imagine that the situation was gradually reversed. Vernacular printed texts and changes in the educational system made literacy accessible to an increasingly larger portion of the population in Europe.⁶⁷ The practice of translating important Latin texts into the vernaculars, too, made the defining texts of the old elite culture more widely available, closing the gap between elite and nonelite and easing the transition to a book culture fragmented among different nation-states and linguistic communities.⁶⁸ In China, the rigorous linguistic demands of the examination system up until the early twentieth century perpetuated the sociolinguistic divide between those who could read the upper registers of Chinese at a level that made success in the examinations possible and those who could read only simple classical Chinese—not to mention the very high percentage of the population that could not read at all.

Moreover, the high premium put on writing in China in contrast to Europe—another consequence of the requirements of the examination system and official service—exacerbated the gap between the well educated and the partially educated or completely uneducated.⁶⁹ Certainly the overlap in usage of classical and vernacular in both speech and writing helped to bridge this gap in terms of everyday communication and cultural coherence, but it was not enough to make up for the very great difference in access to social status, political power, and wealth that separated the fully literate—those with reasonable hopes of examination success—from the rest of the population.

Education and Reading Traditions

Fourth, different educational and commentarial reading traditions shaped the use of printed texts and reading practices in China. The long primacy of the Thirteen Classics as sacred repositories of the sages' teachings and as the fundamental textbooks of the examination system made these works surefire best-sellers. The Four Books, identified since the Yuan as the core texts of the full canon of thirteen, were the first serious objects of study for young male students. Typically, beginning students were first set the task of memorizing these books; only after successfully reciting them would they gradually be instructed in their meaning, usually with the aid of extensive interlinear commentaries sanctioned by the state. During the late imperial

period, the commentaries of Zhu Xi on the Four Books, the *Sishu jizhu* (Collected commentaries on the Four Books), formed the basic handbook of examination study. Thus from a very early age students learned to read texts “interrupted” and interpreted by commentaries. Scholars have suggested that this method of reading influenced the relationship between reader and text, encouraging an engagement or dialogue with the text while at the same time closely guiding the reader’s interpretation.⁷⁰ Although most closely associated with the exegesis of classical texts, this form of commentary was also eventually applied—albeit in an adjusted form—to belles lettres and, much later in the late Ming, to fiction and drama, in the hands of Ye Zhou (fl. 1595–1624), Jin Shengtan (1608–61), and Mao Zonggang (fl. seventeenth century), among others.⁷¹ This method of shaping the reading of a text—presumably it had a profound effect on how readers thought about what they read—suggests again the degree to which elite educational concerns influenced book culture in China.

Relevant also to the issue of reading practices is the role of illustration in books. In practical, how-to texts, illustration clearly served to explain the content in a fairly straightforward fashion, as the pictures of symptoms of various diseases aided the readers of the diagnose-it-yourself medical manuals that became a staple of commercial publishing in the late Ming and Qing. Much more complex are the illustrations designed to illuminate fictional or literary works. Here the kind of illustration—whether of the *shangtu xiawen* format, with illustrations at the top and text below; or of the full page (or half block) “inserted illustration” variety; or of the *guantu* type, in which all the illustrations are bunched together at the beginning of a text—affects the ways in which the reader reads and understands the narrative.⁷² Anne Burkus-Chasson makes this point in her “Visual Hermeneutics and the Act of Turning the Leaf: A Genealogy of Liu Yuan’s *Lingyan ge*,” by demonstrating the ways in which illustration and text interact to guide the reader through a specific work clearly designed for a sophisticated elite audience. In “Didactic Illustrations in Printed Books,” Julia Murray takes a somewhat different approach, placing illustration in the context of other forms of visual representation. By examining the differences between pictorial representations of model emperors in printed texts and other media such as stone engravings and paintings, she assesses the position of woodblock illustration in late imperial visual culture and demonstrates how pictures contributed to the spread of a shared culture.

Historians of the Chinese book must also pay attention to the continued creation and use of hand-copied or manuscript texts (*chaoben*) long after the supposed “conquest” of Chinese readers by the printed book in the late Ming and Qing.⁷³ Of course, this is an issue for historians of the Western book as well: manuscripts by no means disappeared after the relatively late Western invention of movable type in fifteenth-century Europe.⁷⁴ But an argument

can be made for the greater continuing importance of the manuscript and hand-copied text in China, largely because of the high value accorded the art of calligraphy. Book collectors often paid to have copies made of error-free editions in fine calligraphy; in this case, the manuscript copy would have a higher value than other, inferior, printed editions. Chinese woodblock printed books in fact never broke away from the model of the handwritten text, as Western books did; in China, the finest texts were often those that managed to reproduce, largely through elegant and striking calligraphy, the appearance of a manuscript.⁷⁵

The persistence of a manuscript tradition and the practice of hand copying texts had other meanings as well, ones that we might also find in Western book culture. Poverty was often the motive for hand-copying; a reader too poor to purchase texts might borrow books to copy—if he could find a collector generous enough to lend out his books, a rare phenomenon. Book copying could also be a way to express reverence and earn merit; certainly the common practice of copying sutras (sometimes with one's own blood) or paying for the copying of sutras was a popular means of both manifesting devotion to Buddha and earning religious merit. Texts like the Classics might be copied as an act of learning, as a means of absorbing or “owning” the text through personal reproduction of it.

For members of the elite, manuscript editions of certain types of texts—intensely personal, potentially subversive, or sexually explicit pieces of fictional writing, for example—had greater value than printed versions. Indeed, the printed version, which embodied the possibility of uncontrolled, socially unrestricted circulation, was often seen as potentially dangerous or insulting to elite sensibilities. Thus Robert E. Hegel, in “Niche Marketing for Late Imperial Chinese Fiction,” argues that hand-copied “private” manuscripts were the preferred vehicles for the circulation of literati fiction in the late Ming and especially the Qing: printed books, since the Song perceived as “common” by many literati, were viewed with scorn by authors interested in preserving the special status of their most personal writings. Manuscript texts were often preferred, for obvious reasons, as vehicles for the transmission of craft secrets, family medical techniques, or potentially heterodox religious doctrines; as manuscripts they performed the necessary function of preserving techniques and recording beliefs for descendants and fellow believers while limiting the wider accessibility of these techniques and beliefs.⁷⁶ Finally, as Joseph McDermott indicates in “The Ascendance of the Imprint in China,” even at the height of the late Ming publishing boom, printed texts were not so widely available that even wealthy readers and collectors could abandon hand copying (or the hiring of a scribe to copy a book) as a means of reproducing difficult-to-obtain texts. Indeed, through the whole late imperial period at least, Chinese book culture remained very much an imprint *and* a manuscript culture.

The Role of Government in Publishing

Fifth, the political divisions in Europe made the relationship between governments and publishing industries quite different from that in China, which had a relatively stable imperial government (though divided between two dynasties) from the mid-fifteenth through the nineteenth century. The Chinese government, from the Song dynasty on, played a relatively active role in publishing in a variety of arenas: most obviously, to produce essential government documents such as law codes and statutes, examination questions and records, and the orthodox calendar; to print the forms, public notices, and registers necessary to the operation of the bureaucracy; and to establish orthodox editions of important texts, which it often supplied to local officials and schools. Provincial and county governments might also be responsible for producing books for local government schools and local histories or gazetteers. Thus the government operated as an important sector of the publishing industry. Indeed, most studies of Chinese publishing organize the industry into three parts: official (*guanke*); private, “family,” or literati (*sike, jiake*); and commercial (*fangke*).

But the government was a more active player in late imperial publishing than this neat—indeed, overneat—tripartite division suggests. For, in the absence of a coherent central policy defining what types of books could be published and what types could not, government offices at all administrative levels often made what were clearly commercial decisions to publish certain popular texts for public sale and profit. Thus the government (and, for that matter, as Katherine Carlitz makes clear in her essay in this volume, literati publishers as well) also participated in the commerce in books. The Imperial University (Guozhi xue) in Nanjing and the Directorate of Ceremonial (Sili jian) and the Censorate (Ducha yuan) in Beijing, for example, all produced editions of the novel *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo yanyi*) in the Ming—though doubtless the emphasis in that text on the virtues of loyalty and legitimacy made it a work the state was interested in disseminating for ideological as well as commercial purposes.⁷⁷

It appears that the Chinese government played a far more active role in producing printed texts than did European governments of the sixteenth through the nineteenth century, or, as Peter Kornicki emphasizes in his encyclopedic study of the Japanese book, the Japanese government before the nineteenth century.⁷⁸ Certainly the great collecting and publishing projects of the high Qing—the *Siku quanshu* collection, the *Gujin tushu jicheng* (Imperial encyclopedia), and the *Wuying dian juzhenban congshu* (Collectanea of Wuying Palace editions), to name just a few—suggest both how fully the government understood the power of print and how actively and positively it acted on this understanding. Moreover, government participation in printing operated at all levels of the bureaucracy. At the very top were the cen-

tralized publishing agencies, such as the famous Imperial Printing Office (Xiushu chu, housed at the Wuying dian) of the Qing, which employed hundreds of workers and produced some of the finest editions of the day (including the *Gujin tushu jicheng* and the *Wuying dian juzhenban congshu*, both printed with movable type).⁷⁹ In the Ming, imperial princes were often important publishers; though their output was relatively low, estimated at between 250 and 350 titles, their wealth, access to rare editions, and personal interest in publishing ensured that many of their texts stand as among the finest produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁸⁰ (See figure 56, in chapter 11 of this volume, for an example of a fine illustration from a truly “princely” edition of the *Shengtu ji* [Pictures of the Sage’s traces], dated 1548.)

At the provincial and county levels as well, printing offices might produce standard editions of the Classics and histories, gazetteers, dictionaries such as the *Kangxi zidian* (Kangxi dictionary), and imperially sponsored medical handbooks such as the *Yizong jinjian* (Golden mirror of medical doctrine), or, as mentioned above, even belles lettres and works of fiction. Many of these texts were to be distributed to local schools and private academies, as a means of ensuring the study of government-approved editions of important texts.⁸¹ Government publishing, then, functioned in part as an effort to maintain a kind of educational orthodoxy and uniformity. It is revealing that after the defeat of the Taiping rebellion in the late nineteenth century, the Tongzhi emperor (r. 1861–75), following a long-standing imperial policy, ordered the establishment in each province of publishing offices to supply local officials and scholars with works that had been destroyed in the rebellion—in short, to see to the production and dissemination of texts seen as essential for the reestablishment and maintenance of appropriate education and good government.⁸²

There was, of course, a dark side to the vigorous interest of the Chinese government in publishing: censorship and literary inquisition. The harshest campaigns of censorship unfolded under the Kangxi (r. 1661–1722), Yongzheng (r. 1723–35), and, most notoriously, Qianlong emperors. But here again the contrast with Europe and even Japan is striking, in this case in terms of the approach to regulation and censorship. There seems to have been no effective institutional structure in either Ming or Qing China for systematic *pre-publication* censorship of texts, no regular mechanism, as there was, for example, in eighteenth-century France, for the vetting of manuscripts before a board of censors.⁸³ Though an imperial decree of 1778 required prepublication approval of new manuscripts by provincial directors of education,⁸⁴ there is little evidence that this regulation was consistently and systematically enforced. There were, to be sure, general proscriptions of types of texts—unauthorized calendars and almanacs, prognostication texts, subversive or secret government documents, and “licentious” literature⁸⁵—but no effectively and consistently applied system for the regular, prepublication screen-

ing of titles that might be included under any of these categories. For the most part, the Qing government outlawed specific texts after the fact—that is, after they had been published and circulated.

This is not to suggest that French government control of publishing, because more systematic, was necessarily harsher; no one would question the brutality of the Qing literary inquisitions. Furthermore, the multiple governments in Europe made escape from the limits of one's own state possible—witness the thriving business of the Société typographique de Neuchâtel in supplying France with books banned in that country but legally publishable just over the border in Switzerland.⁸⁶ The single government presiding over the enormous Chinese landmass made this form of evasion more difficult. It seems to have been the case that the Chinese government acted most effectively through focused campaigns of censorship and punishment, campaigns in which the targets were works presumed (however questionably) to be subversive of Qing control or antagonistic to the Manchu people—as in the literary inquisitions of the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong emperors. In other areas, censorship was less effective, as the very size of China and the relatively diffuse and mobile nature of woodblock printing made internal control very difficult.⁸⁷ Certainly the government was not able to limit in any thoroughgoing way the publication of almanacs, prognostication texts, or “immoral and licentious popular novels.”⁸⁸

Most interestingly, the unusual situation in Europe—the tension among government efforts at control, foreign publishers' avid desire for “scandalous” texts to publish, and increasing authorial insistence on what we now call intellectual property rights—led ultimately to the evolution of the linked concepts of authorial ownership and copyright.⁸⁹ No such legal development occurred in China. Authors were of course concerned about pirating: Zhu Xi, for example, was able to petition successfully a local subprefect for the destruction of the blocks of an inferior pirated edition of his *Sishu huowen* (Questions and answers on the Four Books); and many authors expressed anger at the sloppy pirated versions of their writings.⁹⁰ Publishers were also worried about unauthorized reprinting of their texts: books printed in the Ming and Qing commonly included the warning “Reprinting prohibited” (*fanke bijiu*).⁹¹ But these concerns were never incorporated into the legal code, and Chinese authors and publishers never received the official legal protections eventually offered their counterparts in Europe.⁹²

Nor, as a consequence, did there develop a precise legal—or, for that matter, much of a popular—definition of what authorship or editorship meant. Many Chinese books are clearly “by” an individual author, but many others—encyclopedias, *duilian* collections, annotated editions of the Classics—are attributed to a group of people whose exact functions are often rather difficult to determine. The title page of a Chinese text may include a list of contributors, not infrequently relatives or friends of the author or editor,

identified as performing a variety of functions—*pingxuan* (to select critically), *jiading* (to proofread against an original), *zengshi* (to add explanation), *canyue* (to proofread), to name just a few—and it is often difficult to work out the precise relationship of their efforts and the specific nature of their contributions to the text in question. To what extent was text production a communal effort? How was the function of the “author”—and all the other contributors to a text—understood?⁹³

A similar confusion shapes the very concept of “book” itself. As McDermott points out in this volume, before the twentieth century most Chinese books were essentially miscellanies, formed of collected (usually unattributed) excerpts from a range of other texts, any number of which might be deleted or exchanged for other excerpts in new editions of the same title.⁹⁴ This cut-and-paste approach clearly has implications for the understanding of authorship and the other functions involved in text formation; it also destabilizes the notion of what a book is. Even apparently identical texts—with the same title and by the same author or editor—might in fact be not much alike, consisting rather of different selections and combinations of writings and varying quite widely in number of *juan*. On the other hand, it was also not uncommon for publishers to issue a single text under a series of different titles—each successive title advertising a “new,” supposedly corrected, expanded, or freshly illustrated version of what was, in fact, the same text.⁹⁵ In sum, the text of a book (and the association of a text with a single title) was far from exact or fixed, allowing authors, compilers, and editors, as well as pirate-publishers, considerable freedom in the combination and recombination of textual components. All these questions—about the nature of authorship, the standardization of functions among the various listed contributors to a text, and the very understanding of what a text or book was—should, as the study of the Chinese book advances, receive more careful study.

Sources and Methods

I have given just a few examples of how different technologies and economies of print and different social, political, and educational contexts distinguish the history of the Chinese book—and the questions its students must ask—from the history of the Western book. There is one other difference, one that affects in quite practical ways the work of the historian of the Chinese book, namely, the difference in type and availability of sources. Chinese historians of the book must be very envious of the material that Western historians of the book—Robert Darnton, D. F. McKenzie, Robert Estivals, François Furet, Leon Vöet, and Miriam Chrisman, to name just a handful⁹⁶—have been able to draw on in their rich and detailed studies of specific book industries: book lists, price lists, detailed correspondence between booksellers and publishers, industry account books, catalogues of book fairs, li-

brary subscriptions, and collections of the book products themselves. Unfortunately, most of these sources, with the exception of the last, are not widely available in China for the late imperial period. Full business records from the woodblock publishing industry have not survived in much abundance—indeed, to my knowledge, at all—as a consequence in part of the violent upheavals of the past several centuries and, perhaps, of a widespread ambivalence about the respectability of commerce. There is, thus, a great deal that we *cannot* say about the social history of the Chinese book. Certainly it is impossible, failing the discovery of more business information, to provide a detailed and comprehensive picture of production costs, print runs, prices, sales statistics, and profits⁹⁷—in short, of the economics of book production and sale.

The paucity of conventional sources for the history of publishing and books creates a significant challenge for scholars of China, as they are spurred to discover new sources of evidence, often indirect—or to develop inventive new readings of old evidence—to uncover the history of the Chinese book. In this volume McDermott illustrates the value of exhaustive and critical reading in the widest possible range of sources—bibliographies, *biji* (miscellaneous notes), government documents, biographies, and so forth—to glean important pieces of information about book culture. Weaving together evidence from random anecdotes about the book market, literati complaints about the scarcity of texts, autobiographical accounts of study and early education, and records in the dynastic histories, he demonstrates how, even in the absence of precise statistics about library holdings and book ownership, it is possible to draw substantial conclusions about access to printed books and book use over the course of the whole late imperial period. In contrast, McLaren reveals the value of intensive reading, particularly of imaginative interpretation of the vocabulary used to describe reading (and writing) and contemporary descriptions (both textual and pictorial) of readers and reading. Drawing, too, on analysis of the rhetoric used in texts themselves, particularly in prefaces, to “sell” texts to specific groups of readers, she is able to deduce the development of new reading publics and new reading practices in the late Ming.

In one regard, however, scholars of China enjoy the same bounty that Western scholars do in the study of books: the books themselves. Like Western books, Chinese books are rich sources not only because of their contents, the texts they present, but also because of the way in which the scholar can “read” the publication information and physical qualities to learn about the circumstances of the books’ publication, origins, purposes, and intended audiences. Mastery of at least some of the methods and terminology of *banben xue* is thus as necessary to the student of Chinese book history as it is to the Western book historian.⁹⁸

Several of the essays here illustrate the range of information that can be

drawn from study of imprints. In “Of Three Mountains Street: The Commercial Publishers of Ming Nanjing,” Lucille Chia demonstrates that it is possible to reconstruct the contours of an important urban publishing industry largely from collection and careful analysis of publication data recorded in bibliographies and surviving imprints. Evelyn S. Rawski, in “Qing Publishing in Non-Han Languages,” and Xu Xiaoman rely, similarly, on close readings of publication information to describe the characteristics of special types of texts: Rawski provides an overview of an important but heretofore neglected genre of texts; Xu shows how the demands of genealogy publication encouraged the development of professional editors and printers and the increasing use of movable-type technology. Other authors approach the question of readership and reading practices through close examination of the physical characteristics (as well, of course, as the contents) of texts. Hegel relies on analysis of the quality and costs of a variety of works of fiction and drama to argue that late Ming publishers targeted different levels of consumers, some choosing to churn out shabby and inexpensive imprints, others preferring to produce fine editions for those willing and able to pay the price. Two other scholars focus on these very different niches: Katherine Carlitz, examining the beautifully produced collections of arias produced by late Ming and Qing dramatists and drama connoisseurs in “Printing as Performance: Literati Playwright-Publishers of the Late Ming,” shows how the choice of carving style, the content and execution of the illustrations, and the quality of imprints served, flatteringly, to reinforce their sense of identity as refined men of *qing* (emotion, authentic feeling). At the other end of the publishing scale, Cynthia J. Brokaw, in “Reading the Best-Sellers of the Nineteenth Century: Commercial Publishers from Sibao,” draws on the rather shabby imprints collected in fieldwork from a poor Qing era publishing site, to suggest, through the examination of different styles of commentary and variations in the layout, advertisement, and combination of texts, ways in which publishers at the lower end of the market shaped texts to suit a reading public with fairly heterogeneous needs, reading practices, and resources.

The two art historians who contributed to this volume both treat, in different ways, a closely related topic—how the physical choices made in designing a text affect its meaning and significance. Burkus-Chasson, focusing on a particular text, shows how the physical choices made by authors and editors—the placement of illustrations on a page, the relationship between text and illustration, and even the type of binding chosen—might shape the reading experience and reveal, with beautiful subtlety, the “message” of a text. And Murray demonstrates the advantages of a comparative approach to the study of the print medium in her analysis of Ming and Qing illustrations of famous men. Comparison of woodblock illustrations and stone engravings and paintings suggests what the choice of woodblock over other media meant about intended audience and didactic message, in addition to

illuminating the significance of woodblock prints in late imperial visual culture. In sum, the essays in this volume offer not simply new information about the history of publishing and book culture in China but also hints about the methods that can fruitfully be applied, given the nature and limitations of the sources, to the study of the Chinese book.

TOWARD A NEW HISTORY OF WOODBLOCK PUBLISHING
IN THE LATE IMPERIAL PERIOD

The historical setting of this volume—the late Ming and Qing eras, from the mid-sixteenth century through the nineteenth century—marks a distinctive and important period in Chinese publishing and book culture, a time when there is a significant expansion in print culture, both in the quantities and types of texts published and in the scope of their distribution geographically and socially. At this initial stage in the study of the Chinese book, the late Ming-Qing period appears to offer a certain coherence as a unit, though future, more detailed studies may reveal the need to break down this long, four-century span of time into smaller units. We hope that future study in the field will yield more information about the even longer initial period of Chinese book history—the late eighth through the fourteenth century—and about the now somewhat contested relationship between Song-Yuan and Ming-Qing imprint cultures.

To be sure, there is no question that the Chinese publishing industry first took off during the Song dynasty, four centuries after the invention of printing (or the first evidence we have for the existence of printing) in the eighth century. In the late Tang, the printing industry—of which we know virtually nothing—seems to have been largely religious and commercial; contemporary references and surviving texts suggest, at any rate, that religious scriptures and prayers and popularly useful texts such as calendars and almanacs dominated the industry. Eventually, most notably in the Five Dynasties period and then again in the Song, the government recognized the opportunities offered by printing for easy reproduction of approved standardized editions of the Classics and other politically and ideologically important texts. Of course, the greater importance of the examination system in the Song increased the need for an “orthodox” set of texts for study.⁹⁹

Though the relatively small number of surviving Song and Yuan imprints makes it difficult to assess the full impact of the publishing boom, it appears that by as early as the twelfth century at least, commercial publishers began to dominate the book trade. Publishers in Jianyang and Hangzhou began turning out a whole range of texts—the Classics (often adapted from government editions), reading primers, encyclopedias, medical guides, literary collections, and *biji*. Many members of the elite were alarmed at the new access to books that printing brought; Zhu Xi, for example, lamented what he

perceived as the decline in education and particularly in reading-memorization practices that came with the greater availability of printed texts.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, as Susan Cherniack has shown, the new print culture altered the way in which literati read and interacted with texts, encouraging more active control and manipulation of texts through a variety of editorial strategies.¹⁰¹ It is much more difficult to assess the impact of the publishing boom on people of lower social and educational status.

Commercial publishing survived the Mongol conquest and continued to grow through the course of the Yuan dynasty. Indeed, the Jianyang industry, certainly the most prolific commercial publishing business of the day, steadily increased its output, without any apparent interference from the new rulers.¹⁰² Interestingly, the real check to commercial publishing came in the early Ming. The social disorder attendant on the fall of the Yuan and the dislocations of population commanded by Ming Taizu (r. 1368–98) in his drive to consolidate power disrupted both book production and book markets. Jiangnan, probably the largest market for books at the time, was the region hit hardest by early Ming policies, and a decline in demand from Jiangnan, exacerbated by a severe paper shortage, depressed output in the once-booming publishing center of Jianyang. Finally, the intellectual climate of the early Ming, emphasizing moral self-cultivation at the expense of broad knowledge and book learning, did little to encourage book production. As a consequence of all these factors, there was a significant decline in publishing during the first half of the dynasty, from the late fourteenth through the early sixteenth century.¹⁰³

It is not until the Jiaping era (1522–67) that there were signs of a new publishing boom. There is considerable controversy over how this boom should be interpreted. Song and Yuan historians prefer to see it as a revival of the flourishing book trade of the Song and Yuan after a brief lapse in the early Ming.¹⁰⁴ But McDermott argues in this volume that the late Ming boom represented the first true “conquest” of China by print. Drawing on the work of Inoue Susumu, he suggests that it is not really until the sixteenth century that printed books were widely enough available that they supplanted what had been the dominant culture of book manuscripts—that is, hand-copied texts.

Lack of clear statistical evidence will probably ensure that this issue remains a source of much debate. We can be reasonably sure, however, that beginning in the early sixteenth century, there was a significant increase, at least over the previous two centuries, in both the numbers and types of books published. As indicated above, widespread commercialization of the economy, begun late in the previous century, provided the lower classes with new opportunities for upward mobility and encouraged the dissemination of information, ideas, and texts to merchants, wealthy craftsmen, and peasants, as well as the scholar-official elite.¹⁰⁵

This growth in the size and the diversity of the reading public stimulated all sectors of publishing: government printing, literati or individual publishing, institutional publishing by academies or temples, and commercial publishing. Most significant, however, in terms of numbers of and range in types of texts published, were the commercial publishing operations. Commercial publishers churned out a wide range of texts, including educational staples such as the *San-Bai-Qian*, the collective title given *Sanzi jing*, *Baijia xing* (Myriad family names), and *Qianzi wen* (Thousand character essay),¹⁰⁶ but also now including medical and pharmaceutical handbooks, household encyclopedias, travel guides, etiquette manuals, popular entertainment texts (the great vernacular novels and stories of the late Ming, in particular), divination and fortune-telling manuals, and almanacs.¹⁰⁷ In the four major commercial printing centers of the empire—Nanjing, Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Jianyang—there was a striking increase in the numbers of texts produced in all the “four treasures” (*siku*) bibliographic categories. There was, too, a shift in the nature of publishing output: although the Classics, Confucian writings, and medical texts retained their relative prominence, nonscholarly works—story collections, historical romances, dramas, divination manuals, and art albums—gained new importance.¹⁰⁸ Responding to increased demand from customers interested in these works, and interested in purchasing cheap versions of them, publishers adapted their output to a broader, more socially varied readership.

McLaren shows that editors, authors, and publishers were quick to take advantage of the expanded market: “The decision to publish a text commercially . . . compelled editors and publishers to devise strategies to market their texts to a reading public somewhat broader than the usual coterie of literati.”¹⁰⁹ Now book prefaces often emphasized the applicability of the text for all of the “four classes” (*simin*) of people—scholars, peasants, artisans, and merchants. It is clear that some texts were edited in different ways for different audiences, evidence that publishers recognized the value of cultivating niche markets for certain texts as well as producing texts that might be advertised as suitable for all readers, including not only “ignorant men” but also “ignorant women” (*yufu yufu*).¹¹⁰

This broader demand influenced book format and printing styles as well: fine woodblock illustrations and color printing (*taoban*)—two developments for which the late Ming is famous—embellished the fiction collections and art albums sought by wealthy literati and merchants of the Jiangnan area.¹¹¹ At the lower end of the market, many imprints in the *shangtu xiawen* format commonly illustrated, often rather crudely, the fiction, cheap medical manuals, and household guides in great demand by the less affluent. Increased use of punctuation and a variety of illustrative materials (*tu*) indicate efforts on the part of publishers to make their texts more accessible and therefore more appealing to readers who might need extra aids to com-

prehension. The development of a standardized printing script, the *jiangti zi*, or craftsman's style characters (also known as *Songti zi*, or Song-style characters), made Ming texts less beautiful than the great editions of the Song, but it made blocks easier to carve and, through the consistent use of a uniform script, the texts themselves easier to read.¹¹²

The expansion in the book industry in the late Ming also stimulated the development of specialized markets serving the interests of the top levels of cultivated society. Carlitz shows how the mixed literati and merchant elite of the Jiangnan area, including figures like the wealthy merchant and private publisher Wang Tingna (1567–1612), formed communities of authors and aficionados devoted to writing, compiling, and publishing dramas and drama anthologies. Hegel argues that the finely illustrated editions produced by Jiangnan publishers presented, often in beautifully produced and illustrated editions, the most original literary products of the day to an active, sophisticated, and wealthy literati readership.

Historians have also argued that the publishing boom helped to promote the major intellectual movements of the late Ming. At the most basic level, the wider accessibility of texts facilitated the circulation of new ideas, particularly those of Wang Yangming (1429–72) and his followers, the most vigorous challengers of the “orthodox” Cheng-Zhu brand of Confucianism. The spread of printing also transformed examination culture, encouraging the proliferation of a large body of literature designed to aid the desperate candidate. Kai-wing Chow argues, too, that this literature transformed intellectual life in the late Ming and Qing; by making new interpretations of the Classics more widely available, it encouraged scholars to challenge long-established readings and thus stimulated debate over the legitimacy of the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy.¹¹³ At a different level, the multiplication of publishing concerns allowed for the publication of the popular educational works—vernacular explanations of the Four Books, household encyclopedias, morality books, and so forth—much championed by the new school of Confucianism as a means of introducing Confucian values and ideas to the common people.

As was the case in the first publishing boom in the Song, not everyone was pleased with the greater opportunities for intellectual debate—or the potentially broader readership—created by the spread of print culture in the late Ming. The visible increase in the availability of texts, to all social levels and to both sexes, aroused the concern and even the opposition of certain members of the elite, jealous of their stranglehold on one source of elite status, access to books. Zhou Lianggong (1612–72) spoke for this view among the elite when he lamented, “Which homes do not have sons and daughters who are literate—and how, after consideration, can this not be frightening?”¹¹⁴ Indeed, while hack authors and commercial publishers might have been striving to attract a broader audience, as McDermott demonstrates,

many members of the elite were far from pleased at the greater accessibility of printed books in the late Ming and Qing. These men often reacted by limiting access to their own collections, restricting, as far as it lay within their power to do so, the circulation of texts.¹¹⁵

By the seventeenth century, however, these defensive measures represented a lost cause, at least in the Jiangnan area, the cultural heartland of late imperial China. With Jianyang, in northern Fujian, Jiangnan led the empire in commercial publishing—and because most Jianyang imprints were exported to Jiangnan, it doubtless led in the richness and size of its book markets as well. If we look simply at numbers of *shufang* (print shops or, more likely, print shops–cum–bookshops) alone, as calculated by Zhang Xiumin, Nanjing, with ninety-three shops, ranked at the forefront of production. (In this volume, Chia provides a survey of this premier late Ming publishing center.) Nanjing was followed closely by Jianyang with eighty-four shops and then trailed by Suzhou with thirty-seven (thirty-eight, if we count Mao Jin’s Jigu ge, in Changshu, Suzhou prefecture), Hangzhou with twenty-four, and Huizhou with ten. Though there were commercial printing establishments in almost all regions of China by the early seventeenth century,¹¹⁶ none came close to rivaling Jianyang and Jiangnan. The imperial capital itself, Beijing, boasted only thirteen commercial bookshops in the Ming.

Zhang’s rough estimate of volume of production approximates this general ranking of numbers of *shufang*: Fujian province, home of the prolific Jianyang printers, churned out more than 1,000 titles, followed by Nanzhili (Nanjing, Suzhou, Huizhou), which produced 468 titles, and then Zhejiang (Hangzhou and Huzhou, famous for its color printing) and Jiangxi, each printing more than 400 titles. Then there was a sharp decline in productivity: Beizhili, Huguang, Henan, Shaanxi, and Shanxi produced no more than “over 100” titles each; Sichuan and Shandong, only about 70; Guangdong and Yunnan, about 50; and Guangxi and Guizhou, merely “over 10” titles. In short, the publishing boom of the late Ming was fueled largely by two regional concentrations of publishing houses—Jianyang, in northern Fujian, and the Jiangnan centers of Nanjing, Suzhou, Hangzhou, Huzhou, and Huizhou.¹¹⁷

After the Manchu conquest of China in 1644, which briefly interrupted the publishing boom of the late Ming, there was a shift in the geographic distribution and orientation of commercial publishing. The disorder attendant on the Manchu conquest brought a depression in the publishing trade from which some of the Ming centers never fully recovered. Jianyang sank into obscurity in the early Qing;¹¹⁸ so, too, at the high end of the publishing scale, Huizhou, famous for its production of expensive illustrated “art” editions in the late Ming, ceased to be a printing site of special importance.¹¹⁹ Nanjing and Hangzhou suffered at least temporary setbacks; though they recovered enough to become regional centers, they lost the empire-leading

prominence they had enjoyed, with Jianyang, in the Ming. Zhang Xiumin has calculated that the number of important *shufang* in Nanjing, for example, dropped from ninety-three to eight in the early Qing; in Hangzhou, from twenty-five to five. Only Suzhou seems to have held its place, and even to have expanded, with a total of at least fifty-five shops, a considerable increase over the Ming figure of thirty-seven.¹²⁰ Though these numbers should not be taken too literally, they are nonetheless crudely indicative of the downward trend that characterized commercial publishing in the old Jiangnan centers after the change in dynasty.

The decline of the earlier centers should not be taken as a sign of the decline in the commercial publishing industry or a decline in printing as a whole, however. There was, in fact, beginning in the late seventeenth century, a thoroughgoing spread of block printing, in two directions: first, *geographically*, to all parts of China proper; and second, to a large extent as a consequence of the geographic expansion, *socially*, down to levels of the population that until then had been largely excluded from the book market because of their distance from production centers.

What is striking about the geographic pattern of the publishing industry in the Qing is the more even distribution of commercial businesses throughout China proper, that is, their extension outward from the older centers. As several of the great publishing sites of the late Ming lost their status as the preeminent leaders of the empirewide publishing industry, other sites rose to prominence. Perhaps most impressive is the new importance of Beijing. Zhang Xiumin lists 112 *shufang* for Qing Beijing, almost nine times the Ming figure of 13. And it was, of course, during this time that Liuli chang became the most famous symbol of the vitality of the Chinese book market.

But the rise of Beijing to prominence did not, as one might imagine, bespeak a new centralization of the commercial book trade. A number of provincial capitals, always important sites of government printing, and regional cities emerged now, too, as centers of commercial publishing. In Sichuan, for example, Chengdu, after a period of recovery from the destruction of Zhang Xianzhong's (1605–47) rebellion in the late Ming and the Manchu invasion, became in the late Kangxi and early Qianlong eras the site of at least ten large commercial publishing houses.¹²¹ Chongqing, though it never rivaled Chengdu in terms of numbers of print shops, became, too, a publishing center of some note. Guangzhou is another example; it became a noted commercial publishing center in the mid-Qing and then flourished in the late Qing as a site for the production of Guangdong statecraft writings.¹²² During the peak of Guangzhou commercial publishing, from the 1850s through the first decade of the twentieth century, the city had at least twenty-three shops.¹²³

With the spread of commercial publishing to the major provincial and

regional centers came the rise of new, smaller, intermediate-level publishing centers. The best two examples here are Foshan (Guangdong), one of the “four great market towns (*zhen*) of the Qing,” and Xuwan (Jiangxi). By the late nineteenth century, Foshan was the site of twelve commercial print shops (two of which may have been branches of Guangzhou shops); by the dynasty’s end, there were more than twenty, specializing in vernacular fiction and popular medical manuals.¹²⁴ Xuwan, a market town on the upper reaches of the Fu River, about forty *li* from Fuzhou, was a noted regional market for rice, paper, bamboo products, and medicine. The town was dominated by two parallel streets, Qian shupu jie and Hou shupu jie, lined with forty-seven print shops; another thirteen shops were scattered throughout the town. These shops together produced, according to the estimate of one nineteenth-century scholar, more texts than any other woodblock publishing site of the day (with the possible exception of Magang, Guangdong).¹²⁵ The Xuwan publishers were not merely prolific; they produced a range of types and qualities of texts, from finely carved editions of the Classics and literary collections to almanacs, cheap medical guides, and novels, and distributed them to the cities on the lower reaches of the Yangzi such as Nanchang, Jiujiang, Wuhu, Anqing, Nanjing, and Changsha.¹²⁶ Although this outward spread of publishing industries was most notable in southern China, perhaps because paper was more accessible there, examples can be found in northern China as well. Jinan and Liaocheng, both in Shandong province, benefited, like Xuwan, from their strategic location near an important waterway; their increasing importance through the Qing as printing and publishing centers owed a great deal to their connection to the Grand Canal.¹²⁷

Influential publishing industries could be found at even lower levels of the central place hierarchy in the Qing, at times in places quite distant from major transport routes: Sibao township, despite its relatively lowly status in the hierarchy and its isolation in the mountains of western Fujian, became the home of at least fifty print shops at its publishing peak during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.¹²⁸ (See Brokaw’s contribution to this volume for a study of the output of some of these shops.)

Why this shift in the distribution of publishing industries and this proliferation of industries of intermediate- and lower-level concerns? It is quite possible, of course, that what we see here as a phenomenon of the Qing represents, rather, the natural unfolding of the publishing boom of the late Ming, a development accelerated by the population increase and the largely temporary decline of great Jiangnan publishing sites such as Nanjing and Suzhou during the period of the Manchu conquest and consolidation of power. Certainly the population boom of the eighteenth century (just when most of the smaller publishing industries mentioned here got their start)

further stimulated an expansion in publishing; and, more to the point, the migrations of the high Qing helped to push publishing industries into hinterland areas. Migration created not only a demand for books, but also the supply of carvers needed to meet it. A striking number of Qing publishing houses seem to have been founded by immigrants. Jiangxi émigrés were largely responsible for the revival of commercial publishing in Chengdu, for example;¹²⁹ and migrant Yuechi block carvers established their craft in frontier areas of Guangxi and Yunnan.¹³⁰ As yet we do not understand the pattern of migration, or the degree to which links established through migration integrated commercial publishing concerns into regional or even national networks; but this is clearly an issue requiring further study if we are to understand more fully the spread of Chinese publishing.

In any event, the expansion in geographic scope, the growth in number, and the greater complexity of intra- and interregional links between publishing sites that characterize the Qing book trade, coupled with the increased prosperity and the population growth of the eighteenth century, made possible not only a broader but also a deeper dissemination of texts in social as well as geographic terms. Many of the new publishing sites at the intermediate level served both the larger book market and a smaller, rural demand for relatively inexpensive texts. The expansion of bookselling networks now made possible the distribution of printed texts to even quite isolated peasant communities, to members of the lower rungs of the social ladder heretofore excluded from printed book culture.

This printed book culture, now extending throughout the empire, appears, at first glance, to have been a relatively homogeneous one. To be sure, regional variation flourished. Books in non-Han languages were published in Beijing, both by the government and by commercial bookshops, as Rawski makes clear in her essay. And texts in dialects or works representing local intellectual and cultural interests (like the works of the Sichuan statecraft school that became the specialty of Chengdu printers in the nineteenth century) continued to be published.¹³¹ But these specialized titles were by and large overwhelmed by a shared set of widely distributed titles, a common core of sure best-sellers that, as Brokaw suggests in her essay, remained at the heart of publishers' book lists everywhere.

It is very difficult to know what this expanded shared book culture meant in terms of literacy or reception. Scholars have had to draw on a wide range of sources—rare village records, descriptions of the nature of early school education, the availability of educational materials, anecdotal evidence of reading abilities among nonelites—to estimate literacy rates. These estimates vary considerably, depending largely on how literacy is defined. Accepting a generous definition of literacy, to include those who knew “only a few hundred characters,” Rawski has suggested that from 30 percent to 45 percent of the male population and from 2 percent to 10 percent of the female pop-

ulation was literate by the mid- to late nineteenth century.¹³² Idema has argued that this estimate is too high, suggesting instead that roughly 20 percent to 25 percent of the male population was functionally literate, *perhaps* 30 percent if Rawski's very broad definition of literacy is used.¹³³ Given puzzlingly contradictory reports from the nineteenth century¹³⁴ and the absence of solid statistical evidence, this issue remains a highly contested one.

The consequences of the expansion of publishing and the formation of a core of shared titles are even more difficult to determine. In her essay on Sibao, Brokaw, echoing points made in the essays by McLaren and Hegel, suggests that differences in production quality and in formatting—the use of punctuation, of different types of commentaries (and in some cases, the absence of commentary), of pronunciation glosses, of illustrations—must have affected the ways in which different readers read different editions of the same titles and may have undermined the integrative function of the core of best-selling titles. To some extent close analysis of these internal differences in the text and explicit definitions of audience in prefaces, *fanli* (general regulations), and other paratextual matter can reveal the intended audiences. Even more revealing differences in actual reader response await the discovery of new sources and much additional research and reflection.

However difficult it may be for scholars to quantify or analyze the trend precisely, there is no doubt that an expansion in the reading public began in the late Ming and gained strength in the Qing. Women, for example, were gradually drawn into the world of writing, publishing, and, presumably, reading. Dorothy Ko, in *Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, demonstrates that there is a sudden boom in the publication of women's writings, largely women's poetry, in the seventeenth century.¹³⁵ In this volume McLaren argues that already in the late Ming some editors and publishers were aware of the existence of a female reading public. Susan Mann and Ellen Widmer have argued that this public continued to grow throughout the Qing, along with the amount of published women's poetry.¹³⁶ The publication of Wanyan Yun Zhu's (1771–1833) *Guochao guixiu zhengshi ji* (Correct beginnings: Women's poetry of our august dynasty) in 1831 represents perhaps the high point in this trend. An attempt to present a comprehensive vision of women's poetry, this collection selects poetry by women of virtue from all social statuses and ethnic groups in the empire. It includes, for example, verses attributed to Hami fisherwomen along with the poetry of the highly educated and well-connected Yun Zhu.¹³⁷

In this regard, Yun Zhu's collection, though presented as a private initiative, seems to have shared some of the goals governing state strategies of publishing. We have seen earlier that these strategies included, most notoriously, brutal censorship and even the execution of authors and publishers deemed dangerous to the state; in these cases, government control of writing and publishing—or government efforts at control—represented an attempt to

force unity by expurgating any voices deemed critical of the non-Han rulers. It would certainly be a mistake to underestimate the impact of this approach: by intimidating scholars and destroying or discouraging the production of certain works, it limited the range of information and intellectual choices available to scholars and literati—and thus, as Okamoto Sae has argued, severely hindered efforts at reform in the nineteenth century.¹³⁸

But Qing strategies also involved more positive measures, such as the sponsorship of collections of poetry, anthologies of philosophy, and large bibliographic projects, that stimulated new methods of textual study and provided support for leading scholars, even as the major purpose of this sponsorship was the confirmation of Qing political and cultural hegemony. Indeed, the Qing government used publishing aggressively as a tool in its “civilizing project,” its effort to forge political and cultural cohesion in an ethnically diverse empire.¹³⁹ In this light, the inclusion of poems “by” Hami fisherwomen in an anthology edited by a Han woman married to a Manchu aristocrat (and the mother of a prominent Manchu official who assisted her in the work of collection) can be seen as a strategy for acknowledging the presence of minority peoples and at the same time drawing them into the “civilizing” Han culture—under, of course, the aegis of the Manchu Qing imperium.¹⁴⁰

Given the overwhelming demographic dominance of the Han, it was particularly important for the state, in its efforts to ensure multiethnic cohesion, to emphasize the importance of other cultural traditions. As Rawski suggests in her essay on the publication of texts for “the non-Han world,” state efforts to encourage the publication of texts in Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, and other non-Han languages were a means of making space for non-Han peoples in a predominantly Han society. These activities were to an extent simply the flip side of the Qianlong emperor’s sponsorship of the vast collections of Han scholarship such as the *Siku quanshu* project; both were designed to forge a unity among the diversity of peoples under Qing rule by acknowledging, honoring, and representing their differences.¹⁴¹

The nineteenth century begins a very different stage in the history of the Chinese book. While woodblock printing continued to dominate the literati and commercial publishing world through that century, two new developments signal the beginnings of a sea change in book culture. The first development is technological—the introduction, late in the century, of lithographic and letterpress printing from the West, a change that eventually made the rapid reproduction and dissemination of texts much easier and cheaper (and made Shanghai the new center of the Chinese book trade). Second, and perhaps more profound, are the cultural and intellectual changes, stimulated by contact with foreign imperialism, that transformed the nature of education, the understanding of what knowledge is, and the social impor-

tance of the written word itself.¹⁴² Study of these momentous changes—and their interaction with the “old” woodblock print culture—awaits a separate volume.

The essays in this volume are organized to emphasize themes central to the study of the book in late imperial China. This introduction has surveyed some of the issues, both comparative and China-specific, that are and will be important to the field. McDermott’s “The Ascendance of the Imprint in China” is also introductory in the sense that it places the study of Ming and Qing publishing and book culture, the focus of the volume, in a larger historical context, the context of Chinese book history since the Song.

With the rise of the imprint in the late Ming came a significant expansion in the book market and a proliferation of publishing concerns, extending through the Qing. Part 2, “Commercial Publishing and the Expanding Market for Books,” treats this growth in both book culture and commercial publishing by describing one of the most prolific urban publishing centers of the late Ming, Nanjing (Chia, chap. 3); the efforts of contemporary commercial publishers to appeal to broader audiences, drawing in readers previously neglected in a market dominated by elite men (McLaren, chap. 4); and the spread by the Qing of important publishing concerns to hinterland areas (Brokaw, chap. 5).

Part 3, “Publishing for Specialized Audiences,” considers one of the most striking developments in late imperial publishing, one that grows out of the expansion of publishing and is a natural offshoot of the broadening of the reading audience that both McLaren and Brokaw suggest: the proliferation of different markets and niches of readers. In rough chronological order, these essays describe specialized publishing for a range of different “niches”: for elite readers of fiction (Hegel, chap. 6) and drama (Carlitz, chap. 7) in the late Ming; for the new groups of non-Han peoples incorporated into the Manchu empire (Rawski, chap. 8); and for lineages interested in preserving records of family membership in genealogies in the Qing and Republican eras (Xu, chap. 9).

Finally, part 4 focuses on the book as a physical and visual object. The two essays here show how the format of a book—the placement of text and illustration, the choice of calligraphy, and even the way the pages are bound together—affects the meaning of a text (Burkus-Chasson, chap. 10); and how illustrations in woodblock texts work in contrast to those in other media, carrying slightly different meanings and appealing perhaps to somewhat different audiences (Murray, chap. 11).

Needless to say, many important topics and issues are absent from this volume. Our purpose, however, has not been to define comprehensively the

study of the book in China but rather to set forth the results of some of the early research on the subject and to suggest some of the methods that can fruitfully be exploited in further studies.

NOTES

I would like to thank my coeditor, Kai-wing Chow, and Anne Burkus-Chasson, Lucille Chia, Joseph Fracchia, Daniel Gardner, Bryna Goodman, Robert E. Hegel, Julia K. Murray, and Patricia Sieber for the valuable suggestions they made on the original draft of this essay.

1. Liang Qizi, "Qingdai de xizi hui" (Societies for cherishing characters in the Qing), *Xin shixue* (New history) (Taiwan) 5.2 (June 1994): 83–113.

2. The extremely brief and general characterization of both pre-nineteenth- and twentieth-century studies of Chinese books below cannot begin to do justice to a very rich and wide-ranging body of scholarship. I have tried simply to indicate the larger directions this scholarship has taken, listing in the notes only a fraction of the many names and works that would rightly be included in a fuller overview. Readers interested in a list of the major works should consult Bibliographies A and B in Tsien Tsuen-hsiun, *Paper and Printing*, vol. 5, pt. 1, of Joseph Needham, ed., *Science and Civilization in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 389–430; and Tsien's update of these bibliographies, "Zhongguo yinshua shi jianmu" (Brief bibliography of the history of Chinese printing), *Guoli Zhongyang tushuguan guankan* (Journal of the National Central Library), n.s. 23.1 (June 1990): 179–99.

3. Cao Zhi, *Zhongguo guji banben xue* (Study of old Chinese editions) (Wuhan: Wuhan Daxue chubanshe, 1993), 52.

4. Most notable in the latter category is the impressive series of detailed catalogues of private collections produced in the Qing dynasty in part under the stimulus of the *kaozheng* movement and the collecting activities of the editors of the *Siku* project—the *Huang Pilie shumu tiba* (Annotated bibliography of Huang Pilie) of the collector Huang Pilie (1763–1825) or the *Wanjuan Jinghua lou cangshu ji* (Record of the Wanjuan Jinghua lou book collection) by the late Qing bibliophile Geng Wenguang (1833–1908), to name just two examples. These two titles, and eight others, have recently been reprinted in the *Qingren shumu tiba congkan* (Annotated Qing bibliographies, collected and reproduced) series produced by the Zhonghua shuju (Beijing, 1990–95).

5. For a modern version of *shuhua*, see Zheng Zhenduo's *Xidi shuhua* (Xidi book talk) (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 1998).

6. The work of facsimile reproduction has continued to the present, though in a slightly different form, one that serves the needs of scholars interested primarily in the physical form of texts. To facilitate close study of the calligraphy and format of rare editions, book experts began, in the early twentieth century, to publish collections of samples of such editions in facsimile—for example, Yang Shoujing's *Liu zhen pu* (Facsimile of rare woodcut editions, 1901–17), Pan Chengbi and Gu Tinglong's *Mingdai banben tulu chubian* (Facsimile specimens of Ming editions, 1941), and *Zhongguo banke tulu* (Collection of facsimile specimens of Chinese printing, 1961), compiled by the National Library of China (formerly the Beijing Library). The Jiangsu

Guangling guji keyinshe in Yangzhou and the Jinling kejing chu in Nanjing, both employing block carvers and printing texts in the traditional fashion, are perhaps the most prolific contemporary producers of facsimile reprints.

7. Chang Bide's *Banben mulu xue luncong* (Collection of essays on Chinese printing and bibliography), 2 vols. (Taipei: Hsueh-hai, 1977), is the pioneering work on *banbenxue*. See also Chen Guoqing, *Guji banben qianshuo* (Introduction to old Chinese editions) (Shenyang: Liao-Ning renmin chubanshe, 1957); and Mao Chunxiang, *Gushu banben changtan* (Talks on old Chinese books) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962).

8. See, for example, Wang Guowei, "Wudai Liang Song jianben kao" (On books printed by the Directorate of Education in the Five Dynasties and the Song) and "Liang Zhe gukanben kao" (On early editions of books printed in the Jiangsu-Zhejiang area), both in *Haining Wang Jing'an xiasheng yishu* (Posthumous works of Wang Guowei) (1936), *ce* [vols.] 33 and 34-35, respectively; Nagasawa Kikuya's *Wakan-sho no insatsu to sono rekishi* (Japanese and Chinese printing and their histories) (1952; rpt. in *Nagasawa Kikuya chosakushū* [Collected writings of Nagasawa Kikuya] [Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1982]), vol. 2, 3-136) and *Mindai sōzubon zuroku* (An illustrated catalogue of books of the Ming period) (Tokyo: Nihon Shoshigakukai, 1962); and Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shu de faming ji qi yingxiang* (The invention of printing in China and its influence) (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin chubanshe, 1958). For a fuller bibliography of the writings of these scholars, see Bibliography B in Tsien Tsuen-hsüan, *Paper and Printing*, 406-30.

9. For example, Zheng Zhenduo, ed., *Zhongguo banhua shi tulu* (Illustrations to the history of Chinese woodcuts), 24 vols. (Shanghai, 1940-47); Zhou Wu, *Zhongguo gudai banhua baitu* (One hundred woodcuts of ancient China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1988) and *Huipai banhuashi lunji* (Collected essays on the history of the woodcuts of the Huizhou school) (Hefei: Anhui renmin chubanshe, 1983).

10. The most comprehensive work on this topic is Pan Jixing's *Zhongguo zaozhi jishu shigao* (Draft history of Chinese papermaking technology) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1979).

11. For example, Ma Heng, "Zhongguo shuji zhidu bianqian zhi yanjiu" (Study of the evolution of the Chinese book), *Tushuguan xue jikan* (Library science quarterly, Peiping) 1.2 (1926): 199-213; and Li Yaonan, "Zhongguo shuzhuang kao" (Bookbinding in China), *Tushuguan xue jikan* 4.2 (1930): 207-16. More recently, the Zhongguo shuji chubanshe has produced a volume on the history of bookbinding, *Zhuangding yuanliu he buyi* (Beijing, 1993), vol. 4 in its series on the history of Chinese printing, *Zhongguo yinshua shiliao xuanji*.

12. Fortunately, much of this Chinese and Japanese scholarship on the history of printing and historical bibliography has been synthesized for a Western audience. Thomas Carter's *Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward* (1925; better known in the second revised edition edited by L. Carrington Goodrich [New York: Ronald, 1955]) very early introduced information about the origins of printing in China and attempted, albeit with little success, to make Western scholars aware of the influence of Chinese printing on other cultures. K. T. Wu published several more specialized articles on Chinese printing; see in particular his "Ming Printing and Printers," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7.3 (February 1943): 203-60. Much later,

Dennis C. Twitchett's *Printing and Publishing in Medieval China* (New York: Frederic C. Beil, 1983) summarized briefly the growth of printing in the Tang and Song. The introductory essays by Sören Edgren, Tsien Tsuen-hsiun, Wang Fang-yu, and Wango H. C. Weng in Edgren, ed., *Chinese Rare Books in American Collections* (New York: China Institute in America, 1984) served to introduce the basic terms and concerns of *ban-ben xue* to a Western readership. Most notable here, however, is Tsien Tsuen-hsiun's *Paper and Printing in China*; this work, in addition to a discussion of the origins of printing and printing and paper technology, presents a brief history of Chinese printing from the late Tang through the Qing.

13. To name just a few: Yan Wenyu, *Zhongguo shuji jianshi* (A brief history of Chinese books) (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1992); Luo Shubao, *Zhongguo gudai yinshua shi* (History of printing in ancient China) (Beijing: Yinshua gongye chubanshe, 1993); and Zheng Rusi and Xiao Dongfa, *Zhongguo shushi* (History of Chinese books) (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan chubanshe, 1998).

14. The newly revised list of print shops that published late Ming fiction, *Xiaoshuo shufang lu* (A record of printers of fiction) (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2002), compiled by Wang Qingyuan, Han Xiduo, and Mou Renlong (which appeared first in 1987 under the same title but with Han Xiduo as the first author), is particularly useful in conjunction with such catalogues as Sun Kaidi's *Zhongguo tongxu xiaoshuo shumumu* (Catalogue of popular Chinese fiction [1932; rpt. Beijing: Zhongguo renmin chubanshe, 1991]) and Ōtsuka Hidetaka's *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku* (Bibliography of Chinese popular fiction, expanded edition [Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1987]) for mapping the pattern of *xiaoshuo* publication.

A very different sort of reference work is the group of texts, some issued very recently, that list the names of block carvers. See, for example, Zhang Zhenduo, ed., *Guji kegong minglu* (Name list of block carvers of old books) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 1996); Wang Zhaowen, *Guji Song-Yuan kangong xingming suoyin* (Index to the names of block carvers of Song and Yuan texts) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990); and Li Guoqing, *Mingdai kangong xingming suoyin* (Index to the names of block carvers of the Ming) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998). This work builds on earlier contributions by Nagasawa Kikuya, e.g., "Sōkanbon kokukō meihyō shokō" (Table of block carvers' names in Song printed editions, a preliminary draft) and "Genkanbon kokukō meihyō shokō" (Table of block carvers' names in Yuan printed editions, a preliminary draft), in *Shoshigaku* (Critical bibliography) 2.2 (1934): 1–25 and 2.4 (1934): 35–46, respectively; these articles have been reprinted in *Nagasawa Kikuya chosakushū* (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1983), vol. 3, 157–96, 202–14. These works, with those listed in the paragraph above, greatly facilitate study of the overall structure of publishing networks and the authentication of texts.

15. The well-established *Wenxian* (Documents; 1979–), produced by the National Library of China, is perhaps the best known of these journals. The recent appearance of new periodicals—such as *Chuban shi yanjiu* (Research on publishing history; 1993–), edited by Ye Zaisheng, and *Beijing chuban shizhi* (Annals of Beijing publishing; 1994–)—evidences the continuing interest in the study of books in contemporary China.

16. Much of the renewed interest in books has been expressed through the production of important new bibliographies and catalogues of rare books. The Shanghai guji chubanshe has, between 1986 and 1994, published five sets, one for each of

the “four treasury” (*siku*) divisions of traditional Chinese bibliography and one for collectanea (*congsu*), of a comprehensive catalogue of extant Chinese rare books, the *Zhongguo guji shanben shumu* (Chinese union catalogue of rare books). Supplemented (and in some cases corrected) by other site-specific bibliographies, this work provides an essential foundation for the study of Chinese rare books. Happily, most of the major collections in China are now engaged in the compilation of catalogues by computer, projects that will allow for continuing refinement of our knowledge of Chinese manuscripts and imprints published before the nineteenth century—and make searches by author, title, publisher, and date much easier.

In addition to site-specific catalogues, very useful period-specific and topical catalogues have been produced. In the first category, Du Xinfu’s *Mingdai banke zongmu* (A comprehensive bibliography of Ming imprints) (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling keyinshe, 1983) is an outstanding example. Examples of topical catalogues are *Quanguo Zhongyi tushu lianhe mulu* (Union catalogue of works in Chinese medicine) (Beijing: Zhongyi guji chubanshe, 1991) for medical texts and *Zhongguo jiapu zonghe mulu* (Union catalogue of Chinese genealogies) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997) for genealogies.

Finally, there is one other bibliographic project that, though it is not China-based, must be mentioned here because it promises to transform research on Chinese publishing and book culture: the Chinese Rare Books Project directed by Sören Edgren. The project, established now at Princeton University, is devoted to the compilation of an on-line union catalogue that provides detailed bibliographical information—often not available in other sources—for extant rare books in collections in China, North America, and England.

17. Responding to a directive from the central Xinwen chubanju (Bureau of News Publication), provincial bureaus have begun to produce histories of provincial publishing, either as serials (e.g., the *Jiangxi chuban shizhi* [Annals of Jiangxi publishing]), sections of provincial gazetteers (e.g., the *Chuban zhi* [Records of publishing], a volume in the recent *Guangdong shengzhi* [Guangdong provincial gazetteer] [Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1997]), or independent texts (e.g., the series of texts on Jiangsu publishing history, including Ni Bo and Mu Weiming, eds., *Jiangsu tushu yinshua shi* [The printing history of Jiangsu texts] [Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1995], and Jiang Chengbo, Du Xinfu, and Du Yongkang, eds., *Jiangsu keshu* [Jiangsu publishing] [Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1993]). Some provinces have also printed bibliographies of local publications; see, for example, Chang Shuzhi and Li Longru, eds., *Hunansheng guji shanben shumu* (Catalogue of old and rare books in Hunan province) (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1998), or the extensive 15-volume bibliography of Jiangsu texts, *Jiangsu yiwen zhi* (Literary annals of Jiangsu), edited by Qiu Yu (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1994–96). Although the quality of the works produced thus far is uneven, this venture will help scholars to refine understanding of regional differences in the development of printing and publishing tastes.

Local scholars, working independently, have also produced a range of useful materials, from reminiscences of early-twentieth-century printing industries and bookshops published in county *Wenshi ziliao* (Sources in culture and history) to careful studies of publishing genealogies to full-scale histories of provincial industries. See, for examples in each of these categories, Zou Risheng, “Zhongguo sida diaoban yinshua jidi zhi yi—Sibao: Qiantan Sibao diaoban yinshuaye de shengshuai” (One of the four

great Chinese printing bases—Sibao: Introduction to the rise and decline of the Sibao publishing industry), *Liancheng wenshi ziliao* (Sources on the culture and history of Liancheng) 5 (1985): 102–15; the series of articles by Fang Yanshou on the Jianyang printers: “Minbei Zhan Yu Xiong Cai Huang wuxing shisanwei keshujia shengping kaolüe” (The lives of thirteen Minbei publishers from the Zhan, Yu, Xiong, Cai, and Huang families), *Wenxian* (Documents) 41 (1989): 228–43; “Minbei shisi wei keshujia shengping kaolüe” (The lives of fourteen Minbei publishers), *Wenxian* 55 (1993, 1): 210–19, to give just two titles; and Xie Shuishun and Li Ting, *Fujian gudai keshu* (Fujian publishing in the premodern era) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1997).

18. See the collection *Huozhi yinshua yuanliu* (The development of movable type) (Beijing: Yinshua gongye chubanshe, 1990); and Zhang Xiumin and Han Qi, *Zhongguo huozhi yinshua shi* (History of movable-type printing in China) (Beijing: Zhongguo shuji chubanshe, 1998).

19. The Henry Luce Foundation recently funded a project, “Mapping the Book Trade: The Expansion of Print Culture in Late Imperial China,” designed to create a bibliography of this new literature as well as to identify possible publishing sites for future field and archival research. Cynthia Brokaw, Hou Zhenping of Xiamen University, and Lucille Chia collaborated on this project with Wei Zhigang of the Chinese Printing Museum in Beijing.

20. For a discussion of the different criteria that might be considered in a definition of *shanben*, see Mao Chunxiang, *Gushu banben changtan*, 3–7.

21. Robert Darnton, “What Is the History of Books?” *Daedalus* (summer 1982): 65.

22. Darnton, “What Is the History of Books?” 67–69, 75–80. For a challenge and an alternative to Darnton’s “communications circuit,” see Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker, “A New Model for the Study of the Book,” in Nicholas Barker, ed., *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society* (London: The British Library; New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001), 5–43. I would like to thank Joseph McDermott for referring me to this essay.

23. See, for example, Henri-Jean Martin, *Livres, pouvoirs et société à Paris au 17^e siècle* (Genève: Droz, 1969); D. F. McKenzie, *The Cambridge University Press, 1696–1712*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966); Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie, 1775–1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979); Miriam Chrisman, *Lay Culture, Learned Culture: Books and Social Change in Strasbourg, 1480–1599* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). In supplying these references, as well as those in notes 24–39, no attempt is made to provide a comprehensive set of citations. For surveys of the literature on the Western history of the book, see Roger Chartier and Daniel Roche, “New Approaches to the History of the Book,” in Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora, eds., *Constructing the Past: Essays in Historical Methodology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 198–214; Roger Chartier and Daniel Roche, “L’Histoire quantitative du livre,” *Revue française d’histoire du livre* 16 (1977): 3–27; Raymond Birn, “*Livre et société* after Ten Years: Formation of a Discipline,” *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 151 (1976): 287–312; Darnton, “What Is the History of Books?” *passim*; Jonathan Rose, “The History of Books: Revised and Enlarged,” in Haydn T. Mason, ed., *The Darnton Debate: Books and Revolution in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1998), 83–104; and the bibliography in Guglielmo Cavallo and

Roger Chartier, eds., *A History of Reading in the West*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 443–71.

24. See, for example, Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

25. Jack Goody, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968); David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England, 1750–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982); Jack Goody, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

26. For example, see the different views of Robert Mandrou, Geneviève Bollème, and Roger Chartier on the readership of the *bibliothèques bleues* in eighteenth-century France: Mandrou, *De la culture populaire aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: La Bibliothèque bleue de Troyes* (Paris: Stock, 1964); Bollème, *La Bibliothèque bleue: La littérature populaire en France du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Julliard, 1971); and Chartier, *Figures de la guesuserie* (Paris: Montalba, 1982). For works that deal with similar issues in English book culture, see Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and Its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

27. See Henri-Jean Martin, “Pour une histoire de la lecture,” *Revue française d’histoire du livre* 16 n.s. (1977): 583–608; Robert Darnton, “First Steps toward a History of Reading,” in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990), 154–87; Carlo Ginzberg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John Tedeschi and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor, eds., *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Cavallo and Chartier, *A History of Reading in the West*.

28. Colin H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (London: British Academy, 1983), 45–66. For other works that discuss the impact that the physical setup of the page and the words on the page have on reading, see Michael Camille, “Sensations of the Page: Imaging Technologies and Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts,” in George Bornstein and Theresa Tinkle, eds., *The Iconic Page in Manuscript, Print, and Digital Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 33–53; and Paul Saenger, *Space between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

29. Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974); Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman, *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Jane Tompkins, ed., *Reader-Response*

Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); Andrew Bennett, ed., *Readers and Reading* (London: Longman, 1995). Michel de Certeau stresses the ways in which reading can be a powerful way of changing the meanings intended by the politically dominant group; see *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 165–89.

30. The first reference here must be to Inoue Susumu's recent *Chūgoku shuppan bunka shi* (History of Chinese publishing culture) (Nagoya: Nagoya University Press, 2002); this work is a richly detailed history of the ways in which books and printing shaped Chinese history and intellectual life.

I also mention, in notes 31 to 36, some important recent contributions to the history of the Chinese book. Limitations of space make it impossible to treat these works and the issues they raise in the text. And these references are not by any means exhaustive; they provide merely a brief sampling of works on a range of topics. For a fuller summary of recent scholarship in Western languages, see Michela Bussotti, "General Survey of the Latest Studies in Western Languages on the History of Publishing in China," *Revue bibliographique de sinologie*, n.s. 16 (1998): 53–68; see Bibliography C in Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 431–50, and "Zhongguo yinshua shi jianmu," 195–98, for a listing of earlier Western-language works on Chinese printing.

31. A host of scholars have discussed the ways in which print and the publishing industry shaped elite intellectual and literary life, dealing in particular with how the spread of printed texts shaped reading and critical thinking in China. To mention just a few: Susan Cherniack demonstrates, in her study of Song book culture, that the availability of print encouraged critical examination of the Classics and other ancient texts and the creation of a kind of "science" of text editing ("Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54.1 [June 1994]: 5–125). According to Kai-wing Chow, several centuries later the publishing boom of the late Ming ensured the widespread distribution of new commentaries on the Classics that challenged the orthodox interpretations and thus fueled intellectual dissent ("Writing for Success: Printing, Examinations and Intellectual Change in Late Ming China," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 [June 1996]: 120–57). See also his forthcoming study, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

For the next dynasty, Pierre-Henri Durand, in *Lettres et pouvoirs: Un procès littéraire dans la Chine impériale* (Paris: Études en Sciences Sociales, 1992), includes an important analysis of the production of examination literature and the power of writing in elite political life in his study of the doomed Hanlin academician Dai Ming-shi (1653–1713). Focusing on the institutional role of book culture, Benjamin A. Elman, in *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China*, 2d rev. ed., Asian Pacific Monograph Series (Los Angeles: University of California, Los Angeles, 2001), identifies the book collections and publishing networks of Jiangnan as two of the props of the *kaozheng* movement, in that they facilitated the exchange of information and texts essential to the progress of textual study.

In the field of literature, Ōki Yasushi, in his pathbreaking study of Feng Menglong (1574–1646) and Chen Jiru (1558–1639), described the intimate interconnections between literati and book production in the "publishing culture" (*shuppan bunka*) of late Ming Jiangnan ("Minmatsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū" [A study of publishing culture in late Ming Jiangnan], *Hiroshima Daigaku*

bungakubu 50.1 [January 1991]: 1–173). Inoue Susumu has examined the connections between bookselling and literati in “Shoshi . shoko . bunjin” (Bookstores, book merchants, literati), in Araki Ken, ed., *Chūko bunjin no seikatsu* (The lives of Chinese literati) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1994), 304–38; see also the article by Kin Bunkyō, “Tō Hin’in to Minmatsu no shōgyō shuppan” (Tang Binyin and commercial publishing in the late Ming), in the same volume, 339–83. The recent collection of essays, *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, edited by Judith T. Zeitlin and Lydia H. Liu (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), includes several contributions to the study of the links between literature and print culture: Shang Wei’s “*Jin Ping Mei* and Late Ming Print Culture,” 187–238; Kathryn Lowry’s “Duplicating the Strength of Feeling: The Circulation of *Qingshu* in the Late Ming,” 239–72; and Ellen Widmer’s “Considering a Coincidence: The ‘Female Reading Public’ circa 1828,” 273–314.

Most of the work in this field, however, struggles with the thorny issue of readership, attempting to distinguish different audiences for the many different editions of vernacular and classical fiction published in the late imperial period. Wilt Idema, in *Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), defines the problem as one largely of language, distinguishing readers who could comprehend only simple classical Chinese from those who had also mastered a more elaborate written vernacular and—at the most sophisticated level—the most difficult and elegant classical Chinese. Patrick Hanan, in *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), modifies this view slightly by insisting on the role of the vernacular in aiding illiterates to read.

Taking a somewhat different tack, Robert E. Hegel, in his *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), explores the role that publishers, particularly those of the Jiangnan area, played in the production and marketing of illustrated vernacular fiction for a literati readership. Anne E. McLaren, in more focused studies, has shown how the marketing interests of certain editors and publishers shaped not only the format but also the contents of texts produced, so that an edition of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* designed for an audience with military interests, might, in its commentary, highlight the strategic choices made by the characters in the novel (“Ming Audiences and Vernacular Hermeneutics: The Uses of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*,” *Young Pao* 81.103 [1995]: 51–80; and “Popularizing *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*: A Study of Two Early Editions,” *Journal of Oriental Studies* 33.2 [1995]: 165–85). Detailed studies of the editorial and publication histories of specific texts—e.g., Richard Gregg Irwin’s *The Evolution of a Chinese Novel: Shui-hu-chuan*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies 10 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966); Kin Bunkyō’s *Sangokushi engi no sekai* (The world of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*) (Tokyo: Tōhō shoten, 1993); and Isobe Akira’s *Saiyuki keiseishi no kenkyū* (Research on the evolution of the form of *Journey to the West*) (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1993)—also add to our understanding of how editors and publishers shaped the reception of two of the greatest works of Chinese vernacular fiction. Isobe, in another article on *Journey to the West*, draws on a wide range of socioeconomic data to speculate about the readership for that novel. See his “Minmatsu ni okeru *Saiyuki* no shutaiteki juyōzō ni kansuru kenkyū—Mindai ‘kotenteki hakuwa shōsetsu’ no dokushazō o meguru mondai ni tsuite—” (Research on levels of subjective reception for *Journey to the West* in the late Ming—on the question of

the levels of readership of Ming “classic vernacular novels”), *Shūkan Tōyōgaku* (Collected papers on East Asian studies) 44 (October 1980): 50–63; see, too, the critique by Ōki Yasushi, “Minmatsu ni okeru hakuwa shōsetsu no sakusha to dokusha ni tsuite—Isobe Akira shi no shōsetsu ni yosete—” (The authorship and readership of the late Ming vernacular novel—on Isobe Akira’s views), *Mindaishi kenkū* (Research on Ming history) 12 (March 1984): 1–6.

Studies by Daniel K. Gardner and David Rolston have also focused attention on a related problem, that of reading rather than readership. How did the explication of texts, in the form of interlinear commentaries on the Classics and a range of different types of commentary on vernacular fiction, shape elite reading experiences? See Gardner, “Confucian Commentary and Chinese Intellectual History,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 57.2 (May 1998): 397–422; Rolston, ed., *How to Read the Chinese Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); and Rolston, *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary: Reading and Writing between the Lines* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

Surprisingly little work has been done on the impact of printing on religious reading practices and beliefs, though Catherine Bell has begun to mine this potentially rich field with a few suggestive articles on the ways in which printing, while expanding the possibilities for proselytization, might also operate to fix and thus limit the flexibility of religious doctrines (“Printing and Religion in China: Some Evidence from the *Taishang ganying pian*,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 20 [1992]: 173–86; and “‘A Precious Raft to Save the World’: The Interaction of Scriptural Traditions and Printing in a Chinese Morality Book,” *Late Imperial China* 17.1 [June 1996]: 158–200).

32. Jean-Pierre Drège’s important work, *Les bibliothèques en Chine au temps des manuscrits (jusqu’au Xe siècle)* (Paris: École française d’Extrême-Orient, 1991), based largely on his study of Dunhuang materials, treats early Chinese book culture “during the age of manuscripts” and the spread of printing during the Song and raises important questions about the differences and relationship between manuscript and print culture. See also his “Des effets de l’imprimerie en Chine sous la dynastie des Song,” *Journal asiatique* 282.2 (1994): 409–42. Inoue Susumu deals with the continuing importance of manuscripts, even during the age of print, in several articles, including “Shuppan bunka to gakujitsu” (The culture of publishing and scholarship), in Mori Masao et al., eds., *Min Shin jidai no kihon mondai* (Basic issues in the history of the Ming and Qing periods) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1997), 531–55; and “Zōsho to dokusho” (Book collecting and book reading), *Tōhō gakuho* (Journal of Oriental studies) 62 (1990): 409–45. (On these questions, see McDermott’s essay in this volume and the conference paper by Ōki Yasushi, “Manuscripts in Ming-Qing China.”)

33. While most of the work on the impact of print has focused on the texts and reading practices of the elite, some scholars have studied popular access to books and even attempted to estimate literacy rates. Most notable here is Evelyn S. Rawski’s pioneering *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch’ing China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979), a study of reading primers and elementary education that proposes a range of literacy levels for both male and female populations of the Qing. James Hayes’s fieldwork in Hong Kong villages has contributed useful information about peasant access to books, manuscript and printed, and the role of reading “specialists” in largely illiterate rural communities (“Popular Culture in Late Ch’ing China:

Printed Books and Manuscripts from the Hong Kong Region,” *Journal of the Hong Kong Library Association* 7 [1983]: 57–72; “Popular Culture of Late Ch’ing and Early Twentieth Century China: Book Lists Prepared from Collecting in Hong Kong,” *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 20 [1980]: 168–81; and “Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World,” in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 75–111). For an earlier period, Anne E. McLaren, in *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), supplies valuable insights about texts and reading practices common among “popular,” often female, readers.

34. On the artistic aspects of book production, see *Calligraphy and the East Asian Book* (*Gest Library Journal* 2.2, Special Issue, Princeton University, spring 1988) by Frederick W. Mote and Hung-lam Chu; this work examines the relationship between different calligraphic styles and carving styles.

Most of the scholarship in this area, however, is devoted to the study of woodblock prints and their role in text illustration. Julia K. Murray has produced a series of studies analyzing narrative illustration—and the relationship between text and illustration—in a range of texts, from the *Classic of Songs* to narratives of the life of Confucius (see *Ma Hezhi and the Illustration of the Book of Odes* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993]; “The Temple of Confucius and Pictorial Biographies of the Sage,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 55.2 [May 1996]: 269–300; and “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius: Their Evolution, Functions, and Significance in Late Ming China,” *Artibus Asiae* 57.1–2 [1997]: 73–134). Anne Farrer focuses on different illustrated editions of a single text, *Water Margin*, an approach that allows her to compare artistic and editorial choices in the relationship between text and *tu* (“The *Shui-hu chuan*, a Study in the Development of Late Ming Woodblock Illustration” [Ph.D. dissertation, London, SOAS, 1984]). And Michela Bussotti’s recent study of the Huizhou carvers of the late Ming, *Gravures de Hui: Étude du livre illustré de la fin du XVIe siècle à la première moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: École française d’Extrême Orient, 2001), reconstructs the development of the most highly skilled and sophisticated artisans of the woodblock print and their work. Most recently, Emma J. Teng’s “Texts on the Right and Pictures on the Left: Reading the Qing Record of Frontier Taiwan,” in Zeitlin and Liu, eds., *Writing and Materiality*, 451–87, analyzes the interaction of illustration and text in the depiction of the “primitive” native population of Taiwan in Qing texts.

At a more theoretical level, Craig Clunas, in a variety of writings, most notably *Pictures and Visuality in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), has reflected on the status of woodblock prints as “reproducible” objects in the late Ming. Hegel, in the work mentioned above, contributes to the debate about the functions of *tu* in his speculations, based on readings in the physiology and psychology of reading, about how woodblock illustrations were “read” in the late Ming.

35. Several recent studies have deepened our understanding of state censorship and control of publishing and the book market. A useful overview of state oversight was provided by Chan Hok-lam in his *Control of Publishing in China, Past and Present* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1983). Not surprisingly, most of the scholarship in this area has focused on the most notorious campaigns of censorship in Chinese history, those of the early and high Qing. Kent Guy, in *The Emperor’s Four*

Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the Late Ch'ien-lung Era (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987), describes the operation of the Qianlong inquisitions and the ways in which state censorship was manipulated by both scholar-officials and local elites. Okamoto Sae, in her monumental *Shindai kinsho no kenkyū* (Research on prohibited books in China) (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo, 1996), provides a detailed analysis both of the impact of the inquisition at the provincial level and of the large repercussions of censorship for late imperial Chinese intellectual and political history. And Timothy Brook has suggested, in a brief but provocative essay, how the inquisition affected the book trade itself, particularly booksellers caught disseminating prohibited texts ("Censorship in Eighteenth-Century China: A View from the Book Trade," *Canadian Journal of History* 23.2 [1988]: 177–96). Brook discusses another form of state control—oversight of texts distributed to school libraries—in "Edifying Knowledge: The Building of School Libraries in Ming China," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (June 1996): 93–119.

For a discussion of issues of copyright and official measures to control pirating, see William P. Alford, *To Steal a Book Is an Elegant Offense: Intellectual Property Law in Chinese Civilization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995)—though Alford is primarily interested in contemporary issues of copyright.

36. Belying the old claim that a lack of sources makes it impossible to research the publishing industry, some scholars have been able to provide surprisingly detailed information about a variety of different printing concerns. Sören Edgren, in a monograph on publishing in Hangzhou in the Southern Song, collects and analyzes the scattered information extant today on that important industry; his work provides intriguing details about the craft of block carving and the role of religious institutions in publishing ("Southern Song Printing at Hangzhou," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 61 [1989]: 1–212). In her fine study of the Huandu zhai publishing operation in Hangzhou and Suzhou in the seventeenth century, Ellen Widmer gives us a good picture of the output and management of a literati-commercial publishing concern ("The Huanduzhai of Hangzhou and Suzhou: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Publishing," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56.1 [1996]: 77–122). Lucille Chia's work on Jianyang, *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), the site of perhaps the largest commercial publishing industry of the late imperial period, provides not only a solid overview of the history of the major Jianyang houses but also a comprehensive description of their output from the Song through the late Ming. And Cynthia J. Brokaw's work on the publishing houses of Sibao, western Fujian, contributes to our understanding of the lower reaches of the book world in frontier areas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ("Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China: The Zou and Ma Family Businesses of Sibao, Fujian," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 [1996]: 49–92).

37. See the essay collection *Huozi yinshua yuanliu* (Beijing: Yinshua gongye chubanshe, 1990); and Zhang Xiumin and Han Qi, *Zhongguo huozhi yinshua shi*.

38. Some very wealthy private publishers of the late Ming and Qing—men like Hua Sui (1439–1513), An Guo (after 1481–1534), and Lin Chunqi (b. 1808)—also used bronze movable type, but this method was never commonly employed by commercial publishers. See Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 212–17.

39. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 220–21; and Evelyn S. Rawski, “Economic and Social Foundations of Late Imperial Culture,” in Johnson, Nathan, and Rawski, *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, 17–19.

40. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 220–21. The print runs of government movable-type publications nonetheless seem to have varied rather widely. The Qing government produced over three hundred copies of the wooden movable-type imprint *Wuying dian juzhenban congshu* but only sixty-six copies of the massive *Gujin tushu jicheng*, printed with bronze movable type (209, 215–16).

41. Louis J. Gallagher, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci, 1595–1610* (New York: Random House, 1953), 21; cited in Rawski, “Economic and Social Foundations,” 17. As Tsien has pointed out, xylography perfectly suited “the pattern of book supply and demand” in China: “Printers in old China made tens of copies at a time, and stored the printing blocks, which could be taken out at any later date for additional copies. Thus they avoided the unnecessary holding of printed books in stock and tying up capital. Block printing was therefore predominant in traditional Chinese publication” (*Paper and Printing*, 221).

42. See Sören Edgren, “The Chinese Book as a Source for the History of the Book in China,” paper presented at the Conference on Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China, Timberline Lodge, Oregon, June 1–5, 1998, 2–3, for a discussion of the economics of Chinese woodblock printing.

43. It would be a mistake to assume, however, that woodblocks were not frequently transported rather considerable distances, either from carver(s) to publisher or (if the blocks were being rented or sold) from publisher to publisher. According to oral histories from Yuechi, Sichuan, publishers in Chengdu often had blocks carved in Yuechi county and then carried overland the roughly 350 kilometers to Chengdu for printing. So, too, Suzhou publishers might commission the female carvers of Magang, Guangdong, to cut blocks that were then transported all the way to Suzhou for publication. In each case it seems that the cheapness of the carving labor outweighed the expense and inconvenience of transporting the blocks.

44. Sören Edgren, “Southern Song Printing at Hangzhou,” *Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, Bulletin No. 61 (Stockholm, 1989): 50–52; and Rawski, “Economic and Social Foundations,” 21–22.

45. Brokaw, interviews with former block carvers in Yuechi, Sichuan, July 1997.

46. Edgren, “Southern Song Printing at Hangzhou,” 50.

47. Martin Heijdra provides three sets of figures: the high estimate puts the population at 175 million in 1500, 289 million in 1600, and 353 million in 1650; the middle estimate, 155 million in 1500, 231 million in 1600, and 268 million in 1650; the lowest estimate, 137 million in 1500, 185 million in 1600, and 204 million in 1650. See his chapter, “The Socio-Economic Development of Rural China during the Ming,” in Denis Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote, eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8, pt. 2: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 438.

48. Until the Ming, there were fairly rigid occupational restrictions on participation in the system: “mean” people, Buddhist and Daoist priests, and the sons of merchants were not allowed to take the examinations. In the late fourteenth century, the prohibition against the sons of merchants was lifted. Then in the 1720s the

Yongzheng emperor's "emancipation" of labor freed people of mean status from this restriction as well, though in 1771 the government ruled that only in the fourth generation after emancipation were men formerly of mean status allowed to sit for the examinations. Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 132, 250–51.

49. See Tadao Sakai, "Confucianism and Popular Educational Works," in Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *Self and Society in Ming Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 331–66.

50. Angela Ki Che Leung, "Elementary Education in the Lower Yangtze Region in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 381–91; Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations," 11–16. Leung emphasizes that it is difficult to distinguish *shexue* from *yixue* (see 384–88).

51. Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations," 20.

52. Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations," 20; see also McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 3. For a more nuanced view of the European situation, see S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, rev. John Trevitt (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press; London: The British Library, 1996), 54–58. Here and throughout this section I have relied heavily on the discussion in McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 3–8, and on the comments and criticism of Robert Hegel and Patricia Sieber.

53. See Stephen Owen, "The End of the Past: Rewriting Chinese Literary History in the Early Republic," in Milena Dolezelová-Velingerová and Oldřich Král, eds., *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: China's May Fourth Project* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), 171–73. There is some controversy over the relationship between different registers of written Chinese. Owen states that the categories "classical" and "vernacular" of written Chinese are inventions of May Fourth reformers. Victor Mair, in contrast, claims that there is a sharp divide between classical Chinese (Literary Sinitic) and vernacular Chinese (Vernacular Sinitic) in "Buddhism and the Rise of the Written Vernacular in East Asia: The Making of National Languages," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53.3 (August 1994): 707–9. For a clear yet nuanced discussion of the different types of written and spoken languages in the late imperial period, see Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, 1–16.

54. For examples, see Piet van der Loon's discussion of dramas written in the Minnan dialect in *The Classical Theatre and Art Song of South Fukien: A Study of Three Ming Anthologies* (Taipei: SMC, 1992); and Anne McLaren's discussion of distinct Wu-dialect rhyming patterns in some chantefable texts in *Chinese Popular Culture*, 44–45. In the late nineteenth century, whole novels began to be written in dialect; see, for example, *Haishang hua liezhuan* (Biography of a flower on the sea), a work in Wu dialect. But the majority of texts in written Chinese would have been accessible to a highly literate reader from any region.

55. Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, 1. I am grateful to Robert Hegel for clarifying some of the issues relevant to this discussion of *guanhua* in a personal communication, December 31, 2000. On *guanhua*, see Hegel, "Answering with a Question: Rhetorical Positions in Qing Legal Documents" (unpublished ms.), 6–8, 19.

56. Glen Dudbridge, *China's Vernacular Cultures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 6.

57. Matthew H. Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 26–27.

58. Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, 5.

59. Owen, “The End of the Past,” 170.

60. Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, 5–6.

61. Owen, “The End of the Past,” 171–72. Fiction (*xiaoshuo*) is explicitly associated with orality, the colloquial, and the common, and contrasted to earlier Tang dynasty writing, for which the defining characteristic was “elegance” in Feng Menglong’s preface to *Gujin xiaoshuo* (Stories old and new): “For the most part, Tang writers preferred an elegant style (*xuanyan*) that appealed to literary minds (*wenxin*). Song writers used the colloquial (*tongsu*) attuned to the common ear (*xie yu li'er*). Now common ears outnumber literary minds in our world, and fiction draws less from the elegant than from the colloquial style.” Feng Menglong, *Gujin xiaoshuo* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958), 1; the translation is from *Stories Old and New*, trans. Shuhui Yang and Yunqin Yang (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 6.

62. Idema, *Chinese Vernacular Fiction*, 53–54. At issue here is the nature of mainstream early education, which started with texts in the classical language. Thus, a reader who had received only a few years of education in the basic primers and one of the Four Books, might well find a simple classical text easier to read. Yet, as Hanan points out in *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, 7–8, the vernacular also played a role in education. For those operating outside the orthodox mode of education in particular, it was perhaps easier to begin learning to read in vernacular Chinese. Li Yu, for example, remarks that his female students found it easier to learn to read from vernacular texts because of the obvious similarity with the spoken language. See also Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*, 300.

63. Of course, the Chinese novel that has enjoyed the most enduring popularity, the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, was written, like the Qing military romances alluded to earlier, in simple classical Chinese with colloquial additions—though at a level of artistic sophistication that far surpassed that of the later military romances.

64. Owen, “The End of the Past,” 172.

65. Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, 14, explains: “Since grammar is, in essence, constant, and since there are no inflections in the proper sense, Classical and vernacular may easily be allowed to interpenetrate on the written page. They are, to a large extent, grammatically compatible systems with different sets of interchangeable parts. It is therefore possible to design a language constructed of both Classical and vernacular elements.”

66. Arthur Smith, *Pearls of Wisdom from China* (Singapore: Graham Brash, 1988; 1st ed. 1888), 7; cited in McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 5.

67. It would be inaccurate to suggest, however, that the vernaculars quickly or completely replaced Latin in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to Darnton, reading primers used in early modern France still taught Latin first, particularly the Latin of the church liturgy: “The whole system was built on the premise that French children should not begin to read in French” (Darnton, “First Steps toward a History of Reading,” 175).

68. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 7, 280. McLaren perhaps exaggerates the contrast she draws here between Europe and China. Certain classical texts were at least “explained” in the vernacular in the late Ming—witness the editions of the Four

Books produced for the use of those familiar only with the vernacular in that period (see 26). Moreover, the overlap between written classical and written vernacular Chinese might have made the texts of the elite tradition more accessible to people in China than in Europe, where there was, at least in the late medieval period, a rather sharp divide between elite and popular cultures.

69. Elman, *A Cultural History of the Civil Examinations*, 276–77.

70. Gardner, “Confucian Commentary and Chinese Intellectual History,” 413–16.

71. Rolston, ed., *How to Read the Chinese Novel*, 4–10, 17–29.

72. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*, 164–241, 311–26.

73. See McDermott, “The Ascendance of the Imprint in China,” chap. 2.

74. See Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 284–310, for a study of the continuing importance of manuscripts long after the supposed “triumph of print” in the West.

75. Mote and Chu, *Calligraphy and the East Asian Book*, 12 passim.

76. See Love, *Scribal Publication*, 284–88, for examples of similar uses of manuscripts—both to limit circulation of personal writings and to transmit craft secrets—in the West. Ōki Yasushi discussed some of these uses of manuscripts in his conference paper, “Manuscript Editions in Ming-Qing China.”

77. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 466; Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*, 133. Commercial publishers also occasionally did work for government offices at all levels and often supplied carvers and printers for literati publishers. For a discussion of this issue, see also McDermott, chap. 2 this volume.

78. Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), 11–17, 320–62.

79. Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 548–50. See also Lothar Ledderose, who includes a brief study of the publication of the *Gujin tushu jicheng* in his stimulating argument about the modular form of Chinese printing in *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 140–42.

80. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 178; Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 402–45.

81. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 559; Timothy Brook treats official efforts to encourage library collections for local schools in the Ming as part of the government interest in supervising and controlling education and the spread of knowledge; see his “Edifying Knowledge,” 93–119.

82. These texts were categorized as *juke ben*, “texts of the government bureaus.” Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 559–64.

83. See Raymond Birn, “La Censure royale des livres dans la France des lumières,” a series of lectures presented at the Collège de France, March 14, 21, and 28 and April 4, 2001.

84. Chan, *Control of Publishing in China*, 23–24. Chan points out that the Song government attempted to establish measures for prepublication censorship (15–17); even in the Ming there was a somewhat similar effort at regulation, in that local educational officials were responsible for regulating publications. “These officials,” however, “blunted by corruption and malfeasance, grossly neglected their duties, and there was little control over the widespread production of low quality literary works and piracy of profitable publications” (23).

85. Chan, *Control of Publishing in China*, 24. As Kent Guy has pointed out, the major institutions for the prosecution of “subversive” texts under the Qianlong emperor

were the book bureaus established to collect and evaluate texts for the *Siku quanshu* project and, after 1776, expectant educational officials; both reported to provincial governors. He emphasizes that these functioned, like the campaign of literary inquisition itself, in a somewhat ad hoc fashion: "There was no single sedition statute; rather, as provincial governors and their subordinates encountered difficulties in carrying out their orders, they evolved *ad hoc* solutions, reporting them to the court and receiving imperial sanction as necessary" (*The Emperor's Four Treasuries*, 167–71).

86. Robert Darnton has written extensively on the business of the Société typographique de Neuchâtel. See, for example, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-revolutionary France* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995).

87. Timothy Brook, "Censorship in Eighteenth-Century China: A View from the Book Trade," *Canadian Journal of History* 22.2 (August 1988): 191–93.

88. Chan, *Control of Publishing in China*, 24. Chan describes the regulations as they appeared in the *Da Qing lüli* (Great Qing code and principles) and does not discuss their real impact. See Brook, "Censorship in Eighteenth-Century China," for a judicious assessment of the effectiveness of Qing efforts to regulate the book trade.

89. See several articles by Raymond Birn: "The Profits of Ideas: *Privilèges en librairies* in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4.2 (winter 1971): 131–68; "Book Production and Censorship in France, 1700–1715," in Kenneth E. Carpenter, ed., *Books and Society in History: Papers of the Association of College and Research Libraries Rare Books and Manuscripts Preconference* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1983), 145–71; "Rousseau and Literary Property: From the *Discours sur l'inégalité* to *Émile*," *Leipziger Jahrbuch zur Buchgeschichte* 3 (1993): 13–37.

90. Ming-sun Poon, "Books and Printing in Sung China (960–1279)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago Library School, 1979), 64. For a more recent discussion of such issues, see Alford, *To Steal a Book Is an Elegant Offense*, 9–29.

91. On Chinese "pseudo-copyright," see Edgren, "The Chinese Book as a Source for the History of the Book in China." For a discussion of earlier efforts to both regulate and protect publishers, see Niida Noboru's studies of Song publishing laws in *Hō to kanshū, hō to dōtoku* (Law and custom, law and morality), vol. 4 of *Chūgoku hōsei shi kenkyū* (Chinese legal institutions) (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1980), 445–91; Pan Mingshen, "Zhongguo yinshua banquan de qi yuan" (Origins of Chinese printing copyright), in *Zhongguo tushu wenshi lunji* (Essays on Chinese book culture and history) (Beijing: Xiandai chubanshe, 1992), 27–32; Chan, *Control of Publishing in China*, 3–22; Inoue, *Chūgoku shuppan bunka shi*, 255–61.

92. Inoue argues, however, that the increase in warnings against pirating of texts in late Ming imprints reflects the development among publishers of a concept of copyright (*banquan*) quite close to the modern idea (*Chūgoku shuppan bunka shi*, 255–61). In Japan, a much more rigorous system of protection for publishers developed. Distressed by repeated infringements of "copyright," Japanese bookseller-publishers in seventeenth-century Kyoto first made informal arrangements to protect their businesses against pirates. In the next century, with the sanction of the government, they formed guilds, *hon'ya nakama*, which were to ensure that publishers observed both the censorship codes and the prohibition against pirating texts. Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 179–83. There is no evidence that such a self-regulatory guild system ever developed in China, at least before the late nineteenth century. For late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century efforts at both government regulation and self-regulation,

see Chan, *The Control of Publishing in China*, 24; and Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 172–73, 336n30.

93. See McLaren, chap. 4 this volume, 164–67, for a consideration of this issue.

94. McDermott, chap. 2 this volume, 90–91.

95. See Brokaw, chap. 5 this volume, 193, 229n25, for an example.

96. In addition to the works cited in note 23, see Robert Estivals, *La statistique bibliographique de la France sous la monarchie au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Mouton, 1965); François Furet and Jacques Ozouf, *Reading and Writing: Literacy in France from Calvin to Jules Ferry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Leon Vöet, *The Golden Compasses: A History and Evaluation of the Printing and Publishing Activities of the Officina Plantiniana at Antwerp*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Van Gend, 1969, 1972).

97. Shen Jin (Chun Shum), “Guanyu Mingdai Wanli zhi Chongzhen qijian de shujia” (Book prices from the Wanli through the Chongzhen eras of the Ming dynasty), presented at the Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China Conference (June 1–5, 1998), is published, in roughly the same form, as “Mingdai fangke zhi tushu litong yu jiage,” *Guoli Gugong bowu guan guan kan* 1 (June 1996): 101–18. A glance at the valuable but relatively meager information Shen has painstakingly collected contrasts strikingly with the wealth of price data presented in studies of the contemporary European book trade. On the difficulty of determining print runs in Chinese publishing, see in this volume, McDermott, “The Ascendance of the Imprint in China,” 59.

98. See Thomas Tanselle, “The History of Books as a Field of Study,” in *The Second Hanes Lecture* (Chapel Hill: Hanes Foundation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1981). For a more recent and more aggressive argument for the centrality of analytic or descriptive bibliography in the study of the book, see Adams and Barker, “A New Model for the Study of the Book.”

99. Poon, “Books and Printing in Sung China (960–1279),” 100–112.

100. Daniel Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu, arranged topically* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 21–22, 139–40.

101. Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China,” 5–125.

102. Lucille Chia, “The Development of the Jianyang Book Trade, Song-Yuan,” *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (June 1996): 42–43.

103. Lucille Chia, “*Mashaben*: Commercial Publishing in Jianyang from the Song to the Ming,” in Paul Smith and Richard Von Glahn, eds., *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 302–5; Inoue, *Chūgoku shuppan bunka shi*, 178–90.

104. Chia, “*Mashaben*,” 327–28.

105. Rawski, “Economic and Social Foundations,” 29–33; see also Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 29–67.

106. See Zhang Zhigong, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun—qi mengxue Shumu he shuying* (Traditional language textbooks—illustrated bibliography of primers) (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992), 16–35, for an assessment of the influence of these ubiquitous primers; see also Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*, 47–49.

107. Tsien notes, "In contrast to that of previous periods, the printing under the Ming included not only the traditional works in classics, history, religion, and literary collections, but also such new subject fields as popular novels, music, industrial arts, accounts of ocean voyages, shipbuilding, and scientific treatises from the West, which had never before been seen in print in China. Significant increases were also noted in printing of dramatic texts, medical writings, records of foreign countries, especially of south and southeast Asia, local gazetteers, and such large compilations as collectanea and encyclopedias" (*Paper and Printing*, 173–74).

108. Chia, "Mashaben," 307–9.

109. McLaren, chap. 4 this volume, p. 152.

110. See also Anne E. McLaren, "Ming Audiencies and Vernacular Hermeneutics: The Uses of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*," 51–80; and "Popularizing *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*," 165–85; here McLaren shows how editors created abridged versions of *Sanguo* for different audiences—in one case, a pictorial edition that reshaped the text into a manual on military strategy; in another, a heavily illustrated edition designed to "inculcate a popularised version of the essential wisdom of Chinese civilization" (181).

Some scholars, however, have challenged the dichotomy McLaren establishes, in the articles cited above and in her *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables*, between "pictorial" texts designed for "popular" readers who need pictures to help them read and "nonpictorial" texts intended for more sophisticated audiences, where the illustrations were artistic embellishments on the text rather than aids to comprehension. First, recent studies by art historians of the Western tradition have called into question the assumption that pictures in texts could help the illiterate or semiliterate learn to read; pictures cannot reproduce text because they convey meaning with different signs. Second, art historians also dispute the view that illustrations in the more sophisticated, "artistic" texts are just decoration; they often engage with the text in ways that are very complex—and at times in ways that are capable of producing alternate readings of the text. For discussions of these issues, see Celia M. Chazelle, "Pictures, Books, and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles," *Word and Image* 6.2 (April–June 1990): 138–53; Margaret Iversen, "Vicissitudes of the Visual Sign," *Word and Image* 6.3 (July–September 1990): 212–16; Carol Armstrong, *Scenes in a Library: Reading the Photograph in the Book, 1843–1875* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), esp. 361–421; W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); and J. Hillis Miller, *Illustration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992). Finally, for an interesting discussion of the relationship between pictures and texts (including cases in which texts were written to explain pictures), see Victor Mair, *Painting and Performance: Chinese Picture Recitation and Its Indian Genesis* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988). I am indebted to Anne Burkus-Chasson for these insights and citations.

111. Wu, "Late Ming Printers and Printing," 203–10.

112. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 110–13.

113. Kai-wing Chow, in his conference paper, "Publishing, Paratexts, and the Practice of Scholarship in Late Ming China," points to ways in which the format of late Ming examination aids both reflected contemporary examination study and prefigured the interests and concerns of the Qing *kaozheng* movement. Produced by commercial publishers eager for profit, these texts, Chow argues, by presenting multiple

glosses on phrases in the Four Books, served—largely unintentionally—to encourage doubts about the “truth” of any single interpretation, thus undermining faith in the state-supported commentaries of Zhu Xi and setting the stage for the questions of the eighteenth-century evidential research scholars. See also Chow, “Writing for Success.”

114. Zhou Lianggong, *Shuying* (Book shadows) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), 1; cited in McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables*, 1.

115. As Joseph McDermott has pointed out in an unpublished manuscript, there were exceptions: for example, the Song collectors Zhao Buyu, Wen Renshi, and Lou Yue. The Ming collector Li Ruiyi (1557–1630) allowed ordinary readers to borrow from his collection. See “Access to Books in China, 960–1650,” 24.

116. Rawski, “Economic and Social Foundations,” 17–28.

117. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 343–48, 359–60, 365–66, 369–72, 378–84. Numbers of *shufang* alone serve as only a very crude indicator of publishing importance, of course, as they do not reveal volume of output or significance in the market. Certainly Huizhou texts, because of their high quality and lavish production, had a status in the late Ming not reflected in the relatively small number of *shufang* producing them. Moreover, it is not always easy to distinguish between commercial and literati *shufang*; the argument has been made, for example, that the Huizhou publishers were not operating commercial concerns as much as literati art houses. See Ju Mi and Ye Xian'en, “Ming Qing shiqi Huizhou de keshu he banhua” (Huizhou texts and woodcuts in the Ming and Qing periods), *Jianghuai luntan* (Jianghuai forum) 2.1–8 [1995]: n.p. Finally, none of the figures given here should be taken as definitive; future research will almost certainly revise Zhang's count. Until this research is done, these figures, with the equally problematic estimates of output, can serve as a very rough index of the relative importance of different regions.

118. Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 247–50.

119. Ju and Ye, “Ming Qing shiqi Huizhou de keshu he banhua,” 6–7.

120. These numbers can be found in Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 343–48, 365–66, 558.

121. Wang Gang, “Qingdai Sichuan de yinshu ye” (The printing history of Qing dynasty Sichuan), *Zhongguo shehui jingji shi yanjiu* 4 [1991]: 62–70; and Wang Xiaoyuan, “Qingdai Sichuan muke shufang shulüe” (Account of woodblock publishing in Qing dynasty Sichuan), *Sichuan xinwen chubanshe shiliao* (Historical materials on newspapers and publishing in Sichuan), no. 1 (1992): 44–45.

122. Rawski, “Economic and Social Foundations,” 24–25. On the book trade in Guangzhou, see Xu Xinfu, “Guangzhou banpian jilüe” (Record of Guangzhou publishing), *Guangdong chubanshe shiliao* (Historical materials on publishing in Guangzhou) 2 (1991): 13–19.

123. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 556.

124. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 557.

125. Jin Wuxiang, *Suxiang sanbi* (Third jottings of Jin Wuxiang), j. 4.1ob, cited in Nagasawa Kikuya, *Wakansho no insatsu to sono rekishi*, in *Nagasawa Kikuya chosakushū*, vol. 2, 84.

126. *Jinxi xianzhi* (Gazetteer of Jinxi county) (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 1992), 387–89; Zhao Shuiquan, “Xuwan yu muke yinshu” (Xuwan and woodblock printing), *Jiangxi difangzhi tongxun* (Newsletter of Jiangxi local history) 2.9 (1986): 51–55; Zhao Shuiquan, “Jinxi de ‘xiao Shanghai’—Xuwan zhen” (Jinxi's “little Shanghai”—

Xuwan), no. 4 (1988): 44; and Xu Zhengfu, "Jinxi shu" (Jinxi books) *Jiangxi chuban shizhi* 3 (1993): 36–39. See also Cynthia J. Brokaw, "Woodblock Publishing and the Diffusion of Print in Qing China," in Isobe Akira, ed., *Higashi-Ajia shuppan bunka kenkyū* (Research on publishing culture in East Asia) (Tokyo: Nigensha, 2004), 176.

127. Reports on field research by Lucille Chia, in "Mapping the Book Trade," for 1998–99, 6; and 1999–2000, 1–4.

128. Brokaw, "Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China," 49–59.

129. Wang, "Qingdai Sichuan de yinshu ye," 62; Brokaw, "Woodblock Publishing and the Diffusion of Print in Qing China," 175.

130. Brokaw, "Woodblock Publishing and the Diffusion of Print," 175.

131. For examples of other dialect-specific publications, see van der Loon, *The Classical Theatre and Art Song of South Fukien*, 1–14; McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables*, 44–46.

132. Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*, 140.

133. Wilt Idema, Review of Evelyn Sakakida Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*, in *T'oung Pao* 66.4–5 (1980): 314–24.

134. See Erling von Mende, "Literacy in Traditional China: A Late Reflex on Evelyn Rawski," in Raoul D. Findeisen and Robert H. Gassmann, eds., *Autumn Floods: Essays in Honour of Marin Glik* (Berne: Peter Lang, 1998), 52–55, for a brief sampling of some of these contradictory reports, largely from Western observers.

135. Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, 59–67.

136. Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 98–99. Ellen Widmer, in her conference paper, "From Wang Duanshu to Yun Zhu: The Changing Face of Women's Book Culture in Qing China," modifies Mann's claims somewhat. She argues that after a lull in the activities of women's poetry networks and the publication of collections of women's poetry in the eighteenth century, there is a renaissance in women's collaborative writing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century (see 2–31).

137. Mann, *Precious Records*, 94–95.

138. Okamoto Sae, in her conference paper, "Forbidden Thoughts in the Qing Period: Characteristics of the Forbidden Books of the Qianlong Era," deals with this particular form of state intervention, suggesting that the prohibition and destruction, in particular of certain statecraft works of the eighteenth century, undermined the ability of the state (and Chinese scholars) to develop a flexible range of responses to the problems it faced in the nineteenth century.

139. Stevan Harrell, *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 4–10.

140. Mann, *Precious Records*, 44, 225; see also Widmer, "From Wang Duanshu to Yun Zhu," 37–43.

141. For a discussion of the Qianlong emperor's claims to represent the differences within his empire, see Pamela Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pt. 3.

142. Some work has already been done on each of these topics. On the development of new print technologies in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Shanghai, see Reed's *Gutenberg in Shanghai*. On the changes in Chinese print culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press,

1996). See, too, the articles in pt. 3 (“The Late Qing Periodical Press: New Images, New Fiction”) in Zeitlin and Liu, *Writing and Materiality*, 317–447. Led by Rudolf Wagner, scholars at the Institute of Chinese Studies, University of Heidelberg, are also engaged in several studies of late Qing and Republican era newspapers. See, for example, Rudolf G. Wagner, “The Role of the Foreign Community in the Chinese Public Sphere,” *China Quarterly* 142 (June 1995): 423–43; Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai’s News Media, 1872–1912* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003); Natascha Vittinghof, *Die Anfänge des Journalismus in China (1860–1911)* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002); Andrea Janku, “Preparing the Ground for Revolutionary Discourse: From Statecraft Anthologies to the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century China,” *T’oung Pao* 90.1 (2004) (forthcoming).

TWO

The Ascendance of the Imprint in China

Joseph McDermott

In 1005 the chancellor of the Directorate of Education (Guozi jian) trumpeted a recent surge in the number of carved woodblocks deposited in his office's storeholds:

At the beginning of the [Song] dynasty the [number of] book woodblocks (*shuban*) was fewer than four thousand. But, now they are over one hundred thousand, with the Classics, the histories, and their proper commentaries all provided for. When I was young and made a career of Confucian learning, I observed that fewer than 1 or 2 percent of school students could be supplied with the Classics and their commentaries. Now woodblock editions (*banben*) are abundant and all families of scholars as well as commoners have them.¹

Some six decades later the Song dynasty's (960–1279) most influential poet, Su Shi (1037–1101), gave a similarly upbeat assessment of the prevalence of imprints in his time: "In recent years, men in the market have one after the other seen to the carving (*moke*) of the writings of a wide assortment of authors. Transmitted in ten thousand pages a day for such uses, the books (*shu*) are numerous and easy to obtain for those who study."² The eleventh century closed with perhaps the most ringing assertion of the rise of the imprint, by the polymath official Shen Gua (1031–95): "Ever since Feng Dao first printed the Five Classics [in 953], the old books (*dianji*) have all been made into imprints (*banben*)."³

These eleventh-century views have generated a long and influential line of scholarship, traditional and modern, Chinese and Western, that has argued that printing came to dominate the world of Chinese learning and reading during the Northern Song (960–1126). As Susan Cherniack, drawing on this research, has reminded us, its spread was far from accidental:

The prestige of printing had been established at the outset of the [Song] dynasty, when the imperial government committed itself to large-scale projects to produce revised editions of the Confucian Classics and commentaries, classical dictionaries, new compendia on literature, law, medicine, and political institutions, new editions of the dynastic histories, starting with the Three Histories, and the first printing of the entire Buddhist canon, the *Tripitaka*. Many were complex undertakings involving years of editing and production work. The number of projects authorized by reigning emperors increased from five under [Taizu, r. 960–76] and six under [Taizong, r. 977–97], to thirty-five under [Zhenzong, r. 998–1022], and thirty-nine additional projects under [Ren-zong, r. 1023–63], the subject areas gradually expanding to include selected Taoist classics, reference works on agriculture, astronomy, geomancy, and works of general knowledge. The Directorate of Education, which remained the dominant printing agency of the [Song] central government, was responsible for printing and distributing most of the works.⁴

Thanks to these early Song government printing projects and later government publications, the popularity of the civil service examinations, and the increasing demand of ordinary readers for imprints, printing spread widely. By the dynasty's end books had been printed in at least ninety-one prefectures scattered throughout fifteen of its seventeen circuits.⁵ Quality printing centers, according to the celebrated book collector Ye Mengde (1077–1148), flourished in Kaifeng, Hangzhou, Nanjing, and central Sichuan; meanwhile, northern Fujian thrived as a commercial book center able to print a great number of copies of a text for an expanding market.⁶ The resulting proliferation of books caused the practice of memorizing texts to give way to book collecting and, to the dismay of some, collating—carefully collecting and comparing different versions of a text to determine the authoritative edition—and scanning or rapid reading. In the eyes of the two famous twelfth-century Neo-Confucian scholars, Lü Zuqian (1137–81) and Zhu Xi (1130–1200), the spread of such sloppy reading practices and the neglect of the traditions of transcription were caused by a widespread reliance on imprints.⁷ According to these accounts, by the twelfth century the printed book had not only arrived—it had come to dominate the world of texts.

In this chapter I wish to question such a univocal account of Song printing. For just as the time for the origin of printing in China has been relentlessly pushed by modern scholars farther and farther back into the Chinese past,⁸ so too are some historians of the Chinese imprint now finding that its conquest was not as quick and as comprehensive as it might appear from the claims cited above. On one end of the relevant time span, scholars have now pushed back the probable date for the origins of printing in China, arguing that xylography was in use by no later than the seventh century and possibly as early as the sixth century. At the other end, some now advocate that the date of the eventual “victory” of the imprint over the manuscript—that

is, the time when imprints finally dominated book culture, significantly outnumbering manuscript texts—should be pushed ahead from the Song to as late as the mid-Ming. Ming-sun Poon was perhaps the first modern scholar to downplay the role of the Song in the history of the Chinese imprint by concluding that this dynasty's imprints accounted for but a fraction of its total book production and private library holdings.⁹ A few years ago, in an impressive study of Song book culture, Cherniack expressed similar reservations about the rise of the imprint. While believing that “for the majority of [Song] readers whose interest in books was largely utilitarian, imprints were becoming the staple,” she nonetheless concluded, “Although Sung printers were prolific, the majority of books in Sung imperial and private libraries were still manuscripts.”¹⁰

If the transition from manuscript to imprint did not occur in the Song, then when did it? The subsequent Mongol period has attracted no scholarly support. Jean-Pierre Drège has instead delayed the change by a couple of centuries to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644).¹¹ Recently, two young Japanese scholars, Inoue Susumu and Ōki Yasushi, have greatly strengthened that view. In a series of well-researched articles they date the ascendance of the imprint to the sixteenth century for both literati and “utilitarian” books.¹² Inoue's work in particular has shaped the direction of this chapter.

In developing a somewhat skeptical view of the impact of the Song imprint, my initial aim is to determine when the imprint eventually replaced the handwritten copy as the principal medium for the Chinese book. On first thought, this question seems to be easily posed in quantitative terms: when did imprint copies of books become more numerous than their manuscript counterparts? Or, more concretely, when did it first become common for book titles to be more readily available in an imprint copy (*banben*) than in a hand copy (*chaoben*)? Unfortunately, these questions are far easier to ask than to answer. At the very least, a satisfactory answer requires a complete list of all extant Chinese rare books (such as is envisaged by the Chinese Rare Book Project under the direction of Sören Edgren) as well as publishing data on all editions of the no longer extant titles mentioned in Chinese sources from the late Tang to the nineteenth century.

At present, we have no such figures. Instead, the best available statistics come from Inoue's important study of Chinese imprints published during the four centuries from the Southern Song to the mid-Ming, more precisely, from 1131 to 1521 (see Table 2.1).¹³ Overall, his figures show a clear increase in the number of imprint titles from the Southern Song into the Yuan (1279–1368), an initial drop and then a further decline in the first half century of the Ming, and thereafter an increase that slowly mounts and then surges upward from the last third of the fifteenth century. The long-term publishing record for the four categories of imprints—Classics (*jing*), histories (*shi*), philosophy (*zi*), and belles lettres (*ji*)—however, varied considerably. Classics

TABLE 2.1 Extant imprints by period, 1131–1521,
with average number of extant imprints per ten-year period
(in the National Library of China, Beijing, and the National Central Library, Taipei)

	<i>Southern Song</i>	<i>Yuan</i>	<i>Ming (up to 1521)</i>								
	1131– 1279	1271– 1367	1368– 1402	1403– 25	1426– 35	1436– 49	1450– 56	1457– 64	1465– 87	1488– 1505	1506– 21
Classics (avg./decade)	50 (3.5)	75 (6.)	2 (0.6)	5 (2.2)	4 (4)	7 (5.)	2 (2.9)	0 (0)	7 (3)	9 (5)	18 (11.3)
History (avg./decade)	48 (3.3)	59 (4.8)	18 (5.1)	6 (2.6)	5 (5)	3 (2.1)	5 (7.1)	3 (3.8)	20 (8.7)	25 (13.9)	34 (21.3)
Philosophy (avg./decade)	39 (2.7)	51 (4.1)	10 (2.9)	8 (3.5)	6 (6)	5 (3.6)	4 (5.7)	6 (7.5)	27 (11.7)	38 (21.1)	36 (22.5)
Belles lettres (avg./decade)	67 (4.7)	60 (4.8)	21 (6.0)	8 (3.5)	12 (12)	25 (17.9)	12 (17.1)	21 (26.3)	82 (35.7)	87 (48.3)	125 (78.1)
Total (avg./decade)	204 (14.2)	245 (19.8)	51 (14.6)	27 (11.7)	27 (27)	40 (28.6)	23 (32.9)	30 (37.5)	136 (59.1)	159 (88.3)	213 (133.0)

SOURCE: Inoue Susumu, “Zōsho to dokusho” (Book collecting and book reading), *Tōhō gakuho* (Journal of Oriental studies) 62 (1990): 428.

titles first peaked in the Yuan dynasty (primarily as a result of an interest in popular examination manuals) but regained this height only in the early sixteenth century, after a decline in the early Ming. History titles rose gradually and peaked in the very early Ming, fell back in the early fifteenth century, but then surpassed their earlier peak in the last third of that century. Philosophy titles rose from the Song to the Yuan, suffered a severe setback in the first half century of Ming rule, surged around 1430, but surpassed this height only in the last third of the fifteenth century. Even the belles-lettres titles, at this time essentially the literary collections (*wenji*) of scholars and officials, suffered an early-fifteenth-century drop from an otherwise steady rise throughout these four centuries. In short, the printing of titles in the last three of these traditional book categories noticeably increased only after 1450, the first of them only after 1500. The imprint thus replaced the manuscript permanently as the primary means for transmitting written culture in the lower Yangzi delta only in the sixteenth century.

These statistics, however, tell us far less about Song, Yuan, and Ming book publication than this reading of them suggests. Based on the holdings of the National Library of China in Beijing and the National Central Library in Taipei, the two most significant collections of old and rare Chinese books, they cover less than a fifth of the total number of extant Song imprints¹⁴ and have never been demonstrated to be representative of the omitted four-fifths. Also, there is no certain knowledge of the size of the print run for any of these extant imprint titles. One twentieth-century scholar estimates possible runs of 84,000 copies (!) in the tenth century, 600 and 1,000 in the twelfth century, and up to 30,000 in the nineteenth century; another sets the maximum at 15,000 copies; and yet another scholar of Japanese printing in the Edo period (1600–1868) opts for 8,000 copies.¹⁵ With so vast a gap in these estimates, any calculation of the total number of imprints made from one set of woodblocks for the titles included in Inoue's statistics remains grossly speculative. But the obstacles are even more forbidding: in the real world of text production, carved woodblocks could be used to print numerous copies of a text over a period of many years, then be stored away, and perhaps, before they had produced the maximum number of copies of the original text, be recut with another text. In sum, in the absence of any precise printers' records, it is impossible to know the print runs for extant woodblock imprints.

More important, these figures tell us nothing of the far more numerous imprint titles that are no longer extant. Surviving book prefaces number in the thousands; yet this most common source of information about books (like the surviving Song book collection catalogues)¹⁶ seldom reveals anything about the production of the book—including whether it was in fact ever printed. In short, although we need a comprehensive list of extant and nonextant Chinese book titles from the Song through the Ming, in the end such

a list would still not provide us with even a reasonably clear picture of either the number of titles printed in the Song and or the number of copies in circulation for any one title.

Finally, these figures reveal nothing about the production and circulation of manuscript copies of a title. As handwritten copies had long been the principal mode for transmitting books, any hypothesis that they were replaced by imprint copies at a specific date should discuss their fate as well. It is naive to assume that they disappeared or stopped begetting additional copies. Unfortunately, despite their ongoing importance in the transmission of Chinese culture up to the twentieth century, very little systematic research has been undertaken on the history of manuscripts in the Song or any later dynasty.

The trends evident in Inoue's statistics, however roughly accurate they may eventually prove, are therefore far from conclusive. For more persuasive evidence on the long-term trends of Chinese manuscript and imprint production, we need to turn to nonquantitative accounts. Inoue has provided some of these as well, in arguing quite persuasively for the shortage of books in the early Ming. Although these sources are frustratingly few and incomplete, they have the great virtue of allowing us to break down the large single question of when the imprint replaced the manuscript in China into a set of more manageable and answerable questions. Thus, by establishing likely answers to questions for which some information survives, I hope to clarify specific issues, such as the size of holdings (in Chinese sources, the preferred method of calculation is the *juan*, the chapterlike divisions in texts) in ordinary and large libraries, the number of such libraries, and the types of books, especially imprints, that readers had trouble obtaining. More important, the answers to these questions will allow me to construct, in crablike fashion, the argument that the imprint became ascendant over the manuscript form of book in only very few parts of China in the thirteenth century and that this ascendance was secured in the entirety of the lower Yangzi delta, the Jiangnan region, only in the sixteenth century. The fate of different types of imprints, such as medical texts and Confucian Classics printed by government offices or officials, diverged from this general account. But the divergence is not significant enough to undermine the overall conclusion that the imprint generally secured permanent ascendance over the manuscript in the book world of China's cultural heartland only some eight centuries after the invention of printing.

This analysis of nonquantitative evidence entails the acceptance of two limitations, one spatial and the other social. Instead of trying to explain a seven-century history of the book for all of China, I focus here on one region, the lower Yangzi delta or Jiangnan, and on the one type of reader we know most about, the literati. A regional focus is crucial for dating the transition from manuscript to imprint, if only because it brings into play local factors essential for this analysis, such as prices and distribution. For instance, in mid-twelfth-

century China, the price for an imprint title could vary by as much as 600 percent, depending on where the text was published;¹⁷ this variation effectively nullifies the utility of any empirewide comparison of imprint prices for an analysis of how they may have influenced the production and trading of books. The focus on the lower Yangzi delta is also intended to tighten our analysis, since this region maintained an unquestioned centrality in the production, distribution, and transmission of books from the Song to the late Ming. In the Song the printing center of Hangzhou had only two serious national rivals in the book trade: Jianyang in northern Fujian and Chengdu in Sichuan. After the Song, however, Chengdu ceased to offer much competition; it was not until the eighteenth century that the city's printing industry recovered from the destruction it suffered during the Mongol conquest in the mid-thirteenth century¹⁸ and Zhang Xianzhong's rebellion in the seventeenth century. Jianyang remained a formidable rival, at least in terms of book production, through the Yuan and Ming. But for the Ming, less information on book culture, especially book consumption, survives from Jianyang than collectively from Suzhou, Nanjing, Hangzhou, and other book centers of Jiangnan. Thus an account of book production in the lower Yangzi delta, particularly one concerned with the transition from manuscript to imprint, promises to provide the most complete long-term picture of the Chinese book world from the eleventh to the seventeenth century as well as to suggest a *terminus ante quem* for the ascendance of the imprint in most of the rest of China.

The second restriction for my analysis concerns the primary type of writer and reader it discusses: the literati. This focus on the Chinese men who made the writing, reading, and collection of books central to their self or family identity is determined by practical considerations. Extant books from these centuries and our knowledge of them derive overwhelmingly from literati or government collections and writings. The mass of popular imprints of almanacs, calendars, broadsheet ballads, and prayers and other religious texts, as well as newspaper sheets (*xiaobao*) and tax forms put out for, in Cherniack's term, the "utilitarian reader" have by and large not survived. While a concentration on less ephemeral materials will not bar us from eventually considering these publications, the evidence and conclusions presented here refer predominantly to just the most literate portion of the largely illiterate population in arguably the wealthiest, most heavily commercialized, and most culturally advanced area of China during these centuries.

These restrictions have their own rewards. At this stage of our understanding of the Song and Ming book world, the process of moving from relatively certain information to less certifiable speculation is more promising than repeating the broad, unfounded generalizations that glut most books on printing in China. A regional and literati perspective will in the end provide a reasonable chance of clarifying the proportion of imprints to manu-

scripts in the most important governmental and private libraries, the difficulties that even major book collectors encountered in acquiring copies of famous works, and changes in these collectors' social status, in their collecting focus, and in the social composition of the Chinese literati in the sixteenth century. This approach also allows me to analyze the reasons for the imprint's eventually permanent ascendance in the mid-Ming, as well as to determine how Song and Ming publishing and imprints differed. The conclusion then offers a brief consideration of the ongoing role of the manuscript in the Song and Ming as well as changes in the way manuscripts were actually used during the late Ming.

At first glance my concerns in this chapter might seem primarily technical. Yet, as virtually all modern historians of the Chinese book have realized, the questions raised here are not simply narrow bibliographic, economic, or academic ones; they lie, rather, at the heart of our understanding of Chinese elite culture. For at least the last thousand years book learning has been central to the identity of the cultural and political elite, as determined by the state's written examinations as well as by that elite's definition of itself and its culture. Books, then, have had a profound impact on the social, political, and intellectual history of China. What we can discern about their production, spread, and use will go a long way to explaining not just the gradual ascendance of the imprint or the intellectual and literary impact of some one book or author. Our conclusions will also suggest how the literate elite's world of learning evolved and what role it played in the making of Chinese culture from the eleventh to the seventeenth century.

FROM MANUSCRIPT TO IMPRINT, SONG THROUGH MING

This chapter opened with three claims, all from the eleventh century, about the extensive spread and use of the imprint in that century. When, however, Inoue subjected these statements to critical examination, their validity was found to be at best questionable. The 1005 claim of the chancellor of the Directorate of Education that the Confucian Classics and their commentaries could be found in the homes of all the emperor's subjects is best interpreted as a piece of political rhetoric designed more to flatter than to inform the Zhenzong emperor (whose inquiry had prompted this effusion). Su Shi's statement on the widespread production of imprints is undermined by the fact that the very library he was praising consisted only of manuscripts. And Shen Gua's account is rightly seen as referring primarily if not solely to the standard Confucian classical texts that Feng Dao had printed in Sichuan in 953 and that were later reprinted several times by the Northern Song government.¹⁹

For signs of the level of Song book production, probably the best surviving clues are details of evidence on the size of individual book collections,

especially the larger ones. The biggest library in the Song was almost certainly the Imperial Library.²⁰ But if we assume that the meaning of *juan* did not change from pre-Song to Song times, then at no time did the holdings of the Song Imperial Library outnumber those of the Imperial Libraries of the Sui and Tang dynasties.²¹ Human errors and natural disasters account for this decline in holdings in the Song. The destruction of Chang'an in the mid-eighth century and again in the late ninth century, along with the subsequent turmoil of the Five Dynasties in northern China, led to the disappearance of much of the Tang Imperial Library's holdings.²² At the start of the Song dynasty the new Imperial Library held just thirteen thousand *juan*. The Song's defeat of rival kingdoms saw the transfer to this library of thirteen thousand *juan* from Sichuan in 966 and another twenty thousand *juan* from Nanjing in 976.²³ But these and subsequent additions fell victim to a devastating fire in the palace grounds in 1015. By 1041 the size of the Imperial Library collection had recovered to 30,669 *juan*, and by the end of the Northern Song it was almost certainly larger. A clue to its scale is the figure of 45,018 *juan* given to the other major, but smaller, palace book collection, the Taiqing Library, at a post-1061 date in the Northern Song. In 1127 tragedy struck both of these collections, when they fell into the hands of the Jin conquerors of northern China. The Southern Song government, taking refuge in Hangzhou without its libraries, had to rebuild them almost from scratch. In 1142 it offered tax rewards, bolts of silk, or official titles to private book collectors in southern China for presenting their rare books or for allowing its agents to copy them.²⁴ Through such means (rather than through outright purchase from book collectors and, especially, bookstores) the holdings of the Imperial Library were restored to 44,486 *juan* in 1178 and finally 59,429 *juan* in 1220, the last total we have for any palace collection in the Song.²⁵

The evidence for significant increases in large private collections during the Song over the levels of previous dynasties is mixed. Whereas in the Northern and Southern Dynasties a family might permanently win a reputation for scholarship by preserving just several hundred *juan* of books,²⁶ by 1166 it was being said that "when an official in government service becomes slightly distinguished, his family invariably has several thousand *juan* of books."²⁷ Nowhere, however, is there evidence that large private collections in the Song showed a similar rate of increase over their earlier counterparts. A collector gained celebrity in the Tang for having twenty thousand or thirty thousand *juan*.²⁸ But the largest collection in the lower Yangzi delta in the eleventh century, that of Zhu Changwen (1041–ca.1100), came to just twenty thousand *juan*, while most Northern Song collections rarely held much more than ten thousand *juan*.²⁹ In the view of the highly knowledgeable sixteenth-century bibliophile Hu Yinglin (1551–1602), the size of the largest Song private collections, few in number, ranged between thirty thousand and forty

thousand *juan*.³⁰ Even the library of so exceptional a scholar as Sima Guang (1019–86), set in his Garden of Solitary Pleasure—where he wrote his famous *Zizhi tongjian* (Comprehensive mirror for aid in government)—came to merely “over five thousand *juan*.” (This is Sima Guang’s own estimate; other writers estimate “more than ten thousand *juan*.”)³¹

For the Southern Song, the size of two collections has stood out, one erroneously and the other correctly. The collection of the Suzhou literatus Ye Mengde has been estimated by Song and modern commentators at or over one hundred thousand *juan*,³² but the owner himself put the figure at about twenty thousand *juan*, roughly half of which was consumed by fire in 1147.³³ The other large collection, that of Chen Zhensun (1183–1261) in mid-thirteenth-century Huzhou, consisted of 49,700 (or 51,180-odd) *juan*, and thus contained more *juan* than any other private collection in the Song.³⁴ But, coming at the end of the Song, it points to future rather than past trends. Moreover, the likely presence of duplicate or multiple copies in these collections would reduce these figures somewhat.

Perhaps more to the point, when we consider the probable contents of these collections, these figures become even less impressive. The thirteen Confucian Classics and their commentaries, the *Shiji* (Records of the grand historian), and the eighteen dynastic histories written before 1100 would have totaled 2,750 *juan*, and the early Northern Song encyclopedias added another 3,000 or so *juan*, as did the ten-odd encyclopedias printed during the Southern Song. These texts, probably the core contents of most major collections—and the principal contents of most private collections—from the last century of the Song through the Ming, taken together add up to approximately 9,000 *juan*.³⁵

Information about the imprint share in these collections is hard to glean, but the little there is suggests that the proportion of imprints is far lower than many modern scholars have assumed. In 1177, for instance, the Imperial Library, including the main collection and the Imperial Archives collection, consisted of 59.5 percent hand copies, 32 percent unprocessed works, and just 8.5 percent imprints (a less detailed breakdown puts the hand-copy share at 91 percent of the *juan* and 92 percent of the volumes [*ce*]).³⁶ For private collections no similar breakdown is available. But two well-traveled sixteenth-century bibliophiles provided, from their lifelong study of books, instructive generalizations. “Even in the prosperous period of the Song,” Hu Yinglin concluded, “imprints (*keben*) were few.”³⁷ Xu Bo (1570–1642), a major Fujian collector who spent several long periods in Nanjing, concurred: “In the Song era woodblock editions (*banben*) had not yet flourished.”³⁸

These Ming views find confirmation in anecdotal evidence about the difficulty Song scholars and officials encountered trying to see and acquire imprints of well-known books. We are perhaps not surprised to learn that the late-tenth-century doctor Du Ding made a living selling his handwritten

copies of a well-known medical text, *Qianjin fang* (Prescriptions worth a thousand pieces of gold), as rival imprints seem not to have been available.³⁹ Yet similar shortages afflicted the more celebrated as well. During the youth of Han Qi (1008–75) in modern Henan province, “imprints (*yinban shu*) were extremely few, and writings (*wenzi*) were all handwritten (*shouxie*). Han always borrowed others’ old and disused books (*shu*) and invariably recorded them in detail (*jiehu*).⁴⁰ In the twelfth century the far wealthier collector You Mao (1127–94) is said to have built up his collection in Wuxi through the acquisition of manuscripts. He regularly joined his sons and daughters in copying books; his own collection contained more than three thousand *juan* in his own hand.⁴¹ A similar figure was given for his contemporary rival bibliophile, Zheng Qiao (1104–62), a native of Fujian. He specified eight ways of acquiring a book, all of which presupposed transcriptions and none of which mentioned a bookstore.⁴² The Jin invasion of the lower Yangzi delta destroyed many collections, making it hard to find copies of the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu* (History of the former Han), and the *Hou Hanshu* (History of the latter Han) in at least the Nanjing area in the early Southern Song.⁴³ The late-twelfth-century scholar Lou Fang (j.s. 1193), the scion of a celebrated Ningbo family, admitted, “Before I was capped as a *jinshi*, I had no books I could look at. Even the two histories [i.e., the *Hanshu* and *Hou Hanshu*] I borrowed from others.”⁴⁴ Faced with such shortages, mid- and late-twelfth-century readers in the Yangzi delta went as far west as Sichuan to hunt down books. When the poet-official Lu Yu (1125–1210) returned from there to Hangzhou and Shaoxing in 1178, his boat was full of Sichuanese imprints not available in the lower Yangzi delta. In the following year Emperor Xiaozong (r. 1163–89) ordered his officials to search for books in Sichuan, believing that the collections in its government offices and schools had escaped the major destructive turmoil of the 1120s and 1130s and so retained the largest extant holdings of Song government publications.⁴⁵

Yet by the close of the twelfth century, books had become more available. Printed in just thirty-odd places during the Northern Song, they were published in almost two hundred places in the far smaller territory of the Southern Song. This sixfold increase meant not only more books but also more areas with their own woodblock carvers, more regional exchanges of these carvers, and more bibliographic details added to entries in book catalogues. Whereas mid-twelfth-century catalogues distinguished imprints from manuscripts in their listings of the Classics and the dynastic histories, mid-thirteenth-century catalogues made the distinction for collected writings and philosophical works as well and even took care to identify place of publication for imprints.⁴⁶ In commenting on the 1202 printing of the early Song anthology of fifth- to tenth-century belles lettres, *Wenyuan yinghua* (Finest flowers in the preserve of letters), the Hangzhou-based bibliophile Zhou Bida (1126–1204) noted a change in the printing of important literary collections:

[In the early Song] printed editions were very rare, so that even the works of famous Tang authors like Han Yu [768–824], Liu Zongyuan [773–819], Yuan Zhen [779–831], and Bai Juyi [772–846] were not readily available, not to mention works of other authors like Chen Zi'ang [ca. 659–700], Zhang Yue [667–730], Zhang Jiuqing [673–740], and Li Ao [772–841], whose books were practically unfindable. . . . But in recent years many Tang works have been printed separately and have become very readily available, making the *Wenyuan yinghua* unpopular among scholars.⁴⁷

Slightly later, printing by private print shops was said to flourish in Jianyang in northern Fujian and Chengdu in Sichuan.⁴⁸ Thus in these two areas, and in Hangzhou during the thirteenth century, imprints of the Confucian Classics, Buddhist sutras and other popular religious fare, student primers, and the writings of celebrated authors became widespread and perhaps predominant over their manuscript counterparts.

But certain genres, such as gazetteers and pharmaceutical texts, were published in smaller runs than before, at least by government-funded printers.⁴⁹ And in places as central and wealthy as Hangzhou and Ningbo, book and imprint shortages persisted. They troubled even such an elevated figure as Yuan Shao (j.s. 1187), a Ningbo native who rose to be governor of Hangzhou and vice grand chancellor. His great-grandson wrote:

When great grandfather Lord Yue [i.e., Yuan Shao] rose to be a *jinshi*, he was poor and could not acquire books (*shu*). He often personally made hand copies (*shouchao*) of books and put them firmly to memory. . . . Afterwards, he was an official in the capital. In all, for twenty-five years he strove to collect books (*shu*) in order to achieve a long-cherished ambition. When the world did not yet have [a book], then he made transcriptions [of copies] in the Imperial Library (Zhongmishu) and collections of old families and returned home. Therefore, his [collection of] books (*shu*) for the first time began to be complete.⁵⁰

And slightly later in Ningbo, a devotee of Zhu Xi's philosophy, Huang Zhen (1213–80), drew no benefit from the supposedly universal availability of imprints of the Confucian Classics. His copy of Zhu Xi's *Sishu jizhu* (Collected commentaries on the Four Books), up to his success in the 1256 *jinshi*-level exams, was a manuscript written in rough grass script. Too poor to buy a better copy, he also lacked the contacts apparently needed to have a copy printed from the official woodblocks kept in his native prefecture.⁵¹ Not surprisingly, book shortages were also reported from more isolated inland areas like Qianshan county in Jiangnandong circuit (Jiangxi province).⁵²

The evidence presented so far indicates that during the Song large private libraries were few; that they usually held between ten thousand and twenty thousand *juan* and seldom more than thirty thousand; that normal scholar-official collections were considerably smaller; that up to the thirteenth century even readers in the capital had trouble acquiring copies, in-

cluding imprints, of well-known literati texts; and that from the early thirteenth century the situation had changed in Hangzhou but apparently not in large nearby cities like Ningbo. These incidental details, however inconclusive when looked at separately, eventually add up to a general confirmation of the revisionist, skeptical assessment of Song literati book printing for much but not all of the lower Yangzi delta.

One could argue, however, that complaints about the unavailability of texts from scholars such as Yuan Shao and Huang Zhen are inconclusive. That is, when a Song reader complains about the impossibility of getting certain texts, we today are often not certain of precisely what he means—a lack of opportunities to acquire books, or merely a lack of access to copies in the collections of others loathe to share them? But we have already shown that in the Song, large collections were few, and even those collections considered large did not in fact contain many books. Complaints from individual readers about the difficulty of getting books, then, were more likely to stem from a genuine sense of an overall shortage of books rather than from restricted access to them.

Such a conclusion accords well with Hu Yinglin's view of Yuan printing as well: "Woodblock imprints (*banben*)," he wrote, "were still few in Yuan times." He criticized the largest known Yuan collection, of some three hundred thousand *juan*, for being grossly bloated by the inclusion of multiple copies that disguised its real size, merely thirty thousand distinct *juan*.⁵³ Both governmental and private printing industries in Hangzhou probably suffered—at least in terms of the production of non-Buddhist texts—once the Mongols had shifted the capital, the Song Imperial Library, and court life to Beijing and, more to the point, imposed strict rules about prepublication review of books by government offices.⁵⁴ Inoue's figures on the holdings of the Yuan Imperial Library, as well as scattered evidence from other sources, suggest that the production of books in the delta increased somewhat at this time. Beijing officials still looked on the southeast as the empire's best storehold of unusual books, even sending officials there to hunt down books in the early 1340s.⁵⁵ The delta's biggest collector, Zhuang Su (fl. mid-fourteenth century), had eighty thousand *juan*, more than any private Song collector.⁵⁶

But, as Wu Xiaoming has argued, this scale is quite exceptional for the Yuan period, particularly in Zhuang's native area of Shanghai, where few men actively collected books. The next largest collection, the mostly inherited fifty-thousand-*juan* library of Chen Jimo in early-fourteenth-century Yangzhou, was also unusual. The only other major holdings were the "several tens of thousands of *juan*" in the collections each of Yang Weizhen (1296–1370) and a man known as "the scholar outside the Blue Gate" in Hangzhou. Much more typical in Yuan dynasty Jiangnan were collections of about ten thousand *juan*—even the wealthy literatus-painter Ni Zan (1301–74) of Changzhou had just several thousand *juan*, consisting pri-

marily of transcribed texts.⁵⁷ In fact, the distinctive feature of Yuan book collecting is less the contents or size of the collections than indications that collecting had spread to lower social statuses: the owners of at least two Yuan collections came from quite lowly social backgrounds, one born into the family of a butcher, the other into a cloth-trading family.⁵⁸ Otherwise, there is little evidence demonstrating a major Yuan break from Southern Song conditions and practices.

Nor is support for such a break evident in the condition of the lower Yangzi delta's economy during most of the Yuan. Whereas some scholars have argued that the Song economy as a whole had stopped expanding from the late twelfth century, the delta's own economy began to show clear signs of distress only decades later, in the second quarter of the thirteenth century. Economic troubles persisted in the delta up to its fall to Mongol invaders in 1276, but even this invasion did not spell the end of the region's economic growth and the expansion in printing (as the Mongol invasion did in Sichuan). Once order was restored under the Yuan dynasty, the delta's economy by and large revived. According to Shiba Yoshinobu, David Faure, and Richard von Glahn, the real, significant retreat from late Song levels of economic development in the delta did not begin in earnest until the last chaotic decade or two of Yuan rule, in the mid-fourteenth century, and then was intensified by economic policies of the early Ming.⁵⁹ Lucille Chia has demonstrated that it was during the early Ming, not the Yuan, that there was a falling-off in book production, particularly in the lower Yangzi delta. In other words, the "collapse" of book culture in Jiangnan and Fujian can now be narrowed down to a *decline*—not a collapse—of roughly one century—not two—and that primarily under Ming rule.⁶⁰ Fortunately, there is no longer any need for historians of the Chinese book to suppose that between the late thirteenth century and the late fifteenth century China as a whole underwent what no other culture has been known to have experienced—a reversal in the development of book culture, away from the increased use of print back to a predominantly manuscript culture for a period as long as two centuries.

We are still, of course, left with the need to explain the limited decline of imprint production in the fourteenth century. It seems particularly puzzling in light of the relatively relaxed policies of the Ming government toward book production; even that government's abolition of Song- and Yuan-style censorship and its cancellation of imprint taxes did little,⁶¹ at least initially, to stimulate book production. Early in the Ming, carved woodblocks for books (all books?) are said to have existed *only* in the Imperial University and the Jianyang region in northern Fujian. And until the mid-fifteenth century the Imperial University blocks remained largely unused, with the result that imprints from them were uncommon.⁶²

Certainly the reasons for the decline in book production are likely to be various: doubtless the ravages of war, the first Ming emperor's profound sus-

picion of Jiangnan literati, and the timber (and hence paper) shortage of the early Ming all played a part.⁶³ I would like to suggest, tentatively, another factor that might contribute to our understanding of the decline: the change in the role of Hangzhou in the book world over the course of the fourteenth century. Chia has already shown that the fourteenth-century decline in publishing was “more severe” in the delta than in Jianyang; I would add simply that the decline would have been more severe in Hangzhou than in other cities of the delta. During the thirteenth century, as the Southern Song capital, Hangzhou had become a major center not only for imprint production (both by the government and by private publishers) but also for book consumption. Thanks to the concentration there of a large number of students, scholars, and officials from throughout southern China, the imprint had begun to dominate certain sectors of book culture by the early thirteenth century. It is important to note, however, that this “progress” of the imprint over the manuscript was not extensive in Song and Yuan book culture at large. Even in Song Jiangnan its ascendancy seems to have been restricted to this exceptional city.

In 1276 Hangzhou and the Southern Song fell to Mongol forces, thereby initiating a slow retreat of imprint culture in Hangzhou for slightly longer than a century. The shift of the capital and officialdom to Beijing, the virtual termination of the civil service examinations, and the rise of literati cultural centers elsewhere in Jiangnan would seem to have led to a gradual fall in Hangzhou book production and consumption throughout the fourteenth century, despite the survival of over twenty thousand Song woodblocks in the West Lake Academy of Hangzhou. This decline would have had a disproportionately large impact on the Chinese book world simply because of the exceptional importance that this city had held in the country’s imprint culture. The overall decline of imprint production in the early Ming could thus be seen, in part, as a consequence of the very uneven distribution of imprint culture in Jiangnan and almost everywhere else in the empire during the Song and Yuan.

A comprehensive explanation of this fourteenth-century decline in publishing undoubtedly requires more detailed research. But the fact of the decline, whatever its causes, is indisputable. The prevalence in the early Ming of the hand copy over the imprint is revealed in the nature of the demands imposed by the court and its representatives on scholars for copies of books. In 1483, when the powerful eunuch Wang Jing wanted books on astrology and divination from Suzhou, he gave orders not that they be printed or bought but that they be hand-copied (by *shengyuan*, the lowest degree holders, at government schools in Hangzhou and Suzhou).⁶⁴ At the end of the Zhengde era (1506–22) only the princely establishments, government offices, and the printing houses of Jianyang, according to Gu Yanwu (1613–82), possessed carved woodblocks: “As for what circulated among the people,

it was no more than the Four Books (*sishu*), the Five Classics (*wujing*), the [*Zizhi*] *Tongjian* (Comprehensive mirror [for government]), and books on moral nature (*xingli*). If any other books were printed, then they were stored up only by families who were fond of the past.⁶⁵ Popular materials suffered similar shortages. By law, government offices were expected to issue annual calendars to all households. But even at the end of the fifteenth century many families in the capital still did not receive these printed copies, leading one literatus to complain, “Surely it is not only in the capital that families do not have calendars.”⁶⁶ Not surprising, then, is the great predominance of manuscripts over imprints—70 percent to 30 percent—in the Ming Imperial Library (Wenyuan ge) in Beijing.⁶⁷

Both inside and outside the lower Yangzi delta, the early Ming market for books lagged considerably. In 1429 a descendant of Confucius, Kong Yanjin (fl. mid-fifteenth century), wishing to give someone a book, had to go to Fujian to buy a copy—and this was a manuscript copy.⁶⁸ In southeastern Jiangxi the famous scholar-official Yang Shiqi (1365–1444) acquired a two-volume edition of the Tang work *Shilüe* (Abridged history) only when his mother exchanged a chicken for it. His book shortage persisted for many years:

Early on I had a strong desire for study, but, being orphaned and poor, I was unable to acquire books. When I was slightly older, I worked at copying and transcribing (*chaolu*) but lacked the funds to pay for the paper and brushes. Thus, often I [tried] to borrow [books] from others to read them, but frequently I could not acquire them. When I was fourteen or fifteen years old, I went off to teach young children. I used my income to provide for sustenance and had nothing extra to buy books. When I came of age [at about twenty], I went to a place far away and received a considerable income from my students. For the first time I purchased books, but it was impossible to collect many.⁶⁹

Even after twenty years of working as a teacher Yang “had acquired only the Five Classics, the Four Books, and the poetry and prose of several Tang authors.”⁷⁰ His collection improved only when he acquired court office:

When I came to serve at the court, I had a regular salary and also at times received presents. I reduced all my expenses and made savings by the day and month. All these were used as funds for collecting books. For more than ten years I amassed a considerable number of titles of the Classics, histories, philosophical writings, and belles lettres, but [my collection] was still not complete.⁷¹

Few scholars attained the office and earnings of Yang Shiqi, and consequently, as Lu Rong (1436–97) observed slightly later in the fifteenth century, “Many poor scholars in out-of-the-way prefectures and minor counties have a desire to read books but cannot get even one view of them.”⁷²

In the lower Yangzi delta similar difficulties confronted early and even

mid-Ming readers seeking to acquire copies of famous books of literature and history. The writings of Su Shi were hard to acquire right up to the Chenghua reign (1465–87), and, as of the late fifteenth century, the collected works of Wen Tianxiang (1236–83) were seldom seen in imprint form; one such copy survived in the imperial palace and another, possibly only in part, in his native Jiangxi.⁷³ The celebrated sixth-century collection of earlier Chinese poetry, *Wenxuan* (Anthology of literature), was also not widely available; the poet Yuan Qiu (1502–47) complained that when poor he could not even borrow a copy.⁷⁴ Poverty, however, does not explain the trouble encountered by the passionate Suzhou collector Yang Xunji (1458–1546) in acquiring a full copy of this text.⁷⁵ Born into a merchant family with no scholarly interests—“there was not one book in our family”⁷⁶—Yang was long stymied by a shortage not of money but of adequate copies of famous books like the *Wenxuan*. The copy of this anthology that he examined and had copied at the Imperial University in Beijing was missing some pages; the version he bought in a marketplace consisted only of the last half; and only by hand-copying the first half from a copy held by his good friend Wang Ao (1450–1524) did he finally put together a complete copy. To acquire the writings of the ninth-century Tang poets Bai Juyi and Yuan Zhen, he had to borrow his friends’ copies and brush out copies on his own.⁷⁷ Geng Yu (1430–96), a minister of the Board of Rites, was surprised to learn that copies of such celebrated books as *Jigu lu* (Collected ancient inscriptions), *Tangjian* (Tang mirror), and *Houshan ji* (Collected writings of Houshan) were actually extant in his lifetime, as he had never seen them.⁷⁸ Ye Sheng (1420–74), then the largest book collector in the lower Yangzi delta, needed more than twenty years to stitch together a full collection of the nonhistorical writings of Sima Guang. He made copies from separate editions owned by three friends, none of whom in return seems to have relied on Ye’s work to complete his own copy.⁷⁹

With well-known works of history such as Sima Guang’s, the story was no different. Complete imprint copies of his *Zizhi tongjian* were rare in the late twelfth century; readers reportedly preferred it abridged or rearranged by topic.⁸⁰ Even so, abridged versions seem not to have been very common, as the Songjiang native Cao An obtained such a version only three years *after* his acquisition of a *juren* degree in 1445.⁸¹ The *Shiji* imprint copy and its woodblocks in the Imperial University in Nanjing were in poor condition, and in the Ming only one pre-Hongzhi era (1488–1506) edition of this most famous historical work was printed.⁸² As late as 1525 “a good edition of the *Shiji* was still lacking,” and its publication that year had to be based on a Song imprint.⁸³ A few years later, in 1534, the avid Suzhou collector and painter Qian Gu (1508–78), when presented by Shen Zhou (1427–1509) with a copy of the *Songshi* (History of the Song), found that it was missing thirty-four *juan*; he had to copy these out on his own to make a complete edition.⁸⁴ Gu Yanwu’s

observation that the Twenty-one Histories began to enter the libraries of scholar officials only when they were printed in Nanjing during the Jiajing era (1522–67) and in Beijing during the Wanli era (1573–1620) thus rings true. Even so, as Gu ruefully noted, the overwhelming preference for examination cribs usually left these monuments of official scholarship unread.⁸⁵

The size of early Ming libraries likewise shows no sign of any expansion in print culture. The two largest private libraries were those of the Ge family in Jiangdu county, Yangzhou prefecture, and the Li family of Zhangqiu county, Ji'nan prefecture, in Shandong; together they are said to have contained fewer than 42,750 *juan*.⁸⁶ In the latter half of the fifteenth century the largest private collection in the lower Yangzi delta, that of Ye Sheng, numbered just 22,700 *juan*, less than half the peak figure for Chen Zhensun's collection in about 1250.⁸⁷

The contemporary Confucian attitude toward self-cultivation served to justify, if not actually promote, limited book collection by serious Confucians. Some of these early Ming thinkers believed that the search for sagehood ought to rest on a rather small cluster of clearly defined texts: the Confucian Classics and Zhu Xi's writings on them. Zhu Xi's other works or the writings of other distinguished Neo-Confucians were not considered an essential part of the curriculum of self-cultivation; and even Zhu's collected writings, his conversations with his disciples, and the collected writings of his master, Cheng Yi (1033–1107), went unpublished for the whole first century of Ming rule.⁸⁸ Indeed, there seems to have been a sense, not for the first or last time in China, that extensive reading was dangerous and "large" collections of several thousand *juan* suspect: what was the need for so many books if one's real goal was to become a sage?

The bleak conditions of the delta's intellectual life altered slowly. During the second quarter of the fifteenth century, according to the Taicang native Lu Rong, books (*shuji*) and printing blocks (*yinban*) were still not extensively available; only toward the end of the century did the situation improve—although the texts produced then were not always those pleasing to Confucian scholars.⁸⁹ According to Inoue, book printing began to increase during the Chenghua reign, picked up speed in the Hongzhi and Zhengde reigns, and flourished in the Jiajing reign.⁹⁰ This trend, evident in his statistics, is confirmed by one statistic on Ming books that merits our confidence: Chia's recent study of nongovernmental Ming imprints listed in a modern bibliography (based on thirty-three library catalogues and bibliographies) concludes that less than a tenth of all these Ming imprints were published before 1505.⁹¹ Contemporary observations support and elaborate this statistical evidence, suggesting that there was an expansion not only in the numbers but also in the types of texts published. The appearance of "unusual" books in mid-sixteenth-century Suzhou, according to the literatus Wen Jia (1501–

83), failed to create the stir among readers that it had often done in his childhood.⁹² At this time, scholars began to complain, not about the dearth of books, but about what was perceived as a socially dangerous excess of imprints. The Changzhou literatus Tang Shunzhi (1507–60) lamented that “if a butcher died, then his family, so long as it had the money, would have an obituary of him printed.” Others, such as the Suzhou writer Zhu Yunming (1461–1537), were not content with scorn or derision; they wanted the government to burn the mountain of objectionable books.⁹³

This printing boom transformed the role of book production in the lower Yangzi delta within the domestic market, especially in the Yangzi valley. Whereas in the Song the capital Hangzhou had been the delta’s sole center for producing and distributing quality books,⁹⁴ by the sixteenth century it had ceded that preeminence to Suzhou and Nanjing. In competition principally with Beijing to the north and Fujian to the south, these two cities’ printers and book merchants dominated the production and distribution of books inside the delta and in many places outside it.⁹⁵ Suzhou and Nanjing each printed from five to ten times more books than the total number of books printed in Xi’an and the three other delta cities, Jiaying, Huzhou, and Yangzhou. For sixteenth-century Suzhou alone we know, from one preliminary estimate, that there were no fewer than 650 woodblock carvers and nearly forty private publishers in the city.⁹⁶

Such success in production was duplicated in distribution. Suzhou and Nanjing printing establishments and bookstores so dominated bookstalls and stores that less than 2 percent of the book sales in these cities was of imprints from elsewhere. They also shipped books to the southern portions of the delta, where, because of competition from the cheaper imprints of northern Fujian, they secured only a portion of the Hangzhou book trade. (The rest went to northern Fujian printers, a probable sign, in this area of cheap and easy boat transport, that Suzhou’s and Nanjing’s overwhelming dominance of their own book markets stemmed in part from exclusionary practices against these cheap imprints from Fujian.) Outside of the delta, their products appear to have had less success the farther south they went—that is, into Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong. But they were particularly welcome in the rest of the Yangzi valley—no serious competition came from Chengdu—and in the north, especially Beijing. In fact, as Hu Yinglin’s survey of the lower Yangzi delta’s book trade underlines in unrivaled detail, they outstripped their principal competitors in the late sixteenth century, Beijing for distribution and Fujian for production and distribution, to gain renown in most parts of China:

In general, there nowadays are four places in the empire where books are gathered [for sale in great numbers]—Beijing, Nanjing, the Chang Gate Quarter

in Suzhou, and Hangzhou. I have sometimes acquired imprints (*zi*) from Fujian, Hunan, Yunnan, and Guizhou, while in Shaanxi, Shanxi, Sichuan, and Henan I have made extensive inquiries and read through [books I was shown]. But they were generally not comparable to these four places.

Beijing publishes few books. Yet boats and carts from within the empire congregate there. Bamboo boxes [of books], with the collections of old families mixed amongst them, are rushed to the market there by big merchants. Therefore, the Beijing [book market] is particularly prosperous, more so than that of other places. Its book prices are the highest; each imported title costs twice what it does in Suzhou, because the distance to Beijing is great. And each text published in the capital costs three times what it would in Zhejiang (Yue), because paper is expensive in Beijing.

Zhejiang also publishes few books. Yet it functions as a hub for the southeast and a center of writing. Books from the Suzhou area and Fujian are all gathered [for sale] there. . . . As for Hunan, Sichuan, Jiao [Nanyue or Vietnam], and Guangnan [Guangdong], merchants sometimes acquire new and unusual books on their travels there. Officials who served in Guan [Shanxi], Lo [Henan], Yan [Beijing], and Qin [Shaanxi] often send books they have brought back with them to the market for sale. During the years of the provincial examinations these books are very much in evidence.

Suzhou and Nanjing have the top reputation for writings, and their imprints are extremely numerous. Large editions and encyclopedias are all to be found there, and merchants throughout the empire rely on Suzhou and Nanjing for 70 percent of their books and on Fujian for the other 30. Beijing and Zhejiang do not rival them. Putting aside the books these places print, what reaches them from other provinces is extremely little. . . , not 2 or 3 percent [of all available titles]. In general, [Suzhou and Nanjing] are places which produce books [for sale], but they do not gather books [for sale from other provinces].

In all, there are three centers for woodblock carving (*ke*): Suzhou, Zhejiang, and Fujian. Imprints from Sichuan were greatly praised in the Song, but in recent generations they have been very few. Beijing, Guangdong (Yue), Shaanxi (Qin), and Hunan now all publish texts and they produce a considerable variety of titles. But they do not flourish like these three other places. Of these for quality, Suzhou is best, and for quantity, Fujian is tops, with Zhejiang in second place. For prices, Suzhou's are the highest, Fujian's the lowest, and Zhejiang's in between.

As for volumes (*ben*), in general, ten imprints (*ke*) are not as costly as one hand copy (*chao*), and ten manuscripts not as costly as one Song imprint. . . . Ten Fujian imprints are not as costly as seven from Zhejiang, which are not as costly as five from Suzhou, which are not as costly as three [sold in] Beijing (that is, imprints which arrive in Beijing from Suzhou, Zhejiang, and Fujian, not books [made from woodblocks] carved [*ke*] in Beijing). Three imprints in Beijing are not worth the cost of one Imperial Household [imprint].

In short, by the end of the sixteenth century books were once again being printed throughout the empire, but now the two principal cities of the lower Yangzi delta, Suzhou and Nanjing, served as national centers. They each surpassed another center, Beijing, in the distribution and especially the production of imprints. Although they produced fewer imprints than Fujian, they traded far more; the volume of the book trade in Suzhou and Nanjing combined was double the volume of texts produced in Fujian. The sole drawback of these imprints was their relatively high price. Though their costliness limited their salability in markets southeast of Hangzhou, Suzhou and Nanjing imprints still dominated the book trade in both the political and cultural centers of Ming China. They continued, in the view of a celebrated observer of Nanjing life, Zhou Lianggong (1612–72), to flourish from the last quarter of the sixteenth century up to the close of the dynasty.⁹⁷

The fierce competition in the book trade did not prevent printing establishments in the lower Yangzi delta from cooperating with workers elsewhere. In the Song and Yuan the clearest instances of this cooperation involve the employment of woodblock carvers, itinerant craftsmen who moved between jobs on circuits encompassing sites as far apart as Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong, or Zhejiang, Huainan, Jiangxi, Hubei, and perhaps even Sichuan.⁹⁸ In the early fourteenth century, a Hangzhou temple's printing of Buddhist sutras relied on woodblock carvers from throughout Zhejiang province and two other prefectures in the lower Yangzi delta, Jianyang in northern Fujian and Guangde in Anhui province.⁹⁹ By the mid-sixteenth century such links, according to Chia, had integrated the book markets of Fujian and the delta (especially Nanjing). Commercial printing establishments in both regions used many of the same authors, editors, printers, block carvers, and woodblocks.¹⁰⁰ Suzhou carvers shared the carving of woodblocks for one title with Nanjing carvers in 1529, with Fujian carvers in the Jiajing era, and with Jiangxi carvers in 1603.¹⁰¹ Perhaps these Anhui, Fujian, and Jiangxi carvers had migrated as itinerant laborers to Suzhou, Nanjing, and Hangzhou.¹⁰² Or, possibly, they did their carving in their home areas, where labor and woodblock costs would have been lower and where boat transport was both cheap and convenient. Note, however, that neither of these types of integrated labor markets necessarily entailed the harmonization of labor costs and book prices. Indeed, book prices in these areas probably varied greatly, according to the separate market niches for the different qualities of new publications from Fujian, Hangzhou, and Suzhou-Nanjing, and were dependent on the availability of competitively priced, older editions of the same title.¹⁰³

This economically integrated book market did not extend to northern China, however. A shortage of books forced northern Chinese to come south to buy schoolbooks in Suzhou in the early fourteenth century and to buy privately printed examination manuals in the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁴ Even in the late seventeenth century it was reportedly so hard to buy books in north-

ern China that private collections there contained very few books.¹⁰⁵ While living in northern China then, Gu Yanwu had books sent to him by friends in the delta.¹⁰⁶ Presumably, the principal problem remained less one of supply than of demand (or financial resources). The book collection of Li Kai-xian (1502–68), one of the major collectors of the north, was, at his death, largely shipped south and added to the library of the famous delta collector-publisher Mao Jin (1599–1659)¹⁰⁷—apparently no northern collector had matched Mao’s bid.

The great expansion of book production in the lower Yangzi delta during the last half of the Ming led to a considerable increase in the number and size of its private libraries. The ten thousand to twenty thousand *juan* of private Song libraries now became commonplace among bibliophiles, with major book collectors often having three or four times as many. By the early seventeenth century the Shaoxing collector Qi Chenghan (1565–1628) had acquired some nine thousand titles and over one hundred thousand *juan*.¹⁰⁸ Already at the close of the sixteenth century these private collections were judged far larger than the Imperial Library;¹⁰⁹ one bibliophile estimated each of the large collections to be twice as large.¹¹⁰

However, this printing boom did not end the trials and tribulations of even the relatively well-to-do in finding the books they wanted to acquire and read. Thirty years passed between the first and second sightings of a well-known twelfth-century miscellany, *Qingbo biezhì* (Another record from Qingbo [Gate]), by the highly experienced editor Yao Zi (b. 1595).¹¹¹ It took a wealthy Suzhou collector more than thirty years to put together, in 1584, a complete copy of the tenth-century work *Caidiao ji* (Collection of fine taste); and in 1579 he reported having similar trouble acquiring the Song dynasty work *Shuyuan jinghua* (The glories of a literary collection).¹¹² The major Suzhou collector Zhao Qimei (1563–1624) spent over twenty years trying to put together a full copy of the Song architectural treatise *Yingzao fashi* (Manual on architecture) in the Wanli era; he succeeded by buying an incomplete imprint and copying the remainder from an edition borrowed from the Imperial Library.¹¹³ Even in the mid-seventeenth century a devout Jiaxing follower of Zhu Xi experienced similar frustrations in his attempts to complete the *Jinsi lu* (Reflections on things at hand), an often-quoted anthology of Song Neo-Confucian writings compiled by Zhu and Lǚ Zuqian. He had by chance acquired a copy from a book merchant, loaned it to a friend who never returned it, and then waited twenty years before he acquired another copy and could finish reading it.¹¹⁴ Thus the evident publishing boom of the sixteenth century did not entirely alleviate book shortages, though it significantly increased the number of texts in circulation and allowed the creation, for the first time, of many large private collections.

Striking, too, is the fact that by this time imprints rather than manuscripts dominated book culture. As a modern Chinese scholar has noted, the ear-

liest (and best) imprints of many pre-Ming books commonly date from the Ming.¹¹⁵ Also, in the two major Ming collections for which we have a record of the ratio of imprints to manuscripts, imprints accounted for a far greater share than in major Song collections: in Hu Yinglin's collection imprints constituted 70 percent, and in the celebrated Tianyi library, built in about 1560 by Fan Qin (j.s. 1532), they were half of the total forty-four thousand *juan* (Fan himself claimed 80 percent were imprints, but that appears to be an exaggeration).¹¹⁶

As Hu Yinglin observed, in the late sixteenth century book buyers and collectors, whenever they had a choice, tended to choose imprints over manuscript copies of the same works. That preference led to a drastic fall in the price of most hand copies, which were now appreciated less for the rarity of their contents than for their aesthetic qualities, in particular their calligraphy.¹¹⁷ There arose, in conjunction with the high regard for the beauty of Song imprints, a respect also for Ming hand copies, or pieces of calligraphy, that had been written by famous literati book collectors such as Ye Sheng, Wu Kuan (1435–1504), Wen Zhengming (1470–1559), Wang Kentang (j.s. 1589), Yang Yi (1488–after 1558), Mao Jin, Xie Zhaozhi (1567–1624), Qian Qianyi (1582–1664), Shen Banzhi, Yao Shuntai, Qin Xiyan, Qi Chenghan, and Feng Ban (1602–71).¹¹⁸ A handful of seventeenth-century connoisseurs in Shanghai and Changshu county, Suzhou, specialized in collecting manuscripts by these men, so that the price of their work rose somewhat.¹¹⁹ In 1681 as much as thirty *jin* was paid for a book hand-copied by Wu Kuan.¹²⁰ The emergence of this specialized collecting interest underlines the extent of the imprint's general ascendancy over the manuscript in the lower Yangzi delta book trade.

THE ASCENDANCE OF THE IMPRINT IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The coexistence of manuscript texts and imprints in lower Yangzi bookstores and collections from the late seventh to the early sixteenth century may strike us as oddly protracted. But knowledge of the history of the Western book proves instructive here. According to a recent estimate, western European publishers, by the end of their first century of book printing, had issued a total of one million volumes.¹²¹ Yet manuscript copies remained in common use throughout Europe for at least two to three more centuries. Even in England, where the victory of the imprint was quickest, manuscripts died a slow death. Printing was introduced there from the Continent in 1486 and by the first decade of the sixteenth century accounted for 400 or so titles. That number rose to about 6,000 in the 1630s, almost 21,000 during the 1710s, more than 56,000 in the 1790s, and around 325,000 separate titles in the 1870s. Yet in the view of the editors of a recent history of reading in England: "Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, commercial manu-

script circulation continued side by side with the book industry. The proportion of available manuscript texts compared to printed matter varied, as did the types of text produced by hand or print, but even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the sovereignty of print was on occasion challenged by written communications."¹²² Thus the unquestioned hegemony of the imprint was not entirely secure even four centuries after the introduction of printing to England.

What is remarkable about the case of China is the extremely long time—eight centuries, from the end of the seventh to the start of the sixteenth century—that passed before imprints clearly dominated manuscripts in the collections and book markets of the most highly developed commercial and cultural region of the empire. No simple explanation for either the prolonged contest between the two types of texts or the final victory of the imprint in the Ming is likely to prove persuasive. General political factors, such as government printing projects, the spread of the examination system, and the cessation of earlier policies of censorship, have often been used to explain the accelerated spread of printing during Ming rule.¹²³ But two other factors contemporaneous with the early-sixteenth-century ascendance of the imprint merit, I believe, at least as much attention: the decline in the price of imprints and a shift in the dominant institution of production from government organizations to private publishers.

Imprints in the Song, Yuan, and early Ming, in the views of Denis Twitchett and Inoue, were expensive. Since, as a consequence, the demand was not great, printers could not afford to produce large print runs. The resulting rarity of Song and Yuan editions meant that, when the demand for books grew rapidly from the sixteenth century on, the price of these works rose considerably.¹²⁴ But, as Hu Yinglin noted, book prices varied according to the quality of the paper, the fineness of the woodblock carving, the type of woodblocks used, the accuracy of the text, the care shown with the wrapping, and the attention paid to the actual work of printing.¹²⁵ It was reductions in the costs of the first two components that appear to have been most important in reducing book prices for new imprints in the sixteenth century.

Traditionally, the cost of paper was probably less important a component in a book's production costs in China than in Europe.¹²⁶ Yet paper prices undoubtedly fell between the Song and the late Ming. In Song times paper of any quality was expensive enough that people commonly wrote on both sides of a sheet.¹²⁷ Song printers frequently recycled paper by printing on the blank sides of pages. (The sixteenth-century official Zhang Xuan [1459–1527] refused to believe this story until he personally examined some Song paper in the collection of the Ming Imperial Library.)¹²⁸ In the Northern Song, government offices sold used paper to bring in extra income or even to finance banquets.¹²⁹

In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, such parsimony

was replaced by extravagance both at the court and in the provinces, a sure sign that the price of paper had fallen. The following anecdote suggests the change that took place in the use of paper:

In Quzhou in Zhejiang province, people make paper for a living. The amount of paper they annually provide to the government for both public and private consumption is beyond calculation. But when the high [eunuch] officials of the Palace Treasury saw [how much was being used], at first they did not pay any attention. I have heard that during the Tianshun reign era [1457–65] an old eunuch returned to the palace from Jiangxi and, when he saw that the Palace Treasury was pasting official paper to the walls, he faced the paper and wept in silence. I suppose that, knowing how hard it is to make, he grieved over such reckless waste.¹³⁰

By the early sixteenth century the easy consumption of paper extended far beyond official circles into the world of commoners and villagers. One Jiajing-era commentator laments this widespread use—in his eyes, waste—of paper, extending now even to peasant villages:

Nowadays the merchants of Jiangzhe [Jiangsu and Zhejiang] carry paper on both boats and carts. [So numerous are they that] the rudders of those trading paper bump into one another, as do their wheels on land. And virtually half of the paper is used for funerary “paper money” (*mingzhi*). Towns of just ten houses and villages of several families invariably have stalls that sell paper horses. People are always burning paper for offerings and sacrifices on the altars in temples and shrines.

Li Lian (j.s. 1514), the author of this critique, explicitly linked the greater availability of paper to an unwelcome explosion of print culture: the publication of “noncanonical books and useless volumes,” the pervasive addiction to preparatory books for the examinations, the current trend toward unnecessarily verbose and prolific compositions, and the government’s own increase of paperwork. “Government posters and announcements fill the walls everywhere,” he complained.¹³¹ Such an expansion in paper consumption rested on increased production of far cheaper, more affordable paper. The region spanning Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Fujian became noted in particular for the production of high-quality, relatively inexpensive bamboo paper suitable for printing, though paper production was a handicraft industry in parts of southern Anhui, Jiangnan, and Sichuan as well.¹³²

But while a decline in the price of paper made the publishing boom possible, it cannot have been the decisive price factor in the shift to imprints, since this cheaper paper also could have been used for manuscripts and would have reduced their price as well. In the absence of information about the prices of woodblocks, the key price change appears to have occurred in woodblock carving. Two prices for block carving in Suzhou city show a dramatic fall in the cost in copper cash of carving one hundred characters,

from about 200 *wen* in about 1250 to 26 to 35 *wen* in about 1600—that is, a considerable drop in carving costs even if currency changes during the intervening centuries make the decline less than the figures suggest.¹³³ Unfortunately, we know neither what share of these savings was passed on to readers nor what concurrent changes took place in the price of manuscript production.

Fortunately, comments by the literatus Li Xu (1505–93) help to clarify the relative price difference between manuscripts and imprints. During his childhood in Jiangyin commandery, at the northern edge of the delta, he could not afford to purchase any of the imprints needed to study for the official examinations. He used only manuscript copies, made by scribes (at a friend's house or at a book merchant's) for 2 or 3 *wen* of copper cash per twenty to thirty sheets of paper—that is, 0.1 *wen* for each hand-copied sheet.¹³⁴ Clearly, no printed version, as long as it cost about 30 *wen* just to carve one hundred characters on a woodblock, could compete with the much lower cost of scribal reproduction for single copies. But once a publisher entertained the possibility of many multiple copies, the economics would change. If we assume that each woodblock contained about 400 to 500 characters, the number on one of Li's hand-copied sheets, then each block would have cost roughly 140 *wen* to carve. If we assume, too, that carving in the sixteenth century still represented the major portion of the production expenses for a woodblock print (and that the other printing costs were negligible), then a commercial book maker would have found it profitable to shift from copying to printing a book only if he expected to sell a few thousand, rather than a few hundred, copies of it. In other words, the finances of commercial book publication, even with the lower costs of the late Ming, tended to discourage the adventuresome choice of new titles and reward the printing of attested sellers for a reasonably predictable market. Such safe publications would have consisted largely of the works of a few famous poets and prose authors, examination manuals, medical advice books, and fiction.

The drop in woodblock carving costs can be directly traced to simplifications in the carving method widely introduced by no later than the mid-sixteenth century. Whereas the calligraphy used for characters in Song imprints had consciously imitated the style of a famous calligrapher's brushstroke, the script in an increasing number of imprints from the mid-sixteenth century onward was in the craftsman's, or Song, style (*jiangti* or *Songti*). With its simple and sharp-edged strokes, this style considerably reduced the technical demands on the carver as well as the time needed to complete the carving. Publishers thus would have seen a considerable reduction in carving costs, a reduction that presumably lowered the retail price of imprints.¹³⁵ Of course, this method, to the chagrin of many Ming literati, reduced the range

of brushstrokes reproduced by the carver and thus diminished the manuscript appearance of imprints.¹³⁶

But this stress on productivity at the expense of aesthetics prompted some printers in Nanjing and Suzhou to move in quite a different direction—namely, to specialize in the production of highly refined, beautifully carved imprints aimed at pleasing the most demanding literati aesthetes. Employing highly skilled carvers, they produced imprints whose illustrations and texts, more than many a Song imprint, closely resembled a fine painting or elegant piece of calligraphy. Thus, while the development of the craftsman's style increased the ability of publishers to supply a popular, "mass" demand for texts, the book market did not expand in just this one, downward, direction. The growing sophistication of carving allowed printers to produce exquisite editions for a limited group of "upscale" elite customers,¹³⁷ much like those discussed by Katherine Carlitz and Robert E. Hegel in this volume.

The adoption of the craftsman's carving style apparently required no financial investment, no special skills (indeed, it allowed for less-skilled carving), and no new tools or technology. We may wonder, then, why it took so long—roughly eight centuries—for printers to develop this means of reducing production costs. The answer probably lies in the low labor costs of hand-copying texts up until the late fifteenth century. Beginning in the Song, the examination system helped to raise literacy levels and increase the number of scholars and literati readers. At the same time, the high failure rate created a large number of potential scribes—a huge surplus of scribal labor—that naturally reduced the price of hand-copying such that manuscripts were cheaper than imprints. Here is a classic case of prolonged delay in the widespread adoption of a technological advance in China: woodblock printing, a great innovation of the eighth century, failed to have an immediate and striking impact on book culture because of the continued low labor costs of traditional manuscript production.

This situation changed when the demand for certain kinds of imprints greatly expanded, due in part to an explosion of interest in examination cribs and in part to the new popularity of certain kinds of writing, especially fiction. From the late fifteenth century on, the number of candidates sitting for the examinations greatly increased, with a consequent boom in the demand for examination cribs and manuals. For instance, before 1465 successful examination essays were not printed up into books. But once a subprefect of Hangzhou printed them up in about 1480 and reaped large profits from them, printers in Fujian and elsewhere rushed to follow his lead on this road to easy profits.¹³⁸ Thereafter, the publication of examination aids flourished even more than in the Southern Song, with some authors—many of them failed examination candidates—making a living from their writing and ed-

itorial work for this expanded audience. “In recent years,” complained Li Lian, “unless a book is for the examinations, the commercial publishers (*shufang*) will not print it. Unless a book is for the examinations, the market stores will not sell it. And, unless it is for the examinations, the scholars will not look at it.”¹³⁹

At this time, in the early sixteenth century, the popular demand for new kinds of composition grew as well. This new work included not just incidental writings honoring an individual’s birthday, appointment, and departure for office, such as stuff many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century collected writings. Far more important, it includes the novels, operas, and dramas that fired the literary imagination of the late Ming. According to a recent study, all but five of the 1,056 publishers of extant editions of Chinese fiction from the Southern Song to the early twentieth century were active only after 1520.¹⁴⁰

The growth in demand for imprints during the Ming, prompted by lower book prices, competitive official examinations, new types of literary and scholarly texts, and the higher level of literacy needed for a more commercialized economy, led to the rise of commercial printing establishments. This, with the decline in the price of imprints analyzed above, was the other major factor that supported the early-sixteenth-century ascendance of the imprint. The designation “commercial printing establishments” (*fangke*) covers a variety of different origins and forms, including long-standing household-based printers (like the famous Jianyang publishers), bookshop managers or book merchants who expanded into publishing, book collectors who began publishing some of their own works for profit, or even literati families who turned to publishing as a respectable means of increasing their incomes. Whatever form it took, however, commercial publishing had clearly come to dominate Chinese imprint culture by the late Ming.

At the same time, there was a corresponding decline in the influence of government or official printing, a decline that marks a clear shift from earlier periods. Since the Song dynasty, government or official printing shops had shaped the world of the imprint for the nonpopular market. In 1166 the bibliophile Wang Mingqing had noted, “The prefectural offices I have visited in recent years often publish collected works of individual authors (*kan wenji*), and it is easy to get copies of them to transcribe and record.”¹⁴¹ Zhang Xiumin has listed more than one hundred titles printed by Song provincial offices and officials with government funds. These books contained writings by these officials, their ancestors, or, when relying on texts found in the hands of other private collectors, a famous native of the area under their jurisdiction.¹⁴²

To be sure, it would be a mistake to draw too rigid a line between government-official and commercial publishing, as Cynthia Brokaw has indicated in Chapter 1. On the one hand, official imprints might be donated to local academies and schools, or used by the official who had sponsored their

TABLE 2.2 Government imprints' share
of total imprint production, 1131–1367
(in the National Library of China, Beijing, and the National Central Library, Taipei)

	1131–1274			1271–1367		
	(a)	(b)	b/a	(a)	(b)	b/a
	<i>Total imprints</i>	<i>Government imprints</i>		<i>Total imprints</i>	<i>Government imprints</i>	
Classics	50	27	54%	75	13	17%
History	48	27	56%	59	30	51%
Philosophy	39	19	49%	51	6	12%
Belles lettres	67	23	34%	60	10	17%
Total	204	96	47%	245	59	24%

SOURCE: Inoue Susumu, "Zōsho to dokusho" (Book collecting and book reading), *Tōhō gakuho* (Journal of Oriental studies) 62 (1990): 427–28.

publication for social rather than commercial profit—that is, for presentation to friends or other officials. But they might also be sold for profit.¹⁴³ As Cherniack explains, "Although government, private, and commercial printing are sometimes treated as separate systems, government, quasi-official, private, and commercial presses all competed for sales at the local level."¹⁴⁴ The commercial sale of officially published books persisted through the Ming dynasty, when eunuchs and imperial princes joined officials in using government funds and government offices to print books of their own choosing for their own profit.¹⁴⁵

In the Ming, however, though government offices at all levels continued to publish (and sell) imprints, their share of the total book market declined significantly within two centuries of the founding of the dynasty. Inoue once again provides suggestive, albeit somewhat sketchy, data on the fate of official publishing up to the late sixteenth century (see Tables 2.2 and 2.3).¹⁴⁶ On the one hand, the number of government- or officially sponsored printings of books increased between 1131 and 1521 and even between 1368 and 1566. These government and official imprints accounted for virtually half of all imprints in the Song, the Yuan, and the first century of the Ming (at least among all surviving imprints in the National Central Library in Taipei), though their relative dearth must have restricted their distribution and consumption. But during the first two centuries of Ming rule, the proportion of government publications among all the dated imprint titles surviving in the National Library of China in Beijing and the National Central Library in Taipei declined considerably and irreversibly. Their 51 percent share of all surviving imprints from 1368 to 1464 is gradually halved over the next century to 26 percent; the decline is in all four categories of books. Only the share of

TABLE 2.3 Distribution of publication dates of surviving dated Ming imprints by government organs and officials, 1368–1566
(as presently held in the National Central Library, Taipei)

1368–1464 imprints

	Total	Government	Officials	Government officials' share
Classics	16	9	2	69%
History	28	17	1	64
Philosophy	23	10	1	48
Belles lettres	54	5	16	39
Total	121	41	20	50

1465–87 imprints

	Total	Government	Officials	Government officials' share
Classics	5	2	3	100%
History	10	3	3	60
Philosophy	15	0	7	47
Belles lettres	46	7	9	35
Total	76	12	22	45

1488–1521 imprints

	Total	Government	Officials	Government officials' share
Classics	7	1	3	57%
History	33	5	8	39
Philosophy	34	6	8	41
Belles lettres	106	5	29	32
Total	180	17	48	36

1522–66 imprints

	Total	Government	Officials	Government officials' share
Classics	49	5	6	22%
History	101	20	19	39
Philosophy	150	22	13	23
Belles lettres	404	22	78	25
Total	704	69	116	26

SOURCE: Inoue Susumu, "Zōsho to dokusho" (Book collecting and book reading), *Tōhō gakuho* (Journal of Oriental studies) 62 (1990): 427–28.

history books, a scholarly subject of relatively little interest to early Ming authors and readers, remained fairly high, at 39 percent. But the government-sponsored imprints in the categories of Classics and philosophy fell precipitously over the first two centuries of Ming rule, thanks no doubt to the popularity of guides to the Classics and medical texts printed by commercial establishments.

In fact, when Li Xu explained the demise of the hand copy in the face of competition from cheap imprints, he explicitly mentioned the central role of commercial printers (*fangke*) in this change: "Now, filling one's eyes are all the products of commercial printers in what is one further sign of the splendour of the customs of this age."¹⁴⁷ By about the middle of the sixteenth century, competitive pricing, novel topics, and availability won commercial publishers predominance in the world of publishing. The proliferation of commercial publishing concerns and publications in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, then, would by and large account for the tremendous growth of the Chinese printing industry as a whole during the last century and a half of Ming rule.

THE BOOK CULTURE OF THE MID- AND LATE MING

The consequences of these changes for the book culture of the lower Yangzi delta and, by extension, the rest of China were profound. For the literati elite I have been discussing, the manuscript's prolonged eight-century coexistence with the imprint would seem to have been, in essence, its coexistence with the government office imprint. Inoue's figures probably underestimate the importance of private printing for elite culture during these eight centuries, if only because they too sharply distinguish between government and commercial printing. Nonetheless, they rightly point to the central role that official printing played in supplying imprints for relatively well-to-do readers up to about the mid-sixteenth century. These figures thereby suggest that the dominance of government printing would have discouraged competition from strictly private printing houses, which would have been unable to bear the costs and risks of producing for this select market. It is noteworthy, then, that the switch, even by literati, to the imprint coincided not only with the drop in book prices and a new, more efficient form of carving but also with the unquestioned ascendancy and hegemony of commercial printing houses over government printing offices in the production of texts for literati readers.

This treatment of the literate elite in such broad terms, however, masks another profound change, one that the ascendancy of the imprint brought to the role of the scholar-official stratum in the reproduction of elite Chinese culture. This group of educated men, who, after acquiring the *jinshi* degree, moved regularly in and out of government office, played a vital role

in Chinese culture from the Song right up to the twentieth century. But from the mid-Ming on, they were joined in the creation, consumption, and preservation of literati culture by a large number of individuals far less successful in pursuing an official career. In other words, scholar-official, or *jinshi*, book culture was supplemented and complemented by what I wish to term *shengyuan* book culture. In Song times virtually all individual collected writings—and the overwhelming share of extant materials—were written by members of the *jinshi* scholar-official stratum. But in the latter half of the Ming they were joined, as both authors and collectors, by many men who never held an official post. Authors, editors, and collectors whose examination success never stretched beyond the lowest degrees, the *shengyuan* or *gongsheng*—men such as He Liangjun (1509–62), Wang Zhideng (1535–1612), Chen Jiru (1558–1639), Xu Bo (1570–1642), Mao Jin, Feng Shu (1593–ca.1645), Lu Yidian (1617–83), and Qian Tong'ai (1475–1549)—come to mind, and one realizes that for the first time in Chinese history a significant portion of the literati and major private book collectors were neither themselves high officials or high-degree holders nor from families of high officials or high-degree holders. Of course, there were still many authors and large book collectors who held *juren* and *jinshi* degrees. Without the writings of *juren* holders such as Hu Yinglin, Huang Zhuzhong, Zhang Xuan, and Wen Zhengming, our knowledge of Ming book collecting would be seriously deficient; so, too, without the actual collections of *jinshi*-degree holders such as Ye Sheng, Lu Shen (1477–1544), Li Kaixian, Yang Xunji (1458–1546), Wang Shizhen (1526–90), and Fan Qin (j.s. 1532), our libraries would be much poorer.

Yet the literary contributions of *shengyuan* considerably expanded the range of writings printed in the latter half of the Ming. As their low degree conferred only temporary relief from onerous service taxes and provided at best a paltry income, they were forced, to achieve some economic security, to live off their writings. Of course, the boom in commercial publishing provided them with ample opportunities to publish their works. Along with some literate commoners who held no degrees at all, they wrote, edited, compiled, revised, and copied reading materials for an apparently limitless audience. Hence their interest in “how-to books” dealing with the examinations, medicine, prose and poetry composition, dictionaries, and numerous hobbies; in assembling collectanea (*congshu*) and selections of famous men’s writings; in composing popular fiction (*xiaoshuo*); and, indeed, in turning their hand to as many activities involving a brush as possible.¹⁴⁸ As men of letters (women authors and collectors were still far less numerous and not openly writing for the market), they gained the friendship of far more elevated collectors and literati. To be sure, some snooty antiquarians might scorn the motives of these *shengyuan* and commoner collectors and look askance at the contents of their collections.¹⁴⁹ Yet some commoner collectors, like Yao Shilin (1561–1651)—literate only from his early twenties and the eventual possessor of more than

twenty thousand well-collated *juan*¹⁵⁰—were feted by high-degree holders who previously would have moved in very different social circles.

But what distinguished these collectors most significantly from previous ones was both the breadth of interests they explored, often well beyond the confines of orthodox fields of learning, and the range of uses they readily put their books to. Some collectors, like the eccentric Xing Liang (fl. late fifteenth century), sought books on many topics, ranging from history and the Classics to Buddhism, Daoism, and medicine. This doctor-diviner–village teacher lived alone “like a rural monk” in the unfashionable Fengmen quarter of Suzhou; the three to four rooms of the rundown house he rented were crowded with books and their walls covered with moss. Nonetheless, this propertyless bibliophile—who composed his own obituary and went out of his way to discourage social contacts—ended up winning the admiration of some of the major book collectors of his day in addition to attracting a number of disciples.¹⁵¹

Other collectors in the sixteenth century proved more practical. Like the Jiaying doctor Yin Zhongchun, they specialized in collecting books in less prestigious fields of learning and then used their collections in a variety of ways to make a living. Doctors had long made practical use of the medical books in their care, in much the way that aspiring officials made use of their Confucian texts and examination manuals. This village doctor turned his medical bibliomania into a huge publication enterprise, however. From youth he had always kept spare change in his pocket, on the odd chance of coming across incomplete, ravaged copies of medical books that he or later his son could buy for just several tens of copper cash and then patch together. Eventually he went off to Jiangxi, where several doctors joined him in compiling and publishing the oldest extant specialist catalogue of medical works, the *Yicang mulu* (Catalogue of a medical collection), consisting of more than 590 titles. In the end he too ended up winning the admiration of literati of his day; the famous author Chen Jiru even wrote his biography.¹⁵²

Other collectors such as the book dealer Tong Pei (fl. late sixteenth century) linked their book collections even more explicitly to careers in the writing and selling of books. Born into a family of book peddlers active in the delta and Zhejiang, Tong Pei worked his way up in the book world to become a noted collector (of some twenty-five thousand *juan*) and a respected writer. He was accepted as a disciple by the noted Suzhou literatus Gui Youguang (1507–71) and eventually exchanged his prose and poetry with other literati. While professing the values of a literatus and even earning a reputation for his skill at painting and art connoisseurship, he actually made his living by continuing the family occupation of selling books. His clients, ever eager to receive his sale catalogues, included bibliophiles such as Hu Yinglin.¹⁵³

The broadened range of degree levels, social backgrounds, and concerns

among book publishers and book collectors naturally had an impact on the types of imprints that have survived from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in our libraries today. Here again we can turn to Inoue's study. Incomplete and inconclusive—future research will almost certainly revise his findings—it nonetheless provides an instructive initial vantage point for acquiring a very general sense of how the world of the imprint changed from the twelfth to the seventeenth century.¹⁵⁴

Already in the twelfth century there is evidence of an expansion in the types of texts that were being printed. From the Southern Song on, books in genres new to printing, such as dramas, arias, and fiction, were printed alongside a growing number of titles in the more traditional genres of classical studies, history, poetry, official memorials, divination, and medicine. Among Song imprints, the philosophical books that have survived are primarily the works of Daoxue, “the learning of the Way,” the new Confucian teaching expounded by Zhu Xi and his followers; next come medical works. But once we enter the Yuan, medical texts predominate, followed by encyclopedias; these two genres account for almost 60 percent of all titles in this category. Then, reflecting the collapse of official and scholarly research on Confucian texts during Mongol rule, come Daoxue-related writings. Among Song imprints of the belles-lettres category, most common were the collected writings of the Six Dynasties and Tang authors. But in Yuan times almost no such works for Tang and earlier authors were printed, except for Du Fu (712–70) and Li Bai (705?–62). This concentration on the famous and the approved, presumably stressing securely profitable authors, becomes even more evident in the Ming.

In the early Ming, there seems to have been a further reduction in the range of texts printed. During the Yuan, government offices had sometimes printed literary works and the Confucian Classics. But in the first century of the Ming, Classics imprints were titles that dealt with the Confucian Classics and their commentaries, plus some popular simplifications of these Classics, dictionaries, and rhyme books—and that is all. As for history studies, the *Tongjian gangmu* (Outline of the *Comprehensive mirror*) and the *Xu tongjian gangmu* (Continuation of *Outline of the comprehensive mirror*) were printed, but not the *Zizhi tongjian* itself or even its abridged reworking as the *Tongjian jishi benmo* (Record of affairs, from beginning to end, in the *Comprehensive mirror*). In fact, during this opening century of the Ming, the important history imprints were few and almost all printed by the government—for example, the *Yuanshi* (History of the Yuan dynasty) (in the Hongwu era, 1368–1399), the *Shiji* (in the Tianshun era), and the *Songshi* (in the Chenghua era). Early Ming imprints on history by private publishers are barely mentioned.

The belles-lettres imprints in the early Ming were similarly few. Of note were the *Zhuzi yulei* (Conversations of Master Zhu, arranged topically), a Jiangxi official imprint of the Chenghua era, and the *Shanghai jing* (Classic

of the mountains and seas), an Imperial University imprint from Beijing. The list of preferred authors shows no change from that of the Yuan, since during the first century of the Ming, no collected writings of pre-Tang authors were published, and the only Tang writers printed were Li Bai, Du Fu, Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, Lu Zhi (754–805), and Lu Guimeng (fl. ninth century). However, there was a gradual increase in numbers of editions. More collected writings appear to have been printed in the early Ming than in the Song and Yuan: in the Song an average of 4.7 every ten years; in the Yuan, 4.8; in the Hongwu era, 6; in the Xuande era (1426–36), 12; and then in the Chinghua era, 35.7.

In the Hongzhi and Zhengde eras, there are a few sporadic hints of the print explosion that was soon to follow in the sixteenth century. Old philosophical titles, such as *Huainanzi* (Master of Huainan), *Yantie lun* (Discourses on salt and iron), and *Duduan* (Independent judgments), begin to be published. Also, for the first time in the Ming, key Neo-Confucian texts like the *Xiangshan wenji* (Collected writings of Lu Jiuyuan), the *Er Cheng quanshu* (Complete writings of the two Chengs), and the *Beixi ziyi* (Meaning of terms, as defined by Chen Chun) were printed. But the range of philosophical titles still remained fairly narrow, even within the confines of orthodox Neo-Confucianism. In fact, before 1565, an era that most intellectual historians consider the heyday of the orthodox school of Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism, virtually the only Daoxue-related imprints were Zhu Xi's commentaries to the Classics and discussions of the principles of "nature and fate" (*xingming*). No effort was made to encourage discussion of this orthodoxy, as scholars were expected to learn these "given views" and reproduce them accurately, just as in an imprint.

Only in the mid-sixteenth century did a desire for a more varied intellectual diet prompt an expansion of the philosophical concerns reflected in imprints. Not surprisingly, the proliferation of imprints on a wider variety of philosophical topics coincided with the end of Daoxue hegemony (as embodied in the Cheng-Zhu school) over Ming intellectual life and a surge of interest in the thought of Wang Yangming (1472–1529). The growing acceptance of the imprint in the book world of the delta doubtless helped to spread awareness of new trends in Neo-Confucian thought; these books often advocated practice over theory and spared no words in their denunciation of the bookishness of the Cheng-Zhu school.

Similar changes occurred in the mid-Ming for nonphilosophical publications as well. Publishers began to bring out new editions of a wide range of early history texts, ones heretofore not widely available in print: *Hanji* (Record of the Han), *Da Tang liudian* (Compendium of Tang administration), *Wenxian tongkao* (Comprehensive examination of written sources), and *Wu Yue chunqiu* (Spring and autumn annals of Wu and Yue). And they now also produced relatively recent histories, works like *Jin Wenjing gong beizheng lu*

(Record of the northern campaign by Jin Youzi) and *Huang Ming kaiguo gongchen lu* (Accomplishments at the beginning of the august Ming dynasty), that could serve as roughly contemporary sources for Ming history. In the category of collected writings, a wide chronological range of texts was also published, including texts, like the *Wenxuan*, dating from the Six Dynasties, as well as more recent works. In the category of the Classics, changes were less marked; but the publication of the *Yili* (Ceremonials and rituals) and the *Chunqiu xilu* (Crown embellishments of the *Spring and autumn annals*) in the Zhengde period suggests a growing interest in less commonly reproduced classical texts.

Gu Yanwu, as we have already seen, concluded that before the Jiajing era the books that circulated among the people were “no more than the Four Books, the Five Classics, the *Tongjian*, and books on moral nature.”¹⁵⁵ By the end of the Jiajing era, however, the situation had changed dramatically. What in the pre-1500 book world had been rare books with little hope of long-term survival began from around 1520 onward to be reprinted in greater numbers, thus increasing the likelihood of their eventual survival as imprints. Thus the editors of the *Sibu congkan* (Collection of the four branches of literature), known for their insistence on using only good imprint editions, drew very heavily on imprints produced in the second half of the Ming. Forty-four percent of the collection’s titles were drawn from late Ming editions—this despite the common early Qing dismissal of Ming imprints as inferior in quality.¹⁵⁶ By the sixteenth century, the imprint had “conquered” not only the world of books at large but also the far more fastidious world of scholarly texts.

MANUSCRIPTS IN THE WORLD OF IMPRINTS: PERSISTING INFLUENCE AND NEED

The final ascendance of the imprint in the sixteenth century, however, did not eliminate either the influence or the use of manuscripts in late imperial China. First, the manuscript tradition continued to shape the form and appearance of woodblock imprints. To be sure, once the artisan style became the dominant carving style in the mid-sixteenth century, printed texts no longer necessarily aped the calligraphy of handwritten texts. But prefaces, particularly in high-quality imprints, were often carved in a distinctive calligraphic style so that at least their opening pages might still resemble a manuscript. The influence of the manuscript tradition on the imprint cut even deeper, going beyond the imprint’s appearance to shape its very contents. Examine almost any traditional Chinese imprint, and regardless of its bibliographic category, it will usually read, and prove to have been put together, as a miscellany. More often than not, it turns out to be a collection of writings by one or more authors, on one or more topics, to tell more than one story,

just as if it had been assembled as a manuscript with items added or subtracted as the author(s) wished. If one or even many of the individual entries or sections in these books is dropped, only a very knowledgeable reader would notice the difference, even if it were an imprint edition rather than a manuscript. Such textual fluidity, so readily understandable in a manuscript culture, has long persisted in China as a common practice among a wide variety of imprint publishers, ranging from popular commercial establishments of the thirteenth century to the state printing houses of the past century.

Second, despite the greater availability of imprints since the sixteenth century, manuscripts have continued to be made and used in Jiangnan right up to the present day. A text's appearance as an imprint did not prevent readers from making a hand copy of it and then transmitting it as a manuscript. Many Chinese scholars and book collectors, such as You Ao (1127–94), insisted that the best way of mastering or even reading a text was to make a brush copy of it.¹⁵⁷ Even if one did not fully understand what one was copying, one could read it again, memorize it, and eventually master it. Others, like the twelfth-century author Hong Mai (1123–1202), did so for reasons of scholarship; he reportedly made three manuscript copies of the *Zizhi tongjian*, one to research its errors and accomplishments, one to study its style, and yet another to master its Confucian learning.¹⁵⁸ One famous late Ming official copied texts for a living. When imprisoned in Beijing for his political criticism, Huang Daozhou (1585–1646) supported himself by writing out copies of the *Xiaojing* (Classic of filial piety), which he sold for two *jin* apiece.¹⁵⁹ No wonder that one early-seventeenth-century Suzhou advocate of hand-copying claimed, "Writing a book (*zhu shu*) is not as good as copying a book (*chao shu*)." ¹⁶⁰

But many readers did not make copies themselves. They paid scribes, as many as thirty at a time, to make copies for them.¹⁶¹ Often these scribes were minor clerks, students in a local school, "bookboys" (*shutong*), or even failed examination candidates anxious to make a living with their brushes.¹⁶² Scribal production, however, was useful to printing establishments as well, as can be seen in the varied career of the Suzhou literatus Zhang Junming (fl. late seventeenth century). He was born into an official family in the late Ming but failed the civil service examinations. He then eked out a living by writing and copying poems and compositions in various calligraphic styles for scholar-officials, by providing text copy for woodblock carvers and stone cutters, and by brushing the names of Suzhou temples and wine shops for their signboards.¹⁶³

Thus the rise and even conquest of the imprint did not by any means entail the disappearance of the manuscript copy. As the examples cited above show, new hand copies of books continued to be produced for a variety of reasons in a range of different contexts. At the close of the sixteenth century, decades after the imprint's ascendance in the lower Yangzi delta, Hu

Yinglin observed that “people in the cities have recently been having all types of scholarly works copied for them, using ten thousand sheets a day.”¹⁶⁴ Even as late as 1769, the famous Beijing book quarter of Liuli chang was selling many manuscripts alongside its imprints; the man who reports this situation admits to passing most of his stay in the capital borrowing and copying books.¹⁶⁵ In fact, the more book titles that were printed and the more extensive their distribution, the more likely it was that manuscript copies of a text, in at least one stage of their transmission, derived from an imprint copy. So pervasive was this interplay that no sharp or absolute distinction can be drawn between manuscript and imprint in late imperial Chinese culture. The claim that the imprint first gained dominance over the manuscript in the mid-Ming must then leave room for the interpretation of the continuing manuscript tradition not as an evolutionary dead end but as a vital contributor to the formation of texts as we have come to read and know them today. Even village households in a relatively developed part of southeast China as late as the 1960s tended to have manuscripts rather than imprints for genealogies, couplet collections, and instruction manuals on family practices and social customs. For other genres, such as geomancy and ritual texts, although the manuscript format was not dominant, it was still common.¹⁶⁶ The findings here on literati culture may prove appropriate for the book culture of ordinary readers as well.

Third, the ascendance of the imprint—and the greater availability of texts presumably resulting from the publishing boom of the sixteenth century—did not necessarily end book shortages. There are clear signs that book owners continued earlier habits of thought and practice about loaning and sharing books: books were still considered so precious that collectors often restricted access to their collections. From at least the Tang onward, book collectors repeatedly reminded themselves and their descendants of the old adages, “To loan a book is unfilial” and “To loan a book is stupid; so is it to return one.”¹⁶⁷ Government school libraries, circulation libraries, and even the libraries of relations and friends provided some improved access to books in the Song, the Yuan, and especially the Ming.¹⁶⁸ But, as the famous seventeenth-century scholar Huang Zongxi (1610–95) concluded after decades of trying to visit major private libraries in the delta, “People do not lightly show their books to others.”¹⁶⁹ Clearly, the rarer and more expensive a book, the more likely it was to receive protection. But such exclusivity, in the complaints of all too many readers, was said to be shown not just to rare or valuable works.¹⁷⁰ In a world in which meritocratic civil examinations assured that certain types of knowledge led literally to power, such vigorous efforts to preserve books—and perhaps to keep them from other competitors—was only to be expected.

Thus, just as the ascendance of the imprint did not rule out the contin-

ued use and creation of manuscripts, so, too, it did not mean an end to complaints about book shortages. But these late Ming shortages were quite different from earlier ones in that their causes were more likely to be primarily man-made than strictly economic. In any event, it would be a mistake to assume that even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at the height of the Ming publishing boom, readers had access to the full wealth of Chinese texts—or even that they had access to the range of works available to the users of major research libraries in the West today. Private book collections were more often used as social and economic capital than as the basis for nonliterary scholarship or even social intercourse. The result was that intellectual life in the Song, the Yuan, and the Ming was far more fragmented and scholars and literati (to the extent that it is possible to generalize about such a varied group) far less widely read—and thus far less well informed, far more ignorant of contemporary intellectual trends—than we are inclined to assume today.

To be sure, some late Ming collectors adopted more generous policies toward the loan of books. They expressed sympathy for readers frustrated by obstacles to gaining access to books, particularly during a publishing boom. And in the early Qing, collectors concerned about the widespread destruction of books during the disorder of the 1640s adopted the practice of formally writing contracts (*yue*) to exchange their books.¹⁷¹ These agreements were still quite limited: in no case did they set out conditions for book loans among parties of more than two or three. And the impact of these arrangements was somewhat delayed: it was not until the early Qing, in scholarship undertaken by men such as Gu Yanwu and Huang Zongxi, that the political ramifications of the mid- and late-seventeenth-century interest in sharing book collections became apparent. Truly collaborative scholarship, based on widely shared access to private collections, would have to wait even longer, until the eighteenth century.¹⁷² By that time the manuscript would have largely but still not entirely ceded its traditional dominance to the imprint among readers throughout the rest of China. In late imperial China the “conquest” of the imprint, just like its ascendance, was a long time coming.

NOTES

1. Li Tao, *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* (Collected data for a continuation of the *Comprehensive mirror for aid in government*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), j. 60, p. 1333.
2. Su Shi, *Su Dongbo wenji shilüe* (Collected writings of Su Shi and an abbreviated account of other matters) (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1966), j. 53, p. 860.
3. Shen Gua, *Mengqi bitan jiaozheng* (Collated edition of notes taken in Mengqi) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), j. 18, p. 597.
4. Susan Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China,”

Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 54.1 (1994): 35–36. Among the more celebrated earlier studies that emphasize the role of the imprint in Song culture are Thomas Carter, *The Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward*, 2d rev. ed., L. Carrington Goodrich (New York: Ronald, 1955); Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (History of Chinese printing) (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1989), 57–58; Tsien Tsuen-hsün, *Paper and Printing*, vol. 5 (*Chemistry and Chemical Technology*), pt. 1, of Joseph Needham, ed., *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 159. Tsien speaks of the Song as “the golden age of Chinese printing,” and on p. xxii Needham talks of “books circulating in large numbers for five centuries before Gutenberg.”

5. Ming-sun Poon, “Books and Printing in Sung China” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1979), 1, 14.

6. Ye Mengde, *Shilin yanyu bian* (Discriminations of the babble of the forest of stones) (CSJC ed.), 75.

7. Cherniack, “Book Culture,” 45–55.

8. Timothy Barrett, “The *Feng-tao k'o* and Printing on Paper in Seventh-Century China,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 60 (1997): 538–40.

9. Pan Mingshen (Ming-sun Poon), “Songdai sija cangshu kao” (On private book collections in the Song dynasty), *Huaguo xuebao* (Journal of sinology) 6 (1971): 215–18.

10. Cherniack, “Book Culture,” 33. A similar judgment is found, albeit inconsistently, in Li Ruiliang, *Zhongguo gudai tushu liutong shi* (A history of the circulation of books in premodern China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2000), 268.

11. Jean-Pierre Drège, *Les bibliothèques en Chine au temps des manuscrits (jusqu'au Xe siècle)* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1991), 266–68. His “Des effets de l'imprimerie en Chine sous la dynastie des Song,” *Journal Asiatique* 282.2 (1994): 409–42, presents a slightly more positive assessment of Song imprints' relative importance. This essay, rich in astute observations, merits careful reading by all students of the Chinese book.

12. Inoue Susumu, “Zōsho to dokusho” (Book collecting and book reading), *Tohō gakuhō* (Journal of Oriental studies) 62 (1990): 409–45; “Shoshi . shoko . bunjin” (Bookstores, book merchants, and literati), in Araki Ken, ed., *Chūka bunjin no seikatsu* (The lives of Chinese literati) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1994), 304–38; and “Shuppan bunka to gakujitsu” (The culture of publishing and scholarship), in Mori Masao et al., eds., *Min Shin jidai shi no kihon mondai* (Basic issues in the history of the Ming and Qing periods) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1997), 531–55; Ōki Yasushi, “Minmatsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū” (A study of publishing culture in late Ming Jiangnan), *Hiroshima daigaku bungakubu kiyō* (Bulletin of the literature department of Hiroshima University) 50 (1992), special issue, 1–176.

13. Inoue, “Zōsho,” 428. Inoue's figures, despite my reservations, represent an important set of data that merits our attention. These figures provide a model basis for the tabulation now required for other early imprints in other Chinese collections.

14. Poon, “Books and Printing,” Appendix A, lists 1,478 Song imprints.

15. Drège, “Des effets,” 427–28; Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 201; Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 137, drawing on research by Hamada Keisuke. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 201, indicates that repairs could add another 10,000 copies to a woodblock's

print run; also, an edition could have been further extended by attaching each of its sheets to separate woodblocks for recarving and reprinting.

16. I.e., Chao Gongwu, *Junzhai dushu zhi jiaozheng* (A collated record of books read in the Jun Studio), coll. Sun Meng (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990); and Chen Zhensun, *Zhizhai shulu jieti* (Catalogue, with explanatory notes, of books in the Zhi Studio) (CSJC ed.).

17. Inoue, "Zōsho," 425–26.

18. Paul J. Smith, "Family, *Landsmänn*, and Status-Group Affinity in Refugee Mobility Strategies: The Mongol Invasions and the Diaspora of Sichuanese Elites, 1230–1330," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52.2 (1992): 665–708, esp. 668–72.

19. Inoue, "Zōsho," 410–12. Cherniack, "Book Culture," 51, notes that Zhu Xi also recognized how few imprints were in circulation when Su Shi made his comment.

20. John H. Winkelman, "The Imperial Library in Southern Sung China, 1127–1279: A Study of the Organization and Operation of the Scholarly Agencies of the Central Government," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s. 64.8 (1974): 10, 37. Note that the term for the Imperial Library changed over time. These changes can be generally understood as follows: From 977 to 978, Three Institutes (Sanguan) was the name given to the libraries at court for officials. In 978, when a private imperial library was also established, the name Institute for the Veneration of Literature (Chongwen yuan) was coined to refer to all the court libraries, including the private imperial one (though the term Three Institutes remained in use). Then, in 1080, when the library system changed in line with contemporary reforms, it was renamed the Palace Library (Bishu sheng). By this time, Three Institutes had fallen out of use. From 1080 on, though both other names appear, Institute for the Veneration of Literature became less commonly used than Palace Library.

21. Winkelman, "The Imperial Library," 8–9 (esp. n. 21), gives 82,384 *juan* for pre-An Lushan Rebellion Tang state libraries. According to Zhou Mi, under Emperor Yuan of the Liang the court had 140,000 *juan*; under the Sui (589–617), 370,000 *juan* in the Jiace Basilica; and in each of the Tang dynasty's (618–907) two capitals, up to 70,000 *juan* (Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu* [Words of a retired scholar from the east of Qi] [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983], j. 12, pp. 216–17). For the Sui and Tang, more detail survives. The Sui court collection reached at least 89,666 *juan*, since that was the number of Sui government books shipped from Yangzhou to the Tang capital; yet only 10 percent to 20 percent survived the transfer intact (*Suishu* [History of the Sui dynasty] [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973], j. 32, p. 908). For the Tang, important details survive for two court libraries, the Imperial Library and the Library of the Academy of Assembled Worthies (Jixian yuan). In ca. 720 the definitive catalogue of the Tang Imperial Library listed 2,655 works in 48,169 *juan* (i.e., 6,000 more *juan* than in its 705–6 catalogue). After the An Lushan Rebellion of 755, recovery was slow, but by 836 its holdings had risen to 54,476 *juan* (David McMullen, *State and Scholars in T'ang China* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988], 221–23, 235–37). The holdings of the Library of the Academy of Assembled Worthies were even greater, probably making it the largest library in Chinese history to this date. In 731 it had 89,000 *juan*, mostly newly made copies, but its growth was curtailed by destruction of the capital in the An Lushan Rebellion (Denis C. Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History under the Tang* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], 26 n. 85).

22. The Imperial Library in the Five Dynasties barely had 10,000 *juan* (McMullen, *State and Scholars*, 237).

23. Jiang Shaoyu, *Songchao shishi lei yuan* (Classified collection of facts on the Song dynasty) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), vol. 1, p. 393.

24. Inoue, "Shoshi," 310; Winkelman, "The Imperial Library," 10, 28, 36–37.

25. See Winkelman, "The Imperial Library," 10, 28, esp. 36–37, Table 7 and its n. a, for rejection of the 72,567-*juan* figure for the Imperial Library in 1177.

26. Yan Zhitui, *Yanshi jiaxun* (Family instructions of the Yan family) (CSJC ed.), 8, 51.

27. Wang Mingqing, *Huizhu lu* (Pure talk) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), *qianlu*, 1, p. 10. He adds that the books in their collections contained many textual errors.

28. Drège, *Les bibliothèques*, 172–73. These figures may be high: Jiang Yi (747–811) gained fame as a book collector with just 15,000 *juan* in the lower Yangzi delta county of Yixing (Wu Han, *Jiang Zhe cangshujia shilüe* [An abbreviated history of book collectors in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces] [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981], 214). Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History under the T'ang*, 109, tells of the 20,000-*juan* collection of Su Bian that in the late eighth century was said to be larger than all collections but the Imperial Library and the Library of the Academy of Assembled Worthies.

29. Jiang Jinghuan, "Wuzhong xianzhe cangshu kaolüe" (A brief study of book collectors in the Wu region), in Xu Yan and Wang Yanjun, comp., *Zhongguo lishi cangshu lunzhuo duben* (A reader of writings about book collecting in Chinese history) (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue, 1990), 643. For more usual Northern Song book collections, see Fang Jianxin, "Songdai sija cangshu pulu" (A supplementary catalogue of private book collecting in the Song dynasty), *Wenxian* (Documents) 35 (1988, 1): 220–39; 36 (1988, 2): 229–43.

30. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong" (Understanding books), j. 4, in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* (Notes from the Shaoshi Shanfang) (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1958), vol. 1, p. 53. Li Ruiliang, *Zhongguo tushu*, 317, lists a few such collections.

31. Inoue, "Zōsho," 414.

32. Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu*, j. 12, p. 217.

33. Inoue, "Zōsho," 414; and Wu Han, *Jiang Zhe cangshujia*, 134, 208. Wang Mingqing, *Huitu lu*, j. 7, p. 174, dates the fire to 1147.

34. Winkelman, "The Imperial Library," 36, especially his dismissal of a probably 1177 figure of 72,567 *juan* for the Imperial Library. Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu*, j. 12, pp. 217–18, mentions large collections whose sizes fell within this range. The principal exception is the 51,180-odd *juan* library of Chen Zhensun, but Zhou Mi attributes its great size to Chen's transcription of many old books in the Zheng, Fang, Lin, and Wu family libraries in Putian county, Fujian.

35. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," j. 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, pp. 53–54.

36. Winkelman, "Imperial Library," 32; Ōuchi Hakugetsu, *Shina tenseki shidan* (Discussions of the history of the book in China) (Tokyo: Shorinsha, 1944), 31.

37. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," j. 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 60.

38. Xu Bo, *Xushi bijing* (Distillations of the notes of Mr. Xu) (rpt. Taipei: Xue-sheng shuju, 1970), 7.5b.

39. Inoue, "Shoshi," 305.

40. Jiao Hong, *Jiaoshi bicheng* (Collection of notes by Jiao Hong) (Shanghai: Shang-

hai guji chubanshe, 1986), *xuji*, j. 4, p. 300. Li Ruiliang, *Zhongguo tushu*, 286, has similar stories.

41. Pan Meiyue, *Songdai cangshujia* (Song dynasty book collectors) (Taipei: Xuehai, 1980), 181; Zheng Weizhang and Li Wanjian, *Zhongguo zhuming cangshujia zhuanlie* (Brief biographies of famous book collectors in China) (Beijing: Shumu wenxian, 1986), 16–19.

42. Inoue, “Shoshi,” 310.

43. Ye Mengde, *Shilin jushi Jiankang ji* (Nanjing collection of writings by the retired scholar Ye Mengde) (late Ming ed., National Library of China copy), 4.1a–2b.

44. Chen Zhensun, *Zhizhai*, j. 5, p. 127.

45. Poon, “Books and Printing,” 24; Pan Meiyue, *Songdai*, 184. Pan also gives further information on the survival of Song imprints in Sichuan during the Southern Song (162, 165, 177, 185). The widespread destruction of book collections in the Five Dynasties had left only Sichuan and the lower Yangzi delta as areas with many books at the start of the Song; the early Song government’s plunder of Sichuan’s libraries only postponed the eventual growth of this area’s collections; see Jiang Shaoyu, *Songchao*, vol. 1, p. 393. However, we know very little of these collections, since they suffered greatly from repeated invasions and turmoil there in the last half of the thirteenth century. By the fourteenth century the flow was reversed, with a Sichuanese traveling to the lower Yangzi delta and collecting a vast number of books there within four to five years (Hu Yinglin, “Jingji huitong,” j. 1, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 17).

46. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 59; Su Bai, *Tang Song shiqi de diaoban yinshua* (Woodblock printing in the Tang and Song periods) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1999), 84–110.

47. *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao ji Siku weishou shumu, Jinhui shumu* (Comprehensive list and summary of contents in the *Complete Books of the Four Treasuries* and a list of books not yet collected), comp. Yong Rong et al. (rpt. Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1971), 4135–36, as adapted from Poon, *Books and Printing*, 68. See also Cherniack, “Book Culture,” 70–71, on this text in the Song.

48. Xiong He, *Xiong Wuxuan xiansheng wenji* (Collected writings of Xiong He) (CSJced.), j. 1, p. 6; Yuan Jue, *Qingrong jushi ji* (Collected writings of the retired scholar Yuan Jue) (CSJced.), j. 22, p. 397.

49. Chen Zhensun, *Zhizhai*, j. 8, p. 237. According to Paul U. Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Pharmaceutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), during the Southern Song the government printed only one new text, in 1249, and reprinted an 1108 text three times (in 1185, 1195, and 1211). Note how permanent the state’s retreat from printing pharmaceutical texts eventually became: “From the seventh century until the end of the Sung period, pharmaceutical books were ordered, revised, and published in China with government initiative or support, the only time before the twentieth century that this was to occur. Subsequently, herbals are reported to have been written upon order of the emperor only once during the Ming and once during the [Qing] period. The works resulting from these later orders, however, were not intended to reach the general public and therefore cannot be considered exceptional to the thesis given above” (45–46).

50. Yuan Jue, *Qingrong*, j. 22, p. 397.

51. Huang Zhen, *Huangshi richao* (Daily jottings of Huang Zhen) (*SKQSZB* ed.), 93.1a–2a.

52. Li Yu'an and Chen Chuanyi, comp., *Zhongguo cangshujia cidian* (Dictionary of Chinese book collectors) (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1989), 92.
53. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," *j.* 1, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, pp. 17–18.
54. Mao Chunxiang, *Gushu banben changtan* (Talks on old Chinese books) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 41. Lu Rong (1436–97) seems to suggest that this practice of government oversight held true for all Yuan imprints (*Shuyuan zaji*, [Collection of miscellaneous notes from a vegetable garden] [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985], *j.* 10, pp. 128–29), but Ōuchi says such high-quality editorial supervision was possible in the Yuan only for imprints published by government offices and schools (*Shina tenseki shidan*, 56–57).
55. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," *j.* 1, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 17; Wei Su, *Wei Taiyu ji* (Collected writings of Wei Su) (rpt. Taipei: Xin wenfeng, 1985), 10.16a–b.
56. Wu Xiaoming, "Mingdai de Shanghai cangshujia" (Shanghai book collectors in the Ming), *Shanghai shifan xuexuan xuebao* (Journal of Shanghai Normal College) 19.1 (1984): 102.
57. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," *j.* 1, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, pp. 18–19; Wu, "Mingdai de Shanghai cangshujia," 102; Li and Chen, comps., *Cangshujia cidian*, 106; Ding Shen, *Wulin cangshu lu* (Account of Hangzhou book collectors), in Xu and Wang, *Zhongguo lishi cangshu*, 593; Zheng Yuanyu, *Qiao Wu ji* (Collected writings of a sojourner in Wu) (rpt. Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1970), 10.1b; *Piling zhi* (Changzhou gazetteer) (1484 ed.), 22.10a; Inoue, "Zōsho," 414.
58. Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng quanji* (Complete collected writings of Huang Jin) (SBCK ed.), 17.3b, for Lu Yu of Suzhou; Lang Ying, *Qixiu leigao* (Draft of information, arranged in seven categories) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), *j.* 40, p. 584, for Sun Daoming of Songjiang.
59. Shiba Yoshinobu, "The Economy of the Lower Yangzi Delta, 1300–1800," forthcoming in Joseph McDermott, ed., *Commercial Growth and Urban Life in Jiangnan, 1000–1850*; David Faure, "What Weber Did Not Know: Towns and Economic Development in Ming and Qing China," in David Faure and Tao Tao Liu, eds., *Town and Country in China: Identity and Perception* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Press, 2002), 65; Richard von Glahn, "Towns and Temples: Urban Growth and Decline in the Yangzi Delta, 1100–1400," in Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn, eds., *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 176–211.
60. Lucille Chia, "Mashaben: Commercial Publishing in Jianyang from the Song to the Ming," in Smith and von Glahn, eds., *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition*, 296–307.
61. *Mingshi* (History of the Ming) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), vol. 1, *j.* 2, p. 21.
62. Lu Rong, *Shuyuan*, *j.* 10, pp. 128–29.
63. Chia, "Mashaben," 305–6.
64. Yang Xunji, *Wuzhong guyu* (Old stories of Suzhou) (Guang baichuan xuehai ed.), 11a–14a; the students successfully resisted these pressures. An imprint shortage also may have lain behind earlier court demands made on Suzhou literati. In 1465 the Suzhou literatus Li Yingzhen (1431–93) was reprimanded for refusing to make a handwritten copy of a Buddhist sutra for the emperor, though earlier on, others, including Hanlin officials in 1412, had obeyed imperial commands to hand-copy such sutras (Jiao Hong, *Guochao xianzheng lu* [Record of the dynasty's documents]

[rpt. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1965], 72.75b; Shen Defu, *Wanli yehuo bian* [Compendium of gossip from the Wanli era], 3 vols. [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju (1619), 1955], vol. 1, j. 10, p. 256).

65. Gu Yanwu, "Chao shu zixu" (Preface on manuscripts), *Tinglin wenji* (Collected prose of Gu Yanwu), j. 2, pp. 31–32, in *Gu Tinglin shiwenji* (Collected prose and poetry of Gu Yanwu) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983).

66. Lu Rong, *Shuyuan*, j. 4, pp. 39–40.

67. Inoue, "Zōsho," 416.

68. Ōuchi, *Shina tenseki shidan*, 61.

69. Yang Shiqi, *Dongli wenji xubian* (Continuation of the collected writings of Yang Shiqi) (*SKQSZB* ed.), 14.20a–b.

70. Yang Shiqi, *Dongli wenji xubian*, 17.17b.

71. Yang Shiqi, *Dongli wenji xubian*, 14.20b.

72. Lu Rong, *Shuyuan*, j. 10, p. 129.

73. Ye Sheng, *Shuidong riji* (Daily notes of Ye sheng) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), j. 20, p. 204; Yang Shiqi, *Dongli wenji xubian*, 18.16b.

74. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi shi, fu buzheng* (Poems and prose accounts of book collecting, supplemented and corrected), ed. Wang Xinfu (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1989), j. 2, p. 174.

75. Inoue, "Zōsho," 417–18.

76. Wai-kam Ho, "Late Ming Literati: Their Social and Cultural Ambience," in Chu-ting Li and James C. Y. Watt, eds., *The Chinese Scholars' Studio: Artistic Life in the Late Ming Period, an Exhibition from the Shanghai Museum* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 26.

77. Inoue, "Zōsho," 417; Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, p. 136. For another instance, see Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, p. 157.

78. Inoue, "Zōsho," 417–18.

79. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, pp. 117–18.

80. Lou Yue, *Gongkui ji* (Collected writings of Lou Yue) (*CSJC* ed.), *heyi*, 3.

81. Inoue, "Zōsho," 417.

82. Inoue, "Zōsho," 418.

83. K. T. Wu, "Ming Printing and Printers," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7.3 (February 1943): 224; Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, p. 129.

84. Ji Shuying, "Xinqin chaoshu de cangshujia Qian Gu fuzi" (Qian Gu and son, book collectors as industrious transcribers), *Lishi wenxian yanjiu* (Studies of historical documents), no. 2 (1991): 76.

85. Gu Yanwu, *Rizhi lu jishi* (*Record of daily jottings*, with collected commentaries) (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1994), j. 18, pp. 642–43. *Jiu Tangshu* (The old *History of the Tang*), after an initial printing in the early Southern Song, was not printed again until 1538 and remained rare until the eighteenth century (Li Ruiliang, *Zhongguo tushu*, 272).

86. Li and Chen, comps., *Cangshujia cidian*, 134.

87. Zheng and Li, *Zhuming cangshujia*, 30.

88. Inoue, "Shuppan bunka," 539–40.

89. Lu Rong, *Shuyuan*, 129.

90. Inoue, "Zōsho," 418–19.

91. Chia, "Mashaben," 303.

92. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishu*, j. 2, p. 142.

93. Huang Zongxi, comp., *Ming wenhai* (Great compendium of Ming dynasty compositions) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 1:860–61. Such a view was an extreme expression of literati distaste for commercial, non-Confucian publications that they previously had preferred to dismiss as not worthy of being read—being burned is not mentioned—by true scholars; see, for an example from the fourteenth century, Wu Hai, *Wenguo zhai ji* (Collected writings of the Wenguo Studio) (rpt. Taipei: Xin wenfeng, 1985), 4.1a–2a. Also see Anne E. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefable* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), 1, 279.

94. Ye Mengde, *Shilin yanyu bian*, 75.

95. Hu Yinglin, “Jingji huitong,” j. 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, pp. 55–56. All the information here on Ming publishing up to p. 77, unless otherwise indicated, comes from Hu’s remarkably detailed account in j. 4, pp. 53–60. Hu’s late-sixteenth-century distinction between the Suzhou area and the Hangzhou area receives confirmation from the Shanghai native Lu Shen (1477–1544) earlier in the sixteenth century. Interestingly, Lu notes how few unusual books and good libraries are found in Jiangxi province (despite its great success in the official examinations and in bureaucratic appointments then): “Nowadays Jiangxi is known, in the lower Yangzi delta, as ‘an old country for written documents.’ I went and visited it. The libraries there were very few, just one or two. Recently loads of books have arrived there from the north, but there are no very unusual books. In Zhejiang it is still better than that. As for our Suzhou (Wu) area, there are a large number of collected writings, some of them fine and beautiful” (vol. 1, j. 1, p. 17). Hu Yinglin notes that northern China, in particular Beijing, had printed many books earlier in the century.

96. Ji Shuying, “Tantan Mingkeben ji kegong—fu Mingdai zhongqi Suzhou diqu kegong biao” (A discussion on Ming woodblock imprints and woodblock carvers, with a table of the names of carvers in the Suzhou area in the mid-Ming), *Wenxian* 7 (1981, 1): 211–31; Ye Shusheng, “Mingdai Nanzhili Jiangnan diqu siren keshu gaishu” (General account of private book printing in the lower Yangzi delta in the Southern Metropolitan District in the Ming dynasty), *Wenxian* 32 (1987, 2): 219. Suzhou’s new rival, Songjiang, had its first bookstore, it seems, only in the early sixteenth century; until then a serious book collector there had to search for books in Nanjing or Beijing (Inoue, “Shoshi,” 316; Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, p. 147).

97. Zhou Lianggong, *Shuying* (Reflections on books) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1981), j. 1, p. 8.

98. Wang Zhaowen, *Guji Song Yuan kangong xingming suoyin* (Index to names of block carvers of Song and Yuan texts) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 63, 103; Sören Edgren, “Southern Sung Printing at Hangzhou,” *Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, Bulletin no. 61 (1989): 49.

99. Kitamura Ko, “Gendai Kōshūzō no kokukō ni tsuite” (On the carvers of the Hangzhou Buddhist canon in the Yuan dynasty), *Ryūkoku daigaku ronshū* (Collected articles of Ryūkoku University) 438 (July 1991): 120–36.

100. Chia, “*Mashaben*,” 319–25.

101. Ji Shuying, “Tantan Mingkeben ji kegong,” 216.

102. This possibility is sensibly discussed in Edgren, “Southern Sung Printing,” 49.

103. Inoue, “Shoshi,” 313–14.

104. Wei Su, *Wei Taihu*, 10.16a–b; Inoue, “Shoshi,” 317.

105. Gu Yanwu, *Jiangshan yong cangao* (Remnant writings, in draft, by Gu Yanwu), *j.* 3, p. 206, in *Gu Tinglin shiwenji*.
106. Gu Yanwu, *Tinglin yiwen jibu* (Supplement to the lost writings of Gu Yanwu), in *Gu Tinglin shiwenji*, 221.
107. Wang Meiyang, “Shilun Mingdai de siren cangshu” (On private book collecting in the Ming dynasty), *Wuhan daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui kexue ban)* (Journal of Wuhan University [Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition]) (1994, 4): 116.
108. Zheng and Li, *Zhuming cangshujia*, 54.
109. Terada Takanobu, “Shōkō Kishi no ‘Tanseidō’ ni tsuite” (On the Dansheng Hall of the Qi family of Shaoxing), in *Tōhō gakkai sōritsu yonjū shūnen kinen Tōhō gaku shūhen* (Collected essays in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Oriental Studies Association) (Tokyo: Tōhō gakkai, 1987), 533–48.
110. Yu Shenxing, *Gushan bizhu* (Gushan recorded talks), *j.* 7, p. 82, in Wang Qi and Yu Shenxing, *Yupu zaji Gushan bizhu* (Miscellaneous writings of Wang Qi, Gushan recorded talks) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984).
111. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, *j.* 2, pp. 161–62.
112. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, *j.* 2, p. 131.
113. Zheng and Li, *Zhongguo zhuming cangshujia*, 42.
114. Zhang Lixiang, *Yangyuan xiansheng quanji* (Complete collected writings of Zhang Lixiang) (Taipei: Zhongguo wenxian chubanshe, 1968), 20.15b–16a. Li Rui-liang, *Zhongguo tushu*, 333, claims that until at least the eighteenth century the texts of 80 percent to 90 percent of the seven thousand to eight thousand titles in the *Yongle dadian* survived only in this vast compendium (which itself was kept in only two places, Beijing and Nanjing).
115. Ji Shuying, “Tantan Mingkeben ji kegong,” 212. Ji also points out that extant Ming imprints have far outnumbered Song and Yuan imprints since at least the Qing (211), although this fact may simply be the consequence of naturally lower survival rates for older texts.
116. Inoue, “Zōsho,” 419; Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, *j.* 2, p. 159.
117. Hu Yinglin, “Jingji huitong,” *j.* 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 59; Inoue, “Zōsho,” 419–20.
118. Ōuchi, *Shina tenseki shidan*, 74–75; Wu Xiaoming, “Shanghai,” 103; Wu Han, *Jiang Zhe*, 183.
119. Wu Xiaoming, “Shanghai,” 103; Wu Han, *Jiang Zhe*, 183.
120. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, *j.* 2, p. 127.
121. Michael H. Harris, *History of Libraries in the Western World*, 4th ed. (London: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 131: “[I]n the sixteenth century more than 100,000 different books were printed in Europe alone and assuming an average of 1,000 copies each, that would mean a hundred million available to Europeans during the century.”
122. James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor, eds., *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 5, 7.
123. Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368–1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 212–13; Ōuchi, *Shina tenseki shidan*, 68.
124. Denis Twitchett, *Printing and Publishing in Medieval China* (London: Fred-eric C. Beil, 1983), 64; Inoue, “Zōsho,” 422–27, and “Shoshi,” 313–14.
125. Hu Yinglin, “Jingji huitong,” *j.* 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 57.

126. Evelyn S. Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations of Late Imperial Culture," in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), esp. 18–19.
127. Inoue, "Zōsho," 423–24.
128. Inoue, "Zōsho," 424–25. A mid-seventeenth-century writer expressed similar surprise over this Song practice of printing on both sides of the page; see Ouchi, *Shina tenseki shidan*, 32, 41.
129. Inoue, "Zōsho," 424.
130. Lu Rong, *Shuyuan*, j. 12, p. 153.
131. Huang Zongxi, comp., *Ming wenhai*, vol. 1, p. 1034.
132. Ōki, "Shuppan bunka," 56; Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," j. 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 57. See Huang Zongxi, comp., *Ming wenhai*, vol. 1, p. 1074, for an excellent account of the different stages required for producing paper in Changshan county, Quzhou prefecture, Zhejiang; presumably this account pertains to the copying paper produced there for government use. So great was late Ming paper production that in 1597 just one Jiangxi town had thirty paper mills with a total workforce of 50,000 individuals (Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998], 78).
133. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 747; Inoue, "Shoshi," 314–15. This view of the low cost of Ming carving work is echoed by the late Qing dynasty–Republican era author Chai E in his *Fantian lu conghu* (Collected records of the Fantian Hut) (rpt. Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1976), 18.28b–29a. Chai specifies the charge for carving the blocks for the Thirteen Classics with old commentaries as just 100-odd ounces of silver. See also the comparison of carving fees in Li Ruiliang, *Zhongguo tushu*, 366. The drop in carving costs gains significance from the little we know of timber (and thus woodblock) prices in the mid-Ming; a ca. 1575 report on recent price rises in the Beijing lumber market suggests that woodblocks might have become more expensive just when carving costs were declining (Chen Zilong, *Ming jingshi wenbian* [Collection of Ming writings on statecraft] [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983], 63.21a–22b).
134. Li Xu, *Jie'an laoren manbi* (Slow jottings of old Li Xu) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), j. 8, p. 334.
135. Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 375; Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 133.
136. Bibliophiles often lamented the lowering of woodblock carving standards but did not describe in detail the proper or improper procedure. In fact, as Drège, "Des effets," 415, observes, "the sole detailed [Chinese language] description of this procedure [of woodblock carving] dates only from 1947" (my translation). Like Paul Pelliot, he attributes this gap to the carving method's simplicity and unoriginality, so that the use for books of a technique already developed for seals and charms demanded neither an explanation nor a single "inventor."
137. Wang Qingzheng, "The Arts of Ming Woodblock-Printed Images and Decorated Paper Albums," in Chu-tsing Li and Watt, eds., *The Chinese Scholar's Studio*, 56–60; Naruse Fujio, "Soshū hanga ni tsuite (On Suzhou woodblock prints)," in *Chūgoku kodai hanga ten* (Catalogue for an exhibition of old Chinese woodblock prints) (Machida: Machida shiritsu kokusai hanga bijutsukan, October–November 1988), 50–57, plus reproductions on 105–215. Drège, "Des effets," 418–19, observes that this period's imprints are the first to provide evidence of a distinct craft specializing in the carving of illustrations alone (as opposed to texts).

138. Lang Ying, *Qixiu leigao*, j. 24, p. 370; *Hangzhou fuzhi* (Gazetteer for Hangzhou prefecture) (1898–1916 ed.), 100.29a.
139. Huang Zongxi, *Ming wenhai*, vol. 1, p. 1034; Inoue, “Shoshi,” 323–26; Kin Bunkyō, “Tō Hin’in to Minmatsu no shōgyō shuppan” (Tang Binyin and commercial publication in the late Ming), in Araki, ed., *Chūka no bunjin seikatsu*, 339–85.
140. Han Xiduo and Wang Qingyuan, *Xiaoshuo shufang lu* (A list of private printers of fiction) (Shenyang: Chunfeng, 1987).
141. Wang Mingqing, *Huitu lu*, *qianlu*, j. 1, p. 10; Li Ruiliang, *Zhongguo tushu*, 248; Twitchett, *Printing*, 30–34.
142. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 56; Chen Shidao, *Houshan zhushi wenji* (Collected writings of the retired scholar Chen Shidao) (rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), 11.9b–10a.
143. The court printed some famous texts for sale but sometimes restricted their acquisition to court officials, as in the case of its edition of the sixth-century agricultural treatise *Qimin yaoshu* (Essential techniques for ordinary people) (Su Bai, *Tang Song*, 29, 64). In 1044 an official even printed books and ordered county and prefectural officials to sell them for his own profit (*Song huiyao jiben* [Collection of important documents of the Song], comp. Xu Song [Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1964], 64.46b).
144. Cherniack, “Book Culture,” 79.
145. K. T. Wu, “Ming Printing,” 249; Ōuchi, *Shina tenseki shidan*, 62–63.
146. Inoue, “Zōsho,” 427–28.
147. Li Xu, *Jie’an*, j. 8, p. 334.
148. Joseph P. McDermott, “The Art of Making a Living in Sixteenth Century China,” *Kaikodo Journal* 5 (autumn 1997): 63–81.
149. Hu Yinglin, “Jingji huitong,” j. 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 64.
150. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 3, p. 274.
151. Zhang Quan, *Wuzhong renwu zhi* (Biographies of figures from the Wu area) (rpt. of 1567–72 ed.; Yangzhou: Yangzhou gujiu shudian, n.d.), 9.24b–25a; Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, pp. 121–22; Xu Bo, *Aofeng ji* (Collected writings of Xu Bo) (1625 ed), 10.9b.
152. Chen Jiru, *Chen Meigong xiansheng quanji* (Complete collected writings of Chen Jiru) (Ming ed.; National Library of China), 33.22a–23b; Li and Chen, comps., *Cangshujia cidian*, 142.
153. Wang Shizhen, *Yanzhou shanren xugao* (A draft of the continuation of the writings of Wang Shizhen) (Taipei: Wenhai, 1970), 72.15; Li and Chen, comps., *Cangshujia cidian*, 143.
154. The following discussion of changes in the print world from the twelfth to the seventeenth century is drawn from Inoue, “Zōsho,” 429–40.
155. Gu Yanwu, “Chao shu zixu,” *Tinglin wenji*, j. 2, p. 29.
156. Inoue, “Zōsho,” 434.
157. Li and Chen, comps., *Cangshujia cidian*, 90.
158. He Mengchun, *Yanquan He xiansheng Yudong xulu* (Properly ordered writings of He Mengchun) (1584 ed.), 35.10a–b. This text also quotes Song Qi (998–1061) as saying, “Only after one makes three hand copies of the *Wenxuan* does one see where it is beautiful.”
159. Gui Zhuang, *Gui Zhuangji* (Collected writings of Gui Zhuang) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), j. 10, p. 516.

160. Gu Yanwu, "Chao shu zixu," in *Tinglin wenji*, j. 2, p. 32.
161. Chen Dengyuan, *Tianyi ge cangshu kao* (On the Tianyi Ge collection) (Nanjing: Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo, 1932), 24.
162. Ye Changchi, *Cangshu jishi*, j. 2, p. 135; j. 2, p. 253; j. 4, p. 307; Li and Chen, comps., *Cangshujia cidian*, 125–26.
163. Wang Wan, *Yaofeng wenchao* (Transcription of the writings of Wang Wan) (SBCK ed.), 15.5b–6a.
164. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," j. 4, *Shaoshi shanfang*, vol. 1, p. 68.
165. Sun Dianqi, ed., *Liuli chang xiaozhi* (Short gazetteer of Liuli chang) (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1982), 100–102.
166. James Hayes, "Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World," in Johnson, Nathan, and Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, 78–95.
167. Nagasawa Kikuya, "Shina ni okeru toshokan no tanjō" (The birth of the library in China), in *Nagasawa Kikuya chosakushū* (Collected writings of Nagasawa Kikuya), vol. 6 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1984), 288–92.
168. Timothy Brook, "Edifying Knowledge: The Building of School Libraries in the Ming," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (June 1996): 93–119; and *The Confusions of Pleasure, Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 132.
169. Huang Zongxi, *Huang Zongxi quanji* (Complete writings of Huang Zongxi) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1985), vol. 1, p. 389.
170. E.g., Gui Zhuang, *Guizhuang ji*, j. 10, p. 494. See my unpublished draft manuscript, "Access to Books in China, 960–1650."
171. Such agreements had doubtless been made earlier, most notably between two eleventh-century collectors in Kaifeng, Song Minqiu (1019–79) and Wang Qinchen (ca. 1034–1101). But, as with many other aspects of social life, the terms for these exchanges appear to have first been written down and preserved in contract form in the late Ming. The most famous examples are those written by Cao Rong (1613–85) and Ding Yongfei (b. 1605; fl. mid-seventeenth century) in the middle of the seventeenth century.
172. See Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China*, 2d rev. ed., Asian Pacific Monograph Series (Los Angeles: University of California, Los Angeles, 2001), chaps. 5, 6.

PART TWO

Commercial Publishing and
the Expanding Market for Books

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THREE

Of Three Mountains Street

The Commercial Publishers of Ming Nanjing

Lucille Chia

Nanking ranks first among cities for wealth of its books, and most of these are in Three Mountains Street, where I keep the largest bookshop. Here are the Thirteen Classics, the twenty-one Dynastic Histories, all the tomes of the nine schools of philosophy, of the three religions and the hundred thinkers, besides collections of eight-legged essays and fashionable modern novels. I have travelled north and south to gather this collection, minutely examining old editions to make fine reprints with scholarly annotations. As well as earning a handsome profit by these transactions, I have helped to preserve and circulate the noblest thoughts of mankind. Even the doctors and masters of literature greet me with deference. I have reason to be satisfied with my reputation.

BOOKSELLER CAI, Scene 29 of *Peach Blossom Fan*¹

For several reasons, a study of the commercial publishers of Nanjing during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) is now more feasible than ever. Although so far there is little work specifically on publishing in Nanjing,² the broader subject of books and printing in late imperial China has recently been engaging the serious efforts of scholars in the history, literature, arts, religions, and science and technology of China. Moreover, the growing availability of a variety of bibliographic sources has made the formidable task of compiling adequate lists of imprints for a given publishing center or category of works possible and slightly less daunting.³

My interest in the Nanjing book trade grew out of my earlier research on the commercial publishers of Jianyang in northern Fujian.⁴ In the course of that study, I was struck by the connections between these two book centers, the largest in Ming China. Not only did the publishers of Jianyang and Nanjing issue facsimile reprints of one another's works, but men involved in various aspects of the book trade—publishers, authors and editors, and block carvers—operated in both places. These business and literary connections almost certainly formed part of a dense and intricate network over much of central and southern China, including other major Jiangnan cities such as Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Wuxi. Thus it seemed useful to look more closely at the book trade in these areas, starting with Nanjing. As the first capital

and, after 1421, the secondary capital of Ming China, Nanjing was one of the political and cultural centers of the country. Scholars have, therefore, a wealth of primary and secondary sources on Nanjing (and the lower Yangzi region in general) for the late imperial period. Particularly useful to a study on publishing is the mass of information on Ming literati culture, including the abundant and varied writings of the literati themselves, on which I will be drawing in this work.

This chapter presents some findings and speculations on commercial publishing of Ming Nanjing. It does not describe the printing activities of the various government offices, religious institutions, and academies (*shuyuan*) in the city, except in passing references to possible connections to commercial publishing. I do, however, discuss some publishers whose type and quantity of output make it difficult to determine whether they were “commercial” or “private” enterprises. There are many omissions—fine art albums, as well as a variety of other wonderfully illustrated works (travel essays, descriptions of Nanjing, novels)—just to name some glaring examples. They are absent in my discussion simply because I have not yet examined them in sufficient detail—and certainly not because they are unimportant. My discussion of imprints is based largely, though not entirely, on those that I have personally examined or know about through adequate reproductions and bibliographic descriptions. Wherever possible, I have avoided drawing broad conclusions concerning imprints about which I have no knowledge except as entries in a library catalogue. I hope that the conclusions offered here will inspire others to undertake work on this fascinating topic.

Here I first give a brief description of Ming Nanjing, highlighting the importance of Sanshan Street (Three Mountains Street) to the city’s book trade. Second, I discuss the commercial publishers—who they were, their output, and their connections to each other and to publishers in other areas. Third, I consider the imprints themselves, concentrating on the overall patterns of what was published and when and referring to specific works to illustrate these patterns. Fourth, based on these findings and those from my work on Jianyang, I speculate on changes over time and the regional differences and similarities in commercial publishing in Ming China.

NANJING DURING THE MING

By the late fourteenth century, according to the map in the *Hongwu jingcheng tuzhi* (Illustrated gazetteer of the Hongwu capital) from 1395,⁵ many of the features of Nanjing described by later Ming and Qing writers were already in place (see Fig. 1). The most important and obvious reason for this was the concerted efforts of the first Ming emperor to transform Nanjing from a Yuan provincial capital to the imperial capital.⁶ Thus during Ming Taizu’s reign (1368–98), the main city wall, the imperial city, numerous government

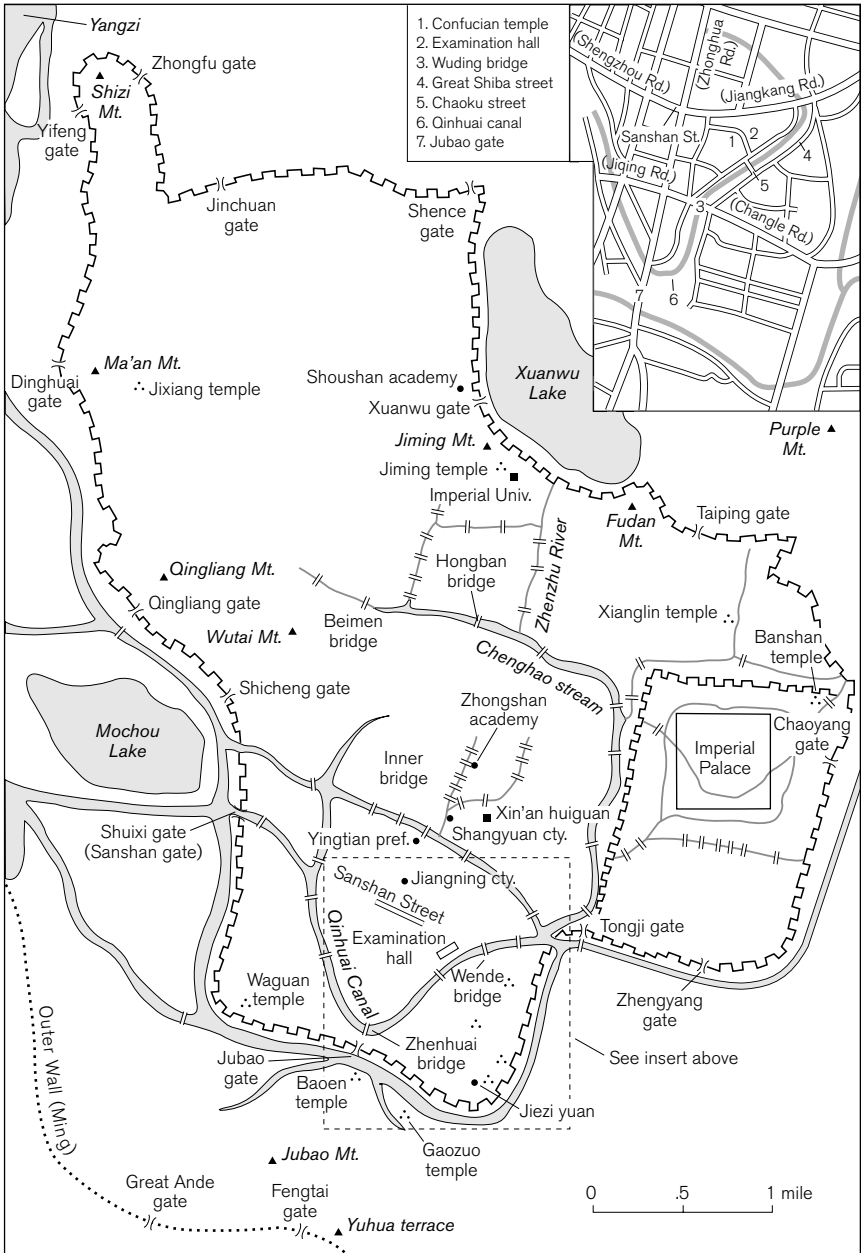


Figure 1. Nanjing in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century.

offices inside and outside of the palace complex, and a new Imperial University (Guozhi xue) were built. Much reconstruction also took place in the “old city” in the southern part of Nanjing, as new residents of all kinds settled there, including officials and their families, well-to-do households moved from other parts of Jiangnan by imperial decree, artisans, shopkeepers, and entertainers.⁷ Even a map of Nanjing today reveals many names of districts, streets, buildings, and passageways clearly indicating the specialties of their occupants in late imperial times.⁸

According to late Ming sources, with the transfer of the capital to Beijing in 1421, much of the impetus for the growth of Nanjing slackened, and there was a drastic decrease in its population, from which it still had not completely recovered a century later.⁹ Yet by the mid-sixteenth century, it had grown into the vibrant political and cultural center described in loving detail by so many Ming and Qing writers and shared fully in the economic recovery and expansion of the lower Yangzi region over the course of that century. Even as a secondary capital, however, Nanjing retained its political and administrative importance—though others clearly saw it as a posting of limited political significance, attractive largely because it offered considerable cultural pleasures. Officials not wanting the actual burden of administrative responsibilities falling on those posted to Beijing preferred positions in the Nanjing government. Retired officials often remained in the region to enjoy the delights of the city, as did many literati seeking excitement, fame, or just the company of others of their kind.

It is no surprise, then, that by the start of the Wanli era (1573–1620) Nanjing was also one of the greatest publishing centers in the country. A number of the commercial publishers would note in their imprints, “[publisher’s name] of Sanshan Street of the Book Quarter in Jinling/Moling [Nanjing]” (. . . Jinling/Moling shufang Sanshan jie). For example, the businesses of at least several of the publishers of the famous Zhou and Tang families were located there, as indicated by the colophons in their publications: “Jinling Sanshan jie shusi Dui Feng Zhou Yuejiao” (Bookshop of Zhou Yuejiao [Dui Feng] on Sanshan Street, Nanjing) and the very explicit “Jinling Sanshan jie Xiugu dui xi shufang Tang Fuchun” (Tang Fuchun of the book district at Xiugu opposite the stream on Sanshan Street in Jinling), possibly indicating a location near the Inner Bridge (Neiqiao) facing the Qinhuai Canal.

Where was Sanshan Street? It ran roughly in an east-west direction in the old city in southern Nanjing (see insert, Fig. 1), approximately along the stretch of road where today’s Shengzhou Road becomes Jiankang Road farther east and intersects the major north-south thoroughfares of Zhongshan South Road, Zhonghua Road, and Taiping South Road. As one of the main streets in this historic district, Sanshan Street was lined with all kinds of shops, teahouses, and several open-air markets.¹⁰ Very close by was the Confucian Temple complex, which had been the site of the Imperial University until it

moved to its new location on Xuanwu Lake in 1381. Just east of the Confucian Temple was the Gongyuan, the examination hall where the triennial provincial examination was administered. Slightly farther south, where the Number One Hospital is now situated, was the place where candidates from Jiangsu took the preliminary qualifying examination.¹¹ Diagonally across the Qinhuai Canal from the Gongyuan, over Wuding Bridge along where today's Great Shiba Street becomes Chaoku Street, were the famous pleasure quarters of Nanjing, celebrated by so many authors of the late Ming and early Qing. Somewhat farther to the north was the Xin'an Huiguan, for natives of that region of Huizhou, including the many involved in the Nanjing publishing industry.

There were several other well-known entertainment areas and scenic spots near Sanshan Street. For example, Mochou Lake lay outside the main city wall, slightly to the northeast of Shuixi Gate (also called Sanshan Gate). Here operatic troupes would hold performances and contests. To the south of Sanshan Street, past Jubao Gate (today's Zhongshan Gate), was Yuhua Terrace, a popular scenic spot. And farther west was the Bao'en complex, which included a number of monasteries, temples, and the Porcelain Pagoda, as well as inns and teahouses for visitors.¹²

Thus Sanshan Street, with easy access to the major educational institutions and liveliest entertainment districts of Nanjing, provided an excellent site for print and bookshops. There were other reasons as well why booksellers and publishers would have congregated on Sanshan Street. First, Chaoku Street was so named because the two government offices printing paper money were established there by Ming Taizu in 1374. Second, the *Nanzang* (Southern Tripitaka), which had been sponsored by the first Ming emperor and completed in 1372, was first printed in Nanjing. Before the blocks were moved to Beijing in the early fifteenth century, they were stored for a time at the Bao'en Temple, where they were used to print copies of sections on demand. Moreover, we have evidence of at least two early printers located in the area who were involved in printing Buddhist (and Daoist) works: the Jiang family's Laibin lou near Jubao Gate, which put out the *Dazang zunjing* (Tripitaka) in 1434, and the Shi family "under the Western Arcade at the Jubao Gate district" (Jubao men li Xilang xia Shijia), who printed a *Sanguan miaojing* (Classic of the three officers) for a patron from Jiading.¹³ In short, for booksellers and publishers looking to locate their businesses in an area attracting the most customers, Sanshan Street was the obvious choice.¹⁴

COMMERCIAL PUBLISHERS IN MING NANJING

Nearly everything we know or guess about Nanjing commercial publishers¹⁵ comes from their imprints: the period they were active, the size of their operations, the kinds of works they produced, and their connections to each

other and to the book trade in other areas of central and south China. Much of this information is contained in Table 3.1, which lists commercial publishers known by name¹⁶ that operated in Nanjing during the Ming (and sometimes into the Qing) and, where possible, a tentative estimate of the number of editions they produced.¹⁷

Table 3.1 reveals several striking features. First, most of the publishers listed were active from the mid-sixteenth century onward, a pattern consistent with the spectacular growth of late Ming publishing. Second, of the approximately one hundred eighty publishers, the vast majority are represented by very few imprints; some dozen publishers apparently dominated the industry and produced more than 40 percent of the titles.¹⁸ Indeed, if we make the reasonable guess that some of the publishers with the same surname (especially Tang and Zhou) collaborated so closely that they should be considered the same businesses, then the contrast between them and the smaller publishers is even more marked. Based on what we currently know, it is difficult to explain this dominance by a small number of publishers. As far as I can determine, there are no significant differences in the kind or quality of the books put out by the large- and small-scale publishers. It could be a testimony to the vibrancy of the late Ming Nanjing book trade that publishers large and small believed it good business to print much the same works—presumably all in such demand as to make their frequent publication profitable.

What do we know about the publishers themselves? Because of the fluidity of population movement in a large metropolis like Nanjing, the survival of materials concerning a group of businessmen on the fringes of elite literati culture some three hundred to four hundred years ago is far less likely than in some of the isolated publishing centers. In certain serendipitous cases, for some of the Nanjing publishers originally from these remote areas, such as Jianyang or Huizhou, we have some information through sources from their native areas. But for the most part, the Nanjing publishers remain merely names. Thus, in contrast to their counterparts in Jianyang, we have no genealogies, no portraits,¹⁹ and almost no knowledge about how they managed their businesses or their relationships with the authors and editors of the works they printed and the block carvers they employed. And although some of the best commercially published books equaled those produced by certain literati, only the latter have left writings discussing their editing and publishing efforts. For example, although the Tang family put out the lion's share of commercial editions of plays in Nanjing, these lack the wealth of editorial and critical comments left by Zang Maoxun (1550–1620) about his editions of Tang Xianzu's (1550–1616) four dream plays.²⁰

How well educated were these publishers? Very few of the publishers listed in Table 3.1 have even been mentioned in Ming writings, and none, with the exception of Wang Tingna (ca. 1569–1628), was recognized as a member of the Nanjing literati scene. Nevertheless, as a first guess, these publishers

TABLE 3.1 Nanjing publishers of the Ming

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Anya tang 安雅堂	Chongzhen (1628–45)	1	
Boshi tang/Daxing Boshi 博士堂/大興博氏	Wanli 45 (1617)	1	
Buyue lou, Shulin 書林步月樓	late Ming- early Qing	5+	
Cai Junxi, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林蔡浚溪	Wanli 3 (1575)	1	
Changchun tang, Jinling 金陵長春堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Chen Bangtai/Dalai Jizhi zhai 陳邦泰/大來繼志齋	late Ming (1590–?)	31	
Chen Hanchu Cunren tang 陳含初存仁堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	3+	also of Jianyang
Chen Longshan and Chen Zunshan Jingfang, Jinling 金陵陳龍山·陳尊山經房	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Dai Shangbin, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊戴尚賓	Jiajing-Longqing (1522–73)	2	
Dasheng tang, Jinling 金陵大盛堂	Wanli 1 (1573)	1	published in conjunction with Tang Fuchun (q.v.)
Daye tang 大業堂	late Ming- early Qing	2+	unclear if same as that of Zhou shi
Deju tang, Shulin 書林德聚堂	late Ming	4	possibly associated with Wu Deju/ Wu Guan (q.v.)
Dequan tang 德券堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Fu Chunming, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊傅春溟	Wanli 45 (1617)	1	
Fu Menglong, Boxia shulin 白下書林傅夢龍	late Ming	2	
Gong Banglu, Jinling shufang Longgang 金陵書坊龍岡龔邦錄	Longqing-Wanli (1567–1620)	2	
Gong Bichuan, Jinling 金陵龔碧川	Longqing 2 (1568)	1	
Gong Shaogang, Jinling 金陵龔少岡	Ming	1	
Gong Yaohui 龔堯惠	Wanli (1573–1620)	1+	at least one imprint copublished with Zhou Zhutan

(continued)

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Guangyu tang, Jinling 金陵光裕堂	Wanli-Tianqi (1573–1628)	6	see also Wu Jiwu Guangyu tang
Hu Chenglong, Jinling 金陵胡承龍	Wanli 18 (1590)	1	
Hu Dongtang, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊胡東塘 (Hushi, Jinling Dongtang 金陵東堂胡氏)	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Hu Xian, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊胡賢	Ming	1	Huizhou native
Hu Zhengyan Shizhu zhai 胡正言十竹齋	Wanli-early Qing (Ming)	25+	
(a) Huaide tang 懷德堂	(a) Xuande 6 (1431)	(a) 1	unclear if the four are related; also a Huaide tang in Jianyang
(b) Huaide shutang 懷德書堂	(b) Jiaping 23 (1544)	(b) 1	
(c) Nanjing Zhoushi Huaide tang 南京周氏懷德堂	(c) Wanli (1573–1620)	(c) 1	
(d) Jinling Shulin Huaide tang 金陵書林懷德堂	(d) Tianqi (1621–28)	(d) 1	
Huaiyin tang, Jinling 金陵槐蔭堂	Ming	1	
Huanwen tang, Shirong tang 煥文堂, 世榮堂	Wanli 1 (1573)	1	
Huijin tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林彙錦堂	Chongzhen (1628–45)	1	
Jiangjia Laibin lou, Jinling Jubao men 金陵聚寶門 姜家來賓樓	Ming	2	
Jiangshi Shiqu ge, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊蔣氏石渠閣	late Ming	2	
Jianshan tang, Jinling 金陵兼善堂	late Ming	2	
Jide tang, Jinling 金陵積德堂	Xuande 10 (1435)	1	
Jingshan shufang, Jinling 金陵荊山書坊	Wanli (1573–1620)		probably same as Jingshan Shulin Zhoushi (q.v.)
Jiuru tang, Nanjing 南京九如堂	Tianqi (1621–28)	1	
Jiyi tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林集義堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Jujin tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林聚錦堂	Jiajing- Chongzhen (1522–1645)	6	
Lei Ming, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林雷鳴	Ming	2	
Li Chao Jukui lou, Jinling 金陵李潮聚奎樓 (aka Shulin Li Chao/Shaoquan 書林李潮/少泉 and Jukui lou, Moling 秣陵聚奎樓)	Ming	16	
Li Chengyuan, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林李澄源	Chongzhen 6 (1633)	1	
Li Hongyu, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊李洪宇	Wanli-Tianqi (1573–1628)	3+	
Li Liangchen Dongbi xuan, Jinling 金陵李良臣東壁軒	late Ming (1583–1645)	1	
Li Wenxiao 李文孝	Chongzhen (1628–45)	1	
Liangheng tang, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊兩衡堂	Tianqi (1621–28)	1	
Lijin tang, Shulin 書林麗錦堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Liushi Xiaoyou tang, Jianye 建業劉氏孝友堂	Ming	1	
Lizheng tang, Jinling 金陵麗正堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Lu Shiyi, Shulin yusuo 書林豫所陸時益	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Mao Shaochi, Jinling shusi 金陵書肆毛少池	Ming	1	
Qinren tang, Jinling 金陵親仁堂	Wanli 8 (1580)	1	
Rao Renqing 饒仁卿	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Renrui tang, Jinling 金陵人瑞堂	Chongzhen 4 (1631)	1	
Rongshou tang, Jinling 金陵榮壽堂	late Ming		see Tangshi Shide tang
Sanduo zhai, Jinling 金陵三多齋	Tianqi (1621–28)	3	also a Sanduo zhai in Suzhou (Qing)
Sanmei tang, Jinling 金陵三美堂	Ming	1	

(continued)

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Sanshan daoren 三山道人	late Ming	1	
Sanshan shufang, Jinling 金陵三山書林	Longqing (1567–73)	2	
Shijia, Jingdu Jubao men li Xilang xia 京都聚寶門 里西廊下施家	Jingtai 3 (1452)	1	
Shouyuan tang, Jingdu Shulin 京都書林壽元堂	Zhengde 1 (1506)	1	
Shu Shichen, Jinling Yiquan 金陵一泉舒世臣	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Shu Zaiyang, Shulin 書林舒載陽	Wanli-Tianqi (1573–1628)	2	may be same as Shu Shichen
Tang Chongyu, Jinling 金陵唐聃宇	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Tang Duixi Fuchun tang, Jinling 金陵唐對溪富春堂 (aka Jinling Sanshan Xiugu dui xi shufang Tang Fuchun 金陵三山繡谷對溪書坊唐富春 (aka Jinling Sanshan jie Tangshi Fuchun tang 金陵三 山街唐氏富春堂, aka Tang Fuchun Shide tang 唐富春 世德堂)	Wanli (1573–1620)	60	a number of imprints seem to be joint publications of various Tang family shops (if they are indeed distinct)
Tang Guoda/Tang Zhenwu, Jinling Shulin Guangqing tang 金陵書林唐國達/ 唐振吾廣慶堂	late Ming	24	
Tang Huichou Wenlin ge 唐惠疇文林閣	Wanli (1573–1620)	3	for Wenlin ge, see also Tang Jinchi, Tang Liyao, Tangshi
Tang Jianyuan, Jinling 金陵唐建元	late Ming	1	
Tang Jinchi Shulin Jixian tang 唐錦池書林集賢堂 (aka Jinling shupu Tang Jinchi Wenlin ge 金陵書鋪 唐錦池文林閣)	Wanli-Tianqi (1573–1628)	6	for Wenlin ge, see also Tang Huichou, Tang Liyao, Tangshi
Tang Jinkui, Shulin 書林唐金魁	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Tang Jiyun Jixiu tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林唐際雲積秀堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Tang Lifei/Jilong, Jinling 金陵唐鯉飛/季龍	Wanli (1573–1620)	4	
Tang Liyao Jixian Tang, Jinling 金陵書林 唐鯉躍集賢堂 (aka Tang Liyao Wenlin tang/ge 唐鯉耀文林堂/閣)	Wanli (1573–1620)	9	for Wenlin ge, see also Tang Huichou, Tang Jinchi, Tangshi
Tang Longquan/Tingren, Jinling shusi 金陵書肆唐 龍泉/廷仁	Wanli (1573–1620)	9	
Tang Mingzhou, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊唐溟洲	late Ming	1	
Tang Qian/Yixuan, Jinling Sanshan shusi 金陵三山書 肆唐謙/益軒 (aka Tang Qian Yuhua zhai, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林唐謙雨花齋)	Wanli (1573–1620)	3	
Tang Shaocun xingxian tang shupu 唐少村興賢堂書鋪 (aka Tang Shaoqiao, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊唐少橋)	Wanli (1573–1620)	5	
Tang Sheng Shide tang, Jinling 金陵唐晟世德堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	3	for (Xiugu) Shide tang, see also Tang Fuchun, Tang Xiugu
Tang Tingrui, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林唐廷瑞	Jiajing (1522–67)	1	
Tang Wenjian, Jinling Shulin 金陵書坊唐文鑒	Ming	1	
Tang Yuyu, Jinling 金陵唐玉子	late Ming (1618–44)	1	
Tangshi Shide tang (Xiugu) (繡谷) 唐氏世德堂	Jiajing-Wanli (1522–1620)	49	for Shide tang, see also Tang Fuchun, Tang Sheng
Tangshi Wenlin ge, Jinling 金陵唐氏文林閣	late Ming	18	for Wenlin ge, see also Tang Huichou, Tang Jinchi, Tang Liyao
Tangshi, Zhoushi heke, Jinling 金陵唐氏周氏合刻	Wanli 14 (1586)	1	
Tongzi shan, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林童子山	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Wang Fengxiang/Jincen, Wang Weiding Guangqi tang,	Wanli- Chongzhen	11	see also Wang Shimao, Wangshi, (continued)

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Jinling shufang 金陵書坊王鳳翔/荊岑, 王維鼎光啓堂 (formerly aka Baimen shulin Wang Jincen 白門書林王荊岑)	(1573–1645)		Cheshu lou
Wang Jingyu, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊王敬宇	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Wang Jinshan, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊王近山	Wanli 3 (1575)	1	
Wang Luochuan, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊王洛川	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Wang Shangguo Yiguan zhai, Shulin 書林王尚果一貫齋	Tianqi (1621–28)	2	
Wang Shangle, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊王尚樂	Ming	1	
Wang Shaotang 王少唐	Ming	1	
Wang Shenwu, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊王慎吾	Ming	1	
Wang Shihong, Shulin 書林王世烘	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Wang Shimao, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林王世茂	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	possibly related to Wang Fengxiang and Wangshi Cheshu lou; not the scholar of the same name
Wang Tingna Huancui tang 汪廷訥環翠堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	22	native of Xiuning, Huizhou
Wang Yuanzhen Huainan shuyuan 王元貞淮南書院	Jiajing-Wanli (1522–1620)	8	
Wang Yunpeng Wanhu xuan 汪雲鵬玩虎軒	Wanli (1573–1620)	7	native of Xiuning, Huizhou—unclear how many imprints were produced in Huizhou and how many in Nanjing
Wangshi (Wang Shimao/Erpei, Wang Fengxiang) Cheshu lou, Jinling 金陵王氏 (王世茂/爾培, 王鳳翔) 車書樓	Ming	1	
Wangshi Qinyou shutang, Jinling 金陵王氏勤有堂	Hongwu (1368–99)	3	
Wei Qing/Duiting, Jinling 金陵魏卿/對廷	Wanli 19 (1591) preface	1	

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Wenshu tang, Jinling 金陵文樞堂	Ming		see Wu Deju/Wu Guan
Wenxiu tang, Jinling 金陵文秀堂	late Ming-early Qing	2	
Wenzhi tang, Jinling 金陵文治堂	late Ming-early Qing	2	
Wosong ge, Jinling 金陵臥松閣	Wanli 34 (1606)	1	
(a) Wu Guan/Deju 吳琯/ 德聚 (aka Deju tang 德聚堂, aka Wu Guan Xishuang tang 吳琯西爽堂)	Wanli- Chongzhen (1573–1645)	(a) 21	
(b) Wu Guan/Wu Guiyu Wenshu tang, Jinling 吳琯/金陵吳桂宇文樞堂		(b) 6	
Wu Jian Tongde tang, Jinling Sanshan jie Zuochuan 金陵三山街左 川吳諫同德堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Wu Jiang/Songting, Jinling Sanshan shushe 金陵三山書舍松亭吳江	Wanli 5 (1577)	1	
Wu Jiwu Guangyu tang 吳繼武光裕堂	Wanli 24 (1596)	1	see also Guangyu tang
Wu Jizong, Jinling Sanshan jie 金陵三山街吳繼宗	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Wu Mianxue/Zhongheng Shigu zhai 吳勉學/ 中珩師古齋	Wanli (1573–1620)	46	from She county (Huizhou), imprints may not all be produced in Nanjing
Wu Shaoxi, Jinling 金陵吳少溪	Ming	1	
Wu Xiaoshan, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊吳小山	Ming	1	
Wu shi, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊吳氏	late Ming	2	
Xiao Tenghong/Shaoqu Shijian tang, Jinling 金陵蕭 騰鴻/少渠師儉堂	late Ming	8	also of Jianyang
Xu Chengzhou, Xu Ziqiang et al., Nanjing Yinjing pu 徐程紆, 徐自強等南京印經鋪	Ming	1	

(continued)

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Xu Longshan and Xu Dongshan, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林徐龍山，徐東山	Wanli 2 (1574)	1	
Xu Mengren, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林許孟仁	Hongzhi (1488–1506)	1	
Xu Shiji, Jinling, and Xiong Minghui, Nanchang 金陵徐世濟，南昌熊鳴惠	Chongzhen 1 (1628)	1	
Xu Sishan, Yu Nanyai, Jinling 金陵徐思山，余南崖	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Xu Songye, Jinlin Shulin 金陵書林徐松野	Ming	1	
Xu Tingqi Dongshan tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林徐廷器東山堂	Longqing-Wanli (1567–1620)	2	
Xu Xiaoshan shufang, Jinling 金陵徐小山書坊	Ming	1	
Xu Yonghe, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊徐用和	Chenghua 20 (1484)	1	
Xujia shufang, Jinling 金陵徐家書坊	Ming	1	
Yan Shaoxi/Liangqi Jinxiu tang, Jinling 金陵晏少溪/良榮錦繡堂	Wanli 34 (1606)	1	
Yang He 楊鶴	Wanli (1573–1620)	4	
Yang Mingfeng, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林楊明峰	Wanli 19 (1591)	1	
Ye Gui Jinshan shushe, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊建陽葉貴近山書舍	Jiaying-Wanli (1522–1620)	11	also of Jianyang
Ye Junyu, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林葉均宇	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Ye Ruchun, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林葉如春	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Ye Yingzu, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林葉應祖	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Yisheng tang 翼聖堂	late Ming	2	
Youhua ju, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林友花居	Wanli 40 (1612)	1	
Youshi ju, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林友石居	Wanli- Chongzhen (1573–1645)	4	

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Yu Damao/Siquan Yuqing tang, Jinling and Zhang Qipeng/Binyu 金陵余大茂/余思泉餘慶堂, 張起鵬/賓宇	late Ming	1	Yu Siquan mainly a Jianyang publisher
Yu Shangxun, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林余尚勛	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Yu Yushi, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林余遇時	Chongzhen (1628–45)	1	
Yuyu tang 郁郁堂	late Ming	3	
Zha Ce, Yu Jinling Sanshan jie Zhichuan 寓金陵三山街芝川查策	Longqing 1 (1567) preface	1	
Zhashi, Shulin 書林查氏	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Zhang Shaowu 張少吾	Ming	1	
Zhangshi, Jianye 建葉張氏	Ming	1	
Zhao Junyao, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊趙君耀	Jiajing (1522–67)	1	
Zhao Pu, Guozi jian qian Shulin 國子監前書林趙鋪	Hongzhi 10 (1497)	1	
Zheng Dajing/Siming Kuibi tang 金陵書林鄭大經/思明奎璧堂 (aka Jinling Shulin Zheng Dajing Side tang 四德堂)	late Ming–early Qing	14+	native of She county (Huizhou)
Zheng Yuanmei Kuibi zhai, Jinling Puyang 金陵莆陽鄭元美奎璧齋	late Ming–early Qing	2	
Zhengshi, Jiangling 江陵鄭氏	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Zhongwen tang and Li Yigong, Moling 秣陵種文堂, 李一公	late Ming	1	
Zhou Chengmao, Jinling 金陵周成卯	Wanli 30 (1602)	1	
Zhou Jingsong, Shulin 書林周敬松	Wanli 4 (1576)	1	
Zhou Jingwu, Shulin 書林周敬吾	Wanli (1573–1620)	3	
Zhou Jinquan Dayou tang, Jinling 金陵周近泉大有堂 (aka Zhou shi Dayou tang, Moling 秣陵周氏大有堂)	Longqing-Wanli (1567–1620)	8	

(continued)

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Zhou Kungang, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊周昆岡	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Zhou Qianshan, Jinling shusi 金陵書肆周前山	Wanli 5 (1577)	1	
Zhou Ru □□ Wanjuan lou, Nandu 南都萬卷樓周如□□	Wanli 43 (1615)	1	
Zhou Ruming, Yan Shaoxi Shimei tang 周如溟, 晏少溪世美堂	Wanli 32 (1604)	1	
Zhou Ruquan Daye tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林周如泉大業堂	late Ming	2	
Zhou Rushan Daye tang, Jinling 金陵周如山大業堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	6	see also Zhou Xidan and Zhoushi
Zhou Shaokui, Shulin 書林周少葵	Ming	1	
Zhou Shitai Bogu tang 周時泰博古堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	5	
Zhou Sida, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林周四達	Tianqi 7 (1627)	1	
Zhou Tinghuai, Jinling shusi 金陵書肆周廷槐	Wanli (1573–1620)	2	
Zhou Tingyang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林周廷揚	Chongzhen (1628–45)	2	
Zhou Wenhuan 周文煥	Wanli (1573–1620)	1	
Zhou Wenqing Guangji tang 周文卿光齋堂	late Ming	1	
Zhou Wenyao Ruying fu, Xiugu 繡谷周文耀汝映父	late Ming (1627–45)	1	
Zhou Xian, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林周顯	Wanli 23 (1595)	1	
Zhou Xidan Daye tang, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林周希旦大業堂 (aka Xiugu Zhou shi Daye tang 繡谷周氏大業堂)	Ming	1	for Daye tang, see also Zhou Rushan and Zhoushi
Zhou Yong shupu, Nanjing 南京周用書鋪	Ming	1	
Zhou Yuejiao/Yingxian/Duifeng, Jinling Shulin 金陵書林周曰校/應賢/對峰 (aka Zhou Yuejiao Wanjuan lou 周曰校萬卷樓)	Wanli (1573–1620)	37+	

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Active period</i>	<i>Estimated editions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Zhou Yuwu/Sida Deyue zhai, Jinling 金陵周譽吾/ 四達得月齋	Tianqi 7 (1627)	1	
Zhou Zhutan/Zongkong, Jinling shufang 金陵書坊周 竹潭/宗孔 (also Jiabin tang 嘉賓堂)	Wanli (1573–1620)	9	
Zhou Zongyan, Shulin 書林周宗顏	Wanli (1592–1620)	1	
Zhoushi Airi zhai 周氏愛日齋	Chongzhen 15 (1642)	1	
Zhoushi Daye tang 周氏大業堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	4	see also Zhou Rushan and Zhou Xidan
Zhoushi Huaide tang, Nanjing 南京周氏懷德堂	late Ming	1	
Zhoushi Renshou tang 周氏仁壽堂	Wanli (1573–1620)	4	
Zhoushi Siren tang, Shulin 書林周氏四仁堂	Longqing (1567–73)	2	
Zhoushi, Jingshan Shulin 荊山書林周氏	Wanli (1573–1620)	5	
Zhu Zhifan (Yuhua guan) 朱之蕃(玉華館)	Wanli-Tianqi (1573–1628)	4	
Zongwen shushe, Jinling 金陵宗文書舍	Wanli 29 (1601)	1	

must have had sufficient classical learning to know what works were in demand, to keep a close watch on the literary and scholarly fashions of the day, to know whom to hire to compile and annotate model examination essays, which prestigious literati to invite to write prefaces that would help sell a work, whom to consult about preparing editions of plays with performance instructions, and so forth.

Of the Zhou family publishers, at least one listed himself as “Taixue Zhou Shitai” (Imperial University student Zhou Shitai) in one of his imprints,²¹ suggesting, if nothing else, that he thought it worthwhile to buy certification as a student of the Imperial University. But perhaps the publishers’ confidence in their own status is revealed far more eloquently in the way they listed their names, usually without any official titles, alongside those of their famous (alleged) authors and editors. For example, in a Wanli edition of Zhu Xi’s (1130–1200) *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* (Outline of the *Comprehensive mirror*

for government), next to the names of Sima Guang (1019–86), Zhu Xi, and the famous Ming scholar and statesman Ye Xianggao (1562–1627)²² are the names of one Li Jing of Fujian (probably the actual author of the commentaries) and the publisher, Tang Sheng. This is a typical example of the “credits” at the beginning of a work (or of each *juan*) in a Nanjing commercial edition.

As for connections among the Nanjing publishers, their imprints yield a bit more information. For example, there are a number of imprints that list both a Tang and a Zhou establishment as publisher, including a hefty literary encyclopedia and the perennially popular medical classic *Furen liangfang daquan* (Compendium of effective prescriptions for women’s diseases). Another literary anthology lists Zhou Zongkong and Gong Yaohui as joint publishers.²³ These collaborations most likely arose from business considerations, as keen competition among publishers even of the same surname was quite evident from near-duplicate editions they produced in the same period (see below).

Furthermore, because a number of men involved in the Nanjing book trade came from other publishing centers, it is not surprising to see inter-regional connections revealed in the imprints. Those between Nanjing and Jianyang are abundantly clear. For example, the *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* published by Tang Sheng lists as the collator Liu Chaozhen of Jianyang, who was active in the famous Anzheng tang of the Liu family in Jianyang. Another Jianyang printing house, the Xiong family’s Zhongde tang, is given the collating credit in the same work. Another work, *Tongjian zuanyao chao hubai* (Essentials of the *Comprehensive mirror [for government]*), looks suspiciously like a Jianyang product, both because of the appearance of the text and because of the characteristic lotus-leaf colophon, even though the Tang family Shide tang is identified as the publisher. It is quite possible that the popularity of this work among students in Nanjing persuaded the Tang print shop to appropriate it by borrowing the blocks from Fujian, perhaps in exchange for some of its own.²⁴

A well-known edition of the *Xinke chuxiang guanban dazi Xiyou ji* (Newly engraved, illustrated, large-character official edition of the *Journey to the West*) supplies further evidence for the relationship between the Xiong family’s Zhongde tang and the Tang family Shide tang. This Jianyang edition has the same preface and the same kind of full-leaf illustrations interspersed among the text as does the Nanjing edition. In fact, other than the statement at the start of some *juan* that the edition was reprinted by Xiong Yunbin (“Shulin Xiong Yunbin chong qie”) and the *guanban* (“official edition”) in the title,²⁵ there are few clues that this is a Jianyang reprint. Moreover, the Jianyang publisher was careless enough to put (or leave) the name of the original publisher at the start of some *juan* in his reprint: “Jinling Shide/Rongshou tang zi xing” (published by the Shide tang and Rongshou tang of Nanjing). (It is

possible that the Nanjing publishers lent the blocks to Xiong Yunbin, though we have no proof of this.)²⁶

Some Jianyang men established at least part of their businesses in Nanjing and proceeded to produce much the same kinds of imprints as other publishers in the city. The Xiao family's Shijian tang published a number of plays, such as the *Xiuru ji* (The story of the embroidered jacket), which was probably issued in the early seventeenth century. On the upper right-hand corner of most of the full-leaf illustrations is noted "Liu Suming juan" (engraved by Liu Suming), followed by Liu's seal, on which appear the words "Suming tushu" (drawn by Suming). Both Liu Suming and his relative Liu Suwen²⁷ are recorded as the carvers, and sometimes the calligraphers as well, in a number of Nanjing and Jianyang imprints.²⁸ What is also noteworthy is that other than the commentator, the famous Ming author Chen Jiru (1558–1639),²⁹ the three men listed on the first page of the first *juan* are all Jianyang men. The publisher, Xiao Tenghong (1586–?), judging from the appearance of other books he produced as well as this edition of *Xiuru ji*, operated at least as much in Nanjing as in Jianyang. Yu Wenxi, who is credited as the proofreader, was a cousin of the best-known publisher of Jianyang, Yu Xiangdou (ca. 1560–1637), but he also worked extensively in Nanjing, according to imprints that credit him as collator or editor. Finally, Xiao Mingsheng (1575–1644), the collator, was either a cousin or an uncle of Xiao Tenghong and worked as both an editor and a printer in Jianyang and Nanjing.³⁰ Thus in one imprint produced in Nanjing, three of the most important Jianyang families involved in the book trade are represented.

The Ye family of publishers seems to have operated in at least three places and had connections to a fourth. For one Wanli era publisher who listed his bookshop as Jinling Sanshan jie Jianyang Ye Gui Jinshan tang (Jinshan Hall of Ye Gui from Jianyang on Sanshan Street in Nanjing), we have about fifteen extant imprints, some looking like Nanjing editions (or what would appeal to Nanjing literati customers), others like lower-quality Jianyang editions. In addition, there is at least one imprint that lists a "Sanqu Ye Jinshan" (Ye Jinshan of Sanqu), a reprint of this edition by the Ye family Baoshan tang of Zhejiang, and a different work that lists in a colophon a Hu family of Sanqu as the publisher of the work in Piling (in modern Changzhou, Jiangsu) and a Ye Jinqian of Sanshan Street who wrote an advertising note (*gaobai*) when he reprinted the book.³¹ We can tentatively untangle these relations by suggesting that the Ye family, originally from and continuing to operate a publishing business in Jianyang, established branches at both Sanqu in western Zhejiang (near modern-day Changshan in Quzhou, bordering on northern Fujian) and Nanjing while collaborating with the Hu publisher(s) of Sanqu, who also had some business in Piling. Although it is highly plausible that the peripatetic publishers from the smaller printing centers in southern and central China would have established a network of branch shops throughout

the region, we have little specific evidence for such practices before the Qing. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to correlate these scraps of information for the Ye and Hu publishers.

Sojourners from another area, Huizhou, also played an important role in Nanjing commercial publishing. The most prolific was Wu Mianxue, a native of She county, who produced a wide variety of works, including the Classics, histories, miscellaneous philosophical works, medical texts, literary encyclopedias, literary anthologies, and at least two letter-writing manuals. Despite his forty-odd extant imprints, however, we know very little about him and cannot even be certain whether all his publications were produced in Nanjing or partly in Huizhou as well. In general, his publications were carefully produced but lacked the mass of front matter, such as prefaces and *fanli* (general regulations) characteristic of so many commercial editions. Indeed, nearly all of the works list Wu Mianxue as the collator and nothing else.

Three other publishers from Huizhou who operated in Nanjing produced mostly plays and drama and song miscellanies, many of which were illustrated and engraved by one or more of the Huang block carvers, also from She county.³² Of the publishers, we know a fair amount about Wang Tingna of Huancui tang, who seems to have been the only publisher listed in Table 3.1 to have achieved some recognition among the literati in Nanjing, as Katherine Carlitz explains in Chapter 7.³³ The second of these men was Wang Yunpeng,³⁴ whose Wanhu xuan produced several of the most popular *chuanqi* (southern dramas) of the time, as well as a miscellany of popular songs. The last man, Zheng Siming, published works from the Wanli era onward under various business names (*tangming*), including Kuibi zhai and Dajing Side tang. The business was still in operation during the early Qing, when imprints were issued by one Zheng Yuanmei.

The last known Huizhou native shown in Table 3.1 is Hu Zhengyan (ca. 1582–1672), owner of Shizhu zhai, which issued a number of superb color art albums, including the painting manual *Shizhu zhai shuhua pu* (Calligraphy and painting manual of the Ten Bamboo Studio; 1633) and the collection of ornamental letter papers, the *Shizhu zhai jianpu* (Album of letter papers of the Ten Bamboo Studio).³⁵

We see, therefore, that among the publishers, authors, editors, and block carvers working in Ming Nanjing, many came from other printing centers, probably attracted by the cultural liveliness of Nanjing, to which they themselves then contributed. Moreover, their imprints show that they managed to produce books that were distinctly “Nanjing,” as well as others that maintained traditions of their native regions. Given the activities of these men in the Nanjing book trade, we should question Hu Yinglin’s (1551–1602) statement that while imprints from Nanjing (and Suzhou) were disseminated throughout the empire, residents of these places only read books published

locally.³⁶ We will see that the commerce in books must have worked in both directions.

COMMERCIAL IMPRINTS OF MING NANJING

Nearly all imprints during the Ming dynasty were produced from the late sixteenth century onward (Table 3.2). In fact, dividing the dynasty exactly in half (conveniently at the end of the Hongzhi reign, in 1505), we find that only about ten commercial editions can be definitely counted during the first half, whereas more than eight hundred were produced during the second half.³⁷

Indeed, this seems to be a regional trend shared by the Jiangnan publishing centers and Jianyang. In an earlier study, I found that in Nanjing, Suzhou, and Hangzhou, the number of nongovernment imprints during the first half of the dynasty constituted a little under 10 percent of the total.³⁸ A very similar and somewhat more certain figure is derived by examining Ming printed editions from Jianyang alone: only about 10 percent of all the works were printed in the first half of the dynasty.³⁹ The similar disparity between the earlier and later Ming figures for the three Jiangnan cities combined and for Jianyang alone strengthens the argument that the distributions are largely the result of a lower survival rate for earlier imprints common throughout central and southern China and are not particular to a single printing center.

Table 3.2 shows that the dearth of commercial publications from Nanjing in the earlier part of the Ming was much more severe than for Jianyang.⁴⁰ Both areas, however, participated in the publishing boom that began in central and southern China in the mid-sixteenth century. By subdividing the later Ming into three parts—1522–1572 (Jiajing and Longqing reigns), 1573–1620 (Wanli and Taichang reigns), and 1621–1644 (Tianqi and Chongzheng reigns)—we can see that the most dramatic surge in publications in both Nanjing and Jianyang was during the Wanli era.

It is beyond my scope here to explain the publishing lull in the early Ming and the near-explosive growth of commercial publications in the late Ming.⁴¹ It seems clear, however, that as far as the book trade was concerned, Fujian and Jiangnan should be considered one integrated area. If we suppose a more general economic integration of this region, then a depression in the early Ming may partly explain why the growth of Nanjing when it was the capital was not reflected in a commensurate growth in its book trade, and why the Jianyang book trade suffered a decline after steady growth through the Song and Yuan.

Now let us turn to the actual imprints. In Table 3.3 the lists of Nanjing “commercial” imprints produced during the Ming distinguish between some seven hundred editions, which are almost certainly from Nanjing, and

TABLE 3.2 Commercial imprints in Nanjing and Jianyang
(by Ming reign periods)

<i>Reign period</i>	<i>Total imprints up through end of reign period</i>		<i>No. of imprints in each time period</i>	
	Nanjing	Jianyang	Nanjing	Jianyang
Hongwu (1368–99)	4	13		
Jianwen (1399–1402)	4	14		
Yongle (1403–25)	4	21		
Xuande (1426–36)	6	32		
Zhengtong (1436–50)	6	55		
Jingtai (1450–57)	7	66		
Tianshun (1457–65)	7	74		
Chenghua (1465–88)	9	113		
Hongzhi (1488–1506)	10	158		
Zhengde (1506–22)	12	221		
Jiajing (1522–67)	38	434	50 years	43
Longqing (1567–73)	55	446		
Wanli (1573–1620)	639	1,047	47 years	586
Taichang (1621)	641	1,048		
Tianqi (1621–28)	680	1,107	23 years	111
Chongzhen (1628–45) (a)	752	1,160		
(Wanli and later) (b)	54	258		
Date undetermined (c)	24	121		
Total (a + b + c)	830	1,539		

about one hundred others, possibly also from Nanjing, judging from their physical appearance, contents, and the identities of the editors, collators, annotators, and sometimes the authors, who either served in a government post or lived in Nanjing.⁴² The figures in Table 3.3 almost certainly give undercounts for several reasons,⁴³ so that the absolute numbers are less useful than the overall patterns we can discern. For example, we can be fairly confident that the dominance of plays and miscellanies of dramatic arias and songs, of medical texts, and of general literary collections will not be challenged even when the table is revised to incorporate more imprints. Similarly, it is quite likely that Buddhist works produced by commercial publishers did in fact constitute a small fraction of their total offerings, since such publications were produced largely under the auspices of the various temples in the area, sometimes in collaboration with government agencies.

In the discussion below, I proceed from the less popular (i.e., less frequently printed) to the more popular kinds of imprints, an order that coincidentally follows the broad organization of the *siku* (four treasuries) classification of works into the Classics, histories, philosophy, and belles

TABLE 3.3 Topical distribution of Nanjing and Jianyang imprints

	Nanjing imprints		Possible Nanjing imprints		Nanjing total		Jianyang	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
1-1 易 <i>Book of Changes</i>	7	(1.0)	1	(1.1)	8	(1.0)	24	(1.5)
1-2 書 <i>Book of Documents</i>	1	(0.1)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)	22	(1.4)
1-3 詩 <i>Book of Poetry</i>	14	(1.9)	3	(3.2)	17	(2.0)	21	(1.3)
1-4 禮 <i>Book of Rites</i>	8	(1.1)	1	(1.1)	9	(1.1)	28	(1.8)
1-5 春秋 <i>Spring and Autumn Annals</i>	8	(1.1)	1	(1.1)	9	(1.1)	34	(2.1)
1-6 孝經 <i>Book of Filial Piety</i>	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
1-7 五經總義 <i>Works on the Classics</i>	1	(0.1)	2	(2.1)	3	(0.4)	8	(0.5)
1-8 四書 <i>Four Books</i>	8	(1.1)	0	(0.0)	8	(1.0)	39	(2.4)
1-9 樂 <i>Music</i>	1	(0.1)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)	0	(0.0)
1-10 小學 <i>Philology</i>	12	(1.6)	3	(3.2)	15	(1.8)	44	(2.8)
1 經部 <i>Classics (total)</i>	60	(8.2)	11	(11.7)	71	(8.6)	220	(13.8)
2-1 正史 <i>Dynastic histories</i>	9	(1.2)	2	(2.1)	11	(1.3)	10	(0.6)
2-2 編年 <i>Annalistic histories</i>	5	(0.7)	3	(3.2)	8	(1.0)	87	(5.5)
2-3 紀事本末 <i>Narrative histories</i>	1	(8.2)	1	(1.1)	2	(0.2)	0	(0.0)
2-4 別史 <i>Separate histories</i>	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
2-5 雜史 <i>Miscellaneous histories</i>	8	(1.1)	1	(1.1)	9	(1.1)	12	(0.8)
2-6 詔令奏議 <i>Decrees and memorials</i>	8	(1.1)	2	(2.1)	10	(1.2)	2	(0.1)
2-7 傳記 <i>Biographies</i>	11	(1.5)	5	(5.3)	16	(1.9)	21	(1.3)
2-8 史鈔 <i>Historical excerpts</i>	1	(0.1)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)	35	(2.2)
2-9 載記 <i>Contemporaneous records</i>	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
2-10 時令 <i>Chronography</i>	1	(0.1)	1	(1.1)	2	(0.2)	0	(0.0)
2-11 地理 <i>Geography</i>	12	(1.6)	3	(3.2)	15	(1.8)	14	(0.9)
2-12 官職 <i>Bureaucracy</i>	1	(0.1)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)	4	(0.3)
2-13 政書 <i>Works on government</i>	2	(0.3)	0	(0.0)	2	(0.2)	14	(0.9)
2-14 目錄 <i>Catalogues</i>	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)
2-15 史評 <i>Historical criticism</i>	4	(0.5)	2	(2.1)	6	(0.7)	23	(1.4)
2 史部 <i>History (total)</i>	63	(8.6)	20	(21.3)	83	(10.0)	223	(14.0)
3-1 儒家 <i>Confucianists</i>	18	(2.4)	3	(3.2)	21	(2.5)	67	(4.2)
3-2 兵家 <i>Strategists</i>	5	(0.7)	0	(0.0)	5	(0.6)	15	(0.9)
3-3 法家 <i>Legalists</i>	4	(0.5)	2	(2.1)	6	(0.7)	4	(0.3)

(continued)

TABLE 3.3 (continued)

	Nanjing imprints		Possible Nanjing imprints		Nanjing total		Jianyang	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
3-4 農家 Agronomists	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
3-5 醫家 Medicine	78	(10.6)	5	(5.3)	83	(10.0)	244	(15.3)
3-6 天文算法 Astronomy and mathematics	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)	10	(0.6)
3-7 術數 Divination	22	(3.0)	1	(1.1)	23	(2.8)	80	(5.0)
3-8 藝術 Arts	20	(2.7)	0	(0.0)	20	(2.4)	10	(0.6)
3-9 譜錄 Collections	8	(1.1)	0	(0.0)	8	(1.0)	2	(0.1)
3-10 雜家 Miscellaneous schools	20	(2.7)	2	(2.1)	22	(2.7)	35	(2.2)
3-11 類書 Encyclopedias	47	(6.4)	5	(5.3)	52	(6.3)	231	(14.5)
3-12 小說 Anecdotists	18	(2.4)	1	(1.1)	19	(2.3)	17	(1.1)
3-13 釋家 Buddhists	4	(0.5)	1	(1.1)	5	(0.6)	2	(0.1)
3-14 道家 Daoists	12	(1.6)	4	(4.3)	16	(1.9)	27	(1.7)
3-15 叢書 Collectanea	3	(0.4)	0	(0.0)	3	(0.4)	6	(0.4)
3 子部 <i>Philosophy (total)</i>	259	(35.2)	24	(25.5)	283	(34.1)	744	(46.7)
4-1 楚辭 Elegies of Chu	4	(0.5)	1	(1.1)	5	0.6	1	(0.1)
4-2 別集 Separate collections	58	(7.9)	15	(16.0)	73	8.8	115	(7.2)
4-3 總集 General collections	71	(9.6)	17	(18.1)	88	10.6	115	(7.2)
4-4 詩文評 Literary criticism	5	(0.7)	0	(0.0)	5	0.6	12	(0.8)
4-5 詞曲 Ci poetry and dramatic songs	181	(24.6)	5	(5.3)	186	22.4	53	(3.3)
4-6 小說 Novels	35	(4.8)	1	(1.1)	36	4.3	110	(6.9)
4 集部 <i>Belles lettres (total)</i>	354	(48.1)	39	(41.5)	393	47.3	406	(25.5)
Total	736		94		830		1,593	

lettres.⁴⁴ Because of space limitations, I discuss only the most important types of works and highlight those features that reveal most clearly the publishers' marketing strategies. Moreover, to demonstrate the regional differences among publishing centers during the Ming, I make brief comparisons between Nanjing and Jianyang where relevant, drawing on Table 3.3.

Confucian Classics

That various government offices in Nanjing were publishing Confucian Classics may have discouraged commercial publishers from doing so and also

may have appropriated the market for these works. What was left for commercial enterprises? They published primarily commentaries or essays on the Classics (with or without the original text) by famous scholars of the past and present as well as by lesser-known authors who were probably in their employ. Not surprisingly, many (more than 40 percent) of the works on the Classics and the Four Books (those texts of the classical canon that were at the center of the examination curriculum) were intended as examination aids, as is obvious from both their titles and their contents.

It is interesting to see which authors and commentators were most popular. First, the Zhu Xi commentaries remained popular for the obvious reason that they presented, for the most part, the officially sanctioned and emphasized interpretations. But a number of other works also offered commentaries and annotations by famous contemporary authors. For example, the poet Zhong Xing's (1574–1624) name was attached to at least four Nanjing commercial editions of the *Classic of Songs* in the last decades of the Ming dynasty, after he co-compiled a highly popular poetry anthology.⁴⁵ Other intellectual luminaries with personal or professional ties to Nanjing, such as Jiao Hong (1541–1620) and Wang Shizhen (1634–1711), were also popular among the commercial publishers as (alleged) authors of commentaries or prefaces.⁴⁶

Another common practice of commercial publishers—using far less illustrious professional writers to produce essays and annotations for works relevant to the government examinations—is clearly seen in the number of works on the Classics edited or compiled by one Xu Fepeng: one work on the *Classic of Changes*, four on the *Classic of Songs*, one on the *Rites of Zhou*, one on the collected commentaries for the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and at least one on the Four Books. These editions varied in quality. Some were mediocre productions marketed by publishers that operated in both Nanjing and Jianyang. Others, however, were of quite high quality. For example, Zheng Yuanmei, whose Kuibi tang published at least two of the works annotated by Xu, was sufficiently proud of his edition of the commentaries of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* that his cover page announces the title as *Kuibi Chunqiu*. In fact, it is quite an elaborate production and boasts a preface by the playwright Tang Xianzu, probably the most famous native of the period from Xu Fepeng's home region of Linchuan, Jiangxi.

Some of the printing houses best known for their production of plays and song collections, such as Chen Bangtai's Jizhi zhai, the Tang family's Guangqing tang, Wenlin ge, and Fuchun tang, and Zhou Rushan's Wanjuan lou, also produced Confucian Classics, as did Hu Zhengyan of Shizhu zhai, better known for his fine art albums. Thus, although Table 3.3 shows that works on the Classics and the Four Books constituted a minor portion (6.8 percent) of Nanjing commercial imprints, they nevertheless provided these pub-

lishers with a steady market that they were unwilling to yield entirely to their lesser-known Nanjing competitors and their Jianyang rivals.

Histories and Historiographical Works

Some of the patterns noted among the commercial Nanjing editions of the Classics are also evident in the works on history. Thus the commercial publishers tended in general to avoid duplicating government imprints. For example, they printed few dynastic histories, since the Nanjing Directorate of Education put out all twenty-one.⁴⁷ Of the four exceptions, two (a *Sanguo zhi* [Annals of the three kingdoms] and a *Jinshu* [History of the Jin]) were published by Wu Guan's Xishuang tang, which seems to have specialized in good editions of historiographical works; and one was a *Shiji* (Records of the grand historian) by Wu Mianxue. Another, less well printed commercial edition of the *Jinshu* from 1639, purportedly from a Jiang family school, attributed commentaries to Zhong Xing and collation to Chen Jiru.

Indeed, many of the works on history were (supposedly) written or annotated by famous scholars and officials with some connection to Nanjing. As noted, Ye Xianggao, the grand secretary from Fujian, was credited with recollating the Shide tang's *Zizhi tongjian gangmu*. A biographical compendium printed by Ye Gui of Jianyang and Nanjing, the *Qie liang zhuangyuan bianci Huang-Ming renwu kao* (A study of personages of the Ming dynasty, collated by two top scholars; 1595), almost certainly was *not* the work of either Jiao Hong or Zhang Fu (1546–ca. 1631), the two *zhuangyuan* (top scholars, or *optimi*, who had earned the top place in the examinations) mentioned in the title. A commercial edition of the *Zhanguo ce* (Intrigues of the warring states), published in 1592, claimed commentaries jointly written by Zhong Xing and Chen Renxi (1579–1634).⁴⁸ Both men, especially Chen, were known by then for essays on the histories, but it is unclear whether either worked on the *Zhanguo ce*.

The *Zhanguo ce*, as it turns out, was a fairly popular work among Nanjing commercial publishers, which produced at least four editions in the late Ming.⁴⁹ The work was probably appreciated as much for its anecdotal as for its historical and scholarly value, if we consider other histories that were printed. For example, the *Huang Ming diangu jiwen* (Records of institutions and anecdotes of the Ming dynasty) of Yu Jideng (1544–1600), which records in a readable style the discussions in the imperial court between the emperor and officials, was published by the Tang family's Shide tang, probably sometime during the Wanli era.⁵⁰

Another type of less demanding narrative work popular among both the Nanjing and Jianyang publishers was biographical compendia. One work, which was offered in a variety of editions, sometimes in combination with short texts on military strategy, was the *Baijiang zhuan* (Biographies of one

hundred commanders), which recounted the lives and deeds of great generals throughout Chinese history. In the Wanli and Tianqi (1621–28) eras, there were in Nanjing alone five commercial editions, as well as a private edition printed by Gu Qiyuan (1565–1628).

Also notable, though there were fewer editions of each, were the lavishly illustrated compendia of stories about historical personages that delivered moral lessons. For example, the *Renjing yangqiu* (A [spring and] autumn mirror for mankind), written and published by Wang Tingna in 1599, had full-foolio illustrations engraved by Huang Yingzu (of the Huizhou family of block carvers) and biographies of moral exemplars of filial piety, loyalty, frugality, and chastity. Two even more extravagant compendia, originally compiled under imperial auspices and subsequently reprinted in Nanjing and other places, were the *Dijian tushuo* (The emperor's mirror, an illustrated discussion) and the *Yangzheng tujie* (Cultivating rectitude, an illustrated explanation); both of these texts are discussed by Julia Murray in Chapter 11 in this volume. The former, consisting of stories of the praise- and blameworthy actions of emperors throughout history, originally meant for the instruction of the young Wanli emperor, was reprinted at least once in Nanjing by the commercial publisher Hu Xian.⁵¹ The *Yangzheng tujie*, a later compendium, written by Jiao Hong for the Wanli emperor's heir, was also much reproduced. Two well-known commercial reprints, both by Huizhou men—Wang Yunpeng of the Wanhu xuan and Zheng Siming of the Kuibi ge—and both engraved by Huang carvers of Huizhou probably working in Nanjing, are among the best-known surviving editions.⁵² Such works served to show off the taste, wealth, and social standing aspired to by their publishers or their purchasers.

Leishu

Leishu, or category books, include a bewildering variety of works whose chief common characteristic is their topical arrangement.⁵³ Consequently, this category is represented by a large number of works—more than 6 percent of the Nanjing imprints in Table 3.3. Despite this arguably artificially high figure, it is useful to survey the different kinds of *leishu* published in Nanjing since they reveal the preferences of their publishers. In general, *leishu* can be organized into the following, sometimes overlapping types: general encyclopedias, writing manuals and literary phrase books, poetry handbooks (including occasional verse), story collections, and encyclopedias for daily use. Among the first two types especially are many works that could equally be classified as examination literature. Although none of these types of works were new in the Ming, many more were compiled and printed during this dynasty than previously. In contrast to the *leishu* printed in Jianyang, one-fourth of which were story collections, with the remainder distributed roughly equally among the other categories, the Nanjing *leishu* are marked

by a preponderance of general encyclopedias and, so far as I can determine, nearly a total absence of encyclopedias for daily use. Of the *leishu* listed in Table 3.3, the breakdown is as follows:⁵⁴ general encyclopedias, 26; writing manuals, 8; poetry handbooks, 4; story collections, 9; and encyclopedias for daily use, 1.

The general encyclopedias are basically compendia of excerpts, sometimes quite brief, ranging from a few characters to a few lines, from the Classics, histories, and famous prose and verse works of the past, sometimes with brief annotations. Many of them were used as general references, although some were compiled with specific purposes in mind, such as explaining the origins of terms and things or focusing on materials useful for the government examinations. There might also be supplements to the original passages placed at the end of each topic, by writers employed by the publisher or (allegedly) by famous scholars. About four of these general encyclopedias were imitations of famous Song texts and expressly mentioned their use for the examinations, but the majority of such works produced in Nanjing seem to have been regarded by the publishers as general references and aids in literary composition. Evidently most of these books were largely recompilations of older encyclopedias, from which huge portions could be copied wholesale. Furthermore, because they were not illustrated, unlike many of the pharmaceutical works, the commercial publishers could afford to reprint a number of substantial *leishu*.⁵⁵

Of the eight writing manuals, consisting for the most part of topically arranged essays written in the Ming, four had titles explicitly announcing their relevance to the government examinations, and the others were collections of assorted pieces by well-known scholars of the time. It is noteworthy that at least one of the imprints, the *Shuolüe* (Notes and sketches), consisting of Gu Qiyuan's jottings on historical sources, apparently was first issued in 1613 by the commercial publisher Wu Deju, suggesting a working relationship between the two men.⁵⁶

Of the remaining types of *leishu*, I offer very brief comments, as I have examined only a few of them. First, there are noticeable differences between the Nanjing and Jianyang works. For example, the collections of occasional couplets (*duilian*), belonging to the "poetry handbook" type, from Nanjing seem to be of higher literary quality than those from Jianyang.⁵⁷ Second, the collections of stories (frequently designated *gushi*) offered by the Nanjing publishers often consisted of long excerpts from classical sources, with annotations and commentaries, which, again, could have been useful in studying for the examinations. In contrast, most of the Jianyang works were stories, often written in very simple language and accompanied by equally simple glosses on the meaning and pronunciation of characters and presented in a *shangtu xiawen* format (i.e., with a relevant illustration on the top third of each page and the text underneath). Third, the absence of household en-

cyclopedias in the output of Nanjing commercial publishers merits some speculation. It seems highly unlikely that such useful works could not find buyers in Nanjing, but it may be that the need was supplied from Jianyang and other printing centers, or even by printers in and around Nanjing of whom we know nothing, not even their names.

Medical Works

As Table 3.3 indicates, medical works constituted an important staple of commercial publishers in both Nanjing and Jianyang. Indeed, the Nanjing commercial houses published as many books on medicine as in the entire history category and somewhat more than in the Classics category and the *leishu* subcategory. Only literary collections and dramatic works outnumbered those on medicine. To explain the importance of the medical works, we must identify some of their publishers and discuss what texts they produced and how.

A number of popular works were reprinted several times. Thus, of the approximately eighty Nanjing publications in medicine, there were, for some sixteen titles, two or occasionally three editions each. Where the publishers in Nanjing and Jianyang differed was in their choice of titles: the former tended to be more conservative than the latter, preferring to print well-known works from earlier periods, including about eight compendia of pre-Ming classics. This is surprising considering that they should have been able to command greater financial and labor resources to meet the challenges of producing new and lengthy works. Those few Nanjing publishers who did print new works, such as Wu Mianxue and Hu Zhengyan, may have had some knowledge of medicine themselves.⁵⁸

The pharmaceutical works (*bencao*) printed in Nanjing serve to illustrate some of the intricacies of the publishing business, especially the connections between Nanjing and Jianyang. For instance, the popular *Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi leizheng beiyong bencao* (Revised materia medica of the Zhenghe era, based on the Classics and Histories, annotated and classified by type, for practical use)⁵⁹ was printed by at least one commercial house in Nanjing in 1581, the Tang family's Fuchun tang, two years after the appearance of a Jianyang edition. The Fuchun tang edition contained illustrations that closely resembled the Jianyang edition, although the two were engraved from different blocks; the illustrations in both texts are similar to those in a Yuan edition from Jianyang. The similarities of the illustrations suggest that one way the publishers economized on production costs was to copy faithfully pictures from older editions, mistakes and all.⁶⁰

Another large work, the *Bencao mengquan* (Elimination of ignorance in pharmaceuticals), was published immediately after it was written in 1565 (probably in Huizhou) and reprinted at least five times by 1628.⁶¹ Indeed, the first

(unillustrated) Jianyang imprint came out within a year of the original edition, and in 1573 the first known Nanjing edition was published by the Zhou family's Renshou tang.⁶² Not only was the latter also unillustrated, but it had the same number of characters per column as the Jianyang one and a lotus-leaf printer's colophon that was a Jianyang trademark. All this again suggests that the Nanjing edition was a copy of the Jianyang one. In 1628 an illustrated version of the work, the *Tuxiang Bencao mengquan*, with a supplement by Liu Kongdun, was published both by Zhou Ruquan's Wanjuan lou in Nanjing and by the Liu family in Jianyang; this was clearly a collaborative project, with the two printing houses sharing the blocks.⁶³ Moreover, the two publishers may have collaborated to some extent with the Jianyang Xiong family's Zhongde tang, since one of the supplements in the *Tuxiang Bencao mengquan*, preceding the main text, consisted of portions of the *Lidai mingyi tu xingshi* (Names of famous physicians in history), the fifteenth-century illustrated biographical compendium of famous physicians by Xiong Zongli. (In this section, too, the illustrations greatly resemble those in the original 1467 reprint.)⁶⁴

Finally, the early publishing history of Li Shizhen's (1518–93) *Bencao gangmu* (Outline of materia medica) suggests that commercial publishers exercised considerable caution with regard to investing money and labor in a large new work, one containing many illustrations, even if it had the support of well-known, influential scholars and a potentially large market. In the brief time that Li worked as a low-level official in the Imperial Academy of Medicine in Nanjing, he made the acquaintance of some noted literati, including Wang Shizhen. Nevertheless, when Li had completed his work and went to Nanjing again, it took him some ten years to convince a publisher to print it. Even so, this 1596 posthumous first edition published by Hu Chenglong in Nanjing has been criticized by many scholars for the poor quality of its illustrations, which again were copied from similar works; it provided only one drawing for each plant and ignored regional variations. For the remainder of the Ming, there was only one more new edition (1603); the five other versions were reprints of either the 1596 or the 1603 edition.⁶⁵

Why, then, were so many medical works produced by the Nanjing publishers? In part, it had to do with the perennially wide demand for such books, not just from professional physicians (*shiyi*) and Confucian doctors (*ruyi*), but also from nonprofessionals, those who considered some understanding of medicine an important part of a scholar's knowledge or householders wanting a medical reference work. Such a market may have been as large as or larger than that for examination literature and dramatic works, even in Nanjing—and still more so outside large urban centers. At the same time, because the illustrated pharmaceutical works were popular but also comparatively expensive to produce, the tendency among publishers in different places to collaborate or to copy from each other is clear.

Drama and Related Works

When it comes to illustrated imprints of plays and drama miscellanies, which account for about one-fourth of all the Nanjing commercial imprints during the Ming, the publishers were truly in their element. Zhang Xiumin has estimated that two hundred to three hundred titles were printed in Nanjing,⁶⁶ so the figure of 181 in Table 3.3 is probably an undercount, even taking into account some number of lost titles.⁶⁷ Moreover, some of the imprints listed are not editions of complete plays but miscellanies of arias from popular plays or *sanqu* (lit., “dispersed songs”; or independent songs or art songs); the list also includes an edition of Shen Jing’s (1553–1610) *Zengding Nan jiugong qupu* (Manual of southern prosody, expanded), a handbook for playwrights.⁶⁸

What can we say about these works? First, nearly all of them were published in the late Ming, that is, the Wanli era or later. Second, several large, well-known printing houses dominated the market, among them, Chen Bangtai’s Jizhi zhai (~29 titles); the Tang family’s Fuchun tang (~45), Shide tang (~15), Wenlin ge (~27), and Guangqing tang (~8); Wang Tingna’s Huancui tang (~20);⁶⁹ Wang Yunpeng’s Wanhu xuan (~6); and Xiao Tenghong’s Shijian tang (~8).⁷⁰

Third, the editions of the complete plays had full- or half-folio illustrations, either grouped together in the front of the work preceding the text or scattered throughout the text. Full-folio illustrations were almost always arranged so that the two halves were on facing sides of two consecutive leaves. Although these illustrations often fell short of the best limited-edition literati publications of art albums,⁷¹ they occupied a significantly higher artistic level than those in most works of the *shangtu xiawen* format, whether published in Nanjing or elsewhere. In fact, it is noteworthy that while Nanjing publishers used this latter format, and even occasionally recut Jianyang works in the *shangtu xiawen* format, far fewer full- or half-folio illustrations are seen among Jianyang imprints. This suggests that many of the more skilled illustrators and engravers, the producers of the high-quality full- and half-folio illustrations, worked in Nanjing, although they were not necessarily natives of the city. It is likely, too, that these fairly expensive works were produced primarily for the local market and that their publishers made far less effort to develop a long-distance book trade than did their Jianyang counterparts.

It is tempting, though perhaps not entirely safe, to assess the relative popularity of different works from the number of different editions of each. Nevertheless, we can speculate cautiously, based on the information in Table 3.4, which lists the works for which there were two or more commercial editions.⁷² The top three titles pose no surprise and accord with all that we know already about their great popularity. Apart from the *Record of the Western Chamber*, all the others on the list are southern dramas of some kind. The presence of several of the earliest *chuanqi*⁷³—the *Baiyue ji* (Moon prayer pavilion) and *Jingchai ji* (The thorn hairpin) from the late fourteenth century—show

their continued popularity.⁷⁴ Several fifteenth-century playwrights also enjoyed success into the late Ming, including Su Fuzhi, author of *Jinyin ji* (The gold seal), Qiu Jun, author of *Toubi ji* (Casting away the brush), and the anonymous author of *Wulun quanbei ji* (The five human relationships), all published by the Shide tang. It would be difficult to claim that native Nanjing authors had an edge over others in such a cosmopolitan city, but Ji Zhenlun is listed twice in Table 3.4, for two of his three known plays, *Sangui ji* (The third cassia tree) and *Zhegui ji* (Breaking the cassia branch); and there was at least one Nanjing commercial edition of the third, *Qisheng ji* (Seven victories). By contrast, the much better known playwright Tang Xianzu shows up only three times in the table.⁷⁵

In all, we know of approximately 102 different works, some in several editions, offered by the Nanjing commercial publishers. How often a complete play was printed, however, may not suffice to indicate its popularity with different audiences, since excerpts (scenes, suites of songs, individual songs), rather than an entire lengthy work, frequently were performed in a variety of settings. Thus it would be useful to compare imprints of the full works with extracts in compendia of the same period. The third column of Table 3.4 indicates the selections that appear in the *Xiuxiang Gelin shicui* (Ten choice selections of song medleys, elegantly illustrated), published in the late seventeenth century in Nanjing by Zheng Yuanmei of Kuibi zhai and Bao-sheng lou.⁷⁶ Aside from four works (two of which date from the Qing), the collection prints passages from plays that have also been published in their entirety in Nanjing, suggesting that the local commercial publishers did indeed choose to print full versions of the most popular plays of the day. Or perhaps they, in collaboration with their authors, used the cheaper compendia of excerpts to promote particular works.

Of course, many other such collections must be examined before we can confirm either of these speculations or draw any general conclusions about the literary and social context for Nanjing drama publication in the late Ming. It would also be informative to study similar drama miscellanies printed not just in Nanjing or the other large Jiangnan book centers but also in other areas of the country, certainly southern and central China. Although we would find significantly more examples of regional drama in considering imprints from, say, Jiangxi, Anhui, Fujian, or Guangdong, we can still obtain some idea of the plays' relative popularity, whether in the "original" version or one revised out of performance considerations or in another dialect.⁷⁷

We must also take care to distinguish between different though most likely overlapping markets for higher-quality illustrated editions of entire plays and collections like that of the Kuibi zhai. The *Xiuxiang gelin shicui*, which is a convenient chapbook size (overall dimensions, 11.5 cm wide × 15.9 cm high) and of chapbook quality, represents a type of imprint that was probably published in greater abundance and circulated far more widely than the

TABLE 3.4 Some commercial Nanjing editions of plays

<i>Work (by no. of editions)</i>	<i>Nanjing commercial editions</i>	<i>Excerpted in 歌林拾翠</i>
<i>Xixiang ji</i> 西廂記 (Western chamber)	8–9	x
<i>Pipa ji</i> 琵琶記 (The story of the lute)	7	x
<i>Mudan ting</i> 牡丹亭 (The peony pavilion)	6	
<i>Hongfu ji</i> 紅拂記 (The red whisk)	5	x
<i>Yuzan ji</i> 玉簪記 (The jade hairpin)	4	x
<i>Baiyue ting</i> 拜月亭 (Moon prayer pavilion)	3	x
<i>Yuhe ji</i> 玉合記 (The jade casket)	3	
<i>Zhufa ji</i> 祝髮記 (Binding the hair)	3	
<i>Huandai ji</i> 還帶記 (Returning the belt)	2	
<i>Jingchai ji</i> 荊釵記 (The thorn hairpin)	2	
<i>Jinjian ji</i> 錦箋記 (The elegant letter)	2	
<i>Jinyin ji</i> 金印記 (The gold seal)	2	x
<i>Sangui ji</i> 三桂記 (The third cassia tree)	2	
<i>Nanke ji</i> 南柯記 ([Dream of] the southern branch)	2	
<i>Poyao ji</i> 破窯記 (The dilapidated kiln)	2	x
<i>Qianjin ji</i> 千金記 (A thousand pieces of gold)	2	x
<i>Toutao ji</i> 偷桃記 (Stealing the peach)	2	
<i>Toubi ji</i> 投筆記 (Casting away the brush)	2	
<i>xiangnang ji</i> 香囊記 (The perfumed sachet)	2	
<i>Xiuru ji</i> 繡襦記 (The embroidered jacket)	2	x
<i>Zhekui ji</i> 折桂記 (Breaking the cassia branch)	2	
<i>Zichai ji</i> 紫釵記 (The purple hairpin)	2	
<i>Baitu ji</i> 白兔記 (The white rabbit)	1	x
<i>Fenxiang ji</i> 焚香記 (Burning incense)	1	x
<i>Gucheng ji</i> 古城記 (The ancient city)	1	x
<i>Hongmei ji</i> 紅梅記 (The red maple)	1	x
<i>Jindiao ji</i> 金貂記 (The golden marten)	1	x
<i>Kuihua ji</i> 葵花記 (The sunflower)	1	x
<i>Mulian (jiu mu quan shan) ji</i> 目連(救母勸善)記 (Mulian rescues his mother)	1	x
<i>Sanyuan ji</i> 三元記 (The three origins)	1	x
<i>Shuihu ji</i> 水滸記 (Water margin)	1	x
<i>Yixia ji</i> 義俠記 (The righteous gallant)	1	x
<i>Baihua ji</i> 百花記 (清) (The hundred blossoms)	0	x
<i>Jinsuo ji</i> 金鎖記 (清) (The golden lock)	1	x
<i>Lianhuan ji</i> 連環記 (Joining the rings)	0	x
[<i>Su Wu</i>] <i>Muyang ji</i> [蘇武] 牧羊記 ([Su Wu] Herding sheep)	0	x
<i>Taohua ji</i> 桃花記 (The peach blossom [sic])	0	x

commercial editions of the illustrated dramas, which in turn had a wider circulation than the private limited-edition imprints with superb illustrations treated in Carlitz's chapter on late Ming playwright-publishers. Indeed, the way the Kuibi zhai and the Baosheng lou alternately list their names in the *Gelin shicui* suggests that an eagerness to profit jointly from its publication overrode any interest in claiming sole "credit" for this rather low-quality work as they might for a more expensive edition. In short, the abundance of drama-related imprints from the late Ming on provides us with a variety of ways to consider what Hegel has identified, in Chapter 6 of this volume, as the "niche marketing" of Chinese imprints.

CONCLUSION

A number of topics for further research are procedurally obvious if not easily feasible. First, far more imprints need to be examined, with a particular emphasis on what information can be extracted concerning the Nanjing book trade. Second, the connections between Nanjing and other publishing centers, at least in central and southern China, should be traced as far as possible to obtain an idea of how the commercial publishers and booksellers operated. Third, comparisons should be made with these other book centers so as to determine what was unique about the Nanjing publishing industry and what it had in common with other centers.

Much more information on all of these topics is necessary before we can draw detailed conclusions about the structure of the Nanjing book trade and its role in late Ming book culture. I conclude by selecting two questions that tie together some of the many issues treated in this chapter. First, what were the circumstances that made for the publishing boom in the late Ming in Nanjing (and the other large Jiangnan cities)? After all, it had developed rapidly from a context of some limited official and religious publishing—but almost no commercial publishing—in the earlier Ming. Second, why the slower but still evident decline of publishing in these cities in the Qing? Considerations of the general political and socioeconomic conditions are necessary but not sufficient to answer this set of questions; I will not review here the arguments already made in other scholarship about the impact of these "external" conditions on publishing in the Ming. Rather, I will suggest new ways of looking at each of these questions from within the world of publishing and book culture.

In considering the causes of the publishing boom of the late Ming, it is necessary to understand why the highly educated official-scholar elite of the time favored printing as the medium through which to convey their public and private ideas and literary and artistic endeavors, perhaps more than ever before or after this period. The imprints themselves, especially the prefaces, postfaces, commentaries, and annotations, as well as the writings of the elite

in general, will provide as much of the information necessary to this understanding as we can hope to obtain. Nevertheless, it will still require much imaginative reading between the lines to answer these questions, since the literati only rarely commented directly on their attitude toward printing as a medium (though they frequently discussed printed works as art and artifacts). But the effort to wade through these sources is worthwhile, for without resolving these issues, we will not understand much about the uses of books and printing in Ming China.

The second question, how to explain the decline of the major late Ming publishing sites in the Qing, might also benefit from a comparison of the output of Nanjing and Jianyang publishers and some speculation about the overall shape of the two markets. We might begin by looking at what Nanjing did not publish, for, as plentiful and as varied as the commercial imprints produced in late Ming Nanjing were, several kinds of works are conspicuous by their absence or paucity: household encyclopedias, low-quality chapbook-like collections of stories, novels, and collections of model examination essays (as opposed to other kinds of writings on topics relevant to the examinations). Yet all these texts were published in great abundance by the Jianyang publishers. These differences in the offerings of the Nanjing and Jianyang publishers make it tempting to claim that Nanjing served the high end of the book market and Jianyang the low end. But such an argument requires certain serious qualifications. Although we have relatively few known Nanjing imprints that were cheap and badly produced, my strong impression, from the few that are extant and from anecdotal evidence, is that the Nanjing publishers produced for the entire spectrum of the book market—though probably not in the same proportion of their total output as the Jianyang publishers. It is highly unlikely that cheap texts found no demand among the many different kinds of readers buying books in Nanjing or that the Nanjing publishers kept out books from other areas to protect their local market.⁷⁸ After all, many of them were hardly “local,” given their close family and business ties to Jianyang, Huizhou, and other printing centers.

If, however, there was a lively market in cheap, lower-quality texts in Nanjing in the late Ming, then where are these texts today? We cannot argue that such imprints simply did not survive, having been read to tatters; there are plenty of extant examples from Jianyang, so that even if Nanjing printers did not produce them in as great quantities, some should have survived through the centuries. It is quite possible, therefore, that the imprints we *can* identify as from Nanjing actually represent only the upper end of a far larger book trade that included lower-quality imprints, ones that publishers were reluctant to identify as their own. After all, the angry suggestions of men like He Liangjun (1506–73) that printers of examination essays be driven out of business were more likely to be acted on by the government

in Nanjing than that in Jianyang. In any event, we are probably missing out on a large, perhaps the largest, portion of the Nanjing book trade.

Moreover, the Nanjing and Jianyang publishing industries in the late Ming were, in a broader historical perspective, more similar than they were different—in the way the printing businesses were organized, in the connections publishers had to their counterparts in other parts of central and southern China, in their distribution networks (based on what evidence we have), and, finally, even in their repertoire of publications. These late Ming commercial publishers represented an older mode of book production and selling than the very different pattern of printing centers that would be evident from the Qing onward. What I suspect, therefore, is that while the known part of the Nanjing publishing industry, the part discussed here, declined for a variety of reasons in the Qing, the other, “hidden” part that I posit above flourished and even expanded in the Qing. If my hypothesis is correct, then when we talk about the decline of the book trade in the large Jiangnan cities after the seventeenth century, we are really referring to just one segment of the entire trade—publications produced for a generally upscale market. I would argue that the other segment of the trade, publications for the lower end of the market, were produced in the late Ming by Nanjing as well as Jianyang publishers—and, increasingly in the Qing, as described in Chapters 1 and 5 by Cynthia Brokaw, by small printing centers established throughout the empire. The existence of this “lower-end” segment of the trade—much larger, by the way, than the “upper-end” segment—signals the formation, already by the late Ming, of a relatively “uniform” print culture at least in southern and central China. This process of homogenization—the progress and implications of which warrant serious research—continued and accelerated through the Qing and well into the Republican period.

NOTES

1. Kong Shangren, *Peach Blossom Fan*, trans. Chen Shih-hsiang and Harold Acton, with Cyril Birch (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 212–13; the translation has been altered very slightly. The bookseller goes on to tell how he has invited “several leading critics to compile anthologies as models for composition” (for the examination essays).

2. The chief secondary works so far are Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (History of Chinese printing) (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1989), esp. 340–63 for Ming Nanjing; and a number of essays in *Zhang Xiumin yinshua shi lunwen ji* (Collected essays on the history of printing by Zhang Xiumin) (Beijing: Yinshua gongye, 1988). K. T. Wu, “Ming Printing and Printers,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7.3 (February 1942): 203–60, remains a useful general survey, and there are relevant sections throughout Tsien Tsuen-hsuei, *Paper and Printing*, vol. 5, pt. 1, of Joseph Need-

ham, ed., *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), esp. 172–83, 262–87.

3. For some references to recent scholarship on the Chinese book and to recently published bibliographic aids, see Chapter 1 in this volume.

4. Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 56 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).

5. *Hongwu jingcheng tuzhi* (Illustrated gazetteer of the Hongwu capital, 1395). There are at least two modern photo-facsimile reprints: one from 1928 with a post-face by Liu Yizheng and one in *Nanjing wenxian* (Historical literature on Nanjing), vol. 3 (1947), where all but one of the maps are illegible. The latter edition in turn has been recently reprinted (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1991).

6. On early Ming Nanjing, see F. W. Mote, “The Transformation of Nanking, 1350–1400,” in William G. Skinner, ed., *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977), 101–53.

7. Mote, “Transformation of Nanjing,” 142–46.

8. See, for example, the entry “Fang, xiang, xiang (2)” (City ward, suburban ward, subcounty) in Gu Qiyuan, *Kezuo zhuiyu* (Rambling talks of a guest) (rpt. of 1618 edition; Beijing: Zhonghua, 1987), j. 2, pp. 58–59. For Gu Qiyuan, see *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 734–36.

9. Gu Qiyuan, “Fang xiang shimo” (The history of city and rural wards), j. 2 of *Kezuo zhuiyu*, pp. 64–66; cited in Mote, “Transformation of Nanjing,” 146–47.

10. For instance, Gu Qiyuan noted in “Shijing” (City wells), *Kezuo zhuiyu*, j. 1, p. 23, that the section from Sanshan Street west to Doumen Bridge was called “Fruit Lane” and that stores selling drums were located at the mouth of Sanshan Street. The street’s abundant merchandise was again noted in “Fengsu” (Local customs), j. 1, *Kezuo zhuiyu*, p. 26.

11. Until the capital was moved to Beijing, the metropolitan examination was also administered in the Nanjing Gongyuan. As for the preliminary qualifying examination, candidates from both Jiangsu and Anhui took it in Nanjing. In the Ming and early Qing, the Anhui men took their examination at a location near Chaotian gong in the west of the city.

12. In chapter 30 of Wu Jingzi’s (1701–54) novel, *Rulin waishi* (Unofficial history of Confucian scholars) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991), where a contest for operatic singers in a pavilion of Mochou Lake is described, one character estimated that there were over one hundred thirty opera troupes along the river near Shuixi Gate. Although Wu set his novel in the pre-Wanli period, his descriptions of Nanjing, based on his own experience and earlier writings, sound more like the late Ming and earlier Qing city. See chapter 41 for a description of the Qinhuai district.

13. See Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 351–52.

14. One book shop billed itself as Guozi jian qian Shulin Zhao pu (the Zhao [Book]shop in the Book Quarter facing the Directorate of Education) in a 1497 imprint, suggesting that there were probably booksellers located in other parts of the city, such as near the Directorate of Education. But Sanshan Street seems to have been the main book district. Hu Yinglin mentions both locations as places to buy

books in “Jingji huitong” (Understanding books), *j.* 4 in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* (Notes from the Shaoshi Shanfang), *jiabu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1958), 56.

15. I designate as a commercial publisher one whose imprints show fairly clearly (by “blurbs,” or *gaobai*, colophons, elaborate self-advertising titles, overall physical appearance, etc.) that they were meant to be sold on the open market. Of course, this neat description does not serve in many ambiguous instances, for which I had to make arbitrary decisions. I have included in Table 3.1 several publishers who might arguably be considered private or literati publishers but are largely indistinguishable from commercial publishers based on the kinds of works they produced. Nor does the number of works printed by a publisher help us to make this differentiation, since many of the publishers “of Sanshan jie” in Table 3.1 apparently produced few works. We may ultimately conclude that all these publishers were producing works for much the same range of readers, and often the distinction between commercial and private publishing in late Ming Nanjing is neither necessary nor useful. See also Brokaw, chap. 1; and McDermott, chap. 2, both in this volume.

16. In addition to the publishers in Table 3.1, there must have been a number of others both inside the city and in the suburbs that did not identify themselves in their imprints. If there is sufficient circumstantial evidence (e.g., physical appearance, names of Nanjing-based authors, editors, and/or block carvers, etc.), such works have been included as “possible Nanjing imprints” in Table 3.3. In certain kinds of works, the publishers may not have wanted to identify themselves. While Bookseller Cai of *Peach Blossom Fan* bragged about compiling examination essays, there were writers who condemned such works and advocated destroying them. For example, He Liangjun said that the worst offenders were printers in the two counties of Shangyuan and Jiangning in Yingtian prefecture (where Nanjing was located), as well as in Jianyang. See *Siyou zhai congshuo* (Collected talks from the Four Friends Studio) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), *j.* 1, p. 4. Cited in Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 353. For descriptions of bookstore owners commissioning annotations for examination essays, see *Rulin waishi*, chaps. 13, 18.

17. By “editions,” I mean imprints cut from different blocks. There were almost no movable-type imprints put out by the publishers listed in Table 3.1. The total number of editions from column 3 of Table 3.1 is much lower than total number of Nanjing commercial editions from column 4 of Table 3.3 because the latter includes some one hundred editions from publishers who were either anonymous or, though probably from Nanjing, cannot be proven to have been so.

Several other uncertainties in compiling this table should be noted. First, several of the publishers operated in other places as well as Nanjing. Thus at least two of them, Ye Guishan and Xiao Tenghong, are known to have printed works in Jianyang as well. The prolific Wu Mianxue was a native of Xin’an in Huizhou, and it is not possible to determine whether all his publications were produced in Nanjing. (One reason for supposing that at least some of them were published in Nanjing is that they record the name of a well-known Nanjing block carver as the supervisor of the engraving: “Xu Zhi du kan.”) Another famous Huizhou native, Wang Tingna (see below), definitely split his printing operations between Nanjing and his home in Xiuning county.

18. That is, over 40 percent of the total number (830) of Nanjing imprints listed in Table 3.3 (column 4, bottom figure).

19. Two Jianyang publishers have left pictures of themselves in several of their

imprints. See Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 217, 220, and Fig. 49a, b. While this was a very rare form of advertising, these portraits nevertheless represent two more examples than we have from Nanjing or anywhere else.

20. Zang's comments are found in the collection itself, *Yuming tang sizhong chuanqi* (Four *chuanqi* from Yuming Hall, 1601), and in Zang's collected writings, *Fubao tang ji* (Collected writings from Fubao Hall). For a discussion of Zang's revisions, especially of the *Handan ji*, see Sai-shing Yung, "A Critical Study of *Han-tan chi*" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1992), pt. 2, chap. 2. See also Wilt L. Idema, "Zang Maoxun as Publisher," paper presented at the First International Scientific Conference on Publishing Culture in East Asia, December 8–10, 2001.

21. See *Jingshi Wang Xiangguo duanzhu baijia pinglin Ban-Ma yingfeng xuan*, published by Zhoushi Bogu tang (Harvard-Yenching T2511/1182).

22. Ye, a grand secretary and president of the Board of Rites in the early seventeenth century (*DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1567–70), was a native of Fujian and as such very popular among Jianyang publishers, who attributed all kinds of commentaries in scholarly works to him. There is no evidence that Ye wrote this particular commentary.

23. The *Xinbian Zanying biyong Hanyuan xinshu* (New book of a grove of literary writings for the needs of officials, newly compiled; Gest TC348/379) lists Tang Tingren and Zhou Yuejiao as the publishers on p. 2a of the general table of contents. The *Tai yiyuan jiaozhu Furen liangfang daquan* (Harvard-Yenching T7955/7926) lists Zhou Yuwu as the publisher on the cover page and Fuchun tang on 1.1a. The *Xinke Gujin xuan xie* (Profound literary passages, old and new, newly printed; Harvard-Yenching T9299/1132) lists "Moling Zhutan Zhou Zongkong, Shaogang Gong Yao-hui tong zi" on 1.1a.

24. There is at least one known Jianyang edition under the same title, published by the Yu Shaoyai Zixin zhai, presumably in 1573, some forty years before the supposed Shide tang edition. Furthermore, the term "hubai," which appears almost exclusively in Jianyang imprints, refers to the commentaries and annotations appearing in a narrow upper register, such as the one in the Shide tang work. The lotus-leaf colophon was an instantly recognizable trademark of Jianyang imprints but not an exclusive one. In this instance, however, the edition probably was originally produced in Jianyang and its woodblocks then used by the Shide tang.

25. *Guanban* (official edition), like *jingben* (capital edition), served as very common advertising ploys by Jianyang publishers to exploit the better reputation of Nanjing imprints.

26. The catalogue of each library owning a copy, however, lists the Shide tang as the publisher. But from my examination of the surviving four copies of this work, all seem to have been printed from the same set of blocks—that is, from blocks used by Xiong Yunbin. Thus either Xiong obtained them from the Shide tang or only the Jianyang recut edition is extant.

27. Liu Suming appears in the same genealogy as a number of the Liu publishers, to whom he was related. Suwen does not appear in this same genealogy. For a simplified reconstruction of the Liu genealogy, see Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 82–83, Table 2b.

28. A list of ten such works is given in Fang Yanshou, "Jianyang Liushi keshu kao" (Study of the Liu family publishers of Jianyang), *Wenxian* 37.3 (1988): 220–21. There are at least five others.

29. It is possible that the commentaries were falsely attributed to Chen Jiru, whose name was often attached to writings he did not work on.

30. Both Xiao Tenghong and Xiao Mingsheng are listed in the *Xiaoshi zupu* (Xiao family genealogy) of 1875. Mingsheng was a *ju ren* of 1603 and has a short biographical notice in the Jianyang County Gazetteer of 1832, *j.* 12.

31. These imprints are *Chongke jiaozheng Tang Jingchuan xiansheng wenji* (Reprint of the collated prose works of Tang Jingchuan [Tang Shunzhi, 1507–1601]), at the Naikaku Bunko (316/no. 150) and at the Harvard-Yenching (T5416/4329), and the *Tang Huiyuan jing xuan pidian Tang-Song ming xian ce lunwen cui* (Choice policy essays by famous worthies of the Tang and Song, specially selected and annotated by Tang Shunzhi), at Gest (TC318/1152).

32. On the Huang block carvers from Anhui, see Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 747–49; Zhang's earlier article, "Mingdai Huipai banhua Huangxing kegong kaolüe" (Study of the Huang family block carvers of Hui school woodcut illustrations in the Ming), in *Zhang Xiumin yinshua shi lunwen ji*, 171–79; and Zhou Wu, *Huipai banhua shi lunji* (Collected essays on the history of woodcuts of the Huizhou school) (Hefei: Anhui renmin, 1983). See Xia Wei, "The Huizhou Style of Woodcut Illustration," *Orientalism* 25.1 (1994): 61–66, for a brief introduction to the subject.

33. See also Nancy Berliner, "Wang Tingna and Illustrated Book Publishing in Huizhou," *Orientalism* 25.1 (1994): 67–75.

34. No relation of Wang Tingna, as far as I can ascertain from the local gazetteers of the Huizhou area. On Wang Yunpeng, see also Murray, chapter 11, this volume.

35. For a black-and-white reproduction from these works and a brief discussion of the Shizhu zhai, see Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 284–86. Both the painting manual and the letter paper collections have been reprinted in modern times.

36. Hu Yinglin, "Jingji huitong," *j.* 4, in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong*, vol. 1, pp. 55–56. A few lines later, Hu admitted that he had not yet stayed in Nanjing or Suzhou for long periods, so possibly his book buying experiences in these two cities were not as extensive as in Beijing.

37. See note 17 about the meaning of "edition" as used here. Table 3.2 uses the dates for the cutting of the blocks for the imprints. Where we do not know the exact year, it is often possible to make an educated guess as to the period and more often than not decide whether it is "late Ming" ("Ming mo"). Some of the bibliographies I used, such as Du Xinfu's *Mingdai banke zongu* (A comprehensive bibliography of Ming imprints) (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling guji keyinshe, 1983), seem to assign too many imprints to the Wanli era, rather than make the less exact but more accurate designation of late Ming.

38. Lucille Chia, "Mashaben: Commercial Publishing in Jianyang from the Song to the Ming," in Paul J. Smith and Richard von Glahn, eds., *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 284–328.

39. See Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 152–53, 312–13 (Appendix C.2). The total number of known Jianyang imprints from the Ming is in the vicinity of 1,600, of which only about 160 are from the first half of the dynasty. These various figures may actually be further skewed in favor of the later Ming, since a number of imprints that are attributed to the early Ming turn out to be later reprints using woodblocks cut sometime in the Yuan. These figures have greater reliability than those for publica-

tions from the Jiangnan printing centers since I have done an exhaustive search for Jianyang imprints using almost all the available catalogues and bibliographies.

40. This may be because the Nanjing figures are erroneously low; we can only count imprints that are identifiably from the area but are missing out on many unidentified works, possibly of a quality similar to those of Jianyang.

41. For a discussion of these issues, see Chia, “*Mashaben*,” 302–6. See also McDermott, chap. 2, this volume.

42. The table was compiled from a number of bibliographies and library catalogues, as well as from my examination of about 120 of these imprints. The former include Du Xinfu, ed., *Mingdai banke zongu*; the RLIN on-line records (mostly from the Chinese Rare Books Project); the rare books catalogues of the National Library of China, the National Central Library in Taipei, the Naikaku Bunko, and so forth. I have examined Ming imprints in a number of the major libraries in China, Taiwan, and Japan; as well as the Gest (Princeton), Harvard-Yenching, C. V. Starr (Columbia University), and the University of California at Berkeley East Asian Library in the United States; and the British Library, Cambridge University Library, and the Oxford Bodleian in England.

43. First, I have not exhaustively combed through every available catalogue and bibliography. Second, there are imprints from the Nanjing area that cannot be identified as such, either because the works themselves do not offer enough evidence or, possibly, because the blocks were transferred to publishers in other locations who then effaced information about the original publisher. Third, in a number of instances, I had to make an arbitrary decision whether to include someone who produced only a few works as a commercial publisher. As Table 3.1 indicates, many publishers worked on a very small scale, producing fewer than five imprints (that we know of). While I included those publishers who use *shufang* or *shulin* to describe themselves, it was more difficult in other cases to decide if a publisher was “commercial,” because the *tangming* may simply have been the studio name of the individual.

44. I retain the *siku* classification in Table 3.3 because traditional Chinese works in most catalogues are so organized, and little is gained in attempting an entirely new ordering scheme. The subcategories can always be discussed individually or after partial regrouping.

45. See Nancy Norton Tomasko, “Chung Hsing (1574–1625), a Literary Name in the Wan-li Era (1573–1620) of Ming China” (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1995), 306 ff., on the popularity of the *Shigui* (A repository for poetry) (preface, 1617). In a personal communication, Tomasko stated her belief that, in general, Zhong Xing’s own works were first published in Nanjing, but his name, like those of other famous writers of the day, was attached to many other works (as the author, editor, and/or annotator) with which he had no actual connection.

46. Other than favoring officials and literati whose names in an imprint would entice customers, the commercial publishers of Nanjing did not seem to have any other rationale for their choices. For example, there is no discernible pattern showing that the publishers favored one political faction over another in the late Ming, perhaps since this would have been too chancy in any case. In this way, they were as pragmatic as their Jianyang counterparts, who often used the names of Ye Xianggao and Li Tingji (?–1616, j.s. 1583), both grand secretaries in the late Wanli period and both Fujian natives, to sell their imprints.

47. See Du, *Mingdai banke zonglu*, 3.30a–31b, for a sample of the publications of various central government agencies located in Nanjing. The Twenty-one Dynastic Histories were reprinted by the Nanjing Directorate of Education from the early Ming through the Wanli period.

48. There is a copy of this edition in the Hubei Provincial Library. For Chen Renxi, see *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 161–63.

49. Four Jianyang editions were also printed in the Ming.

50. See Entry 2736 in the *Zhongguo shanben shumu*, *Shibu*, vol. 1. Yu's biography is in the *Mingshi* (History of the Ming), *j.* 216, vol. 19, pp. 5701–2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju).

51. Zhou Wu, in *Jinling gu banhua* (Ancient woodblock prints of Jinling) (Nanjing: Jiangsu Meishu, 1993), 306–7, shows a full-folio illustration from an edition by a “Jiangling Zheng shi,” who presumably published it in Nanjing (no library given). The Hu Xian edition can be found in the National Central Library (Taipei).

52. Both editions seem to have been published in the last decade of the sixteenth century. Huang Lin is listed as the engraver for the Wanhu xuan edition, Huang Qi for the Kuibi ge one. A leaf from the former is reproduced in Anne Farrer, “Calligraphy and Painting for Official Life,” in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art* (London: British Museum Press, 1992), 123. It definitely differs from the Kuibi ge edition, though both credit the painter Ding Yunpeng (fl. 1584–1618) with the illustrations. In a personal communication, Julia Murray indicated that she believes the Kuibi ge edition is a facsimile recut of the original edition carved by Huang Qi. In any case, the Kuibi ge edition was almost certainly produced in Nanjing, but it is possible that the Wanhu Xuan edition was produced in Xiuning county, Huizhou, since Ding Yunpeng operated there as well as in Nanjing.

53. Two recent basic introductions to *leishu* are Hu Daojing, *Zhongguo gudai de leishu* (Chinese category books of the past) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982); and Dai Keyu and Tang Jianhua, eds., *Leishu de yan'ge* (The development of category books) (Chengdu?: Sichuan sheng zhongxin tushuguan xuehui, 1981). On classifying *leishu*, see Hu Daojing, *Zhongguo gudai de leishu*, esp. 8–14; the classifications in Teng Ssu-yü and Knight Biggerstaff, eds., *An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Chinese Reference Works*, 3d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 82–128; and Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A Manual*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), 601–9. For discussions of Jianyang *leishu*, see Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 134–39, 234–39.

54. Some of the works I have not examined have been classified on the basis of their titles. I do not have enough information to determine the classification of four of the fifty-two *leishu* in Table 3.3 (col. 4).

55. The heftier Nanjing literary encyclopedias include *Tang leihan* (Classified Tang writings), 200 *juan*, and *Xinbian gujin shiwen leiju* (Classified collection of affairs and compositions of the past and present), 236 *juan*.

56. We know that a number of his works were published by Gu himself and/or by his younger brother, Qifeng (j.s. 1610). Thus it would be interesting to learn in greater detail their relationship with Wu Deju. The National Library of China has a copy each of the 30 *juan* 1613 edition (no. 3122) and a later 60 *juan* edition (no. 9977) listing Gu Qifeng as the publisher.

57. These occasional couplets are found not only in specific collections but also in all the household encyclopedias published in Jianyang; they are all of much the same literary quality.

58. Although Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 283, says that Hu was a physician, it seems more likely that it was his relative, Hu Zhengxin, who was the physician; he was credited as author of at least two of the Shizhu zhai medical imprints.

59. For a brief discussion of this work, see Paul U. Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Pharmaceutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 81–82. The edition of 1249 was a revised and expanded version of the original work compiled under the emperor Huizong (r. 1100–1126) in ca. 1116. A number of editions are described in Okanishi Tameto, *Song yiqian yiji kao* (Study of medical works of the Song dynasty and earlier periods), 4 vols. (Taiwan: Guting shuwu, 1970), 1244–76.

60. Copies of the Fuchun tang edition are in the Japanese National Diet Library (*toku* 1–975) and Columbia University's C. V. Starr (RLIN ID NYCP94-B16294). In addition, 2 *juan* from different copies are at the Oxford Bodleian (Shelfmark Sinica 18a, 18b). The Diet Library (*toku* 1–928, *toku* 7–270, *toku* 7–271, *toku* 7–272) and the National Library of China both have copies of the 1579 Jianyang Yang xianchun Guiren tang edition, and the Seikadō has a copy of the Yuan edition.

The artistic quality and fidelity to the actual subject of the illustrations in block-printed materia medica vary widely, even within a single imprint, so that these do not serve as usual criteria in comparing different editions. The same mismatching of the captions with the illustrations in two different editions, however, would strongly suggest that one might have been copied from the other, or both from a third edition.

61. For a general discussion of this work, see Unschuld, *Medicine in China*, 241–48. The original edition was published by students of the author, Chen Jiamo. All these men were natives of Huizhou, so the work was probably published there. According to the Zhongguo zhongyi yanjiuyuan tushuguan, *Quanguo Zhongyi tushu lianhe mulu* (Beijing: Zhongyi guji chubanshe, 1991), entry no. 02665, p. 163, the earliest Jianyang edition from the Liu family's Bencheng tang is dated 1565. I found no evidence for this date in the copy I examined, but it follows very closely the format of the original edition and seems to be earlier than the Nanjing edition of 1573.

62. There are copies of the Jianyang Liushi Bencheng tang edition at the Japanese National Diet Library (no. 197–240, *toku* 7–512, *toku* 7–513) and the Beijing University Library. There is a complete copy of the Nanjing Renshou tang edition in the Naikaku bunko (304/no. 295) and 2 *juan* in the Oxford Bodleian (Shelfmark Sinica 16).

63. A copy with the Wanjuan lou cover page is held in the Japanese National Diet Library (*toku* 386), and the National Library of China has two copies (nos. 16403, 16614) in which Liu Kongdun is listed as the publisher. Liu Kongdun was a younger son of the very prolific publisher Liu Dayi (1560–1625), who operated the Qiaoshan tang in Jianyang. Kongdun himself apparently worked as much in Nanjing as he did in Fujian. Liu Suming, the engraver mentioned earlier, was a distant cousin of these men. See Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 83, 166, 173–74.

64. For the 1467 Xiong Zongli edition, see Naikaku bunko 302/no. 9. I did not have the chance to compare it side by side with the 1628 work, but a comparison of

photocopies would indicate that they might have used the same blocks, or that the later work was based on facsimile-cut blocks. For Xiong Zongli, see Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 163, 167–68, 170, 217, 231–33, 252.

65. See Unschuld, *Medicine in China*, 145–63, on Li and the *Bencao gangmu* (including translations of excerpts). It is true, as Unschuld writes, that the illustrations of the 1596 edition resemble those in various editions of the *Chongxiu Zhenghe jinshi leizheng beiyong bencao*, but then the illustrations in almost all such works resembled each other. Moreover, in some editions of the latter work, such as the 1628 Nanjing-Jianyang edition, drawings are provided for regional varieties for many plants and animals.

Although a number of library catalogues and bibliographies give a date of 1590 (the date of Wang Shizhen's preface), the Nanjing edition of *Bencao gangmu* was most likely published by Hu Chenglong in 1596. There is a note by Li Jianyuan, Shizhen's son and the illustrator of the Nanjing edition, presenting the work to the Wanli emperor. This note is missing from the original edition but appears in the 1603 edition published in Jiangxi. See Wang Zhongmin, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1983), 258–59.

66. Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 349.

67. In addition to the bibliographic sources cited earlier, I have also used the indispensable Zhuang Yifu, ed., *Gudian xiqu cunmu huikao* (Collected notes on extant musical dramas; hereafter *GXCH*), 3 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1982). Zhuang is not (nor does he claim to be) exhaustive in listing different editions of each work. On occasion, however, his descriptions imply the existence of different editions when there is only one, with different publishers listed in various parts of a copy, or in different copies made from the same blocks. For example, for several Tang family imprints, the Fuchun tang and the Shide tang are both listed, sometimes in different parts of a single work; in these cases, Zhuang seems to assume two different editions.

Also enormously useful is the multipart series *Guben xiqu congkan* (Old editions of traditional drama, collected and reproduced) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1954–64), although it is sometimes difficult to tell from the reproductions whether the edition shown is the “original” or a later facsimile recut.

68. Nor have I included in Table 3.3 plays that were published privately, either by the authors themselves or by one of their acquaintances, if these publishers appear not to have printed anything else.

69. Nancy Berliner, in “Wang Tingna and Illustrated Book Publishing in Huizhou,” 73, points out that Wang was printing in both Nanjing and back in his estate in Xiuning county in Huizhou; but at least some if not all of the plays were printed in Nanjing, as discussed later.

70. I have chosen to list the Shijian works as Nanjing rather than Jianyang imprints not only because their overall quality is higher than some of the publisher's other imprints (which look more like typical Jianyang products) but also because in the editions of the plays, many of the men credited as editors, collators, and block carvers were known to have worked in Nanjing but not in Jianyang—for example, the Anhui Huang engravers.

71. Berliner, in “Wang Tingna and Illustrated Book Publishing in Huizhou,” 73, writes that Wang Tingna's illustrated plays represented the low-end imprints of his print shop, while works such as the *Renjing yangqiu* and the printed handscroll of his

garden (*Huancui tang yuanjing tu*) represented the high end. In fact, she quotes Gu Qiyuan's pronouncement that Wang's drama publications were "common editions for the masses . . . [that] became so popular that one might say they drove up the price of paper."

72. I have included the titles in the various anthologies but have omitted "literati" editions, although the distinction between commercial and literati publishing is at times rather arbitrary, as I have already discussed. The list of titles with just one edition in the lower part of the table is by no means a complete list of those published in Nanjing, but I have included these titles because they were also excerpted in the *Xiuxiang Gelin shicui*.

73. In translating terms relating to Chinese drama, I follow mainly those used in Wilt L. Idema and Lloyd Haft, *A Guide to Chinese Literature* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1997).

74. It is worth mentioning that apparently there were no commercial Nanjing editions of the later Ming *zaju*. The noted *zaju* playwright Xu Wei (1521–93), for example, appears only as a commentator for one of the commercial editions of the *Xiuxiang ji*.

75. The only Nanjing edition of Tang's fourth dream play, *Handan ji*, is that of Zang Maoxun, in *Yuming tang simeng*. I have not tracked down the studies that discuss what revisions were made to each of the Nanjing editions of Tang's plays, but based on the discussion in Sai-shing Yung, "A Critical Study of the *Han-tan chi*," pt. 2, chap. 2, it seems likely that these editions may well have undergone so many alterations from Tang's original that they can no longer be considered, strictly speaking, regional drama in the Yihuang style. For similar reasons, even though the Nanjing imprints include a large number of *kunqu* titles, I hesitate to designate them automatically as such.

76. The "ten choice selections" refer to the ten parts of the collection, which, incidentally, have no illustrations in the copy I examined (Harvard-Yenching T5659/1451). Two ambiguous dates are given: mostly *jihai* and one *yichou*, which most probably correspond to 1659 and 1685, respectively, since at least two of the works are probably Qing (see Table 3.4) and the physical appearance of the work (printing, paper) suggests early Qing.

77. Indeed, as the Jianyang reprints of theatrical works in the Minnan dialect show, regional drama can attain popularity beyond the region where the dialect is spoken. See the introduction in Piet van der Loon, *The Classical Theatre and Art Song of South Fukien: A Study of Three Ming Anthologies* (Taipei: SMC, 1992), 1–58.

78. For a somewhat different conclusion, see McDermott, chap. 2, this volume.

FOUR

Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China

Anne E. McLaren

During the mid-sixteenth century, authors and publishers of vernacular texts realized, probably for the first time in the history of Chinese print culture, that their reading public was no longer restricted to the learned classes. Prefaces and commentaries of the era show an emerging awareness, which broadened and strengthened during the seventeenth century, that the potential readership for these texts was a heterogeneous one of officials, literati, collectors among the new class of *nouveaux riches*, members of the laity, common people, the relatively unlearned, and even the all-inclusive “people of the empire” (*tianxia zhi ren*) or “people of the four classes” (*simin*).

This historical shift in perceptions of the constitution of the reading public was a consequence of the collision of the preexisting manuscript culture, print technology, and the increasing commercialization of the economy from the mid-Ming period on. The earliest vernacular narratives belonged to manuscript culture. Vernacular texts circulated in manuscript form for decades within circles of literati and admirers who felt no compunction about changing the text as it was recopied and passed from hand to hand. But the decision to publish a text commercially—and the need to recover the expense of engraving it on woodblocks—compelled editors and publishers to devise strategies to market their texts to a reading public somewhat broader than the usual coterie of literati and aficionados. Intrinsic to the marketing process was the emergence of a new discourse that sought both to legitimize the publication enterprise and to conceptualize the target readership.

In this study my intention is to draw on prefaces and commentarial material from narrative and dramatic texts dating from the late fifteenth century to the mid-seventeenth century in order to trace shifting constructions of readers, authors, and editors, the broadening of reading practices during

this period, and the emergence of an apologia for vernacular print.¹ This period, particularly after about 1570, is marked by a dramatic increase in the volume of books produced by commercial publishers, a surge in the publication of books of a popular or practical nature, and strong indications of a broadening of readership to include less learned groups.² My concern here is primarily with the “reading public,” which I define, after Natalie Zemon Davis, as the target public addressed by the author or publisher as distinct from the “audience” or actual historical readers.³ This study of notional readers and their reading practices does not give us direct evidence of actual readers or how they interpreted the works they read, but it does demonstrate the historic specificity of notions of readership, which shifted dramatically during the Ming period (1368–1644), and offers insight into how entrepreneurial writers and publishers actively sought to create a public with particular literacy skills and cultural competencies. Above all this study reminds us, in the words of D. F. McKenzie, of the importance of including the notion of “human agency” in the study of texts, that is, “the human motives and interactions which texts involve at every stage of their production, transmission and consumption.”⁴

First I discuss the paradigms underlying notions of readers, authors, and reading practices, beginning with the standards set by the Neo-Confucian thinker Zhu Xi (1130–1200). I argue that the expanding lexicon for authoring and reading texts is based on a set of suppositions seeking to legitimize vernacular print, suppositions that radically extended Zhu Xi’s constructions of the (male elite) reader of the Confucian canon. It was from the early sixteenth century that certain publishers put forward the iconoclastic notion that the Classics were archaic and impenetrable but that vernacular texts were capable of imparting the essential moral wisdom of the Confucian Classics in palatable form. Next I trace the lexicon for target readers in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works, as it developed away from a coterie of literati to broader social groups. Since notions of the reader cannot be discussed in isolation from constructions of authorship, it is also necessary to discuss the contiguous terms for authors, editors, and publishers, with particular focus on that ambiguous group known as the *haoshizhe* (amateur collectors, aficionados) who read, collected, and authored or edited texts. In line with their perceived readership, publishers and authors produced texts with features that suited a variety of reading practices—for example, texts with verse material that could be memorized easily, texts designed to be read aloud or sung, texts with illustrations to assist literacy, typographical features to facilitate reading, and commentaries and glosses to educate the less learned. I focus on the editorial practices of Yu Xiangdou (ca. 1560–after 1637), who was perhaps the first to write commentary aimed specifically at readers with low educational and literacy levels.

CLASSICS FOR THE UNLEARNED

Prefaces to vernacular texts enunciated a set of legitimizing suppositions, which developed into an apologia for fictional writings. Although these were ultimately based on views of the function of literature that dated from antiquity, sixteenth-century preface writers extended these ancient notions in dramatically new ways. One of the oldest literary ideas in Chinese civilization, the notion that literature conveys the Way (*wen yi zai dao*),⁵ that is, that literature is a vehicle of moral instruction, forms the fundamental justification for fictional, vernacular texts as well.

The words of Yongyuzi (the pen name of Jiang Daqi), in a preface dated 1494 to the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo tongshu yanyi*), are representative of this axiom: “when you read (*du*) about loyalty it encourages one to be loyal; it is the same with filial piety. If you only read [the text] over and do not observe [its moral] in your own practices, then this amounts to not [really] reading (*dushu*).”⁶ The counterpart to this is the concern that some readers may choose to emulate the evil practices portrayed instead of learning to be good by negative example. Zhang Zhupo (1670–98), in his preface to the famous erotic novel *Plum in the Golden Vase* (*Jin Ping Mei*), is particularly concerned about the effect on women as a listening audience:

The *Plum in the Golden Vase* is a work that women should never be permitted to see. Nowadays there are many men who read passages out loud to their wives or concubines while taking their pleasure with them inside the bed curtains. They do not realize that, even among men, there are few who recognize the force of exhortation and admonition or respond appropriately to what they read. . . . What would be the consequences if they [women] were to imitate, however slightly, the things they read about?⁷

One could also note here the view of the Qing (1644–1911) commentator Liu Tingji (fl. 1712) on the importance of “reading properly” (*shan du*) the four famous narratives of the Ming era (*si da qishu*): “Those who don’t read *Water Margin* [*Shuihu zhuan*] properly, their minds tend to perversity and treachery; those who don’t read the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* properly, their minds tend to political expediency and deception; those who don’t read the *Journey to the West* properly, their minds tend to cunning and deluded imaginings.” As for the *Plum in the Golden Vase*, “those who read this book and wish to imitate it are wild beasts.”⁸

Increasingly one finds in prefaces an awareness of the difficulty of the Classics, even for some members of the literati class, and the perceived lack of a clear moral message in the official dynastic histories. This awareness was already apparent in the earliest period of print publication in China.⁹ For example, the famous Neo-Confucian scholar Zhu Xi, in his work “Dushu fa” (On reading) expresses concern for the inherent difficulties of the Classics and recommends a host of reading practices to overcome these difficulties.

Zhu Xi's annotated editions of the Classics constituted the dominant curriculum of education and the examination system until the end of the imperial era, and his ideas about education and reading (*dushu fa*) have influenced Chinese educators for a millennium. It is thus instructive to examine briefly Zhu Xi's ideas on reading—which were clearly directed at aspirants to the literati class—as a benchmark for Neo-Confucian notions of (elite) reading practices during the late imperial period. As I demonstrate, these notions were radically reshaped in the discursive and editorial practices of vernacular publishers three to four centuries later.

Zhu Xi called for intensive, repetitive reading of the Classics to fully comprehend their inner meaning. His admission of his own earlier problems in reading *Mencius* illustrates the sheer effort required for even the best educated to comprehend a text of such antiquity:

Thereupon he spoke about the method of reading a text (*dushu*), saying: You should read it ten or more times. Once you've understood 40 to 50 percent of the meaning, look at the annotation. Having understood another 20 to 30 percent, read the classical text again and you'll understand yet another 10 to 20 percent. Previously I didn't comprehend the *Mencius* because its paragraphs were so long. Then I read it in the manner just described, and although at first its paragraphs were long its meaning nevertheless cohered from beginning to end.¹⁰

Although Zhu Xi notes from time to time the notional clarity of the Classics (“The words of the sages and worthies are luminous, like the sun and the moon”),¹¹ he is much more aware of the constant risk that students will fail to comprehend the immanent moral principles reflected in the ancient texts: “The multitudinous words of the sages are nothing but natural principles; fearing people would not comprehend them [they] composed them in writing[,] . . . but the problem is that people do not read carefully and seek a way [to comprehend them]. One must reflect on the words of the sages, on what they said and how it can be applied.”¹² Elsewhere he notes one must “make a truly fierce effort” to read the Classics.¹³

The metaphors adopted by Zhu Xi repeatedly stress the sheer physical effort required to master the canon. One needs to penetrate beneath the skin of a text,¹⁴ to look for a “crack” (*fengxia*, as if in a clay vessel) with which to pierce the text,¹⁵ to wrest meaning from the text as if leading a massive onslaught through a military siege (*xu da sha yifan*),¹⁶ to interrogate the text like a harsh jailer dealing with prisoners (*ku li zhi yu*)¹⁷ or as if capturing a bandit (*kan wenzi ru zhuo zei*).¹⁸ One must read as if slicing through one's body: “Go down layer by layer, past skin to flesh, past flesh to bones, past bones to marrow. If you read in desultory fashion you'll never attain this.”¹⁹ When reading one must sit with one's spine straight²⁰ and read until one's eyes hurt.²¹ Reading for Zhu Xi, as for the ancients,²² meant recitation: “Generally speak-

ing in reading a text, we must recite it aloud. We can't just think about it. . . . In reading students must compose themselves and sit up straight, look leisurely at the text and hum softly. . . ."²³ The reader is above all an alert and active practitioner who makes the printed page come alive: "[O]n the printed page (*yinban shang*) the speech and patterns appear not to be alive; because they are not alive they cannot be applied. One must savor the flavor and turn it over until it is familiar and only then will the text come alive."²⁴ The reader is encouraged to become a coauthor, as it were, of the words of the sages: "recite (*shudu*) until its words appear to come from one's own mouth."²⁵

Zhu's theory of reading, with its emphasis on recitation and "possession" of the text, seems in many ways to perpetuate the reading and learning practices necessary in a manuscript culture. To one modern observer, his "Dushu fa" appears to be "a nostalgic attempt to convert the print-oriented students of his day to the traditions of pre-print book culture."²⁶ Yet in his own day he was attacked rather for what were seen as his departures from reading traditions; his use of printed texts and diagrams in pedagogy, for example, was criticized by his contemporary Lu Xiangshan (1139–93).²⁷ In any event, one suspects that Zhu Xi's idealized model was hardly representative of actual reading practices in the Song (960–1279) or any other period. In the Ming and Qing, the impracticality of his model was implicitly acknowledged in works of household instruction that propagated a vulgarized interpretation of Neo-Confucian intensive reading. In these works, consisting mainly of examples of "laborious study" (*qindu*), the goal of reading was not so much communing with the sages as the more prosaic one of passing the examinations and becoming an official.²⁸

A similar process of simplification and vulgarization shaped the institutionalization of Zhu Xi's program of learning in the centuries after his death. In the Yuan (1279–1368), a reduced form of his demanding model curriculum was officially promoted. William Theodore de Bary has shown how this "stripped down" curriculum, based on the Four Books with Zhu Xi's commentaries, was aimed at the "lowest common denominator" of educated Mongols.²⁹ The first Ming ruler, Taizu (r. 1368–98), a man of peasant origin, settled for an even briefer Neo-Confucian curriculum and sought to extend it throughout the empire.³⁰ But even in a radically reduced form, this program was still too difficult: the Classics remained abstruse, and Ming Taizu's goal of universal moral education through the Confucian canon was not realized.

Preface writers during the Ming period adopted the by now familiar rhetoric of the perceived difficulty of the Classics and histories and used it to legitimize their own fictional enterprises. For example, the author of an early preface (1522) to the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* pointed out the difficulty of official historiography:

A guest asked me, why is there a need for the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, given that there exists an official history [the *Sanguo zhi*, or Annals of the three kingdoms]. Is not the *yanyi* [elaboration, narrative] superfluous? I answered, “No. The events recorded in the histories are given in detail but the language is archaic, the import is subtle and the inner significance profound. If you are not a highly erudite scholar then once you open up the volume you will most likely fall asleep. So *haoshizhe* [aficionados], using language close to contemporary idiom, compiled this book by reshaping (*yinkuo chengbian*)³¹ [the *Sanguo zhi*] so that it would penetrate the ears of the people of the empire and thus they would comprehend it.”³²

The famed Ming thinker Yuan Hongdao (1568–1610) described the tedium of reading the Classics, contrasting it to the ease with which one could read fictionalized narratives such as *Water Margin*. In a constructed dialogue between a book lover and an interlocutor, he puts forward this view: “People say of *Water Margin* that it is extraordinary and so it is. Whenever I select the Thirteen Classics or Twenty-one Histories, as soon as I open the volume I am overtaken with sleepiness.” He adds that stories about heroes of the Han dynasty reach both the educated and the illiterate—“garbed [officials] and women.” However, the official *Hanshu* (History of the Han) requires endless explanations to be comprehensible. For this reason a *yanyi* version has been published: “When [classical] compositions cannot get their meaning across, vulgar [works] can; for this reason the [*Dong Xi Han tongsu yanyi* (Narrative of the eastern and western Han)] is termed a popular elaboration (*tongsu yanyi*.)” The readership is envisaged as a broad one: “those in the empire who love reading books.”³³

It was during the Ming period that an even more audacious idea was promoted, namely, that fictional writings were not only easier to read than the Classics but also could serve as substitutes for the Classics and impart the same essential moral wisdom. I have located this notion first in a collection of tales in classical Chinese, the *Jiandeng xinhua* (New stories to [read while] trimming the lamp) by Qu You (1341–1427), who held various senior posts as an educator and administrator.³⁴ In his preface, dated 1378, Qu You explains that he dared not circulate the work because it was “almost an incitement to immorality” and stored the manuscript in his box of books. However, many guests came to request it, and he could not decline them all. Qu then argues that the Classics themselves contain events impinging on “immorality” and “supernatural events.” For example, the *Classic of Songs* contains poems about elopement and erotic love, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* records times of disorder and banditry. In this way, he argues, even fictional tales can be said to have a didactic function akin to that of the canon.³⁵

Yongyuzi elaborated the same idea in the earliest extant preface to the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* (1494). He notes that “in the composition of the histories, the principle is subtle and the significance profound.” Nonethe-

less, histories lack a broad readership: “[W]hen most people read (*guan*) them they often criticize them and put them aside and pay no further attention because they are not comprehensible to a broad readership (*butong hu zhongren*). Consequently with the passing of time the events of the ages become lost in transmission.” In Luo Guanzhong’s *yanyi* version of the *Sanguo zhi*, however, “the language is neither too profound nor too vulgar and it is almost equivalent to a history, so if you read and recite (*dusong*) it you can learn a lesson from it.”³⁶

Fifty years later, Yuan Fengzi, in his 1548 preface to the *Sanguo zhizhuan* (Chronicles of the three kingdoms; another textual system of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*) went one step further than Yongyuzi by declaring that this famous narrative was not just “equivalent to a history” but a substitute for the core Confucian Classics. After all, it contained auguries of good and bad fortune as in the *Classic of Changes*, methods of governance as in the *Classic of History*, human passions as expressed in the *Classic of Songs*, judgments of praise and blame as in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and scrupulous observance of the proprieties as found in the *Record of Rites*. According to Yuan, the putative author, Luo Guanzhong (ca. 1330–1400), was concerned about the obscurity of official historiography, which made it difficult for those “of mediocre ability” (*yongchang*) to comprehend. Now that the work was published with illustrations it would be comprehensible to “the people of the empire.”³⁷ Several generations later sentiments of this sort had become commonplace.³⁸

In contrast to the Western experience, the sacred texts of Chinese civilization were not translated into the vernacular, although efforts were made to make them more comprehensible.³⁹ Perhaps the only parallel one could draw here would be the activities of literati during the late imperial period (after ca. 1550) to edit and publish vernacular narratives that sought to draw on the perceived essence of the Confucian Classics for a broader reading public.⁴⁰ There was no equivalent of Luther’s German Bible in the Chinese experience of vernacular print, but nonetheless literati increasingly promoted the notion that vernacular narratives could serve as Classics for the unlearned, thus developing what could be called an apologia for vernacular print. Around the same time a new lexicon of readership emerged together with a range of reading practices much broader than those prescribed in the Neo-Confucian model of intensive reading.

CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE READER

A number of noted vernacular narratives and plays circulated first in manuscript form to a tiny coterie of aficionados.⁴¹ This was also true for fictional works in the classical language, such as Qu You’s *Jiandeng xinhua*. This coterie readership is invariably addressed as members of the literati class or as

amateur collectors-aficionados (*haoshizhe*). For example, in his preface of 1494, Yongyuzi refers to “literati collectors” (*shijunzi zhi haoshizhe*) who competed to copy the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* in manuscript form.⁴² A play based on the popular religious story of Mulian circulated first in manuscript form among “amateur collectors” and then was published so as to meet the strong demand for copies (according to a preface dated 1582).⁴³ Of the great Ming narratives, the *Plum in the Golden Vase* is known for having a complicated textual history because of its early circulation in manuscript form among a small coterie of appreciative literati readers.⁴⁴ To explain the appearance of such manuscripts in print, the author of a preface will frequently construct a dialogue between a publisher and an interested literati reader of the manuscript who acclaims the work and recommends publication. For example, Xiuranzi (the pen name of Zhang Shangde), in his preface dated 1522, praises the readability of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* and refers to what could well be the first published edition of this work through the mouthpiece of a “guest”: “The guest looked up and let out a deep sigh, saying, ‘That is so, do not be offended by my words. One can indeed say it is of assistance in understanding [official] history and does not violate it! Books (*jianzhi*) are as numerous as the sea is vast, but quality editions (*shanben*) are very hard to find. Why not engrave it on woodblocks and publish it to the four quarters to ensure its longevity?’”⁴⁵

Literati, the appreciative readers of vernacular narratives, are referred to in a range of terms: *shizi* (literati), *junzi* (gentlemen), *saoko* (poets), *jinshen* (officials), *shangyinzhe* or *zhiyinzhe* (connoisseurs), *yashi* (men of refinement), and so on. Zhang Xiongfei (fl. 1522–66), in his 1557 preface to a reedition of the Yuan prosimetric narrative *Xixiang ji zhugongdiao* (*Record of the Western Chamber*; in the form of an all-keys-and-modes narrative) by Dong Jieyuan (fl. 1190–1208), spoke of the target reading public as connoisseurs (*zhiyinzhe*) and official gentlemen (*jinshen xiansheng*).⁴⁶ The scholar and bibliophile Hu Yinglin (1551–1602) noted that among those who love the *Water Margin* one finds officials and learned men (*jinshen wenshi*).⁴⁷

By the late fifteenth century, preface authors sought to flatter their readers as men of discernment, praising them for preferring the text in question to other less favored works. For example, in a preface dated 1589, Tiandu waichen (believed to be the pen name for Wang Daokun [1525–93]), in exclaiming on the delights of *Water Margin*, its encyclopedic scope and dazzling plot, says, “[O]ne can only speak of this to men of refinement (*yashi*), there is no point discussing it with common men (*sushi*).” He scorns the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, with its confusing mixture of fact and fiction, as fit only for the appreciation of common men who “sit in the darkness of their ignorance.” By contrast, men of refinement will appreciate *Water Margin* as another *Shiji* (Records of the grand historian).⁴⁸ Similarly, Xie Zhaozhe (1567–1624) praises a number of fictional works but considers the *Narra-*

tive of the *Three Kingdoms* and other historical tales boring because they keep too close to historical facts; such texts can delight children in the lanes and alleys but not literati (*shijunzi*).⁴⁹ Preface writers might also apply these distinctions to different versions of the same work, for the great Ming narratives circulated in two textual traditions, one simpler and containing more narrative material than the other. As Zhang Fengyi (1527–1613) noted, in a preface to *Water Margin* written in about 1588–89, connoisseurs (*shangyin-zhe*) would be able to discriminate between the authoritative text produced by Guo Xun (1475–1542) and the commercial product that contained the additional tales of Wang Qing and Tian Hu.⁵⁰

One also finds a wealth of references to social groups of ambiguous or lowly social status. One group is the amateur collectors, who are discussed in the next section on authors and editors. Members of the laity, called “good men and women” (*shanren*), and congregations addressed by kinship terms (sisters, brothers, etc.) are the designated reading public of chantefables and religious “precious scroll” (*baojuan*) narratives.⁵¹ Other groups are “people of the empire” (1548, the Escorial edition of the *Sanguo zhizhuan*), “people from the four quarters” (*sifang zhi ren*) (Xiuranzi, 1522 preface to the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*), and “the four categories of people” (*simin*; specifically, literati, farmers, artisans, and merchants). The four classes of people and the “ordinary people” (*fanmin*) were also the perceived public for morality books and similar texts.⁵² A preface dated 1644 and attributed (probably falsely) to Jin Shengtian (1608–61) declared that the reading public was both “the learned” (*xueshi*) and “the unlearned” (*buxue zhi ren*), “heroes and exceptional men” (*yingxiong haojie*), and “ordinary people and the vulgar herd” (*fanfu suzi*).⁵³ Presumably the reader was invited to place himself in one of these categories.

One of the most intriguing terms for designating the reader in Ming times is the category “ignorant [i.e., uneducated] men and women” (*yufu yufu*). In antiquity the locus classicus of this term referred to the obligation of the ruler to cherish the common people.⁵⁴ The leading Ming thinker Wang Yang-ming (1472–1529) elevated the potential of the *yufu yufu* in a way unprecedented in previous Confucian thought: “that which corresponds to the mind of the ignorant man and woman may be called ‘common virtue.’ That which differs from the ignorant man and woman may be called ‘heterodox.’”⁵⁵ Possibly the earliest use of *yufu yufu* in vernacular texts is the 1508 preface, attributed to Lin Han (1434–1519), to the *Sui Tang zhizhuan tongsu yanyi* (Popularized elaboration of the *Chronicles of the Sui and Tang dynasties*): “I want to [ensure] this work circulates together with the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* so that even ignorant men and women will understand the events of these two dynasties in a glance.”⁵⁶ Nonetheless, this text is actually designed for “gentlemen coming after” (*hou zhi junzi*) as a supplement to the official histories.⁵⁷ Here the term “ignorant men and women” should be considered

a trope used in preface discourse to represent the relative clarity of popularized texts as opposed to the obscurity of official historiography. In other publications the term might well designate a specific reading public, as in the play *Quanshan ji* (Encouragement to do good), based on the Mulian story, by Zheng Zhizhen (fl. late sixteenth century). In a preface dated 1582, it is stated that the play was written in order to move the emotions of “ignorant men and women” and thus attain the goal of moral edification.⁵⁸

A related term is *suren* (the common people). Li Danian, in his 1553 preface to the *Tangshu yanyi* (Popularized elaboration of the *History of the Tang*), notes that both the common people and poets (*suren saoke*) will read and benefit from this work.⁵⁹ In another case, Xiong Damu (fl. mid-sixteenth century) declares that he has transformed a work of hagiography about the Song hero Yue Fei (1103–41) into one comprehensible to the less learned. A relative who was also a publisher urged Xiong to rewrite this text in *chihua* form (i.e., prose with some inserted verse) “so that even ignorant men and women will understand [at least] some of it.”⁶⁰ The rewritten text, which appeared in 1522, was called the *Da Song yanyi zhongxing—Yinglie zhuan* (Popularized elaboration of the restoration of the great Song—a record of heroes). A seventeenth-century edition of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* from Hangzhou contains the following declaration in its preface: “Luo Guanzhong took historical material from the *Sanguo zhi* [i.e., the official history] and from the [*Zizhi tongjian*] *gangmu* [Outline of the *Comprehensive mirror of government*, by Zhu Xi] and made it comprehensible so that ignorant men and commoners (*yufu sushi*) could read and recite it (*jiangdu*).”⁶¹

It is hard to say how many so-called ignorant men and women actually read historical fiction. Certainly youths acquiring literacy, some of them of humble origin, read vernacular narratives, particularly the simpler commercial versions. Wu Cheng’en (ca. 1506–82), for example, was the son of a clerk in a silk shop. He admitted to hiding from his father and reading unorthodox histories when he was a youth.⁶² Chen Jitai (1567–1641), who finally gained the rank of *jinshi* at the age of sixty-eight, came from a poor family in Wuping, Fujian. In his jottings he described how as a child he borrowed a copy of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* from his uncle and became totally engrossed in it, even ignoring entreaties from his mother to come and dine. He was particularly entranced by the illustrations at the top of the text that depicted every stage of the story.⁶³ The text he read was almost certainly one of the pictorial type, in *shangtu xiawen* format, produced in Jianyang, Fujian. Jin Shengtian, famed for his abridged version of *Water Margin*, has described the tedium of studying the Four Books as a child. When he was eleven years old, he began to enjoy a “vulgar” (*suben*) edition of *Water Margin*.⁶⁴

As far as I can determine, with the exception of *yufu yufu*, women are never addressed as such in prefaces to dramatic and narrative works during this period, but they did nonetheless form an emerging audience for vernacular

works.⁶⁵ Ye Sheng (1420–74) is commonly cited in this regard. He notes with concern that booksellers promote tales (probably based on dramatic versions) of Cai Bojie and others, tales that commoners such as peasants, artisans, merchants, and peddlers like to copy and store. He notes that “foolish, ignorant women are particularly addicted to them.”⁶⁶ Most references to women place them as members of a listening audience for chantefables or storytelling.⁶⁷ Where one finds references to women reading, it is often associated with auditive reading—that is, reading something out loud to oneself or to an audience. It follows from this that to attract this sort of audience, texts needed to be designed to have an auditive quality. As I discuss below, editors show an awareness of this from the earliest phase of vernacular print. By the mid-Qing period one finds clear signs of the development of a hierarchy of reading. In the late eighteenth century Zhang Zilin noted that women loved reading (*kan*) the vulgar tales of the storyteller, but “if they read books (*dushu*), it just does not penetrate [the ear].”⁶⁸ Commentators now distinguished between material based on the oral arts, with an auditory quality, which could be “viewed” (*kan*) by the unlearned, and classical texts, which required considerable effort to study and master, in the Neo-Confucian sense of *dushu*. It appears that the literati reader remains implicitly *male*, whereas the emerging literacy of unlearned groups is often portrayed as *female*.⁶⁹

The issue of the female reader could also be pursued in a study of literary constructions of women and literacy and the metaphorical associations of the Chinese technology of writing: the brush, inkstone, inkstick, and paper. As we have seen, Zhu Xi used a cluster of metaphors, many based on male biological and occupational roles, to construct an image of a male reader, toiling incessantly to achieve a Confucian enlightenment. He was not particularly eccentric in this regard. The writing brush, for example, was often referred to by literati as a “brush plough” (*bigeng*), which conveyed the notion that the (male) writer labored with the brush as a farmer labored with his plough.⁷⁰ But the brush is also featured in Chinese erotic art, where it represented the phallus. Erotic folios of the Ming dynasty, for example, included illustrations of a man moistening his brush on an inkstone while a beautiful woman looked on.⁷¹ In poems, plays, and fiction of an erotic nature, male and female literacy is constructed in highly gendered terms. A woman who wrote billet-doux, for example, is said to be “sketching,” “outlining,” or “embroidering” a letter, terms drawn from feminine occupations such as sewing and using cosmetics. These terms also had erotic overtones; for instance, the word “embroider” (*xiu*) could refer to a woman in the act of intercourse, and similarly, the word “write” (*shu*) referred to the male role in the sexual act.⁷² Constructions by literati of actual courtesans, fictional courtesans, and heroines of love stories all deploy a metaphorical network that imagines male and female literary skills as distinct pursuits within a complex *ars erotica*.⁷³

This issue of gendered reading (and writing) is too complex to be fully treated here. But it is possible to suggest, from a survey of the various types of reading attributed to women, a range of different female literacies: the “auditory literacy” of semiliterate women who read performance-style texts, the more elaborate “courtesan literacy” of high-class courtesans (see Fig. 2) and certain literary heroines, and the simplified Confucian literacy expected of ladies from fine families. Occasionally, too, one finds a member of the literati class noting with astonished admiration the learning of an exceptional woman who has reached male literati standards and can even be deemed a “Woman Metropolitan Graduate.”⁷⁴ However, although many women could and did read, it would appear that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries women were rarely addressed as a target public by editors and publishers of drama and vernacular fiction.

AUTHORING AND EDITING THE VERNACULAR TEXT

Many early to mid-Ming vernacular (or semivernacular) texts are attributed to figures who are unknown, known only by a pen name, or historically obscure. This is particularly true for the most famous narratives of the Ming era, such as the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, *Water Margin*, *Journey to the West*, and *Plum in the Golden Vase*. A little-known figure from an earlier era (such as Luo Guanzhong) can be regarded as the supposed author of a stream of plays and narratives. In their frontispieces, attributed “authors” often declared themselves simply compilers, editors, or reshapers of earlier material. The impossibility of attributing a particular text to a particular author who “owned” it meant that texts were in an important sense “authorless” and thus open to “authoring” by other hands. As David Rolston has pointed out, the obscurity of the author was a conceptual problem for the reader because the traditional aim of reading was to understand the personality and intentions of the author. Rolston argues further that, with the development of the “literati novel” in the mid- to late Ming, literati editors relied on commentary to create an “implied author” with whom the reader could “commune.”⁷⁵ Similarly, Robert E. Hegel has noted that in China, in contrast to the West, authorship “became relevant sometime *after* the novel had become a popular literary form.”⁷⁶

It appears that the earliest producers of vernacular fiction and dramatic texts did not regard themselves as individualized “authors.” One of the most ubiquitous terms in Ming prefaces is *haoshizhe*, a term that escapes exact definition but that refers variously to someone who read, produced, and collected texts. In antiquity the *haoshizhe* was an idler who liked to gossip and meddle. For example, when Mencius hears of rumors about the life of Confucius, he responds that these are “fabrications by people with nothing better to do (*haoshizhe*).”⁷⁷ The same term was used in fine arts to refer to nouveau riche

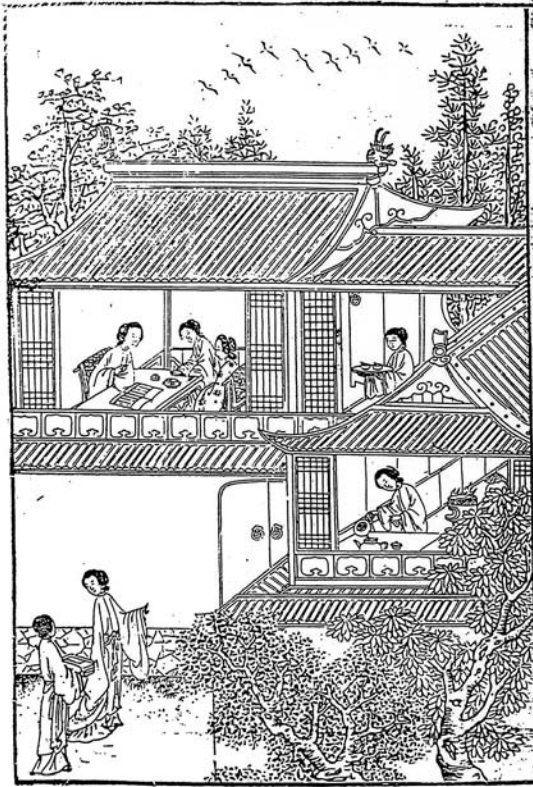


Figure 2. Books in the courtesan quarters of Nanjing. In the foreground, a woman arrives at this courtesan house carrying books; upstairs, a female teacher instructs two women from an open text. From *Lüchuang nüshi* (Women scholars of the green window), 14 *juan*, attributed to Qinhuai yuke (Guest of the [courtesan quarters] at Qinhuai) and published by the Jinling Xinyuan tang, apparently during the Chongzhen era; reproduced from a facsimile reproduction in *Guben xiaoshuo banhua tulu*, comp. Jin Peilin (Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju, 1996), *han* 2, vol. 2, no. 649.

collectors of expensive artworks who did not necessarily have the requisite learning to appreciate their possessions. Mi Fei (1052–1107) divided collectors of artworks into connoisseurs (*jianshangjia*) and collector-aficionados (*haoshizhe*).⁷⁸ By “connoisseurs,” he meant those with avocations who collected items of exquisite quality. But, he laments, *haoshizhe* of the current age—the mere aficionados, with wealth and property but little learning—collect expensive items to display their good taste. The *haoshizhe* have a love of meretricious show but little real taste or sensibility.⁷⁹

The term *haoshizhe* gained a measure of respectability in the Ming era, although it did not lose its pejorative connotations. Shen Chunze (fl. 1573–1620) clearly saw it as a critical designation in his preface to the *Changwu zhi* (Treatise on superfluous things) by Wen Zhenheng (1585–1645): “In recent times, some wealthy people, together with some of their vulgar and obtuse associates, congratulate themselves on their connoisseurship (*haoshi*). Whenever they ‘appreciate and discriminate’ (*shangjian*), they issue only commonplaces, and whatever enters their hands is roughly handled.”⁸⁰ Yet in some other writings of the day, the term is used in a neutral or even positive sense to designate amateur enthusiasts and collectors. In prefaces to drama and fiction, *haoshizhe* are regarded as aficionados who constitute an important target reading public. Zhu Quan (1378–1448), the sixteenth son of the first Ming emperor, in his preface to his book about aria writing, the *Taihe zhengyin pu* (Corrected song forms for the era of great peace), declared that his intention was to set standards for *yuefu* (“bureau of music”) song composition that “may be useful to devotees (*haoshi*) and assist scholars (*xuezh*) in case of need.”⁸¹ *Haoshizhe* were also collectors of material in manuscript form. Qu You, in his preface to the *Jiandeng xinhua*, refers to the activities of *haoshizhe* who sought out tales about contemporary events or the recent past. Qu in turn compiled and published these.

The term *haoshizhe* was apparently borrowed from collectors of the fine arts and applied to those who enjoyed singing and composing lyrical arias for Chinese drama and who collected aria material for their own enjoyment. It was then used to refer to those who collected fictional material and anecdotes and, by the late fifteenth century, to admirers of semivernacular narratives such as *Sanguo zhi*. In 1494 Yongyuzi referred to the “collectors from among the literati” (*shijunzi zhi haoshizhe*) who rushed to copy down this narrative. A generation later, Xiuranzi, in his 1522 preface, refers in positive terms to *haoshizhe* who revised and edited this work. The epithet “literati” has here been dropped, presumably because the term is now sufficiently respectable to stand on its own.

Haoshizhe were men who had the resources and leisure to take pains to collect specific copies of texts. In 1528 Zhang Lu (fl. 1522–66), in his preface to a compilation of *yuefu* songs called the *Cilin zhaiyan* (Exquisite selections from the forest of arias), noted that the originals had circulated in two

main ways. Some had been printed for the public (*gongzhu zixing*); others had circulated privately as manuscripts (*mizhu tengxie*). Complete sets were thus hard to obtain. Only a few collectors (*haoshizhe*) had managed to gather them all together.⁸² *Haoshizhe* were also men who traveled, perhaps to take the examinations. This is the implication of the preface to the same text dated 1539: “Poets and scholars from the four directions (*sifang zhi ren*), on departing from their country and thinking of home, at the extremities of wind and moon, can recite and sing these songs while inducing each other to drink and thus release the anxieties of travel. What solace this will be!”⁸³

Avid collectors stimulated demand for a text, thus also stimulating its publication. Hu Tianlu noted in the 1582 preface to *Quanshan ji* that the author took a preexisting story about Mulian and “reshaped it” (*kuocheng*) as a didactic play: “*Haoshizhe* have not shirked traveling long distances to obtain a copy. There were not enough [manuscripts] to allow for those who wished to copy it out (*shan xie buji*) so I have had woodblocks engraved (*xiu zi*) [i.e., published it] in order to meet the demand.”⁸⁴ *Haoshizhe* could intervene directly in the textual process; that is, they could edit, revise, and publish texts. Tiandu waichen credits *haoshizhe* with bringing editions of *Water Margin* back to an earlier approved model. He compares the work of *haoshizhe* favorably with the editing activities of another group pejoratively labeled “village pedants” (*cun xuejiu*).⁸⁵ *Haoshizhe* also played an interventionist role in the transmission of the play *Pipa ji* (The lute). In a preface dated 1498, a writer known only by the pen name “Baiyun sanxian” declares that a *haoshizhe* recorded excerpts of the script. Because the middle part was missing, he rashly added material to make it complete, but some errors remain.⁸⁶ Conservative commentators noted with alarm that *haoshizhe* contributed to the growing rise in esteem enjoyed by vernacular texts. Ye Sheng, for example, writes scathingly of *haoshizhe* who regard the popular tales enjoyed by women as a kind of “Female *Mirror of Government*” (*Nü Tongjian*).⁸⁷

Farther down the social scale from the *haoshizhe* was a group known variously as “village school teachers” (*xiangshu*), “village pedants,” “alley scholars” (*liru*), and “rustic elders” (*yelao*). According to Hu Yinglin, the fiction of later centuries was the product of alley scholars and rustic elders, in distinction to the literati and men of talent (*wenren caishi*) who wrote the more ornate fiction of the pre-Tang period.⁸⁸ He further noted the inclusion of fictional tales in narratives like the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, which, he believed, was due to the influence of “village pedants.”⁸⁹ Like the *haoshizhe*, these presumably less learned readers sought to intervene actively in textual transmission. He Bi (fl. early 1600s), in a preface dated 1616, notes that older editions of the *Record of the Western Chamber* contained erroneous phonological annotations; he declares, “[N]o doubt this is the result of village schoolteachers. Nowadays these are not reprinted.”⁹⁰ Tiandu waichen was equally

scathing about the “village pedants” who removed prologue sections and added the tales of Tian Hu and Wang Qing to *Water Margin*: “To delete dazzling writing and add on superfluous stories, what could be a worse fate than this!”⁹¹ The activities of the so-called *haoshizhe* and the so-called village pedants or village schoolteachers were so similar that one is tempted to consider them the same group of literate, if not learned, men. The choice of appellation was clearly a subjective matter. The restorative efforts of an “aficionado” in one preface could well be labeled the crass intervention of a “village pedant” in the next.

READING PRACTICES AND THE DESIGN OF VERNACULAR TEXTS

Publishers and editors (whether “aficionado collectors” or “village pedants”) intervened just as actively in the printed transmission of texts as in their manuscript circulation. Print technology and the burgeoning market for publications broadened the range of editorial options considerably, however. Specifically, publishers and editors designed texts to allow for a range of reading practices. Readers brought some of these practices with them from manuscript culture, such as reading, chanting, and singing a text based on the oral or dramatic arts. In other cases, editors took advantage of the potential of the printed page—for example, providing illustrations representing each stage of the narrative so that less literate readers could “read the pictures,” or using spacious layout and typography for ease of reading.⁹² Other features, such as the use of commentary, were borrowed from elite culture but adapted to the needs of the less learned reader.

One of the most favored reading practices was vocalization, either to oneself or to an audience. The lexicon of vocalization included *songdu* (or *du-song*), *jiangdu*, and *fengsong*.⁹³ Vocalization was a practice borrowed from Chinese traditional techniques of study; memorization, chanting, and reading out loud were the usual techniques for acquiring an elementary education and, later, mastery of the Classics. Much early educational material was composed in verse, in part to make vocalization and memorization easier. Even before formal education began, parents would teach children to recite classical poems.⁹⁴ During the late Ming and Qing periods, potted histories written in parallel prose or verse were in common circulation.⁹⁵ Students destined to be shopkeepers, artisans, and merchants were taught to read and chant jingles with a limited number of characters relevant to their specific trades.⁹⁶ Formal education began with the rote memorization of primers such as the *Sanzi jing* (Three-character classic) and *Baijia xing* (Myriad family names) before moving on to the Four Books.⁹⁷ There was little if any explanation. The curriculum emphasized the ability to memorize and recite classical material (much of it in metrical form) and to match rhyming couplets. Gui Youguang (1507–71) complained that local schools focused too much

on “reciting the texts and matching lines” to the detriment of moral teaching: “Today people simply teach students to recite and match rhyming lines. If the students recite and match well, then they are thought to be intelligent, but the teachers know not of the nature and sensibilities of their students nor of their character, nor of how they serve their relations and their peers.”⁹⁸ Zhu Xi sought to make this mindless chanting meaningful by urging that the reader engage his mind actively in the process: “recite until the words appear to come from one’s own mouth.”⁹⁹

The assumption that a text was to be vocalized or chanted, an integral part of Confucian education, was adopted too in reading practices of texts in general. For example, Zhang Zhupo, in his preface to the *Plum in the Golden Vase*, notes that he was taught to read slowly and savor each syllable: “I would linger over each character as though it were a syllable from an aria of *kunqu* opera.”¹⁰⁰ As discussed earlier, women’s literacy practices were particularly associated with vocalization. Early editions of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, including the edition of Xiuranzi, contain a simple jingle before the text proper. This verse prelude, which sums up the main events of the narrative, is commonly found in chantefable texts and served as a useful mnemonic for the reader to chant.

The ability to read a text out loud in meaningful segments (*poju*) was the hallmark of an educated man.¹⁰¹ Memorization and recitation of favorite texts continued well into the twentieth century. Louis Cha (also known as Chin Yung, 1924–), the popular Hong Kong writer of martial arts novels, has described how his mother and aunts loved to read the *Dream of the Red Chamber*: “Everyone would compete to recite the chapter titles and the poems in the text. If you won you could win a sweet. I used to listen from the side. I felt it was sissy and boring but when my mother put a sweet into my hand I suddenly became interested.”¹⁰² Examples could be multiplied endlessly. The common practice of vocalization and memorization, particularly of verse, could well account for the large amount of metrical material in Chinese vernacular narratives, a feature that has long puzzled Western commentators, who tend to regard the verse sections as redundant.¹⁰³

China’s earliest vernacular texts took as their model various oral and performance genres that were based on the spoken language of a particular region. Well before the emergence of vernacular print, China had a long-established tradition of what could be called “performance texts” (i.e., texts that record a performance of an oral or religious-liturgical genre or were modeled on these genres). When a performance text (such as a play, chantefable, or melodic narrative) was published, it was essential to make a decision about the spoken language to be recorded as well as the rhyming schemes of its melodies or arias. To succeed in the market, publishers now had to make decisions about the linguistic backgrounds, educational levels, and likely reading practices of their target readership. In Europe, the emer-

gence of a literary reading public was inseparable from the development of new vernacular languages that became a kind of *hochsprache*, or language held in common by the educated reading public.¹⁰⁴ We still know too little about the choices made by Chinese editors in this regard, but one can point to two contradictory trends, one toward the use of regional languages (*fangyan*) and the other toward a standardized vernacular (*guanhua*, lit. “official language”) based mainly on northern speech.¹⁰⁵

Publishers of some plays and chantefable-type genres sometimes chose to write in dialectal usages or to base rhymed material on the phonological patterns of specific areas. The decision of the (presumably) Beijing-based publishers to rhyme the “Hua Guan Suo” chantefable with the phonology of the northern Wu dialect is one puzzling case.¹⁰⁶ Other examples include lute ballads in Suzhou speech, plays with dialogues in Wu dialect, and plays from Minnan with arias based on local musical and dialect modes.¹⁰⁷ However, apart from the occasional work aimed at wealthy markets in Jiangnan and Fujian, or those designed for the performer, most authors apparently saw themselves as publishing for a national market, or at least a market beyond their immediate areas.

The equivalent in China of the vernaculars shared by educated groups in European countries would perhaps be the “book-reading speech” (*dushu yin*) of the north. “Book-reading speech” was the recitation mode taught in formal education from as early as the seventh century c.e.¹⁰⁸ A key work in establishing the dominance of northern pronunciation was the *Zhongyuan yinyun* (Sounds and rhymes of the central plain, 1324), a manual of rhyming and prosody designed for the composer of dramatic arias and songs. The first Ming emperor, a southerner, commissioned a phonology based on northern *dushu yin*, the *Hongwu zhengyun* (Correct rhymes of the Hongwu era), compiled in 1375, in order to provide a standard for song composition.¹⁰⁹

Although manuals to assist with the composition of southern arias were also produced, the northern works remained influential even in the south. For example, Wang Jide (ca. 1560–1625) from Shaoxing, south of the Yangzi, noted in his preface to an edition of the *Record of the Western Chamber* (1614), “[T]he writing down of songs is different from that of the Classics and histories. For this reason I have recorded the phonology of the central plain, as in the *Zhongyuan yinyun*.”¹¹⁰ His teacher, Xu Wei (1521–93), also from Shaoxing, wrote an important work on southern drama but declared, “In singing, regional accent is to be avoided more than anything else.”¹¹¹ Xu Wei’s preferred pronunciation standard was probably not the *Zhongyuan yinyun* but a more ancient phonology.¹¹² Editors recognized that texts based on the performing arts containing a high number of colloquialisms became obscure in succeeding centuries. For example, in his annotated edition of the *Record of the Western Chamber*, Xu Wei explained that his method was not so much to explicate classical allusions as to concentrate on dialect, terms

of abuse, the jargon of actors and publishers, examples drawn from glyphomancy, vulgar and refined usages, and so on.¹¹³

The same basic text might be produced in different versions to meet the linguistic, performative, and literary tastes of varying readerships. For example, Shi Guoqi (Qing) observed that the edition of *Xixiang ji zhugongdiao* in his possession is “a transmitted text for reading” (*liuchuan duben*). It can be distinguished from the songbooks of the same story used by courtesans (*yuanjia changben*). The *duben* version has an abundance of arias, scanty prose, some dialect usages, and no musical notation.¹¹⁴ Similarly, Ling Mengchu (1580–1644) observed that his edition of the *Record of the Western Chamber* “is really an aid to broad cultivation and can be read as a literary composition; it should not be regarded as a play.”¹¹⁵ According to He Bi, this famous play was in circulation in three types of editions. The “marketplace editions” (*shike ben*), named after the likely sites of performance, included musical annotation and were designed for use by performers. The “commercial editions” (*fangke ben*) included punctuation and commentary; presumably these texts were produced by commercial publishers for aficionados of this famous play. The “old editions” (*jiuben*) contained erroneous phonological annotations done by “village schoolteachers.” Nowadays, he notes, the old editions are no longer reprinted.¹¹⁶ The four great Ming narratives circulated in two textual traditions, one in simpler pictorial form and the other a more literary text, presumably for differing audiences.¹¹⁷

Woodblock publication made possible the replication of endless black-and-white images and the rapid transposition of the same or similar pictures across a number of texts. Vernacular publishers used a range of illustrative modes: pictorial (*shangtu xiawen*, with pictures on the top third of each page and text below), half-folio illustrations, and two-in-one illustrations with one picture on top of the other.¹¹⁸ By the late Ming illustrations could be grouped at the beginning of a work or even in an independent fascicle instead of interspersed throughout the text.¹¹⁹ Preface writers believed that illustrations not only attracted readers but also assisted their comprehension of the text. The Yue publishing house (Yuejia) of Beijing, for instance, criticized “marketplace editions” of the *Record of the Western Chamber* because the texts were full of errors, the pictures did not match the progress of the story, and they were not easy to read. They claimed that their edition (1498), in contrast, had a large typeface and pictures that matched each stage of the play for easy comprehension: “Now the songs and pictures match, so people lodged in inns or traveling in boats, whether they be roaming for pleasure or sitting in some distant place, can get a copy of this text, look it over, and sing it correctly from beginning to end and thereby refresh their hearts.”¹²⁰ Pictures were thought not only to aid the less learned reader but also to help to impart the work’s moral wisdom. Yuan Fengzi, in the 1548 preface to the Esorial edition of the *Sanguo zhizhuan*, notes that illustrations (*hua*) were added

to the original text: “the illustrations comment on the narrative (*zhuan*) and the narrative speaks of what is in the *Annals* (*zhi*; i.e., the *Sanguo zhi*) and thus the work [achieves its goal of] encouragement to do good and warning against evil.”¹²¹

But, as the Yue publishers pointed out in their self-serving attack on marketplace editions of the *Record of the Western Chamber*, illustrations in “chap-book”-type literature were not always a reliable tool for comprehension.¹²² In higher-quality texts, the disjuncture between text and illustration was not a problem, for illustrations were employed largely for aesthetic purposes. As Hegel has noted, the illustrative art of the block print borrowed many techniques and conventions from the fine arts of the elite; and the finest carvers might achieve some degree of fame for their work. In some quality editions of the late Ming, exquisite illustrations are attributed to noted carvers.¹²³

Nonetheless, the necessarily representational nature of illustrative art was often viewed as vulgar and merely decorative—the art of mimesis as opposed to the individual, self-referential art of the literati.¹²⁴ This would explain the ambivalence some literati publishers felt about the inclusion of illustrations in their own editions. For example, Ling Mengchu considered illustrations a necessary concession to the marketplace. In his literary edition of *Record of the Western Chamber*, he declared, “It should be unnecessary to include illustrations (*tuhua*), but people place importance on ‘rouge and powder.’ I am concerned that people will complain about the lack of illustrations (*xiang*) and so at each act I have placed titles and plot summaries of four lines (*timu*) together with illustrations (*hui*) in line with the current custom.”¹²⁵ The same ambivalence is reflected in the lexicon of viewing. Craig Clunas hypothesizes that *guan* (to visualize or contemplate) reflects the aesthete’s appreciative viewing of an object of high art, whereas *kan* (look) reflects the gaze of the unlearned at a mimetic depiction.¹²⁶

Commentary was also used to attract readers.¹²⁷ Yu Xiangdou was one of the first to use his commentary as a selling point by calling his editions “commentarial editions” (*piping* or *pinglin*). A prolific publisher, he is known for his examination essay extracts, annotated extracts from classical works, encyclopedias, commercial manuals, almanacs, rhyme guides, and fictional works, many in pictorial form. He produced up to three different editions of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* and one edition of *Water Margin*. Although his works have been scorned by critics, he was one of the first to cater specifically to less learned readers. According to Y. W. Ma, “[W]ith the possible exception of Feng [Menglong, 1574–1646], it is difficult to name another individual in the Ming period who did so much to champion the cause of popular culture in general and vernacular literature in particular.”¹²⁸

Yu’s commentary to vernacular narratives is quite distinct from the earlier commentarial traditions that concentrated on place-names and the odd phonetic gloss as well as from later commentaries that sought to highlight

the aesthetic qualities of a text. In a study of Yu's *Piping Sanguo zhizhuan* (Commentarial edition of the *Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*), I argued that Yu treated this narrative as a manual on strategy that offered a "watered-down" version of complex historical events, aphorisms dealing with tactics, and simplified didactic lessons.¹²⁹ Yu's commentary could be categorized into three types: those making affective points (playing on the readers' emotions and encouraging them to identify with heroes and villains, the victor and the vanquished), those passing judgment on the action (providing moral assessment of tactics), and those pointing up certain social phenomena. His commentary offered contradictory interpretations and, unlike the commentary of later literati on the aesthetics of the novel, did not seek to present a coherent pattern along Confucian lines. It was designed for selective, discontinuous reading by readers interested in the strategic application of the contents to everyday living.¹³⁰

In another edition, this time with the slightly altered title, *Sanguo zhi pinglin* (*Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, with abundant commentary), held at Waseda University, Yu tried another tactic to attract his reading public. In this edition, likely published after the *Piping* version, Yu has broadened the categories of his commentary to include not just *ping* (evaluations of characters and events in line with the strategy used) but also a battery of other types of commentary, such as *shiyi* (explanations of place-names, allusions, and terms), *buyi* (supplements), *kaozheng* (textual evidence), and *yinshi* (pronunciation). This proliferation of types of commentary was almost certainly a result of the pressure of a highly competitive market for editions of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*. Nanjing editions, from which Yu presumably borrowed, included the above categories of commentary, which imitated the traditional apparatus of the Classics. In spite of the impressive appearance of this "abundant commentary," however, Yu's comments are often quite elementary in nature and were surely directed at a reading public at the foundational stages of literacy. The very first line of commentary in the volume is the elucidation of the term for eunuchs, *huangguan*, as "officials who manage affairs in the palace" (1a). Celebrated historical figures, such as the military strategist Sunzi, are identified; Qin and Xiang are explained as Qin Shihuang and Xiang Yu. One even finds the word *qi* (wife) explained as an alternative term for woman, *fu* (13:5b). As in the *Piping* edition, the *Pinglin* version contains simplified interpretations of events and tactics.

During the Ming period, it was the pictorial editions of editors such as Yu Xiangdou, with their simple commentary and interpretive frameworks, that predominated in the market for less learned readers. Although Yu published these editions for unlearned readers and those in the process of acquiring literacy, he took pains to flatter his target public with the appellation "literati" (*shizi*)¹³¹ and to impress them with the kind of pseudocritical apparatus found in the Classics. The same phenomenon has been noted in the

acquisition of curios, antiques, and artworks by nouveaux riches seeking to acquire “cultural capital” in the late Ming period.¹³²

CONCLUSION

This study of constructions of readers, authors, publishers, and reading practices in the early stages of Chinese vernacular print is necessarily a preliminary one. As far as I know, an analysis of the Chinese lexicon of readership and underlying paradigms of reading and writing in a class and gendered context has not been attempted before, although many studies touch on related issues.¹³³ Here, because of limitations of space, I have dealt with only a small portion of the preface and commentarial discourse extant for my chosen period, the late fifteenth to mid-seventeenth century. The issues touched on here belong to studies of the history of reading and reading practices and the sociology of the text. This is a much-studied area in the West; one could mention in this context the works of Roger Chartier, D. F. McKenzie, and Wlad Godzich,¹³⁴ which I have found inspiring. I have drawn, too, on the insights of recent feminist scholarship, which has demonstrated the highly gendered, indeed sexualized, nature of notions of literacy, reading, and writing in Renaissance England and ancient Greece.¹³⁵

The Chinese “rhetoric of reading,” by which I mean constructions of the reader in prefatorial, commentarial, and educational discourse, changed radically from the early stage of Chinese print culture, as represented in the twelfth-century views of the leading Song Neo-Confucian, Zhu Xi, to the burgeoning of vernacular print after the mid-sixteenth century. Essentially, the main change was from an intensive reading of an arcane, often obscure Classic to extensive, discontinuous reading of an accessible, attractive text with a clear practical or didactic message. The “fierce effort” required to master a Classic (*dushu*) became the easier task of “looking at” (*kan*) a text or “surveying” (*lan*) its illustrations. The active Neo-Confucian reader, seeking to “penetrate” a text and thus attain personal understanding of perceived universal principles or even a mystical enlightenment, becomes the passive reader whose ear will be “penetrated” by the audio quality of the vernacular text and guided by simple explanatory and interpretive commentary. The aspiring scholar, humming the text with back upright in the privacy of his study, becomes the chanting, vocalizing reader who shares his or her recitation or understanding with others in the immediate social environment. The student, who, by his mental engagement and mouthing of the text, becomes a “coauthor” of the Classic, becomes then, too, the reader as storyteller, reciter, and public “performer.”

Along with this shift in the rhetoric of reading came a change in the class terms used to identify reading publics. In publication rhetoric, the aspiring scholar, the examination candidate, and the literatus give way to a broader

spectrum of reading publics constructed by a complex set of negotiations. The rhetoric is contradictory, reflecting opposition in some quarters to attempts to popularize the vernacular text. Some works are acclaimed because they are designed for men of refinement (*yashi*) as distinct from the vulgar herd; others, precisely because they are aimed at a common readership (*sushi*). Some preface writers aimed at an all-inclusive “four classes of people,” “people of the empire,” or “people in the empire who love books”; others spoke explicitly of a dichotomous audience for the same text, that is, learned and unlearned, the literati and the common man. Some texts, purportedly designed for the literati class, nonetheless vaunted their “popular” (*tongsu*) nature, emphasizing that even “ignorant men and women” could understand them. This new valorization of popular texts (and implicitly, their less learned readership) finds some parallels in the prevalence of manuals of scientific and medical knowledge directed at less learned groups during the Ming period. Timothy Brook has noted that whereas in previous ages lack of knowledge was generally equated with moral infirmity, by the mid-Ming period there was an awareness in some quarters that the benighted customs of the populace were due to lack of access to knowledge rather than to willful obstinacy.¹³⁶ The confusion of terms denoting readership could also reflect the gradual blurring of the ancient demarcations between “the four orders of the people,” a trend that worried contemporaries of the period.¹³⁷

Within the complex claims for target readerships, one suspects that in some cases the designation *tongsu* is basically a trope with little referentiality. Literati readers were invited to read texts that while “unorthodox” and “crude,” were nonetheless worth reading because they purportedly captured the essential simplicity of the universal principles enunciated in the Classics. This is reminiscent of the simplicity topos in Western print, that is, the notion frequently put forward by heretics that their texts encapsulated a holy simplicity akin to that of the fishermen Apostles taught by Jesus Christ.¹³⁸ In the rhetoric of vernacular texts one finds a similar oppositional discourse between the excessive abstruseness of the sacred Classics and the sagelike simplicity of popularized texts and, by implication, of their target readership. What remains muted and largely absent in the Chinese side of the equation, however, is the reader as heretic.

What does this process of rhetorical contestation—the opposition posed between refined and popular, between the literatus and the common man—imply about changing social hierarchies and distinctions? Should one regard the much-vaunted popularization (*tongsu*) of the vernacular text as a sham, a rationalization of vernacular print for the literati reader? Or should one say instead, in the light of the rhetoric of Yu Xiangdou, that unlearned readers who required the most basic guidance in their reading were rhetorically co-opted into the class of literati (*shizi*) by the act of reading a text whose elementary nature is carefully disguised by the appurtenances of classical his-

toriography? But to suggest that a choice is necessary is perhaps mistaken: it appears that *both* these processes were at work during this period.

When did these changes take place, at least in the rhetoric of publication, and to what extent did they reflect actual reading practices? This study suggests that the point of transition from the coterie manuscript text, passed around a small circle of literati admirers, to the printed book was the crucial point of transition toward a broader target readership in the case of many novels and plays. This point was reached at different times for different manuscripts. In the case of the best-known vernacular fiction, this process took place at various times during the sixteenth century. The point of publication was the precise time when editors made long-term decisions about the textual format and the target readership. The other crucial factor was the social class and level of education of the editor or editor-publisher. By the mid-Ming period, more literati figures lent their names to or were actively involved in the publishing of commercial works of a popular nature.¹³⁹ But, as we have seen, they were not necessarily writing only for those in their own social class.

A crucial part of the Chinese experience, as in the West, was the production of the “same” text in multiform editions (expanded, contracted, pictorial, with varying types of commentary and content, etc.). Empirical as well as rhetorical evidence suggests that different actual audiences did in fact read different types of editions. This has important implications for our understanding of “the vernacular book,” which should in some cases be considered a multiple text, a point I have made elsewhere.¹⁴⁰ An examination of text design also demonstrates that editors and publishers had an acute awareness of the likely reading practices of their target public and produced texts with this in mind. Another commercial consideration was the choice of language style and rhyming phonology (northern standard or regional). Most texts extant today were apparently aimed at a national market, or at least a large interregional market that included Beijing, Jiangnan, and Fujian. However, there remain some little-studied exceptions, which if pursued could throw light on publication strategies for emerging regional markets.

What innate characteristics of a text led to its production as a “multiple text” and its appropriation by different reading audiences? The sixteenth-century notion that the Classics correlated to key vernacular texts could help us to answer this question. This totalizing process, apparent in many exegetical fields in China, whereby the universal principles believed to be inherent in the Classics were said to embrace contiguous genres, provided useful criteria for the choice of the “multiple text,” as well as a fitting legitimation of vernacular print. Publishers selected texts that by their sheer scope and breadth of coverage could be said to include the key to changes in fortune (as in the *Classic of Changes*), moral judgments (as in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*), methods of governance (as in the *Classic of History*), and human pas-

sions (as in the *Classic of Songs*). This allowed for the rhetorical upgrading of the common reader to a pseudoliterati status—after all, he or she was reading the essence of the Classics. Yu Xiangdou was particularly adept at flattering his readers in this way. If, in the welter of personalities and fictional events, the individual reader lost his or her perspective on these canonical attributes, then the preface, commentary, and exegetical apparatus would serve to guide and potentially control his or her interpretations. And if the reader failed to “read properly,” in the words of Liu Tingji, and fell under the influence of the expedient, the subversive, or the pornographic, then at the very least this was not considered “heretical,” as in the Western experience, but simply a “misreading” by a member of the vulgar herd.

NOTES

1. I use the word “vernacular” with some reservations. Some historical novels discussed here, such as the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguozhi tongsu yanyi*), were composed in simplified classical Chinese. In other narratives, such as *Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan*), one finds a range of styles from classical to vernacular. Throughout the imperial period, a number of historical popularizations continued to rely on a simplified classical style (Wilt Idema refers to these as “chapbooks”), while literati authors gradually developed a more “inventive” vernacular style in a range of registers (see Wilt L. Idema, *Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974], xi–xii, lii–lvii). On the “interpenetration” of both classical and vernacular in so-called vernacular texts, see Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 14.
2. Ōki Yasushi, “Minmatsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū” (A study of publishing culture in late Ming Jiangnan), *Hiroshima daigaku bungakubu kiyō* (Bulletin of the literature department of Hiroshima University) 50, special issue: 1, 3–5, 15–16. For the economic factors that stimulated the commercialization of the economy and book production during this period, see Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 129–33, 167–80.
3. Natalie Zemon Davis, “Printing and the People,” in her *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (rpt. Stanford: Stanford University Press, [1965] 1985), 192–93.
4. D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts: The Panizzi Lectures* (London: The British Library, 1986), 6–7.
5. James J. Y. Liu, *Theories of Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 114, 128.
6. Cited in Huang Lin and Han Tongwen, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo lunzhu xuan* (A collection of prefaces from Chinese fiction through the ages) (Jiangxi: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 1982), vol. 1, p. 105.
7. Translated by David T. Roy, “Chang Chu-p’o on How to Read the *Chin P’ing Mei* (The Plum in the Golden Vase),” in David Rolston, ed., *How to Read the Chinese Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 236.
8. Cited in Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo lunzhu xuan*, vol. 1, p. 383.
9. Chinese commentarial tradition on the classics began in the first century C.E.,

so one can assume that there were perceived difficulties even at this early stage. See John B. Henderson, *Scripture, Canon, and Commentary: A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 43 ff. By Zhu Xi's era, with the emergence of the world's first print culture, the broader circulation of texts made possible by the new technology intensified the issue of how to read and interpret the archaic language of the canon.

10. Translated by Daniel K. Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu*, arranged topically (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 154 (5.47). I cite Gardner's lucid translation of excerpts of Zhu Xi's "Dushu fa" where included in his *Learning to Be a Sage* but occasionally choose to depart from it to highlight the use of metaphorical terms.

11. Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage*, 151 (5.38). Henderson notes that Chinese exegetes were particularly concerned about the perceived "order and coherence" of the Confucian canon; see *Scripture, Canon, and Commentary*, 113. He notes further the "apparent paradox" in Confucian commentary that the classics are "plain yet obscure" (134).

12. ZZYL 11.10a, p. 297. All references below are to the "Dushu fa" in volume 1. For this reference, see 11.10a, p. 297.

13. Lit., *meng shi gongfu lihui*. Translated in Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage*, 132 (4.23); ZZYL 10.4b, p. 262.

14. "If you just read the skin (*pifu*) then you will fall into error," ZZYL 10.2a, p. 257. See Gardner's more abstract rendition, "If you simply read what appears on the surface, you will misunderstand," in *Learning to Be a Sage*, 129.

15. ZZYL 10.2a, p. 257. Cf. Gardner, who refers to the crack as an "opening" in *Learning to Be a Sage*, 130.

16. ZZYL 10.2b, p. 258.

17. ZZYL 10.3a, p. 259.

18. ZZYL 10.3a, p. 259.

19. ZZYL 10.10a, p. 273.

20. See *shu qi jin gu*, ZZYL 10.2b, p. 258. Cf. Gardner, "keep your body alert," in *Learning to Be a Sage*, 130 (4.13).

21. ZZYL 10.2a, p. 257.

22. Zhu Xi quotes the locus classicus on reading in the *Xunzi*: "[The superior man] recites texts [*sung shu*; lit. "recites numbers"] in order to penetrate [*guan*] the Way. . . ." Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage*, 136 (4.37).

23. Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage*, 147 (5.16); ZZYL 11.3a, p. 283.

24. ZZYL 11.2b, p. 282.

25. ZZYL 10.6b, p. 266. Cf. Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage*, 135: "in reading we must first become intimately familiar with the text so that its words seem to come from our own mouths."

26. Susan Cherniak, "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54.1 (1994): 50.

27. According to Robert J. Mahoney, Lu Xiangshan accused Zhu Xi of "neglecting personal oral communication" in teaching and relying overmuch on the printed word. See "Lu Hsiang-shan and the Importance of Oral Communication in Confucian Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1986), 8.

28. For late Ming examples, see the instructions of noted bibliophile Qi Cheng-

han (1565–1628), to his sons, *Dushu xun* (Instruction in how to study), and the work of Wu Yingqi (1594–1645), *Dushu zhiguan lu* (Record of reading and meditation). Both can be conveniently consulted together with two examples from the Qing period in Wang Yuguang et al., eds., *Dushu siguan* (Four examples of how to read) (Wuhan: Cishu chubanshe, 1997).

29. Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 49.

30. de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy*, 62. Even examination questions on the Five Classics were dropped during the Ming period.

31. The metaphorical term here comes from the craft of building. A *yinkuo* is a bevel, a tool used to measure angles and ensure that a timber frame is square. In literary studies the term refers to cutting, editing, or reshaping a text.

32. de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy*, 111.

33. A preface to the *Dong Xi Han tongsu yanyi* in Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 176.

34. See *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 405–7.

35. Cited in Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 99.

36. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 104.

37. *Sanguo zhizhuan*, held in the Escorial Museum, microfilm at the Harvard-Yenching Library, preface 1b. The idea that the Classics corresponded to a universal moral, historical, or mental order had become commonplace well before this time. See particularly the view of Wang Yangming, which has interesting parallels with the somewhat later preface of Yuan Fengzi (Henderson, *Scripture, Canon, and Commentary*, 48).

38. David Rolston gives several examples, most dating from the seventeenth century and later; see his *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary: Reading and Writing between the Lines* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 108–9, also chap. 5.

39. Discussed in Anne E. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), 4–8.

40. By the seventeenth century the same principle was applied to morality books; see Cynthia J. Brokaw, *The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit: Social Change and Moral Order in Late Imperial China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 168–69.

41. On the importance of hand-copying books long after the invention of printing, see Ōki Yasushi, “Minmatsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū,” 8–10. On the manuscript circulation of fiction and plays, see Robert Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 158–61. He notes that some manuscript editions became valued collectors’ items.

42. Cited in Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 104.

43. Cai Yi, ed., *Zhongguo gudian xiqu xuba huibian* (Prefaces and colophons on classical Chinese dramas, compiled according to categories), 4 vols. (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 1989), vol. 2, p. 620.

44. For a detailed discussion, see Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 55–72.

45. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 111.

46. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 572.

47. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 152.

48. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 125.

49. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 166.
50. Zhu Yixuan and Liu Yuchen, *Shuihuzhuan ziliao huibian* (Collected material on *Water Margin*) (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 1981), 190. On the early non-extant edition attributed to Guo Xun, see Plaks, *The Four Masterworks*, 283–85.
51. See, for example, the conclusion to the chantefable “Patriarch Kai,” which addresses each household member in turn. See McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 125.
52. Tadao Sakai, “Confucianism and Popular Educational Works,” in Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *Self and Society in Ming Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 335, 346.
53. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 331.
54. In the *Classic of History*, the following song deals with complaints against the reigning emperor: “It was the lesson of our great ancestor/The people should be cherished; /They should not be downtrodden. . . . When I look throughout the empire/ Of the simple men and simple women (*yufu yufu*),/Anyone may surpass me.” James Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 3: *The Shoo King* (rpt. Taipei: Wenshezheshu chubanshe, 1971), 158.
55. Sakai, “Confucian and Popular Educational Works,” 339.
56. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 109.
57. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 109.
58. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 615.
59. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 120.
60. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 117.
61. Zhu Yixuan and Liu Yuchen, *Sanguo yanji ziliao huibian* (Collected materials on the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*) (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 1983), 284.
62. He is attributed with the authorship of the *Journey to the West*. See his preface to the *Yuding zhi*, in Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 122.
63. Anne E. McLaren, “Chantefables and the Textual Evolution of the San-kuochih yen-i,” *T’oung Pao* 71 (1985): 187.
64. This preface, dated 1641, is Jin’s third preface and is addressed to his young son. See Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 277.
65. The exception would be references to women in chantefables and similar works.
- There is some evidence that in the seventeenth century women read or made use of various practical texts such as books of model letters. See Ellen Widmer, “The Huan-duzhai of Hangzhou and Suzhou: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Publishing,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56.1 (1996): 77–122.
66. Ye sheng, *Shuidong riji* (Daily notes of Ye Sheng) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), j. 21, p. 214.
67. Discussed in McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 72–76.
68. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 73–74.
69. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 74.
70. Discussed in Anne E. McLaren, “Reading, Writing and Gender: Metaphorical Networks in Chinese Texts,” unpublished manuscript.
71. Robert H. van Gulik, *Sexual Life in Ancient China* (1961; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), 318.
72. van Gulik, *Sexual Life*, 318.

73. For full discussion, see McLaren, "Reading, Writing and Gender."

74. This is the attribute given by the poet Yang Weizhen (1296–1379) to Zhu Guiying, a storyteller who was renowned for her historical tales and learning; see Hu Shiyong, *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* (Survey of short stories and fiction), 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), vol. 1, p. 284.

75. Rolston, *Traditional Chinese Fiction*, 114–24, esp. 116; see also 6–7.

76. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 39.

77. D. C. Lau, *Mencius* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 147.

78. See Yang Xin, "Shangpin jingji, shifeng yu shuhua zuowei" (The commodity economy: Public morals and fake works of art), *Wenwu* (Cultural relics) 10 (1989): 90.

79. According to Yang Xin, this comment reflects the rise of the nouveau riche class during the Northern Song, a class that included officials, men of property, merchants, and businessmen. Yang, "Shangpin jingji," 90.

80. Cited in Wai-ye Li, "The Collector, the Connoisseur, and Late-Ming Sensibility," *T'oung Pao* 81.4–5 (1995): 279–80.

81. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 1, p. 27.

82. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 4, p. 2690.

83. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 4, p. 2691.

84. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 621.

85. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 124.

86. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 592.

87. Ye, *Shuidong riji*, j. 21, p. 214. Wang Liqi, *Yuan Ming Qing sandai jinhuai xiaoshuo xiqu shiliao* (Material on banned books and plays of the three dynasties of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing) (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe, 1981), preface ("Qianyan"), 35.

88. Cited in Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 147.

89. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, p. 147.

90. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 642.

91. Huang and Han, *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo*, vol. 1, 151.

92. See the challenge to this view in Brokaw, chap. 1, n. 110, this volume.

93. All these terms refer to reading or reciting out loud. On the prevalence of vocalization in reading generally, see Wang, *Dushu siguan*, 109.

94. Wang Ermin, "Zhongguo chuantong jisong zhi xue yu shiyun koujue" (Chinese traditional recitation methods and arts of rhyming), *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Jindai shi yanjiusuo jikan* (Journal of the Institute of Modern History of the Academia Sinica) 23 (1994): 36.

95. Wang Ermin discusses *Longwen bianying* (Spur to easy reading) and *Youxue qionglin* (Jade forest primer) in his "Zhongguo chuantong jisong," 39–41.

96. For example, see the *Siyán zazi* (Miscellaneous words in lines of four syllables), a four-syllable-a-line jingle listing common commodities (Wang, "Zhongguo chuantong jisong," 37). According to Wang, farmers learned jingles about climate, basic astronomy, and the seasons (50); he also reproduces a fishmonger's "seven-syllable-a-line verse about fish names" (55).

97. Wang, "Zhongguo chuantong jisong," 37.

98. Wang Liqi, *Yuan Ming Qing sandai jinhuai xiaoshuo xiqu shiliao*, 90.

99. See note 25.

100. Translated by David T. Roy in Rolston, *How to Read the Chinese Novel*, 234.
101. According to the Ming author Wu Yingqi, in *Dushu zhiguan lu*, in the compilation of Wang, *Dushu siguan*, 85.
102. Sun Lichuan, “Zhongguo yanyi: Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuo de dianfan” (The Chinese *yanyi* genre: Models for Chinese traditional fiction), *Ming Bao* 386.2 (1998): 52.
103. Discussed in McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 283–84.
104. Erich Auerbach, *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 248.
105. See Brokaw, chap. 1, pp. 11–14, for a general discussion of this point.
106. Note the chapter by Furuya Akihiro on phonology in Inoue Taizan, Ōki Yasushi, Kin Bunkyō, Hikami Tadashi, and Furuya Akihiro, *Ka Kan Saku den no kenkyū* (A study of the Hua Guan Suo zhuan) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1989), 326–46. This text was discovered at a location in the relevant dialect area but was apparently published in faraway Beijing. See McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 19.
107. For a brief survey of plays and narratives containing dialect, see Zhou Zhenhe and You Rujie, *Fangyan yu Zhongguo wenhua* (Dialect and Chinese culture) (Shanghai: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1986).
108. The first known phonological book written to assist students to read texts and scholars to compose literary works is the *Qieyun* of Lu Fayan (ca. 601); see Zhao Cheng, *Zhongguo gudai yunshu* (Ancient Chinese works of phonology) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 18. The regional languages that formed the basis of *dushuyin* changed over the centuries. On *dushuyin*, see Zhao, *Zhongguo gudai yunshu*, 25–27.
109. Hok-lam Chan notes that because most of the compilers came from the south they were relatively unfamiliar with northern pronunciation; see *DMB*, vol. 2, p. 1642. Zhao argues that the *Hongwu zhengyun* was less influential than the *Zhongyuan yinyun* because the latter reflected actual speech changes in the north (*shuohua yin*) whereas the imperial phonology preserved the “official” phonology of an earlier age; see *Zhongguo gudai yunshu*, 81, 83.
110. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 661.
111. K. C. Leung, *Hsu Wei as Drama Critic: An Annotated Translation of the Nan-tz'u hsü-lu*, Asian Studies Program Publication No. 7 (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1988), 76.
112. Leung, *Hsu Wei as Drama Critic*, 169 n. 163.
113. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 648.
114. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 575.
115. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 678.
116. Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 642.
117. On audiences for the two textual streams of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, see Anne E. McLaren, “Ming Audiences and Vernacular Hermeneutics: The Uses of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*,” *T'oung Pao* 81.1–3 (1995): 51–80.
118. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 59–63; Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 164–289.
119. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 198. Hegel also notes that illustrations were virtually “ubiquitous” in texts by the late sixteenth century (6).

120. Translation by Stephen H. West and Wilt L. Idema, eds. and trans., *The Story of the Western Wing* (1991; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 287. See chap. 1, note 110; and note 92 above.

121. *Sanguo zhizhuan*, held in the Escorial Museum, microfilm at the Harvard-Yenching Library, preface 1ab.

122. The same scene could be transposed to other contexts; see McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture*, 64.

123. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 96, 142, 151, 193, 290.

124. Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 14–18.

125. Cited in Cai, *Zhongguo gudian xiqu*, vol. 2, p. 678.

126. Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, 120.

127. For a detailed study of commentary in “literati” fiction, see Rolston, *Traditional Chinese Fiction*. He outlines three stages in the development of commentarial editions of the Ming narratives. In the earliest stage (late sixteenth century) commentary was “rudimentary” and inspired by commercial motives. The works of Yu Xiangdou (discussed above) belong to this stage. The second stage was dominated by imitations of Li Zhi commentary; the third stage, by the more inventive commentary of editors who took on an almost authorial role in their revision of the texts (2–4).

128. Y. W. Ma, “Introduction,” p. 3, in Hartmut Walravens, ed., *Two Recently Discovered Fragments of the Chinese Novels San-kuo-chih yen-i and Shui-hu chuan* (Hamburg: C. Bell Verlag, 1982).

129. McLaren, “Ming Audiences and Vernacular Hermeneutics,” 64–80.

130. McLaren, “Ming Audiences and Vernacular Hermeneutics,” 67–76.

131. Above the preface to his *Piping* edition, Yu adds some advertising material that refers critically to preexisting editions. One text that does meet with his approval is the one produced by the Liu publishing house of Fujian. Their edition is said to be “free of errors, literati (*shizi*) read it with pleasure,” but unfortunately the blocks had worn down so no additional copies of that edition could be printed (“Xu,” 2a). Since Yu proclaims that his version is superior to existing texts, he is here flattering his own target readership by implying that they are literati.

132. On the production of printed manuals concerning curios and antiques in the Ming era, see Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, 78–79.

133. Note Widmer, “The Huanduzhai of Hangzhou and Suzhou,” which contains much information, derived from prefaces, on the imagined readers for the Huanduzhai texts. The Huanduzhai published mainly texts of a practical nature such as model letters and medical writings during the seventeenth century. One target readership was “women and children of the people” (102–3). In other works one finds projected “an undifferentiated vision” of the target readership (109). A parallel study in Chinese visual arts is Craig Clunas’s study of the lexicon of viewing. Note his distinction between *kan* (“to see,” associated with commoner viewing) and *guan* (“to contemplate,” associated with literati appreciation); see *Pictures and Visuality*, 111–33.

134. See Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), and “Texts, Printing, Readings,” in *The New Cultural History*, edited by Lynn Hunt (Berke-

ley: University of California Press, 1989): 154–75; Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, eds., *A History of Reading in the West*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999); Wlad Godzich, *The Culture of Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968); and D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

135. See, for example, Page du Bois, *Sowing the Body: Psychoanalysis and Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Jesper Svenbro, *An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Wendy Hall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

136. Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, 133.

137. Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, 142–45.

138. Peter Biller, “Heresy and Literacy: Earlier History of the Theme,” in Peter Biller and Anne Hudson, eds., *Heresy and Literacy, 1000–1530* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3–11.

139. According to Brook, publishers sought out scholarly authors to write for the market. He notes, in the mid-Ming, a “shift from scholarly to commercial publishing among scholars”; see *The Confusions of Pleasure*, 170. On the involvement of officials and literati in the publication of even the simpler pictorial editions of the *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, see McLaren, “Popularizing the Romance of the Three Kingdoms,” 175–76. Even the chancellor of the Directorate of Education lent his name to one popular edition (175–76).

140. For the idea of the “multiple narrative,” see McLaren, “Ming Audiences and Vernacular Hermeneutics,” 52.

FIVE

Reading the Best-Sellers of the Nineteenth Century

Commercial Publishing in Sibao

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The case of Sibao, an important regional publishing center active from the late seventeenth through the early twentieth century, illustrates the special nature of the expansion in publishing in Qing China. Isolated in the mountains of western Fujian, with limited access to major centers of publishing such as Beijing or the cities of the Jiangnan area, Sibao township developed a cluster of household printing industries dominated by families from two major lineages, the Zou and the Ma.¹ The Zou and Ma printing houses served not only Minxi but also other hinterland areas in eastern Jiangxi, northern Guangdong, and Guangxi for more than two hundred years. The Sibao entrepreneurs provide a case study of the two interrelated trends in Qing publishing discussed in Chapter 1: the expansion of publishing sites to hinterland areas of southern China and the development of important publishing concerns at the lower levels of the hierarchy of central places.

The Sibao book trade typifies the spread of commercial printing socially in the Qing, down to levels of the population heretofore not fully integrated into the book market. Bypassing major centers like Guangzhou, the Sibao merchants developed distribution routes—and on occasion founded branch bookshops—through areas of southern China that were frontier regions in the early eighteenth century and still by no means well integrated into provincial or regional economies in the nineteenth century. Hakkas themselves, the Sibao booksellers were particularly interested in selling to Hakka communities in the hinterland of eastern Jiangxi, northern Guangdong, and Guangxi. Sibao served, then, in large part both well-established hinterland populations and markets of relatively new settlers, migrants who moved to the highlands of the Lingnan area in response to the demographic pressures of the eighteenth century. Geographic isolation limited the access of these

settlers—as well as of the Sibao booksellers themselves—to major book markets and mainstream cultural life.

These factors—Sibao’s isolation, the fact that it was a Hakka community, its largely hinterland market—shaped the publishing choices made by the Sibao printers. Dependent on their ability to meet the demands of a large but not necessarily very affluent or even necessarily highly literate readership, these men produced texts they were sure would sell. Their stock consisted of the common core of titles in steady demand throughout the southern China book market—the “best-sellers” of the day.

A complete description of Sibao’s output is impossible. Sibao itself remains the best site for the collection of Sibao texts and woodblocks; more than two hundred titles survive there as either blocks or imprints. But the loss and destruction of many more such materials, largely over the course of the twentieth century, ensures that we will never possess either a full list of Sibao publications at any given time or comprehensive records of the changes in Sibao production over time. Fortunately, however, evidence pieced together from other sources—property-division documents, genealogies, a single account book, and oral histories—combined, of course, with extant imprints and blocks, allows us to characterize Sibao output in the nineteenth century.²

After a general characterization of Sibao’s output in the nineteenth century, I describe, by way of illustration, two categories of texts—the Classics and basic educational texts—that were the staples of the Sibao industry. I hope to demonstrate, first, something of the typicality of Sibao’s output—all of the texts described, almost without exception, are fairly common. That is, in terms of both genres of texts and specific titles, they are very like imprints produced in other regional publishing sites of the Qing—Xuwan in Jiangxi and Yuechi in Sichuan, for example.³ Second, I hope to suggest something of the diversity that nonetheless exists within this common output, by looking at the ways in which the contents of certain “fixed” texts like the Four Books are shaped by different types of commentary and annotation, or the ways in which different approaches to education are embedded in certain of Sibao’s elementary educational texts. Anne E. McLaren, in “Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China,” analyzes the variety of “notional readers” created for late Ming fiction; here I focus on a somewhat similar project—uncovering the range of “notional reading practices” revealed in Sibao texts. I am particularly interested in how these practices are constructed (by authors, editors, preface writers, and publishers) both semantically—how the meaning of a text may be shaped by different types of commentary and annotation, punctuation, language, or juxtaposition with other texts—and physically—how meaning may be shaped through page layout, size, and production quality.⁴

SIBAO'S BEST-SELLERS: A GENERAL CHARACTERIZATION

In the late seventeenth century, when the Sibao industries were just starting up, their texts were closely and almost exclusively linked to the demands of the educational system. A genealogy of the Zou lineage, the more prominent of the two printing lineages in Sibao, proudly emphasized the early link between their output and success in the civil service examinations, claiming that Sibao publishing “assisted the empire’s literati to become generals and ministers of state.”⁵ Without accepting this claim at face value, it is nonetheless easy to believe that Sibao printers got their start by producing what must have been the imprints in greatest demand in their day, reading primers and the Classics, the central texts of the educational system.

This was clearly the case for Ma Quanheng (1651–1710) and Ma Dingbang (1672–1743), a father-and-son team who founded what was to become one of the most successful of the Sibao print shops, the Wencui lou, in producing classical texts and reading primers. *Sishu jicheng* (Complete collection of the Four Books), *Sishu beiyao* (Complete essence of the Four Books), *Sishu* (Four Books), *Shijingzhu* (*Classic of Songs*, with commentary), and *Youxue* (Elementary studies), *Zengguang* (Expanded words of the sages) were their first imprints. When Ma Dingbang printed the *Sishu zhu daquan* (*Complete collection of the Four Books*, with commentary) in 1707, the family fortunes were secured. “This book was extremely popular,” his biographer notes, “thus the family’s circumstances became a little more comfortable, and procuring daily necessities ceased to be a struggle.”⁶

Reading primers and versions of the Classics remained the staples of Sibao publishing throughout its history. But in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as certain printing shops became more prosperous, they could afford to expand and develop a more adventuresome publication list. Indeed, the breadth of Sibao’s coverage is quite impressive, particularly in view of its distance from significant book markets and cultural centers. In addition to the Classics and reading primers, the Zou and Ma printers produced dictionaries, including large projects such as the *Peiwen yunfu* (Yunfu repository of rhymes) and the *Kangxi zidian* (Kangxi dictionary); reference works and aids to the study of the Classics; household encyclopedias designed to explain proper ritual forms and appropriate behavior both within the family and in the community; letter-writing and rhymed couplet (*duilian*) guides; a large array of manuals for good fortune, covering almost every popular method from geomancy, divination through the *Classic of Changes*, the casting of horoscopes, and physiognomy to the use of amulets, performance of meritorious deeds, appeals to the gods, and careful scheduling of one’s activities according to a calendar of auspicious and inauspicious days; medical manuals, ranging from famous medical textbooks like *Yuzuan Yizong jinjian* (Imperially sponsored Golden mirror of models of medicine) to popular medical

and pharmaceutical handbooks; calligraphy guides; vernacular and classical fiction, including both sophisticated literati novels and popular military romances and love stories; songbooks of popular stories like *Liang Shanbo Zhu Yingtai* (Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai); and poetry collections (largely of Tang poetry) and “poetry discussions” (*shihua*) for those interested in learning how to write poetry. In short, they published almost the whole range of texts produced by larger and more sophisticated printing concerns in important urban areas.⁷

Sibao publishing choices in the nineteenth century seem to have been guided by certain forces or assumptions (probably market tested) about what book buyers wanted. First, the degree to which examination culture shaped the output of the Zou and Ma publishers and presumably the demands of their readers cannot be overstated. Sibao produced the beginning primers *Sanzi jing* (Three-character classic), *Baijia xing* (Myriad family names), and *Qianzi wen* (Thousand-character text), elementary compendia of Chinese culture such as *Youxue gushi qionglin* (Treasury of knowledge for elementary studies), and the Classics (with the orthodox commentaries) and the reference works needed to understand them, as well as guides and models for the writing of eight-legged essays. The relentless emphasis in all of the primers on the importance of study and examination success helped to perpetuate the already strong market for these texts. And the openness of the examination system in Qing times, by offering hope—however slender and treacherous—of success and dazzling wealth to the vast majority of the male population, promoted the widespread sale of these texts in badly produced editions affordable to the poor.

This is not to say that purchase of a Sibao edition of the Four Books signified an intention to study for the examinations. Nor is it clear that such an edition would have been of much assistance in any event. Indeed, if we can take the experiences of Sibao residents themselves as an indicator, it appears that Sibao publications were not very useful aids to examination success. After the sixteenth century, neither the Zou nor the Ma lineages succeeded in producing any civil *jinshi* degree holders; most of the families’ examination successes never earned status any higher than that of *shengyuan*.⁸ Nonetheless, these works were important simply because knowledge of the examination texts—the Four Books, the Five Classics, and the great works of Tang poetry—defined what it meant at this time to be educated, to participate in the great cultural and intellectual tradition. Any text that offered some access to elite or gentry culture, no matter how poorly produced or elusive in its commentary, seems to have had a guaranteed audience. A purchaser of such a text might not necessarily understand or even read it; mere possession and display could represent a claim to a culture and status ultimately inaccessible in practical terms.

In this fashion we can also explain the appeal of collections such as *Three*

Hundred Poems of the Tang and *Tangshi hexuan xiangjie* (Combined selections of Tang poetry, with detailed annotations) and texts of poetry instruction and criticism: these offered readers information necessary for examination preparation as well as the opportunity to share—at varying levels of readership and comprehension—in the aesthetic pleasures of elite culture. Presumably some of the reference texts, such as the *Wenliao dacheng* (Complete collection of literary materials), a guide to reading and writing about the Classics, with a list of stock phrases and allusions, provided these readers with the formulas of expression, the clichés of speech and writing, that would associate them with intellectual and aesthetic orthodoxy. In the nineteenth century, then, Sibao’s output served to transmit not only the content, the ideals and ideas, but also—and perhaps above all else—the *forms*, the linguistic models and conventions, of elite literate culture to a broader audience.

Second, Sibao printers published practical manuals for confronting problems of daily life, inspired by what appears to have been a thirst for how-to texts. The household encyclopedias, letter and *duilian* handbooks, medical and pharmaceutical manuals, and the guides to good fortune all bespeak a high demand for practical aids to individual and family prosperity. These texts, designed more to be *used*—as training manuals or as reference works—than to be *read*, together instruct their owners in the rituals and polite social forms that would establish the individual in his or her proper place within the family and the family in its proper place (or the place it aspired to) within local society; in the therapies and treatments that would ensure good health and physical harmony; and in the techniques that would move the cosmos and the gods to bestow good fortune. Texts of this practical, “how-to” genre consistently advertised themselves as popular texts, up-to-date in their guidance and accessible to all. So, for example, the household encyclopedia *Huizuan jiali tieshi jiyao* (Compendium of the essentials of family rituals and model forms) boasts that its contents reflect the latest popular practices (*xu*, 1a).⁹ And the pharmaceutical guide *Yanfang xinbian* (New collection of efficacious prescriptions) claims a universal audience for its “guaranteed” prescriptions: “[This text] supplies a prescription for every sickness and a medicine for every prescription. Moreover, these prescriptions need not cost even one *qian*, and yet are miraculously efficacious. Even though you live in an isolated rural area, one that rarely sees a boat or horse, you will still be able to find the necessary medicines” (*xu*, 1b). For readers interested, rather, in diagnosing and curing the causes of bad fortune, Sibao also produced a series of accessible and long-popular geomantic handbooks and divination guides, including, for example, texts like the Ming dynasty *Luoqing jie* (Explanation of the geomantic compass) of Wu Wanggang and the early-eighteenth-century *Bushi zhengzong* (Orthodox divination) of Wang Weide.¹⁰

Third, a high demand for entertainment seems to have driven Sibao production to the publication of fiction, songbooks, and, to some extent, po-

etry. If we can assume that Sibao output was shaped largely by market demands, then it seems that Sibao's customers, like contemporary readers elsewhere, favored military-historical romances, love stories, and tales of the strange. To be sure, Sibao also published "literary novels" such as *Dream of the Red Chamber* and *Journey to the West* (though this text, like *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* and *Water Margin*, might also fit just as well into the military-historical romance category), but the bulk of their fiction imprints were "chapbook" novels written in a style that made them more accessible to readers with a limited education in the classical language and the literary tradition:¹¹ *Wuhu pingxi* (Five tigers pacify the west), *Wuhu pingnan* (Five tigers pacify the south), *Wanhua lou Yang Bao Di yanyi* (Tower of a myriad flowers narrative of Yang [Zongbao], Bao [Gong], and Di [Qing]), *Longtu gong'an* (Cases of Judge Bao), and *Shuo Tang yanyi quanzhuan* (Complete story of the Tang), to name just a handful in the "military romance" category. Songbooks (*changben*) were reportedly also extremely popular: one informant claimed that "hundreds" of these cheap texts were printed, often for local sale, a statement supported by the nostalgic reminiscences of many of the older villagers, whose childhood entertainment often centered on performances of *Liang Shanbo Zhu Yingtai* and *Meng Jiangnü ku changcheng* (Meng Jiangnü weeps at the Great Wall). The low survival rate of these texts might suggest something of how they were read and used: as entertainment, they were to be passed about, shared, and perhaps lost, in contrast to consistently useful, practical works like the household encyclopedias and medical manuals, on the one hand, and to ethically and philosophically weighty works like the Classics, on the other.

How does Sibao's output compare to that of other printing centers in the nineteenth century? Were the Sibao publishers' production choices unusual, representing the preferences of a special hinterland market, one dominated by a special population, the Hakka? It seems that the provisional answer is no.¹² There appears to be a high degree of homogeneity among the "best-sellers" of the nineteenth century, at least throughout southern China. Lucille Chia, in her study of the great publishing center of Jianyang, suggests that such homogeneity existed as early as the late Ming, when the major publishing sites of the day—Jianyang, Nanjing, Suzhou, and Hangzhou—were producing roughly the same types of texts.¹³ Preliminary research done in publishing sites in Chengdu, Yuechi, and Xuwan suggests that there was a core of common texts, perhaps even common titles—very much like the titles that Sibao printed—that was reproduced at most commercial publishing sites in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well. This is not to say that everyone everywhere was reading the same set of texts. Different publishers might produce a wide range of different texts beyond this common core, to supply niche markets or to meet special regional demands. Nor, in positing the existence of a core of common texts, do I mean to suggest a uni-

formity of impact; different readers do not necessarily read the same texts in the same way. The point is simply that there was a cluster of texts and even of specific titles that was commonly accessible throughout southern China.¹⁴

From a business perspective, focus on the publication of an assured core of steady best-sellers was wise, particularly for the Sibao publishers. Isolated in the mountains of western Fujian, they did not have immediate or even rapid access to news of the changing currents of the book trade. They were in no position to take chances on untested texts, so it is no surprise that the fiction Sibao published was of proven popularity. Nor was it, given their location outside major cultural centers, advantageous for them either to produce fine editions that might attract fastidious bibliophiles or to publish for a niche market, like those Nanjing publishers described in this volume by Lucille Chia, Robert E. Hegel, and Katherine Carlitz who became famous for their editions of dramas and fiction. Their success depended, rather, on their ability to satisfy the demands of a varied but largely rural and hinterland audience for consistent, inexpensive, and dependable best-sellers. Required to support their households back in Sibao, they could not afford, given their slim margins of profit, to take chances or to specialize in the way that literati publishers or large commercial printers in major book centers could.

If future research confirms this claim for the existence of a common core of best-selling titles in the nineteenth century, then we can speak with more confidence about the role that commercial publishing, particularly commercial publishing as structured in places like Sibao, might have played in encouraging cultural integration in the late imperial period. Of course, the Sibao printers, in profiting from the production of a set of assured sellers, were relying on an existing degree of integration to begin with. But certainly their efforts served to reinforce the popularity of these titles. Taking Sibao as a model (and drawing out the economic and geographic argument made above), we might assume that this hypothetical core of shared titles or types of texts takes a larger share of a publishing concern's output as we descend the hierarchy of publishing sites—that is, larger, more centrally located publishing industries (like those in Beijing or the cities of Jiangnan) might elaborate significantly either on this core of texts, printing many additional titles, or on one part of the core, for example, specializing in the production of dramas or primers and medical texts (as the Nanjing publisher Li Guangming did).¹⁵ As one moves down the hierarchy, we might expect a reduction in the number of these “extra” texts, an increasingly tight focus on the common core, as businesses had to rely on the production of a range of popular titles for a broad market. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the rise of more rural, lower-level publishing sites such as Sibao, dependent on this core of texts for their survival, reinforced the homogeneity of imprints offered for sale in a kind of dialectic between supply and demand.

This dialectic would have particular force in the markets Sibao served, where limitations on supply shaped demand.

On the basis of the evidence now at hand, it is possible to make another point about this core of genres and titles: it remained relatively stable over time. Evidence from Sibao suggests that there was little significant turnover in types of books published between the late eighteenth and the late nineteenth century and that there was relatively high continuity in the publication of specific titles. There were good business reasons for this stability; once the Sibao publishers had blocks cut for a title (the most expensive step in book production), it made more sense for them to keep printing and selling that title. Indeed, the production of a new title in a genre, quite aside from the capital investment it required, might operate to undercut sales of older titles in the same genre, in effect wasting some of the capital invested in its production. Thus both the technology of woodblock printing and the isolation of Sibao, which delayed printers' awareness of new trends, militated against innovation. Of course, some new titles were added to the list in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,¹⁶ but there remained at the core a reasonably stable collection of traditional favorites—versions of the Four Books such as the *Wenhai lou Sishu zhengwen* (Orthodox text of the Four Books), primers such as *Sanzi jing* and *Zengguang xianwen* (Expanded words of the sages), collections of Tang poetry such as *Tangshi sanbaishou zhushi* (Three hundred poems of the Tang, with annotations), household encyclopedias such as *Huizuan Jiali tieshi jiyao* and *Choushi jinnang* (Compendium of rules for social intercourse), pharmaceutical manuals such as *Yanfang xinbian*, well-known geomantic handbooks and divination guides such as *Luojing jie* and *Bushi zhengzong*, and so forth—dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

A SAMPLING OF SIBAO TEXTS

This existence of a common core of texts over a considerable stretch of time has been interpreted as evidence for “the uniformity of the Chinese cultural heritage and for how highly its written basis was valued, how widely it was spread, and how deeply it penetrated.”¹⁷ Yet surviving imprints from Sibao should make us cautious about the conclusions we might draw from this assumed uniformity, for at least two reasons. First, Sibao's corpus is itself varied and wide-ranging enough to challenge such monolithic assertions. Different readers with different interests and tastes could find plenty to attract them among Sibao's stock of Classics, primers, dictionaries, essay collections, reference works, household encyclopedias, *duilian* collections, medical manuals, pharmaceutical guides, novels, and fortune-telling handbooks. Preliminary investigations of the production of other Qing sites, for example,

Xuwan and Yuechi, reinforce this impression of variety and diversity within a shared textual heritage.

Second, there is a considerable risk that an emphasis on uniformity of heritage will be elided with uniformity of impact, that we will assume that exposure to the same texts meant the development of the same ways of thinking. Scholars have already pointed up the dangers here: assuming that the effect of a text can be deduced from its contents, that all readers will respond to a single text in a predictable, relatively uniform way; and identifying certain social groups with a uniform response to a text, assuming that all members of a certain socioeconomic class will make the same uses of a text and thus that that text can be taken to represent a certain group *mentalité*. It is necessary to know how specific readers respond to specific texts before precise conclusions can be drawn about reading practices and the impact of certain titles.¹⁸

In the case of Sibao, however, we know almost nothing about how real readers interpreted or used any single text. It is necessary, then, to turn to other sources, to contemporary descriptions in texts and pictures of reading and writing practices and—my task here—to “representations of the competencies and expectations of the least capable readers,” as implied in the aids to reading and interpretation, formatting, and physical qualities of the texts themselves.¹⁹ By examining the layout of texts, especially the layout of similar texts, the kinds of commentaries attached to them, and the variety of rhetorical methods used to impart information, it is possible to suggest the range of reading responses that are implied or, in some cases, explicitly encouraged in these texts.

To illustrate my points briefly, I have chosen a portion of Sibao’s corpus, the Classics and educational texts, first, to suggest something of the diversity of titles homogeneity can contain; and second, to show, through an analysis of the diversity of reading expectations and approaches these texts imply, how a homogeneity of titles, a “uniformity of cultural heritage,” could result in a variety of reading experiences and different “appropriations” of these texts.²⁰

The Classics

The Classics remained at the heart of Sibao production throughout its publication history. The account book of the Wenhai lou, a print shop that enjoyed a spurt of prosperity in the late nineteenth century just as other Sibao print shops (*shufang*) were beginning to decline, suggests that roughly 22 percent of the bulk of their trade was in classical texts—that is, 22 percent of the total copies (8,440) of texts they sold were Classics. Of these, 52 percent were copies of the Four Books. The Five Classics occupy the rest of the Classics category in the account book, though here the *Classic of Songs*, with

319 copies, and the *Classic of History*, with 316, far exceed in popularity the *Classic of Changes* (121), *Record of Rites* (42), and *Spring and Autumn Annals with the Zuo Commentary* (25).²¹

The relative importance of the Four Books in the full canon of Thirteen Classics is to be expected. As the central texts of early study and examination preparation through the Qing, neither their popularity nor their dominant status on the Sibao publication lists is surprising.²² Sibao produced at least twenty different versions of the Four Books: in addition to the simple *Sishu*, the *Sishu zhengwen* [Guangxu era, 1875–1909], *Sishu tijie* (The Four Books with explanatory notes) [1839], *Sishu hejiang* (Combined explanations of the Four Books) [1839], *Sishu zhangju jizhu* (Collected commentary on the chapters and phrases of the Four Books, 1841), *Sishu buzhu beizhi tijue huican* (Collation of the full purport and explication of the subtleties of the Four Books, supplemented with commentary), *Sishu beizhi tiqiao* (Full purport and explication of the subtleties of the Four Books), *Xinzeng Sishu beizhi ling tijie* (Newly expanded *Full purport of the Four Books*, with efficacious explanations, 1886), *Sishu jizhu beizhi* (Full purport of the *Collected commentaries to the Four Books*), *Sishu baiwen* (Vernacular text of the Four Books) [1839], *Sishu tijing* (Mirror to the Four Books), *Sishu yizhu* (The Four Books interpreted), and *Sishu zhiyu* (Remaining points in the Four Books) [1839], to name just a few.²³ Because many of the actual texts do not survive, it is difficult to know how these texts differed in content. Extant texts suggest that the variations in title, particularly the rather minor ones, indicate texts that are virtually identical but titled differently to allow for production by more than one *shufang* or to create the impression that a new, updated version was for sale.²⁴ Take, for example, the *Xinding Sishu buzhu beizhi* (Newly revised *Full purport of the Four Books*, supplemented with commentary) and the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican*, both attributed to the Hongwu-era (1368–99) official Deng Lin and sharing the same size and format, with virtually identical contents. Only slight variations in the spacing, the titling of some of the sections, and the list of scholarly contributors distinguish one version from the other.²⁵

A detailed look at a few Sibao versions of the Four Books provides a sense of the range in the kinds of annotations and commentaries and in the formats within Sibao output, suggesting how similar texts might be received differently. Perhaps the most elementary strategy of explanation is deployed in *Sishu yizhu*, a late-nineteenth-century Sibao product (Fig. 3). Here the explanation of the text or, to cite the title, the “unravelling” of the text, is accomplished by adding to the text of the Classic, interrupting the Classic, as it were, with extra characters (smaller in size) that serve to explain its meaning. Thus the famous passage in which Confucius’s disciple Jilu asks about serving ghosts and spirits is handled in this fashion: 季路問事鬼神其所以感通之道何如子曰神人一理也若未能盡事人之道焉能盡事鬼之道予唯先求所以事人焉可矣。²⁶ There are no other notes or commentary; the basic sense

of the text is conveyed through the technique of “rewriting” the Classic by fleshing out the terse Chinese of the original with added characters (underlined) that make the meaning clear.

The Wenhai lou 1868 version of the *Sishu zhengwen* (the full title is *Wenhai lou jiaozheng jianyun fen Zhang fenjie Sishu zhengwen*, or the Wenhai lou Orthodox text of the Four Books, standardized, with corrected sounds, and divided into sections), collated by Wu Jupō, edited by Lai Fengqian, and corrected by Yan Maoyou (active in the 1620s and 1630s), represents a very conservative, even parsimonious approach to semantic annotation. As its full title indicates, its purpose seems to be the standardization of passage divisions and of pronunciation in the Four Books (Fig. 4). The text is divided into two registers, a lower one (12.8 cm) containing the text of the Classic in large, clear characters (sixteen to a column, with ten columns per half-foolio page), with very sparse notes, and a narrow upper register (2.3 cm) devoted entirely to notes. The Classic portion is unpunctuated, with each chapter marked off by an initial circle and the conventional divisions of the chapters marked off with a raised initial character. The terse notes in the lower register are guides to pronunciation and thus meaning. In *Mencius* 4.1, for example, the first few lines of the Classic are glossed with the single point that the *wen* of *renwen* 仁聞 should be read with the fourth tone, to indicate that it means “reputation” (the gloss is underlined):

孟子曰 離婁之明 公輸子之巧 不以規矩不能成方 員師曠之聽 不以六律不能正五音 堯舜之道 不以仁政不能平治天下

今有仁心仁聞而民不被其澤 不可法於後世者 不行先生之道也 聞去聲 (ce 2, 1a).²⁷

More extensive notes, crowded into the top register (at twenty columns per page, with five characters per column), elaborate the issues of pronunciation and identification that arise in the text below, providing more information on pronunciation than is strictly necessary for a reading of the *Mencius* text but less information than one might like on identification and meaning. Thus, though a variety of different pronunciations and meanings is given for the character 婁 (it can be pronounced as 樓, *lou*, or as 廬, *lū*, as in the passage from the *Classic of Songs*, *fu yi fu lū* 弗曳弗婁, “you will not wear them”; it can be a person’s given name, a surname, or the name of an animal or constellation), Li Lou himself, the legendary figure of exceptional vision Mencius is referring to, is never explained. Gongshu and Kuang, the other important references in this passage, are not mentioned at all in the notes. So, too, the extended gloss of the note reproduced above (聞去聲, *wen qusheng*) lists two different possible pronunciations and meanings for 聞, *wen*: “聞 is fourth tone. 聞 is pronounced 汶. It means reputation [lit., ‘name extending over a distance’]. When 聞 rhymes with 文, it is pronounced 文 and it means to hear [lit., ‘the ear receiving sound’]” (ce 2, 1a).

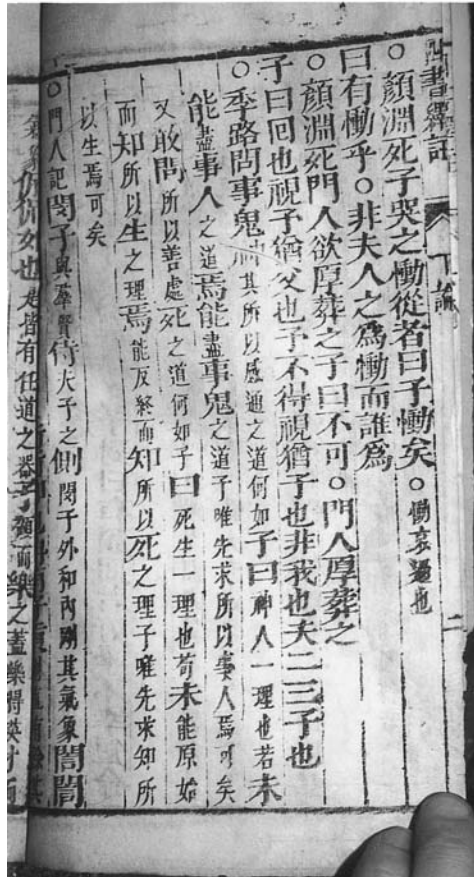


Figure 3. Page from the *Sishu yizhu*, a late-nineteenth-century Wuge edition. Here the meaning of the *Analects* is explained by fleshing out the sentences of the Classic for greater clarity. Photograph by the author of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage in Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.

This is it. There is no discussion of how this particular character fits into the passage as a whole or, indeed, of the philosophical significance of the passage. Throughout this text, an interest in phonology and vocabulary determines the content of the notes; they provide the reader with the possible readings of a character, whether or not these are relevant to the larger



Figure 4. Opening page of the “Li Lou” chapter of *Mencius* from the *Wenhai lou jiaozheng jianyun fenzhang fenjie Sishu zhengwen*, published by the Wuge Wenhai lou in 1868 (block: 14.6 × 23.5 cm). The notes in the top register provide pronunciations and basic meanings (and alternate pronunciations and meanings for selected characters in the Classic below). Photograph by the author of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage in Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.

meaning of the text. This text seems to function more efficiently as a dictionary than an edition of *Mencius*, as if its primary use was the introduction of new characters and their readings, with the standardized text of the Classic serving merely as a source for the entries in the register above. It is quite possible, of course, that the emphasis on phonology in this text was in fact the source of its popularity: such texts would have been particularly useful in southern China, famous for its multitude of dialects. The population (including the Hakka-speaking peoples of Fujian, Jiangxi, Guangdong, and Guangxi) would need just the kind of guidance provided in *Sishu zhengwen* to learn the “correct”—that is, the northern—pronunciation of the characters.

Other Sibao versions of the Four Books provide fuller annotation and explication of the meaning of the texts. Take, for example, the 1883 edition of *Yuanben Erlun qiyou yinduan* (Original edition of *Two treatises for the education of children and the stimulation of virtue*; also published as *Erlun chuanwen beizhi* or *Two treatises with linked explanations*; block: 17.1 x 25 cm). This text, compiled by a Liu Jinhou of Tongbo, Henan, and completed for publication by his followers, Liu Mao and Liu Duozhen, in 1776, is explicitly designed for the education of students of eight to nine *sui*. The preface presents this work as a form of protest against the conventional method of early education in the Classics, “backing the book”—that is, training students, through dictation, to memorize portions of the Classics without instruction in the meaning of the text. (Progress was tested by having the student stand in front of the teacher, with his back to the book, and recite the passage in question.) A teacher himself, Liu Jinhou was frustrated with this approach to the instruction of children. On the one hand, they were too young and ignorant to read the texts of the Classics and understand their “extensive and profound” meaning. On the other hand, the dictation of the texts, as “unfounded speech,” left them without the solid support of the written word (and, perhaps more to the point, they often got lost if the dictated passages were too long). Existing textual efforts to explain the texts either distorted the meaning, threatening to “poison the vital parts” of the young, or broke the Classic into fragments, “at times following the text, at others cutting it off,” so that the student was confused.

Yet providing students with a moral guide, with a means of “nurturing rectitude,” was essential at this critical age, so Liu set about writing a simple explanation of the *Greater Learning* and the *Analects* (according to Zhu Xi, the two of the Four Books that should be read first, as the foundational texts of the Confucian curriculum). The result, according to the admiring preface writer, is perfection: “There is just the right degree of simplicity and sophistication, easiness and accuracy, correctness and solidity, distance and closeness to the text” (“Jiangshu erlun xu,” 1ab).

How does Liu achieve this effect? First, his explanations of the text are written in very simple colloquial Chinese, presenting the basic sense of the orthodox interpretation (i.e., the interpretation presented in Zhu Xi's *Sishu jizhu*, Collected commentaries on the Four Books), stripped of its potentially confusing ontological elaborations. Second, the text is formatted in such a way that the student is taken through it quite slowly and provided with numerous (often repetitious) annotations of characters and phrases. Liu follows the conventional interlinear commentary structure, but he breaks the page into two registers, the top designed to explain the meanings of characters, the bottom to flesh out the wording of the text. These registers are supposed to complement one another; as the preface explains, "The characters and phrases mutually clarify each other" ("Jiangshu erlun xu," 1b). On the top register, units consist of characters or phrases that make up a whole sentence or a full thought in the Classic, though frequently interrupted or broken down into single characters by commentary. On the bottom, units are clustered around phrases, consisting of an opening summary of what is to come, a phrase from the Classic, and a colloquial translation of the phrase.

Here, for example, is the way in which the opening passage of the *Analects*, "子曰學而時習之不亦說乎," is handled in upper and lower registers of text (the circles divide each unit of text-and-commentary):

子 This means "the master." His surname is Kong, his name is Qiu, and his *zi* is Chongni. He was a sage of the state of Lu. 曰 This means "to speak." 子曰 refers to the master's speech. 學 This is to copy the manner of those before you. What I don't understand, I learn from those who do. What I'm not able to do, I learn from those who are able to do. Explicating books and managing affairs are both study. Now, the ancients were humane, righteous, loyal, and trustworthy, tirelessly taking pleasure in virtue. 時 This means "time." 習 This means "review." 時習之 This means "to take what one has studied and constantly review it." 說 This has the meaning of "enjoy." 不亦說乎 How can the mind not be pleased? ○ This section explains the benefit of study to oneself.

○ This chapter shows the master using the advantages of study to urge people to study and to encourage them to take pleasure in study. Naturally if one takes pleasure in study one will become a gentleman. 子曰 The master said ○ Everyone can become good simply by studying. 學而時習之 What I don't understand, I learn from those who do. What I'm not able to do, I learn from those who are able to do. When I finish studying, I constantly review what I have studied. ○ 不亦說乎 The mind is naturally satisfied. Does this not make study even more pleasurable? ○ I take pleasure in study. (1a)

This rather labored explanation reproduces, albeit in simplified form and colloquial language, what we might call the practically useful portion of Zhu Xi's orthodox gloss in classical Chinese—that is, it adopts Zhu's understanding of 學 as 效, "to emulate" (rather than He Yan's rendering, "to learn," as book learning). And it emphasizes the practical course of action the stu-

dent is to take (as well as the attitude he is to adopt): emulating the behavior of those more advanced in virtue, constantly practicing or reviewing this behavior, and finding the whole process enjoyable. It strips away Zhu Xi's citations of sources (Cheng Yi and Xie Liangzuo), his fuller definitions ("Xi is the frequent, rapid motion of a bird's wings in flight"), and, most important, his effort to connect the passage to his ontological explanation of the pleasure one derives from study: the claim that human nature is innately good and that by emulating the good, one comes to understand the good and return, happily, to one's original nature.²⁸

We could say that Liu succeeds in his goal, then, of presenting a proper reading of the text to his young students without baffling them with allusions to its profounder meanings, meanings that, after all, have no bearing on the practical moral message. Clearly one of Liu's goals here is moral; the title of his work, *Erlun qiyou yinduan*, reveals that he sees his text as a way of "drawing out the beginnings of virtue" (*yinduan*) in his students ("Jiangshu erlun xu," 2a).

But he also succeeds in another of his goals—making the text linguistically and semantically intelligible to young students. The top register breaks the text of the Classic down into single units: 子, 曰, 學, 時, 習, 說. Each is defined separately (with a little biographical information added for "the master") but, in the fuller explanatory sentences, placed firmly back into the larger message of the passage. The bottom register presents the text in more coherent phrases (though considerably shorter than the full-sentence units used in Zhu Xi's commentary). Again, the moral message of the passage is emphasized, first, in the initial simple colloquial summary of each unit and, second, in the equally simple and often repetitious colloquial translation that follows the phrase from the Classic. Here the only impediment to a clear, though simple and partial, understanding of the orthodox interpretation of the *Lunyu* is the very poor production quality of the text; the cramped and very faint characters make it difficult to decipher its easy vernacular explanations.

Sibao produced more sophisticated commentaries on the Four Books as well. The *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* (Fig. 5), for example, packs three very crowded registers of text on each page and, by employing an array of different annotations and explanations, provides a detailed, albeit somewhat repetitious, guide to the text. As usual, the Classic is printed in the largest characters on the most commodious bottom level (15.3 cm). Units of text, consisting of a sentence or two from the Classic and a series of four different types of annotations, are marked off by circles. Each sentence of the Classic is divided into phrases, and after each phrase a series of definitions or simple translations (in classical Chinese) are provided in small characters. Once the whole sentence has been glossed, a section titled *zhu* (annotations) presents the orthodox Zhu Xi commentary (mastery of which was essential

to success in the examinations), dutifully transcribed character for character from Zhu's *Sishu jizhu*. Then a section marked *jiang* (interpretation) explains the passage more fully, elaborating on its meaning. Thus, the opening line of Mencius's debate with Gaozi—告子曰性猶杞柳也義猶本柶捲也以人性為仁義猶以杞柳為柶捲—is first glossed, then annotated with Zhu Xi's commentary, and then “explained” as follows:

In former times, Gaozi took human nature to be evil, dividing human nature and humaneness-and-righteousness into two. And he said to Mencius, “Today those who speak of human nature all alike take human nature to be good; and those who speak of humaneness and righteousness all alike take humaneness and righteousness to be derived from human nature. From my point of view, man has human nature at birth. His perceptions and movements are insensately one substance, just as the *qi* willow is insensately one thing. The principle of humaneness and righteousness is not something that my nature originally has, just as the utensils, cups, and bowls are not formed originally in the *qi* willow. Therefore, human nature will become humane and righteous only after it has been forced and bent, just as the *qi* willow becomes cups and bowls only after it has been forced and bent.” This is Gaozi seeing humaneness and righteousness as external to human nature; he does not understand that humaneness and righteousness are the willow's nature. (*Mengzi, xia*, 4.1a)

This explanation adds little in the way of interpretation; it simply expands on the meaning of the text as explained by Zhu Xi. Finally, a short section marked *bu* (supplement) contains additional glosses, often defining or clarifying characters mentioned in the *zhu* section—in this case, defining the characters Zhu Xi had used to describe the action required to make cups and bowls from willow wood: *jiao* 矯, “to force,” and *rou* 揉 “to bend.” In this bottom register the text is continuous, though the various sections of notes are, as usual, marked off from the text of the Classic in double columns of much smaller characters.

The middle register (4.7 cm) identifies chapters (*zhang*) and sections (*jie*) for explanation. Thus the middle register above the “Gaozi” chapter of *Mencius* opens with a section titled “Gaozi *zhangzhi*” (Meaning of the Gaozi chapter), which explains the major point of the passage—Mencius's attack on Gaozi's view that human nature lacks humaneness and righteousness. It also points up the source of Gaozi's error, in his use of the character *wei* 為 to insist that human nature has to “be made” humane and righteous, just as a willow has to be made or forced into the shapes of cups and bowls. Mencius challenges this use of *wei* to mean, in effect, “to do violence to” human nature, arguing that because humaneness and righteousness are originally in the nature, there is no need to force them. This analysis disposes of Gaozi's “calamitous theory.”

This comment is then succeeded by another little essay titled “Gaozi *jiezhi*” (Meaning of the Gaozi section), which offers what might be called a very



Figure 5. Opening page of the “Gaozi” chapter of *Mencius*, in a nineteenth-century Mawu edition of *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* (block: 22.6 × 31 cm). Intended for examination study, this text provides Zhu Xi’s commentary with the Classic in the lower register (along with some notes on vocabulary) and two upper registers of discursive comments on the proper interpretation of the chapter. The “flattened characters” (*bianzi*) of this text, though difficult to carve and read, allow the publisher to cram as much text as possible on each page. Photograph by the author of a copy held privately by a member of the Ma lineage in Mawu, Sibao, Fujian.

sketchy rhetorical analysis of the passage: “Gaozi had certainly often heard of Mencius’s theory that human nature was good and he therefore wished to use his own theory to destroy it. These three phrases are essentially all establishing his theory, rather than posing questions.” The phrases are broken down into semantic groups for easy understanding; and the commentary is interpreted, rather colloquially, as “explaining rightly that the character 性 does not enter Gaozi’s mouth”—that is, that Gaozi does not really understand what human nature is (*Mengzi, xia, 4.1a*).

The top register, the smallest (2.6 cm), deals, often at considerable length, with specific themes, identified by sentence (“xing you *juti*,” “theme of the sentence ‘xing you’”). Here we see the influence again of Zhu Xi’s state-sanctioned teaching. The argument here is that Gaozi is wrong about human nature, but the text goes a bit further in explaining what is wrong with Gaozi’s view: he is wrong because he “only acknowledges *qi* as human nature” (*Mengzi, xia, 4.1a–3a*). Though this point is not fleshed out very thoroughly, it refers for the first time to the ontological underpinnings of the orthodox view of human nature, introducing the reader to the larger ideas that underlie Zhu Xi’s interpretation. These various sets of notes are not very well coordinated physically; the notes in the top register are often ahead of the text, referring to passages one or two pages distant. No punctuation is provided to make the cramped text easier to read.

This text was obviously designed for students more advanced than those targeted in *Erlun qiyou yinduan*, students on the examination track but still by no means very sophisticated or knowledgeable. The “Gaozi” chapter of the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* provides the orthodox interpretation, taken character for character from the *Sishu jizhu*. This interpretation is presented as *the way to read the text*; we are not even troubled with Zhu Xi’s name and certainly not with any hint that contesting views might exist (though presumably Zhu Xi was not named simply because it was assumed that any reader would already know him to be the author of the commentary). In a brief subcommentary, a gloss is provided on two crucial characters in Zhu’s commentary (*jiao* and *rou*), each of which clarifies Mencius’s critique of Gaozi’s use of *wei* to mean “force” or “bend.” The compiler then devotes a great deal of space to fleshing out the orthodox view and driving home the point that Gaozi is wrong and Mencius right. Presumably a more experienced reader of these texts would not need this point repeated as frequently as it is here. In short, the whole elaborate apparatus of *zhu, jiang, bu, zhangzhi, jiezhi*, and *juti* is devoted to explicating the orthodox Cheng-Zhu interpretation of the passage for a reader new to the text, a student who wants to understand beyond all shadow of a doubt “what will be on the test.”

Turning from the Four Books to the Five Classics, we find that, generally, Sibao versions of the Five Classics follow a common model of formatting and

annotation. The explanatory material included in these texts may be rather simple, consisting of the common double-column interlinear style of commentary that periodically interrupts the classical text. But some texts, in addition to this typical form, also include notations along the right side of certain characters (*pangxun*), usually phrases highlighting the moral or political significance of a point. They may also include a short top register of additional annotations. Most of these texts are punctuated, with markers (circles, open and solid, and slugs) that indicate phrase breaks and highlight important passages.

This kind of punctuation, at a very basic level, instructs the reader how to make sense of the text; it also tells him what the significant parts of the text are.²⁹ The presence of punctuation seems to mark such texts as textbooks, intended to guide students through their first readings of the texts, for a fully literate scholar would not require—and indeed might feel affronted by the idea that he might need—a punctuated text. It is interesting in this regard, however, that all of the above-mentioned Sibao versions of the Four Books, the textbooks that students would read before they embarked on the Five Classics, are unpunctuated. This might have something to do with the place of the Four Books in the educational curriculum; as the first Classics to be learned, they were memorized by rote, without attention paid, initially at least, to their meaning. By the time a student finally confronted a written text of the Four Books, he probably did not need any punctuation, having learned the appropriate pauses in the course of the memorization process.

Two brief examples of Sibao editions of the Five Classics should serve here to give some idea of the organization of these texts. The 1819 edition of the *Shujing jinghua* (Essence of the *Classic of History*) consists of a large bottom register that alternates columns of double rows of smaller-character commentary and columns of the Classic in larger characters. Guides to the meaning or pronunciation of single characters may appear directly after the character (so that 曰 is followed by 粵通), but fuller explanation of the meaning of the text is restricted to the double-rowed columns reserved for commentary. The top register explains the larger significance of each passage, so that 克明後德 is explained as “the business of self-cultivation” and 以親九族 as “the business of managing a household” (“Yaodian,” 1a). This is a lightly punctuated text, with phrase and sentence units in both the Classic and the commentaries indicated by circles.

The *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Lin huican* (Collation of the Du and Lin versions of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* with the *Zuo Commentary*) follows the more common format: two registers, with the Classic and the *Zuo Commentary* text in large characters with double rows of interlinear commentary at the bottom and a freer explanation of the text at the top (Fig. 6). But this



Figure 6. Page from a Sibao edition of the *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Lin huican* (block: 16.2 × 51 cm). Note the plethora of notes and explanations: the interlinear commentary interspersed through the text of the Classic, the occasional sideline explanation, and the further notes on the top register. Photograph by the author of a copy held privately by a member of the Ma lineage in Mawu, Sibao, Fujian.

text also adds occasional sideline comments between the lines of text, usually to clarify the meaning of the passage to the left. Thus, Minister Shi's critique of the misguided policy of Chu toward the state of Zheng is accompanied by the terse explanation, "it was a strategy without any benefit [to Chu] itself," for those who had difficulty following Shi's longer and less direct speech (15.15a). The text of the Classic here is punctuated; circles mark off

phrases and a series of circles or slugs highlight important passages. This is a text that provides several types of aids to the reader—three types of commentary (interlinear, sideline, and discursive) clearly set off from the main text by placement or variation in character size and two types of punctuation (phrase division and highlighting).

Generally, then, Sibao versions of the Classics contain no intellectual surprises; when they provide interpretations, they are of an orthodox nature. This intellectual orientation might well reflect the conservatism of western Fujian, long a bastion of Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy,³⁰ but it probably also indicates the good business sense of the Sibao printers. By producing what might be called generic editions of the Classics, providing only enough in the way of commentary to introduce readers to the interpretations required for beginning examination study, they made their texts accessible and presumably desirable to a broad audience. More original, complex, or idiosyncratic interpretations might have attracted a small number of devoted scholars, but as commercial publishers interested first and foremost in selling books, the Zou and Ma shop owners pragmatically chose to appeal to the larger readership.

Despite the absence of any startlingly—or even mildly—new or different interpretations, there is, as the analysis above of four Sibao versions of the Four Books suggests, considerable variation in the way the same text is presented through commentary, annotation, and format—and thus in the ways the text could be received. In particular, here, different types of commentaries bespeak different reading levels and orientations: a basic grasp of simple meaning through the “translations” of the *Sishu yizhu*; mastery of both pronunciation and meaning from the standard edition presented in the more philologically oriented *Sishu zhengwen*; indoctrination in a simplified, moralistic version in the *Erlun qiyou yinduan*; or a fuller explication of the orthodox philosophical meaning through the layers of commentary in *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican*. To be sure, this range in annotation styles and levels of explication was not the preserve of the Sibao publishers alone; commercial publishers since the late Ming (if not earlier) had offered their customers similar choices. What is noteworthy here is that these choices are, through the hinterland networks developed by the Zou and Ma, now offered to readers heretofore not fully drawn into the book market.

Basic Educational Texts

The category of texts for education, together with the Classics, forms the backbone of the Sibao publishing industry throughout its history. Many of these texts—certainly the elementary primers *Sanzi jing*, *Baijia xing*, and *Qianzi wen*—were such guaranteed best-sellers that the Sibao printers waived their normal rules against competitive printing of the same text by several

print shops, allowing all print shops to publish them. But Sibao educational texts spanned several levels of learning, providing instruction not only for beginning readers but also for intermediate students and serious examination candidates desirous of learning how to write the eight-legged essay form necessary for examination success.

At the level of elementary education, Sibao published, in addition to the ubiquitous trinity of beginning primers, the *San-Bai-Qian*, a cluster of other basic reading texts such as *Zengguang xianwen* (also known as *Zengguang zhengwen*, Expanded orthodoxy), *Dizi gui* (Regulations for students), *Youxue qimeng tijing* (Path to children's education), *Renjia riyong* (Items of everyday life), and *Yinian shiyong zazi* (Practical glossary for use throughout the year). The *Sanzi jing*, *Baijia xing*, and *Qianzi wen* are so well known that they need little explanation here.³¹ *Sanzi jing* and *Qianzi wen* both introduce beginners to basic characters (roughly five hundred new characters in the former, one thousand in the latter) in the form of simple Confucian exhortations and elementary information about the universe and the Chinese past. The *Sanzi jing*, for example, opens with the famous lines "Men at birth are naturally good./Their natures are much the same;/their habits become widely different./If foolishly there is no teaching,/the nature will deteriorate,"³² a neat capsule summary of the orthodox teaching about human nature central to the Neo-Confucian moral philosophy supported by the state. *Baijia xing* is a list of four hundred of the most common Chinese family names. Together these books provided a "crash course" in roughly two thousand characters, presented in a form that also taught fundamental moral lessons and rules for proper behavior.³³

The basic texts might be supplemented with notes; the titles of surviving Sibao woodblocks and imprints suggest efforts to expand or annotate even these simple texts: *Zengzhu Sanzi jing* (*Three-character classic*, with expanded commentary, 1868), *Xinke zengbu Sanzi jing* (*Newly published and expanded Three-character classic*), *Sanzi jing zhujie beizhi* (*Full purport of the Three-character classic*, with commentary), and *Xinke zengbu Baijia xing* (*Newly published and expanded Myriad family names*). Of these, only the *Zengzhu Sanzi jing* (Fig. 7) exists in its entirety; it does, in fact, include a third register of "notes" above the two registers that contain the couplets of the original. On the first page this topmost register contains a crude picture of a schoolroom, with the teacher seated by a table stacked with books and writing materials, the student before him apparently reading an essay; on either side is a couplet from the text: "The young must diligently study" and "Writing essays is the way to establish oneself" (1a).

The notes on the successive pages appear to provide examples to illustrate the rhymes of the text; thus, a brief account of Mencius in the top register—"Mencius, *ming* Ke, *zi* Ziyu, was a man of the Warring States period. He wrote



Figure 7. The first page of the pamphletlike Sibao edition of the *Zengzhu Sanzi jing* (block: 8.9 × 31 cm). While the characters here are clearly carved, the illustration is quite crudely cut. Photograph by the author of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage in Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.

seven essays on morality, humaneness, and righteousness” (2a)—is provided presumably to demonstrate that writing essays is a good way to establish oneself, at the same time that it introduces a few facts about Mencius’s life. The physical appearance of this text—its small size (16.3 × 12 cm), its coarse and yellowed paper, and its crude printing—suggests that Sibao publishers saw these as texts to be produced in considerable quantities but at very low quality. According to the Wenhai lou account book from the 1880s, 105 copies of the *Sanzi jing* and 75 copies of the *Qianzi wen* sold wholesale for only 0.05 *qian* each. At roughly the same time, a copy of the *Sanzi jing tukao* (*Three-character classic, illustrated and examined*) published by the Nanjing printer of textbooks, Li Guangming, was selling retail for 0.5 *qian*, ten times that price (to be sure, Li’s version is a much better produced text).³⁴ Though we

must discount the difference here between wholesale and retail prices, the Sibao text was evidently a much cheaper edition, more accessible to a less wealthy audience.

Some of the other elementary texts were simple glossaries that introduced the reader to basic vocabulary useful in everyday life. Two of these glossaries, *Renjia riyong* and *Yinian shiyong zazi*, were obviously intended for local sale, for their vocabulary is Hakka, specifically from the Sibao Hakka subdialect. The *Xinzheng Renjia riyong* (Newly expanded *Items for everyday use*, 1922), for example, provides local terms for a candle holder, a bamboo basket, a wood pot, all illustrated at the top register of the text (8b, 12b–13a). At a somewhat more sophisticated level, the *Youxue qimeng tijing*, written in seven-character couplets, lists words and sentences that define or are associated with twenty-four topics: “beginning study,” “one’s place in the world,” “practicing agriculture,” “managing a household,” “clothing,” “people,” “astronomy,” “geography,” “time,” “birds and beasts,” “fish and snakes,” “flowers and trees,” “tools,” “political offices,” “the body,” “food and drink,” “marriage and birthdays,” “self-control,” “rulers and fathers,” “brothers,” “husbands and wives,” “friends,” “grief and illness,” and “diction.” Under “in the world,” for example, various professions are listed: fortune-telling and divining, medicine, geomancy, physiognomy, itinerant entertaining, entering a monastery, leather or metalworking, butchering, trading and commerce, and so on (2a–4a, unpaginated). Most topics include fuller sentences ordered in a logical progression: thus the topic “beginning study” traces the curriculum of a typical student from his efforts to read at age six to seven *sui* to his mastery of the Four Books and the Five Classics, on through the examination system and official service (1a–2a).

Moreover, the topics and their groupings—whose logic is not always immediately clear to the modern reader—introduce the student to categories firmly embedded in Chinese cultural practices: note, most obviously, the cluster of topics on human relations. In short, this text, *Youxue qimeng tijing*, seems designed primarily to introduce words and phrases to the student, to teach not only vocabulary but also morally and socially important clusters of vocabulary words. Such texts relied on rhythmic (and often rhyming), parallel phrases to aid memorization and recitation; and they usually incorporated simple moral instructions about filial piety, retribution, and the value of study as well, so that in learning to read and recite, the student was also learning how he (and possibly she) ought to behave.

Dizi gui, by the Kangxi-era (1661–1722) teacher Li Yuxiu, is even more explicitly designed as a textbook for instruction in both reading and morality.³⁵ Very popular in the second half of the Qing dynasty, this text is organized around Confucius’s instructions to his disciples as they appear in *Analects* 1.6: 弟子入則孝，出則弟，謹而信，泛愛眾而親仁，行有餘力則以學文。³⁶ The primer opens with a close paraphrase of this line: “*Dizi gui* is the instruc-

tion of the sage: first you are filial to your parents and respect your elder brothers; then you earnestly cultivate sincerity, overflow with love to the people and befriend the benevolent; and then, if you have strength, study texts” (1a, unpaginated and unbound). The text is then divided into sections defined by phrases from the *Analects* passage; each section explains, in simple characters and phrases (most of which are to be found in the *Analects* itself), the meaning of the phrase. Thus, the section linked to 謹而信 opens: 見人善, 即思齊, 縱去遠, 以漸躋; 見人惡, 即內省, 有則改, 無加警 or “When you see a person who is virtuous, then think of equaling him (思齊)—even though you have far to go, gradually rise [to the task]; when you see a person who is evil, then examine yourself (內省), and if you find evil in yourself, change it, without requiring further warning” (4b).³⁷ Two of the phrases here (underlined in the Chinese text) are from the *Analects* and clearly refer to Confucius’s own explanation of how one should learn from the virtues and vices of others (see *Analects*, 4.17).

With this text, the beginning student is learning on at least four fronts: he is learning or reviewing characters (a total of 1,080, though this includes repeated characters);³⁸ he is absorbing basic moral precepts that should guide his behavior in the family and the community while being reminded of the value of study; he is being introduced to some of the vocabulary, not to mention the teachings, of the *Analects*; and finally, he is learning, through recitation of the easy-to-remember twelve-character lines (divided into four groups of three characters each), the parallelism and the rhythms of the language.

These texts are striking for the way in which they teach a variety of skills, including skills that go beyond simple reading. *Zengguang xianwen*, a widely popular textbook in the Qing, was billed largely as a tool for instruction in speech: “Read *Zengguang* and learn how to speak” was a common saying.³⁹ The opening lines of the text set forth its philosophy of education: “Use the great writings of the ancient sages and worthies to instruct your speech and you will speak sincerely and precisely. Collect good phrases and rhymes, steadily increasing your store, and you will extend your experience and knowledge. To understand today, you must examine the past; without history, there is no present” (1ab). The remainder of the text is then devoted to a series of couplets transmitting the moral messages of the ancients to the reader: “Life and death are fated, wealth and rank are decided by heaven,” “The good family teaches its sons and grandsons ritual and righteousness, the bad family teaches brutality and evil,” and so forth. Here the student is learning how to read and how to speak—that is, how to use set phrases and proverbs appropriately—while he is also learning the basic moral principles that are supposed to guide his behavior.

He is beginning to learn, too, the basic structures that he will later have to master in composition: the rhythm of phrases of a set number of characters, rhyme, parallelism, and the association of certain characters or “tags”

and sayings with specific situations, occupations, or states of mind (as in the *Youxue qimeng tijing*). This early interest in teaching patterns of writing is a distinctive feature of Chinese educational texts, as Benjamin A. Elman has pointed out. Sophisticated composition skills were a prerequisite for passage of the civil service examinations and official service. Thus, in contrast to the curriculum in Europe, where the primary emphasis was on reading, even basic Chinese educational texts were likely to incorporate some patterns useful to students learning to write.⁴⁰

The *Youxue xuzhi* (Necessary knowledge for children; better known under one of its alternate titles, *Youxue gushi qionglin*), the textbook with the closest link to Sibao in its own textual history, reflects the same complex of concerns with reading and writing, albeit at a more advanced level. Originally compiled by the Ming scholar Cheng Dengji, a Jingtai era (1450–57) *jinshi*, the text was later expanded and revised by Sibao's most distinguished scholar, Zou Shengmai (1691–1761).⁴¹ It became a very popular children's encyclopedia—if, as the saying cited above claims, *Zengguan xianwen* taught children how to speak, then (as the saying continued) “after reading *Youxue qionglin*, they know how to study.”⁴² Organized topically, the text covers a wide range of material in four *juan*: astronomy; geography; the seasons; the court; civil officials; military officials; parents and children; brothers; husbands and wives; uncles and nephews; teachers and pupils; friends, guests, and hosts; marriage; women; relations by marriage; age and youth; the body; buildings; tools; flowers and trees; birds and beasts; clothing; food and drink; precious things; inventions; literary matters; the civil examinations; Buddhism, Daoism, ghosts and spirits; the arts; criminal proceedings; poverty and wealth; human affairs; and diseases and death. The topics, again, like those in the *Youxue qimeng tijing*, present the student with the important cultural categories through which the world was apprehended, reinforcing and perpetuating existing assumptions about the organization of knowledge.

Under each topic, there is text and commentary: the text presents a phrase or idiom (*chengyu*) relevant to the topic in question, and this is explained in a double row of smaller interlinear characters. This commentary frequently cites important texts such as the Classics, the *Shuowen jiezi* (Explanation of single graphs and analyses of compound characters), the *Huainanzi*, the dynastic histories, and the *Tongdian* (Encyclopedic history of institutions), introducing the reader, briefly, to the major texts of the tradition, as well as to a range of important references to Chinese history, literature, and social custom. *Youxue qionglin* serves as a kind of digest of information and important citations on the wide range of topics listed above, essential in a culture that enjoyed both a very long written tradition and a fondness for quotation and allusion. Written in parallel prose, it incorporates many polite phrases and expressions frequently used in the exchanges of daily life. As it instructs the student on the facts of Chinese history, literature, and society, it also pro-

vides guidelines for proper behavior and speech. Like *Zengguang xianwen*, it teaches students “how to speak.” Presumably the emphasis on parallelism and the *chengyu*—not to mention the collection of allusions and quotations—also provided a model for the kind of composition valued in the examinations. Recitation of the text would help to implant the rhythms of parallel prose in the student’s mind at the same time that the topically arranged citations provided an invaluable index to allusions that the writer could draw on when composing an essay.⁴³

Writing prose composition was, however, not the only challenge facing the student hopeful of examination success. The ability to write poetry, reintroduced as a requirement in the examinations in 1756, was no longer, certainly by the nineteenth century, simply a polite accomplishment, the mark of a cultivated man, but a necessity to anyone who hoped to take the examinations at any level. Sibao produced several texts for students of poetry, two basic collections and a series of rhyme dictionaries. *Qianjia shi* (Myriad poems), the beginning text for learning poetry and “one of the key collections students and candidates referred to[,] to learn regulated verse,”⁴⁴ was a common Sibao product, often rather cheaply produced. One late-nineteenth-century edition, the Wanxian tang’s *Zhong Bojing xiansheng dingbu Qianjia shi tuzhu* (Master Zhong Bojing’s revised *Myriad poems*, with illustrations and commentary), falsely attributed to Zhong Xing (z. Bojing, 1574–1624), includes crude illustrations in the *shangtu/xiawen* format, and the poems, with “Zhong’s” commentary below (Fig. 8). The Linlan tang edition of the late nineteenth century combines the *Xinke Qianjia shi* (Newly published *Myriad poems*), without commentary or annotation, on the large bottom register, with another text on the top, the *Xinke Shenglü qimeng duilei* (Newly published *Primer for sound rules in matched categories*), providing “lessons for matching characters and phrases of varying lengths” for the beginning versifier (Fig. 9).⁴⁵

At a somewhat more advanced level was the *Tangshi sanbaishou zhushu* (*Three hundred poems of the Tang*, with annotations and commentary), the cheap (at 0.3 *qian*) Sibao edition of the ubiquitous poetry primer, the *Three Hundred Poems of the Tang*. This text, based on a compilation made by a Jiangsu scholar, Sun Zhu, in 1763 or 1764 (shortly after knowledge of Tang regulated verse was instituted as a requirement of the examination curriculum), became the most popular of all anthologies of Tang poetry. As Sun himself explains in his preface, he chose not only the most famous works of Tang poetry but also those that would be easiest to understand and memorize.⁴⁶ For student writers of poetry, Sibao also produced a number of rhyming dictionaries and a collection of “poetry discussions,” the most notable of which was Yuan Mei’s *Suiyuan shihua* (*Suiyuan poetry discussions*).

All these texts were produced for a general learning readership; that is, they teach basic reading (and some writing) skills and general cultural knowledge.



Figure 8. Page from *Zhong Bojing xiansheng dingbu Qianjiashi tuzhu*. Though not any more finely printed, this text, unlike the version of *Qianjia shi* in Figure 9, includes illustrations and notes (falsely attributed to Zhong Bojing) and is not punctuated. Photograph of a text held privately by a member of the Ma lineage in Mawu, Sibao, Fujian.

Many also inculcate fundamental moral principles. There are other texts that were more specialized in the academic assistance they offered. For example, Sibao's *Suanfa cuoyao* (Essentials of calculation, 1896), a primer of abacus use, though explicitly addressed to a readership desirous of mastering one of the Confucian six arts (*xu*, 1a), was in fact a text likely to be most useful to aspiring shopkeepers and craftsmen. *Zibian xinzhā* (Distinguishing characters, Writing letters; preface dated 1876, published in the late nineteenth

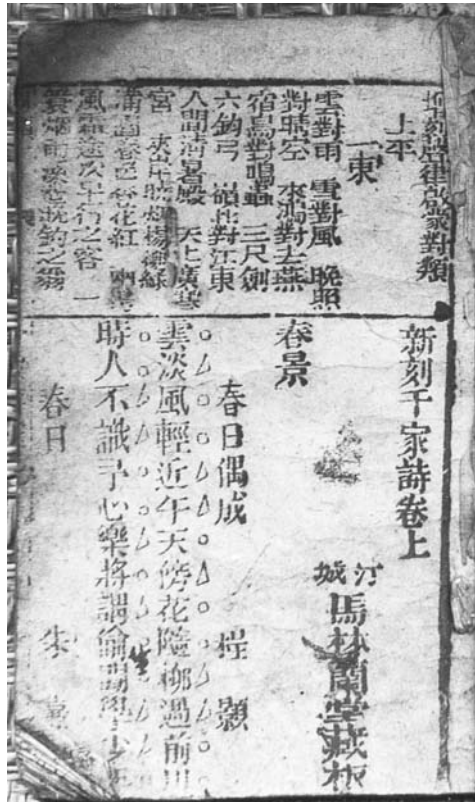


Figure 9. Page from *Xinke Qianjiashi*, published by the Ma family Linlan tang branch shop in Tingcheng (Changting) (block: 16.8 × 24.2 cm). Here, as in Figure 10, one book incorporates two texts, the *Zengke Sheng-lü qimeng duilei* in the top register and the title text, *Xinke Qianjia shi*, in the bottom register. Photograph of a text held privately by a member of the Ma lineage in Mawu, Sibao, Fujian.

century) by Tan Yuanbiao and Li Chunshan, in contrast, self-consciously advertises its usefulness to a limited, specialized audience. Designed in part to help students learn to distinguish similar characters and in part to teach letter writing, this text is openly presented as one that might be particularly useful for traveling merchants, for men very much in the situation of the Zou and Ma booksellers themselves. The unidentified preface writer explains

that his father ordered him to abandon his studies at the age of eighteen in order to “travel to distant places as a merchant.” Now he bitterly regrets the resulting deficiencies in his education: “Whenever I have to write anything, I cannot distinguish clearly the forms of the different characters. I scratch my head, bitterly wasting much time and energy trying to think of the right character.” Returning home to visit his family, he is shocked to see that his son, who has been studying for five years, has the same problem; he cannot distinguish between *bu* 簿 and *bo* 薄 or between *wei* 微 and *zheng* 徵. The son, shamed by his father’s anger and disappointment, procures a copy of *Zibian xinzha* and, after a mere month of study, is able to pass an extensive test, involving several tens of similar characters, of his ability to read accurately. “That only one month of work would be enough to supplement five years of study—this is indeed extraordinary!” marvels the proud father, and he then goes on to praise the clarity of the textbook (*xu*, 1ab).

The commercial context of the preface is directly reinforced at the beginning of the text; in a lower register, the first of “Ten Important Principles for Embarking on a Profession” explains, “[K]nowing how to read, knowing how to use the abacus, and knowing how to distinguish between grades of silver are the most important skills. If, as a merchant, you have these skills, you will do well; if you don’t, you will do poorly. When young you should study these skills thoroughly first, and then you will be able to take your place among men once you embark on a profession” (1a). Though *Zibian xinzha*, like the other texts cited earlier, could be used by any student as an aid to learning easily confused characters and proper letter-writing forms, it was marketed as a text particularly useful for aspiring merchants.

Another primer notable for its utility is actually a collection of primers, a handy encyclopedia of beginning instructional materials produced in the late nineteenth century by the Wenhai lou print shop. *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke* (Annotated combined edition of *Three-character classic*, *Myriad family names*, *Thousand-character essay*, and *Expanded words of the sages*; Fig. 10) offers a practical all-in-one compendium of texts that seems to be designed to meet all of a child’s early educational needs. In one cramped volume, it not only combines the four most popular reading primers—*Sanzi jing*, *Baijia xing*, *Qianzi wen*, and *Zengguang xianwen*—with annotations; it also adds, surprisingly unadvertised in the title, a top register consisting of a miscellaneous series of very brief texts, including calligraphy guides (*Zhibi tushi*, Illustrated instructions on holding a brush; *Linchi kaifa*, Regular-script calligraphic models; *Caojue baiyun*, Secrets of grass script in one hundred rhymes; *Gushu zhuanwen*, Seal script in ancient texts; and *Lishu fatie*, Clerical-script calligraphic models), a primer of abacus calculation titled *Suanfa yaojue* (Essential secrets of calculation), explanations of fortune-telling techniques (*Zhan denghua jixiong*, Good and bad fortune from the divination of candle wicks; and *Liuren shike*, Schedule of *liuren* divination), and moral admonitions

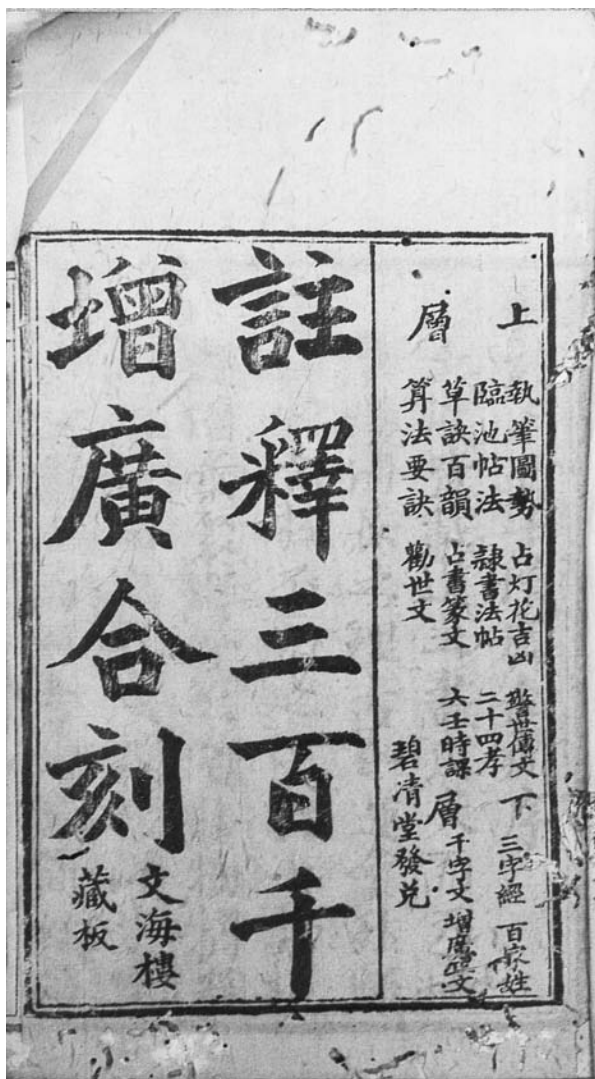


Figure 10. Cover page (right) of the text of *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke* (block: 18.7 cm h × 29.6 cm w). Photocopy of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage in Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.



Figure 11. First page of *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke*. Note the two separate texts: *Zhibi tushi* in the top register and *Sanzi jing zhujie* (*Three-character classic*, explained with notes) in the bottom. Photocopy of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage in Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.

(*Quanshi wen*, Exhortations to the world; *Jingshi chuanwen*, Messages to awaken the world; and *Ershisi xiao*, Twenty-four exemplars of filial piety). The four major texts on the larger bottom register (10.3 cm) are heavily annotated. This text, unlike the cheaper editions of the *Sanzi jing*, *Baijia xing*, *Qianzi wen*, and *Zengguang xianwen*, provides unpunctuated commentary, writ-

ten in simple classical Chinese, in double interlinear rows of smaller characters, to the main text.

The top register (4.3 cm) presents its series of texts without commentary or annotation but with frequent, albeit quite crude, illustrations. Thus *Zhibi tushi*, for example, is aptly illustrated with a drawing of a hand grasping a writing brush in the proper way (see Fig. 11); and the text of the *Ershisi xiao* is dotted with small, roughly executed pictures of its stories. This compendium of children's literature provided a cheap and convenient guide for beginning learners, with the fundamental texts of primary education at the bottom, fully explained, and a selection of varied instructional material at the top. Indeed, the interest of this text lies in the wide-ranging conception of elementary education it expresses: the young student is to absorb not only the rudiments of reading, the mechanics of writing, and the fundamental moral precepts of Chinese culture but also calculation on the abacus and a few basic techniques of fate prediction, essential presumably as a guide to decision making in all aspects of the student's future life.

THE MEANING OF HOMOGENEITY

The overview above of basic educational texts produced by the Sibao publishers represents only a portion of Sibao's total output in this category. Sibao publishers also produced a large number of more advanced textbooks and reference aids: dictionaries and guides to the Classics, anthologies of model essays, character and rhyming dictionaries, collections of examination essays, poetry critiques, and so forth. With the equally cursory discussion of Sibao's production of the Classics, however, the overview suggests nonetheless something of the range of titles the Zou and Ma publishers produced. As emphasized earlier, there is nothing unusual or striking about the educational titles Sibao published; they are similar, in many cases identical, to those produced in Xuwan, Jiangxi, and even in larger centers like Nanjing or Chengdu in the nineteenth century. Sibao appears to have chosen sensibly, given its situation and its markets, to publish texts widely in demand—the Four Books and Five Classics, *San-Bai-Qian*, *Youxue xuzhi*, *Three Hundred Poems of the Tang*, and so on.

But a closer look at this same selection of texts also reveals the range in content that could exist within a fairly homogeneous cluster of titles or types of texts. The variety of textbooks Sibao published, for example—from glossaries of practical everyday vocabulary such as *Renjia riyong* through the trinity of popular reading primers *San-Bai-Qian*, the children's encyclopedia *Youxue xuzhi*, the manuals for fortune-telling included in the *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke*, the texts for specialized educational problems like *Zi-bian xinza*, introductions to poetry like *Qianjia shi*, reference guides to the

Classics, and models for examination writing—suggests an abundance of learning and teaching choices. The multivalence of functions within single titles of this group, which may combine instruction in reading, speaking, writing, and the organization of knowledge with moral teachings and information about Chinese history and material customs, further extends the range of possible meanings and uses within the homogeneity of texts. And then, when we consider too that these texts represent just a sampling of Sibao's total output, we must be struck by the variety of interests and tastes that the Zou and Ma publishers could satisfy.

This range and diversity within a shared cluster of texts complicates the significance of homogeneity and its implications for textual reception and cultural integration.⁴⁷ For different readings may be implied even within multiple versions of the same basic text. We have seen, for example, in the analysis of the Sibao versions of the Four Books, how different commentaries and types of commentaries on the same basic text could encourage different readings. These readings are not necessarily susceptible to precise definition or a prediction of readership: although *Erlun qiyou yinduan*, for example, is crafted explicitly for young students struggling with their first or second Classic (or for teachers introducing young students to their first or second Classic), it could assist any beginning student, of whatever age, in learning to read the text.

But the information imparted in that text—the reading it encourages—is clearly rather different in type from the reading of *Mencius* presented in the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican*. The former presents a simplified, heavily moralized reading of the *Analects*, whereas the latter offers, in addition to the all-important orthodox reading of *Mencius*, a passage-by-passage analysis of the argument in the Classic. It is, of course, teaching the reader the requirements of the examination system; but it is also teaching, through example, a kind of critical or analytic thinking (albeit a kind based on an unquestioning faith in the orthodox reading of *Mencius*), in that it guides the reader to the pivotal point of Mencius's argument, his critique of Gaozi's abuse of the character *wei*. The reading implied in *Sishu zhengwen* provides a sharp contrast to these two texts, each of which attempts to illuminate, in its own way, the meaning of the Classic. The *Sishu zhengwen* is interested in meaning only at the level of individual characters, at times without reference to their functions in the classical text. This text could be read as a kind of dictionary of sounds and multiple meanings, in which the Classic itself functions as the database from which the compiler selects the characters to be defined and analyzed.

Now the differences here would not, to be sure, necessarily result in widely variant or conflicting philosophical interpretations of the Four Books of the sort that might stimulate intellectual debate or cause cultural conflict. As mentioned earlier, Sibao did not in fact produce texts supporting readings

in explicit opposition to the orthodox, Cheng-Zhu interpretation; there is no Wang Yangming or Dai Zhen version of the Four Books in the Sibao corpus. Although there are interpretive differences—no one could argue that the reading presented in *Erlun qiyou yinduan*, for example, is exactly the same as that in *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican*—nonetheless each text is operating within the same set of assumptions about the meaning of the Classics. The important differences in these texts are, rather, those that promote different understandings of the uses of these Classics—whether these be examination preparation, moral indoctrination, early reading instruction, or phonological study (or any combination of these uses)—and thus different relationships between the reader and the classical text.

By focusing thus far on prefaces and commentary, we have been looking at what is perhaps the most direct pointer to intended textual use; through these forms the author or editor of a text can instruct the reader explicitly how to read his text and how to think about the use of the text. But there are a great many other factors that operate, less directly, to shape both the way a reader thinks about a text and the way he or she reads a text. For example, the context of a text set in a collection of works conditions a reader's perception of the text's use and significance. Consider the *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke*, the compendium of primers described on page 214, and the picture of elementary education it presents. First, with its interlinear comments on the *Sanzi jing* and the other texts listed in the title, it implies a more serious reading of these texts than that to be found in the simpler, cruder, and very sparsely annotated *Zengzhu Sanzi jing*, *Zengbu Baijia xing*, and so forth.

But, more to the point here, the inclusion in the compendium of a wide range of other beginning texts, particularly those on fortune-telling and supernatural retribution, suggests a broad vision of the goals of elementary education, a vision that imagines paths other than examination study. The *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke* encompasses instruction in a wide range of practical, basic skills—reading, writing, calculating, and fortune-telling—rather than directing the reader to the single purpose of classical study and official service. It also lends texts like *Zhan denghua jixiong* and *Liuren shike*, the two fortune-telling guides in the collection, a legitimacy as children's textbooks that they might not have on their own by printing them together on the same page as the “orthodox,” respectable primers *Sanzi jing*, *Baijia xing*, *Qianzi wen*, and *Zengguang xianwen*. The implicit promise of the compendium (like that of many of Sibao's household encyclopedias or medical compendia) is that this one text will fit all needs—and thus that the text presents a well-rounded approach to beginning learning. It is not the content of any single text in the compendium but the implied relationship among all the texts, through their inclusion in a single imprint, that distinguishes this work and makes it essentially different from a collection of separate editions of all the relevant texts.

Crucial too are the qualities of a text that influence the physical act of reading. Differences in the layout or format, size, use (or absence) of punctuation, choice of language, and physical appearance and production qualities of the book also shape the reading process. Few of these factors are treated in analyses of literature and reading in China,⁴⁸ and yet they are necessary to an understanding of reading. As this is too wide-ranging a topic to treat in any detail here, I will simply give a few examples, drawn from Sibao, of how the layout and appearance of a book may shape reading and thereby encourage differences in interpretation.

First, the form or format of texts influences the reading process. It is not simply that the different commentaries—as is the case with the *Sishu yizhu*, *Sishu zhengwen*, *Erlun qiyou yinduan*, and *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican*—encourage different readings of the Four Books. The presence of commentary and different commentarial *forms*—interlinear, sideline, or separate-register—imply different approaches to reading and different modes of comprehension.⁴⁹ How, indeed, does interlinear commentary, a commentary that repeatedly interrupts the main text, engaging as it were in a kind of running interaction with it, influence a reader's sense of the whole meaning of a text? It seems, at the very least, to announce the importance of the text, to suggest that it is worthy of the kind of line-by-line attention usually devoted to the Classics. Thus the provision of interlinear commentary for each of the title texts in the primer-compendium *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke* elevates this particular edition of each of these texts above an edition with only upper-register commentary, like the inappropriately titled *Xinke zengbu Sanzi jing*.

The juxtaposition of multiple levels of commentary and multiple registers of text is also an issue. Certain works, such as *Zibian xinza* and *Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke*, have independent, unrelated texts printed on the same page; in the latter, for example, there is no relationship between the contents of *Sanzi jing*, in the lower register, and *Zhubi tushi*, above, and a student could easily read each text separately. More commonly, however, there is a relationship between the contents of different registers of text. This is clearly the case for the *Erlun qiyou yinduan*. The logic of that text, supported by the instructions in the preface, indicates that there was a kind of dialectical relationship between the two registers: the student was to work, under the guidance of a teacher, back and forth between them, learning the meanings of individual characters and phrases from the top register and applying that learning to the general interpretation of the meaning of whole passages of text from the bottom register. The pattern here, that the more detailed, technical commentary is placed at the top, to serve as a tool for the comprehension of the text at the bottom, is often echoed in books that contain two registers of separate texts. The *Xinke Qianjia shi*, for example (see Fig. 9), devotes a large bottom register to the title text, with the *Zengke Shengli*

qimeng duilei—the primer of phonology provided to aid in the analysis of the poetry below—in the smaller upper register.

But this relationship does not necessarily hold in more complex texts. The *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican*, for example, provides three registers of commentary, two of which provide two types of subcommentaries. This profusion of commentary serves both to announce the importance of the Classic (and the crucial importance of passages burdened with the whole panoply of “annotations,” “interpretations,” “supplements,” “chapter meanings,” “section meanings,” and “sentence themes”) and to promise a thorough explanation of it. But here the order of reading seems to work from bottom to top: the student first comprehends the meaning of the classical passage and the orthodox commentary and then moves upward, away from the literal explanations of the passage toward more abstract readings that analyze the thrust of Mencius’s argument (second register) and, finally, at the most abstract and historically distant level, link the passage to contemporary orthodox ontology (third register).

Second, the use of punctuation affects the act of reading. In the absence of standardized punctuation forms, punctuation is often difficult to interpret. Authors, editors, and publishers employed a variety of different symbols to set off sections of the text, mark phrases and sentences, highlight passages for emphasis, indicate tonal patterns in poetry, and so on. Look, for example, at the different approaches to punctuation in two Sibao versions of *Qianjia shi*: *Xinke Qianjia shi* (see Fig. 9) marks each poem with sequences of circles and triangles to guide the reader, it would seem, through the tonal pattern, but ignores line breaks entirely. *Zhong Bojing xiansheng dingbu Qianjia shi tuzhu* (see Fig. 8) simply provides line breaks, leaving analysis of the technical qualities of the poetry to the reader (though explanation of the meaning of the poems is presented in the unpunctuated notes). At times, it is not clear how helpful a plethora of punctuation, no matter how well intended, would be to a reader: consider the confusion that might be engendered by the mix of circles and slugs (presumably designed to indicate important passages), intermixed with sideline commentary, in Sibao’s *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Lin huican* (see Fig. 6). Indeed, in some cases it is tempting to assume that punctuation was added almost randomly, to provide the publishers with an additional selling point.

Quite aside from the difficulties of interpreting punctuation, the very presence—or absence—of punctuation alone might serve to mark a text for a certain reading approach. As indicated earlier, for the highly literate scholar, punctuation was of course not necessary and might be a kind of insult. In this case, the presence of punctuation, both phrase delimiters and markers of emphasis, as is commonly found in Sibao versions of the Five Classics like the *Shujing jinghua* or the *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Lin huican*, suggests a work for students, for readers who need to be told where to pause and who

want to be told what is important. Yet we could also argue, extrapolating from the work of Paul Saenger on silent reading in medieval Europe,⁵⁰ that punctuation might not be necessary, even for the student, in texts typically first learned by aural rote. Thus a reader who had memorized the *Analects* aurally, and frequently recited it orally, might not need punctuation to guide his reading of a text; he would automatically know where to pause. This might explain, as already noted, why none of the Sibao versions of the Four Books discussed here, even the elementary *Erlun qiyou yinduan*—and very few of the reading primers (which would, of course, have been memorized for recitation)—are punctuated, whereas most of their versions of the more difficult Five Classics are. Printed punctuation, then, might well announce a text for learning readers. The absence of punctuation, however, does not necessarily indicate an advanced, highly literate reader. Here the contents of the text and the ways the text was used have to be taken into consideration before the significance of punctuation or its absence can be assessed.

Third, the language of a text—its nature (i.e., its place among the registers of classical, vernacular, dialect), difficulty, and quality—has to be taken into account in deducing different reading practices from a text. Like punctuation, this is a difficult issue. It may be obvious that the simple colloquial language of the *Erlun qiyou yinduan* was intended for young beginning readers (as is stated in the preface), but the rather awkward semicolloquial classical language of the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* is harder to interpret. Many scholars argue that the use of the vernacular is a signal of a text for popular readership. There is certainly evidence to support this view: no one could deny that the very simple, repetitious vernacular commentaries of the *Erlun qiyou yinduan* made it easily accessible to beginning readers. But what about the more complex and sophisticated vernacular language, replete with classical phrases and allusions, of the literati novels of the late Ming and Qing? Some scholars have argued that, for semiliterate readers with perhaps only a few years of schooling, simple classical prose was probably easier to understand than the rich vernacular prose of *Journey to the West* or *Dream of the Red Chamber*.⁵¹ If this is the case, then the popularity of military romances written in simple classical Chinese—the titles that constitute the bulk of Sibao's output in the fiction category—may suggest that Sibao served a population that included a considerable number of partially literate readers. But the use of semicolloquial classical or vernacular need not indicate anything at all about intended audience: Zhu Xi's *Yulei* (Conversations, in categories), hardly a text designed for a popular readership, is in a mixed colloquial and classical language, as befits a text of the "recorded conversation" (*yulu*) genre. Thus the language of a text (like most of the criteria mentioned here) has to be interpreted in the context of a variety of other factors, including genre, contents, and the aids to comprehension (commentary, punctuation, etc.) a text includes.⁵²

The physical appearance of texts, their production quality, naturally also affects reading. Relying on a cheap, unillustrated, and poorly printed Sibao edition of *Youxue xuzhi*—one riddled with mistaken and simplified characters—would be quite a different experience from using an expensive, heavily illustrated, and carefully produced edition of the text from one of the great publishing houses of Beijing or Jiangnan, or even from Li Guangming, the Nanjing publisher of textbooks. Though the Sibao printers occasionally produced clear and easily readable texts and, more rarely, even rather fine editions, for the most part the production quality of Sibao imprints was not high. Sibao texts were generally rather poorly cut, with as many characters crammed on the page as possible; a glance at a page from the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* (see Fig. 5) illustrates just how difficult to read such a text might be. The proportion of incorrect, simplified, or omitted characters, both in this text and in Sibao's other versions of the Classics, is rather high, despite the fact that these were important texts, the correct rendering of which was central to examination study.⁵³ Illustrations are rare in Sibao editions; and when a text is illustrated, it is usually rather crudely done; see, for example, the illustrations to *Sanzi jing* (Fig. 7) and *Qianjia shi* (Fig. 8) or the figures of the gods produced for a Sibao almanac, the *Yuxia ji* (Record of the jade casket; Fig. 12). Paper quality is generally not high; Sibao imprints were often printed on rather cheap, coarse, *maobian* paper, made of *mao* bamboo, which quickly yellowed.

A brief comparison with contemporary texts from Xuwan reveals a clear difference. The Xuwan editions of the medical primer *Yixue sanzi jing* (Three-character classic of medicine) and the pharmaceutical guide *Shennong bencao jingdu* (Shennong's *materia medica* classic punctuated), for example, though by no means particularly elegant, are larger and clearer, much easier to read, than the Sibao versions (Figs. 13, 14). Obviously the smaller, cramped characters and the higher proportion of mistaken characters in Sibao imprints affect the reading process, in that they, at best, slow the reader's progress through the text and, at worst, distort the meaning of a text and mislead the reader. What remains to be studied is how other physical factors—quality of paper, size of text, style of calligraphy, use of simplified characters, presence, nature, and placement of illustration (both *hua* and *tu*),⁵⁴ layout of text registers—shape a reader's response to a text and its significance within the literary tradition. Anne Burkus-Chasson, in Chapter 10 in this volume, makes a strong start, examining in detail how such factors, in particular choice of binding style and layout of illustration and text, encourage a certain reading of a text.

These are some of the criteria that can be applied to imprints in any attempt to analyze reading practices from the texts themselves. The assumption underlying this approach is that the meaning of a text is inextricably bound to its physical form—not only its production qualities but also its format, the



Figure 12. A portrait of Jia Fu, god of the constellation Di, from a popular almanac, *Yuxia ji*, published in Wuge (18a) (block: 11.5 × 23 cm). Photograph by the author of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage in Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.

arrangement of the page, and the relationship among the different parts of a text (illustrations, paratexts, commentaries, etc.). To be sure, a wide range of other issues, going well beyond the analysis of individual texts as carriers of content and physical objects, must also be considered. The ways in which books were used or the status of a book or books within a household—as collector's pieces, luxury items, commonplace resources for education and entertainment, or rare and highly valued (no matter how cheap in economic terms) links to a distant elite culture—might also condition the act of reading. More obviously, the way in which the text is absorbed—through personal, individual reading, instruction in school, oral performance, or transmission by a literate specialist to an illiterate audience⁵⁵—shapes the kind of impact the same text might have on different readers. Finally, the place of a single text within its genre is significant. We have to gain a better appreciation, for

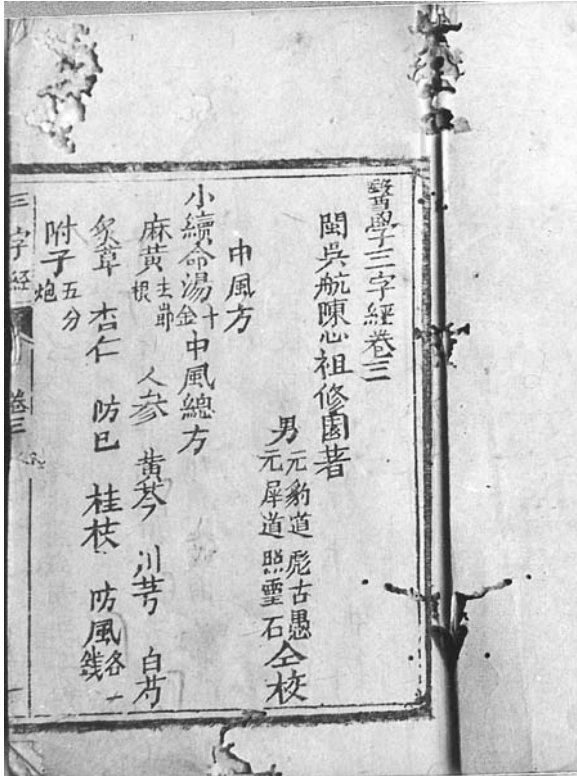


Figure 13. From a partial Sibao edition of Chen Nianzu (z. Xiuyuan), *Yixue sanzhi jing* (block: 18 × 11.6 cm), 3.1b–2a. Compare the crude carving and small characters of this text to the relatively clear carving and larger characters of the Xuwan edition following (Fig. 14). Photocopy of a copy held privately by a member of the Zou lineage of Wuge, Sibao, Fujian.

example, of both the relationship between the four different Sibao editions of the Four Books analyzed here and their place in the whole genre of editions of the Four Books in circulation in the nineteenth century, in terms of their content and style of commentary and their layout, punctuation, production qualities, and role in the educational curriculum.

The differences in reading experiences—or to follow Roger Chartier, in the ways readers appropriate texts—that may result from all these factors are difficult to assess until more research can be done on different publishing sites, on the general availability of books, on the types of texts accessible

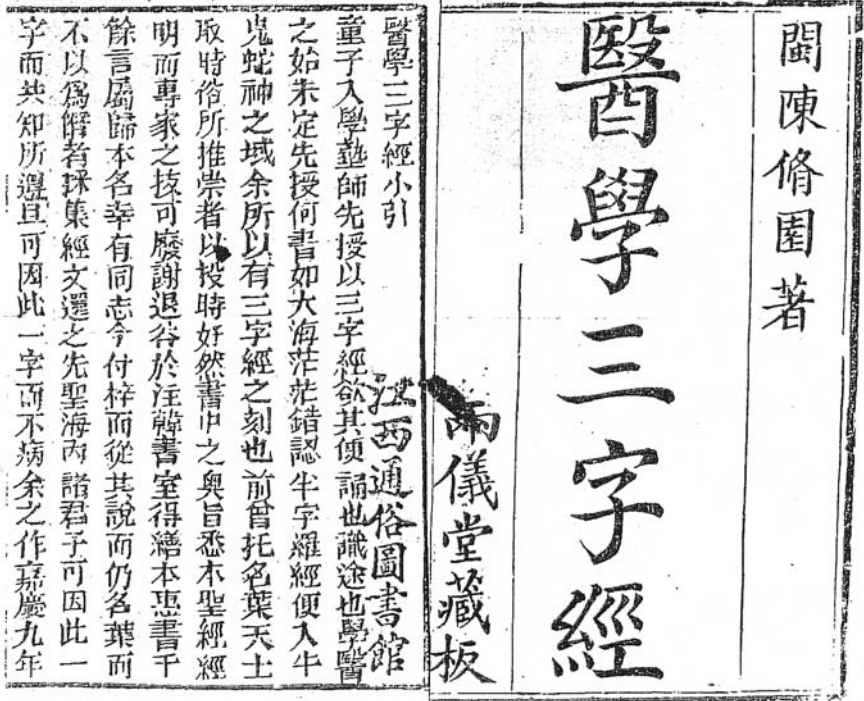


Figure 14. Cover page and first page of the “Short Foreword” (Xiaoyin) by Chen Nianzu, in his *Yixue sanzhi jing* (Xuwan: Liangyitang, n.d.; block: 20.2 × 16.1 cm); compare this edition to that in Figure 13. Photocopy from the edition in the Jiangxi Provincial Library.

to different social levels, and on methods of and contexts for reading in China. But they do suggest that the homogeneity of titles and the longevity of the core titles posited here on the basis of the evidence from Sibao do not signify a uniformity of influence and response, or even necessarily a high degree of real cultural integration. Indeed, this long-lasting homogeneity of titles may have been rather superficial in impact, allowing a body of apparently shared references to disguise a multitude of different experiences and interpretations.

NOTES

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1. Sibao is a *xiang*, or township, encompassing a cluster of villages in four counties (Changting, Ninghua, Qingliu, and Liancheng). Wuge and Mawu were the two villages that developed the largest publishing houses. For more information about the structure of these industries, see Cynthia J. Brokaw, "Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China: The Zou and Ma Family Businesses of Sibao, Fujian," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (1996): 59–71.

2. Since completing this chapter, I gained access to one other source for Sibao imprints, a list of titles that notes the amount of paper required to print one copy of each text; presumably, this list was used by publishers to calculate paper purchases. Though I have not been able to incorporate detailed evidence from this source, dating from the late nineteenth century, into this chapter, the list firmly supports the characterization below of Sibao's output: the Classics and educational texts dominate all other categories of imprints.

3. For publishing at these sites, see Cynthia J. Brokaw, "Woodblock Publishing and the Diffusion of Print Culture in Qing China," in Isobe Akira, ed., *Higashi-Ajia shuppan bunka kenkyū* (Research on publishing culture in East Asia) (Tokyo: Nigen-sha, 2004), 176–78.

4. See Robert E. Hegel, chap. 6, this volume, for more thorough consideration of these physical factors.

5. (*Fanyang*) *Zoushi zupu* (Dunben tang, 1947), j. *shou*, 4b.

6. (*Changting Sibaoli*) *Mashi zupu* (Xiaosi tang, 1945), jì 7, 1.60b–61a. *Youxue* is probably an abbreviation of *Youxue gushi qionglin*. The *Sishu zhu daquan* could refer to an edition of the *Sishu daquan* (Complete collection of the Four Books), a very popular compendium of Zhu Xi commentaries to the Four Books. The text gives the title as *Sishu wang daquan*; I am taking *wang* as an error for *zhu*, though it is also possible that the text is a version of the *Sishu daquan* by an editor surnamed Wang.

7. To be sure, there was a limit to Sibao's range. Sibao publishers produced few poetry or literary collections beyond those useful for examination study; nor did they publish much drama. They appear to have produced only a few Daoist and no Buddhist texts, perhaps because the publication of such works was monopolized by religious institutions. There is some evidence that they produced a few works of history, law, and philosophy during their peak years in the Qianlong era (1736–96), but such texts seem to have been abandoned in the nineteenth century, presumably because they did not guarantee the sales that other, more practical and entertaining titles did. A more comprehensive description and analysis of both what Sibao did and did

not publish will appear in a fuller study of the industry, "Commerce in Culture: The Book Trade of Sibao, Fujian, 1663–1947."

8. Brokaw, "Commercial Publishing," 62–63; Chen Zhiping and Zheng Zhenman, "Qingdai Minxi Sibao zushang yanjiu" (Research on the lineage merchants of Sibao, Minxi, in the Qing period), *Zhongguo jingji shi yanjiu* (Research on Chinese economic history) 2 (1988): 104.

9. All citations to Sibao editions (available in Wuge or Mawu) are provided in the body of the text.

10. Richard Smith, *Fortune-tellers and Philosophers: Divination in Traditional Chinese Society* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), 118, 136. *Bushi zhengzong* was first published in 1709.

11. The distinction between literati and "chapbook" novels is from Wilt L. Idema, *Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), x–xii, lx–lxiv.

12. Sibao did produce at least two texts in the Sibao Hakka subdialect; these were clearly designed for limited local sale and use. But such texts are a very small portion of the surviving titles; they are also the products of Sibao's declining years, a fact that suggests their publication was a response to shrinking markets.

13. Lucille Chia, "Printing for Profit: The Commercial Printers of Jianyang, Fujian (Song–Ming)" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1996), 260.

14. For a fuller discussion of this core of common titles and its place in late imperial book culture, see Brokaw, "Woodblock Publishing and the Diffusion of Print Culture," 180–83.

It is probably no accident that the set of village texts described by James Hayes in his study of written materials in early-twentieth-century Hong Kong is strikingly similar to the set of extant Sibao imprints. See his "Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World," in David Johnson, Andrew H. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 78–92. See also James Hayes, "Popular Culture of Late Ch'ing and Early Twentieth Century China: Book Lists Prepared from Collecting in Hong Kong," *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 20 (1980): 168–81; and "Popular Culture in Late Ch'ing China: Printed Books and Manuscripts from the Hong Kong Region," *Journal of the Hong Kong Library Association* 7 (1983): 57–72.

15. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (History of Chinese painting) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1989), 558.

16. Most of these new titles were nonetheless in the same category of works traditionally produced by Sibao printers. That is to say, Sibao printers in the early twentieth century produced some new military romances, but new types of books—the modern fiction of the May Fourth era or the textbooks of the new educational system—were never part of Sibao's output.

17. Hayes, "Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World," 110.

18. For a summary of the argument, see Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 3–12. For a clear demonstration of the problem, see Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John Tedeschi and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

19. Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 93–94.

20. For the concept of appropriation, see Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print*, 3–12.

21. Generally, the Sibao editions of the Classics were among their best products. These texts were likely to have a larger format than other types of texts, about 27 by 16 centimeters. (The “typical” Sibao edition is quite small, roughly 16 by 10 centimeters.) Moreover, the texts were often more finely carved and their paper whiter and finer than the yellowed, coarse paper that characterizes other, presumably cheaper, texts.

22. Allan Barr, “Four Schoolmasters: Educational Issues in Li Hai-kuan’s *Lamp at the Crossroads*,” in Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 55–57.

23. Dates enclosed in brackets [] refer to the date of the document in which they are listed; [1839] refers to the document of that date dividing the property of the Zaizi tang (Mawu), [Guangxu era] to the property-division document of the Yijing tang. Dates in parentheses identify the date of publication as printed in the book—that is, the date the blocks for the text were carved, not necessarily the date of printing. In many cases it is not possible to date texts with any precision.

24. To reduce competition, Sibao printers agreed that most titles should be divided up among the different print shops, so that no print shop could undercut the sales of another. The production of similar texts with different titles might have been a means of getting around this rule. It is also possible that this rule simply did not apply to the Four Books; some texts, like the guaranteed best-sellers *Sanzi jing* and *Baijia xing*, were so popular that they were exempted from this restriction. Brokaw, “Commercial Publishing,” 73–74.

25. In the *Xinding Sishu buzhi beizhi*, Deng’s grandson Yuyao is listed as compiler, Qi Wenyong of Bao’an as editor, and Du Dingji of Jiangning as reviser and enlarger. The second title omits the name of Deng’s grandson, listing Zhang Chengyu as editor and adding Yin Yuanjin as an assistant. Superficial efforts were made to disguise the fact that these are, in effect, the same text. Thus, the “Gaozi zhangzhi” and “Gaozi jiezhizhi” of the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* are titled “Qiliu zhangzhi” and “Qiliu jiezhizhi,” respectively, in the *Xinding Sishu buzhu beizhi*, though the contents of the sections are identical. The spacing of the sections is also altered to give the impression that these are different texts.

26. *Jilu asked, ‘In serving ghosts and spirits, how does one go about contacting them?’ The master replied, ‘Spirits and people are of one principle. If you are not yet able to realize fully the way of serving people, then how can you realize fully the way of serving ghosts? You should simply first seek the way to serve people.’* *Sishu yizhu, xia*, 2b. (The words in italic here correspond roughly to the characters of the *Analects*.)

27. James Legge renders this passage (4.1) as: “Mencius said, ‘The power of vision of Li Lou, and skill of hand of Gongshu, without the compass and square, could not form squares and circles. The acute ear of the music-master Kuang, without the pitch-tubes, could not determine correctly the five notes. The principles of Yao and Shun, without a benevolent government, could not secure the tranquil order of the kingdom.’” Li Lou, a contemporary of Huangdi, was said to have such sharp vision that he could see a hair at one hundred paces; Gongshu is better known as Lu Ban, who became the patron god of carpenters; Kuang was a musician and counselor in the state of Jin. Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics* (rpt. Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1970), vol. 1, p. 288.

28. *Sishu jizhu* (Collected commentaries on the Four Books), Sibu beiyao edition, *Lunyu*, 1a. The translation is from Daniel K. Gardner, *Zhu Xi's Reading of the Analects: Canon, Commentary, and the Classical Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 31.
29. The history of punctuation is a topic that needs further research. Zhang Xiumin, in *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (510–12), provides a useful chart of commonly used symbols but emphasizes that there is considerable variation in usage.
30. Xu Xiaowang, *Fujian sixiang wenhua shigang* (Outline history of Fujian thought and culture) (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996), 208–47.
31. See Evelyn S. Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979), 47–52, 136–38; Zhang Zhigong, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun—ji mengxue shumu he shuying* (Traditional language textbooks—with illustrated bibliography of primers) (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992), 16–30.
32. Translation from Herbert A. Giles, *San Tzu Ching: Elementary Chinese* (rpt. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1963), 2–4.
33. Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*, 47.
34. Yuan Yi, “Qingdai de shuji jiaoyi ji shujia kao” (The market in and prices of books in the Qing period), *Sichuan tushuguan xuebao* (Journal of the Sichuan Library) 1 (1992): 74.
35. See Wang Xuemei, ed., *Mengxue: Qimeng de keben* (Primers: Textbooks for children's education) (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 1996), 41; Zhang, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun*, 51–52.
36. “A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has the time and opportunity, after the performance of these things, he should employ them in study.” Translation, slightly modified, from Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, p. 140.
37. For a discussion of this text, see Zhang, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun*, 51–52.
38. Zhang, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun*, 51–52.
39. Mao Shuiqing and Liang Yang, eds., *Zhongguo chuantong mengxue dadian* (Encyclopedia of traditional Chinese primers) (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1993), 155.
40. Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 276–77.
41. This text, under one of its alternate titles, *Chengyu kao*, is also attributed to Qiu Jun (1419–94). See Zhang, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun*, 64.
42. Wang Maohe, ed., *Baihua mengxue jingxuan* (Selection of vernacular primers) (Beijing: Zhishi chubanshe, 1991), 399.
43. See Zhang, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun*, 64–66.
44. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations*, 551; see also Zhang, *Chuantong yuwen jiaoyu jiaocai lun*, 90–92.
45. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations*, 549.
46. William H. Nienhauser Jr., ed., *Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), vol. 1, p. 755. See also Hayes, “Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World,” 89.

47. A similar argument about the problems of cultural integration is made in Evelyn S. Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations of Late Imperial Culture," in Johnson, Rawski, and Nathan, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, 32–33.

48. Quite recently some historians of the Chinese book, often drawing on scholarship on the Western book, have begun to deal with these issues. For a general consideration of the issues involved in analyzing the relationship between the physical form of a book (or any written artifact) and reading, see Lydia H. Liu and Judith T. Zeitlin, "Introduction," in Zeitlin and Liu, eds., *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 58 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 1–28. See also, in the same volume, Wu Hong, "On Rubbings: Their Materiality and History," 29–72; and Judith T. Zeitlin, "Disappearing Verses: Writing on Walls and Anxieties of Loss," 71–132. And see the references cited in chap. 1, notes 31–34, 36, this volume.

49. On the ways in which commentaries shape meaning, see Daniel K. Gardner, "Confucian Commentary and Chinese Intellectual History," *Journal of Asian Studies* 57.2 (May 1998): 397–422; Anne E. McLaren, "Ming Audiences and Vernacular Hermeneutics: The Uses of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*," *T'oung Pao* 81.103 (1995): 51–80; Anne E. McLaren, "Popularising *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*: A Study of Two Early Editions," *Journal of Oriental Studies* 33.2 (1995): 165–85; David Rolston, ed., *How to Read the Chinese Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); and *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary: Reading and Writing between the Lines* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

50. Paul Saenger, "Silent Reading: Its Impact on Late Medieval Script and Society," *Viator* 13 (1982): 366–414.

51. Idema, *Chinese Vernacular Fiction*, x–xii.

52. See chap. 1, this volume, for a longer discussion of these issues.

53. For example, the *Sishu buzhu beizhi tiqiao huican* omits or prints incorrectly several characters in just one passage of commentary: on the second register of 4.1a, *ben* 本 is written as *mu* 木, and the character 性 is omitted altogether. So, too, the commentary in the *Sishu zhengwen* drops a character from its citation of a line from the *Shijing*: *fu yi fu lou* 弗曳弗婁 becomes *fu yi lou* 弗曳婁.

54. Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 104–11. On the impact of illustration on reading, see Robert Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 291–326.

55. For a discussion of the role of specialists in village "reading," see Hayes, "Specialists and Written Materials in the Village World," 92–111.

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PART THREE

Publishing
for Specialized Audiences

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Niche Marketing for Late Imperial Fiction

Robert E. Hegel

APPROACHING THE QUESTION

Recent studies by scholars in China, Japan, and North America have opened new doors in the study of print culture in late imperial China: they have demonstrated the complexities of publishing by exploring such questions as the specialization of particular booksellers or of regional publishers in specific varieties of books and the trade in books. Many of their findings address the question of marketing by demonstrating that certain types of books were produced for particular groups of book buyers at different levels of society.¹ Essays in this volume by Cynthia Brokaw, Joseph McDermott, Anne E. McLaren, and others provide more information and new perspectives relevant to this question.

My purpose here is to demonstrate configurations of niche marketing for works of fiction, a generally less well studied category of books, during the late Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) periods. By correlating available data about printed novels and short story collections with what we know of publishers and booksellers, some inferences can be drawn about the reading audiences for whom vernacular narratives were printed. Even more, however, these data suggest a “target public” (McLaren’s term; see Chap. 4), or rather several levels of intended buyers for these books. If extant examples are to be trusted as representing the full range of late Ming printing practices, then we may conclude that the fiction-buying public of the seventeenth century included relatively affluent readers, probably those who had studied for the civil service examinations. This conclusion is based on a recognition that many late Ming editions of fiction produced in the Jiangnan cities, Jinling (Nanjing; for more on the Nanjing publishing scene, see Chapter 3 by Lucille Chia) in particular, were relatively fine; their superb illustrations and clearly printed text surpassed books from other categories such as phi-

losophy, history, and literary collections. Through the Qing and especially from the Qianlong reign (1736–96) onward, the fiction-buying public broadened to include readers lower on the social scale, as evidenced by the increasing number of smaller-format editions of novels and stories bearing crude and simple block-printed illustrations. Even though accessible material is insufficient to identify with greater precision the determining factors in these changing markets—and the role of printers in their creation—available data suggest general answers to some of the more interesting questions about who read what and how the expectations of the reading audiences of late imperial China were served by its printers and booksellers.

READERS OF FICTION?

To determine potential readers, one must gain some sense of the extent and composition of the literate population of late imperial China. Available information is limited; scholars have had to address the question from theoretical perspectives.² Kai-wing Chow has suggested that there were several overlapping reading audiences during the early seventeenth century: students for the examinations, general urban readers, and women. The first was a large, perhaps the largest, of these groups, to judge from the number of titles (editions of the Classics, sample examination essays, and the like) intended to address this need; contemporary novels and plays include among their characters booksellers who catered to this reading public. Many such books may well have been relatively inexpensive.³ On the other hand, trade-route guides, gazetteers, medical books, and almanacs seem to have been produced for professional and other social groups not subsumed under this classification. Moreover, it has often been claimed that women constituted an important segment of the novel-reading public, but since Brokaw has addressed literacy and writing among women in her introductory chapter (and McLaren in her contribution), I leave that question aside here. Instead I try to determine the outlines of the buying habits of the fiction-reading public at large, an audience probably overlapping to a degree with Chow's "general urban readers."

Of course, all approaches allow only hypothetical reconstructions of reading audiences; an individual buyer might purchase books from a number of these categories and of a range of prices on different occasions. Keeping all the inherent limitations of this approach in mind, here I focus primarily on the commercial value of books as reflected in the relative degree of care and expense with which they were produced. I use the contents of the books, and their intrinsic artistic level, only to confirm conclusions reached from the objects themselves, if at all. And from this sort of relatively objective information I speculate on their intended buyers in the aggregate.

Without belaboring the point, it is intuitively true that wealthy book buy-

ers could afford to buy any book they wished; contrarily, people with limited funds for nonessential items like books would restrict their purchases to the less expensive editions (or buy only a very few books, regardless of price). Thus relatively affluent book buyers could have been the historical customers for any edition that attracted them and should be included among the theoretical buyers and readers of every book produced. Financially straitened readers, however, would generally have had to limit their purchases to the cheaper editions, if they could afford books at all. Poorer book buyers constituted a subset of all book buyers, a targeted audience who consumed books but were probably far less likely to collect them for their value as objects. As Brokaw demonstrates in Chapter 5, these less affluent and less well educated readers might be found in remoter and economically less well developed areas. Although this wealthy/poor division is a crude one, it allows for some refinement of the concept of book-buying audiences.

BUYERS OF FICTION

In an earlier study I traced the decline in the quality of fiction imprints from the late Ming through the Qing period by observing specific changes in the size and quality of paper, the density and clarity of print on the page, and the complexity and artistic refinement of their illustrations. These criteria include several identified by the late Ming writer Hu Yinglin (1551–1602) as the bases for determining book prices. Comparing editions of fictional works from the middle Ming through the late Qing demonstrates that this decline in the physical format and appearance of books was neither regular nor consistent. Even though many Qing printers used ever smaller paper to produce pages bearing ever more characters, certain publishers also frequently reprinted earlier large-format editions, as during the Qianlong period, when such reprints seem to have been common. Despite the difficulty in dating many imprints, their sheer numbers indicate a large and active market for works of vernacular fiction, particularly during the Qing; a quick glance at the listings in Ōtsuka Hidetaka's extremely useful *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku* (*Bibliography of Chinese popular fiction*, expanded edition) and Han Xiduo's and Wang Qingyuan's *Xiaoshuo shufang lu* (*A record of printers of fiction*), for example, provide a vivid sense of just how vigorous sales of vernacular fiction were.⁴

The physical appearance of the books themselves suggests the following conclusions about the marketing of fiction in late imperial China.

1. Although regional or individual bookseller specialization came about during the early stages of popular commercial publishing, these differences were moderated as craftsmen, artists, and the already carved printing blocks circulated among booksellers and even from city to city. Increas-

ing standardization of printed characters, page layout, and illustrations through the late Ming and early Qing furthered the elimination of trademark printing house and even regional printing styles. As a product of market competition, at least modest diversification in the categories of books they printed became the rule for commercial publishers.

2. The seventeenth century was probably the high point for the publication of fiction in terms of the artistic quality of the books themselves. During the last few decades of the Ming and the first decade of the Qing, a greater number of large-format (with pages measuring approximately 15 × 25 cm) and relatively fine editions of fiction were published than previously or thereafter. Labor costs for high-quality craftsmanship dictated higher prices, which in turn indicate the existence of a book-buying public who valued works of fiction enough to pay relatively dearly for them. Even during the Wanli era (1573–1620), however, both fiction and plays were printed in editions that differed quite radically from that standard. The reasons for this may well have been commercial: it would appear from the range in printing quality of their imprints that, already by 1600, printers were consciously targeting economic strata of consumers among the book-buying public.
3. Through the Qing period, book publishers came to consider fiction less worth the expense of printing in large, fine-quality editions. Qing large-format editions of fiction were probably reprints (using older printing blocks) or reissues (recarved versions of older printings). Most newly carved editions of fiction produced after around 1800 were small (e.g., 13 × 18 cm or less) in page size; most were of the quality that Chia terms “chapbook” and thus comparable to the low-cost Fujian titles discussed by Brokaw. Without question, the literate segments of the population were growing in magnitude through the Qing; the changes in the quality of fiction imprints seemingly reflect a desire to expand the buying public to include those who were less affluent than the cultural elite.⁵

It appears that changes in fiction-printing practices can be correlated with a variety of other historical factors. In political terms, the fall of the Ming brought ruin to commercial enterprises in a number of cities. The publishing industry was not aloof from this destruction, and it recovered only slowly during the first decades of the Qing. Likewise, conservative Confucians reacted negatively to the conspicuous consumption of goods, including art, by both merchants and high officials during the late Ming. Surely expensive books of a “frivolous” nature would have been similarly rejected as the conservative reaction spread during the early Qing. Thus, in cultural terms, this disdain for vernacular fiction apparently grew among certain elite groups to produce the official scorn expressed particularly vociferously late in the nineteenth century.⁶ Simultaneously, audiences of what might be termed “gen-

eral” nonscholarly readers who sought recreational, rather than aesthetic or educational, pleasure in reading grew rapidly as literacy spread. This meant that there was less impetus during the Qing to produce large and fine—and hence expensive—limited editions so common during the Ming, and many reasons to produce rough and crude editions in small formats and in large quantities, to be sold at lower prices. I expect, too, that the late Qing slippage in fiction print quality was involved in what Richard John Lufrano has termed “the broader trend toward homogenization beginning in the eighteenth century,” the growth of commercial demand for cultural artifacts at the lower end of the price—and artistic—scale. One may assume that the middle-level merchants who formed the audience for cheaply printed merchant manuals during the Qing may well have sought similarly inexpensive works of fiction for their entertainment during this period.⁷

FICTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Likewise, general economic changes may have been implicated in this general decline in fiction print quality. From the twelfth through the early nineteenth century, the “lower Yangzi macroregion” became increasingly commercially developed and prosperous. It is little wonder that the leisure arts flourished there as urban culture became distinct, appealing to the literati, wealthy landlords—more and more of whom moved to Jiangnan cities—and the growing numbers of handicraft workers drawn there by employment opportunities. Suzhou was the center of this cultural and economic development during the Ming, and it became a major port, given its location on the Grand Canal. Merchant life there was lively and diverse. Many important publishers of fine editions of books were established in Suzhou. However, economic stagnation during the last decades of the Ming caused a decline in the maintenance of waterways, the Grand Canal among them. Economic recovery late in that century saw the resurgence of the interregional trade in food and other goods that brought financial strength back to the lower Yangzi cities. During the period from the beginning of the Qing through 1785, there was an increase in the silver supply from the New World; silver became the medium of exchange even for land rent payments in the countryside. Surely the circulation of silver contributed to commercial development in the major cultural centers. Fluctuations in the price of this metal currency forced growing numbers of farmers into the market economy, spurring urban growth and perhaps increasing the reading audiences there.⁸

However, this initial prosperity was not to last. A period of economic crisis late in the eighteenth century was heralded by the concentration of land and water rights in the hands of large landlords who moved to urban centers in increasing numbers. Likewise, a series of natural disasters contributed

to the decline of the water transportation system; the involvement of foreign trade in the fluctuating value of silver currency also had major ramifications for the cities and urban culture. The economic crisis was in part the result of a dramatic decline in “Nankeen” cotton exports from Shanghai during the period from 1826 to 1835 as British power-loom textiles came to be produced in much greater volume—and at half the price of imported Chinese fabrics. Likewise, the end of the British East India Company monopoly on China trade in 1834 allowed Americans to import their own cottons, further weakening a once-flourishing Jiangnan industry. The subsequent wars with the British over the sale of opium and the Taiping rebellion of the mid-nineteenth century severely damaged the lower Yangzi economy while building Shanghai into its major port. Not surprisingly, the printing of vernacular fiction was to flourish there during the final decades of the Qing as foreign lithographic techniques facilitated the production of cheap books for its rapidly growing population.⁹ Were these economic factors of central importance in the decline of print quality for novels and collections of stories? This question lies far beyond the scope of the present study. Instead, my present concern is to exemplify the marketing of the novel during the late Ming and the Qing by examining the imprints of several publishing houses that specialized in the production of fiction.

EXAMINING BOOKS

Lacking reliable data on retail prices for most works of fiction, one can only distinguish relatively expensive editions from comparatively cheap ones. To that end I have examined such qualities as the size, precision of detail, accuracy, and style of the printed graphs, the number, location, stylistic complexity, and definition in carving of the illustrations, and the size, color, and finish of the paper. (The general clarity of the imprint is of importance as well: one might assume that the prints pulled from well-worn printing blocks were not appealing to discriminating book buyers—or likely to fetch more than modest prices.) Not too surprisingly, the quality of paper parallels the quality of the printing; most small-format woodblock editions were printed less carefully. Curiously, it appears that there is only a general correlation between the artistic level of the fiction *as literature* and its price as a printed text; certain dull historical narratives appeared with fine illustrations during the sixteenth century, and, as we will see, one of the finest novels of the Qing has been printed with the shoddiest of workmanship. To limit subjectivity in evaluating the quality of imprints, I confine my data to the physical dimensions of books and the number of characters per page. These are themselves crude instruments for evaluating the quality of an edition. Even so, they do suggest identifiable *buying*, if not reading, audiences, or niches in the book market of late imperial China.

THE STANDARDS SET BY FUJIAN PUBLISHERS BEFORE 1600

By the middle Ming, private printing establishments in the Jianyang area of Fujian dominated the book trade. These printers had set the standards in content, materials, and format for books of all types: Fujian or “Min” editions of popular encyclopedias (*leishu*), of annotated editions of classical texts, and even of vernacular fiction dominated the book markets. One physical characteristic of Min editions was the division of the printed page into several registers, with illustrations at the top and text below, as in the Yuan period *pinghua*, the earliest long vernacular fiction to be discovered to date.

But throughout the Ming, Fujian editions were often known for their shoddy workmanship. The low quality of many Min texts, a product of questionable business practices, can be seen already in Yuan period (1279–1368) publications. Figure 15 is a double page from butterfly-bound *Sanguo zhi pinghua* (*Pinghua* from the *Annals of the Three Kingdoms*), one of the well-known *quanxiang pinghua*, or fully illustrated plain[ly told] tales, dated 1321–23. Here simplified forms of characters are common and the paper is quite small (8.0 × 13.8 cm). Even so, the quality of the carving is high, with the result that both the nicely executed illustrations and the lined type (twenty lines of twenty characters each) are easy to read.¹⁰ Was this an expensive edition? When compared to contemporary editions of history, it surely cost less, if for no other reason than its modest length. Even so, the illustrations were carefully and skillfully carved; given the extra production expense these illustrations would have entailed, this book must have been comparatively high in price, hence destined for a relatively affluent book buyer.

Figure 16 is a cheap Min reissue of the *Sanguo zhi pinghua* titled *Sanfen shilüe* (Historical outline of the tripartite division). This is a puzzling text. It has been assumed, given the fact that several wrong characters from the *Sanguo zhi pinghua* are corrected in the *Sanfen shilüe*, that the latter is the original version, and the standard *Pinghua* was a later edition that improved the pictures at the expense of the text. However, the date *jiawu* here contradicts this assertion (it has been read as 1294; it was meant to indicate 1354), as does the technique by which it was reproduced. A copy of the *Pinghua* apparently was used as a model for carving new blocks of about the same size; this much can easily be discerned from a comparison of both the illustrations and the text of the two: what had originally been curving or complicated lines were simplified for *Sanfen shilüe*, as if executed by a less skilled carver. Consequently, the *Sanfen shilüe* text is harder to look at, much less to read, and the illustrations are crude and ugly by comparison. (Note that ground plants in the earlier illustration become incongruously tiny mountains here!)¹¹ The differences between these two versions are instructive for our purposes. Technologically, there is no reason that a second edition could not have been virtually identical to the first. But the publisher of *Sanfen shilüe*

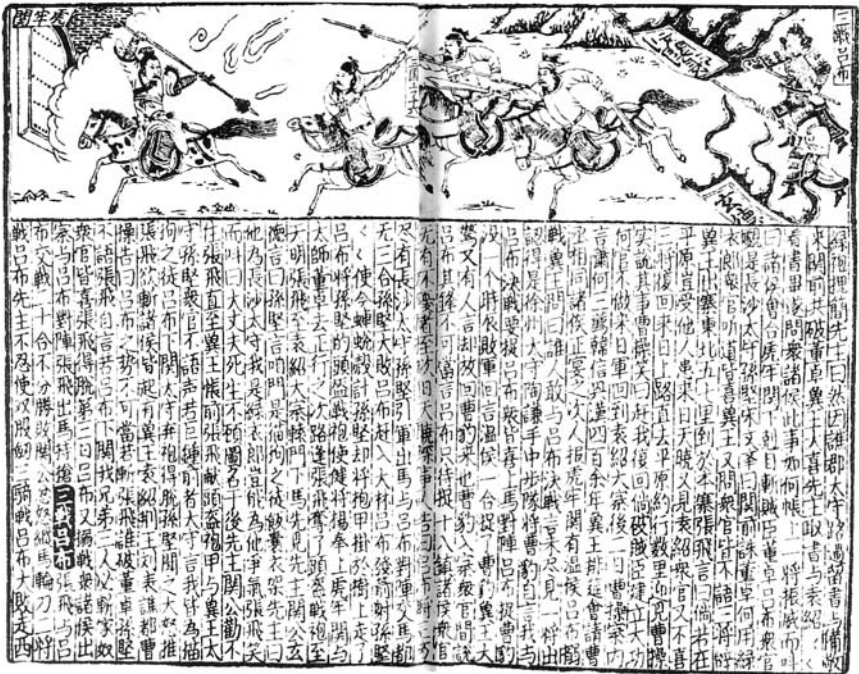


Figure 15. *Sanguo zhi pinghua*, Shanghai Hanfen lou photo reprint (ca. 1930) of the Yuan period Fujian edition, reproduced from a copy in the author’s collection.

clearly chose to cut his costs by hiring less expert craftsmen and, probably, rushing their work to such a degree that the result is only a rough imitation of the relatively fine original. Regardless of the intended buyers for the first edition, the reissue was a less expensive book: the publisher of *Sanfen shiliu* was targeting buyers interested in spending less money for such works of historical fiction. In a similar vein, some Ming period Jianyang publishers subsequently went so far as to truncate texts to cut costs; others forced greater numbers of graphs of smaller size onto the page for the same purpose.¹²

By the Wanli era, books produced by Yu Xiangdou (ca. 1560–after 1637) of Jianyang had set a standard for page format in books for general readers. The narrow horizontal illustrations of his imprints (in *shangtu xawen*, or illustration above/text below format), with characteristic stylistic elements such as thick outlines of human figures and other features, characterize the “Jianyang school” of book illustration. This standardized style may well have been intended to enhance sales. So, too, was his appropriation of titles published by other Jianyang publishers.¹³

Middle and late Ming Fujian imprints of fiction are unattractive, although



Figure 16. *Sanfen shilüe*, dated 1354. Reproduction of a copy in the Tenri Central Library; Tenri University, Japan; reprinted by permission. Photograph courtesy of James I. Crump Jr.

less so than *Sanfen shilüe*. Fu Xihua's *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji* (Selected block-printed illustrations from classical Chinese literature) gives an interesting selection of pages from these works; all are in the *shangtu/xiawen* format. They include the illustrated poetry collection *Tangshi guchui* (The pleasures of Tang poetry) published by Sanhuai tang (managed by Jiang Zisheng), the adventure novel *Shuihu zhizhuan pinglin* (Chronicles of the water margin, heavily annotated) published by Yu Xiangdou's Shuangfeng tang in 1594, and the Wanli period religious novel *Tianfei chushen zhuan* (The rise of the Empress of Heaven) published by Xiong Damu (Xiong Zhonggu,



Figure 17. *Tianfei chushen zhuan*, a Wanli period edition published by Xiong Damu. Reproduced from Fu Xihua, ed., *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji*, 68. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

fl. 1550–60; Fig. 17).¹⁴ All of these imprints used the same format; the latter is similar to other Fujian novels in print size (ten lines of sixteen graphs), although these are relatively easy to read. One might infer from their physical similarity that all were produced for the same broad stratum of book buyers who had limited financial means.

More books intended to attract this stratum of buyers can be found when one examines the imprints of specific publishing houses. The Qingbai tang in Jianyang was managed by Yang Xianchun. Active during the second half of the Wanli era, the firm produced the following novels: *Jingben tongsu yanyi an Jian Quan Han zhizhuan* (Chronicles of the entire Han, a popular narrative based on the *Comprehensive Mirror for Government*, capital edition), 12 *juan*, dated Wanli 16 (1588); *Xinke quanxiang Ershisizun dedao Luohan zhuan* (Tales of enlightenment of the twenty-four arhats, newly carved and fully illustrated), 6 *juan*, dated Wanli 32 (1604); and undated editions of *Damo chushen chuangdeng zhuan* (The rise of Bodhidharma and his transmission of the dharma) and *Dingqie Jingben quanxiang Xiyou ji* (*Journey to the West*, exquisitely carved, fully illustrated capital edition). All three books are printed with illustrations in the upper register; they vary in density of print from 15×27 graphs (*Xiyou ji*) through 14×22 graphs (the historical fiction) to 10×17 graphs (the novels on religious figures). The titles of these novels used elements common among other novels printed during the Wanli period in Fujian—*jingben*, or capital edition, for example—and were concerned with topics popular at the time, historical and religious or fantastic figures.¹⁵ Furthermore, another historical novel dated Jiaping 31 (1552) bears the Qingbai tang mark, *Da Song zhongxing tongsu yanyi* (The restoration of the great Song, a popular narrative), in 8 *juan*. Both works contain internal references to Yu Xiangdou and Xiong Damu, respectively, placing them firmly in the same category as the inexpensive popular fiction being produced by other Fujian printers. Thus perhaps we can conclude from their choice of books that this Yang family operation meant to satisfy popular tastes in reading. Examining illustrations from these books reveals great similarities in quality, that is, *low* quality, that again suggest undiscerning, relatively less affluent buyers—in marked contrast to the fine printing accorded the linguistically much more complex *chuanqi* (southern dramas) at that same time in the lower Yangzi cities.¹⁶

What else did Qingbai tang publish? Du Xinfu's not always reliable *Ming-dai banke zonglu* (A comprehensive bibliography of Ming imprints) includes the following: *Xinqie pinglin Dansui dong gao* (Works of Wu Guolun, newly carved, with ample commentary), 26 *juan*, Wanli 16 (1588); *Qilin ji* (Unicorn wool), 2 *juan*, by Chen Yujiao, Wanli period; *Chajiu zhengqi* (Outstanding teas and wines), 2 *juan*, by Deng Zhimo, Tianqi 4 (1624);¹⁷ *Shanshui zhengqi* (Outstanding scenic spots), 3 *juan*, also by Deng Zhimo, Tianqi 4 (1624); and *Du Yi siji* (Private reading notes on the *Classic of Changes*), 10 *juan*, by Dong Guangsheng, Chongzhen 4 (1631). Why these works? *Dansui dong gao* is the collected writings of Wu Guolun (1524–93; *Dansui dong* was a small cavern made by decorative rocks in the private garden he enjoyed in his retirement). In 1562 Wu was appointed vice-prefect of Jianning in Fujian. He served capably, hence his name would have been rather familiar in this area.¹⁸ Chen Yujiao (1544–1611) was a minor bureaucrat who collapsed



Figure 18. The Rongyu tang edition of *Zhongyi Shuihu zhuan*. Reproduced from *Ming Rongyutang ke Shuihu zhuan tu*, an illustration for chapter 38.

and died after an unsuccessful attempt to free his son from imprisonment when he was charged with murder; this is one of his four *chuanqi* plays, a revision of an earlier play that he wrote under a pseudonym. Chen seemingly was involved in the compilation of *Gumingjia zaju* (Comedies by famous playwrights of the past) and other collections of popular plays; this may have been why his work was reprinted by this publishing house.¹⁹ That the works of Deng Zhimo should have been produced by a Fujian printer of popular reading material is hardly surprising: Deng served as a tutor at the school founded by the Yu family of printers; consequently, his many writings were published and republished in Fujian, especially by the Yu printing houses. It would appear that in addition to popular fiction, Qingbai tang was producing books of local interest, another niche in the general book-buying market.

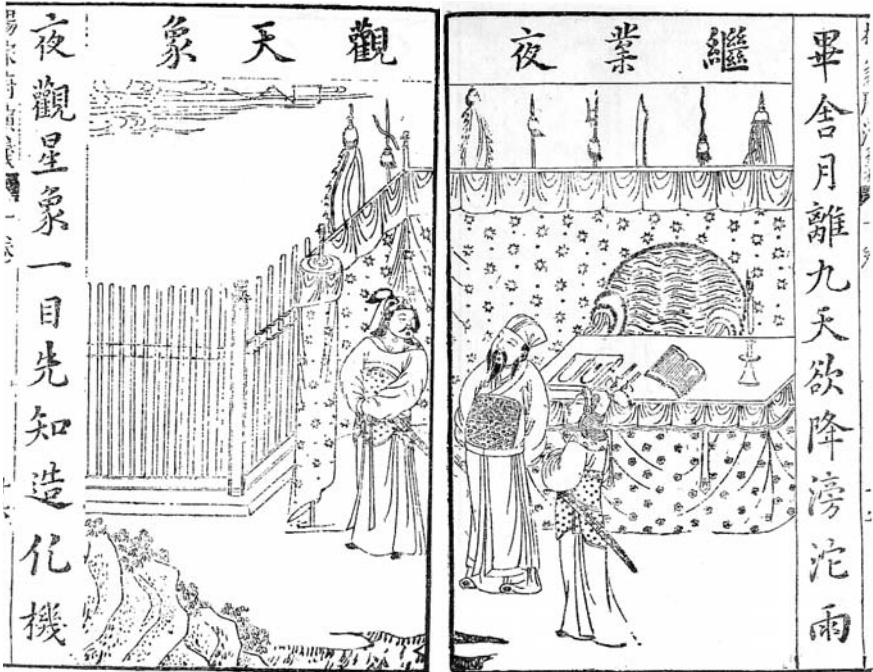


Figure 19. *Yangjiafu yanyi*, a Suzhou edition of the Wanli period. Reproduced from Fu Xihua, ed., *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji*, 176–77. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

It is well known that fiction was not published only in such inexpensive and unattractive editions during the late Ming, however. While Fujian publishing houses were producing fiction primarily for less affluent readers, Hangzhou and Suzhou printers were producing very fine editions. The Rongyu tang *Zhongyi Shuihu zhuan* (Water margin: of loyalty and generosity), famous for its fine and widely reproduced illustrations (Fig. 18), was the work of a Hangzhou printer of plays. This large-format edition (15.5 × 26.0 cm), like other fine Jiangnan imprints of novels, was visually as aesthetically pleasing as were the plays (also approx. 16 × 25.5 cm) that must have been sold at high prices. In some editions the names of the best-known printing block carvers can be found, members of the Huizhou Huang and Liu families.²⁰ A number of the most carefully printed novels were produced by individual literatus publishers; many of these illustrated editions were annotated as well. Examples include the first editions of *Sui Yangdi yanshi* (The merry adventures of Emperor Yang of the Sui, 1631, 15.5 × 24.0 cm) and *Yangjiafu yanyi* (Narrative of the [generals of the] Yang family, printed area 13.6 × 21.2 cm; Fig. 19), both pub-

lished in Suzhou. Their intended audience must have been relatively affluent and discriminating book buyers, the same group who would have purchased the albums of printed landscapes and bird-and-flower illustrations produced during the late Ming by a number of Jiangnan printers.²¹

SPECIALIZATION AND MARKETING AMONG JIANGNAN PUBLISHERS

Nanjing's Sanshan jie (Three Mountains Street) book market district was home to the Fuchun tang and the Shide tang, two firms owned by members of the Tang family of booksellers, including most notably Tang Fuchun. The first was famous for the printing of plays in moderately well illustrated editions, some of which bear traces of having been reprinted from blocks carved by other publishing houses in the family. It also produced editions of classical fiction, medicine, and verse. All, however, were similar in size of paper, density of text on the page, and illustrations (in the case of the plays); we can infer that all were intended for buyers of the same middle economic range. An example of these is the Fuchun tang edition of *Jindiao ji* (The golden marten, approx. 16.0 × 25.4 cm; Fig. 20).

Another Nanjing bookshop, the Wenlin ge managed by Tang Liyao, also offered a range of titles while specializing in drama. However, this Mr. Tang's imprints were considerably more attractive. In contrast to the Fuchun tang illustrations, Wenlin ge pictures have long, gently curving, narrow lines, finer decorative details such as the stars on the inside of the tent, and a more successful representation of mass through the texture of the rock and graceful draperies on the figures. Surely these more labor-intensive productions would have been more expensive than their Fuchun tang counterparts—and hence intended for a more upscale buying public (see Fig. 21, *Yanzhi ji* [Rouge, approx. 15.7 × 24.7 cm]). Wenlin ge also published a large collection of Song documents, a zither tutor (revised from a Fuchun tang edition of lower quality), and a 1607 album of practice images for painters titled *Tuhui zongyi* (The royal design for illustrations), edited by Yang Erzeng (fl. 1600–1620). These, too, seem designed to appeal to more affluent book buyers.²²

To judge from available copies, during the late Ming, most Jiangnan fiction editions were produced by publishers who had diversified their types of imprints. This suggests that fiction publishers sought to attract a broader range of book buyers than did the purveyors of refined libretti. For example, the earliest edition of *Journey to the West* in its complex version was produced by Shide tang in Nanjing, a printing house operated by the owner of Fuchun tang. Yet it would appear that the two bookshops were not competitors: only rarely can one discover a title that was published by both. Shide tang printed a relatively small number of plays and two philosophical classics, *Chongxu zhide zhenjing* (The true scripture of emptiness and perfect virtue, or *Liezi*) and *Xunzi*.²³ But Shide tang did produce annotated editions of several early



Figure 20. The Fuchun tang edition of *Jindiao ji*.
 Reproduced from Zhou Wu, ed., *Jinling gu banhua*,
 32, from a copy in the Beijing University Library.
 Reprinted by permission.

historical novels that may have been obtained from the Fujian publisher Yu Xiangdou. *Tangshu zhizhuan tongsu yanyi tiping* (Chronicles from the *History of the Tang*, a popular narrative, with marginal commentary, 1593), had been published first by Qingjiang tang in 1553. The text was recarved for this Nanjing edition, however. Some of these and several illustrations for *Nan Bei liang Song zhizhuan tiping* (Chronicles of the two Song courts, South and North, with marginal commentary) were signed by Wang Shaohuai of Shangyuan (Nanjing). The Daye tang edition of *Dong Xi liang Jin zhizhuan tiping* (Chronicles of the two Jin courts, East and West, with marginal commentary) also bears illustrations by Wang Shaohuai; this imprint is also dated 1593. Given

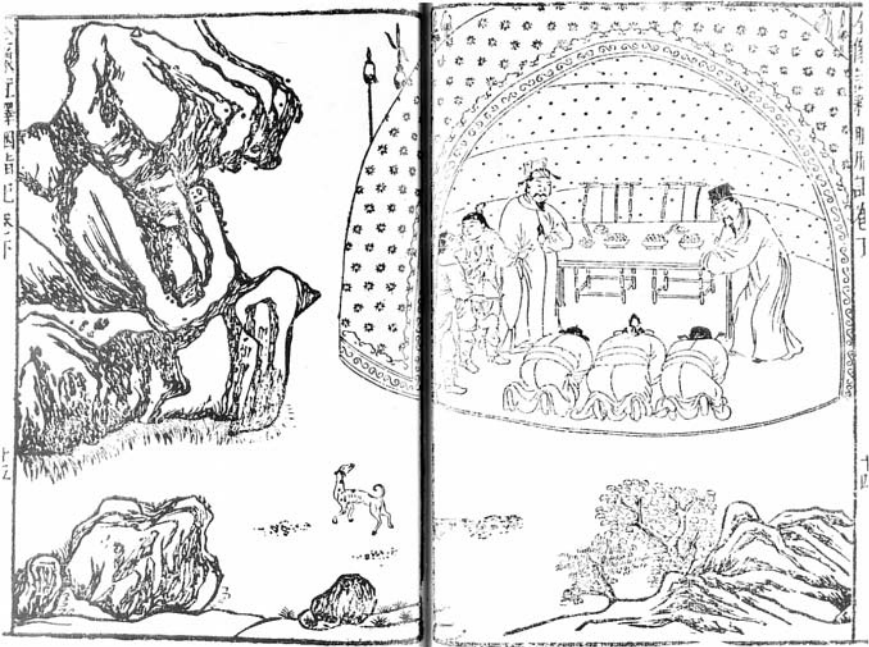


Figure 21. The Wenlin ge edition of *Yanzhi ji*. Reproduced from Zhou Wu, ed., *Jinling gu banhua*, 122–23, from a copy in the National Library of China (formerly Beijing Library). Reprinted by permission.

the similarities in appearance of these two novels, it may be that Shide tang reprinted a Daye tang imprint. Alternatively, Daye tang might well have used the Shide tang blocks for its edition.²⁴ One can infer that Tang Fuchun meant these three historical novels to be a matched set, of interest to the sort of relatively discriminating buyers who bought plays in sets produced by Fuchun tang or its more upscale competitors.²⁵

Other Jiangnan publishers of fiction were similarly diversified during the late Ming. The Nanjing bookseller Zhou Yuejiao published books on medicine and *leishu*.²⁶ He also produced collections of *gong'an*, or crime-case fiction (*Xinjuan quanxiang Bao Xiaosu gong baijia gong'an yanyi* [A hundred cases for Lord Bao Xiaosu, a narrative newly carved and fully illustrated] and *Hai Gangfeng xiansheng juguan gong'an* [The cases of Master Hai Gangfeng in office]), as well as a supernatural novel (*Xinjuan saomei dunlun Dongdu ji* [Salvation in the East, through scourging the demons and strengthening morality, newly carved]), in addition to works of historical fiction concerning the Han, the Three Kingdoms, the Jin, and the Tang dynasties—in a style very similar to that of Shide tang imprints (see Fig. 22, *Sanguo zhizhuan tongsu*



Figure 22. The Zhou Yuejiao edition of *Sanguo zhizhuan tongsu yanyi*, preface dated 1591. Reproduced from a copy in the National Palace Museum Library, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China. Reprinted by permission.

yanyi [*Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*, a popular narrative], printed area 13.9 × 22.4 cm). Either some of these novels were reprints of books initially issued by other Nanjing publishers or Zhou was attempting to profit from the Shide tang's success by imitating its format and hiring the same illustrator.²⁷ Given the fact that some of the crime-case and supernatural novels were initially produced in Fujian in relatively low-quality editions, it may be that Zhou Yuejiao was attempting to bring fiction to the attention of the generally wealthier Nanjing book buyers.

Through even this brief look at a few Jinling publishers we can glimpse how late Ming booksellers specialized. (For more detail, see Chap. 3, above.) Clearly there was collaboration as well as competition among them. Texts of novels made their way from Fujian to Nanjing; and printing blocks seemingly circulated among publishers who shared generally the same market, either for plays or for novels. We can also infer that the Tang family of publishers made conscious marketing choices on the question of specialization: Wenlin ge produced fine editions that must have been relatively expensive, hence appealing to the relatively affluent; Fuchun tang editions were seemingly



Figure 23. The Huancui tang edition of *Yilie ji*, from the collection *Huancui tang yuefu*. Reproduced from Zhou Wu, ed., *Jinling gu banhua*, 230–31, from a copy in the National Library of China. Reprinted by permission.

less expensive; and the Shide tang offered popular fiction in a similar range of quality. In other words, the Tang family seems to have catered to several different book market niches.

During the same period, the high end of the book-buying market was served quite explicitly by Huancui tang, a Nanjing publishing house. Its writer-manager, Wang Tingna (ca. 1569–1628)—who is treated more fully in Chapter 7—was directly involved in each of its imprints. His collected writings, titled *Zuoying xiansheng quanji* (Complete writings of Master Zuoying, 1609), include fine illustrations of Wang's private garden; later in the same year this *juan* was printed separately as a lengthy scroll—now rare—with the title *Huancui tang yuanjing tu* (Views of the gardens at Huancui tang). This was a noteworthy achievement in block printing. Wang's pen name also appears in the titles of all other Huancui tang imprints, collections of poetry by individual Ming writers, and several of his own plays. It may be that his personal fame attracted book buyers, or that he sought thereby to advertise

his imprints to book collectors. As was the case with the Nanjing printer Tang Fuchun, Wang Tingna's imprints were all physically similar regardless of authorship or content. The illustrations in these Huancui tang imprints were of the highest quality, of the sort to attract book connoisseurs.²⁸ What is noteworthy about them is their degree of detail. See, for example, Figure 23, an illustration from the play *Yilie ji* (Righteous heroes): notice that all available space is taken up with fine lines, most of them curved, hence involving more painstaking carving. Given the skilled labor such illustrations involved, these can only have been very expensive editions designed for a limited audience of buyers.

CHANGES IN THE MARKETS FOR FICTION DURING THE QING

The late Ming had been a high point in the artistry of woodblock printing; the Wanli and subsequent reign periods had also been a time of expansion in numbers of imprints produced and in the techniques for printing illustrations. Color printing reached a level of perfection during that time, although such pictures—with shading in many colors—appeared primarily in albums and on single sheets during the seventeenth century. After the brutal political and economic transition to the Qing, the publishing trade emerged changed from its previous situation of multilevel marketing. In the genre of fiction, book producers in the Qing seem to have targeted two very different readerships and groups of book buyers: a large number of consumers of limited means, able to purchase only inexpensive (and thus relatively low-quality) editions; and an elite of literati aficionados who, disdainful of print and the indiscriminate circulation of texts that it made possible, produced works in manuscript for distribution to a select circle of like-minded readers.

Qing commercial publishers could be characterized as discriminating against general buyers, with fewer middling-quality imprints for the *shengyuan*, or the middle-level book-buying public (see Chapter 2, by Joseph McDermott, for a discussion of *shengyuan* book culture and its impact on Ming literary production). In sheer numbers of volumes printed, of course, Qing period publishers far outstripped the production of their Ming predecessors.²⁹ But, in contrast to the late Ming practice of including pictures in books of all categories, many Qing period imprints had no illustrations. Only novels were exceptions to this rule, although, as we have seen, the artistic standards for novel illustrations fell precipitously during the Qing. Likewise, editions of fiction on poor paper with crowded text and large numbers of crudely drawn and poorly carved pictures became ever more frequent, apparently produced for book buyers of modest means. Older novels, including “classics” such as the *si da qishu* (four masterworks) of the Ming joined the ranks

of new popular romances written during the Qing for a growing audience of readers and book buyers; all appeared in cheap, low-quality editions regardless of the artistic merit of the text itself.

At the same time, however, the new, more introspective literati novels of the Qing, and literati plays as well, circulated for decades, sometimes even a century or more, in manuscript only. Thus, to forestall the uncontrollable distribution of his work of fiction through inexpensive printing, a literatus-novelist or his sympathetic friends might permit his book to circulate only in manuscript copies. This would restrict its circulation to a closed circle of aficionados who could truly appreciate its artistic profundity. Works of this category include *Rulin waishi* (Unofficial history of the literati, also known as *The Scholars*, ca. 1750), *Honglou meng* or *Shitou ji* (Dream of the Red Chamber or Story of the Stone, 1760s–1790s), *Yesou puyan* (The humble words of an old rustic), and *Qihu deng* (Lamp at the crossroads, ca. 1785). Similarly, many literati plays also circulated in manuscript among restricted circles of readers during the Qing.³⁰

Examples of poor-quality Qing editions of novels can be found in virtually any Chinese collection. In place of the elaborate settings for action, including buildings and landscapes, that are found in the best late Ming imprints, these Qing editions of many of the same works characteristically have only a few rough portraits of major characters. Generally these figures are deprived of all background and are clustered at the head of the first volume. An example is shown in Figure 24, from the 1859 Wuyun lou or Guanghua tang edition of *Dream of the Red Chamber*; notice, too, the low quality of the text itself in this imprint. These editions, like many of the books produced by the Sibao publishers discussed by Brokaw in Chapter 5, were prepared by artisans of little skill (who were also working as quickly as possible, I would expect). Individual copies must have been comparatively inexpensive, thus designed for buyers who cared little for the physical appearance of the book and certainly not for bibliophiles.³¹

Relatively fine editions of fiction continued to be produced throughout the Qing, but many were simply reprints of earlier editions, either pulled from well-carved blocks brought out of storage or from new blocks that used an earlier edition as the model. In both cases the quality was degraded from the original, either by wear on the older blocks or by the imprecision of using printed pages as the models during recarving.³²

A few exceptional fiction imprints did appear during the Qing, however. Late in the seventeenth century novels were still occasionally being produced by literati printers, such as Chu Renhuo (ca. 1630–ca. 1705), with all the care lavished on the finest books of the Wanli period. Chu's *Sui Tang yanyi* (Narrative of the Sui and the Tang, 1695) was heralded then and has been ever since as an exemplar of the printer's art; unquestionably he intended it for book buyers from the highest cultural level who had the funds to spare



Figure 24. *Xiuxiang Honglou meng*, the Wuyun lou–Guanghua tang edition, 1859. Reproduction of a copy in the East Asian Library at Washington University, St. Louis. Reprinted by permission.

on lavish editions—and who were fans of vernacular fiction. Some literati printers also produced fine editions of more formal writings, but Chu’s own collected jottings were produced on paper that was smaller in size and far inferior in quality to that used for his novel.³³

Examining the imprints of a relatively active printer of fiction during the middle Qing demonstrates the general decline in quality of printing even in relatively large format editions. The firm Shuye tang was active in Suzhou over a period of several decades, to judge from the dates of extant titles. Although there is no convenient way to know what other types of books they may have published, at least fourteen novels produced there between 1775 and the early 1820s bear the Shuye tang mark. (It seems likely that editions bearing this name dated after about 1830 were produced by a different firm or firms in other cities, including Taiyuan and Beijing.) For easy comparison, I include the fourteen Suzhou imprints in Table 6.1.³⁴

It would appear that many of the Shuye tang imprints are large-format editions; both *Hou Xiyou ji* (The later *Journey to the West*) and *San Sui pingyao zhuan* (The three Suis suppress the demons’ revolt) measure about 15.5 × 24 cm, and *Ying Yun Meng zhuan* (Ying[niang], [Wang] Yun, and Meng[yun]) measures 14.7 × 23.6 cm, with a printed area of 12.8 × 19.5 cm. *Yunhe qizong* (Remarkable events from a gathering of heroes) measures 16.0 × 25.5 cm. These

TABLE 6.1 Jinchang (Suzhou) Shuye tang fiction imprints

<i>Title</i>	<i>Graphs/ page</i>	<i>Illustrations</i>	<i>Paper size</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>Longtu Shenduan gong'an</i> , 1775 ([Bao] Longtu's inspired judgments on crime cases)	9 × 20	5		Guotu, CU
<i>Ji Dian dashi zuiputi</i> , 1777–80 (Drunken Bodhisattva: Chan Master Crazy Ji)	9 × 20			Tōyō
<i>Shuo Hu quanzhuan</i> , 1779 (Complete tales of the Hu [family of generals])	9 × 18	10		Guotu, CU
<i>Doupeng xianhua</i> , 1781 (Idle talk under the bean arbor)	10 × 25		15.0 × 19.5	Nantu, Guotu
<i>Hou Xiyou ji</i> , 1783 (The later <i>Journey to the West</i>)	11 × 24	16	15.7 × 24.5	Tōyō
<i>Jin'gu qiguan</i> , 1785 (Strange sights new and old)				CASS
<i>Yishuo Fan Tang yanyi</i> , 1803 (Rebels against the Tang, a new version)	11 × 24			CASS
<i>Ying Yun Meng zhuan</i> , 1805 (Ying [niang], [Wang] Yun, and Meng[yun])	11 × 22		14.7 × 23.6	Nantu, Tōyō
<i>Yangjiafu . . . zhizhuan</i> , 1809 (Narrative of the [generals of the] Yang family)	10 × 22			
<i>San Sui pingyao zhuan</i> , 1812 (Three Suis suppress the demons' revolt)	10 × 22		15.3 × 23.7	LC
<i>Pai'an jingqi</i> , 1812 (Striking the table in amazement)	12 × 24			CASS
<i>Yuanben Hai Gong da hongbao</i> , 1822 (The great red-robed Lord Hai, original version)	9 × 19			Guotu
<i>Dong Han, Xi Han yanyi zhuan</i> , n.d. (Biographical records of Eastern and Western Han)	10 × 22	16	15.8 × 24.7	Tōyō
<i>Yunhe qizong</i> , n.d. (Remarkable events from a gathering of heroes)	11 × 24		16.0 × 25.5	Nantu

Abbreviations: Tōyō = Tōyōbunka kenkyūjo, Tokyo University; Guotu = National Library of China; Beida = Beijing University; Nantu = Nanjing Library; CASS = Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing; CU = Columbia University; LC = Library of Congress.

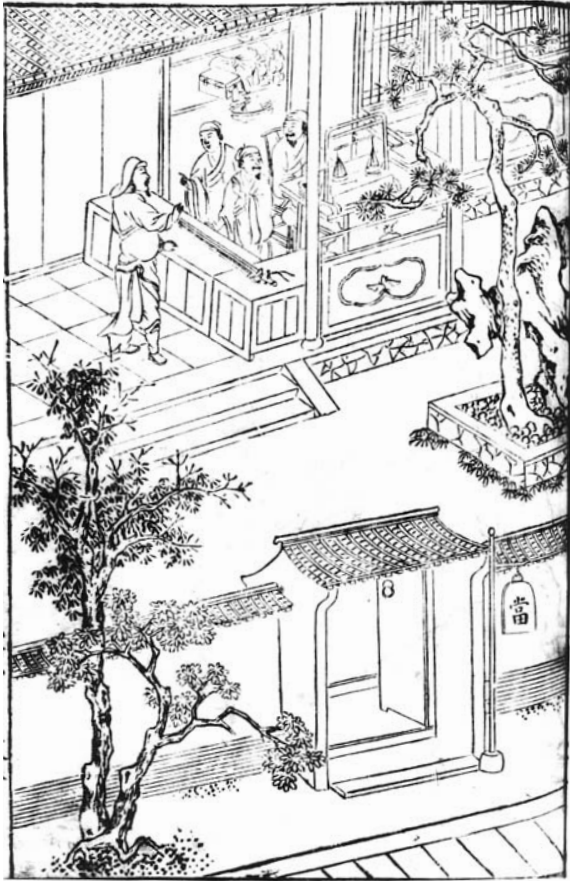


Figure 25. The Sixue caotang edition of *Sui Tang yanyi*, 1695. Reproduced from *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, by Robert E. Hegel. Copyright 1981 by Columbia University Press. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

books are all near to the physical size of *Sui Tang yanyi*, which set the standard for fine Qing imprints of fiction, at 17.0×24.5 cm. Even so, the quality of craftsmanship is considerably lower in the middle Qing imprints; the difference is clear when one compares illustrations from Chu Renhuo's 1695 first edition of *Sui Tang* (Fig. 25) and the 1812 edition of *San Sui pingyao zhuan* (Fig. 26). The disparity in quality of text carving between the two editions is equally great.



Figure 26. The Shuye tang edition of *San Sui pingyao zhuan*, 1812. Reproduced from a copy in the Library of Congress. Reprinted by permission.

Wang Zhongmin indexes a nonfiction imprint by this firm that deserves at least a brief consideration. The Shuye tang edition of *Jiezi yuan huazhuan* (The mustard seed manual of painting) was printed in spring 1782, about the same time as *Doupeng xianhua* (Idle tales from the bean arbor) and *Hou Xiyou ji*. Its pages had nine columns of twenty characters each, as did two earlier Shuye tang editions of fiction; the printed area of its pages measures 14.0×22.3 centimeters, and the pages are only slightly larger than the printed pages of the fiction texts.³⁵ This is a fine edition compared to the firm's works of fiction, however. We may safely conclude, then, that even

though these imprints are considerably more attractive than cheap editions such as the *Dream of the Red Chamber* (see Fig. 24), Shuye tang nonetheless was producing novels and story collections for a broad range of buyers, rather than exclusively serving those at the high end of the economic scale. The same firm clearly could produce fine editions when it chose to; its fiction imprints did not come up to that standard of quality, and they probably cost considerably less than the painter's manual.

CHANGES IN BOOK PRODUCTION,
CHANGES IN FICTION IMPRINTS, AND CULTURAL CHANGE

During the nineteenth century, technological change revolutionized the book publishing industry. Movable type came to be used for fiction as well as for books in other categories, but lithography (*shiyin*) enabled publishers to print using ever smaller type with ever more characters per page while maintaining legibility. Shanghai shuju printed 130 different fiction titles using this new equipment and techniques between 1875 and 1930, for example; Guangyi shuju printed 35 titles by this method between 1879 and 1925. These small-format editions, on very cheap, high-acid paper, sold widely and at reasonably low cost. The new technology had simply amplified the tendency that had begun during the Ming, to target particular segments of the book-buying public with editions of fiction designed to suit their purses. Likewise, the number of characters per page increased as the size of the paper was diminished to produce tiny print in late Qing works of fiction. The extremely small print of lithographed editions produced around the turn of the twentieth century—some requiring use of a magnifying glass to be legible—thus came as the logical conclusion of a process discernible throughout the Qing.³⁶ One may safely conclude, I am persuaded, that the decrease in size of the medium and the increasing number of written characters per page through the Qing reflects a continuing decline in the costs of popular reading materials. These changes likewise heralded a similar social process: vernacular fiction was attracting a growing audience of socially more diverse readers. And as it became more popular, the cultural status of fiction—as defined by the social elite—declined: fiction came to be widely scorned by the more conservative members of China's dominant stratum as it became accessible to ever more of the urban populace in general.

Let us consider some broader implications of these conclusions. In my earlier work, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, I suggested that although publishers specialized in certain types of books by content, there was a range of titles that each publisher might publish over a relatively short time, a decade or two. However, these publishers also adopted a variety of formats and styles. That is, while the Tang family's Fuchun tang might publish an extensive list of drama titles that are very similar if not identical in appearance, they might

also print books in quite different formats for a variety of commercial reasons. But not, I think, to reach separate audiences—or for distinguishable market niches, in other words. I base this conclusion on similarities in *quality* of imprints from late Ming publishers, the relatively fine quality of illustrations and their number, and the accuracy of carving of the text itself. Developments in book marketing and in technology were to create clearer markets for fiction as the publishing industry burgeoned during the late nineteenth century. But I leave the study of lithographed editions of fiction to someone else; my concerns here have been to observe significant trends in the production of woodblock-printed fiction.

In summary, then, was there niche marketing of vernacular fiction? When one examines both text and illustrations of any collection of fiction imprints, complications to any neat generalizations about niche *writing* may immediately appear—but not so about niche *marketing*. To judge from the books as physical objects, there can be little question: the quality of the imprints clearly varies through time and among publishing houses; these quality differences can be interpreted to reflect prices relatively, in the absence of extensive data on actual costs. And to the extent that the relative prices of books limit the range of potential buyers, book production costs can broadly serve as the basis for identifying intended purchasers. In my earlier study and here as well I have demonstrated that the printing quality of novels and story collections fell during the Qing period; one can safely infer as well that the prices decreased apace. Perhaps most significantly, these changes came about as increasing numbers of China's population became literate, thereby making ever more potential buyers for more readily affordable books. Significant changes occurred in the realm of popular print culture from the middle Ming through the end of the Qing, especially in terms of the numbers and social levels of its participants. These changes are probably nowhere more clearly reflected than in the printing of vernacular fiction.

NOTES

1. Among the more important works, see Lai Xinxia, *Zhongguo gudai tushu shiye shi* (A history of the publishing industry in old China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1990); Zhou Wu, *Huipai banhua shi lunji* (Collected essays on the history of the Huizhou school of woodblock carving) (Hefei: Anhui renmin chubanshe, 1983); Han Xiduo and Wang Qingyuan, *Xiaoshuo shufang lu* (A record of printers of fiction) (Shenyang: Chunfeng wenyi chubanshe, 1987); Ōki Yasushi, "Minmatsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū" (A study of publishing culture in late Ming Jiangnan), *Hiroshima daigaku bungakubu kiyō* (Bulletin of the literature department of Hiroshima University), special issue, 50 (1991): 1–175; Ōtsuka Hidetaka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsuzoku shōsetsu shomoku* (*Bibliography of Chinese popular fiction*, expanded edition) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1987). For English-language studies, in addition to their essays in this volume, see Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of*

Jiayang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries), Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 56 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002) and Cynthia J. Brokaw, “Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China: The Zou and Ma Family Businesses,” *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (1996): 49–92. See also Ellen Widmer, “The Huanduzhai of Hangzhou and Suzhou: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Publishing,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56.1 (1996): 77–122.

2. I refer to important studies by Evelyn S. Rawski (*Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979]) and David Johnson (“Communication, Class, and Consciousness in Late Imperial China,” in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985], 34–72), and the further investigations of women readers in Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang, *Writing Women in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); see also Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997). Kai-wing Chow's identification of reading audiences is as speculative as David Johnson's; see Chow's “Writing for Success: Printing, Examinations, and Intellectual Change in Late Ming China,” *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (June 1996): 120–57. I also discuss reading audiences in “Distinguishing Levels of Audiences for Ming-Ch'ing Vernacular Literature,” in Johnson, Nathan, and Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, 112–42.

3. Kai-wing Chow, “Writing for Success,” 124–26; for an excellent window into late Qing publishing, see Brokaw, Chapter 5, this volume.

4. A number of conclusions about the printing of fiction were presented in my *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). Portions of this chapter summarize sections from Chapter 3; see especially *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 90–95, Table 3.6; and Ōtsuka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku*. For Han and Wang, see note 1 above.

5. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, chap. 3, esp. 155. For Lucille Chia's use of this term, see Chapter 3, this volume.

6. These generalizations do little justice to the complexities of Ming and Qing thought or cultural change; for detailed studies, see Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); John B. Henderson, *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Stephen J. Roddy, *Literati Identity and Its Fictional Representations in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), esp. pt. 1, chaps. 1–3; Richard John Lufano, *Honorable Merchants: Commerce and Self-Cultivation in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997); and, for one literatus's scorn for the commodification of culture and the commercialization of the arts trade, Kenneth J. Hammond, “The Decadent Chalice: A Critique of Late Ming Political Culture,” *Ming Studies* 39 (spring 1998): esp. 41–43. It should be noted that Hammond's subject, Wang Shizhen (1526–90), was as critical of the uses of art objects in central administration manipulations of favor as he was of merchants' assumption of literati culture.

7. Lufano, *Honorable Merchants*, 183, 31–34. Cynthia Brokaw summarizes information on the growth of the reading public and their geographic distribution in Chapter 1 of this volume.

8. William T. Rowe, "Introduction: City and Region in the Lower Yangzi," in Linda C. Johnson, ed., *Cities of Jiangnan in Late Imperial China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 3–15; Michael Marmé, "Heaven on Earth: The Rise of Suzhou, 1127–1550," in Johnson, ed., *Cities of Jiangnan*, 43–44; Paolo Santangelo, "Urban Society in Late Imperial Suzhou," in Johnson, ed., *Cities of Jiangnan*, 82–84; Pierre-Etienne Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine in Eighteenth-Century China*, trans. Elborg Forster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 1–3, 14, 43; James C. Shih, *Chinese Rural Society in Transition: A Case Study of the Lake Tai Area, 1368–1800* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1992), 165, 168, 189; Kathryn Bernhardt, *Rent, Taxes, and Peasant Resistance: The Lower Yangzi Region, 1840–1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 7. Commercialization produced greater instability in the agricultural sector and greater vulnerability of farmers to fluctuations in the relative value of this metal currency. Silver had been the primary medium of exchange in the cities from the middle Ming; its exchange rate fluctuated in relation to the copper standard from 1,000 coins per *liang* early in the Ming, through 600 later, to 2,400 during the dynasty's final years.

9. Santangelo, "Urban Society," 84; Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 312; Susan Naquin and Evelyn S. Rawski, *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 104–5, 222–23, discuss the silver crisis of the Kangxi era. See also Linda Cooke Johnson, "Shanghai: An Emerging Jiangnan Port, 1683–1840," in Johnson, ed., *Cities of Jiangnan*, 178–81.

10. The *Sanguo zhi pinghua* was reprinted by Shionoya On in 1926; two years later a Chinese scholarly delegation came to Japan to photograph rare books, including the rest of the *pinghua* collection. These books were in the process of being reprinted in China, during 1929 and 1930, when hostilities with Japan interfered; a few copies of *Sanguo* were printed, and the rest were lost during Japanese bombardment. Subsequently, four of the *pinghua* were produced in a lithograph edition in Tokyo at the original size and bound butterfly style. Copies of this edition are hard to find; James I. Crump Jr. obtained one in Tokyo in the 1950s. Both this illustration and the next, from *Sanfen shilüe*, were kindly supplied by Professor Crump; he took photographs of the latter at the Tenri Library in 1955. See also Zhong Zhaohua, ed., *Yuankan quanxiang pinghua wuzhong jiaozhu* (Yuan editions of the fully illustrated *pinghua*, five titles, annotated versions) (Chengdu: Ba Shu shudian, 1989), "Qianyan," 1, for more information about *pinghua* reprinting. Recent *pinghua* reprints generally divide the pages for rebinding just opposite to the original intention. That is, double pages were carved from a single block with a single illustration extending across both leaves; only when these sheets were bound with the printed faces inward could one appreciate the illustration fully.

11. I am indebted to Sören Edgren for clarifying how the first served as model for the second. The *Sanfen shilüe* is the only one of the earlier *pinghua* series to have been reproduced at that time, it would appear. It has been reprinted as volume 1 in *Guben xiaoshuo congkan* (Old editions of vernacular fiction, collected and reproduced), edited by Liu Shide, Chen Qinghao, and Shi Changyu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987–91), Collection 7. I realize that my judgments concerning the artistic merit of book illustrations are to a degree subjective. However, I base them in large part on the technical difficulty of execution, thanks to lessons in appreciation provided by the late scholar and woodblock artist Zhou Wu (d. 1990).

12. For brief comments on Fujian publishers, see Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 135–37. For more information on the decline of publishing standards there, see Xiao Dongfa, “Jianyang Yushi keshu kaolüe” (A study of imprints by the Yu family of Jianyang), *Wenxian* (Documents) 21 (1984): 241–43; and especially, Chia, *Printing for Profit*, 80–93.

13. See Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 139–40, for examples.

14. Fu Xihua, ed., *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji* (Selected woodcut illustrations from classical Chinese literature) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 58–63, 64–67, 68; the latter is reproduced here as Fig. 19.

15. See Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 21–51, esp. 48–51, for a synopsis of the data suggesting that various genres of vernacular fiction came into or fell out of fashion, judging from their publishing records. For Ōtsuka’s notes on the novels on religious figures, see Ōtsuka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku*, 131–39; novels numbered 22003–22017 all appeared originally in Fujian in *shangtu/xiawen* format. Ōtsuka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku*, 133, identifies *Damo chushen chuandeng zhuan* as a Qingbai tang imprint; for the other titles, see Du Xinfu, *Mingdai banke zonglu* (A comprehensive list of Ming imprints) (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling keyin-she, 1983), 4.30b.

16. *Ershisizun dedao Luohan zhuan* was reprinted in the *Ming Qing shanben xiaoshuo congkan* (Rare editions of Ming and Qing fiction, collected and reproduced) (Taipei: Tianyi chubanshe, 1985) series; a page of *Quan Han zhizhuan* is reprinted in *Chūgoku Min Shin no ehon* (Chinese illustrated books of the Ming and Qing) (Osaka: Ōsaka seiritsu bijutsukan, 1987), 23, Fig. 43; a page of this *Xiyou ji* edition appears on 35, Fig. 65. Brokaw observes a number of shared features among books designed for marginal readers in Chapter 5, above.

17. Biographical information in Zhuang Yifu, comp., *Gudian xiqu cunmu huikao* (Collected notes on extant classical plays) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982), 1060–61. A number of his *chuanqi* plays exist, see Zhuang, 1061–62.

18. *DMB*, vol. 2, p. 1490, lists this title, his collected works, in 54 *juan*. Wang Zhongmin, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao* (Notes on Chinese rare books) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1983), 630, lists a Wanli edition that was relatively large in size (13.9 × 19.7 cm in printed area, with pages of 10 × 20 graphs); the Qingbai tang edition may well have been incomplete. Interestingly, Wu had been involved in abridging at least one other book himself (see Wang, p. 622), and had edited a medical text later published by a Yang family firm, perhaps Qingbai tang (Wang, p. 264, cf. the *pai* quoted in Du, *Mingdai banke zonglu*, 5.42b–43a).

19. Chen Yujiao’s plays are collected in *GBXQ*, Series 2; see *DMB*, vol. 1, p. 189. For notes on his plays, see *GXCH*, pp. 439–42, 858–60. For a summary of this play, see *GXCH*, p. 859.

20. Du, *Mingdai banke zonglu*, 4.2a; *GXCH*, pp. 830–39; Fu, ed., *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji*, vol. 1, pp. 372–411. All of the Rongyu tang editions have commentary attributed to the unorthodox Li Zhi (1527–1602); see the explanatory headnote in the recent reprint *Ming Rongyu Tang ke Shuihu zhuan tu* (Illustration from the Ming period Rongyu Tang edition of *Water Margin*) (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1965). An illustration of a Rongyu tang edition of a play can be found in *Chūgoku Min Shin no ehon*, 11, Fig. 21; for notes on this play, see 111.

21. Zhou, himself a woodblock artist, has written most extensively about the She-

xian block carvers; see his *Huipai banhua shi lunji*, esp. 1–9. See also Wang Bomin, *Zhongguo banhua shi* (A history of woodcuts in China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu, 1961), 74–85; Wang, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao*, 351, 400–402, etc., and Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, chap. 4, for a detailed discussion of novel illustrations and their relationships to printed albums and the other commercial arts. Although trimmed paper size might differ from copy to copy of the same edition, the printed area did not vary. Usually printers left upper and lower margins of 3 to 4 cm, and the space at the ends of the printing block left for string binding might be another 2 cm.

22. For a discussion of Wenlin ge imprints, see Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 144–45. Wenlin ge play illustrations appear in Fu, ed., *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji*, vol. 1, pp. 156–71; and Zhou Wu, *Jinling gu banhua* (Ancient woodblock prints of Jinling) (Nanjing: Jiangsu meishu, 1993), 101–27. They are clearly superior in quality to those of Fuchun tang imprints; cf. Zhou, *Jinling gu banhua*, 12–66. Yang Erzeng was also the author of at least one novel, on the religious figure Han Xiangzi.

23. For Shide tang imprints, see Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 146–48. The *Chongxu zhide zhenjing*, also more simply known as the *Chongxu zhenjing* (The true scripture of emptiness), is a name for the *Liezi* that came into use during the Song period. Wang Zhongmin, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao*, 220, lists an edition of *Xunzi* printed by the Shide tang that he has seen only in a very precise Japanese reprint dated Enkyō 2 (1745); but in its physical characteristics, it corresponds with other Shide tang imprints.

24. The Shide tang edition of this novel was reprinted in *Guben xiaoshuo congkan* Series 28. Lucille Chia presents a much fuller description of the Tang family's publishing houses in Chapter 3, this volume.

25. All of these novels were printed with pages of 12 × 24 characters, making them relatively attractive and easy to read. The philosophical classics printed by the Shide tang house were allotted smaller paper, but they are printed with fewer characters per page, making them similarly high-quality editions. Consequently, they, too, were reprinted later. See Wang, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao*, 220 (a Japanese reprint), 238.

26. On the printer Zhou Yuejiao, see Du, *Mingdai banke zonglu*, 3.18a–19a; Nagasawa Kikuya, “Genzon Mindai shōsetsu sho kankōsha hyō shōkō” (A draft list of printers for existing editions of Ming fiction), *Shoshigaku* (Critical bibliography) 3 (1934), reprinted in *Nagasawa Kikuya chosaku shū* (Collected works of Nagasawa Kikuya) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1985), vol. 5, p. 226; Wang, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao*, 363–64, a reference to Zhou's largest project, *Hanyuan xinshu* in 156 juan published in 1591; and Chia, Chapter 3, this volume.

27. Ōtsuka mentions three historical novels in addition to the edition of *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* listed by Nagasawa; see Ōtsuka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku*, 192, 197, 204. The style of illustrations in this edition is very similar to those of Shide tang imprints; see Zhou, ed., *Jinling gu banhua*, 268–73. In this edition of *Tangshu zhizhuan tongshu yanyi* the name Shide tang appears in several places, and the name of the artist Wang Shaohuai is given on one of its illustrations; see *Zhongguo tongshu xiaoshuo zongmu tiyao* (Annotated bibliography of Chinese popular fiction), ed. Ouyang Jian et al. (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian, 1990), 58. It is unlikely that this is coincidental. For a selection of Shide tang illustrations, see Zhou, *Jinling gu banhua*, 67–100; *Xiyou ji* illustrations are on pp. 96–99.

28. For information about Huancui tang imprints, see *GXCH*, 832 ff.; Du, *Ming-dai banke zonglu*, 7.11 ab. Illustrations from two of Wang Tingna's plays are reproduced in Fu, ed., *Zhongguo gudian wenxue banhua xuanji*, vol. 1, pp. 300–307. Huancui tang imprints are also featured in Zhou, ed., *Huipai banhua shi lunji*, 68–76, Figs. 191–203; Zhou Wu discusses his Nanjing publishing house and its imprints on pp. 16–17. The most beautiful reproductions of these imprints is of *Zuoyin xiansheng jinding jiejing Yi pu* (Manual of *Weiqi* strategies carefully edited by the gentleman Zuoyin, 1609, ca. 25 × 28 cm) in Philip K. Hu, comp. and ed., *Visible Traces: Rare Books and Special Collections from the National Library of China* (New York: Queens Borough Public Library; Beijing: National Library of China, 2000), 44–51. Wang was a friend of the playwright Tang Xianzu (1550–1616); see the brief biographical sketch in *GXCH*, vol. 1, p. 453; Zhuang provides information about Wang's plays on pp. 454–56. For a more detailed study, see Nancy Berliner, “Wang Tingna and Illustrated Book Publishing in Huizhou,” *Orientalia* 25.1 (1994): 67–75. In *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 145–46, I erroneously identified the location of Huancui tang as Shexian, Anhui. Zhou Wu reproduces portions of the lengthy printed handscroll of Wang's villa in his *jinling gu banhua*, 248–55; see also 220–66 for other Huancui tang printed illustrations.

29. On the differences between Ming and Qing printing practices, see Tsien Tsuen-hsuei, *Paper and Printing*, vol. 5, pt. 1, of *Science and Civilisation*, ed. Joseph Needham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 269. On the numbers of books produced, see Tsien, p. 190, note f: “It is estimated that 253,435 titles are registered in various dynastic and other bibliographies from the Han to the 1930s; 126,649 were produced under the [Qing].”

30. On manuscript editions, see Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 153–54; Zhuang Yifu lists many plays in the manuscript editions collected by the *Shengpingshu*, the Qing court Theatrical Office.

31. Compare this illustration with the portrait of Shi Xiangyun by Gai Qi in the very fine 1879 *Honglou meng tuyong* (Illustration, with verse, for *Dream of the Red Chamber*, 1879 [rpt. Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi, 1996]), reproduced in Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 242. Guanghua tang imprints include *Haoqiu zhuan* (The fortunate union, 1860); *Jingfu xinshu* (New tales to admonish the wealthy, a fictionalized version of a murderous Guangdong feud, 1729), and, presumably, *Jin'gu qiguan* (Strange sights new and old, a collection of stories; the blocks for this work were “released” by the Guanghua tang for an 1868 printing by Qingyun lou); see Ōtsuka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku*, 81, 169, 18. For a synopsis of *Jingfu xinshu*, see *Zhongguo tongshu xiaoshuo zongmu tiyao*, 614–15; it is a small edition having six illustrations and a text density of 11 × 21 characters. The *Jin'gu* stories were also printed as a small-format edition on pages having 11 × 25 characters with 20 illustrations. The location of this printing house has not been determined; the *Honglou meng* title page indicates that Wuyun lou stored the printing blocks (*cangban*), but distribution (*fadui*) was handled by the Guanghua tang. Clearly the Guanghua tang paralleled the publishers of Sibao, Fujian, in producing books intended for customers of modest means and low aesthetic expectations. For prices of Sibao publications, see Brokaw, Chapter 5, this volume.

32. For an explanation, with photographs, of the printing process, see Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 97–110.

33. For biographical information concerning Chu Renhuo, see Robert E. Hegel,

The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 46, 206–8, 268 n.28; an illustration from Chu's first edition of *Sui Tang yanyi* appears on p. 218 and in Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 231. He also published a fine imprint of *Fengshen yanyi* (The canonization of the gods, 1695) that became the standard edition. For an example of its illustrations, see *Chūgoku Min Shin no ehon*, 38.

34. Except for the copies that I have personally examined, I rely on Han and Wang, *Xiaoshuo shufang lu*, 35–36, and the relevant title entries in Ōtsuka, *Zōho Chūgoku tsūzoku shōsetsu shomoku*.

35. Wang, *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao*, 296, gives the *bankuang*, or printed area measurements, for this book, according to standard bibliographer's practice. I have generally measured paper size for printed pages to get a better sense of how big the books were overall. To judge from other books of the period, to estimate the size of the printed page from the *bankuang*, or printed area dimensions, one should add about 2 cm to the width and 4 cm to the height to account for the margins on the manual of painter's images. Reproductions of illustrations from two more Shuyue tang editions can be found in *Guben xiaoshuo banhua tulu*, Figs. 1080–81 (*Hou Xiyou ji*) and Figs. 1113–14 (*Shuo Hu quanzhuan*).

36. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 106 ff., esp. 154–57. For the development of lithography in China and some examples, see Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, 192. Don J. Cohn, ed., *Vignettes from the Chinese: Lithographs from Shanghai in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Hong Kong: Research Centre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1987), presents an excellent survey of late Qing lithographic prints.

SEVEN

Printing as Performance

Literati Playwright-Publishers of the Late Ming

Katherine Carlitz

In the 1630s or 1640s, someone known to us only as the Master of the Silkworm Studio (Jianshi zhuren) published a finely illustrated edition of the play *Xiang dang ran* (How it must have happened).¹ The cover page advertised it as a work by the sixteenth-century eccentric Lu Nan, with commentary by the early-seventeenth-century poet Tan Yuanchun (d. 1637). The critics were not convinced. The connoisseur Qi Biaoja (1602–45) dismissed the attribution to Lu Nan, noting that the arias sounded like recent productions; and with regard to Tan Yuanchun, he observed that false claims were becoming all too typical of commentary editions.² The prefaces themselves undermine the claims of the title: the preface attributed to Tan admits that Lu Nan may not in fact be the author, and the preface attributed to Lu is given a calendrically impossible date.³ As for the “Master of the Silkworm Studio,” his identity remains completely obscure to us. No contemporaries list any other editions from a Ming dynasty (1368–1644) “Silkworm Studio,” and in fact “Silkworm Studio” is still best known as the studio name of the Song dynasty (960–1279) poet Wang Qiao.⁴

Why did the Master of the Silkworm Studio, whoever he was, expend so much effort on his “Lu Nan” and his “Tan Yuanchun”? We can intuit the answer by looking at another late Ming drama edition, a masterpiece of Ming publishing. A decade or so before the appearance of *Xiang dang ran*, the celebrated man of letters Ling Mengchu (1580–1644) brought out a “red-and-black” (*zhu mo*) critical edition of the late Yuan (1279–1368) play *Pipa ji* (The lute), including textual variants and a careful evaluation of the place of *Pipa ji* in late Yuan drama. With its superstructure of prefaces, commentary, fine illustrations, and *dianban* (rhythmic) notation, this edition of *Pipa ji* was an authoritative text for readers and an exquisite object for connoisseurs.⁵ Ling Mengchu, whose father had passed the highest or *jinsi* level of the civil ser-

vice examinations and whose family regularly compiled scholarly books and had them printed at private expense, was a model for the sort of elite drama connoisseur whose aura the Master of the Silkworm Studio must have wanted to share.⁶

The fact that *Xiang dang ran* may thus be something of a forgery is actually of great value to us, since the conscious choices made by the Master of the Silkworm Studio give us a window on the assumptions and expectations involved in late Ming drama publishing. Drama was deemed worthy of literati scholarship; therefore, the Master of the Silkworm Studio includes prefaces, commentary, and his own “Compiler’s Remarks” (*chengshu zaji*) in which he trots out conventional observations on the history of drama and song. Most late Ming drama editions were illustrated, and the Master of the Silkworm Studio was willing to pay a substantial amount of money to follow suit. (The illustrations to *Xiang dang ran* were clearly carved by master craftsmen, who commanded high prices by the early seventeenth century.) The Master of the Silkworm Studio gives us no clue as to his actual identity—but then neither does Ling Mengchu. Both men sign their works with the sort of pseudonym common in the world of elite literature (Ling’s is Kongguan zhuren, or Master of the Temple to Emptiness).

The Master of the Silkworm Studio may also have had purely pecuniary motives. Commercial publishers as well as private individuals brought out luxury editions of drama, and the Silkworm Studio may have been attempting a commercial venture with *Xiang dang ran*. By choosing “Lu Nan” as the putative author of this play about a scholar in search of a wife, the Master of the Silkworm Studio could hope to capitalize on the late Ming fascination with the eccentric. Lu Nan, who in real life was imprisoned for murder and then drank himself to death after fellow poets secured his release, so fascinated later intellectuals that he appeared as a character in vernacular fiction shortly before *Xiang dang ran* was published.⁷ The Master of the Silkworm Studio may have been looking for a profit by riding the coattails of the published story.

But lest we assume too great a contrast between the literatus Ling Mengchu and the unknown Master of the Silkworm Studio, we must note that Ling himself was hardly the sort of sober evidential scholar who would dominate the intellectual world a century or two later. Ling gave his own edition of *Pipa ji* a fantastic pedigree: he begins by quoting a purported 1498 preface describing a dream-encounter between the editor and the ghost of the author, Gao Ming (ca. 1307–ca. 1371), in which Gao Ming pleads for the editor’s help in contesting a lawsuit in hell.⁸ In actuality, there is no attested 1498 edition of *Pipa ji*, and the dream that Ling Mengchu describes is surely as fictional as the “Lu Nan” of *Xiang dang ran*.

Thus late Ming drama publishing involved commercial and private interests that we are only beginning to understand. There are practical rea-

sons for studying drama publishing as a discrete category, separate from the rest of the late Ming publishing boom: the structure and prosody of drama gave rise to specialized printing conventions, and drama had its own body of lore, both technical and anecdotal. Only the detailed study of drama editions themselves can teach us to distinguish convention from innovation. But these technical issues cannot be studied in isolation. We must turn to the social dimensions of Ming drama publishing to learn why resources were concentrated on this genre, to produce some of the most exquisite of all Ming printed editions. It is clear that the design of drama editions was in itself an expressive act. Private individuals published drama as a way to advertise their own connoisseurship, cleverness, or daring, and commercial publishers fed off the glamour of elite dramatists, who formed a loose subculture that fascinated the public. Drama on the stage was a performance for an audience of the moment, but drama on the page was a performance that could be calibrated to reach a number of different audiences in different ways.

SETTING THE SCENE

The Silkworm Studio prefaces to *Xiang dang ran* claim that a merchant from the Yangzi delta carried an earlier, crude edition into Huguang province, where Tan Yuanchun read it and produced his commentary. The story may be false, but it points to the revolution in commerce and communication that Timothy Brook and Martin Heijdra have both described as transforming the Ming dynasty socioeconomic landscape.⁹ The fact that goods and travelers could move with increasing ease allowed empirewide fashions to emerge: the Jiangxi elite, writes John Dardess, had once climbed local mountains on their own, but by the middle Ming they were carried up in Suzhou-style sedan chairs.¹⁰

This ramifying web of commerce and communication affected every aspect of literati involvement with drama. The spread of the money economy, however uneven in the empire at large, increased the demand for printed books, and we can reasonably assume that this encouraged the writing and printing of more plays. Regional dramatic styles became part of empirewide fashion: performers from the south were in demand as far north as Beijing. Craftsmen were able to follow wealthy customers or to gather in urban centers, creating a continuum of publishing possibilities that are discussed below. And the cities of the commercializing southeast, Nanjing and Suzhou in particular, generated enough wealth to support communities of literati who were devoted to drama and song. These men created seductive descriptions of their life together: *Jinling suoshi* (A casual chronicle of Nanjing life), a loving record of literati life in sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century Nanjing, chronicles their poetry gatherings, their devotion to the late Ming cult of *qing* (emotion), the plays and songs with which they entertained each

other, and the dreams in which Li Bai (705?–62) appeared to them.¹¹ At the same time, the native-place associations where merchants congregated (*huiguan*) were the prime venues for semipublic drama performances, and traveling merchants seem to have been prime customers for inexpensive editions of plays that they could take on their travels. Thus literati and merchant social life both fed the growing demand for new plays.

But literati playwrights and publishers had a special place in the drama world, and drama played a special role in the construction of Ming-dynasty literati identity. While motifs and melodies were constantly drawn from the Chinese masses, all evidence indicates that it was the literati—namely, those who had at least started on the civil service examination path that stratified Ming society—who supplied the most commercially viable plays.

Table 7.1, which ranks by frequency of publication the plays and authors in the late Ming anthology *Liushi zhong qu* (Sixty plays), provides preliminary quantitative evidence for the central position of the literati in the late Ming drama world. Though nineteen of the thirty-eight *Liushi zhong qu* authors exist for us as names only, their careers apparently not prominent enough for details to have survived, seven were holders of the highest, or *jinshi*, degree, and twelve more are known to have followed the examination path and/or to have had extensive connections with known literati dramatists.¹² Table 7.1 demonstrates that it was the *jinshi* holders and the non-*jinshi* holders with strong literati connections who were the most widely published. Men in these two groups of *Liushi zhong qu* dramatists wrote twelve of the fifteen plays that were published in three to ten other editions, commercial or private. (All but one of these twelve plays, and all of their ten authors, were commercially published.) If we divide the list roughly in half, we find that the top half (the more published) has roughly twice as many holders as the bottom half (the less published).

The writing, publishing, and even amateur performance of drama were acceptable literati activities largely because they were perceived as having a demanding intellectual tradition. *Xiang dang ran* was a *chuanqi* play, the long dramatic form that matured and flowered during the second half of the Ming dynasty. The *chuanqi* form, like most Chinese drama before the twentieth century, combined speech and song. Arias (*qu*) were written to set melodies (actually metrical patterns) that were themselves grouped within musical modes. Thus an aria was not an instance of new lyrics set to new music: rather, the composer of *qu* “filled in” (*tian*) lyrics to a preexisting metrical pattern, and when the songs were combined into sequences, they followed rules for rhythmic and melodic progression. Art songs (*sanqu*, lit. “dispersed songs,” independent of drama) followed the same rules for filling in lyrics and were grouped into sequences following the same rules of progression. Chinese poets and dramatists had refined these techniques of writing *qu* during the preceding Yuan dynasty (1279–1368), when both art songs and the short,

TABLE 7.1 Attested editions and author information
for *chuanqi* included in Mao Jin's *Liushi zhong qu* (60 plays)

Ming editions, including LSZQ

Number	Title	Author	Career
>20	<i>Pipa ji</i> 琵琶記	Gao Ming 高明	<i>jinshi</i>
>20	<i>Bei Xixiang ji</i> 北西廂記	Wang Shifu 王實甫	
10	<i>Huanhun ji</i> ¹ 還魂記	Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖	<i>jinshi</i>
8	<i>Hongfu ji</i> 紅拂記	Zhang Fengyi 張鳳翼	<i>jueren</i>
8	<i>Yuzan ji</i> 玉簪記	Gao Lian 高濂	no details
7	<i>Nanke ji</i> 南柯記	Tang Xianzu	
6	<i>Xiuru ji</i> 繡襦記	Xue Jinqun ² 薛近椿	<i>jinshi</i>
6	<i>Handan ji</i> 邯鄲記	Tang Xianzu	
6	<i>Yongui ji</i> 幽閨記	Unknown (Yuan)	
6	<i>Huansha ji</i> 浣紗記	Liang Chenyu 梁辰魚	connections
5	<i>Jinjian ji</i> 金箋記	Zhou Lüjing 周履靖	connections
5	<i>Zichai ji</i> 紫釵記	Tang Xianzu	
5	<i>Yixia ji</i> 義俠記	Shen Jing 沈璟	<i>jinshi</i>
5	<i>Yuhe ji</i> 玉合記	Mei Dingzuo 梅鼎祚	official family
5	<i>Nan Xixiang ji</i> 南西廂記	Li Rihua 李日華	connections
4	<i>Qianjin ji</i> 千金記	Shen Cai 沈采	no details
4	<i>Xiangnang ji</i> 香囊記	Shao Can 邵燦	no details
3	<i>Shuihu ji</i> 水滸記	Xu Zichang 許自昌	took exams
3	<i>Hongli ji</i> 紅梨記	Xu Fuzuo 徐復祚	took exams
3	<i>Fenxiang ji</i> 焚香記	Wang Yufeng 王玉峰	no details
3	<i>Tanhua ji</i> 曇花記	Tu Long 屠隆	<i>jinshi</i>
3	<i>Zixiao ji</i> 紫簫記	Tang Xianzu	
3	<i>Mingzhu ji</i> 明珠記	Lu Cai 陸采	official family
3	<i>Baitu ji</i> 白兔記	Unknown (Yuan)	
3	<i>Mingfeng ji</i> 鳴鳳記	Unknown (Ming) ³	
3	<i>Jingchai ji</i> 荊釵記	Unknown (Yuan)	
3	<i>Yuhuan ji</i> 玉環記	Unknown (Ming)	
2	<i>Yujue ji</i> 玉玦記	Zheng Ruoyong 鄭若庸	took exams
2	<i>Guanyuan ji</i> 灌園記	Zhang Fengyi	
2	<i>Xilou ji</i> 西樓記	Yuan Yuling 袁于令	minor office
2	<i>Jingzhong ji</i> 精忠記	Yao Maoliang 姚茂良	no details
2	<i>Zhongyu ji</i> 種玉記	Wang Tingna 汪廷訥	purchased post
2	<i>Shihou ji</i> 獅吼記	Wang Tingna	
2	<i>Xunqin ji</i> 尋親記	Wang Ling 王鈺	no details
2	<i>Qinxin ji</i> 琴心記	Sun Di 孫柚	no details
2	<i>Dongguo ji</i> 東郭記	Sun Zhongling 孫鍾齡	connections
2	<i>Qingshan ji</i> 青衫記	Gu Dadian 顧大典	<i>jinshi</i>
2	<i>Jiaopa ji</i> 焦怕記	Dan Ben 單本	
2	<i>Jinlian ji</i> 金蓮記	Chen Ruyuan 陳汝元	held office

(continued)

TABLE 7.1 (continued)

Ming editions, including LSZQ			
Number	Title	Author	Career
2	<i>Xiajian ji</i> 霞箋記	Unknown	
2	<i>Jinque ji</i> 金雀記	Unknown	
Editions in LSZQ only			
Title	Author	Career	
<i>Jiexia ji</i> 節俠記	Xu Sanjie 許三階	no details	
<i>Yujing ji</i> 玉鏡記	Zhu Ding 朱鼎	fl. 1580s	
<i>Shuanglie ji</i> 雙烈記	Zhang Siwei 張四維	connections	
<i>Feiwan ji</i> 飛丸記	Unknown		
<i>Luanbi ji</i> 鸞鏡記	Ye Xianzu 葉憲祖	<i>jinshi</i>	
<i>Longgao ji</i> 龍膏記	Yang Ting 楊珽	Wanli era	
<i>Bayi ji</i> 八義記	Xu Yuan 徐元	Wanli era	
<i>Shagou ji</i> 殺狗記	Unknown (Yuan)		
<i>Tousuo ji</i> 投梭記	Xu Fuzuo		
<i>Sixi ji</i> 四喜記	Xie Dang 謝謙	<i>jinshi</i>	
<i>Chunwu ji</i> 春蕪記	Wang Ling		
<i>Caihao ji</i> 采毫記	Tu Long		
<i>Sanyuan ji</i> 三元記	Shen Shouxian 沈受先	Chenghua era	
<i>Shuangzhu ji</i> 雙珠記	Shen Jing ⁴ 沈鯨	no details	
<i>Huaixiang ji</i> 懷香記	Lu Cai		
<i>Zengshu ji</i> 贈書記	Unknown		
<i>Yunpi ji</i> 運甓記	Unknown		
<i>Sixian ji</i> 四賢記	Unknown		
<i>Huanhun ji</i> ⁵ 還魂記	Unknown		

SOURCES: Information on editions is taken from Zhuang Yifu, *Gudian xiqu cunmu huikao*. Information on careers and social connections to the office-holding class is taken from Zhuang Yifu; Xu Shuofang, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*; and Jin Menghua, *Jigu ge Liushi zhong qu xulu (LSZQ)*.

¹Alternate title: *Mudan ting*. Lightly edited by Mao Jin.

²This attribution is uncertain.

³After the seventeenth century attributed to Wang Shizhen, showing the cultural assumption that plays were written by high literati.

⁴Not to be confused with the famous prosodist and playwright Shen Jing (1553–1610).

⁵Full title: *Huanhun ji Shuoyuan gai ben* (The soul's return, Shuoyuan revised version). Extensive revision of Tang Xianzu's play, not to be confused with Mao Jin's own light revision included in *Liushi zhong qu* (also titled *Huanhun ji*).

tightly organized four-act plays called *zaju* (comedies) were written to the keys, modes, and melodies of the North, while long dramatic forms were being developed using the melodies of the South. Though early Ming dramatists still wrote Yuan-style *zaju*, the prestige of Southern music gradually rose as its prosodic rules were defined with increasing rigor, and Southern song came to be seen as the signature genre of the Ming dynasty. Late Ming playwrights still wrote what they called *zaju*, but now these were simply short plays that mixed Northern and Southern melodies (and might run to more than four acts). Like the sedan chairs favored by the Jiangxi elite, Southern music had become nationally fashionable by the early sixteenth century. Northern as well as Southern poets helped to create this national fashion: the poets Kang Hai (1475–1541) and Wang Jiushi (1468–1551), both from Shaanxi province, published virtuoso collections of Northern and Southern melodies in the 1520s.¹³

The result was a rich culture of art song and musical drama, both closely integrated into literati life. The songs of drama were not restricted to their original context: entertainment was *de rigueur* at gatherings in private homes, the courtesans' quarters, or scenic spots, and the songs performed might be either *sanqu* or dramatic *qu*. Thus a gregarious member of the Nanjing elite might hear the same song as part of a play or as background to a banquet, and if he were a true aficionado, he might spend the evening matching wits with his peers, improvising new lyrics to the familiar tunes. These conditions made drama authorship increasingly attractive, and the period from the 1570s through the 1630s was a golden age for the composition of *chuanqi*.

This golden age of *chuanqi* coincided with a golden age of Ming printing. Information gathered by Lucille Chia and presented in this volume (see Chap. 3) shows that from the 1570s through the 1630s, books were published on a wider variety of topics, and probably reached more of the population, than had been the case in any earlier era. Printed books could be valued possessions: this was also the great age of Ming library building, and the seals we see on extant printed books (including drama editions) show that they were possessions whose ownership was worth registering.¹⁴

Drama penetrated the late Ming book market deeply. Chia's statistics show that drama and song constituted nearly a quarter of the entire output of Nanjing commercial publishers. This popularity may have had something to do with the need to acquire status, since drama, whether onstage or on the page, was much the most pleasant way to absorb the high cultural tradition. The Jiajing era (1522–67) military official Gao Ru, for example, listed historical *plays* as well as formal histories in the "History" section of his personal library catalogue.¹⁵

Plays were published both in integral editions and in the drama miscellanies that excerpted famous scenes from famous plays. (These miscellanies

were of two types: the frankly commercial anthologies studded with useful information for the traveler or general reader and the literati-compiled song collections that were often intended for use by cultivated amateurs who gathered to perform for each other.)¹⁶ Publishing whole *chuanqi* required a significant investment, since *chuanqi* might run to forty or fifty scenes, and printed drama was increasingly understood to require illustration. Nevertheless, their popularity guaranteed them a range of options, from the commercial editions that Chia and Robert Hegel describe in this volume to the single imprints produced in literati “halls” (*tang*) or “pavilions” (*ge*) that might have only a title or two to their credit.¹⁷

The publishing continuum for Ming drama and the social relations it fostered were made possible by the nature of xylography or woodblock printing. Production of a high-end book required the collaboration of numerous different craftsmen: calligraphers, designers, and carvers. These men and resources could be organized in commercial establishments, but while the resultant efficiency and economies of scale were doubtless necessary for the publication of a large and varied booklist, the mobility and portability of *all* the personnel and materials involved meant that a temporary workshop could be set up almost anywhere. Here is the prefectural official Zhang Lu writing in the 1570s, ordering the production of regulatory handbooks: “To further my aim, I respectfully order the appropriate officials of the prefecture . . . to use uncommitted government silver to pay out what is needed for the purchase of woodblocks and to summon good calligraphers and carvers.”¹⁸ And here is a Huizhou notable writing in 1617, preparing to publish an edition of Lü Kun’s *Guifan* (Admonitions for the women’s quarters): “I got like-minded friends to subscribe and had engravings done in the style of old books. . . . [T]he workmen wanted to rise to the compiler’s effort.” The friend who took over the project after the original sponsor’s untimely death noted sadly: “Just when the workmen had been assembled (*jiu gong*), he died.”¹⁹ The editions we call “private” or “literati” may have been printed in private studios, “halls,” or “pavilions” in this fashion; or, alternatively, compilers or editors may have transported their projects to workshops maintained by established craftsmen.

There were many possible motivations for bringing out private editions: friendship, family, or teacher-disciple relationships, the desire to be associated with some notable work, or the desire to rescue some rare edition from oblivion. (This sort of bibliophilic rescue—*Xiang dang ran* purports to be an example—gave a number of nonplaywrights a way to associate with the glamour of the theater.) And finally, many literati playwrights supervised the publication of their own plays.

In actuality, however, the realms of late Ming commercial and private printing were intimately related, since the boom in private printing depended on the large craft pool that resulted from the concentration of commercial pub-

lishers in major centers like Nanjing.²⁰ These craftsmen were high-end freelancers, available to any patron with sufficient resources. The best-received *chuanqi* found both commercial and private publishers, but more obscure plays were typically printed in only one or two private editions, whose publishers would have had to organize the printing enterprise themselves.²¹ Wang Tingna (ca. 1569–ca. 1618), a wealthy Huizhou playwright whom we will meet again below, shows us how difficult it can be to distinguish between commercial and private editions: he organized a fairly large-scale printing establishment (the Huancui tang, or Hall of Environing Azure) on his own estate and used it almost exclusively to print his own works—but then sold his plays to the public.²² The far more famous Feng Menglong (1574–1646), to whose collection, redaction, and republication we owe much of what we know about late Ming vernacular literature, also sold the plays he wrote (or revised) and published at his Mohan zhai (Ink-Wild Studio) in Suzhou.

These published dramas had a complex relation to performance, which I discuss below. There was little if any public commercial theater at the end of the Ming.²³ Rather, performance took place in venues that brought actors and audiences together for specific social and ritual purposes. Plays were performed in private homes for social occasions or to mark family or lineage ritual celebrations, and they were often staged when literati and courtesans gathered in scenic spots. Troupes were hired to perform at market fairs, where they would attract commerce, and at temple ceremonies honoring local tutelary gods. In the venue that provided the most significant economic support for the drama world as a whole, plays were performed in merchant *huiguan*, which were literally temples to commerce—or at any rate temples to the gods who facilitated commerce. The lack of public theaters, and the relative ease of producing private editions, meant that playwrights did not automatically have to turn their work over to theater or publishing professionals who would make it their own. Actors, anthologists, and amateur singers were constantly altering popular plays, but playwrights or their friends could control the appearance of their private editions, which thus became a medium of self-expression.

THE EVOLUTION OF MING DRAMA EDITIONS

The simultaneous flowering of drama and drama printing in the mid- to late Ming was in some sense the appearance of a new genre in a new medium. Xylography, of course, was already centuries old; printed books were no novelty in Ming China (on this fact, see Chapter 2, by Joseph McDermott). And as Hegel has shown, great strides were made in printing illustrated fiction and didactic literature from the eleventh through fifteenth centuries.²⁴ Drama, while not as old in China as xylography, had matured in the North three centuries or so before the 1570s, and some of the gems of Southern

drama had been composed and printed by the time of the Yuan-Ming transition. Extant editions show that the early-fifteenth-century vogue for *zaju* composition led to a small peak in the printing of *zaju*.²⁵ But because the total output of printed drama had never been large and because of the fifteenth-century dip in book production generally, the publishing boom that began to build after 1550 or so was experienced by many as a veritable flood. New styles of binding, the new prevalence of illustration, and the standardization of printed characters, as Hegel has noted, made Wanli-era (1573–1620) books easier to read and more attractive to consumers.²⁶ Illustrated drama thus was packaged in what was for Ming readers a novel and attractive format. And despite their roots in earlier Southern music and diction, *chuanqi* themselves felt new: Wanli-era practitioners were still in the process of producing the formularies that codified the rules of the genre.

Illustrated drama had been printed before the Wanli reign, though it had never occupied a prominent place in the total published output of any era before the late Ming. Before the mid-sixteenth century, drama publishers were still experimenting with formats developed for fiction, Buddhist sutras, and exemplary biography such as *Lienü zhuan* (Biographies of women). The Xuande era (1426–36) edition of the *zaju Jiao Hong ji* (The tale of Jiaoniang and Feihong) inserts one full-page illustration opposite each page of text, and the crudely illustrated 1470s edition of the late Yuan play *Baitu ji* (White rabbit) inserts one full-page illustration per scene. The remarkable 1498 Beijing edition of Wang Shifu's Yuan dynasty *Record of the Western Chamber* (*Xixiang ji*) uses the *shangtu/xiawen* (pictures above/text below) format that had long been established for historical fiction. The 1498 *Record of the Western Chamber* was the high point of printed drama before the sixteenth century: the text is exquisitely legible, and Yao Dajun has pointed out that the “pictures above/text below” illustrations in this edition have a continuity and naturalistic power that go far beyond evoking the play on the stage.²⁷ But the *chatu* (inserted illustration) format was more intrinsically suited to the *chuanqi* dramatic form, which was structured around the idea of the *scene* rather than the continuous narrative, and so ultimately the “inserted illustration” format outlasted the others.

And as illustration settled into a predictable format, a simultaneous evolution in paratext turned printed drama into the sort of instrument that could sustain a community of playwrights and publishers. Above and beyond the scenes of the play itself grew a superstructure of prefaces, commentary, and postfaces that created complex relationships among authors, readers, and publishers. We can take the 1547 edition of Li Kaixian's (1501–68) *Baojian ji* (Precious sword) as our starting point for discussing characteristic late Ming drama editions. This *Baojian ji* is not illustrated, but it is the sort of edition that established the discursive terms characteristic of high-end published drama for the rest of the dynasty.

The preface to this edition holds *Baojian ji* up as superior even to *Pipa ji*, the most famous drama of the age. The preface writer demolishes those who would doubt Li Kaixian's talent: answering an imaginary interlocutor who asks why such a paragon is not serving in office (Li Kaixian had been cashiered in one of the Jiajing era court scandals), the preface writer replies that drama and song are the perfect vehicles for a talented but unappreciated literatus to vent his sense of injustice.

The two postfaces praise Li Kaixian's talent in detail, by laying out what a true *zhi yin* (one who understands music) needed to know: how to compose individual songs and suites of songs and how to manipulate Northern and Southern musical modes and all the minutiae of rhythm and diction. The first postface validates Li Kaixian's claim to expertise by quoting the reigning *qu* authorities Kang Hai and Wang Jiushi, whose disciple Li had become. The second postface is by Wang Jiushi himself, who says that he, Kang Hai, and Li Kaixian have all published each others' collections of *qu*.

What we see in this front and back matter to Li Kaixian's play is, first, a sense of membership in a group with recognized authorities (a group constituted in part by the way they published each others' work); second, the inventory of skills expected of those authorities; third, an understanding that writing *qu* is an appropriate activity for a literatus; and fourth, the utility of *published* drama as a way of advertising oneself. Li Kaixian maintained a household drama troupe and staged his *Baojian ji* wherever he went, but only by putting ink to paper could he concentrate and disseminate quite so many encomia to himself.

At this early date, however, drama on the page did not have the predictable, relatively uniform appearance it would achieve by the late Wanli era. The Wanli conventions for printed drama, which use character size to differentiate song from speech and elevate tune titles to the top of their respective columns, are already in evidence in many early-fifteenth-century *zaju* editions, but not in the Xuande era illustrated edition of the *zaju Jiao Hong ji*. The elegant 1498 edition of *Record of the Western Chamber* obeys these conventions—but they are ignored in the 1547 *Baojian ji*. Nothing in placement on the page or character size differentiates tune titles, song, or speech in the 1547 *Baojian ji*.²⁸ And the 1547 publisher of *Baojian ji* is uncertain about something that would later become standard practice, namely, setting the preface off from the rest of the text by having it carved in running script. In this mid-Jiajing edition, the publisher hedges his bets by apologizing and printing the preface again in standard characters! It is uncertain who this publisher actually was: the preface suggests that it may have been the magistrate of Li Kaixian's home county in Shandong, who would simply have rounded up local carvers and set them to work in his yamen.

By the Wanli era the physical appearance of printed drama had evolved to match the sophistication of Li Kaixian's message. The standardization

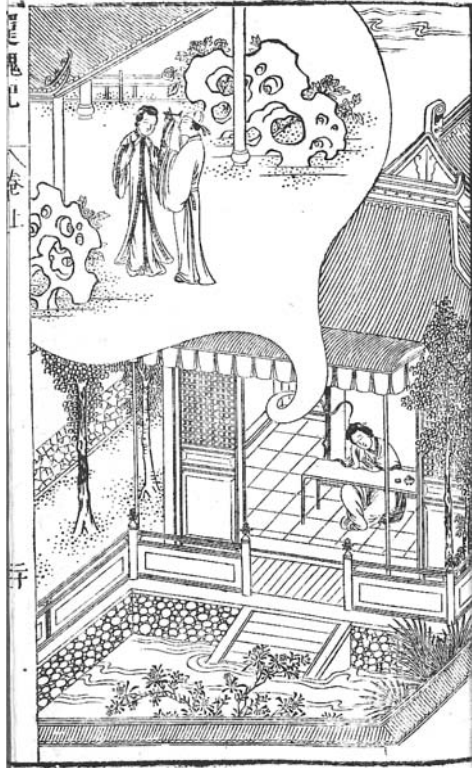


Figure 27. An example of an illustration representing a performance of *Huanhun ji*, Scene 10 (1.20a); compare to the later, landscape-style illustration in Figure 28. 1598 edition. Spencer Collection, New York Public Library.

of print conventions made drama predictable in appearance and thus easier to read, and elite private publishers displayed their own expertise by discussing these conventions explicitly. Several late Ming private publishers (Ling Mengchu among them, in his edition of *Pipa ji*) advise readers that extrametrical words and phrases will be distinguished from arias proper by printing them in *xishu* (smaller, more delicate characters).²⁹ A remarkable (and probably spurious) early-seventeenth-century manuscript “reconstruction” of a lost Jiajing era printed *Pipa ji* shows us how sensitive Ming cognoscenti were to the appearance of printed drama. Lu Yidian, the producer of the manuscript, discusses in his preface the exact placement on



Figure 28. An example of a landscape-style illustration from *Pipa ji*, 6a. Ling Menchu Tianqi era (1621–28) edition. Spencer Collection, New York Public Library.

the page of speech, arias, and tune titles in a Yuan edition he claims to have seen.³⁰

The evolution of pictures, prefaces, and commentary over the forty-seven-year course of the Wanli era shows us how Li Kaixian's assertion of literati priorities tended to become standard in late Ming drama editions, both private and commercial. Xiao Liling (Hsiao Li-ling) has pointed out that the most significant change in Ming drama illustration was the Wanli era evolution from pictures evocative of performance, with protagonists filling most of the picture space (see Fig. 27), to landscape-style illustration, where the lens moves back to show the protagonists in a far larger field (see Fig. 28), thus encouraging a contemplation of the meaning of the play that goes be-

yond the mimesis of a single moment on the stage. The earlier large-figure illustrations were generally interspersed throughout the text of the play, whereas the later landscape-style illustrations were typically collected at the front, in the fashion of literati albums.³¹

Xiao Liling argues that this evolution toward literati style coincided with an elevation in the cultural status of *chuanqi*, a growing sense that the composition of *qu* was a valid literati activity. The shift to landscape-style illustration is quite pronounced over the last decade and a half of the Wanli era, and it parallels a marked rise in private literati editions. But as Xiao demonstrates, the change in style can be seen first in high-end commercial drama publishing, as for example in the Wanli era Rongyu tang edition of *Pipa ji*.³² And private editions from *earlier* years of the Wanli era still featured the large-figure, essentially stage-mimetic interspersed illustrations characteristic of early Wanli commercial editions. Paradoxically, the evolution toward a style identified with the literati album may have been led by the commercial sector, eager to capitalize on the literati cachet—and in any case, as noted above, the finely detailed and elegantly carved late Wanli and Chongzhen era (1628–45) illustration style was profoundly indebted to the rise of commercial publishing, which created the economic conditions that made possible the elevation of the illustrators' and carvers' crafts.

By the early 1600s a high-end style was achieving maturity, and it was a style that drew its formal features—prefaces, commentary, preferences in art—from standard styles of literati self-presentation. Extant literati drama from that time on would exhibit a fairly uniform appearance. Wang Tingna's 1608 *Sanzhu ji* (The three vows) still intersperses large-figure, stage-mimetic illustrations throughout the text,³³ but we see a typical example of the new style in *Yingtao meng* (A dream of cherries), written and published by the official-turned-playwright Chen Yujiao (1544–1611).³⁴ The illustrations to Chen's 1604 edition of *Yingtao meng* are elegant examples of landscape-style prints collected at the front of the edition in album fashion, and unlike the diffident publisher of *Baojian ji* half a century earlier, Chen Yujiao was perfectly comfortable with prefaces in running script. His edition has two, the first by the literati publisher and friend to dramatists Chen Jiru (1558–1639) and the second by Chen Yujiao himself, writing in the guise of one of his pseudonyms and describing a visit to another of his pseudonyms. Neither preface identifies Chen Yujiao by name; by this time, the literati preface was often an elaborate game the writer played with the reader.³⁵

Literati did not, however, always lead the way. As with illustration style, the commercial sector may well have established norms in matters of punctuation and *dianban* (rhythmic) notation, with literati following suit in such a way as to emphasize their own expertise. Ming dynasty printed drama editions do not notate melody, but they frequently do notate the *dianban* sys-

tem of beats and pauses.³⁶ *Dianban* notation was clearly a commercial draw: many Wanli era commercial editions advertise themselves on their cover pages as “newly printed, with *dianban* and illustrations.”³⁷ Wang Jide’s (ca. 1560–1625) *Tihongji* (Inscribing the autumn leaf) and Bu Shichen’s (fl. ca. 1611) *Dongqingji* (Evergreen in winter) are examples of private editions that not only incorporated *dianban* notation but also discussed it in prefaces or postfaces, claiming that their use of *dianban* sets them apart from “vulgar teachers” who misunderstand the requirements of *chuanqi* prosody. Similarly, most Wanli era commercial publishers punctuated both speech and arias with small circles, but Bu Shichen *explains* his use of circles (*quan*) to mark the end of every sentence.³⁸

These high-end editions were not all absolutely alike, and formal features that seem minor from our distance could signal different orientations. By the early seventeenth century, the question of whether to include *dianban* notation had become a somewhat charged issue. Ling Mengchu’s 1620s “red-and-black” *Pipa ji* printed punctuation and emphasis in red and *dianban* notation in black (see Fig. 29), but some drama miscellanies prepared expressly for *qingchang* (pure singing), in which cultivated amateurs performed for each other without props or costumes, disdained such aids as an insult to the cognoscenti. Moreover, as McLaren points out in Chapter 4 in this volume, not all literati publishers even agreed that illustrations made an edition more refined. For the publisher of Xie Hongyi’s Chongzhen era play *Hudie meng* (Butterfly dream), illustrations were no more than a bookseller’s trick to increase profits, and he omitted them so as to avoid “vulgarity” (*su*).³⁹

But similarities outweighed differences, and the brief Taichang and Tianqi eras (1620–28) and the final Ming Chongzhen era saw the complete domination of the high-end style. Just how standard the format had become is evident in the Chongzhen era *Xiang dang ran*, with its prefaces and commentary claiming technical and moral mastery, and the “Compiler’s Remarks” with their now-obligatory references to Yuan dynasty prosody. And when he describes his rationale for including illustrations, the Master of the Silkworm Studio manages to have it both ways, emphasizing his spiritual cultivation but also excusing himself for following current fashion. The earlier edition, he says, was not illustrated, and he planned at first to honor the author’s original intentions. But he reflects that elegant and vulgar productions need to be distinguished from each other, and so a few images *at the start of the play* must be supplied. These illustrations, however, will *not* merely reproduce the text; rather, a master artist will be called on to evoke the *shenqing* (spiritualized emotion) that goes beyond mere words.

The publishing of drama developed along with other entertainment printing. Late Ming books of art songs were illustrated and carved by the same

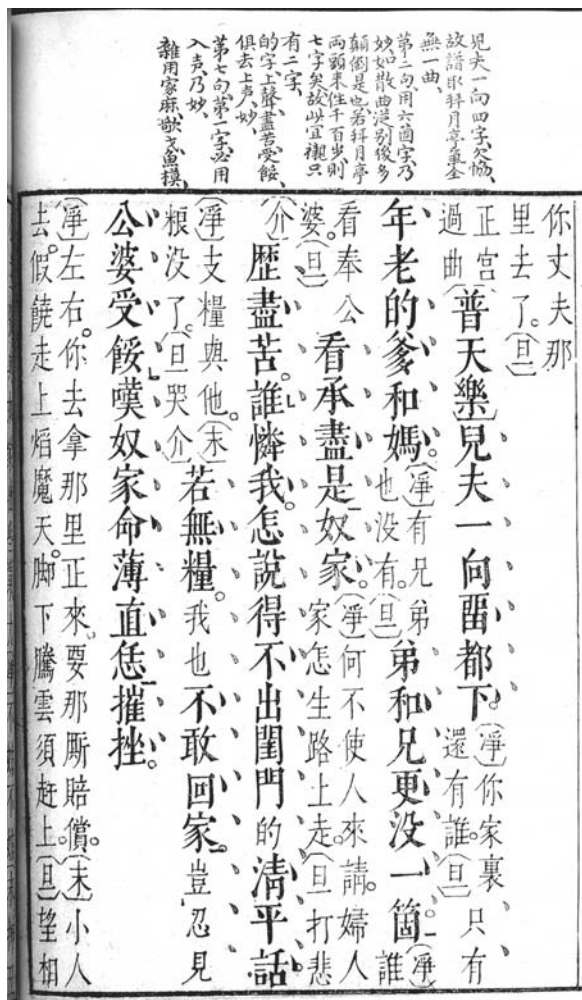


Figure 29. A page from the Ling Mengchu Tianqi era (1621–28) edition of *Pipa ji*. Punctuation and emphasis are printed in red, the *dianban* notation in black. Spencer Collection, New York Public Library.

artists and craftsmen who were working on printed drama,⁴⁰ and genre-spanning collaborations involved several of the men we have already met. Wang Tingna's associate Chen Suowen, for example, exchanged art songs with the playwright Zhang Siwei—whose play *Shuanglie ji* (The martyred pair) was later revised by Chen Yujiao as *Qilin ji* (Unicorn wool).⁴¹ Ling Mengchu

published illustrated fiction, drama, and song (including his own plays and stories), and the influential Feng Menglong produced seminal works in all three genres. This cross-fertilization among the three genres further marked high-end late Ming printed drama as a literati product. Numerous drama prefaces refer to the works of vernacular fiction that were prime reading material for the literati who considered themselves culturally daring.⁴² Drama had by far the largest share in the market for printed entertainment, but we need to remember how interconnected were fiction, drama, and song in the view of late Ming collectors, authors, and publishers.

THE SOCIAL WORLD OF LATE MING DRAMA PUBLISHING

The evolution sketched above takes us from *chuanqi* printing as a relatively isolated act (Li Kaixian's 1547 *Baojian ji*, printed by someone outside the drama community altogether) to *chuanqi* publishing as communal and conventional—something that commercial presses, literati playwrights, and their associates expected of themselves and each other. Print was not the only important channel whereby plays became known; it is impossible to overstate how important performance remained, and drama still circulated in manuscript. But even as he played at hiding his identity in the prefaces to *Yingtao meng*, Chen Yujiao chose print, and apparently spared no expense. Why did print matter to someone like Chen?

Print versus Manuscript

We can answer by comparing late Ming printed editions of drama with extant manuscript editions. For *chuanqi*, the most accessible manuscript editions date from early Qing (1644–1911), and a separate effort to find and survey extant Ming *chuanqi* manuscripts will be required before definite pronouncements can be made.⁴³ But the Maiwang guan collection held by the National Library of China contains 242 *zaju*, ranging from early Ming palace copies (all in manuscript) to private manuscript copies to print editions.⁴⁴ The trends evident in this body of Ming *zaju* manuscripts are similar to what we see in the early Qing *chuanqi* manuscripts.

We can conjecture that manuscript copies were primarily utilitarian, serving the purposes of preservation or performance. Some of the fine Ming dynasty copies of *zaju* are early Ming palace manuscripts; likewise, some of the extant *chuanqi* manuscript copies were prepared for the Qing court. Other handwritten copies are apparently performance scripts, with shorthand stage directions and musical notation. But what is striking about all of these manuscript editions is that they are devoid of prefaces or commentary—devoid of anything, in short, that would initiate a conversation with the reader, or impress the reader with the author's or publisher's persona. These hand-

written copies seem to have been made for the convenience of the possessor rather than for communication with a public.

Print editions, by contrast, could be virtuoso performances: the “Lu Nan” and “Tan Yuanchun” prefaces, the lawsuit Ling Mengchu created in the courts of hell, the dialogue between Chen Yujiao’s personae. Print helped Chen to signal his presence *and his qualifications* to the other members of his community, the literati dramatists who had turned to print as an accepted mode of self-expression. Once the reading apparatus of high-end drama was standardized, with its prefaces, commentary, and *fanli* (general regulations), it automatically conjured up a special sort of literati status and could be deployed idiosyncratically.

This expressive potential (along with the commercial potential that I discuss below) made print so popular that late Ming print conventions influenced even handwritten copies. Many early Qing manuscripts abide by the late Ming conventions established for print (for example, the practices of differentiating song from speech and beginning new songs at the top of their respective columns rather than simply following speech as in the 1547 *Baojian ji*). It required print, in fact, to suggest, by force of visual contrast, the intimacy of calligraphy, as when *meipi* (eyebrow notes) simulating handwritten comments were printed in the margins above the printed text, or when prefaces in cursive script seemed to communicate a personal message to the reader.

Even the fact that more *zaju* than *chuanqi* are extant in manuscript can be related to the late Ming prestige of print. *Zaju* had antiquarian cachet simply by virtue of their “pastness” and therefore could profitably be collected in manuscript. But only an elegant, limited *printed* edition could elevate a contemporary *chuanqi* to the status of a rarity worth collecting. Thus Mao Jin (1599–1659; see below) was an avid collector of manuscripts of rare *chuanqi*—but he collected them for the purpose of publishing them in such a way as to establish a persona of his own.

And just as print could bolster an author’s or publisher’s persona, so too could it expand and stratify its audience. Anything in print generates anonymous readers: the author-publisher knows that he will be read by readers he does *not* know and that their levels of discernment will vary. Indeed, writers often played on this fact of imprint culture in their prefaces, pointedly addressing themselves to the discerning few among an assumed mass of indiscriminating readers. Clearly this is the goal of Chen Yujiao’s playful prefaces: the reader who understood them was differentiated from the anonymous readers who did not, and the implied existence of unperceptive readers ensured that those who got the jokes would experience themselves as cognoscenti. In what follows we will look at who these cognoscenti were, what textual and personal practices united them, how they integrated their publishing

efforts with their interest in performance, and how they used publishing to vie for status within their community.

The Literati Drama Community

This community was composed loosely of a cluster of literati (and perhaps some would-be literati) centered in Suzhou and united by their involvement in the world of drama. This involvement took many forms. Most of the men discussed here were playwrights, though of varying prominence: Ling Mengchu, Bu Shichen, Xu Zichang (d. 1623), Chen Yujiao, Chen Ruyuan (fl. ca. 1600), Wang Heng (1561–1609), and so forth. Many of these dramatists were also involved, “hands on,” in the process of putting on plays, organizing their own troupes, and overseeing their performances—Shen Jing (1553–1610), Gu Dadian (1541–96), and Tu Long (1542–1605), for example. Several were noted, too, for their scholarly research on drama, their efforts to collect and preserve plays, and the development of rules and criteria—a whole critical apparatus—to categorize and evaluate drama: Shen Chongsui (fl. ca. 1600), Wang Jide, Wang Shizhen (1526–90), Zang Maoxun (1550–1620), Qi Biao-jia, Mao Jin, among others. Others occupied a more ambiguous position, their claims to membership in this literati group somewhat weakened by their commercial backgrounds and interests; Chen Dalai (fl. ca. 1600) and, to some extent, Wang Tingna fall into this group. And some, such as Wang Xijue (1534–1610), functioned simply as patrons to playwrights. Needless to say, there was considerable overlap among these roles.

While no single career is typical, the life and work of the energetic Shen Jing can serve to illustrate almost every facet of the late Ming drama world discussed here. A *jinshi*-degree holder at age twenty-two *sui*, he had already experienced Wanli court scandals, been demoted, and retired by 1589. At age thirty-seven, he began a second career as a dramatist, as was true of many of the Ming playwrights who had left office. His seventeen plays were published variously in commercial editions, in drama miscellanies, and in a private compendium under his studio name as *Shuyu tang chuanqi*; some are preserved in early Qing dynasty manuscripts as well. A committed rule giver and canonizer, he published the widely influential *Nan jingong shisandiao qupu* (Manual of Southern prosody in the nine keys and thirteen modes), codifying rules for writing Southern drama, rules he applied as he revised the work of his great contemporary, Tang Xianzu (1550–1616).⁴⁵ But he was equally committed to performance and maintained a drama troupe together with the playwright Gu Dadian. His commitment to drama as a shared enterprise is evident in his role as a teacher to younger dramatists, his partnership with Gu, and his acknowledged leadership of the “Wu school” of playwrights based in and around Suzhou.⁴⁶ The rapidity with which his work

was published shows us that there must have been a public eager for printed drama: in 1593, only four years into his “second career,” scenes from his first three plays were already published in the miscellany *Qunyin leixuan* (A multitude of melodies, classified and selected).⁴⁷

Shen Jing and his friends understood themselves as a special subset of the literati world. Like other men educated for the examination path, they were committed to the mastery of textual traditions, but, in addition to the standard scholar-gentry intellectual formation, they had traditions of their own: literati drama had developed in an atmosphere of intense self-awareness since the Yuan-Ming dynastic transition, when the first major canonizing works *Zhongyuan yinyun* (Sounds and rhymes of the central plain, 1324), *Lugui bu* (Register of ghosts, 1330), and *Taihe zhengyin pu* (Tables of correct tones for a period of great peace, 1398) systematized Northern melodies, rhymes, and attested plays.

Shen Jing became an icon for numerous later playwrights, as did Shen Chongsui, the author of *Xiansuo bian'e* (The correct employment of string ensembles), an important formulary for the Northern-style tunes that were still incorporated into the *chuanqi* form, despite the rise of Southern music. These formularies allowed playwrights and publishers to claim mastery of abstruse knowledge, and the formularies were typically invoked along with a set of recognized classics, namely, the Yuan *zaju* and early Ming Southern dramas (especially *Pipa ji*) in which the principles of the formularies had supposedly been realized. Despite these references, it was widely recognized that Shen's formulary was actually codifying the recent usage of his own region, the musical style that came to be known as *kunqu*.⁴⁸ Ling Mengchu, in the commentary on his edition of *Pipa ji*; Wang Jide, in the “General Regulations” (*fanli*) to his *chuanqi Tihong ji*; and Bu Shichen, in the postface to his *Dongqing ji*—all invoked these formularies and early plays as the appropriate standards for later playwrights. (These particular claims display a certain degree of animus against *qingchang* amateurs, whom Ling, Wang, and Pu all accused of having forgotten where to place beats and pauses.)

Wang Jide insisted that one must be *well-read* (he uses the word *du*) in the dramatic tradition to be a truly refined (*daya*) playwright, and he worked up an ideal reading list that could thread the aspirant through the classics of Chinese poetry and into the heritage of earlier dramatic forms.⁴⁹ Wang set the tone for dramatic-scholarly study in his suggestions for compiling *qupin* (the catalogues in which plays and playwrights were ranked): he leaves “vulgar” popular plays unranked but permits retaining a record of them, “in order to benefit further research” (*yi bei chakao*).⁵⁰ The eminent scholar-official Wang Shizhen showed how absorbing such research could be. Trying to clear up the question of authorship of the Yuan dynasty *zaju* cycle *Record of the Western Chamber*, he consulted the reference book *Taihe zhengyin pu*, and subjected arias by Guan Hanqing (ca. 1220–ca. 1300) and Wang Shifu (late thirteenth

century) to linguistic comparison.⁵¹ And since *Taihe zhengyin pu* was not widely available in print until late in the Wanli era, his work may have been doubly arduous: he may have been working from a manuscript, which if he did not own he may have had to copy.⁵² The limited availability of these standard reference books must have further enhanced a sense of membership in a special group with access to them.

This expertise was demonstrated by the revision of earlier plays, to correct predecessors who had not got things right. Feng Menglong, Shen Jing, and Zang Maoxun revised Tang Xianzu's great *Peony Pavilion*.⁵³ The *Liushi zhong qu* editions of *Yougui ji* (The secluded seraglio) and *Shagou ji* (Killing a dog [to reform a husband]) are mid-Ming revisions of historically popular *xuwen* (older Southern plays). Xu Zichang's play *Jiexia ji* (The faithful swordsman) revised an earlier play of the same name by Xu Sanjie (perhaps a kinsman?). The *chuanqi* oeuvre of Xu Zichang and Chen Yujiao runs to four plays each, of which three are revisions or adaptations—or, at any rate, responses. Chen Ruyuan even revised a *zaju* of his teacher Xu Wei (1521–93), a respected authority on drama composition, to bring it into line with fashions calling for more accessible language.⁵⁴ And none of the later critics seems to have felt that Li Kaixian knew how to put words to Southern music in his one *chuanqi* play, *Baojian ji*. Shen Defu (1578–1642) says that Li seems not even to have realized that Southern speech had an entering tone, while Qi Biaoia says that Li did not understand sentence construction. Thus Chen Yujiao knew that he was correcting serious errors when he revised *Baojian ji* to create his own play, *Lingbao dao* (The miraculous blade). Chen slanted the plot differently (pathos becomes the dominant note, replacing Li's rage at corruption), and, more to the point, Chen made sure that every entering tone was properly placed—and pointed this out to readers in marginal commentary. Taken together, these revisers and critics created a scholarly, book-centered, and canonizing character for their enterprise.

It would be a mistake to think of this group as anything more than a loose federation based on common interests. Members might belong to poetry or painting societies of their own, and though they participated in the social culture of drama entertainment described above, so did many *nondramatists* in Nanjing, Suzhou, and other centers of drama or publishing activity. But the men described here were connected by textual practices and personal relationships that created special bonds. They quoted each other, supplied each other with prefaces, argued in print, and published each others' work (just as we saw in the prefaces to Li Kaixian's *Baojian ji*). This self-referential group had room for men with a variety of connections to drama: Chen Yujiao numbered among his friends Wang Xijue, a grand secretary under the Wanli emperor, patron of playwrights, and father of Wang Heng, the *zaju* playwright. Men like Shen Jing and Wang Jide were playwright-critics and teachers, and all of Ming drama was constantly being classified and evaluated by highly ed-

ucated connoisseurs like Qi Biaoja and Wang Shizhen.⁵⁵ The textual practices of the group might deepen preexisting personal ties, as when Chen Yujiao paid homage to Wang Heng by incorporating songs from Wang's *zaju Mei nai he* (Nothing can be done) into his own *zaju Yuanshi yiquan* (The righteous dog of the Yuan family),⁵⁶ or strengthen social ties, as when Tang Xianzu supplied a preface for a *chuanqi* by the highly placed author Zheng Zhiwen.⁵⁷

Not surprisingly, a group so closely bound by literary interests forged personal and family ties as well. Xu Zichang arranged marriages between his own household and that of Chen Jiru, a highly influential critic, bibliophile, and intimate of the famous. Zhang Fengyi (1527–1613) was Xu Fuzuo's (1560–after 1630) wife's uncle, and Xu studied *qu* composition with Zhang. Zhou Lüjing (fl. 1582–96), whose play *Jinjian ji* (Golden notepaper) was widely commercially published, was the uncle of Li Rihua (1565–1635), whose Southern adaptation of the *Record of the Western Chamber* was included in Mao Jin's *Liushi zhong qu*. Zhou and Li often traveled together. Chen Yujiao wrote an epitaph for Shen Jing's mother (Chen and Shen had received the *jinshi* degree together in 1574), and Tu Long attended the funerals of Wang Heng's parents. Feng Menglong and many others studied with Shen Jing; this was part of what forged the Suzhou regional identity. When Xu Wei, a central figure in Suzhou painting, poetry, and drama circles, took Chen Ruyuan on as his student, he also chose the name of Chen's studio for him. And writing plays might even enrich the rituals of literati life, as when Zhang Fengyi presented his second play, *Hufu ji* (Tiger tally), to his mother at the celebration of her eightieth birthday.⁵⁸

The relationship of this group to the book market is difficult to ascertain. The problem can only be approached by disaggregating the community, since it looks as though men comfortable with their governing-class status may well have been comfortable with certain commercial ventures as well, whereas men of marginal literati status felt it necessary to adopt a pose of being above commerce altogether. Nonetheless, we know that certain playwrights from merchant backgrounds, such as Xu Zichang and Wang Tingna, were commercially active: Xu Zichang first came to the attention of the literati by republishing rare Song dynasty works,⁵⁹ and Wang Tingna's plays sold so well that they “drove up the price of paper.”⁶⁰

But Wang's apparent plan to print his way into the “forest of the literati” depended on separating his public persona from this commercial activity. Wang published attractive editions of his plays but saved his best effort for an exquisite, limited-edition book about himself. Here he forged prefaces that linked him to the most prominent members of the drama community, and in one of the finest late Ming examples of book illustration had himself pictured as the epitome of the secluded gentleman.⁶¹ The strategy backfired in certain quarters: it was noised about that his associate Chen Suowen was the actual author of all the *chuanqi* that Wang Tingna claimed to have writ-

ten, and unlike Chen Yujiao's quotations from Wang Heng, which do not seem to have excited adverse comment, Wang Tingna's quotation of songs by Shen Jing, in the *zaju Guangling yue* (The moonlight reunion at Guangling), provoked accusations of plagiarism.⁶²

Xu Zichang, by contrast, was able to deploy his wealth and literary cultivation to achieve a solid position in literati drama circles, and no loss of reputation dogged Feng Menglong, whose publishing enterprise dwarfed those of his other playwright-publisher contemporaries.⁶³ Feng supported himself by publishing frankly commercial works during the long years he spent waiting for the examination success that would finally win him a magistrate's position in 1634. But Feng's promotion of vernacular literature made him central to the cultural life of a major city, Suzhou, and to the late Ming reorientation of literati identity, in ways that Wang Tingna could not match.

Literati hostility to commerce had faded considerably by the last decades of the Ming, and some of the books produced in the studios of scholars fit so well with the product lines of the major commercial publishers that one is led to assume they were intended to make money. Chen Yujiao published a guide to rhetoric as well as explicated editions of Du Fu's poems and the famous Six Dynasties anthology *Wenxuan* (Anthology of literature), and when Chen Ruyuan honored his teacher Xu Wei by publishing a calligraphy manual that contained a section by Xu Wei, it is hard to imagine that Chen was oblivious to the fact that Xu's name would help the book sell. But Mao Jin, to whose collection *Liushi zhong qu* we owe unique editions of many Ming *chuanqi*, seems to have felt the need to present himself as uninfected by commerce. Mao, who was probably the most cultivated of late Ming printers, presided over a publishing enterprise that brought out fine editions of works from drama to history to connoisseurship. (Mao had started out on the examination path and studied with the poet Qian Qianyi [1582–1664], and he wrote in the recognized literati genres himself.)⁶⁴ Mao presented his vast publishing enterprise as a means of saving books that would otherwise have been lost and making available to the public books that they could never otherwise see. Making books available became, in fact, his "obsession" (*pi*), a term indicating a strictly literati sort of fixation by the late Ming and early Qing.⁶⁵ Mao was the only actual businessman in this group of literati publishers, but his public persona keeps commerce at a distance.

A more naive desire to attach oneself to the literati world is evident in what may be a unique account of the relationship between a literati author and his commercial publisher. Chen Dalai, proprietor of the Jizhi zhai (Studio of lasting integrity), published Shen Jing's play *Yixia ji* (The righteous hero) and Zhou Lüjing's *Jinjian ji* with prefaces of his own, and no other front or back matter. In his 1607 preface to Zhou's play, Chen Dalai explicates the author's purpose for us, in the manner of a literati friend. In his preface for Shen Jing, Chen says he was in the habit of frequenting Shen's

studio and was thus able to borrow manuscripts and copy them. This statement may well be giving us useful information about publishing practice, but Chen's next statement makes a claim of a different nature: when Shen Jing heard that Chen was about to bring out an edition of *Yixia ji*, says Chen, Shen Jing demurred at first because of the play's defects and then asked Chen to correct its numerous errors!⁶⁶ Another Jizhi zhai edition, however, reminds us of the gulf that separated Chen from the authors he published. In this edition of Wang Jide's play *Tihong ji*, the preface is not by the publisher Chen Dalai but rather by Wang's friend and fellow playwright Tu Long, and it displays all of the usual literati erudition, as Chen's preface did not.

Moreover, no matter how close a relationship Chen might claim to have with Shen Jing, commercial publishers were concerned primarily with putting out a printed product. Our literati author-publishers, by contrast, frequently traveled with their troupes and staged their own plays. How did a printed edition function within the community of cognoscenti, who might be seeing the play as well as reading it?

Print and Performance

We must remember that *reading* a *chuanqi* may have been, for most people, the only way to experience the play as a whole. Late Ming fiction and memoirs suggest that while entire *chuanqi* plays were sometimes performed over a period of days, the performance of selected scenes was the more common practice. Authors therefore wanted their plays to be *read*, since only readers would encounter the prefaces, commentary, and "General Regulations" whereby interpretation of the play could be guided. And authors wanted this degree of control, since performers altered plays to suit their own ideas of performability, and the drama miscellanies often printed these performers' emendations.⁶⁷ The late Ming printing boom meant that, for the first time, one could imagine a sizable audience of such readers; many plays, it is safe to say, led only a "desktop" life, even if an aria or two entered the performance arena by virtue of having been included in a published songbook.

But while authors wanted readers, they were expected to show that they could manage *actors*. In this performance-saturated culture, the truly refined dramatist was expected not only to master the textual traditions described above but also to be *dang hang* (in the business), aware of what would and would not work onstage. This requirement explains why most of the interlinear commentary in Ling Mengchu's edition of *Pipa ji*, an edition clearly designed for reading, is actually performance-oriented. Performance questions were so important to playwrights that they began to appear as plot elements: we watch blind beggars taught to sing in Sun Zhongling's *Dongguo ji* (Eastern suburb); and in Wang Tingna's *Guangling yue*, the correct performance of a song saves a kingdom. The discourse of performance extended

even to plays that were never staged: Catherine Swatek shows that late Ming revisions of Tang Xianzu's *Peony Pavilion* were typically justified on the grounds that they were more singable and stageworthy than the original, though the revisions themselves may never have been performed, and the actual aim of the revisers was probably to rein in Tang's depiction of desire.⁶⁸ This concentration on performance did not, of course, mean descending to the social level of the troupes;⁶⁹ in the preface to his own published *zaju* collection (see below), Meng Chengshun (fl. 1629–49) criticized prosodists with whom he disagreed by saying that they were “no better than actors or singing-teachers.” The aim, rather, was to *instruct* the actors and the singing-teachers (and perhaps to suggest by implication that the commentator was wealthy enough to have a troupe of his own).

Late Ming critics and dramatists were confident that they could capture the demands of good performance on paper. Wang Jide, Wei Liangfu (fl. mid-sixteenth century), and Shen Chongsui wrote minutely detailed directions for the production of proper tone, the placement of beats in music, and so on.⁷⁰ This specialized knowledge did not, however, always appear in print. Rather, it was deployed through a shifting mix of performance, print, and manuscript, depending on the point the dramatist or critic wanted to make and the audience he wanted to reach. Shen Jing published his plays but did not keep the whole of his famous formulary in print.⁷¹ Qi Biao'ia's monumental catalogue of Ming plays was not published until after his death. Shen Chongsui, by contrast, published not only his formularies for Northern and Southern song but also an exhaustive treatise on voice production and sets of rhymes for remembering prosodic principles.⁷²

When formularies and catalogues were *not* printed, this may have been because they were not commercially viable, but here too we need to remember that print and manuscript served different functions. Manuscript, by virtue of its relative inaccessibility, could work to create subtle boundaries, inside which literati dramatists could position themselves. Print, which constructed a potentially unlimited audience, worked to produce an opposite effect. The standard format of late Ming drama editions made a place for the display of *dang hang* expertise, and for dialogue with other authorities. It was in published prefaces that Zang Maoxun took Tang Xianzu to task for straining singers' voices, and it is in the “General Regulations” to his printed play *Huayan zhuan* (Deception at the feast) that Fan Wenruo explains the idiosyncratic notation he will use to direct singers on the placement of tones.⁷³ The literati aura of late Ming drama editions lent authority to this expertise. But since printing was open to all, the standard edition format provided, by happy paradox, a set of directions for claiming that authority. There were barriers to having one's claims *accepted*, but no one was barred from trying.

Tu Long, whose play *Tanhua ji* (The millennium flower) preached the

unity of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, provides a richly documented instance of the relationship between print and performance.⁷⁴ The hero of *Tanhua ji* rises to high office (as Tu Long had done) but abandons the dusty world after divine beings appear to him. Before disappearing, he plants a *tan* flower in his courtyard, announcing that the plant will bloom once he has truly attained the Way,⁷⁵ and in the course of the drama his whole family achieves the Way. Our hero brings about a number of conversions, his wife and mother achieve perfect harmony, his sons make empire-stabilizing military contributions—and the *tan* flower blooms.

A fine edition of this play was printed within a year of its completion, and Xu Shuofang's account of Tu's life shows us the way in which book and performance worked together to establish the play's renown.⁷⁶ *Tanhua ji* made an early impact on a reading audience: Chen Yujiao wrote to ask for a copy, and Chen Jiru wrote to Tu Long that he felt enlightened upon reading it.⁷⁷ At the same time, Xu's account shows us Tu Long traveling indefatigably to Hangzhou, Fujian, Jiaying (Zhejiang), and Anhui, directing his troupe to perform *Tanhua ji* at the houses of friends or at temples or scenic spots. The memoirist Shen Defu witnessed one of these performances and describes Tu Long directing his actors in a scene of which he was particularly proud.⁷⁸ But Tu did not stop with performance. Whether he was purging his sins (rumor had it that *Tanhua ji* was a gesture of repentance for a romantic escapade) or simply writing with tongue in cheek, Tu used the front matter of his printed edition to claim authority over the audience as well as the actors. His "General Regulations" categorically forbade the performance of anything illicit on the same day as *Tanhua ji*, and the preface announced the great merit to be gained if householders, actors, and audiences all abstained from wine and meat while the play was performed. Treating *Tanhua ji* as no more than "a play," or performing it in the courtesans' quarters, would incur karmic penalties. Here in the printed edition the audience itself is instructed to perform, to complete the spectacle through an act of hyperbolic renunciation. Only print, with its invariant instructions to a potentially infinite audience, could create for Tu the fiction of permanent control over performance.

Competitive Publishing

In 1615–16 a major publishing event further demonstrated the power of print. Zang Maoxun's publication of *Yuanqu xuan* (Selected Yuan plays) set in motion forces that would lead not only to the preservation of Yuan *zaju*, but of Ming *zaju* as well, and even, as I suggest below, of Ming *chuanqi*.⁷⁹ Zang Maoxun, critic, collector, and occasional playwright, had earned the *jinshi* degree in 1580, and he seems to have been an intimate of most of the major dramatists of his era. *Yuanqu xuan* consolidated his position as an arbiter

of dramatic taste. He lived only until 1620, but preface after preface and collection after collection responded to the judgments and erudition expressed in *Yuanqu xuan* in a remarkable display of competitive mastery of the past.⁸⁰

Zang was able to capitalize on trends already well under way. A vogue for preserving and publishing Yuan plays and songs is evident from the mid-1500s on. Li Kaixian had published one collection,⁸¹ and another, *Gumingjia zaju* (*Zaju* plays of ancient notables), one of whose plays is dated 1588,⁸² was followed by the publication in 1598 of *Gujin zaju xuan* (A selection of *zaju* old and new), whose compiler is known to us only by his pseudonym, Xijizi (Master of Universal Repose).⁸³ The beautifully illustrated collection *Yuanren zaju xuan* (Selected *zaju* by Yuan authors) is sometimes ascribed to the editorship of Wang Jide; the ascription is tenuous, but the collection would have presented a worthy model for Zang Maoxun.⁸⁴ Among commercial *chuanqi* publishers, Chen Dalai published Yuan and Ming *zaju*, four of which remain extant.⁸⁵ None of these collections has survived intact, however, and none of the earlier collectors' names entered common discourse.

Yuanqu xuan was designed to appeal to both readers and scholars. It was not an edition of record like Ling Mengchu's *Pipa ji*; Zang chose not to acknowledge extant variants of the plays he selected for publication. But *Yuanqu xuan* was highly readable: palace editions and earlier *zaju* collections had already filled in the dialogue and stage directions that were missing in extant fragmentary Yuan editions, and Zang's plays were cleanly printed, with songs formatted according to standard Wanli practice and dialogue in single rather than double columns. Illustrations of the highest quality were collected, album-style, after the front matter and before the plays themselves. The text is unpunctuated, but as noted above, this could function as a mark of respect for the knowledgeable reader, and Zang was known for preparing editions to serve such readers. The collection's scholarly character is manifested not in the sort of detailed commentary that Ling Mengchu supplied for his *Pipa ji* but rather in the front matter, a collection of treatises on Yuan drama, most notably an extensive selection from the late-fourteenth-century formulary *Taihe zhengyin pu*.

And this was no neutral scholarship. Zang's prefaces put his collection squarely—and combatively—in the middle of Ming debates. Southern drama, Zang claimed, had swept the land, and everyone seemed unaware of how vastly inferior it was to the earlier Northern *zaju* literature. Not content with disparaging Southern drama in general, Zang then took on individuals with whom he disagreed. Xu Wei was praised for writing *almost* acceptable Northern-style *zaju*, but Xu had inserted inappropriate regional dialect. The dialogue in Tu Long's *Tanhua ji* ran on unconscionably; some acts had no songs at all. (Nevertheless, Zang had taken the trouble to publish a “red-and-black” commentary edition of *Tanhua ji*.)⁸⁶ And, following the standard complaint of Shen Jing and his followers, Tang Xianzu could not fit words

harmoniously to music. Truly, nothing in late Ming times could reach the glories of the past.⁸⁷

Zang's connoisseurship and publishing acumen set a new standard for drama anthologies. Wang Jide was indignant at Zang's prefatory opinions but said that *Yuanqu xuan* surpassed all previous collections.⁸⁸ In 1629 Chen Ruyuan and the later-to-be-famous Qi Biaoia attempted to cash in on the fame of *Yuanqu xuan* by collecting and publishing Yuan plays that Zang had not included. Xu Shuofang quotes Qi's letters and diary to show how actively Qi attempted to round up rare editions, though ultimately the project foundered for lack of funds.⁸⁹ But the most substantial response came in 1633, when the playwright Meng Chengshun published his own illustrated and elegantly printed *Gujin mingju hexuan* (Famous plays old and new).⁹⁰

Meng's *Gujin mingju hexuan* can be seen as a competitive homage to Zang's collection. (Meng refers to Zang repeatedly, beginning with the first sentence of his preface.) Zang criticized Tang Xianzu; Meng ranked Tang above Zang's great friend, the rule giver Shen Jing ("no better than a singing teacher"). Zang printed selections from *Taihe zhengyin pu*; Meng's collection begins with the even older treatise *Lugui bu*. Of the thirty-six Yuan *zaju* in *Gujin mingju hexuan*, thirty-four had already been published by Zang, but Meng was aggressive in printing variant versions. A comparison of the ways Ma Zhiyuan's *Hangong qiu* (Autumn in the Han palace) is printed in these two collections shows Meng staking out his own territory: whereas Zang had praised Yuan drama for interweaving speech and song and printed the hero's first-act "Kun River Dragon" aria accordingly, Meng kept a longer version of the aria intact and used "eyebrow notes" to criticize Zang's presentation. Frequently Meng accepts Zang's emendations but always asserts his own authority to choose between Zang's versions and the "original" text. And in a fundamental repudiation of Zang's approach, Meng rejected the claim that Northern *qu* were intrinsically superior to Southern *qu*. Both had their strengths, Meng declared, and therefore he chose to reproduce eighteen Ming dynasty *zaju*, including four of his own.

To make his riposte effective, Meng printed *Gujin mingju hexuan* in a format identical to Zang's: a preface in running script, a historical treatise, the table of contents, illustrations that matched Zang's in quality, and, finally, the plays.⁹¹ But where Zang omitted all marks of punctuation and emphasis and supplied no commentary, Meng Chengshun made full use of the late Ming editorial repertoire, printing punctuation, marks of emphasis, and ample commentary that he used both to claim equal status with Zang and to point out Zang's mistakes.

The response to *Yuanqu xuan* also included collections devoted exclusively to Ming drama. A modern scholar has asserted that by the mid-sixteenth century, almost five hundred Ming *zaju* can be attested, and several collections

were circulating by the late Ming.⁹² But, as with *Yuanqu xuan*, one collection achieved preeminence, namely, Shen Tai's *Sheng Ming zaju* (*Zaju* plays of the flourishing Ming). *Sheng Ming zaju* appears to have been published in installments; the first of these, including thirty plays by sixteen playwrights, was in print by 1630. The prefaces to this installment turned Zang Maoxun's complaint on its head: Shen and his friends, doubtless responding to the impact of *Yuanqu xuan*, lamented that "everyone" was now devoted to Yuan drama, causing Shen's friend Yuan Yuling to remind them that "not all beauty is in the past!"⁹³

Shen's collection has none of the intellectual pretensions of Zang's *Yuanqu xuan* or Meng's *Gujin mingju hexuan*. It reproduces no historical treatises, takes on no fellow dramatists or collections, and describes the literati (*wenshi*) authors of the plays as men devoted to moonlight, flowers, and beautiful women. But its production, with clear, uncluttered printing and fine album-style illustrations, is as ambitious as that of Zang's and Meng's collections.⁹⁴ And in a gesture that suggests the anthologizing fervor Zang had unleashed—and also reminds us of the communication revolution described by Brook and Heijdra—Shen's "General Regulations" call for all who possess Ming *zaju* manuscripts to "disregard 1,000 *li*" and send them to him *by post*.⁹⁵

Of Ming dynasty *chuanqi* collections, only Mao Jin's late Chongzhen era *Liushi zhong qu* has survived intact.⁹⁶ Here too we may be able to see the indirect influence of *Yuanqu xuan*. Mao Jin drew on an extensive base of previously published *chuanqi*: beginning in the 1590s, the Nanjing publishers who specialized in drama brought out illustrated *chuanqi* in series form. These series, however, were unlike the illustrated *zaju* collections discussed above. They show no evidence of a single guiding hand. Individual plays are generally without prefaces (Chen Dalai's are the only prefaces by a commercial publisher that I have found), and I have seen no series prefaces. It is probably more accurate to think of them as product lines than as collections. Each of the publishing houses had its own artists and carvers, who imparted a characteristic look to each of the "lines." The major literati playwrights were a staple of these commercial series.⁹⁷

Liushi zhong qu, by contrast, is a true collection, organized by a single sensibility. *Liushi zhong qu* is cleanly printed in an absolutely uniform format, with no prefaces, punctuation, editorial marks, or illustrations. By republishing *chuanqi* in this format, Mao subjected them to a radical transformation, stripping them of much of their personality. A case in point is the third of Mao's sixty plays, *Dongguo ji*. The preface in the one extant edition aside from *Liushi zhong qu* is signed only "Baixue lou zhuren" (Master of the White Snow Tower), a name linked through the study of seals to one Sun Zhongling, about whom little is known except his authorship of one other *chuanqi*, *Zui-xiang ji* (The land of intoxication).⁹⁸ The White Snow Tower edition of *Dong-*

guo ji is a satirical play in an edition with personality. The preface purposely misconstrues the passage from *Mencius* on which the play turns (the man of Qi whose horrified wife discovers him begging for food among the graves in the Eastern Suburb). Eyebrow notes, written by Sun in the guise of a third person, note how cleverly the author develops the ideas of the play. In this White Snow Tower edition, the preface is followed by the *Mencius* passage itself, interspersed with witty interlinear commentary, and the play is followed by a rhymed postface. The *Liushi zhong qu* edition omits all of this commentary and front and back matter. If Sun's edition seems designed to enter into conversation with the reader, Mao Jin effectively terminates that conversation. The result is drama as data rather than self-expression.

Does this put Mao Jin completely outside the drama-publishing trends described above? The answer is that Mao was not primarily a publisher of drama; drama was only one small piece of his enterprise. His press, Jigu ge (Drawn from the Well of the Ancients), was a major producer of histories and collectanea for cultivated readers, and extant Jigu ge editions in various genres reveal that the format and the "fonts" of *Liushi zhong qu* look a great deal like those of his other editions. He established his authority by producing an elegant, uniformly printed product that drew attention to his enterprise, and implicitly to himself as an arbiter of genres, rather than to any individual *chuanqi* author (no authors' names or pseudonyms are supplied in *Liushi zhong qu*).

It seems likely, however, that it was the popularity of collections like Zang's and Meng's that moved Mao Jin to include a drama series in his own Jigu ge line. The appeal of *zaju* collections to his cultivated customer base would not have escaped his notice. And Mao was not without a scholarly strategy of his own. He had first made his name by producing fine facsimiles (*fuke*) of rare Song-dynasty editions, and *Liushi zhong qu* is also a demonstration of connoisseurship. Nineteen of Mao's sixty plays are extant in no other print or manuscript edition, and Mao Jin was probably conscious of rescuing them from oblivion. Like Shen Jing, Feng Menglong, and Zang Maoxun, Mao applied his editorial hand to Tang Xianzu's famous *Peony Pavilion*.⁹⁹ In his discreet way, he too used the publication of drama to position himself as a literatus with specialized knowledge, and the result is a contribution that remains indispensable.

CONCLUSION: PRINTING AS PERFORMANCE

Self-expression rarely depends on the self alone. The "self" that these late Ming editions of drama express is a literatus, imagined as part of the cultural elite, a *wenshi* (gentleman of letters) like those imagined in the preface to Shen Tai's collection *Sheng Ming zaju*. But as we have seen, this self re-

quired for its realization such things as improved communications, the monetization of the economy, merchant networks, and the explosion of commercial printing. Is this to accuse literati author-publishers of bad faith? No, because their experience of self-confident group identity, which print helped to foster, led them to create the works that would help to shape the world in which they lived. How did print consolidate that group identity?

We have already seen that the appearance of the standard literati edition—the look of prefaces and commentary on the page—must have worked as a sort of mirror for the literati reader, reminding him of the social cachet of his education. The typical late Wanli and Chongzhen era illustrations would have carried the process further. Whereas illustrations had once evoked the stage, by the late Wanli period they evoked not the stage but the literati self. The men and maidens pictured in the illustrations flattered the male reader, who could see himself in the scholar's garb pictured on the page, with courtesans, lovesick gentry girls, or loyal wives leaning on his arm or pining for him at the window. (These illustrations, while increasingly generic, were also increasingly exquisite.) Illustrations in songbooks encouraged an even more explicit identification of pictures with actual people, since the songs were often written to commemorate specific gatherings of *wenshi* and courtesans. The “spiritualized emotion” that imbued the illustrations to *Xiang dang ran* was precisely the desired emotional experience of the man of *qing*, and the frequent reader of published drama surely incorporated such images into his own understanding of how to “act” in the world. In a ceaseless dialectic, print produced the self that wrote the plays.

Print did not, however, give authors the permanent hold on their intellectual property that they may have wished for. We have seen how plays could escape into published miscellanies, with arbitrary emendations, or into an “authoritative” anthology like *Liushi zhong qu*, where the personality of the original author-publisher might be effaced. In this way the promise of print was ultimately *unrealized*: the potentially unlimited audience that publishers counted on was in fact limited by the increasing rarity of original editions. But after the fashion of a Buddhist-conditioned dharma, these original editions, brief though their vogue may have been, had measurable if not permanent effects. In a move that fundamentally blurred the boundary between private and commercial, printing (the production of multiples) made the images of literati selfhood available, in principle, to all. Whether the literati editions discussed here were produced for sale or for private exchange (and we have no definite answer to this question), they became part of late Ming visual culture. The images associated with drama and song (printed text as well as printed illustration) helped to generalize new ways to imagine the self, creating ideals that continued to affect the literati for generations.

NOTES

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1. These dates are based on comparison with known examples of early- and mid-seventeenth-century illustration style and on the fact that Tan Yuanchun's fame was not widespread until the 1630s. See *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1246–48. This is the only extant edition of *Xiang dang ran*. It is reproduced in *GBXQ*, First Series.

2. *Yuanshan tang qupin* (Far Mountain Pavilion catalogue of *chuanqi*), *ZGGD*, vol. 6, p. 14.

3. The “Lu Nan” preface is dated “Jiajing *bingzi*,” but according to the Chinese sexagenary dating system, the Jiajing era contains no *bingzi* date. The Chongzhen era (1628–45) does contain a *bingzi* year, 1636, which suggests to Guo Yingde that 1636 is the actual year of publication. See Guo Yingde, *Ming Qing chuanqi zonglu* (A comprehensive record of Ming and Qing *chuanqi*) (Hebei: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997), 450.

4. Modern scholars are divided on the attribution of *Xiang dang ran*. Zhuang Yifu accepts the attribution to Lu Nan (see *GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 829), while Guo Yingde, *Ming Qing chuanqi*, 448–51, accepts the early Qing attribution to one Wang Guanglu, a student of Zhou Lianggong (1612–72). This Qing attribution is discussed by Chaoying Fang in *DMB*, vol. 2, p. 1247. Given Qi Biao's death in 1645, however, and the lack of any other information about Wang Guanglu, Wang would seem to me to have been too young to produce this edition by the date it appeared. In any case, the attribution to Wang tells us nothing about the “Master of the Silkworm Studio” or the construction of this elaborate edition.

5. The Spencer Collection at the New York Public Library has a copy of Ling Mengchu's edition, reference number “Chinese 1498.”

6. For Ling Mengchu, see Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 140–64.

7. “Lu Nan,” no. 29 in Feng Menglong and “Langxian's” collection, *Xingshi hengyan* (Constant words to awaken the world). See Hanan, *Vernacular Story*, 122.

8. The protagonist of *Pipa ji*, Cai Bojie, was an unfilial son and an unfaithful husband in the dramatic tradition. In the dream, the author of *Pipa ji* protests that he wrote his play about another figure entirely, whose name was later confused with Cai's. Cai, however, has brought suit against him in the court of the underworld.

9. See Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Martin Heijdra, “The Socio-Economic Development of Rural China during the Ming,” in Denis Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote, eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644*, pt. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 417–578.

10. John W. Dardess, *A Ming Society: T'ai-ho County, Kiangsi, Fourteenth to Seventeenth Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 39.

11. Zhou Hui, *Jinling suoshi* (A casual chronicle of Nanjing life) (Beijing: Wenxue guji kanxing she, 1955).

12. Based on *nianpu* in Xu Shuofang's magisterial three-volume *Wan Ming qujia*

nianpu (Chronological biographies of late Ming playwrights) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1993).

13. See Kang Hai, *Pandong yuefu* (Songs from east of the Pan river) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986); Wang Jiushi, *Bishan yuefu* (Songs from Mt. Bi), in his *Meipoji* (Collected works of Master Meipo) (Taipei: Weiwen tushu chubanshe, 1976), vol. 3.

14. Brook, *Confusions of Pleasure*, 169–70; Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 169–70.

15. Gao Ru, *Baichuan shuzhi* (The one hundred streams bibliography) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), *juan* 7–11. See Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, 35–36.

16. Kathryn Lowry's pathbreaking work on these miscellanies uses illustrations to peg them as works for male travelers, probably merchants. Lucille Chia has shown that drama miscellanies were staples of the book lists of the lower-market publishers in Ming Jianyang, Fujian. See Kathryn Anne Lowry, "The Transmission of Popular Song in the Late Ming" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1996), 266–76; and Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries)*, Harvard-Yenching Monograph Series 56 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 241–42.

17. Of course, commercial publishers also used such terms—*tang*, *ge*, *zhai* (studio), and so forth—to designate their workshops. Thus it is virtually impossible to tell from the name of a publisher alone whether a book was published by a single literatus or a business concern.

18. Preface to *Huang Ming zhishu* (Regulatory handbooks of the Ming dynasty) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995).

19. Lü Kun, *Guifan* (Female exemplars), 1617 Huizhou edition. The Harvard-Yenching library has a reprint of this edition, titled *Yingyin Minghe Guifan sijuan* (Photomechanically reproduced Ming edition of *Guifan*, in four *juan*) (n.p.: Jiangning Wei shi, 1927).

20. Commercial publication of drama reached a peak during the Wanli era (1573–1620); private editions show a similar peak in the Chongzhen era.

21. There were far more private editions than commercial ones, though the scale of commercial publishing probably meant more commercial exemplars actually in print.

22. Nancy Berliner, "Wang Tingna and Illustrated Book Publishing in Huizhou," *Orientalizations* 25.1 (1994): 73. This example (and that of Feng Menglong below) illustrates points about the overlap between commercial and literati publishing made in Chapter 1 in this volume.

23. Sai-shing Yung, "A Critical Study of *Han-tan chi*" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1992), 122, suggests that there may have been commercial performances of Tang Xianzu's *Peony Pavilion*. I am grateful to Catherine Swatek for bringing this point to my attention. Performances of drama and song for a mass audience also took place at Huqiu (Tiger Hill) in Suzhou. See *GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 876, for reference to a performance of Bu Shichen's play *Dongqing ji* at Tiger Hill.

24. Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 164–91.

25. See the Xuande era (1426–36) woodblock-print editions of *zaju* listed in the

catalogues of the National Library of China and the Fu Ssu-nien Library of Academia Sinica, Taiwan. (These editions are not illustrated.)

26. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 97–127.

27. Yao Dajun, “The Pleasure of Reading Drama: Illustrations to the Hongzhi Edition of *The Story of the Western Wing*,” in Stephen H. West and Wilt L. Idema, eds. and trans., *The Moon and the Zither* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 437–68.

28. This is how most extant Ming *manuscripts* of drama looked (though by the end of the dynasty, at least a few manuscripts were imitating the conventions of printed drama).

29. See also the front matter to Wang Jide’s *Tihong ji* (*GXCH*, vol. 2, pp. 890–91) and Bu Shichen’s *Dongqing ji* (*GXCH*, vol. 2, pp. 875–76), both in *GBXQ*, Second Series.

30. *Pipa ji*, *GBXQ*, First Series. See *GXCH*, vol. 1, p. 13.

31. Xiao Liling (Hsiao Li-ling), “Banhua yu juchang: Cong Shide tang kanben *Pipa ji* kan Wanli chuqi banhua zhi tese” (Woodcut prints and theater: Characteristics of drama illustrations of the early Wanli period as revealed in the Shide tang edition of *Pipa ji*), *Yishu xue* (Study of art) 5 (1991): 133–84.

32. These illustrations are in “landscape” style but not in album format.

33. This is true of all of Wang Tingna’s Huancai tang editions.

34. *GBXQ*, Second Series. For Chen Yujiao, see Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, pp. 395–440.

35. The authorship of this play is not in doubt. Chen included it in a self-published edition of all four of his *chuanqi*. See *DMB*, vol. 1, p. 189.

36. Ming *dianban* notation requires further study. Shen Jing’s *kunqu* formulary (discussed below) and Wang Jide’s *Quli* both discuss *dianban/banyan* placement and nomenclature. Richard Strassberg, in “The Singing Techniques of *Kunqu* and Their Musical Notation,” *Chinoperl Papers* 6 (1976): 45–81, translates a modern treatise on *kunqu* notation whose discussion of the *banyan* system may be useful for elucidating Ming usage. *Dianban* notation in Ming published plays typically uses only four symbols, namely, light and heavy horizontal marks, a teardrop-shaped mark, and an “L”-shaped mark.

37. The apparent popularity of *dianban* notation in the Ming needs to be analyzed in terms of reader response and in terms of the cultural function of printed plays generally. Did *dianban* notation help readers to “hear” the music as they read? What groups of readers did commercial publishers target by including *dianban* notation? It is easy to understand literati author-publishers’ fascination with *dianban*, since formularies had made it part of their standard expertise.

38. Bu Shichen, “Fanli,” #3, *Dongqing ji* (*GBXQ*, Second Series), in which he says he will punctuate the *unrhymed* portions of the play (rhymes automatically signaled the ends of phrases in the arias).

39. See Xie Hongyi, “Fanli,” *Hudie meng* (*GBXQ*, Third Series).

40. Examples of songbook illustration are contained in Wu Xixian, *Suojian Zhongguo gudai xiaoshuo xiqu banben tulu* (A record of editions of premodern fiction and drama that I have seen) (Beijing: Zhonghua quanguo tushuguan wenxian suo wei fuzhi zhongxin, 1995), vol. 4.

41. See *GXCH*, vol. 2, pp. 836, 859.

42. See prefaces to *GBXQ* editions of *Dangui ji* (A tale of cinnamon) (author unknown) (First Series; *GXCH*, vol. 3, p. 1545); Xie Hongyi, *Hudie meng*; (Third Series; *GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 949); Zhu Kueixin, *Huichun ji* (The return of spring) (Third Series; *GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 946); and Lu Di, *Yuanyang tiao* (The mandarin-duck embroidery) (Second Series; *GXCH*, p. 1036).

43. See *GBXQ*, Second and Third Series, for many examples of extant *chuanqi* manuscript editions.

44. This collection is named for the studio of Zhao Qimei (1523–1624), whose original holdings formed the core of the collection. The collection was later expanded by Zhao's compatriot Qian Zeng (1629–after 1699). See Zheng Qian, *Jingwu congbian* (Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1972), 424–25.

45. Zhou Weipei, in his *Qupu yanjiu* (Research on drama and song formularies) (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1997), 109–27, discusses Shen Jing's formulary and its antecedents and notes that Shen's formulary was referred to by several different names in the late Ming.

46. The discussion below of the Nanjing publisher Chen Dalai shows us, however, that Shen Jing's appeal was hardly restricted to Suzhou dramatists.

47. Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 1, pp. 287–320. See Lowry, "Popular Song," 273, for a full discussion of this miscellany.

48. See Catherine Swatek, "Feng Menglong's Romantic Dream" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1990); and *Peony Pavilion Onstage: Four Centuries in the Life of a Chinese Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 2002), for exemplary discussions of these issues. On the gradual spread and dominance of the *kunqu* style, see Lu Eting, *Kunju yanchu shigao* (A history of *kun* drama performance) (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1980).

49. Wang Jide, *Qulü* (Rules for drama prosody), *ZGGD*, vol. 4, p. 121.

50. *ZGGD*, vol. 4, pp. 172–73.

51. Wang Shizhen, *Quzao* (The art of drama), *ZGGD*, vol. 4, p. 31.

52. See publication information in *ZGGD*, vol. 4, pp. 4–9.

53. Zang revised four of Tang's plays and published them as *Yuming xinci* ("New songs from White Camellia Hall," a play on Tang's own *Yuming tang simeng*, or "Four dreams from White Camellia Hall"); and Feng Menglong apparently planned to revise scores of Ming plays in line with his conception of prosody. See Swatek, *Romantic Dream*, introd. and chap. 1, 1–93; and Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, p. 443.

54. For Xu Zichang, see *GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 924. For Chen Ruyuan, see Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 3, pp. 519–24.

55. It is generally held that Wang Shizhen did *not* write *Mingfeng ji*, a *chuanqi* traditionally attributed to him.

56. See Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, p. 396; *GXCH*, vol. 1, pp. 441–42.

57. *Qiting ji* (The banner pavilion), *GBXQ*, Second Series (*GXCH*, pp. 877–78).

58. These accounts are all drawn from Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*.

59. Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 1, pp. 453–82.

60. Berliner, "Wang Tingna," 73.

61. This is his *Qipu* (Chess manual), of which the National Library of China and the Nanjing Library have Wanli editions. Discussed in Berliner, "Wang Tingna," 73.

62. Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 3, pp. 544–45.

63. Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 1, p. 394.

64. *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 565–66.

65. See Hu Zhenxiang's preface to Mao Jin's *congshu Jindai mishu* (The Jindai collection of esoteric writings) (rpt. Taiwan: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1966), Ming dynasty Chongzhen edition, n.p.

66. *Yixia ji*, *GBXQ*, First Series (*GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 847). *Jinjian ji*, *GBXQ*, Second Series (*GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 869). Xu Shuofang notes (vol. 1, p. 315, of *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*) that *Yixia ji* was published in 1607 but makes no mention of Chen Dalai. A preface by the connoisseur Lü Tiancheng, added later, lists the publisher's *hao* as Banye zhuren, which is not the way in which Chen Dalai signed himself. Still, Chen may represent an intermediate type between the typical commercial publishers of Nanjing and the literati who published their own work or that of their friends. Chen's Jizhi zhai published almost nothing but drama, and his taste clearly mirrors that of the literati described here. He published numerous plays by Shen Jing, as well as work by the iconoclast Li Zhi (1527–1602), a hero to the late Ming fiction and drama community.

67. Xu Shuofang notes that this is what happened when Shen Jing's first three plays were published in the miscellany *Qunyin leixuan*. See *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 1, p. 311.

68. Catherine Swatek, "Romantic Dream."

69. Such a descent would have been out of the question for these literati playwrights. All actors were legally "mean (*jian*) people," below the status of commoners.

70. Wang Jide, *Qülü*, *ZGGD*, vol. 4, pp. 43–192; Wei Liangfu, *Qülü*, *ZGGD*, vol. 5, pp. 1–14; Shen Chongsui, *Xiansuo bian'e*, *ZGGD*, vol. 5, pp. 15–182.

71. Wang Jide, *Qülü*, *ZGGD*, vol. 4, p. 61.

72. *ZGGD*, vol. 5, pp. 243–46.

73. *GBXQ*, Second Series (*GXCH*, p. 989).

74. *GBXQ*, First Series (*GXCH*, p. 838).

75. In Buddhist lore, the *tan* flower bloomed only once a millennium—and so came to symbolize the rarity of the appearance of a true Buddha.

76. Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, pp. 309–94.

77. Were they reading printed books or manuscript copies? Neither mentions copying the play out by hand, as borrowers of manuscripts typically did.

78. Shen Defu, *Guqu zayan* (Miscellaneous notes on drama and song), *ZGGD*, vol. 4, p. 209.

79. Zang Maoxun, comp., *Yuanqu xuan* (Selected Yuan plays), 1615–16 (rpt. Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1918).

80. See Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, pp. 441–86.

81. *Gaiding Yuan xian chuanqi* (Revised *chuanqi* [actually, *zaju*] of Yuan dynasty worthies). See Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, p. 442.

82. This collection is frequently attributed to Chen Yujiao, but Zheng Qian discusses evidence that links it to Wang Jide instead. See *Jingwu congbian*, 426–27. I am grateful to Wilt Idema for bringing this to my attention.

83. See Zheng, *Jingwu congbian*, 425–26. The Maiwang guan collection, discussed above, preserves fragments of both *Gumingjia zaju* and *Gujin zaju xuan*.

84. No convincing evidence ties this collection to Wang Jide; Wang Zhongmin's *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao* (Bibliographic notes on Chinese rare books) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982) states only that it was published during the Ming

dynasty. I am grateful to David Roy for pointing this source out to me. A comparison with early and late Wanli-era drama illustrations suggests to me that this collection dates from the middle of the Wanli era.

85. See Du Xinfu, *Mingdai banke zonglu* (A comprehensive bibliography of Ming imprints) (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling keyinshe, 1983), 8.3b; Zheng Qian, *Jingwu congbian*, 428.

86. *GXCH*, vol. 2, p. 838.

87. Though Zang speaks exclusively of Yuan *zaju* in his prefaces, he in fact includes two plays by the early Ming author Jia Zhongming.

88. *ZGGD*, vol. 4, pp. 170, 260.

89. Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, pp. 523–24.

90. In *Gujin mingju hexuan*, Meng combined two collections, namely, *Liuzhi ji* (the “Willow-branch collection”), devoted to romantic themes; and *Laijiang ji* (the “Lai River collection”), devoted to themes of heroism. See *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1064–65. For Meng’s life and work, see Xu, *Wan Ming qujia nianpu*, vol. 2, pp. 539–72. (See Xu, vol. 2, pp. 539–72, for Meng’s explanation of the names of the two collections.)

91. Meng groups the illustrations at the head of each of the two collections that make up *Gujin mingju hexuan*.

92. *Sheng Mingzaju* (Taipei: Wenguang chubanshe, 1963), n.p. Preface by Yuanjun.

93. *Sheng Mingzaju*, Xu Mingya preface (n.p.).

94. While modern editions of *Sheng Mingzaju* often print illustrations at a rate of one per play, the 1630 edition on microfilm in the Library of Congress prints them in typical Chongzhen era album-style.

95. See Brook, *Confusions of Pleasure*, 185–90, for a description of early seventeenth-century commercial mail service.

96. *Liushi zhong qu* (Sixty plays) (Beijing: Wenxue guji kanxing she, 1955).

97. A full study of the relationship between literati authors and commercial publishers remains to be written. Of the seventeen most-published plays listed in Table 7.1, five are classics from the past, but of the twelve by late Ming authors, eleven are by *jinshi*-degree holders or literati who moved in their circles. All eleven were published in commercial editions, ranging from one to eight for the wildly popular *Peony Pavilion*.

98. See Jin Menghua, *Jigu Ge Liushi zhong qu xulu* (A discussion of the Jigu ge *Sixty Plays*) (Taipei: Jiaxin shuini gongsi wenhua jijinhui, 1969), 18, on the establishment of Sun’s authorship. Sun’s two plays are discussed in *GXCH*, vol. 2, pp. 965–66. Jin refers to Sun as “Sun Renru, courtesy-name unknown,” but *GXCH* corrects this to “Sun Zhongling, courtesy-name Renru.”

99. See Swatek, “Romantic Dream,” 1, 23 n. 1.

EIGHT

Qing Publishing in Non-Han Languages

Evelyn S. Rawski

Given the significant role that non-Han peoples have played in the development of Chinese culture and the Chinese state, a history of the book in China must include an account of books written and published in languages other than Chinese. Such an account raises the same issues that are raised for book culture elsewhere. What kinds of materials (in terms of content) were published in non-Chinese languages? Who were the authors and publishers, and in what form did these works circulate? Where was and who constituted the reading public consuming these works? What impact did printing have on the non-Han cultures? Did printing facilitate cultural integration, the creation of a common, though necessarily diverse, culture?

The Qing dynasty (1644–1911) is an especially appropriate period for the examination of non-Han printing in China.¹ The rulers of the Qing were a northeast Asian people who identified themselves with the Jin dynasty, which had ruled northern China from 1121 to 1234. Like earlier non-Han conquest regimes ruling parts of the Chinese-speaking world during the tenth to fourteenth centuries, the Manchus adopted cultural policies designed to maintain their separate identity. They created a written language; adopted this language, Manchu, as one of the two state languages of the Qing dynasty; and established schools to educate and train bannermen in Manchu.² Banner officials were required to communicate with the throne in Manchu, and documents relating to the imperial lineage, banner affairs, and Inner Asian military matters were often written only in Manchu. Although the 1.55 million official documents written in Manchu are outside the purview of this chapter, they are important to explaining why literacy in Manchu expanded during the first half of the Qing dynasty.³

Qing policies stimulated literacy in Mongolian as well as Manchu. Schools were established in each *jasagh*, the administrative banner unit introduced

into Mongolia by the Qing, and in Beijing, Urga, Uliasutai, and Kobdo, where students learned to read and write Mongolian and Manchu.⁴ Mongols and others enrolled in the Eight Banners (large civil-military units that registered members of the conquest forces) were eligible to sit for special examinations in Manchu and Mongolian, the latter of which was added in 1730. Although the number of Mongols winning degrees was modest—one scholar estimates that only 154 Mongols won the *jìnshi* degree during the entire Qing dynasty—the examinations provided an avenue of upward mobility for Mongols who did not have access to the hereditary posts and clerkships open to their superiors.⁵

Mongols also learned Tibetan during their schooling at Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. The Qing court's patronage of Tibetan Buddhism, which experienced a revival in Mongolia in the late sixteenth century, helped to create new producers and expanded audiences for religious texts.⁶ By the early Qianlong era (1736–96), there were nearly two thousand monasteries and temples in Mongolia and many hundreds of others serving the Tibetan and Mongol population in the present-day provinces of Qinghai and Xinjiang.⁷ With almost one-third of all men residing in monasteries by the early twentieth century, Mongol literacy achieved new heights. Tibetan was the prestige language in Mongolian monasteries, “studied by all lamas who had any pretensions to learning.”⁸

The creation of literatures in Manchu, Mongolian, and Tibetan was stimulated in both direct and indirect ways by Qing rule. As northeastern Asia, Mongolia, Tibet, and the Tarim Basin were incorporated into the empire during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, demand for information useful in administration and trade arose, not only among Inner Asians, but also among Qing officials and Han Chinese merchants who penetrated these markets. Qing rule also brought formerly distant regions such as Mongolia and Tibet closer together, and the expansion of Tibetan Buddhism among Mongols also led naturally to a demand for religious works.

Court patronage of translation and dictionary projects played a direct and leading role in the development of non-Han book culture and was integral to the multicultural policies espoused by the Manchu emperors. The Kangxi (r. 1661–1722) and Yongzheng (r. 1723–36) emperors commissioned translation and dictionary projects as part of an ongoing effort to disseminate knowledge useful for ruling the large empire in their own language. Courting the Mongols through sponsorship of Tibetan Buddhism also led the rulers to commission massive translations of the Tibetan Tripitaka. The scope of the translation efforts expanded as the empire grew. The Qianlong emperor marked the conquest of the Tarim Basin and Eastern Turkestan by employing the rhetoric of universal monarchy to proclaim himself the ruler of five peoples: the Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Uighurs (Turkic-speaking Muslims), and Han Chinese. He commissioned a large number of multilin-

gual compilations that reflected his vision of the ruler as the essential center of a diverse multicultural empire.⁹

In this chapter I first provide an overview of Qing publishing in Manchu, Mongolian, and Tibetan, drawing on catalogues of collections in Asia, the United States, Europe, and Russia. Second, I analyze the nature of the works published in non-Han languages in the Qing, in comparison to the types of Chinese publications available at the time. A concluding section evaluates the impact of Qing publishing on the cultures of the Qing empire and its peripheries.

THE PUBLICATION OF NON-HAN WORKS

Manchu Works

The total number of works in the Manchu language is likely to exceed earlier estimates of less than a thousand titles.¹⁰ Generalizations about the types of works that were produced in Manchu are based on a survey of 2,746 Manchu-language works held by institutions in the People's Republic of China; German collections; the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; the Tōyō Bunko, Tokyo; the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London; the British Library; the India Office Library; the Public Record Office; the British and Foreign Bible Society, London; the Royal Asiatic Society; the Royal Geographical Society; and American libraries.¹¹ The following information was culled from the catalogues of these collections and recorded in an electronic database: title of the work, format of the work (i.e., handwritten manuscript or imprint from woodblocks),¹² language of the text, site at which the work was produced, and date of publication or production.¹³ Duplicates were discarded; out of the more than 2,700 works surveyed, 2,143 were unique titles or unique editions of a work. The "Manchu database" cited in this chapter thus consists of over 2,100 Manchu-language works.

The titles listed in the catalogues vary greatly in their content and range. Although most archival documents were omitted, the Manchu database includes some nonbooks such as the "last will and testament" of an emperor, official calendars, and charts of solar and lunar eclipses. What constitutes a single "item" also varies: it may be a single printed sheet or, like the Tibetan Kanjur,¹⁴ the Tibetan Tripitaka, incorporate hundreds of separate Buddhist scriptures under one title. A majority—51.7 percent—of the items in the Manchu database are in manuscript form.¹⁵ Some manuscripts are probably the original drafts of imperially commissioned works that were later printed; others—such as the five-language dictionary compiled during the Qianlong reign, which I discuss below—were never printed. There are also many handwritten copies of printed books.

The Manchu-language materials produced during the Qing dynasty tended to be multilingual: 39.6 percent of the works were in Manchu only,

TABLE 8.1 The most prolific Qing publishers of Manchu-language materials

<i>Publishers</i>	<i>Number of books produced</i>
Palace (Wuying dian)	112
Sanhuai tang (Peking)	21
Juzhen tang (Peking)	16
Imperial Household Department (Neiwu fu)	11
Translation School, Jingzhou garrison (Fanyi zongxue)	9

SOURCE: Manchu-language database.

48.2 percent were in Manchu and Chinese, and the rest were in a profusion of languages reflecting the cosmopolitan nature of the court. Jesuit missionaries produced translations of Christian works in Manchu and Latin; Tibetan Buddhist scriptures were reproduced in Manchu, Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Mongolian. Imperial geographies added Uighur and Todo, the latter an adaptation of Mongolian to render the Oirat (Ölöt) or Western Mongolian dialect. Manchu grammars were published in annotated versions for speakers of Korean, Russian, French, and Japanese as well as Chinese and Mongolian.

Information on publishers clarifies the throne's leadership in Manchu-language publishing. Of the 767 woodblock-printed materials in the database, only 44.1 percent actually identify a publisher, either as the printer of the work or as the holder of the woodblocks.¹⁶ Ninety-six government agencies and commercial printers' names appear in the list of publishers, but the majority—more than 57 percent—are credited with only one work, and all but the top five printers are listed as printing five or fewer titles (see Table 8.1). Three of the five most prolific Qing publishers—the palace, the Imperial Household Department (Neiwu fu), and the Jingzhou Translation School (Fanyi zongxue)—were government agencies. Imperial dominance in the production of Manchu-language books is reflected in the large number of palace editions shown in the table.

Mongol Works

Mongolian works first appeared in printed form in significant numbers during the Qing dynasty.¹⁷ Estimates suggest that there may be as many Mongol-language (and Tibetan-language) works extant in collections around the world as there are Manchu-language works.¹⁸ The generalizations below concerning Mongol-language works draw on a survey of approximately 1,700 items held in major collections in Germany, St. Petersburg, Copenhagen, Tokyo, and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., hereafter referred

to as “the Mongol survey.”¹⁹ Although 58.3 percent of the works were manuscripts, 39.8 percent were woodblock-printed editions. The bulk of the works in Mongol collections (83 percent) were in Mongolian alone; however, a significant number of works (16.9 percent) were in two or more languages.

Mongolian literature was bifurcated by genre and language. More than 61 percent of the texts in the Mongol collections surveyed dealt with Tibetan Buddhist subjects. Scholarship and book printing in Mongolian and Tibetan were intertwined. Their religion gave devout Mongols a cultural orientation toward Tibet quite apart from their political orientation toward the Qing court. Mongol monks translated many Tibetan texts and also wrote biographies of religious notables, church chronicles, and philosophical dissertations in Tibetan. Of the “works translated from Tibetan or written under Tibetan or Buddhist influence,”²⁰ many were written in Mongolian, or Mongolian and Tibetan and Sanskrit. One scholar has argued that books on Tibetan Buddhism in Tibetan and Mongolian should be regarded as the “undividable literature of Tibetan Buddhism.”²¹

Interestingly, despite use of Chinese texts in the translation effort,²² none of the translations of Tibetan Buddhist texts included Chinese. There were more than twice as many Tibetan-Mongol or Tibetan-Mongol-Sanskrit texts (7.6 percent) as there were Chinese-Mongol or Manchu-Mongol texts (3.6 percent). By contrast, Mongol-Chinese and Mongol-Manchu-Chinese texts proliferated in secular Mongol-language works—that is, those dealing with commerce, administration, and language. The physical construction of these books, too, echoed this cultural divide. Whereas religious texts were almost always bound in the style of the Tibetan palm leaf–shaped book, the *pothi*, secular books tended to be printed and bound in the Chinese style.²³ The coexistence of two contrasting types of Mongolian books—different not only in linguistic associations and content but also in form—accurately reflects the cultural dualism of Qing Mongol culture.

Tibetan Works

Tibetan-language books published during the Qing dynasty were produced from three different sources: the Qing government, Mongols (not surprising, given their devotion to Tibetan Buddhism), and, of course, Tibetans themselves.²⁴ Most of these texts were religious in content. Before its first printing in China in 1411, the Tibetan Buddhist canon (Kanjur or *bka' gyur*), compiled in the thirteenth and early fourteenth century, existed only in two sets of manuscript copies. Tibetan monks relied primarily on manuscript copies of religious texts until the eighteenth century, when several large monasteries printed their own editions of the canon. The eighteenth century saw a considerable increase in the printing of Tibetan books. The Sa

skya pa monastery of sDe dge (Derge), produced imprints of the Kanjur and Tanjur (bstan 'gyur), the collection of commentaries on the Buddhist canon, as well as many other works. Other editions of the canon were printed at Choni and Narthang.²⁵ Holdings of Tibetan texts outside Tibet indicate that Beijing, the monasteries in Mongolia, and the Buriat Mongol monasteries in tsarist Russia were also important printing centers of Tibetan-language works.²⁶

Government Printing

Like its predecessors, the Qing government compiled, printed, and disseminated books. The Chinese-language books that it produced are well known, and the most important of them have been studied quite thoroughly. Few scholars, however, have paid attention to the government publication of non-Han texts. Here, thus, it is necessary to discuss briefly the process of publication for and the nature of the non-Han texts produced under Qing auspices.

Non-Han-language works usually went through different agencies at court, depending on the language and people involved. Pamela Crossley notes that although the Qing continued to operate a translation bureau (Siyi guan), several other bodies shared the task of translation during the dynasty. The Mongol Office and its successor, the Lifan yuan (Office of Western Barbarian Management) dealt with the Khalkha and western Mongol tribes, the Turkish-speaking Muslims in Central Asia, and Tibet.²⁷ During the Kangxi reign, a number of subagencies in the inner court dealt with Inner Asian relations, and in the Yongzheng reign, Russian and Zunghar Mongol affairs were handled by inner deputies.²⁸ Later, when emperors commissioned multilingual dictionaries and translations, they appointed imperial princes and high officials as chief editors, who would then oversee a group of scholars who did the actual work. The massive production of long works in non-Han languages was therefore accomplished on an ad hoc basis. There was no single, centralized office in charge of such productions throughout the dynasty; rather, a variety of different offices or officials might be appointed the task of publication when the need arose.

Scholars have divided the imprints produced by different government agencies into several categories. The first imprints, fragments of Chinese- and Mongol-language works, date from before 1644. During the Shunzhi reign (1644–61), many works, known as *neike*, were printed by the Imperial Household Department. The Wuying dian Xiushu chu (Imperial Printing Office), an agency under the Imperial Household Department, was not established until 1680. Its imprints, known as “palace editions” (*dianke*), are prized by bibliophiles for their high quality. Estimates of the number of books printed by the Wuying dian vary; a recent study of the palace editions held

in major collections in Taiwan and the People's Republic of China suggests that the total number was less than six hundred titles, with another six hundred or more bearing the Imperial Household Department imprint.²⁹ (Few of the imprints listed in these studies were in non-Sinitic scripts, so adding the 112 palace editions of Manchu-language works may increase the total number of palace editions.)

Central government ministries also printed books; so did provincial governments, and so did commanders of banner garrisons scattered around the empire. Dictionaries dated from 1798 to 1878 bear the imprint of the banner official schools (*baqi guanxue*), and many books were printed by the Translation School of the Jingzhou garrison.³⁰ Until the second half of the nineteenth century, all these government publishing offices used woodblock-printing technology in book production. From 1859, "official book agencies" (*guanshuju*) were established at provincial capitals and began to produce significant numbers of reprints. Some of these presses began to use movable-type print and lithography, but their books, known as *juben* (agency editions), were primarily important for Chinese-language materials and thus fall outside my purview here.³¹

Private Printing

Many works were produced by commercial firms situated in Beijing, in Shengjing (Mukden), and in the larger banner garrisons. Woodblocks circulated from one publisher to another, even from one place to another.³² Beijing, however, dominated non-Han-language publication, as a logical consequence of its role as the seat of government where Qing subjects came to renew their relationship with the emperor.

Information on publishers of Manchu-language works confirms Beijing's importance as a publishing center. All but the last of the most prolific publishers listed in Table 8.1 were located in Beijing. Of the woodblock-printed books containing information on the location of the publishing house, 82.8 percent were printed in Beijing; 41.7 percent of these firms were located in the capital at several sites in the "inner city," reserved for the conquering bannermen, and in the "outer city," where Chinese were moved after 1648. Manchu books were sold in shops near Songzhu Temple in the imperial city, near the residence of the ICang skya khutukhtu, the highest-ranking Tibetan Buddhist prelate of the Eastern Mongols, and near Longfu Temple, in the eastern quarter of the inner city. And Manchu book publishers lined two east-west streets (Damo chang and Xihe yan) running alongside the moats separating the inner and outer cities. Finally, Manchu publishers were also located in Liuli chang, the famous district for Chinese bibliophiles.

Although Mongol books were also produced at the office of the ICang

skya khutukhtu at Shara Süme in Dolonor and at Urga, the headquarters of the highest prelate of the Khalkha Mongols, the Jebtsundamba khutukhtu, Beijing was central to Mongol-language publishing. Walter Heissig identified 221 Mongol-language works published in Qing Beijing; and 425 of the 548 woodblock editions in the Mongol survey were Beijing editions. Four early-eighteenth-century books identify Fu Dalai (Fu Hai), “who dwells outside the Anding Gate,” as the carver.³³ The Mahakala miao, in the eastern part of Beijing, printed Mongolian-language religious texts, and Songzhu Temple, to the north, printed and sold Mongol and Tibetan religious texts from the mid-eighteenth century onward. Colophons state that the printing blocks for several nineteenth-century books were stored in the Tianqing bookstore, “which is by the side of the monastery of Songzhu Temple.”³⁴ A colophon in a medical text dated 1873 notes that the blocks were entrusted “to the care of the person surnamed Xiao” who “sells new and old Manchu, Mongol and Chinese books” at Longfu Temple in the eastern quadrant and Huguo Temple in the western quadrant of the inner city from the seventh to the tenth of each month. This was the same neighborhood where Manchu-language Buddhist scriptures were produced and sold.³⁵

Dates of Publication

Analysis of the database challenges generalizations concerning the history of the Manchu language during the Qing period. According to Hanson Chase, evidence of the decline of the spoken language among bannermen could be found as early as the last decades of the Kangxi reign. During the eighteenth century, despite the efforts of the Qianlong emperor to arrest the trend, Manchu was gradually transformed and “sinicized” by its long exposure to a predominantly Chinese-speaking population. By the nineteenth century, it had become a linguistic artifact.³⁶

But information on the dates of publication for Manchu texts (see Table 8.2) suggests a slightly different trajectory for Manchu literacy. Despite Hong Taiji’s (r. 1627–44) efforts to translate Chinese-language canonical and legal works into Manchu, the conquest period (lasting until 1683) was in fact not a productive period for Manchu-language publication. A comparison of two periods of virtually equal length, the Kangxi and Qianlong reigns, shows that the eighteenth and not the seventeenth century was the high point for Manchu books. Table 8.2 shows that publication not only continued through the nineteenth century but also experienced another surge during the Guangxu era (1875–1909). Thus Manchu-language materials were published throughout the Qing dynasty.

The information provided by Heissig (see Table 8.3) shows a similar historical trend in Mongol-language printing, which peaked in the eighteenth

TABLE 8.2 Manchu-language works
(by reign period)

<i>Reign period</i>	<i>As % of total (993) works with dates</i>
Before 1644	.3
Shunzhi reign (1644–61)	5.0
Kangxi reign (1661–1722)	11.5
Yongzheng reign (1723–36)	7.6
Qianlong reign (1736–96)	30.6
Jiaqing reign (1796–1820)	6.6
Daoguang reign (1821–51)	11.1
xianfeng reign (1851–62)	3.8
Tongzhi reign (1862–75)	3.9
Guangxu reign (1875–1909)	14.9
Xuantong reign (1909–12)	2.3
After 1912	2.3

SOURCE: Manchu-language database.

TABLE 8.3 Mongol-language Beijing imprints
(by period)

<i>1650–1717</i>	<i>1717–1735</i>	<i>1736–1795</i>	<i>1795–1911</i>	<i>Total</i>
45	41	99	36	221

SOURCE: Walter Heissig, *Die Peking'er Lamaistischen Blockdrucke in Mongolischer Sprache Materialien zur Mongolischen Literaturgeschichte* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1954), 3–4.

century during the Qianlong reign. Although it did not experience a boom during the late nineteenth century, as did Manchu-language publication, Mongol-language books also continued to be published throughout that century.

CATEGORIES OF LITERATURE IN NON-HAN LANGUAGES

How did the types of works being produced in non-Han languages compare to the literature simultaneously being produced in Chinese? Very generally, Tibetan-language books were overwhelmingly Buddhist in nature; Tibet's geographic location meant that it was influenced as much by Indian as by Chinese culture.³⁷ A comparison of Manchu and Mongol literature shows that there was a significant structural difference in the subjects treated in the two different languages (see Table 8.4). Perhaps the most striking contrast concerns the place of Chinese educational texts. The Confucian Classics and educational primers, prominently featured in this volume as the staples of Chinese publishing in Cynthia Brokaw's and Lucille Chia's studies of Sibao

TABLE 8.4 Manchu-language works
(by category)

Category	As % of Manchu-language work	Comments
Philosophy	6.8	
Ethics	9.9	
Religion	10.4	
Law	.8	
Military affairs	2.0	
Language and writing	26.5	
Literature	8.9	
Art	1.4	
History	24.3	Includes edicts and government memorials
Geography	1.5	Includes maps
Mathematics	.3	
Astronomy	5.3	Includes imperial calendars
Medicine	.7	
Animal husbandry	.1	
Water control	.1	
General works	.8	

SOURCE: Manchu-language database.

and Nanjing, also occupied a significant place in Manchu works. Although Mongols could read these Chinese texts in Manchu-Mongolian multilingual editions,³⁸ very few publications in Mongolian alone were devoted to translation or explanation of Confucian principles. Overwhelmingly, Mongol texts—not only on religion, but also on ethics, geography, and even medicine—were oriented toward Tibetan Buddhism. The absence of Confucian works suggests that this distinctively Chinese body of thought failed to make much of an impression in the realm of privately printed Mongol book production.

The Classics

Imperially commissioned Manchu translations of Chinese works were a vehicle for the introduction of the ideas embodied in the Confucian Classics.³⁹ Most of the major books in the Confucian canon were not printed in a Manchu- or Mongol-language version until the Kangxi reign. Although the *Mencius*, *Analects*, *Greater Learning*, and *Doctrine of the Mean*, popularly identified as the Four Books, were translated into Manchu in 1677, the earliest printed version currently found in collections is the *ice foloho manju nikan hergen-i se šu* (Newly published Four Books in Manchu and Chinese), published by the Yushu tang in 1691 and subsequently by the Hongyuan tang

in 1733.⁴⁰ In addition to two Manchu-language editions, the *duin bithe* (Four Books) appeared in fifteen Manchu-Chinese and three Manchu-Chinese-Mongol editions in the course of the dynasty. The earliest trilingual edition was published in 1755; there was also an 1892 edition that was only in Mongolian. Zhu Xi's annotated edition, *sy šu ji ju* (The Four Books with collected commentaries), was published by three different firms, as were works such as the *se šu oyonggo tuwara bithe* (Essentials of the Four Books) by Shen Qiliang and the *inenggidari giyangnaha se šu-i jurgan be suhe bithe* (Daily lectures on the Four Books).⁴¹ The Four Books were also published as individual titles, but most of the extant editions of these works date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁴²

The Five Classics were also all translated into Manchu but not into Mongolian.⁴³ The *Classic of Songs* was printed in 1655 in a Manchu and a Manchu-Chinese version. The palace edition of this work came more than a century later, in 1768.⁴⁴ The *Classic of Changes* seems to have been first published in 1684 as *inenggidari giyangnaha i ging ni jurgan be suhe bithe* (Book explaining the meaning of the *Classic of Changes* in daily lectures). As *jijungge nomun* (Lines classic), it appeared in a palace edition in 1765. Translation of the *Record of Rites* is said to have occurred during the Shunzhi reign, but *han-i araha ubaliyambuha dorolon i nomun* (Imperially commissioned translation of the *Record of Rites*) was not printed until a palace edition appeared in 1783. The earliest dated copy of the *Classic of History* is the *dasan i nomun i bithe* (Classic of rule) of 1733; the palace edition did not appear until 1760. Seven editions of this work are found in contemporary collections, the last produced in 1896 by the Translation School in Jingzhou. The earliest dated imprint of *šajingga nomun* (Spring and Autumn Annals) is a 1784 palace edition. A Manchu translation of the *Xiaojing* (Classic of filial piety)—not one of the Five Classics but a text highly regarded by Qing rulers—was completed only in 1708. It was printed at least six times during the course of the dynasty, finally as a palace edition in 1856.⁴⁵

Language Aids

A high proportion (24.7 percent) of the Manchu literature consisted of language guides. The Manchu conquerors represented a small minority in, as one scholar has phrased it, “a Chinese-speaking ocean.”⁴⁶ Administrative requirements sparked a demand for Manchu grammars, conversation manuals, and dictionaries. The first large-scale Manchu-Chinese dictionary, *dai-cing gurun-i yooni bithe* (Complete book of the great Qing), privately compiled by Shen Qiliang in 1683, was followed by an imperially commissioned dictionary, *han-i araha toktobuha manju gisun-i buleku bithe* (Imperially commissioned definitive Manchu dictionary, *Yuzhi Qingwenjian*) that appeared in 1708. Revised again in 1772, the dictionary, now called *han-i araha nonggime*

toktobuha manju gisun-i buleku bithe (Imperially commissioned enlarged definitive Manchu dictionary, *Yuzhi zengding Qingwenjian*) became a popular textbook in banner schools.⁴⁷

The appearance of multilingual dictionaries in the eighteenth century, particularly during the Qianlong reign, was at least in part the consequence of the Qianlong emperor Hongli's polylinguistic policy. Crossley writes that "as the court became more explicit in its formal claims to universalism, the emperorship's 'simultaneous' (*kamciha, ho-pi [hebi]*) expression in two or more languages took on a fundamental symbolic role in the imperial culture."⁴⁸ The emperor took pains to emphasize that "however diverse in structure might be the languages of the subject peoples[,] . . . as media of expression there was no distinction of cultural level between the various peoples and there was nothing unnatural in the domination of the Ch'ing [Qing]."⁴⁹ His position on Manchu and its superiority to Chinese was made explicit in an imperial preface: "In its alphabet of twelve basic symbols, Our dynasty possesses an all-embracing literary instrument. No sound can elude the phonetic combinations of which it is capable. It can express any sound whatever with a precision and completeness, of which Chinese is incapable. This surely is the summit of linguistic universality."⁵⁰

Polylingual translation and compilation projects necessitated the creation of new reference aids. When the emperor ordered that the Tibetan Tanjur be translated into Mongolian, scholars first had to standardize translations of Buddhist terms—in short, to compile a Tibetan-Mongol dictionary of religious terminology.⁵¹ To compile a military history of the victorious campaign against the Zunghars in 1755 (the *Pingding Zhungaer fanglüe* [Military history of the Zunghar pacification]), scholars first laboriously collected the names of the relevant places and persons of the new western territories in a geography modeled on the Tang dynasty's *Xiyu tuzhi* (Geography of the western regions). The *Xiyu tongwenzhi* (Transcribed record of the western regions), completed in 1782, covered the northern and southern circuits of Zungharia, Chinese Turkestan, Qinghai, and Tibet and presented standardized Manchu and Chinese transliterations of proper names, accompanied by the spelling of the words in their original language and the phonetic equivalents in Mongol, Tibetan, and Uighur pronunciations.⁵²

The *Xiyu tongwenzhi* was compiled in an office specially set up for this purpose. The individuals who participated in its compilation also worked on the *Pingding Zhungaer fanglüe*, and, given their expertise, are likely to have also contributed to the five-language *han-i araha sunja hacin-i hergen kamciha Manju gisun-i buleku bithe* (Imperially commissioned dictionary of Manchu in five scripts, *Yuzhi wuti Qingwenjian*), which was completed before the end of the Qianlong reign.

The five-language *Qingwenjian* was the most ambitious of the imperially sponsored dictionaries, which included, in addition to those cited above, a

Manchu-Chinese dictionary, *han-i araha manju monggo gisun-i buleku bithe* (Imperially commissioned dictionary of the Manchu and Mongol scripts, *Yuzhi Man Meng hebi Qingwenjian*), which appeared in 1717; a trilingual dictionary, *han-i araha manju monggo nikan hergen ilan hacin-i mudan acaha buleku bithe/Yuzhi Manzhou Menggu Hanzi sanhe qieyin Qingwenjian* (Imperially commissioned dictionary in which the sounds of three kinds of script, Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese, are matched), which was published in 1771; and a quadrilingual dictionary, *han-i araha duin hacin-i hergen kamciha manju gisun-i buleku bithe/Yuzhi siti Qingwenjian* (Imperially commissioned dictionary of Manchu in four scripts), which appeared in the Qianlong era.⁵³ Of these, the Manchu, bilingual, and quadrilingual dictionaries appeared in palace editions, the trilingual dictionary appeared under a private imprint, and the five-language dictionary was never printed. With the exception of the trilingual dictionary, the other imperially commissioned works were never reprinted.⁵⁴

There are 145 dictionaries listed in Huang Runhua's *Quanguo Manwen tushu ziliao lianhe mulu* (Union catalogue of Manchu-language materials in the People's Republic of China), and only six appeared in palace imprints. The majority, 57 percent, were in manuscript form. Some dictionaries, such as Shen Qiliang's *daicing gurun-i yooni bithe*, existed in both printed and manuscript form. The earliest edition of this dictionary, dated to 1683, was printed by a private firm, the Yuanyu zhai, located in the capital. Reprinted by the Sanyi tang in 1713, it was incorporated into another work, titled *Qingshu zhinan* (Guide to Qing writing).⁵⁵ Other popular dictionaries, such as Li Yanji's *manju isabuha bithe* (Collected Manchu book, *Qingwen huishu*), were reprinted throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century; in 1751, for example, this dictionary appeared under the imprimatur of three different Beijing book firms.⁵⁶ Multilingual dictionaries continued to be compiled into the last decade of the Qing dynasty, when lithographic reproductions and woodblock-print editions seem to have been produced simultaneously.⁵⁷

Handbooks and dictionaries are found in every major Mongolian collection and represent 6 percent of the works surveyed. Among them are guides to Mongol grammar and writing, in Mongolian; Manchu-Mongol translations of the Chinese primer the *Sanzi jing* (Three-character classic); Mongolian-Manchu, Mongolian-Chinese, Mongolian-Tibetan, Mongolian-Tibetan-Sanskrit, and Mongolian-Manchu-Chinese dictionaries; and dictionaries with word equivalents for four and five languages.

Not all of the users of these guides were non-Han people. A preface in a Mongolian-Chinese-language handbook, *Chuxue zhinan* (Guide for beginning students), dated 1794, states, in Chinese, "The Mongolian language being orally transmitted for the most part, it is especially difficult in China Proper (*neidi*) to find the right teacher. I have accordingly compiled this vol-

ume for the benefit of beginning students.” The Mongolian contained in this book is transcribed in colloquial Manchu and colloquial Chinese, suggesting the ethnicity of the potential purchaser.⁵⁸ Some books, like the 1801 *Xinchu duixiang Menggu zazi* (Newly published illustrated Mongol glossary), were aimed at several different language groups, with illustrations of everyday articles annotated in Chinese with Manchu transliteration and Mongol with Chinese phonetic transliteration; Heissig calls this a “language-guide for Mongols coming to the market in Beijing as well as for Chinese merchants trading with Mongols.”⁵⁹ A handbook that provided Manchu transcriptions of Mongolian phrases and their Manchu and Chinese equivalents was written in the Daoguang era (1821–51) for students studying to be Mongolian translators. It, like a Mongol-Manchu-Chinese dictionary and glossary, dated 1811, presented the material in Manchu alphabetical order.⁶⁰

The downward percolation of written materials, in terms of production as well as consumption, may explain the pragmatic, practical orientation of the works described above. The increasingly varied quality of printed offerings also hints of an expansion in the population now participating in literate culture. For example, a Mongol-Tibetan dictionary titled, in translation, “The terminological dictionary called the bright moonbeam that clarifies names and meanings” (*ming gi rgya mtsho'i rgyab gnon dag yi ge chen po skad kyi rgya mtsho'am skad rigs gsal byed nyi ma chen po zhes bya ba bzhugs so*), produced in 1838, has a Tibetan colophon that, according to an eminent scholar, “appears a rather inept translation from the Mongolian by a Mongol,” suggesting the gradual indigenization of Tibetan-language education in the Mongolian monasteries.⁶¹ Yet at the same time, the eighteenth century was a period when many new Tibetan dictionaries were produced.⁶²

History

Because this category includes the documents and records of the Qing dynasty itself—published imperial edicts, dynastic regulations, documents relating to the administration of the banners, communications with tributary states, and so forth—it contains by far the largest listing of Manchu-language works. One might argue that the imperial calendars that constitute the bulk of the works in astronomy should also be counted here, in which case the “History” category would total 30 percent or so of the all the works in the database.

But this category includes as well a number of histories of past non-Han rulers and dynasties commissioned by Manchu and Qing rulers. Hong Taiji ordered translations of biographies of the Liao, Jin, and Yuan dynasty rulers and had portions of the biography of Shizong (r. 1161–89), the fifth Jin ruler, read aloud to assembled officials.⁶³ Manchu versions of the Liao, Jin, and Yuan histories, printed in 1647, were the first imprints produced after the

Qing entry into Beijing. Qing rulers often alluded to these histories when creating new policies.

History also became an important subject for Mongol writers. Many specialists have noted that seventeenth-century Mongols lacked an ethnic consciousness: their internal rivalries were the primary factor in the Manchu victory over the Mongols.⁶⁴ But during the eighteenth century, a new sense of Mongol history and culture, expressed through studies of Tibetan Buddhism, seems to have developed. New historical works were written in Tibetan and sometimes in Mongolian, drawing on Tibetan and Chinese sources. Mongol writers produced biographies of Tibetan Buddhist prelates and histories of Buddhism, its evolution in Tibet and its expansion into Mongolia. Gombobjab (ca. 1680–1750), a polyglot who served as director of the Tibetan school in Beijing, wrote *Ja-nag choim-jun* (History of Buddhism in China, 1736), introducing Chinese primary sources to Tibetan readers. He was also the author of an influential work in Mongolian that traced the genealogy of the Chinggisid descent line.⁶⁵

Religious Literature

Like the Ming rulers, the Qing emperors funded the reprinting of the Tibetan Buddhist canon, the Kanjur, in its original language—and did so at least five times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁶⁶ But Qing imperial patronage was perhaps most important for establishing large-scale translation projects of the Tibetan Buddhist canon and providing the foundation of lexical standardization for these translations. At the same time, many religious texts were printed privately, by pious Mongol princes and their wives.⁶⁷ In the course of the dynasty, approximately 255 Tibetan Buddhist works were translated into Mongolian under Manchu and Mongol princely sponsorship.⁶⁸

The most massive translation projects were commissioned, not surprisingly, by the imperial government. The Kangxi emperor, the first Qing ruler to initiate such a project, sponsored a revision of the Mongol-language Kanjur compiled under Ligdan Khan (d. 1634), using scholars recruited from all of the banners. Calligraphers “who command the Mongol script” were called to Dolonor in summer 1718, and the “imperial red” edition was printed, in 108 volumes, in 1720. During the Qianlong reign, the Tibetan Tripitaka was again translated into Mongolian as well as into Manchu; the Qianlong emperor was embarrassed that a Manchu-language edition had never been produced.⁶⁹

Sponsors of religious publishing, official or private, might be driven by motives other than a simple desire to disseminate the texts of their religion. Printing such texts was an act of religious merit in Buddhism. Merit was earned regardless of whether one paid to have a religious text copied or

printed, though, of course, “the more lavish the resources expended, the greater the merit which accrued to the sponsor of the edition.”⁷⁰ Moreover, as Paul Harrison notes, “as complete entities, the texts of the bKa’ gyur are thought to be powerful and transformative, as physical objects when seen or touched or as sounds when uttered or heard, whether or not intellectual understanding takes place. . . . [I]f one text can be powerful, then the complete set of them, the entire canon, represents a total power source of considerable importance.”⁷¹ No wonder emperors, khans, dalai lamas, and Mongol nobles all sponsored printings of the canon.

Fiction and Drama

Qing rulers tried to discourage translations of popular Chinese plays and novels, and they succeeded in preventing most works from being printed—though not from being circulated and read in manuscript form. According to a recent study, Manchu translations of only three Chinese novels exist today in printed form: an edition of *Plum in the Golden Vase*, a selection of short stories from *Liaozhai zhiyi* (Strange stories from a Chinese studio), and two editions of *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms*, the fictionalized retelling of the *Sanguo zhi* (Annals of the Three Kingdoms). This last work was particularly popular among banner officials because of its relevance to military strategy. It was first published in Manchu in the 1630s; then a second edition was commissioned in the 1640s by the regent to the Shunzhi emperor, Dorgon (1612–50), though this edition did not appear until 1651.⁷² Huang Runhua also lists a Manchu-Chinese bilingual edition of the famous play *Record of the Western Chamber*, printed in 1710.⁷³

Despite this very low number of *printed* editions of Manchu translations of Chinese fiction, it is evident, from repeated bans of immoral and lascivious literature during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, that Chinese novels did circulate widely—and not simply in their original Chinese versions—in manuscript form. Some of these manuscripts even featured phonetic transcriptions of Chinese texts in Manchu letters, so that they could be read aloud to bannermen who could not read Chinese but understood the spoken language.⁷⁴ The existence of many Manchu (and, for that matter, Mongol) transcriptions and translations of a variety of Chinese works of fiction suggests that there was a large audience for them; the paucity of woodblock-printed editions can be explained by the official policy banning most of Chinese popular literature.

Chinese literature was introduced to Mongols first through translations, which were produced beginning in the eighteenth century and, like the Manchu versions, were circulated usually in manuscript form.⁷⁵ One scholar estimates that more than eighty Chinese works had been translated into Mongolian by the end of the Qing dynasty.⁷⁶ Closer scrutiny of the titles in

Mongol-language collections, however, shows relatively few of the masterpieces of Chinese literature: in the royal collections in Copenhagen, which include an unusually large number (56) of fictional works, of these masterpieces, only *Journey to the West* and *Narrative of the Three Kingdoms* were represented. Half of the holdings were fragments of a novel depicting the adventures of “wise official Shi” (*Shi mergen noyan*) who served during the Kangxi reign; still others were fictional accounts of the adventures of the Shunzhi and Jiaqing emperors as they left the palace and lived in commoner society.⁷⁷

But Chinese fiction clearly had an influence on Mongol writing: during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Mongol writers began to record pieces of their own oral literature—of course refashioning them in the process. The works thus produced borrowed some of the conventions and themes of popular Chinese novels.⁷⁸

THE IMPACT OF PRINTING ON CHINESE AND NON-HAN CULTURES

Did printing in non-Han languages facilitate the creation of a common “Qing” culture, one that integrated texts, ideas, and religious beliefs from a range of different ethnic sources? Did the printing of texts in non-Han languages, in particular those texts that translated Chinese writings into non-Han languages, serve to forge Han Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, and Tibetans into a multiethnic cultural confederation under Qing rule?

The answers to these questions depend to a great extent on the period and the particular type of non-Han publishing under discussion. If one examines the case of Tibet, it is clear that publishing in the Tibetan language did not, and probably was not intended to, encourage integration. The Qing government ruled Tibet indirectly through Tibetan nobles and clerics. Most Tibetans were not exposed to sustained contact with Han Chinese or, indeed, encouraged to engage in linguistic and cultural exchanges with the Chinese and, to some extent, other Qing ethnic groups. Banner schools teaching languages other than Tibetan did not exist in Tibet. Chinese texts were not commonly translated into Tibetan; nor were Tibetan works translated into Chinese. Sinitic cultural influence was relatively limited and, in any event, was matched and to some extent challenged by influence from India.⁷⁹ Qing patronage of the church—and publication of the Tibetan Buddhist canon—served only to strengthen the society’s focus on Tibetan Buddhism. With greater access to the Buddhist canon, thanks to the printed editions produced during the Qing, Buddhist historical, theological, and philosophical writings flourished.⁸⁰ One could argue, in fact, that government-sponsored publication of Tibetan texts, by encouraging studies of Tibetan Buddhism, served to strengthen a sense of Tibet’s separateness and difference. Tibetan culture

remained quite independent of Chinese culture—and a very distinct unit within the Qing empire—into the early twentieth century.

The case of the Manchus is more complex, for here the effort to integrate Manchu and Chinese was more intense. Translations of Chinese texts had early played a role, albeit a minor one, in the rise of the Manchus as a political power. The Qing rulers sponsored the publication of bilingual texts, and commercial publishers profited from the sale of bilingual (sometimes trilingual) dictionaries. These efforts, needless to say, had little impact on Chinese writing and may have served to hasten the “sinicization” of the Manchus.⁸¹ Chinese fiction, in translation or transcription, became quite popular, judging from the number of manuscript editions that have survived. Despite repeated imperial efforts, most Manchus had lost their original language by the end of the dynasty and spoke Chinese instead; Manchus also wrote poetry and fiction in Chinese.⁸² The relatively small body of original works in the Manchu language does provide several examples of a proud cultural consciousness, albeit one sponsored by the state; the Qianlong emperor’s *han-i araha mukden i fujurun bithe* (Ode to Mukden) is a striking example. But there is little evidence that these works had any immediate, significant impact on Manchu consciousness, or that they slowed the apparent process of Manchu assimilation to Chinese culture.

Nonetheless, as Crossley has so eloquently argued, the outward signs of assimilation were misleading, even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Certainly it can be argued that publishing in the Manchu language aided in the Qianlong emperor’s “creation” of Manchu ethnicity⁸³—though perhaps not precisely at the time or in the way the emperor had envisioned. Although his encouragement of Manchu writing seems, at least superficially, to have had little impact in the eighteenth century, it certainly supported the development of a distinct Manchu identity in the twentieth century. One could argue that the Qianlong emperor unwittingly established the foundational texts for this modern development.

The case of Mongolia is the most fascinating, for the ways in which it demonstrates the role that publishing and literature can play in the creation of ethnic and national identities. By the late nineteenth century, the bureaucratization of the banners had weakened though not eliminated the cleavages among Mongol tribes. Many Mongols were now preoccupied with the increasing challenge posed to their pastoral economy by Han Chinese settlers and traders. A weakened Qing government was unable to keep Chinese traders out of Mongolia, and Mongol leaders were alarmed at the high rates of indebtedness that resulted. Han Chinese settlers had moved into some of the most fertile regions of Inner Mongolia, incurring the resentment of Mongols.⁸⁴

The reaction to these trends can be seen in the historical novel *Köke sudur*

(Blue chronicle), by Injannasi (1836–92).⁸⁵ Injannasi was a Mongol noble who traced his descent to Chinggis's fourth son. His father, the second-highest-ranking banner official in the Tümed Right Banner of the Jusutu League in present-day Inner Mongolia, was a man of education and scholarly interests. As the seventh son, Injannasi was not obliged to take up administrative posts as were his older brothers; little seems to be known of his earlier career. In the 1870s he began to write fiction. According to his introduction, the first eight chapters of *Köke sudur* were written by his father, before the onset of the Opium War. The work, a "glorified account" of Chinggis Khan, re-creating Chinggis and other Mongol heroes with techniques borrowed from Chinese fiction (here revealing the influence, in part, of Mongol translations of Chinese novels), depicts the glorious past of the Mongols to contrast it to the (in Injannasi's view) miserable present. Scholars have suggested a Confucian perspective in his critique of Tibetan Buddhism as the cause of Mongolia's decline, but Injannasi did not adopt a pro-Chinese stance. Instead, he explicitly set out to attack the patronizing tone of Chinese historians writing about the Mongol conquest. He offered *Köke sudur* as a "standard history" and a corrective to biased Chinese accounts, hoping that his Mongol readers would be inspired by their historical legacy to take charge of their own fates.

Almaz Khan has argued that Mongol ethnic consciousness, which transformed Chinggis Khan from the object of an ancestral cult to a symbol of the Mongolian people, can be dated to no earlier than the twentieth century.⁸⁶ Indeed, Injannasi's novel circulated only in manuscript form during the Qing dynasty, so it had only a limited audience at that time. But its potential as a document for Mongolian ethnic nationalism was recognized during the 1930s, when fragments were published in Beijing; the enlarged (though incomplete) novel was published in 1940 and in 1957. This novel—to some extent a product of the textual translations and exchanges I have been discussing—has had a "tremendous impact" on Mongol nationalists.⁸⁷ Its evolving function in Mongolian culture typifies the multiethnic and multilinguistic complexity of the heritage of Qing book culture.

CONCLUSION

During the Qing period, Beijing became a major printing center for literatures in Manchu, Mongolian, and Tibetan. Qing imperial patronage and economic prosperity stimulated an unprecedented efflorescence of Mongol and Tibetan literary culture. Translations and original works, surviving in manuscript and printed form, testify to both the breadth and the depth of the expansion in non-Han book culture that was part of the Qing cultural legacy.

Statistics on the distribution of subjects in the Manchu-, Mongol-, and Tibetan-language literatures speak to the question posed at the onset of this

chapter: did printing facilitate the creation of a common culture, shared not only by the diverse Han population but also by non-Han peoples within the Qing imperium? Many Mongols and Tibetans obtained access to Chinese texts through the multilingual Manchu editions that were published during the Qing dynasty by government agencies and commercial firms. Since familiarity is a fundamental prerequisite for creating a common culture, one might argue that these Qing publications helped to lay the foundation for cultural integration between Han Chinese and Inner Asian subjects. Nonetheless, the large body of works in Mongolian and Tibetan that either show little Chinese cultural influence or reflect the influence of Indian culture challenges assumptions of “sinicization” or other oversimple generalizations concerning Qing cultural development. And the role that Manchu and Mongol texts such as *han-i araha mukden i fujurun bithe* and *Köke sudur*—though not particularly influential at the time of their appearance—have played in the formation of modern Manchu and Mongol identities suggests that the publication of non-Han works had, in the long run, a *disintegrating* effect.

Perhaps the most striking effect of non-Han publishing in the Qing was the creation of a book culture of the Qing periphery. Manchu and Mongol bannermen and a select group of Mongols from outside the Eight Banners seem to have been the most active agents in this achievement. These scholars drew on the resources of several distinct cultures (including their own) as they wrote. Although government projects played a large role in the production of non-Han book culture, there was also a significant development of commercial publishing, particularly for Manchu-language works. Proximity to potential buyers—Mongol nobles were required to appear at court in periodic rotation—and the presence of the central government dictated that the center of non-Han publishing would be Beijing rather than the lower Yangzi cities that were the major sites of Chinese commercial publishing. The Mongol and Tibetan emphasis on religious literature also ensured that monasteries and temples would be important centers for book production in these genres.

One might view the flowering of book culture in Manchu, Tibetan, and Mongolian as the fulfillment of the Qianlong imperial vision in which a universal monarch sponsored cultural development for each of his subject peoples. At the same time, the Qing Mongol and Tibetan cultural efflorescence had historical consequences for the twentieth century, when educated Tibetans and Mongols emerged from Qing rule with expanded literatures in their native languages. These literatures would form a foundation for the ethnic nationalism that emerged after the fall of the Qing dynasty. In support of that argument, one need merely point to the actions taken by elites on the peripheries of the 1911 Revolution: the expulsion of Qing officials and troops from Tibet, the establishment of an independent state in Mongolia, and the attempts by Inner Mongols to secede from the Chinese republic.

Other aspects of non-Han book production speak to issues treated by other authors in this volume. Cynthia Brokaw's and Joseph McDermott's comments concerning the persistent importance of the manuscript and hand-copied text in China apply with equal vigor to Mongol-, Manchu-, and Tibetan-language texts, whose readership was far more scattered and far less urban. Much of the literature in Manchu, Tibetan, and Mongolian produced during the dynasty was in manuscript form. As with the Chinese handwritten texts that Brokaw describes (see Chap. 1), non-Han manuscripts ran the whole gamut from imperial court productions, usually produced as a prelude to publication, to poor-quality hand copies. Manuscript and printed copies interacted with one another: sometimes a printed edition would be hand-copied, at other times a manuscript would form the basis for a printed edition. The strong presence of manuscripts in all of the major collections of non-Han materials produced during the Qing dynasty underlines the formative character of this period in the cultural history of Tibet, Mongolia, and the northeastern peoples in the Manchu homeland.

A statistical comparison of the Manchu- and Mongol-language literatures also highlights the particularly important role of the Manchu language in the diffusion of book culture. Whereas 83 percent of the works in the Mongol survey were monolingual (only in Mongolian), less than 40 percent of items in the Manchu-language database were only in Manchu—thus more than 60 percent were in Manchu and one or more other languages. This comparison underlines the significance of Manchu as a “bridge language”—that is, as the language that Mongols and other non-Han peoples could use to access Chinese-language works. With its close historical relationships to the Mongol writing system, Manchu would have been easy for Mongols to learn. This fact allowed Mongols an indirect access to Chinese culture, an access not fully approved by the government, which was interested in restricting contact between some Mongols and Chinese. The Qing prohibited the Khalkha Mongol leagues from communicating in Chinese with Beijing⁸⁸ and discouraged them from learning Chinese. Efforts to screen the Khalkha from direct Chinese influence were ineffectual in the long run, but they may have played a significant role in producing a book culture that was distinctive and closed to individuals who were not literate in Mongolian—that is, in limiting Chinese access to Mongolian literature. Yet Manchu allowed these Mongols some access to Chinese culture.

Although Brokaw notes in her introductory essay that a weak central government failed to effectively control Chinese commercial publishing, the virtual absence of the major Chinese literary masterpieces from the printed literature in Mongolian and Manchu suggests that this point should be modified. Certainly the government was able to maintain a more effective official presence in this particular arena of book culture. Manchu rulers implemented Confucian ideals concerning women and family with great vigor,

promoting widow chastity and suppressing the late Ming urban culture that celebrated sexual and sensual pleasures;⁸⁹ their ban on the printing of Chinese novels was one aspect of this policy. But, though the state could inhibit publishers, individuals were able to produce and circulate manuscript copies of translated drama and fiction. Manchus and Mongols read these prohibited books and were inspired to create new works of their own. Here—as in several of the other cases noted above—knowledge of Chinese book culture encouraged integration *and* laid the groundwork for the development, in the twentieth century, of Manchu and Mongol identities distinct from Chinese—and thus ultimately undermined the forces of cultural integration.

NOTES

1. This chapter does not discuss the printed literature in Uighur, despite the fact that such materials were produced by the Qing. It focuses on works in three major non-Han languages: Manchu, Mongolian, and Tibetan.

2. On the early development of the Manchu writing system, see Huang Runhua, “Qingwen guanke tushu shulüe” (A brief description of the Manchu-language official imprints), *Wenxian* (Documents) 4 (1996): 178–79; Pamela Kyle Crossley, *The Manchus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 37–38; and Pamela Kyle Crossley and Evelyn S. Rawski, “A Profile of the Manchu Language in Ch’ing History,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53.1 (1993): 63–102. On schooling, see Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Manchu Education,” in Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 349–52.

3. On the “Manchuization” of Chinese bannermen, see Teng Shaozhen, *Qingdai baqi zidi* (The Qing bannermen) (Beijing: Huaqiao chubanshe, 1989), chap. 2.

4. Zhang Yongjiang, “Qingdai baqi Menggu guanxue” (The Qing Mongol banner schools), *Minzu yanjiu* (Research on nationalities) 6 (1990): 96–102; Xing Li, “Lishi shang de Mengguzu jiaoyu” (Mongol education in history), *Minzu jiaoyu yanjiu* (Research on education among national minorities) 4 (1993): 80; Y. Rinchen, “Books and Traditions (from the History of Mongol culture),” trans. Stanley Frye, in *Analecta Mongolica, Dedicated to the Seventieth Birthday of Professor Owen Lattimore* (Bloomington: The Mongolia Society, 1972), 68–70.

5. Crossley, “Manchu Education”; Zhang Yongjiang, “Baqi Menggu keju chutan” (A preliminary inquiry into the Mongol banner exams), *Nei Menggu shehui kexue* (Social Science Academy of Inner Mongolia) 4 (1989): 75–79.

6. Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), chap. 7.

7. Xu Xiaoguang and Zhou Jian, “Qingchao zhengfu dui lamajiao li fa chutan” (A preliminary inquiry into the establishment of laws by the Qing government respecting Tibetan Buddhism), *Nei Menggu shehui kexue* 1 (1988): 59; Robert J. Miller, *Monasteries and Culture Change in Inner Mongolia* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1959), 27.

8. C. R. Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia*, 2d rev. ed. (London: Kegan Paul, 1989), 87; Henry G. Schwarz, “Introduction,” x, in his *Mongolian Short Stories* (Bellingham: Program in East Asian Studies, Western Washington State College, 1974).

9. The Qianlong ideology is explained at length in James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759–1864* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 197–203. See also Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pt. 3.

10. J. D. Pearson, *Oriental Manuscripts in Europe and North America* (Zug: Interdocumentation Company of Switzerland, 1971), 431, cites an estimate of 705 Manchu-language works, scattered in libraries throughout Europe, Japan, the United States, and the former Soviet Union.

11. *QMM, CUM*, Paris, Tokyo, London, and USA. This chapter does not treat the extensive body of Manchu-language archival materials that exists in the First Historical Archives, Beijing, and in the National Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan. For more information on the archives, see Crossley and Rawski, “A Profile of the Manchu Language.”

12. Although the bulk of the printed Manchu-language materials was made from woodblocks, a small number, produced in the second half of the nineteenth century, were actually printed using new technology imported from the West. Details on the latter appear in the discussion of Qing publishing that follows.

13. The term “publication” is used here only with respect to printed works.

14. This is entry 0139 in *QMM*.

15. Woodblock-printed materials constituted 40.4 percent of the database; the remaining 8.5 percent were reproduced using printing technologies introduced from the West during the late nineteenth and twentieth century.

16. The discussion of publishers largely excludes the 239 unique works held in American libraries because this data was with few exceptions not supplied in USA.

17. Walther Heissig, *A Lost Civilization: The Mongols Rediscovered* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), 252–53.

18. Walther Heissig, in Copenhagen, estimated that approximately 1,400 Mongol-language works are held in collections outside Mongolia and the USSR (xx). The 400 titles collected by A. N. Podzneeov and 129 titles by B. Ia. Vladimirtsov are in the Manuscript Department, Library of the Leningrad Department of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia, Academy of Sciences, and cited in N. P. Shastina, “Mongolian Manuscripts and Xylographs,” in A. S. Tveritinova, comp., *Selections from the Holdings in Oriental Studies in the Great Libraries of the Soviet Union*, trans. Ruth N. Denney (Honolulu: East-West Center, 1967), 17. Vladimir L. Uspensky, “Old Tibetan and Mongolian Collections in the Libraries of St. Petersburg,” *Asian Research Trends: A Humanities and Social Science Review* 6 (1996): 176, estimates the size of the Mongolian collection at 7,300 works (counting duplicates) and the Tibetan collection at the Institute of Oriental Studies, St. Petersburg branch, “one of the world’s largest,” at about 20,000 volumes (counting duplicates) (174). Numeration of the Tibetan-language materials will vary depending on whether the Tibetan Buddhist Kanjur is counted as one book or subdivided into its separate works. For a description of how the collections were formed, see M. Wassiliev, “Notice sur les ouvrages en langue de l’Asie orientale, qui se trouvent dans la bibliothèque de l’Université de Saint-Petersbourg,” *Mélanges asiatiques tirés du Bulletin historique-philologique de l’Académie Impériale des sciences de St. Pétersbourg* 11, 6e livraison (1856): 562–607.

19. Information on holdings came from Germany, Copenhagen, Tokyo, Aziatskii, DLC.
20. Tokyo, 9–188.
21. Uspensky, “Old Tibetan and Mongolian Collections,” 173.
22. See, for example, the compilers’ comment in Tokyo, 16, no. 12: “The alleged Sa. [Sanskrit] title given in the present work is gibberish. The Sa. is beside the point anyway, since . . . the original was translated out of Ch. [Chinese].”
23. Copenhagen, xxv–xxvii.
24. Approximately 2.7 percent of the works in the Manchu-language database were also in Tibetan. The Qing government also published sacred works that were only in Tibetan.
25. David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet* (New York: Praeger, 1968), 160; the authors point out, p. 139, that there is no evidence of any Tibetan woodblock-print book before the Ming Kanjur. Also see Song Xiaoji, “Lüetan Xizang gudai yinshua he yinjing yuan” (A brief chat about Tibet’s ancient printing and printing establishments), *Zhongyang minzu xueyuan xuebao* (Journal of the Central Nationalities University) 1 (1987): 42–43; and Lewis Lancaster, “Canonic Texts,” in Patricia Berger and Terese Tse Bartholomew, eds., *Mongolia: The Legacy of Chinggis Khan* (San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 1995), 186–87.
26. Uspensky, “Old Tibetan and Mongolian Collections,” 175.
27. Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Structure and Symbol in the Role of the Ming-Qing Foreign Translation Bureaux (ssu-i kuan),” *Central and Inner Asian Studies* 5 (1990): 38–70.
28. On the role of the Sutra Translation Office during the Kangxi reign, see Wang Jiapeng, “Zhongzheng dian yu Qing gong Zangzhuan Fojiao” (The Zhongzheng Hall and the Tibetan Buddhist faith in the Qing palace), *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* (Bulletin of the Palace Museum) 3 (1991): 58–71; Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch’ing China, 1723–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 128, 130–31; Zhao Zhiqiang, “Lun Qingdai de neifan shufang” (On the Qing Inner Translation Bureau), *Qingshi yanjiu* (Research on Qing history) 2 (1992): 22–28, 38.
29. Zhu Saihong, “Wuying dian keshu shuliang de wenxian diaocha ji bianxi” (Investigation and analysis of the quantity of books published by the Wuying dian), *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 3 (1997): 25–32.
30. See BZM, 11, 19, 30, 32, for books printed by the banner official schools, and 14, 19, 73, 106, for books printed by the Translation School in the Jingzhou garrison. *QMM*, nos. 0437, 0440, 0289, are Manchu books printed by this garrison.
31. Kong Yi, “Qingdai guanshuju keshu shulüe” (A brief description of the official imprints of the Qing dynasty), *Wenxian* (Documents) 1 (1992): 231–45; Mei Xianhua, “Wan Qing guanshuju dashi jilüe” (A chronology of major events in the late Qing government presses), *Wenxian* 1 (1992): 247–58.
32. Cheryl Boettcher, “In Search of Manchu Bibliography” (M.A. thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1989), 21.
33. Tokyo, nos. 27, 28, 36, 44; xylographic editions dating from 1708 to 1721; Walter Heissig states that Fu Dalai carved blocks on editions dated 1707 to 1721 (*PLB*, 4).

34. Tokyo, no. 140b, and nos. 82a, 83, 131, 132, 133, 134; *PLB*, p. 4.
35. Tokyo, nos. 120, 81; *PLB*, p. 5. Miller, *Monasteries and Culture Change*, 81, 78. Boettcher, "In Search of Manchu Bibliography," 53–54, cites Fuchs, who visited the area in the 1930s and found some printing firms still in business.
36. Hanson Chase, "The Status of the Manchu Language in the Early Ch'ing" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1979); Zhao Jie, "Manyu de bianhua" (The evolution of Manchu), *Zhongyang minzu xueyuan xuebao* 4 (1987): 78–82.
37. Beth Newman, "The Tibetan Novel and Its Sources," in José Ignacio Cabezán and Roger R. Jackson, eds., *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1960), 411–12; Losel Rinchen, "Zangzu wenhua fazhan gaishuo" (On the cultural development of Tibetans), *Zhongguo Zangxue* (Chinese Tibetology) 4 (1992): 125–38.
38. These works are excluded from the Mongol survey.
39. Chase, "The Status of the Manchu Language."
40. The 1691 edition is no. 11 in Paris; what may well be the same edition appears in *QMM* as no. 0012 under the title *duin bithe*. The 1733 edition is no. 251 in Tokyo.
41. *Duin bithe* is listed as no. 0012, *sy šu ju* as no. 0013, and *inenggidari giyangnaha se šu-i jurgan be suhe bithe* as no. 0009 in *QMM*. *Ice foloho manju nikan hergen-i se šu* is no. 11 and *se šu oyonggo tuwara bithe* is no. 18 in Paris; another edition is listed as no. 251 in Tokyo.
42. The *Mencius* is no. 0007, the *Analects* no. 0006, the *Great Learning* no. 0001, and the *Daxue Zhongyong* (Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean) no. 0003 in *QMM*. The trilingual edition of the Great Learning is a ms. copy, Mong. 96, in Copenhagen, which also holds Mong. 14, a ms. copy in Mongolian of the *Doctrine of the Mean*.
43. Although Copenhagen, p. 104, Mong. 38, is a 1906 ms. copy of a work that provides "an account of the textual history of the five Chinese Classics."
44. *QMM* no. 0543 is a Manchu-language edition titled *irgebun i nomun* (Poetry classic), which seems to be the same book as Paris, no. 6, which is titled *ši ging ni bithe* (*Classic of Songs* book). Both books are dated 1655. Tokyo no. 238 is the same work under a different title, *han-i araha ši ging bithe* (Imperially commissioned *Classic of Songs*).
45. On generalizations concerning translation projects, see Chase, "Status of the Manchu Language," chap. 2; and Huang Runhua, "Qingwen guanke tushu," 186–87. For Manchu versions of the *Classic of Changes*, see *QMM* no. 0023, Tokyo nos. 231–33, *London* II.43A–D, and Paris no. 1. The *Classic of History* is no. 0658 in *QMM*, nos. 234–237 in Tokyo, II.45A–C in *London*, and no. 3 in Paris. The *Record of Rites* is *QMM* no. 0940, Tokyo nos. 242–43, and *London* II.47A–D. For the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, see *QMM* no. 0662, Tokyo nos. 244–45, *London* II.48A–C, and Paris nos. 8–9. On the *Xiaojing*, see *QMM* no. 0099, Tokyo nos. 257 and 444, *London* II.54 and II.55A–B, and Paris no. 10.
46. Zhao Jie, "Manyu de bianhua," 78.
47. Ji Yonghai, "'Da Qing quanshu' yanjiu" (Research on the *Da Qing quanshu*), *Manyu yanjiu* (Research on the Manchu language) 2 (1990): 42–50. Also see Crossley and Rawski, "Profile of the Manchu Language," 83–87.
48. Crossley, "Manchu Education," 347.
49. Kazuo Enoki, "Researches in Chinese Turkestan during the Ch'ien-lung Period, with Special Reference to the *Hsi yü t'ung-wen chih*," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 14 (1955): 22.

50. Enoki, "Researches in Chinese Turkestan," 19.

51. The work is described in *PLB*, pp. 86–87; see Tokyo, 123.

52. Enoki, "Researches in Chinese Turkestan." The dictionary also provided the pronunciation of place-names in the Todo script, which was adapted for the Western Mongol (Oirat) dialect (see p. 307).

53. He Xige, "'Wuti Qingwenjian' ji qi bianzuan biniu" (The *Wuti Qingwenjian* and its compilation errors), *Manyu yanjiu* 2 (1993): 85–90; Imanishi Shunju, "Gotai Shinbunkan kaidai" (Synopsis of the *Wuti Qingwenjian*), in Tamura Jitsuzō, ed., *Gotai shinbunkan yakukai* (Annotated translation of the five-language Manchu dictionary) (Kyoto: Kyōto daigaku bungaku bu, 1966), 17–29.

54. *QMM* nos. 0406, 0427, 0428, 0460, 0466.

55. *QMM* nos. 89–121; see no. 0354.

56. See *QMM* no. 0425.

57. See, for example, the Manchu-Mongol-Chinese textbook, Tokyo no. 169, which has a preface dated 1908.

58. Tokyo no. 161.

59. Copenhagen, pp. 111–12, Mong. 57a, 57b: the two copies were purchased by Heissig in Beijing in 1944. USA no. 244 seems to be an 1890 edition of the same work

60. Tokyo nos. 166, 163, 164, 165.

61. Tokyo nos. 131, 128–30.

62. Yin Weixian, "Zangyu wencishu bianzuan jianshi" (Brief history of Tibetan-language dictionary compilation), *Zhongguo Zangxue* 1 (1995): 122–23.

63. Chase, "Status of the Manchu Language," chap. 2; Huang Runhua, "Qingwen guanke tushu," 179; Crossley, "Manchu Education," 345–46.

64. Owen Lattimore, *The Mongols of Manchuria: Their Tribal Divisions, Geographical Distribution, Historical Relations with Manchus and Chinese and Present Political Problems* (New York: John Day Company, 1934), 57.

65. Sh. Bira, *Mongolian Historical Literature of the XVII–XIX Centuries Written in Tibetan*, trans. Stanley N. Frye (Bloomington: The Mongolia Society, the Tibet Society, 1970), 32–40; Yin Wenxian, "Zangyu wencishu," 122; Walther Heissig, "Mongolische Literatur," in *Handbuch der Orientalistik, Erste Abteilung Nahe und der Mittlere Osten: Fünfter Band, Altaistik: Zweiter Abschnitt, Mongolistik* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964), 266.

66. The original woodblocks carved in the Yongle reign (r. 1403–24) were the basis for the Qing imprints; see Paul Harrison, "A Brief History of the Tibetan bKa' 'gyur," in Cabezán and Jackson, eds., *Tibetan Literature*, 81.

67. Heissig, *A Lost Civilization*, 158–60, presents information on the 2,000 taels of silver that a Khalkha Mongol prince's son paid in 1713 for printing a work that was over 9,000 pages long. Bawden, *Modern History*, 84, notes, "It was rich men and nobles from among the Mongols themselves who patronized printing."

68. For one outstanding example, see Vladimir L. Uspensky, *Prince Yunli (1697–1738), Manchu Statesman and Tibetan Buddhist* (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1997).

69. Lū Minghui, "Qingdai beifang gemizu yu zhongyuan Hanzu de wenhua jiaoliu ji qi gongxian" (The cultural mix and contributions of the northern minorities and the Han people of the central plain in the Qing), *Qingshi yanjiu* 6 (1988): 130–31; Walther Heissig, *The Religions of Mongolia*, trans. Geoffrey Samuel (Berke-

ley: University of California Press, 1970), 33; *PLB*. Li Zhitan, “‘Dazangjing’ zang, Manwen ban xiancun Gugong” (The Manchu edition of the Buddhist Tripitaka survives in the Palace Museum), *Wenxian* 4 (1991): 286–87, describes the discovery in 1950 of the print blocks for the Manchu edition of the Buddhist canon.

70. Harrison, “Brief History,” 86.

71. Harrison, “Brief History,” 85.

72. Huang Runhua, “Qingwen guanke tushu,” 181–82.

73. Martin Gimm, “Manchu Translations of Chinese Novels and Short Stories: An Attempt at an Inventory,” *Asia Major*, 3d ser., 1.1 (1988): 79. Gimm surveyed sixty Manchu-language collections located all over the world to collect the information presented in this study. *QMM* no. 0583. Huang lists two different editions of *si siyang gi bithe*; the first is identified with a printer’s name, the second has no printer’s name.

74. Gimm, “Manchu Translations,” 80 n. 7, cites a phonetic transcription of *Honglou meng* (Dream of the red chamber); elsewhere (p. 81) Gimm argues that these ms. translations of Chinese novels “owe their existence purely to chance.”

75. There are also a few modern metal-type editions in the collections.

76. Yun Feng, *Meng Han wenhua jiaoliu zemian guan—Mengguzu hanwen chuanguo shi* (A side view of Mongol-Han cultural interaction—a history of Mongol literary creations in Chinese) (Hebei: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1992), 194.

77. Copenhagen nos. 93–103. By comparison, only five items of fiction appear in the Mongol collections in Germany, nos. 88–92. No works of fiction are found in Tokyo. I am grateful to Prof. Christopher Atwood for help translating *mergen noyan*.

78. Heissig, “Mongolische Literatur,” 236–37, 262–63; Nicholas Poppe, *The Heroic Epic of the Khalkha Mongols*, trans. J. Krueger, D. Montgomery, and M. Walter (Bloomington: The Mongolia Society, 1979), 8, 26, 54–62; Schwarz, “Introduction,” ix.

79. Newman, “The Tibetan Novel and Its Sources”; Losel Rinchen, “Zangzu wenhua fazhan gaishuo.”

80. Sushama Lohia, *The Mongol Tales of the 32 Wooden Men (Tučin Qoyar Modun Kümün-ü Üliger) in Their Mongol Version of 1746 (1686), Translated and Annotated* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968); Josef Kolmaš, “Tibetan Sources,” in Donald L. Leslie, Colin Mackerras, and Wang Gungwu, eds., *Essays on the Sources for Chinese History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), 135–36.

81. For a critique of this term, see Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 13–14.

82. On Chinese-language writings by Manchus, see Mao Xing, ed., *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu wenxue* (Literature of China’s minority peoples) (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 237–62; Tian Jizhou et al., eds., *Shaoshu minzu yu Zhonghua wenhua* (National minorities and Chinese culture) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1996), 470–545; Zhang Jiasheng, “Manzu xiaoshuo chansheng yu Qingdai zhongqi de yuanyin” (Factors in the production of Manchu fiction in mid-Qing), *Manzu yanjiu* (Research on the Manchu people) 1 (1993): 57–64. Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China’s Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 94–125, 214–25, focuses on the poetry compilation of a Hanjun woman, Wanyan Yunzhu. On Mongol writers, see Yun Feng, *Meng Han wenhua jiaoliu*, 100–186.

83. Pamela Kyle Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Daniel Kane, “Language Death and Language Revivalism: The Case of Manchu,” *Central Asiatic Journal*

41.2 (1997): 231–49. For a discussion of the creation of Manchu identity, see Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, passim.

84. See M. Sanjdorj, *Manchu Chinese Colonial Rule in Northern Mongolia*, trans. Ur-gunge Onon (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980).

85. The variant spellings of his name include Inchanashi, Injanashi, Injannashi. See John Gombojab Hangin, *Köke Sudur (The Blue Chronicle): A Study of the First Mongolian Historical Novel by Injannasi* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1973).

86. Almaz Khan, "Chinggīs Khan: From Imperial Ancestor to Ethnic Hero," in Stevan Harrell, ed., *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 248–77.

87. Hangin, *Köke Sudur*, 1–2, describes the history of the manuscript and different editions. See his discussion of its nationalist meaning, pp. 45–46.

88. Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia*, 86.

89. Mann, *Precious Records*, 23–26.

NINE

“Preserving the Bonds of Kin”

Genealogy Masters and Genealogy Production in the Jiangsu-Zhejiang Area in the Qing and Republican Periods

Xu Xiaoman

Translated by Huang Yuanmei

Scholars generally interpret the proliferation of genealogies from the late Ming (1368–1644) on as a sign of the increased importance of lineages in local society in southern China. They acknowledge that lineages served a wide range of functions: they might serve as groups representing gentry interests to the state, as economic units that facilitated gentry investment in commerce, as alliances that strengthened elite networks and extrafamilial ties, and as institutions that helped to organize local society and even provide welfare services for its members and—more important from the state’s point of view—mechanisms for the collection of taxes.

Genealogies,¹ as written definitions of lineages, presumably fulfilled a similar range of different functions. To be sure, the explanations for the construction of genealogies given in the texts themselves usually emphasized the goal of narrating family history and thus forging family cohesion. Prefaces commonly repeat the platitude that “a genealogy is to a family as a history is to a country,” or “the genealogy of a family is as important as the history of a country and a local gazetteer of a *zhou*.” Or, more eloquently, as Lu Wenchao (1717–96) explained, a genealogy, by defining the family, ensured its preservation: “[O]nly if you have a genealogy can your descendants know their ancestors, distinguish their lineage, and avoid confusing the branches and sections within their own kin group. . . . Although the ancient rules defining the core line of descent from the eldest son do not exist any more, everyone should exert themselves to preserve the bonds among kin [lit., “the way of the kin group”], and the genealogy is the basis for such efforts.”² The publication of genealogies came to represent, by extension, civilization and culture, in particular the moral values associated with a strong family. Thus the late Qing scholar Zhong Qi, in *Huangchao suoxie lu* (Collection of trifles from the present dynasty), marks a clear divide between those regions no-

toriously backward in the production of genealogies and those where genealogies could be found in “every village.” “[The people] of the provinces Gansu, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guizhou do not know their genealogies; they confuse kin and non-kin,” he complains. “This is really negligent and vulgar. Every village in the provinces of Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Anhui, Zhejiang, Hunan, and Hubei has compiled genealogies in order to uphold benevolence and honesty, as well as to unify their scattered kinsmen.”³

As recent scholarship has indicated, however, genealogies also functioned in more practical, socially, politically, and economically useful ways. A genealogy established a family’s (and thus, of course, an individual’s) pedigree and social standing,⁴ linking the group to the “civilized” values mentioned above. For elite lineage members, it could work to advance economic goals or consolidate personal gains in the political world—to create useful networks or to bolster an official career.⁵ The practice, relatively common from the Song on, of soliciting prefaces for genealogies from distinguished officials or scholars outside the family, helped to forge social (and potentially political and economic) links between the lineage and important local—and perhaps national—figures. In 1801, for example, the genealogy of the Wang lineage of Jiading included a laudatory preface from the famous scholar and high official Qian Daxin (1728–1804). “[When we] read this text,” he wrote, “[we find that] there is no pomposity, and no strained interpretations. In praising [the family], the compilers have studied the honesty of the ancients. From such family rules we can discern the good character [of the family] and thus predict that their blessings will last forever.”⁶ The fact that Qian was in the habit of writing prefaces for the genealogies of his friends reduces the value of this particular tribute somewhat, but it still serves to link the family to a great man—and, as Robert Hymes has pointed out, ensures the survival of the link in the collected writings of the great man, if not through the genealogy itself.⁷

A genealogy might also provide the basis for higher-order lineage formation, as the documentation required to “prove” kin ties between different lineages interested in forging kin alliances, often as a means of elevating their status by linking their line to a more prestigious branch of the family.⁸ Yet it might also have the effect of dividing and restricting a kin group. David Faure has argued that genealogies functioned as contracts, as documentation of membership in a lineage, and as such would indicate the identification and location of different ancestral halls (*citang*), list “member” descendants in the generational tables, provide pictures and precise descriptions of grave sites, and often record as well lineage property holdings and contractual agreements made among lineage members. Thus genealogies might also serve as proof of who had legitimate access to the profits of corporate property, family networks, and lineage services—and who did not.⁹ Here the compilation of a genealogy is just as much an act of exclusion, bar-

ring certain kin from participation in lineage affairs (and from a share of the corporate property), as it is an act of inclusion, a mechanism for family agglomeration or cohesion, as is so often argued in the texts themselves.

In some cases, it might also serve to prevent interlopers from defrauding legitimate lineage members. The foreword to the *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu* (Revised genealogy of the Du lineage [of Chongming]; wooden movable-type edition of 1868) does reveal the utility, from both the family and official viewpoints, of genealogies as “contracts” of lineage membership.

It has been years since [Du] Wanyu of our Du lineage moved to Chong[ming], and it is difficult to sift exhaustively through all the materials for the compilation of a genealogy. The genealogy was revised in the Daoguang period [1821–51], proofread by Mr. Du Yuan, and enlarged and published superbly after extremely careful correction. Unfortunately, the original woodblocks were all destroyed in a fire. Originally we hoped that materials could be investigated and a genealogy edited that would include each family line, but no one would assume leadership in this task. Recently, it was reported that Lu Ligang, who lives in northeast Liuyan, Haijing, fraudulently obtained the original genealogy, and, claiming the surname Du, traveled from Haijing to Chongming, defrauding people everywhere of money to pay for travel and food, claiming to be working on a revision of the genealogy. So I, Xizhou, cannot stand by any more.¹⁰

Here there was an urgent need to revise the Du genealogy because someone was assuming the Du surname and using it to cheat family members. The legitimate genealogy editor (Du Xizhou) even attached a government notice, written by the “chief prefect of Haimen, Jiangsu,” to support the Du cause:

Student of the imperial academy Du Ruiyu and commoners Du Xizhou and Du Yingquan report: “The *Dushi zongpu* was revised by our granduncle Songyuan during the Daoguang period. The original blocks were all destroyed later in a fire. It has been twenty-six years since then. The family and lineage members have moved throughout Chongming, dispersing so that it has been impossible to find them. Then it happened that Lu Ligang assumed the Du surname to cheat people in the villages out of money by [claiming to be] writing [the genealogy]. We thought that a genealogy, like the root of a tree and the origin of a river, should not be neglected for long, so we plan to entrust Du Xizhou and Genealogy Manager Li Tinghua with the compilation of the genealogy. Because there are too many branches and lines in the kin group, it is difficult to obtain knowledge about all. In order to prevent villains from using our surname for fraud, we submit a statement of the situation and a public notice for approval by the government.” So, in addition to the government-approved notice, we post notices to inform the descendants of the Du lineage of the situation. Now the plan to revise the genealogy has been made by Du Ruiyu and the revision will be undertaken by the Manager Li Tinghua, with

assistance from Du Xizhou. Those of you who are members of the Du family should go to the [genealogy] bureau to write [down information about your family], so that the lines of descent can be authenticated. Any unlawful villains who pretend to be members of the family and make monetary gain by such fraud should be reported so that they can be penalized. Everyone should be on the alert so that there will be no violations. Promulgated Tongzhi 7 [1868], 8th month, 12th day.¹¹

This example also reveals another characteristic of Qing era (1644–1911) genealogies: the government, in line with its support of lineage development,¹² openly encouraged their compilation. In 1670 the Kangxi emperor (r. 1661–1722) identified genealogies as a tool for the promotion of kinship communities in the “Shengyu shiliu tiao” (Sixteen imperial decrees): “[compiling a genealogy can] make kinsmen more sincere through the demonstration of harmony.”¹³ His successor, the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723–35), also encouraged genealogy writing, “so that a family might unite with remotely related kinsmen.”¹⁴ At times, the genealogies themselves, as in the case above, reveal explicit and pointed government support for the compilation, not simply of genealogies broadly speaking, but of specific texts. The (*Nanhui*) *Fushi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Fu lineage of Nanhui), revised in 1908 and printed in lead type in 1913, includes a notice issued by the “chief office (*zhengtang*) of Nanhui county, Songjiang prefecture, Jiangsu province,” dated the twentieth day of the eighth month, 1870, announcing that Fu Yikang proposed to revise the complete genealogy of all five branches of the Fu lineage. The notice requests that all Fu’s relatives list all the branches and sections (in their family), without leaving anything out, and submit this information to Fu Yikang.¹⁵ Such cases are rather rare, however, as the government usually confined itself to general statements of support; certainly it was unusual for the government to issue public notices calling for assistance in the compilation of genealogies.

My purpose here is not to belabor analyses of the motives for genealogy writing already advanced in the rich scholarship on lineage formation.¹⁶ Rather, I explore the actual process of genealogy compilation: how and how often genealogies were compiled, who collected the necessary information and edited the texts, how genealogies were funded, and how they were printed and distributed. Knowledge of the various methods used to fund, research, edit, print, and disseminate genealogies, heretofore neglected by scholars, will in fact assist our understanding of the significance and function of genealogies in lineage creation and development.

I have selected genealogies produced during the Qing dynasty in Shanghai and the Jiangsu-Zhejiang area surrounding the city as the focus of this study. Most of the immigrants who formed the core population of Shanghai came from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces—hence the close connection between migrant families and lineages based in the two provinces.

THE COMPILATION OF GENEALOGIES: GENEALOGY MASTERS,
 GENEALOGY BUREAUS, AND THE PROFESSIONALIZATION
 OF GENEALOGY PUBLICATION IN THE QING

Who did the actual work of compiling a family's genealogy? We might find it easy to assume that a genealogy would naturally be compiled by members of the relevant lineage. And, indeed, this was often the case. For example, the cover page of the *Wushi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Wu lineage [of Chongming]; wooden movable-type edition of 1900) has the words "revised by [Wu] Bugao of the sixteenth generation, proofread by Fengming" printed on the left and "revised by [Wu] Luzhen of the fifteenth generation" on the right.¹⁷ These men were obviously both lineage members. So, too, the list of compilers in the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu* (Revised branch genealogy of the Wang lineage of Jiading; wooden movable-type edition of 1901) includes nine persons who revised the genealogy, ten who expanded the genealogy, and six who proofread it—all members of the Wang lineage.¹⁸ And Zhu Qifeng, Zhu Kun, and five other brothers, "following the desire of their father Zhu Xigu," began compiling the (*Shanghai*) *Zhushi zupu* (Genealogy of the Zhu lineage of Shanghai; woodblock edition of 1839) at their ancestral hall, Wangyun ge, in 1789.¹⁹

In the Qing, however, there is evidence that genealogy compilation became, more and more, a profession. It became quite common for families to hire specialists from outside the lineage, often scholars without other means of employment, to compile their genealogies. Although some genealogies attempted to conceal this fact,²⁰ most openly acknowledged that their compilers were from outside the lineage. For example, the (*Runzhou Zhufangzhen*) *Youshi zupu* (Genealogy of the You lineage of Zhufangzhen, Runzhou; wooden movable-type edition of 1802) and the (*Jingkou*) *Dingshi zupu* (Genealogy of the Ding lineage of Jingkou [in Zhenjiang]; wooden-type edition of the Songming tang, 1808) each identifies the compiler of the genealogy as Jiang Weilin.²¹ Jiang was probably a professional genealogy producer, a "genealogy master" (*pushi*), though neither text uses this term or defines Jiang's functions clearly. The *Zhangshi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Zhang lineage [of Chongming]; Guangxu era [1875–1909] woodblock edition) is more forthcoming, describing a collaborative approach to compilation: in 1895, "Qiu Jiucheng, the genealogy master, was invited to collate the drafts and reprint the genealogy"—that is, a genealogy master was hired to edit the drafts of the genealogy (already written by members of the twenty-first generation of the Zhang family) and have the completed manuscript published.²² The *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu*, mentioned above, lists the name of the genealogy master Li Tinghua (also known by his *ming*, Li Shaoshan) in its "Announcement" (Gaoshi), and includes a preface written by Li.²³

Genealogy prefaces often tell us a great deal about the functions and special status of the genealogy master. There seems, in fact, to have been quite

a variety in the types and levels of responsibilities taken by genealogy masters; the term *pushi*, at least, includes a considerable range of meanings. For example, the Du lineage seems to have given their genealogy master almost full control over the compilation of their genealogy, designating a specific site, a “genealogy bureau” (*puju*), for his work. The preface by Du Yunkang and Du Xitong, dated 1869, explains, “[S]o the honest genealogy master Li Shaoshan was invited to make the genealogy. He paid the expenses in advance by himself and went around [to collect materials] regardless of the toil,” and “he went far away to make visits and to investigate.”²⁴ Therefore, Li did everything from collecting data to finishing the whole book. From statements in the genealogy “Bulletin” (Yubai) and “Announcement”—that “the [genealogy] bureau was located in northwest Jiulongzhen, at Du Yunkang’s house” and that certain tasks were “assigned to Du Xizhou and Genealogy Manager Li Tinghua to deal with”²⁵—we may infer that this genealogy bureau was managed by Li Tinghua (Shaoshan), with lineage-member Du Xizhou acting as his assistant.

Some genealogies suggest that genealogy masters might also take a less active role in the compilation of the texts, working more as editors of a completed draft manuscript than as full compilers of the text, as was the case for the (*Chongming*) *Zhangshi zongpu* above. Thus the collator of the early Republican era *Kangshi zupu* (Genealogy of the Kang lineage), explains, “[I] disregarded my age and weakness, exhausted my vision, and suffered the difficulties of writing to copy by hand the worn out old genealogical records I had collected. Within several days, I had made a pile of them and gave them to a genealogy master. Finally, after more than a month, [the genealogy] was finished.”²⁶ Here much of the work of compiling the genealogy was apparently done by a lineage member; the genealogy master was called in to arrange and edit the text and oversee the printing process.

And, in some cases, “genealogy masters” might simply have been the craftsmen hired to print a genealogy. Zhang Xiumin, in his *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (History of Chinese printing), explains that there were workers specializing in printing genealogies in the Shaoxing area, men who were called “genealogy craftsmen” (*pujiang*) or “genealogy masters.” There were as many as over one hundred in Sheng county alone at the end of the Qing period. After the harvest season in the fall, they would travel to towns in Shaoxing or the Ningbo area, carrying their wooden types on shoulder poles, to print genealogies. Their loads of wooden type (*muzi*), also called “wooden stamps” (*myin*), contained only twenty-thousand-odd types, all made from pear wood. These types came in two sizes, big and small, though all were carved in the “Song” style (*Songti*). The compositor’s form, in which the type was set, was made from Chinese fir, evened up with strips of bamboo. The numbers of printers in each group usually ranged from five or six to more than ten. They would work as a group but practiced a division of labor; type

TABLE 9.1 Compilers of the (*Dongting*) *Wangshi jiapu*
(wooden movable-type edition of 1911)

“Proposal of the revision” (*yixiu*):

Twentieth-generation descendant Zhongjian, *zi* Zifang
 Twentieth-generation descendant Zhongfu, *zi* Yueyan
 Twentieth-generation descendant Zhongchi, *zi* Xiaocheng
 Twenty-first-generation descendant Xicheng, *zi* Jingzhai
 Twenty-third-generation descendant Songwei, *zi* Fuqing

“Initiating the project” (*chuangxiu*):

Twenty-first-generation descendant Xigui, *zi* Yizhi
 Twenty-second-generation descendant Renzhong, *zi* Weixuan
 Twenty-second-generation descendant Renbao, *zi* Jinliang
 Twenty-second-generation descendant Renjun, *zi* Hanzheng
 Twenty-second-generation descendant Renrong, *zi* Mengmei

“Gathering the material” (*caifang*):

Twenty-first-generation descendant Xigui, *zi* Yizhi
 Twenty-second-generation descendant Renlin, *zi* Zupei
 Twenty-third-generation descendant Shufan, *zi* Xiaofeng
 Twenty-fourth-generation descendant Jizhi, *zi* Peiqin
 Twenty-third-generation descendant Shuxuan, *zi* Yaoting

“Composing the text” (*xuanshu*):

Ye Yaoyuan, *zi* Zicheng, from Wu county
 Twenty-second-generation descendant Renjun, *zi* Hanzheng
 Cheng Qipeng, *zi* Wanli, from Changzhou

“Editing” (*bianzuan*):

Ye Yaoyuan, *zi* Zicheng, from Wu county

“Collating” (*jiakan*):

From the Editorial Office (Bianji suo): **Ye Yaoyuan**, *zi* Zicheng,
 from Wu county
 Hu Yuan, *zi* Xiaoshen, from Taiping county

“Marking the columns” (*guaxian*):¹

Ye Yaoyuan, *zi* Zicheng, from Wu county

“Copying the manuscript” (*chaoxie*): Four people (names omitted)

“Making the fair copy for printing” (*shanqing*): Two persons (names omitted)

TABLE 9.1 (continued)

<p>“General proofreading” (<i>zongjiao</i>):</p> <p>From the Printing Office (Shuayin suo), Ye Yaoyuan, <i>zi</i> Zicheng, from Wu county</p>
<p>“Proofreading of the covers” (<i>fengbo jiao</i>):</p> <p>From the Printing Office, two people (names omitted)</p>
<p>“Supervising the printing” (<i>jianyin</i>):</p> <p>Ye Yaoyuan, <i>zi</i> Zicheng, from Wu county Twenty-second-generation descendant Renlu, <i>zi</i> Yinchu Twenty-third-generation descendant Shuchun, <i>zi</i> Baosun Twenty-fourth-generation descendant Jizhi, <i>zi</i> Peiqin Twenty-third-generation Shurong, <i>zi</i> Yousan</p>
<p>“Printing” (<i>shuayin</i>): Xu Weipu, of the Xu Yuanpu Print Shop (Yindian), Suzhou²</p>

¹Guaxian appears to refer to the marking of the double columns to the right and left of each block (and folio page), “zuoyou shuanglan” or “zuoyou shuangxian.”

²“Xuantong xinhai xiupu renyuan lu” (*Dongting*) *Wangshi jiapu*, j. *shou*, 34a–35b.

carving, picture making, and typesetting were the distinct tasks assigned to different workers. A manager supervised the whole printing process. Depending on the size of the lineage and the amount of material to be printed, the labor period might vary from one to three months. These itinerant genealogy masters were usually hired by a lineage to print a genealogy in the lineage ancestral hall or charitable estate (*yizhuang*).²⁷

The genealogy masters mentioned by Zhang Xiumin clearly specialized in the task of reproducing genealogies—carving type and blocks for illustrations and printing. Taga Akigoro also identifies genealogy masters as the technicians and laborers who handled the mechanics of genealogy reproduction: “genealogy masters are professionals who specialized in the printing of genealogies.”²⁸ Yet Qiu Jiucheng and Li Shaoshan clearly had much broader and more important tasks: they also wrote and edited genealogies. Their work had already moved beyond the simple supervision of genealogy printing to more demanding professional research, writing, and editing tasks.

To clarify the complex relationships of collaboration—and especially the role of the genealogy master—that often supported genealogy compilation, let us analyze the list of genealogy compilers in the (*Dongting*) *Wangshi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Wang lineage of Dongting; wooden movable-type edition of 1911). The list in Table 9.1 is ordered in categories, each defining the na-

ture of the contribution made by each person or group, from the inception of the project to its end.²⁹

Here members of the Wang lineage played an important role in the initial stages of the project—obviously in proposing and initiating the compilation, but also in collecting the necessary information from family members. Beyond this last stage, they had relatively minor roles: only one family member helped to write the genealogy, though several assisted in supervising the printing of the texts. Once the research had been done, it was, rather, an outsider, Ye Yaoyuan (z. Zicheng), who dominated the project, appearing no fewer than six times in this list. He was largely responsible for the composition and collation of the manuscript and the supervision of the printing, and apparently solely responsible for the editing and proofreading. It is possible that he was an independent genealogy master hired by the Wang family to take over the more onerous and less private steps in the compilation of the genealogy. It is also possible that Ye (and his co-collator Hu Yuan) was affiliated with the Xu Yuanpu Printshop of Suzhou—that is, that he was a genealogy master working for a print shop (*yindian*) that was in charge of the entire process of compiling and printing genealogies. In either case, Ye was clearly doing the work of a professional editor-publisher.

Another sign that the compilation and publication of genealogies had become more specialized and to some extent professionalized in the Qing is the apparently rather common lineage practice of establishing genealogy bureaus to organize compilation and oversee printing.³⁰ Some genealogies list the name and location of the relevant genealogy bureau on the labels (*jiantiao*) pasted on the genealogy covers, under the title. Thus the label of the *Zhangshi zongpu* contains the following statement: “Printing woodblocks in the possession of Yuxiu tang. The bureau is located at Duinan sanjia, Bianshu he town, Chongming.” And the cover label of the *Shishi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Shi lineage [of Chongming]; late Qing woodblock edition published by the Baoyin tang) explains “the bureau is located at X X X hall, to the northeast of X X X town.”

Such terse references yield little detailed information about the size and complexity of these genealogy bureaus. But the “Record of Receipts and Expenditures for the Revision of the Genealogy” (*Xiupu zhengxin lu*) in the (*Wuzhong*) *Yeshi zupu* (Genealogy of the Ye lineage of Wuzhong; revised by Ye Maoliu and printed in wooden type in 1911) suggests that they could, depending on family resources and ambitions, be quite elaborate offices:

1. Expenses of the office in Shanghai and business trips (822 *yuan*).
2. Rent for the houses of the genealogy bureau in Shanghai (719 *yuan*).
3. Stationery for the office of the genealogy bureau in Shanghai (162 *yuan*).
4. Salaries of the office clerks of the genealogy bureau in Shanghai (3,252 *yuan*).³¹

The Ye family clearly spared no cost in establishing, staffing, and supplying its genealogy bureau.³²

GENEALOGY PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND CARE

Given the low and very uneven survival rate for the texts, it is difficult to know how frequently genealogies were revised. The general expectation was that a genealogy was to be revised every thirty years, or “once in three generations.” But some families desired a revision every twenty years, every ten years, or even at shorter durations. Guidelines were sometimes included in the family rules or instructions in the genealogy itself. For example, the “Family Rules” (Jiafa) of the (*Xicheng*) *Zhangshi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Zhang lineage of Xicheng [, Shanghai]; wooden movable-type edition printed by the Jiuru tang in 1928) required that “the genealogy should be revised every thirty years.”³³ Hou Xianchun wrote, in his 1603 preface to the (*Xishan Dongli*) *Houshi baxiu zongpu* (Eighth revised edition of the genealogy of the Hou lineage of Dongli, Xishan; wooden movable-type edition, 1919): “I hope that from now on, [the genealogy] can be edited every thirty years and that my descendants will honor the will of their forebears.”³⁴ Even in the late Republican era, genealogies included instructions for frequent revision; the “Rules for Editing the Genealogy” (Xiupu tiaoli) in the (*Yuyao Daotang*) *Caoshi xupu* (Continuation of the genealogy of the Cao lineage of Daotang, Yuyao) prescribes “a small amendment every ten years and a thorough one every twenty years.”³⁵

It is clear, however, that these revision schedules often could not be kept. They might be realized in times of peace and prosperity, but during war or natural disaster—or simply in the absence of any social, political, or economic necessity for what was clearly, as the discussion in the section above shows, a rather elaborate and expensive process—they were more difficult to meet.³⁶ More than once the authors of prefaces to genealogies, family elders in their seventies or eighties, include a rhetorical apology, emphasizing the shame they feel before their ancestors for their failure to compile or revise a genealogy within an allotted time. Other prefaces stress what a great accomplishment it was to complete, finally, the compilation of the genealogy.

It is equally difficult to make generalizations about the print runs of most genealogies—the number of printed copies made was by no means fixed. Usually, however, the range was quite limited, from several tens to just over one hundred copies. For example, the entire print run for the (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Yu lineage of Jinshan [Dongyang]; wooden-type edition of 1901) was only 20 copies;³⁷ the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, 40 copies;³⁸ the (*Gurun*) *Wushi chongxiu zongpu* (Revised genealogy of the Wu lineage of Gurun; woodblock edition, 1886), 50 copies; the *Chenshi shipu* (Genealogy of the Chen lineage [of Jiaxing]; lead-type edition of the Zhuyi tang,

Shanghai, 1891), 80 copies; the *Wushi zhipu* (Genealogy of the Wu branch lineage [of Wuxian]; woodblock edition, 1882), 80 copies;³⁹ the (*Dantu Yaoshi zupu* (Genealogy of the Yao lineage of Dantu [Zhenjiang]; wooden movable-type edition, 1911), 100 copies; and the (*Funing*) *Gushi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Gu lineage of Funing), 110 copies. Clearly the size of each printing was decided by the specific needs of each lineage.

Genealogies were to be made available only to lineage members, and, at that, usually to only a restricted number of kin within the lineage. The (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu* suggests that the criterion for selection should be character: “The genealogy should be deposited with kin members who are competent, prudent, and principled, so that it will be kept from dirt and damage.”⁴⁰ But other lineages made more precise plans for the distribution of the texts. The Zhang family of Fengxian, for example, developed this detailed set of directives for distribution in their genealogy of 1877:

Beginning with the eldest son of the eleventh generation, following the ordering of all the branches according to their designations (*minghao*) and seniority, give one copy to each branch. If the member [of the eleventh generation] is not married, then start with the tenth generation, following the same order. There is no need to distribute any additional copies. If a member of the twelfth generation is already married and separated from the family, give him an additional copy, according to the appropriate designation. If the member [of the eleventh generation] has married, but died without an heir, or his sons have not yet married, one copy is to be assigned to the appropriate designation, but is temporarily kept by the charitable estate. After the sons grow up and get married, the head of the lineage will investigate and then give [the genealogy] to them. If a family that has received a genealogy lacks an heir and is without anyone to pass it on to, then, during the ancestral worship at the winter solstice, when all the lineage members gather together, the genealogy, after investigation, should be handed back to the charitable estate.⁴¹

Other rules governed—and, again, limited—the use and preservation of genealogies. Many of these rules suggest that genealogies were not to be used much at all—if read at all, they were to be read silently, out of respect for one’s ancestors (and presumably out of fear that a reading aloud might carelessly disclose precious information that could be abused by outsiders or even kin without access to the genealogy). Thus, the *Gushi jiasheng* (Family history of the Gu lineage [of Shanghai]; printed in 1745), in a section of the lineage rules titled “Genealogical documents should be taken seriously” (*Pudie dang zhong*), warns:

The genealogical documents contain the honored and taboo names of one’s ancestors. Filial descendants can read them with their eyes, silently, but not with their mouths, aloud. It would be better to store them away in secret and preserve them forever. During the ancestral rites in the Qingming Festival,

[each family line] should bring the original edition of [its genealogy] to the ancestral hall and read it over together. After the ceremony, [the genealogies] should be taken home and stored.⁴²

Here the ancestral rites of the Qingming Festival are the only occasion that justifies public reading of the genealogy. The Yu family of Jinshan also allowed for use of the genealogy as a record of lineage affairs, presumably useful in settling disputes, though emphasizing, too, the value of storage in one place over frequent use: “If the genealogy has to be brought out for reference in lineage affairs, it must be re-deposited safely afterwards as soon as possible. It should not be lent recklessly lest accidents occur.” And when a genealogy was to be revised, all existing copies were supposed to be turned in to the ancestral hall.⁴³

Naturally, given this emphasis on the need to control distribution of the genealogy and to keep it secret and safe (and used as little as possible), lineages also usually kept close track of their genealogies by making precise records of distribution. Often serial characters or numbers were used to identify which texts belonged to which families. Some encoded the serial characters or numbers in auspicious phrases. For example, the Yu lineage of Jinshan used the twenty characters in the following statement to provide the designations for copies of their genealogy in 1901: 瓜瓞同根蒂，分軒衍慶長，子孫千萬葉，人壽祝蕃昌 (As melon vines from the same root and stem branch out and spread to an admirable length, descendants extend through millions of generations, longevity blessing an abundant prosperity).⁴⁴ The auspicious code for the identification of copies of the genealogy of the Li lineage of Jurong was thirty characters long: 祖德詒謀遠，宗功燕翼深，詩書綿甲第，忠孝振家聲，敦睦傳懿訓，升平慶永寧 (The virtues of the ancestors are passed down to descendants generation after generation; the lineage achievements shelter the descendants; study brings continuous success in the examinations; loyalty and filial piety make known the family name; sincerity and concord are transmitted as virtuous instructions; harmony is rewarded with peace).⁴⁵

Some genealogies actually printed the “serial mark for receipt of the genealogy” (*lingpu bianhao*) or the “name of the recipient of the genealogy” (*lingpu renming*), recording the copy designation of the genealogy for each branch and the name of the person who received the copy. Thus, at the end of the *Lishi jiasheng*, there is a section titled “Names of the Recipients of the Genealogy” (*Lingpu renming*); it records, “Gong received the copy with the designation *zu*,” “Yuanyi received the copy with the designation *de*,” “Zhao-long received the copy with the designation *yi*,” and so on. Generally, genealogies would often include on their covers a form, printed in advance, with the number of the genealogy and name of recipient left blank (“the _____ volume held by _____,” *di* _____ *ce* _____ *zhencang*), to be filled in at

the time of distribution. For example, one copy of the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu* has “fourteen” and “Laiyao” written in the blank spaces between these characters on its cover, to indicate that it was “the fourteenth copy, held by [Wang] Laiyao.”⁴⁶ Or, sometimes, after the phrase “serial mark for calculating and recording distribution to each branch” (*jikai fensong gefang xihao*), there is a record “the ____ mark given for safe keeping to ____” (*di ____ hao gei ____ shoucang*). Thus the “thirty-five” and “descendant Youchun of the eleventh generation” written in a copy of the (*Fengxian*) *Zhangshi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Zhang lineage of Fengxian; woodblock edition of 1877) means that Zhang Youchun of the eleventh generation received the number thirty-five genealogy.⁴⁷ This close supervision of the distribution of the genealogy within the lineage suggests the exclusive nature of at least some of these texts; many lineages deemed it essential to limit and control access to their genealogies.

Such records of genealogy possession could be used, too, to help enforce prescriptions for the care of the texts and proscriptions against their sale. The *Gushi jiasheng* makes the connection explicit:

If someone has [the genealogy of his line] eaten by mice, stained with grease, or worn away, he will be punished by the head and all the members of the kin before the ancestors. If this happens, another capable person in the same family line will be chosen to take charge of [the genealogy]. To make it easier to check, [the caretaker's] name will be recorded. If some unworthy descendants should sell the genealogy or copy the original version to seek profit stealthily, confusing the true and false [genealogies] and thereby bringing disorder to the lineage branches, they disgrace not only their relatives but also their ancestors. They will be expelled from the lineage, forbidden from entering the ancestral hall, and a suit will be filed by the lineage with the government. The falsified genealogies will be tracked down and the offender punished.⁴⁸

And the (*Changzhou*) *Mashi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Ma lineage of Changzhou; Zhicheng tang lead-type edition of 1919) lists even stricter penalties:

If the genealogy, due to carelessness in preservation, is soiled, smeared, worm-eaten or mouse-bitten, a penalty will be deliberated. The person responsible will be made to mend it, or receive a beating of twenty strokes. If the genealogy is destroyed in a fire that spread through the neighborhood, or stolen, [the person responsible] will be punished by being made to kneel for as long as it takes a stick of incense to burn. If someone sells the genealogy but reports it as a loss, he will be forever forbidden from entering the ancestral hall once his fraud is discovered.⁴⁹

And for the Yu family of Jinshan, loss of a genealogy, for whatever reason, merited removal of the name of the owner from lineage records and heavy punishment for all members of his line.⁵⁰

The rules and restrictions summarized above represent the attitudes to-

ward distribution and use expressed in a majority of the genealogies. But not all lineages were this inflexible in limiting access to their genealogies within the lineage. The Wu lineage of Gurun clearly allowed members to purchase copies of its genealogy; in its revised genealogy of 1886, prices are listed for those interested in buying a copy: “[I]n total more than two hundred and ninety *yuan* was spent to print fifty copies of the genealogy. The price for each is about six *yuan*. Now we reduce the price by half to three *yuan*. No further reductions for those who want an additional copy.”⁵¹ It is possible here, however, that willingness to sell the genealogy—at a reduced price—arose out of the need to collect funds to pay for the compilation and printing costs.

It seems that, in the Republican period in particular, there were fewer restrictions on genealogy distribution within the larger kin group. For example, He Huishu, the editor of the (*Ganshan*) *Heshi jiapu* (Genealogy of the He lineage of Ganshan [, Qingpu, Shanghai]), wrote simply in his preface: “[A]lthough [I] am poor, I dare not forget my lineage. So my brothers Shenshu, Xixun, and I verified information, compiled materials, and wrote this genealogy. We had it printed and distributed to all the families in our lineage so that family members will be informed of their origin even though they may disperse in the future.”⁵² Without fuller information about the status and economic circumstances of the Wu and He lineages, we can only speculate on the reasons for their more generous policy toward genealogy distribution. It is possible, in the first case, that such a policy was a necessary means to fund genealogy publication; in the second, that the absence of corporate property (if we take Hu Huishu’s statement about his own poverty seriously) made it unnecessary to restrict lineage membership and thus genealogy ownership.

THE TECHNOLOGY OF REPRODUCTION: HAND-COPYING, XYLOGRAPHY, AND MOVABLE TYPE

In the Qing and Republican eras, just about every possible method of text reproduction known in China at that time—hand-copying, xylography or woodblock printing, wooden movable type, lead movable type, and eventually lithography and mimeography—was employed in the production of genealogies. Tables 9.2 and 9.3, based on a study of 219 genealogies produced in the Shanghai area in the Qing and Republican periods, provide statistical summaries of the popularity of these methods.⁵³

A glance at the tables reveals one rather startling fact: the persistence, through the early twentieth century, of what might seem, given the other technologies available, to be an unnecessarily laborious means of reproduction: hand-copying. The earliest form of text multiplication and circulation was in fact not at all uncommon through this period, accounting for

TABLE 9.2 Genealogies in the Qing dynasty and the Republican period
(by printing method)

<i>Period or reign</i>	<i>Manuscript</i>	<i>Woodblock</i>	<i>Wooden type</i>	<i>Lead type</i>	<i>Lithography</i>	<i>Mimeography</i>	<i>Total</i>
Qing dynasty	6						6
Shunzhi							
Kangxi	4	1					5
Yongzheng							
Qianlong	4	4	3				11
Jiaqing		8					8
Daoguang	7	6	1				14
Xianfeng	1	3					4
Tongzhi	2	6	3				11
Guangxu	10	23	6	2			41
Xuantong	2		1	3			6
Republic	15	11	13	52	9	6	106
Unknown	6		1				7
Total	57	62	28	57	9	6	219

TABLE 9.3 Percentage of genealogies produced
(by different printing methods)

Printing method	Qing dynasty		Republican period	
	#	%	#	%
Manuscript	36	34%	15	14%
Woodblock	51	48%	11	10.4%
Wooden movable type	14	13.3%	13	12.3%
Lead movable type	5	4.7%	52	49.1%
Lithography			9	8.5%
Mimeography			6	5.7%
Total	106	100%	106	100%

thirty-six titles, or 34 percent, of the total number of genealogies from the Qing and fifteen titles, or 14 percent, of those from the Republic. Why this surprisingly high number of manuscript texts at a time when many apparently more efficient methods of printing had already long been available and new, even more efficient methods had recently been introduced?

As we have seen in our consideration of genealogy print runs, the number of copies, particularly if they were to be circulated within a small lineage, was rather low. Yet printing a genealogy would cost a great deal, far more than was reasonable given the relatively few copies required. It was therefore often much cheaper to have the genealogies copied by hand. Only as the size of the family and the kin group grew larger and larger and the number of copies needed increased, was it no longer economical to duplicate by copying.

Some manuscript editions were partially printed in that they were hand-written on paper printed specially for use in genealogical records. For example, the *Zhangshi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Zhang lineage [of Songjiang]; revised in 1862) was hand-copied on special green writing paper with “Zhangshi jiapu” (Zhang family genealogy) printed at the fold lines of the pages. The *Tangshi shipu* (Genealogy of the Tang lineage [of Shanghai]) was also copied on preprinted paper; and at the central fold of each page is printed “fourth edition of the genealogy of the Tang in Shanghai, [compiled by] the tenth-generation descendant Xirui, in the third year of the Xuantong era [1911].”⁵⁴

Most of the extant genealogies—fifty-one titles, or 48 percent of the total—in the Shanghai area were printed by the woodblock method. This is not surprising, as through most of the Qing this method was the most common printing technology. The quality of these printed texts varies greatly. Some are rather fine productions, of large size, and clearly printed on good bamboo paper. For example, the (*Pudong*) *Shenshi zhipu* (Genealogy of the Shen branch lineage of Pudong), a woodblock edition of 1877, measures

265 mm × 167 mm, with a 191 mm × 140 mm frame (*bankuang*).⁵⁵ It was printed on high-quality white bamboo paper (*lianshi zhi*). The (*Xiaoyi Qimen*) *Shenshi beizhi shisanfang Shanghai zhi zupu* (Genealogy of the thirteenth house, Shanghai branch, of the north line of the Shen lineage of Qimen, Xiaoyi), a wooden movable-type publication of 1859, is also rather large (with a total page size of 264 mm × 162 mm and a 187 mm × 135 mm frame), with a clear and pleasing layout. This text is also innovative in that the page numbers are placed near the bound edge rather than at the mouth or open edge of the page. The largest genealogy I have seen is the *Wangshi zhipu* (Branch genealogy of the Wang lineage [of Chongming]), published by woodblock in 1864 on white *lianshi* paper; the size of the book is 303 mm × 182 mm, and that of the inside frame is 235 mm × 165 mm.⁵⁶

Although the materials on genealogies in Shanghai available so far are insufficient for a study of genealogical printing in each area of Shanghai, preliminary research suggests that most of the poorer-quality woodblock editions (and, for that matter, the poorer wooden movable-type editions) came from the Chongming area. Take, for example, the *Shenshi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Shen lineage [of Chongming]), a woodblock edition from the Sanyi tang of Baihuazhuang, dated 1864, and the *Guoshi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Guo lineage [of Chongming]), which was printed in wooden movable type at the Dunmu tang, Xinkaihezhen, in 1909. Not only are the quality of woodblock and wooden-type carving and the arrangement of the characters and type very poor, but the paper is also of low quality. Very thin yellow paper was used both inside and for the covers, and some covers were made of paper as thin as that in the inside. Moreover, the small size of these texts (the former measures 255 mm × 162 mm, with a frame of 224 mm × 140 mm; the latter, 248 mm × 145 mm, with a frame of 205 mm × 145 mm), similar to that of ordinary books, is another sign of low quality.

Some Chongming lineages made an effort to conceal the flaws of local carvers. Two voluminous genealogies, the *Nishi jiasheng* (Family history of the Ni lineage [of Chongming]), a woodblock edition of 1898 in forty-five volumes, and the *Wushi zongpu*, a wooden-type edition of 1900 in forty volumes, outwardly look rather fine. At any rate, they both have very formal, stiff, and smooth title pages, labeled with the dates of printing and the names of the carvers. Yet in the former, even the name of the bookshop on the cover label is unclear; and inside the latter there are many smeared pages.

In some cases, it is apparent that limited resources impeded the completion and perhaps affected the quality of printed genealogies. Although the *Nan Zhang shipu* (Genealogy of the Southern Zhang lineage [of Shanghai]; woodblock edition) is listed as a publication of 1885, a series of different dates of publication are listed at the ends of sections of the text: “reprinted (*chongkan*) in 1880,” “reprinted in 1882,” “reprinted in 1883,” and “reprinted in 1885.” According to the “General Regulations” (*fanli*), “[B]ecause I,

[Zhang] Zheng, ran out of strength and energy in producing the genealogy [all by myself], others made donations to help in the cutting of woodblocks. For each part of the published text the cutting of which was supported by the donation of someone [else], the name of the donor is indicated in order to show there are kin with a shared will [to compile the genealogy].⁵⁷ Thus, because different people made donations at different times to help defray the cost of cutting the woodblocks, there were several different dates of “publication” or carving. The genealogy was finally printed after all these sets of woodblocks were assembled. Printing a genealogy in such a way was indicative of the choices that had to be made by lineages with inadequate resources and limited support from kinsmen.

A third fairly common method of genealogy reproduction was wooden movable-type printing. Though not as common as either xylography or hand-copying in our sample of 219 texts, wooden movable type was used in 13.1 percent of the genealogies during the Qing and 12.3 percent in the Republican era, frequently enough to merit some consideration. And there is some evidence that this technology of reproduction became in fact the most popular in certain parts of Jiangnan in this period. A study of Chinese genealogies preserved in Japan shows that Jiangsu and Zhejiang produced an overwhelmingly high percentage of wooden-type genealogies: 61.5 percent, or 483 of a total of 785 titles printed during the Qing and under the Republic (for which the method of reproduction is known; see Table 9.4).⁵⁸ Here the preference for wooden movable type is clear already by the Daoguang era; and by the Guangxu era, 72.8 percent of all genealogies were wooden movable-type editions.

Within the two provinces, Shaoxing prefecture (Zhejiang) and Changzhou prefecture (Jiangsu) emerge as the real centers of wooden-type genealogy printing. In the course of the discussion of “genealogy craftsmen” and “genealogy masters” above, I described the itinerant genealogy printers of Shaoxing, the groups of craftsmen who carried their store of wooden type from village to village, supplementing them with newly carved characters to suit the specific needs of each lineage. Changzhou was also noted for its wooden movable-type printing; indeed, even more than Shaoxing, it had become a center of that handicraft by the late Qing. The contemporary scholar Bao Shichen praised the quality of type produced by Changzhou carvers, explaining that it was fine enough to have attracted the attention of literati interested in publishing their writings: “[T]he difference among the size of types is most obvious and the typeface of the wooden type [used by Changzhou printers] was the most precise and clear. This type was used to print only genealogies at first and then occasionally to print collections of writings and poetry by literati. Recently, it has been used to print the *Wubei zhi* [Chronicle of military forces], which was a significant event. In the reproduction of the character strokes and the arrangement of lines and rows, there

TABLE 9.4 Genealogies from the Jiangsu-Zhejiang
area in the Qing and Republican periods
(by printing method)

<i>Reign</i>	<i>Manuscript</i>		<i>Woodblock</i>		<i>Wooden type</i>		<i>Metal type</i>		<i>Lithography</i>		<i>Mimeograph</i>	
	Jiang	Zhe	Jiang	Zhe	Jiang	Zhe	Jiang	Zhe	Jiang	Zhe	Jiang	Zhe
Shunzhi		1										
Kangxi	3	3	3	2								
Yongzheng			1									
Qianlong		7	10	11	3	3						
Jiaqing	2	2	9	5	10	12						
Daoguang	2	7	14	9	22	24						
Xianfeng	1	3	6	1	12	6						
Tongzhi	3	4	11	3	24	19						
Guangxu	6	11	30	34	131	96	1	1	2			
Xuantong		1	2		16	5	2			1		
Republican	1	3	14	10	46	54	23	21	10	4	1	1
Unknown	3	2	4		1							
Total	21	44	104	75	265	219	26	22	12	5	1	1

is nothing that is not perfect.”⁵⁹ Or, as another study explains, “The wonderful printing skill of the craftsmen of Changzhou was so famous that people from many different areas came [to have their genealogies printed]. Even people in Sichuan would send their genealogies to Changzhou to be printed. It was said that [the workers in Changzhou] once completed the printing of the (*Luzhou Nanmen*) *Gaoshi zupu* [Genealogy of the Gao lineage of Nanmen, Luzhou] in only forty-five days.”⁶⁰

Given the high quality of Changzhou movable-type printing, it is not surprising, then, that some wooden movable-type genealogies are of impressively high quality. For example, the *Hushi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Hu lineage of Fenglin), printed on *lianshi* paper in 1747, is very well produced, with a neat layout and a clear typeface. This is also a relatively large volume: 365 mm × 250 mm, with a frame of 302 mm × 220 mm. Indeed, as Zhang Xiumin has pointed out, wooden-type genealogies produced in Shaoxing or Changzhou were usually larger than those from other areas, measuring as high as 46 cm and as wide as 37 cm (in contrast to the average of 30 × 20 cm).⁶¹ Apparently the Yu lineage of Dongyang was so satisfied with this technology that they had the revisions of their very large genealogy repeatedly printed, in 1878, 1901, and 1926, in wooden movable type, even insisting that the book labels in the later revisions copy the previous labels.⁶² Certain lineages only gradually moved to wooden movable type, however; the (*Shanghai*) *Zhushi zupu* (Genealogy of the Zhu lineage of Shanghai) was revised and printed by woodblock in 1802, 1827, and 1839—only in 1928 did the lineage shift to wooden movable type.

At the same time that wooden movable-type printing was becoming the preferred method of reproducing genealogies, at least in certain parts of Jiangnan, we can discern the early signs of what was to become another shift in printing technology, to lead movable type. This new method was introduced by Westerners in China; Dr. Robert Morrison, a British missionary, was the first to use it, in 1807, to print Chinese characters. In 1834 an American mission obtained a set of wooden types of Chinese characters and had them sent to Boston to be cast into metal types for use in China. The Royal Printing Bureau (Imprimerie royale) in Paris also cast a set of Chinese characters in 1838. These lead metal types, which were cast from Chinese wooden types, were initially used mainly in the publications or magazines of foreign missions but gradually came to be used in Chinese printing.⁶³ As Tables 9.2 and 9.3 indicate, in the very late Qing, during the Guangxu and Xuantong eras (1875–1912), five Qing genealogies from our sample were printed by lead movable type; all are from either Jinshan, Shanghai, or Songjiang (Huating).

Because the typeface of metal type is precise and sharp-edged, printing with this method produces clearer characters than does either xylography or wooden movable type. The greater clarity allows for a fuller page—that is, a page with many more characters. For example, the *Chenshi shipu*, a lead-

type edition of 1891, has nine lines on each half-folio page, with as many as 28 big characters and 56 small characters in each line. The “Song-style” typeface used in metal-type printing is very clear and the text is easy to read. This text was printed by the Zhuyi tang of Shanghai, a bookstore (first located at Nanshi and later at Qipan jie) that published largely Confucian Classics, histories, literary anthologies, and popular novels. Indeed, the same year that it published the *Chenshi shipu*, the shop also produced Wang Xiqi’s famous work of geography, the *Xiaofanghu zhai yudi congchao* (Collections of historical writings from the Xiaofanghu Studio, 1897). It is somewhat unusual that this shop would also print genealogies.

During the Republican period, genealogies printed in the Jiangsu-Zhejiang area came increasingly to be published in lead type; during the last three decades of the Qing dynasty, a mere four titles were published by lead type; during the Republican period, this figure increased tenfold, to forty-four. Nowhere, however, was the shift to the new printing method more marked than in Shanghai, where as many as fifty-two genealogies (52.1 percent of the total) were printed in metal type under the Republic. This rapid shift to the new technology was clearly related to the development of the modern printing industry of Shanghai.

It would be a mistake to assume, however, that with the development of lead-type printing, the older printing methods died out. During the Republican period, a large number of genealogies, not to mention all sorts of other texts,⁶⁴ were still printed with woodblock or wooden type. And in other ways the influence of the older methods lingered on: Song-style characters were still in common use, even after type-casting methods made the development of other fonts possible. And large-sized genealogies were still preferred, even after the use of metal type made it possible to produce many more characters per page and thus to reduce the size of the texts. For example, the *Xu Wangshi shipu* (Continuation of the genealogy of the Wang lineage), printed in metal type in 1925, is quite large, measuring 305 mm × 175 mm. Thus the new printing technique, while it improved the quality of character reproduction, did not change the format and style of genealogies.

RESOURCES AND EXPENDITURES IN GENEALOGY PUBLISHING

All the issues of genealogy production that I have raised so far—choices made by the lineage about who would do the work of genealogy compilation, decisions about print runs and distribution, selection of reproduction methods, and even the initial plan to produce a genealogy—were dependent to some extent on the resources available to the lineage. Unfortunately, it is difficult to collect information on the costs of genealogy production, as very few genealogies treat this topic in any detail (or even at all). Nonetheless, it is possible to draw some tentative conclusions about both the sources of ge-

nealogy funding and the variation in costs of genealogy production from references—most rather general but some quite specific—scattered throughout the genealogies I have treated here.

Generally, the funds used in publishing a genealogy came largely from the public funds of the lineage and/or contributions from families or individuals within the lineage. The (*Xicheng*) *Zhangshi zongpu*, in its “Family Rules” (*Jiaxun*), states that “expenses [for the publication of the genealogy] will be appropriated from the public funds [i.e., the corporate fund of the lineage], while the deficit will be shared by all the families.”⁶⁵ Lineages without public funds had to rely exclusively on donations from member families, particularly on the contributions of wealthier or more generous members. The “Agreement over the Revision of the Branch Genealogy” (*Chongxiu zhipu yue*), included in the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, explains, for example, “[A]ttempts to revise the genealogy have been aborted several times, because of the lineage’s lack of resources. Now that the ancestral hall has been completed, the production of the genealogy can no longer be postponed. If those within the lineage with the resources and the will make contributions—how much or how little is a matter of personal choice—then the contributor’s name will be recorded in the genealogy. The rest of the money will be donated by Weicheng, a twenty-ninth-generation descendant.”⁶⁶ Here apparently most of the funds for printing the genealogy came from a single lineage member, supplemented by contributions from individual families.⁶⁷

The cost of printing a genealogy was decided largely by the numbers of volumes and copies needed, the printing method chosen, and, of course, contemporary prices. In the Appendix, I list the cost of each step in genealogy production for four titles: (*Fengxian*) *Zhangshi jiapu* (woodblock edition of 1877, published by the Chongben tang), in fifty copies of two volumes each; *Wushi zhipu* (Genealogy of the Wu branch lineage [of Wuxian]; woodblock edition of 1882), in eighty copies of six volumes each; (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu* (wooden movable-type edition of 1901), in forty copies of four volumes each; and (*Dantu*) *Yaoshi zupu* (wooden movable-type edition of 1911), in one hundred copies of eight volumes each. The publication dates of the four genealogies span thirty-four years, from 1877 to 1911, with an average of about eight years between the printing of each. Though this sample is too small to provide either conclusive or precise information on genealogy expenditures, it is nonetheless, in the absence of fuller statistics, worth analyzing. Table 9.5 presents a rough breakdown and comparison of the costs for each lineage.

First, although possible fluctuations in currency valuation and prices—not to mention the different methods of categorizing expenses employed by each lineage—make it difficult to compare expenditures for the four titles in any detail, the variation in total costs is nonetheless striking, ranging

TABLE 9.5 Comparison of compilation and printing expenses for four genealogies

<i>Genealogy</i>	<i>Zhangshi jiafu</i>	<i>Wushi zhipu</i>	<i>Wangshi zhipu</i>	<i>Yaoshi zupu</i>
Year	1877	1882	1902	1911
Printing method	Woodblock	Woodblock	Wooden type	Wooden type
Print run	50	80	40	100
Volumes/copy	2	6	4	8
Total expenses	125 <i>yuan</i>	450.27 <i>yuan</i>	81.9 <i>yuan</i>	2066.9 <i>yuan</i>
Cost per copy	2.5 <i>yuan</i>	5.63 <i>yuan</i>	2.05 <i>yuan</i>	20.7 <i>yuan</i>
Compiling expenses	Not listed	Not listed	8 <i>yuan</i> (9.8% of total)	1156.6 <i>yuan</i> (56% of total)
Carving/ typesetting expenses	80.8 <i>yuan</i> (64.6% of total)	359.27 <i>yuan</i> (79.8% of total)	27.2 <i>yuan</i> (33.2% of total)	172.6 <i>yuan</i> (8.4% of total; 19% of total w/o compilation costs)
Cost of printing paper	11.2 <i>yuan</i> (8.9% of total)	32 <i>yuan</i> (40% of total)	12.6 <i>yuan</i> (15.4% of total)	320.3 <i>yuan</i> (15.5% of total; 35.2% of total w/o compilation costs)
Printing and/or binding expenses	18.3 <i>yuan</i> (14.6% of total)	27 <i>yuan</i> total (6% of total) (14.2 <i>yuan</i> for printing, 3.2% of total; 12.8 <i>yuan</i> for binding, 2.8% of total)	2 <i>yuan</i> for binding (2.4% of total)	20 <i>yuan</i> for binding* (1% of total; 2.2% of total w/o compilation costs)
Other materials	6.4 <i>yuan</i> (5.1% of total)	18 <i>yuan</i> (4% of total)	10.9 <i>yuan</i> (13.3% of total)	63 <i>yuan</i> (3% of total; 6.9% of total w/o compilation costs)
Other expenses	8.3 <i>yuan</i> (6.6% of total)	14 <i>yuan</i> (3.1% of total)	21.2 <i>yuan</i> (25.9% of total)	334.40 <i>yuan</i> (16.2% of total; 36.7% of total w/o compilation costs)

NOTE: The exchange rate between a *wen* and *yuan* is 1,200 *wen* :: 1 *yuan*. Based on *Zhongguo huabishi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1988), 843.

* The *Yaoshi zupu* does not give a breakdown of carving/ typesetting and printing costs; the total for all of these tasks, listed as 172.6 *yuan*, is put here under the "Carving/ typesetting" category because it is likely that the costs of carving and setting the type were far more expensive than those of printing. See the Appendix for a complete list of sources and expenses.

from a low of 81.9 *yuan* (1901) for the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu* to a dazzling high of 2,066.9 *yuan* (1911) for the *Yaoshi zupu*, a twenty-five-fold increase in one decade, or, if we calculate the per-copy cost, a low of 2.05 *yuan* to a high of 20.7 *yuan*, a roughly tenfold increase. This is a somewhat artificial comparison, as the Yao lineage seems to have spent extraordinary sums, roughly 56 percent of their total costs, on genealogical research. The only other genealogy that mentions such an expense, the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, lists only eight *yuan*, or a mere 10 percent of the total cost of the genealogy; apparently the Yao devoted an unusually large portion of their funds to research and data collection. Presumably less wealthy lineages economized by dividing the responsibilities for research, collection of data, and editing of the genealogy among lineage members willing to work on the project for nothing.

Carving of the text was a considerable expense. It seems, however, that wooden movable-type printing was less expensive than woodblock printing, at least in the Jiangnan area. The Zhang and Wu lineages spent roughly two-thirds and four-fifths of their funds, respectively, on block carving; the Wang and the Yao, in contrast, spent only one-third and less than one-tenth (or almost one-fifth, if we discount the unusual sum the Yao family spent on research), respectively, on the wooden movable type required to print their genealogies. The reason for the disparity has much to do with the special nature of genealogies. They use certain standard formats and repeat characters with exceptionally high frequency, in part because of the common use of generational names. If movable type is used, genealogies do not require a very large font, but if blocks are carved, all the characters, repeated or not, have to be cut. The movable-type printing method is thus cheaper. This, I think, explains its growing popularity in the Qing.

The categorization of costs for each genealogy suggests a relatively high degree of specialization in the carving trade. The two woodblock editions divide the carving tasks rather precisely into large and small characters (and in two cases, numbers 1 and 2 in the Appendix, characters for paratextual matter and characters for generational tables), blank spaces, and illustrations, with specific rates for each of these tasks. Presumably these differences in rate are tied to differences in the skill and time required for each task; carving a preface or postscript, which might use exceptionally large characters or characters written in an artistic calligraphic style, required more skill and time than, for example, the carving of the smaller, *jiangti* (craftsman's-style) or *songti* characters of the body of the genealogy. And certainly the carving of illustrations and maps, too, demanded more skill and effort than the relatively simple scooping out of the blank spaces of the text. The *Wushi zhipu* also adds a category for correcting characters—that is, for gouging out incorrect characters and replacing them with slugs of wood with the correct character carved on them. It is clear, too, that genealogies printed by mov-

able type had to use woodblocks for portions of the text: for the Wang and the Yao, illustrations, maps, cover pages, and book labels were carved on blocks, presumably because it was easier and more cost-effective to do so.

Only one genealogy, the wooden movable-type (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zupu*, lists costs for writing out the final draft or fair copy of the genealogy, in this case the copy from which the type would be set; this represents a fairly considerable expense, totaling 19.2 *yuan*, or 23.4 percent of the total cost of the genealogy. And the *Yaoshi zupu* is the only one to list proofreading expenses, again a fairly considerable sum of 334.4 *yuan*, or 16.2 percent (36.7 percent without the compilation costs) of the total. Perhaps these rather high cost tasks were performed by lineage members for the other genealogies, as a means of conserving funds.

As for other production costs, paper could be a considerable expense, depending on the quality chosen and amount needed: the Wu lineage seems to have spent the most, proportionally speaking, for paper—40 percent of the total cost to make 480 volumes (80 copies at six volumes a copy). The Yao family, by far the largest spenders overall, devoted over one-third of their total production costs to paper (here again discounting the large sum they spent on research), but they printed a considerably larger number of volumes—800 (100 copies at eight volumes a copy). The two other lineages, each of which printed fewer copies and perhaps used cheaper paper, spent between 8.9 (for 100 volumes) and 15.4 (for 160 volumes) percent of their total costs on paper. The expenditures for other materials do not seem to have been too high: ink, thread for binding, cover papers (and silk for their corners), and wooden boards, with ties, to encase the genealogies are the most commonly listed supplies, and these, calculated together, usually do not exceed 6 percent of total costs.

The actual printing of the texts does not seem to have been a major expense; nor does the binding. Though these costs are difficult to calculate because they were often combined with other expenses, together they do not seem to have exceeded 15 percent of the total; in the case in which printing and binding are counted separately, the printing cost is only 3.2 percent, the binding cost no more than 2.8 percent. Since printing and binding were the low-skill tasks of the book-production process, it is not surprising that they constitute such a small percentage of the total costs. That these jobs might be assigned to women (and in the case of printing, children as well), generally the cheapest sector of the labor force, also helps to explain the low costs.

Because of the very small print runs, the cost per title of genealogy publishing was much higher than that of other books. For example, in 1889 the price of a forty-volume edition of the *Kangxi zidian* (Kangxi dictionary) ranged from only 3 to 15 *yuan*,⁶⁸ and in 1901 a set of the voluminous *Huang-*

chao jingshi wenbian (The august dynasty’s memorials on statecraft, in 24 *ce*) was only 2.4 *yuan*.⁶⁹ Yet, in the same year, the cost of the (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, the cheapest of the four genealogies in only four volumes, was 2.05 *yuan*.

CONCLUSION: THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF GENEALOGY PRODUCTION

There are many factors that distinguish genealogies from other texts as a genre of publication. A genealogy, by its very nature as a record of a family, required constant revision and republication; it was bound to be always out of date. Its audience and circulation were, generally, very constrained, for the purpose of printing or in any way reproducing a genealogy was not broad dissemination of its contents but rather confirmation of the definition of a lineage within a very restricted group—one that usually did not even include all the kin members of the lineage. A genealogy was not really supposed to be used very much at all; it might be brought out and read as part of ancestral rites or consulted on important lineage affairs and conflicts. But for the most part it was to be kept hidden away, safe from both the pollution and the curiosity (and dangerous knowledge) of outsiders. The publication of genealogies was thus a delicate matter: it was important for a lineage to produce a genealogy, for it established a lineage history and membership, but then equally important for the lineage to restrict, tightly and anxiously, its circulation, for wide dissemination might threaten the economic and social benefits to be derived from lineage membership—and thus undermine the original purpose of the publication.

The dual nature of genealogies as both ritual texts and contracts helped to dictate the specialized form of the texts. There is, after all, no reason why generational tables, grave sitings, intralineage contracts, and property holdings needed to be included in the texts if they were to function simply as family histories. Yet the ritual and contractual requirements of lineage organization meant that most genealogies included this information—at the very least, even the sparsest of texts included generational tables. This meant that genealogies followed a more or less predictable, though expandable, form.

And, as lineages became ever stronger forces in local societies in the late Ming and Qing, it is not surprising that there evolved a group of specialists whose task it was to research, compile, and print these highly formulaic texts. As we have seen, this trend is particularly striking from the late eighteenth century on, when it appears that lineages commonly relied on the services of professional genealogy compilers and/or printers. Working independently or as a member of the staff of a print shop, or *kezi dian*, the more fully liter-

ate of these professionals might, as the head of the lineage “genealogy bureau,” organize the collection of material for the genealogy as well as the composition and editing of the text. Doubtless the increasing competitiveness of the examination system provided, in the form of failed candidates, a goodly supply of literate men eager for such employment, thus helping to meet the growing demand for such services.

Genealogy masters might also supervise the technical aspects of publication—the carving of the block or wooden type, proofreading, and the printing of the texts. Or, as “genealogy craftsmen,” they might simply be in charge of carving the type and printing the texts. (And, as we have seen from the lists of expenditures included in some genealogies, there was a fairly fine specialization of carving tasks as well.) To be sure, lineages that could not afford genealogy masters had to rely on their own members to do the most arduous work of research, composition, and collation. But it appears, from the evidence presented here, that lineages in the Jiangsu-Zhejiang area were fairly regularly able to hire professional genealogy masters to assist them. And the fact that itinerant entrepreneurs of wooden movable-type printing were able to make a living from genealogy printing suggests that the specialization and professionalization of genealogy production was well established, at least in this area, by the late Qing.

APPENDIX: EXPENSES OF GENEALOGY PRODUCTION FOR FOUR LINEAGES

The exchange rate between *wen* and *yuan* is 1,200 *wen* to 1 *yuan*, based on *Zhongguo huabishi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1988), 843. In some cases the items in the following lists have been reordered, so that they could be grouped under types of expenses.

1. (*Fengxian*) *Zhangshi jiapu*,

WOODBLOCK EDITION OF 1877 (50 COPIES, 2 VOLUMES IN EACH COPY)

The rates for carving are in three categories, depending on the type of text and size of the characters. For the preface (which was presumably written either in much larger characters or in a distinctive calligraphic style, more difficult to carve than the standard *jiangti zi*), the rates were 400 *wen* for 100 large characters and 300 *wen* for 100 small characters. For the genealogical tables, carved in smaller standard script, the rate was 160 *wen* for 100 small characters.

TYPE OF EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION/QUANTITY	COST
Carving	Margins and blank spaces	7,000 <i>wen</i>
	Pictures of ancestral hall, graves, and tips	10,000 <i>wen</i>

	Large characters: about 10,000*	80,000 <i>wen</i>
	Small characters: about 22,000*	
	Blank space and illustration of the ancestral hall*	
Printing and binding	50 copies, 2 volumes each copy, at 240 <i>wen</i> /copy	12,000 <i>wen</i>
	Meals for printers and binders	10,000 <i>wen</i>
Materials for printing and binding	Cotton paper (<i>mianliao zhi</i>), 24 <i>dao</i>	13,440 <i>wen</i>
	Chinese ink, 3 <i>jin</i> ; white silk thread, 1 <i>liang</i>	3,700 <i>wen</i>
	Cover paper (<i>bumian zhi</i>) and mounting	4,000 <i>wen</i>
Travel	Expenses for a round-trip by water to Songjiang	10,000 <i>wen</i>
TOTAL		150,140 <i>wen</i> = 125 <i>yuan</i>

*The original text does not provide the breakdown for these different items. Using the carving rates given at the beginning of the document, we can guess that the total for the carving of the large characters was roughly 40,000 *wen*; of the small characters, roughly 35,200; and of the picture of the ancestral hall and the blank space around it, roughly 4,800 *wen*.

2. (*Wuxian*) *Wushi zhipu*,

WOODBLOCK EDITION OF 1882 (80 COPIES, 6 VOLUMES IN EACH COPY)

TYPE OF EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION/QUANTITY	COST
Carving	Large and small characters, blanks and margins: 239,872 characters at 160 <i>wen</i> /100 characters	383,795 <i>wen</i>
	Columns, table of contents, general principles, and postscript: 9,852 characters at 320 <i>wen</i> /100 characters	31,526 <i>wen</i>
	Embedment (<i>kongqian</i>) [of corrected characters] and mending: 60 jobs at 240 <i>wen</i> / job	14,400 <i>wen</i>
	Cover page (<i>fengmian</i>) and labels for the covers (<i>fangqian</i>)	1,400 <i>wen</i>
Printing and binding	Printing of sample: 3 copies, 6 volumes/copy	3 <i>yuan</i>
	Printing and ink for 80 copies at 0.14 <i>yuan</i> /copy	11.2 <i>yuan</i>
	Binding and silk wrapping	12.8 <i>yuan</i>

	the cover corners for 80 copies at 0.16 yuan/copy	
Materials	Construction of 2 five-tier shelves (for printing)	5 yuan
	Painting of the 2 shelves	1 yuan
	Paper (<i>sailian zhi</i>) for 80 copies at 0.4 yuan/copy	32 yuan
	Gingko-wood cover boards, with strings, for 80 copies at 0.15 yuan/copy	12 yuan
Miscellaneous	Tips and banquets for the completion ceremony	8 yuan
	Total tips for odd-job men	6 yuan
TOTAL		91 yuan and 431,121 wen or 450.27 yuan

3. (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*,

WOODEN-TYPE EDITION OF 1901 (40 COPIES, 4 VOLUMES IN EACH COPY)

Though this text and the next, the *Yaoshi zupu*, are both wooden-type editions, the list below includes some costs for carving woodblocks for illustrations, cover pages, and cover labels. It was easier to carve and print illustrations and maps from woodblocks than from wooden type; and the few characters appearing on cover pages and labels made it cost-efficient to carve them on blocks as well.

TYPE OF EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION/QUANTITY	COST
Compilation and/or editing	Labor of workers at the genealogy bureau	6 yuan
	Initiating the project and writing the first draft	2 yuan
Carving and typesetting	Material and labor for carving of woodblocks	1.5 yuan
	Labor for typesetting and some miscellaneous type cutting	16 yuan
	Labor for carving 16 woodcut illustrations	4.7 yuan
	Carving 1,700 wooden types	4 yuan
Writing of draft	Carving labels, inside and out	1 yuan
	Copying of draft	16 yuan
	Drawing 16 illustrations	3.2 yuan
Materials	Paper for draft (<i>yinshua gaozhi</i>)	1.5 yuan
	Paper (<i>liansi zhi</i>) for printing	12.6 yuan

	Covers and silk for wrapping the cover corners	1.2 <i>yuan</i>
	10 woodblocks for the illustrations	0.7 <i>yuan</i>
	2 typesetting matrices	1 <i>yuan</i>
	40 sets of wooden cover boards, with string	5.5 <i>yuan</i>
Binding	Coir brushes and coal	1 <i>yuan</i>
	Binding and wrapping the cover corners	2 <i>yuan</i>
Miscellaneous	Banquet on completion of the work	2 <i>yuan</i>
TOTAL		81.9 <i>yuan</i>

4. (*Dantu*) *Yaoshi zupu*,

WOODEN-TYPE EDITION OF 1911 (100 COPIES, 8 VOLUMES OF EACH COPY)

TYPE OF EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION/QUANTITY	COST
Compilation and/ or editing	Two announcements in newspaper	18.6 <i>yuan</i>
	Labor for cutting woodblocks for notices of recruitment and reminders	4.5 <i>yuan</i>
	1,500 yellow sheets for printing the recruitment and reminder notices; cost of printing	13.5 <i>yuan</i>
	Labor of and meals for servants posting the recruitment and reminder notices; postage for sending these notices	55.4 <i>yuan</i>
	Travel expenses and servants' wages during 5-year survey	1,064.6 <i>yuan</i>
	Materials	Paper for the genealogy, etc.
Ink for the genealogy		12.8 <i>yuan</i>
Coir for brushes used in printing		7.2 <i>yuan</i>
Silk thread for binding		6 <i>yuan</i>
200 boards for covering the genealogy (2 boards/copy)		35 <i>yuan</i>
Cotton-thread bands for the boards		2 <i>yuan</i>
Typesetting, printing, and carving	Typesetting and printing at 0.2 <i>yuan</i> /page	171.2 <i>yuan</i>
	Carving labels for the covers	1.4 <i>yuan</i>

Binding	Labor for binding 800 copies of the genealogy	20 <i>yuan</i>
Proofreading	Meal and sundry fees for proofreaders for 5 months	334.4 <i>yuan</i>
TOTAL		2,066.9 <i>yuan</i>

NOTES

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1. “Genealogy” translates a variety of titles in Chinese: *zupu* (genealogy of a lineage), *zongpu* (genealogy of a clan), *jiacheng* (history of a family), *pu die* (genealogy document), *jiadie* (family document), *guazhi pu* (“melon-vine” genealogy), *tongpu* (complete genealogy), *hepu* (joint genealogy), *quanpu* (complete genealogy), *datong pu* (unified genealogy), and so on.

2. Lu Wenchao, “*Lushi pu xu*,” 1a, (*Yongshang*) *Lushi zongpu gao* (Draft genealogy of the Lu lineage of Yongshang). Jingmu tang wooden movable-type edition of 1860.

3. Zhong Qi, *Huangchao suoxie lu*, in *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan* (Historical materials on modern China, collected and reproduced), no. 59 (1897; Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1970), vol. 3, 38.6b.

4. Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “The Early Stages in the Development of Descent Group Organization,” in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and James L. Watson, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 45; see 35–39, 44–50, for a general discussion of the role of genealogies in lineage formation.

5. James L. Watson, “Anthropological Overview: The Development of Chinese Descent Groups,” in Ebrey and Watson, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China*, 286. For a more detailed discussion of this phenomenon, see Keith Hazelton, “Patriline and the Development of Localized Lineages: The Wu of Hsiu-ning City, Hui-chou, to 1528,” in the same volume, 147–51.

6. (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu* (Revised branch genealogy of the Wang lineage of Jiading; wooden movable-type edition of 1901); Qian’s preface is in the first *ce*, the second preface under “Wangshi zhipu yuanxu” (2a).

7. Robert P. Hymes, “Marriage, Descent Groups, and the Localist Strategy in Sung and Yuan Fu-chou,” in Ebrey and Watson, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China*, 117–23.

8. Ebrey, “The Early Stages in the Development of Descent Group Organization,” 49; Hazelton, “Patriline and the Development of Localized Lineages,” 165.

9. David Faure, “The Written and the Unwritten: The Political Agenda of the Writ-

ten Genealogy,” in Zhongyang yanjiu yuan Jindaishi yanjiu suo, ed., *Jinshi jiazhu yu zhengzhi bijiao lishi lunwen ji* (Family process and political process in modern Chinese history) (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Jindaishi yanjiusuo; Department of History, University of California, Davis; Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, 1992), 259–96.

10. “Yubai,” 1a, in *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu* (wooden-type edition of 1868), *ce* 1 (this section of the text is unpaginated; the passage cited occurs on the first page of the first volume).

11. “Yubai,” 1a, in *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu*, *ce* 1.

12. See Benjamin A. Elman, *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship: The Ch’ang-chou School of New Text Confucianism in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 25–35, for a discussion of the Ming and Qing governments’ policies on lineages.

13. *Shengyu guangxun* (Expanded instructions of the Sacred Edict), in the *Yingyin Wenyuan ge Sikū quanshu* (photo-facsimile reprint of the Wenyuan Pavilion copy of the *Sikū quanshu*) (rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), *zibu*, 717, no. 593.

14. *Shengyu guangxun*, *Yingyin Wenyuan ge Sikū quanshu*, *zibu*, 717, no. 594.

15. (*Nanhui*) *Fushi jiapu* (revised 1908, printed in lead type in 1913), *ce* 1, 21b (there are no *juan* divisions). A similar notice, dated 1866, can also be found in the 1878 woodblock edition of the *Yaoshi zongpu [Chongming]* (Genealogy of the Yao lineage [of Chongming]), printed by the Qinye tang; see *ce* 2, “Gaoshi,” 1ab.

16. The English-language literature on these topics is quite large, too large in fact to list here. To mention just a few of the major book-length studies: Hugh Baker, *A Chinese Lineage Village: Sheung Shui* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968) and *Chinese Family and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); Hilary J. Beattie, *Land and Lineage in China: A Study of T’ung-ch’eng County, Anhui, in the Ming and Ch’ing Dynasties* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Myron Cohen, *House United, House Divided: The Chinese Family in Taiwan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China* (London: Athlone Press, 1958) and *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung* (London: Athlone Press, 1966); Maurice Freedman, ed., *Family and Kinship in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970); Burton Pasternak, *Kinship and Community in Two Chinese Villages* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972); Rubie Watson, *Inequality among Brothers: Class and Kinship in South China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Zheng Zhenman (trans. Michael Szonyi), *Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001). See also the works cited in notes 4–9 and 12.

17. In addition, the last preface, dated 1886, is by Wu Bugao, who is listed as a sixteenth-generation descendant; see “Zhongxiu xinxu,” *Wushi zongpu [Chongming]* (Genealogy of the Wu lineage [of Chongming]), wooden movable-type edition of 1900.

18. “Zhongxiu zhipu mingji,” 1b–2a, in (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, *ce* 1. In the *Shanghai Tushuguan guancang jiapu tiyao* (Synopsis of genealogies held in the Shanghai Library) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000), this text is listed mistakenly as a woodblock edition (p. 46). See Appendix, no. 3, where the genealogy lists the expense of carving wooden type as a production cost.

19. “Chongxiu zupu zishu,” in “Zixu,” 2a, (*Shanghai*) *Zhushi zupu*, j. shou. The (*Zhoupu*) *Zhushi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Zhu lineage of Zhoupu [of Nanhui, Shanghai]; lead movable type, 1926) was also compiled by descendants of different generations in the Zhu lineage.

20. Some genealogies still listed the names of lineage members as editors, even though their prefaces reveal the active participation of outsiders. For example, the men listed as compilers in the (*Nanhui*) *Fushi jiapu* (completed in 1908 but not published, in lead type, until 1913) were all members of the Fu family, but the preface, written in 1911 by a descendant of the sixteenth generation, Fu Rubing, explains that “Li Tiyun, a student at the Imperial Academy (*mingjing*) was invited to revise the generational order and the biographies in the genealogy.” See “Mujuan ke zongpu xu” in “Xu,” 16a, (*Nanhui*) *Fushi jiapu*, ce 1.

21. Taga Akigoro, *Sōfu no kenkyū* (Research on genealogies) (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko, 1960), 29.

22. “Xu,” *Zhangshi zongpu*, ce 1.

23. “Gaoshi,” 1ab, *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu*, ce 1; Li’s preface is titled “Dazhai xu,” 1a–3a of ce 1.

24. Du Yunkang and Du Xitong, “Xu,” *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu*, ce 1.

25. “Yubai” and “Gaoshi,” *Chongxiu Dushi zongpu*, ce 1.

26. “Kangshi yuanliu zhongxiu pu xu,” *Kangshi zupu* (1913). The next edition (1939) of the genealogy was also edited by a genealogy master.

27. Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi* (History of Chinese printing) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1989), 712. By identifying the local characteristics of the typeface of the wooden type used in genealogies, it should be possible to chart the routes and working areas of the genealogy masters and thus get a clearer picture of the organization and scope of this profession.

28. Taga, *Chūgoku sōfu no kenkyū* (Research on Chinese genealogies) (Tokyo: Nihon gakujutsu shinkōkai, 1981), vol. 1, p. 328.

29. “Xuantonq xinhai xiupu ren yuan lu,” (*Dongting*) *Wangshi jiapu*, j. shou, 34a–35b.

30. “Genealogy bureau” might also refer to official bureaus established to compile and study genealogies (see *Hanyu da cidian* [Comprehensive dictionary of Chinese] [Hanyu dacidian chubanshe, 1993], vol. 11, p. 427), but the term here clearly designates a nonofficial bureau established temporarily by a lineage to compile its genealogy.

31. “Xiupu zhengxin lu,” (*Wuzhong*) *Yeshi zupu*, in the first of the appended ce.

32. For another example of a lineage willing to support a genealogy bureau at quite considerable expense, see the discussion of the (*Dantu*) *Yaoshi zupu* below.

33. “Jiafa,” (*Xicheng*) *Zhangshi zongpu*, ce 2, 2.20b. This text is also titled *Shanghai Zhang Jiuru Tang zongpu* (Genealogy of the Jiuru branch of the Zhang lineage of Shanghai).

34. “Xu,” 2b, (*Xishan Dongli*) *Houshi baxiu zongpu*, ce 1.

35. “Xiupu tiaoli,” (*Yuyao Daotang*) *Caoshi xupu* (woodblock edition published by the Qingzhen tang, 1948).

36. Taga, *Chūgoku sōfu no kenkyū*, vol. 1, p. 325.

37. The number and distribution of all the copies are recorded in a section ti-

tled “Buci,” after the “Fanli,” in *j. 1*, (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu*, *ce 1*. Unless otherwise noted, the print runs given in this paragraph are drawn from the list of names of lineage members, printed in the genealogies themselves, who received copies of the genealogies.

38. See “Cangshu mingshu,” 1a, and “Jikai,” 1b, in (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, *ce 1*.

39. “Keyin gongliao xizhang,” at the end of *j. 12* of *Wushi zhipu* (Wuxian).

40. See the last item of the “Fanli,” *j. 1*, in (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu*, *ce 1*.

41. (*Fengxian*) *Zhangshi jiapu* (Genealogy of the Zhang lineage of Fengxian) (Chongben tang woodblock edition of 1877), *ce 2*, 1.41ab.

42. “Zonggui,” *Gushi jiasheng* (woodblock edition of 1745), *ce 1*.

43. Last page of the “Fanli,” *j. 1*, (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu*, *ce 1*.

44. “Buci,” in *j. 1*, (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu*, *ce 1*.

45. *Lishi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Li lineage [of Jurong]; lead-type edition of 1921), *j. 1*, after the prefatory material.

46. See “Cangshu mingshu,” 1a, and “Jikai,” 1b, (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, *ce 1*.

47. See “Jikai fensong gefang xihao,” 42b–44b, (*Fengxian*) *Zhangshi jiapu*, *ce 2*.

48. This passage is also included under the section “Pudie dang zhong,” in “Zonggui,” *Gushi jiasheng*, *ce 1*.

49. “Fanli,” 4b, (*Changzhou*) *Mashi zongpu* (Zhicheng tang lead-type edition of 1919), *j. 1*.

50. Last page of the “Fanli,” *j. 1*, (*Jinshan*) *Yushi zongpu*, *ce 1*.

51. “Jikai,” (*Gurun*) *Wushi chongxiu zongpu* (woodblock edition of 1886), *ce 1*.

52. “Xu,” (*Ganshan*) *Heshi zupu* (Republican era, lead movable type).

53. Because of the ravages of war, political upheaval, and natural disasters—not to mention more mundane problems of mildew and worms—few genealogies have survived over the centuries. Extant genealogies from the Shanghai area are very scarce, dating for the most part from the Qing or the Republican era. Ming dynasty genealogies are extremely rare. Frequently we have records of the titles of genealogies, so that scholars are aware that such texts once existed, but if no copies survive, there is no way to analyze the contents. In writing this chapter, I consulted genealogies from several sources: catalogues of genealogies in the National Library of China in Beijing, the Zhongshan Library in Guangzhou, and the Shanxi Provincial Library in Taiyuan; Taga Akigoro, *Sōfu no kenkyū* and *Chūgoku sōfu no kenkyū*, which includes several separate bibliographies of Chinese genealogies held in public institutions in Japan, the United States, and China; *Meiguo jiapu xuehui Zhongguo pu mulu* (Chinese genealogies in the American Genealogical Society) (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1983); *Taiwan Guoxue wenxian guan xiancang Zhongguo zupu* (Catalogue of extant Chinese genealogies preserved in the Guoxue Wenxian guan in Taiwan) (Taipei: Guoxue wenxianguan, 1982); and *Zhongguo jiapu mulu* (Catalogue of Chinese genealogies) (Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1992). The recent publication of *Zhongguo jiapu zonghe mulu* (Comprehensive bibliography of Chinese genealogies) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997) and particularly of Wang Hongming, ed., *Shanghai Tushuguan guancang jiapu tiyao*, now makes the compilation of a more comprehensive list of such genealogies possible.

54. In the *Shanghai Tushuguan guancang jiapu tiyao*, this one-*ce* text has been classified as a manuscript edition (*chaoben*) containing materials dating into the Guangxu era (1875–1909) (554). I believe, however, that it was rather the original draft (*diben*) that was to be presented to the printers for reproduction (that is, the version of the text to be pasted on the blocks for carving). Another edition of the Tang lineage genealogy, the (*Shanghai*) *Tangshi zupu*, edited also by Tang Xirui, was printed in eight *ce* in 1918; this is listed as the fifth edition.

55. By “frame,” I mean the printed area of the page.

56. Zhang Xiumin says that genealogies printed in wooden type are “usually about 30 cm high and 20 cm wide. But some editions from Shaoxing or the Ningbo area are as high as 46 cm and as wide as 37 cm” (Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 714). I have never seen editions 46 cm high in the Shanghai area.

I would include the (*Fengxian*) *Zhangshi jiapu*, carved in 1877, as another example of a carefully printed, high-quality genealogy.

57. “Fanli,” *Nan Zhang shipu*, *ce* 1.

58. Genealogies from these provinces dominate the Japanese holdings. See also Taga Akigoro, *Chūgoku no sōfu no kenkyū*, 1:404–8; and Taga, *Sōfu no kenkyū*, 31 (here the figure is 66 percent of all the genealogies in Japanese collections, 811 of 1,228).

59. Bao Shichen (Qing), “*Niban shiyin chubian xu*” (Preface to *Niban shiyin chubian*), in Zhai Jinsheng (Qing), *Niban shiyin chubian* (First experimental printing with earthenware type, 1844).

60. Luo Shubao, *Zhongguo gudai yinshua shi* (History of printing in ancient China) (Beijing: Yinshua gongye chubanshe, 1993), 425–26.

61. Zhang, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 714.

62. See the three different entries for (*Jimshan*) *Yushi zongpu* in *Shanghai Tushuguan guancang jiapu tiyao*, 422.

63. See Fan Muhan, ed., *Zhongguo yinshua jindai shi chugao* (Preliminary draft of modern Chinese printing history) (Beijing: Yinshua gongye chubanshe, 1995), 66–175, for a detailed account of the introduction and spread of both lead movable type and lithographic printing from the West.

64. Indeed, long after modern metal-type printing was introduced into China, the traditional woodblock-carving method continued to be used. For example, at the beginning of the Republican period, three famous book collectors, Zhang Junheng, Jiang Ruzao, and Liu Chenggan, produced woodblock texts of high quality, including *Zeshi ju congshu* (*Zeshi ju collectanea*), the *Jiaye tang congshu* (*Jiaye tang collectanea*; printed in Shanghai), and the *Wuxing congshu* (*Wuxing collectanea*). In addition, Wu Changshou of Renhe carved and printed the forty-volume *Shuangzhao lou ci* (*Verses from Shuangzhao lou*), appreciated still today for its elegance. Liu Shiheng of Guichi and Xu Naichang of Nanling both printed a large number of woodblock texts in Nanjing and Shanghai during the late Qing and the early Republican era. See Ren Jiyu, ed., *Zhongguo cangshu lou* (*Chinese book collections*) (Shenyang: Lianning renmin chubanshe, 2001), vol. 3, pp. 1568–1817, especially, for the figures mentioned above, vol. 3, pp. 1697–1700, 1721–24, 1759–62, 1766–71.

65. “Jiafa,” *zhang* 8, *tiao* 66, in (*Xicheng*) *Zhangshi zongpu*, j. 2.20b.

66. “Chongxiu zhipu yue ___,” in (*Jiading*) *Wangshi chongxiu zhipu*, *ce* 1, 2a.

67. See the case of the *Nan Zhang shipu* (1885) for another example of this kind of financial arrangement.

68. “Shanghai shiyin shuye zhi fazhan,” in *Beihua jiebao*, May 25, 1889.

69. Ying Lianzhi (1867–1926), *Ying Lianzhi riji yigao* (Posthumous draft diary of Ying Lianzhi), in Fang Hao, *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan xubian* ed., no. 3 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1974), 10th month, 4th day, 1901 (vol. 1, p. 359).

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PART FOUR

The Book as a Visual Medium

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Visual Hermeneutics and the Act of Turning the Leaf

A Genealogy of Liu Yuan's Lingyan ge

Anne Burkus-Chasson

The printed book appeared in a variety of forms during the course of its history in China. These included, among others, the “whirlwind” binding (*xuanfeng zhuang*), sometimes called the “dragon scales” binding (*longlin zhuang*), to describe the overlapping sheets of paper within the book; the “fold” binding (*zhezhuang*), also known as the “folding sūtra” binding (*jingzhe zhuang*) or “Sanskrit” binding (*fanjia zhuang*), given its common use in the presentation of Buddhist texts; the “butterfly” binding (*hudie zhuang*), whose appellation derives from the effect of fluttering papers that accompanies the opening of the book; and the “thread” binding (*xianzhuang*), a technical designation that refers to the silken or cotton filaments used to stitch together folded sheets of paper into fascicles. (For diagrams of these fabrications, see Fig. 30.)

As to how and when these various forms developed, historians of the book have presented contrary views. Still debated is the relation between the manuscript roll (*juanzhou zhuang*, or “scroll” binding) and the flat-leaf book; the extent to which experimental mingling of one physical format with another occurred; and the nature of the interaction among forms of the book, their contents, and their imagined readers. These questions notwithstanding, the material format of a text remains critical to an analysis of how that text was read. In addressing bibliographic issues that pertain to the materiality of the book, I follow, among others, Roger Chartier, who has observed, “The significance, or better yet, the historically and socially distinct significations of a text, whatever they may be, are inseparable from the material conditions and physical forms that make the text available to readers.”¹

Clearly, the different formats of the printed book involve the reader in experiences that are peculiar to each format. In what follows, I dwell on the construction of the leaf as one material element of the book that affects the

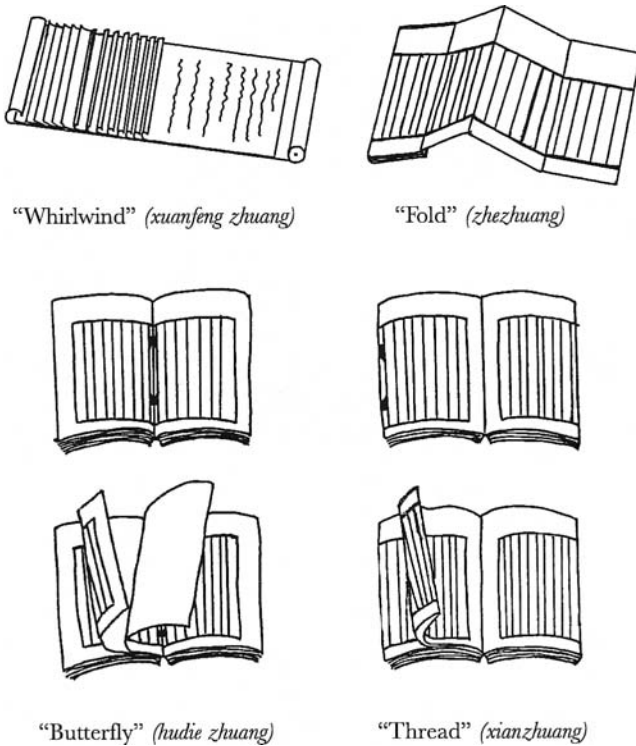


Figure 30. Diagrams of book bindings.

reading experience. After all, it is the form of the leaf that largely determines how the book is opened and how it is moved. I use the word “leaf” to translate the bibliographic term *ye*, which also signifies the foliage of a plant. According to Ye Dehui (1864–1927), the term *ye*, or leaf, was derived from the etymologically related word *ye*, which denotes a thin piece of wood.² Thin, leaflike slats of bamboo or wood, bearing columns of written characters, were used to fabricate the earliest known manuscripts from the Han period (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.). The adoption of the word “leaf” to denote the sheet of paper that bears a printed text thus embeds an image of an antique form of the book within its later, foliated manifestations.

The construction of the leaf is intimately related to the construction of the book within which it is bound.³ For example, the whirlwind binding, briefly adopted during the eighth through tenth centuries, uniquely exhibits characteristics of both the book-roll and the leafed, or foliated, book. There is some controversy about the fabrication of this binding.⁴ However, it appears that the construction of the book involved a paper backing, similar to

that required in making a scroll, on which separate sheets of paper were mounted. Each of the sheets, which bore a text on its front and back sides, was glued contiguously to the paper roll along a narrow section of its right-most edge. Layered one beneath the other, the successive sheets spread down the length of the paper backing, thereby presenting a continuous text. And yet the individual sheets themselves constituted discrete units of text, which facilitated their precise location within the book.

Surely, the whirlwind binding saved readers the effort of unrolling a conventional scroll. But more significant in the reading experience was the division of the text that the binding allowed. Thus, as Li Zhizhong has indicated, the whirlwind binding lent itself to the presentation of reference books, such as rhyming dictionaries and encyclopedias, especially useful to poets, that were opened intermittently, rather than leafed continuously and read from beginning to end.⁵ Jean-Pierre Drège adds that such books probably facilitated study for the newly expanded civil service examinations of the Tang period (618–907) as well. He concludes that in breaking up a text for discontinuous leafing, the whirlwind binding may also have promoted a purely visual practice of reading that diminished the importance of recitation.⁶

The fold binding, which also appeared in the eighth century, similarly promoted the discontinuous leafing of a printed text. Another metamorphosis of the still predominant manuscript roll, the fold binding retained the technique of gluing together single sheets of paper end to end to form a continuous text. But instead of being rolled, the printed sheets, prior to assembly, were each precisely folded, usually four times at equally spaced intervals. To protect the folded sheets of a text, boards of thick paper were pasted at either end of the concertina-like format. The folded divisions of the leaf facilitated the opening of the book to specific sections that a reader might wish to peruse.⁷ Its flat-leaf construction, thought to have been inspired by Indian palm-leaf books, further eased the handling of the book.⁸

The practice of using the recto and verso sides of a leaf (in the whirlwind binding) and the practice of folding the leaves (in the concertina-style book) contributed to the development of the so-called butterfly binding. In use by the ninth century, this binding was favored by printers in the Song period (960–1279). After all, the printer's block had a determining effect on the construction of the new format. Each sheet of paper, printed only on one side from a single woodblock, was folded in half, such that the printed sides faced one another; the folded leaves were then gathered into suites, and these were bound together with glue at the folds; finally, the assembled suites were pasted inside stiff paper covers. A new principle of fabrication was at work, namely, the insertion of the folded sheet of paper into the so-called *shunao*, or "brain of the book," the part of the binding at which the leaves are held together. However, on opening the book, a reader might encounter blank papers, that is, the reverse sides of two successive folded leaves. Because the

order of the book was based on a series of individual folios, the units of its text were discrete and discontinuous; and yet, within the mobile leaves of the book, they were difficult to locate. Nonetheless, Song-period readers were chided for quickly flipping through the leaves of a butterfly-bound book—skimming rather than reading—an action that the binding encouraged.⁹ Although it was ultimately abandoned, the butterfly format was adopted in the seventeenth century for fancy illustrated books, notably the first editions of what came to be known as *Shizhu zhai shuhua pu* (Calligraphy and painting manual from the Studio of Ten Bamboo), published in separate issues between 1619 and 1633. The desire for an unbroken presentation of the pictorial image, which was designed to occupy the entire surface of a leaf, seems to have motivated the revival of the old-fashioned binding.

The thread binding, considered the last transformation of the foliated book, became prevalent during the Wanli era (1573–1620). Like the butterfly binding, the thread binding involved the use of folded sheets of paper. However, to eliminate the difficulty of opening the printed faces of the leaf in the butterfly binding, the printed sheet was folded in half, such that its text was turned outward and made visible, rather than hidden within its fold. An assembly of folded leaves was held together with twists of paper, which were pierced through holes made along the open ends of the folded leaves. Soft paper covers were then attached to the body of the book with silken thread, preferably, or with cotton thread. The threads were stab-stitched into the *shunao*, generally in four spots. In this way, the fold of each leaf faced outward at the “mouth of the book,” or *shukou*. Opening the book revealed the printed faces of successive leaves.

The new construction of the leaf, with its recto and verso sides, critically altered the reading experience, especially in the case of the illustrated book. The folded leaf became a structural and signifying unit, the meaning of which lay in the act of turning from one side to the other. The complexity of this phenomenon defies a casual or brief analysis. Late Ming publishers of fiction, for instance, variously positioned images on the leaf and within the book: a running band of illustration might appear at the top of every leaf; images printed on a half-sheet, or on two facing half-sheets, might be placed sporadically within the text. Alternatively, a separate suite of illustrated leaves might be assembled at the beginning of a book and isolated from its verbal text.

Thus, in opening an illustrated thread-bound book, the act of turning the leaf brought to view the unexpected. A leaf of text introduced fresh narrative; an image might suddenly interrupt the reading of the text. Particularly disruptive was the illustration printed on two facing half-sheets, one half of which was printed on the verso side of the preceding leaf and the other on the recto side of the succeeding leaf. The interruption was hardly diminished by the placement of the illustration to follow directly on the textual passage

with which it was allied. Furthermore, the illustrated folio itself was sometimes designed as an independent unit, particularly in books in which illustration was confined to the front. And yet such illustrated folios were not designed as unified semiotic units. Visual image and verbal text might be conjoined on the recto and verso sides of a leaf. Or, a detailed narrative illustration, designed to refer to an event in the textual story it accompanied, might appear on the recto side of a leaf, whereas the verso side might show an isolated symbolic image that represented the motivation of the textual story in a figural, schematic way. It is within such assemblies of the thread-bound book that the potential of its folded leaf was fully exploited.

The element of the unknown that emerges within the illustrated thread-bound book thus draws attention to the semiotic differences between visual image and verbal text.¹⁰ Recently, it has been argued that the thread binding encouraged rapid reading, given the ease with which its leaves might be turned.¹¹ However, the element of the unknown that is inherent in turning the leaf with its hidden verso side may have had the opposite effect. Puzzles take time to decipher.

To demonstrate my point, I focus here on a rare and unusual picture book, designed in the mid-1660s by Liu Yuan (fl. mid-seventeenth century), a little known painter from northern China who worked in Suzhou for some time and later acquired a name at the court of the Kangxi emperor (r. 1661–1722). The book is titled *Liu Yuan jing hui Lingyan ge* (Liu Yuan respectfully painted Lingyan ge; hereafter I refer to the book as *Lingyan ge*).¹² Its production was sponsored by a Qing official, Tong Pengnian (j.r. 1651), who held an influential supervisory post in Suzhou. It is not unlikely that the book was used by Tong in the administration of his political office to celebrate the dynastic transition and to persuade its readers of the legitimacy of the Manchu usurpation. After all, the Lingyan ge of the book's title, or "Gallery That Traverses Smoky Clouds," was a historical building that had housed the portraits of twenty-four vassals of the early Tang state, all of whom had contributed to its establishment and consolidation. The portraits were commissioned in 643 by the second emperor of the Tang, Li Shimin (r. 627–49), better known by his temple name, Taizong (Great Ancestor). By the mid-seventeenth century, the portraits had vanished. But the significance of the Lingyan portrait gallery was never forgotten: it was a political space, one that connoted the loyal service of a vassal to his ruler. Therefore, with the production of *Lingyan ge*, a reconstruction in print of a paradigmatic monument to loyalty, Tong Pengnian, together with the artist Liu Yuan, engaged one of the most controversial issues of contemporary politics, that is, the reconciliation between Chinese subjects, recently dislocated after the fall of the Ming house (1368–1644), and a newly established Manchu sovereignty. The subject matter of the book itself involved examining the nature of political allegiance, as well as reevaluating the very meaning and significance of loyalty.

Moreover, in the following pages, I argue that practices of reading, especially those adapted to the recto-verso leaf of the thread-bound book, were manipulated by Liu Yuan to create tension in his presentation of the historical gallery of portraits. Contrary and subversive, Liu's picture book dwells, in particular, on the complicated histories of the Lingyan Gallery vassals to demonstrate that their allegiance to the Tang emperors was not perfect. The ironies of Liu's presentation are brought forward in the opposition between the visual images printed on the recto sides of the leaves of the book and the verbal texts printed on their verso sides. The structure of the thread-bound book is thus critical to his political argument.

Furthermore, to make a methodological point, I begin my discussion with the premise that illustration, in general, served more than a subsidiary function within a book. Although it has been commonly observed that late Ming publishers favored illustration, the pictorial element of the printed book has often been discounted, both by seventeenth-century editors and by modern historians; it is frequently treated as a means either of making the printed word attractive or of explaining the meaning of a text to less than competent readers.¹³ *Lingyan ge*, however, forcefully demonstrates the importance of being pictured. The political argument that Liu advances in the book hinges on the manipulation of pictorial conventions of portraiture, and it is intensified through a dialogue, maintained throughout the book, between visual images and verbal texts. I argue that the illustration in *Lingyan ge* is not only a critical site for the economy of reversal involved in the turning of the leaf. The images also constitute a form of visual hermeneutics, whose communicative power matches that of the abundant verbal commentary that characterizes books in general from this historical period.

Finally, a genealogy of the editions of *Lingyan ge*—which includes printed thread-bound books as well as folding albums mounted with printed sheets, in addition to painted scrolls—expressly brings forward the significance of the act of turning the leaf in Liu's original design. The folding album in particular provides an interesting foil to the presentation of illustration within the thread-bound book. A brief explanation of the history and construction of the folding album will clarify this point. First adopted in the late Northern Song period (960–1126), the album was often used to conserve fragments of a deteriorated painting or rubbing.¹⁴ Although it appears to have been a vehicle for small nature studies in the eleventh century, the album was not widely used among painters until the sixteenth century.¹⁵ This juncture in the history of the folding album corresponds with the period that saw the widespread production of illustrated thread-bound books. It is not far-fetched to imagine that the booklike presentation of paintings and calligraphy within the folding album may have been inspired by the foliated printed book. Indeed, the bibliographic term *ce*, originally

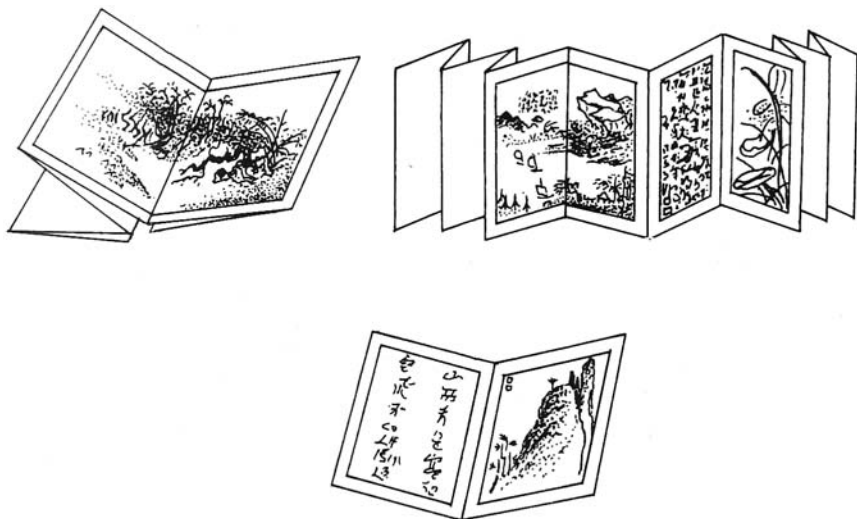


Figure 31. Diagrams of folding albums: *Top left*: single-sheet painting mounted within folding album. *Top right*: combination of the two alternatives pictured here. *Bottom*: two facing single sheets, one painted and the second inscribed with calligraphy, mounted within folding album. Based on Jerome Silbergeld, *Chinese Painting Style: Media, Methods, and Principles of Form*, Fig. 1. i–k.

used to denote the antique book of wooden slats, was adopted to refer to the folding album.

Nomenclature alone may explain why modern scholars often associate the folding album with the foliated book, and, in particular, with the butterfly-bound book.¹⁶ But, in fact, the principles of their fabrication are entirely unrelated. The construction of an album involves the attachment of paintings or works of calligraphy onto stiff sheets of paper that are joined together end to end and then folded into a concertina (Fig. 31). Unlike the folded leaves of a butterfly binding, the leaves of an album are not necessarily folded, nor are they gathered together to form a suite and then glued into a cover; unlike the folded sheets of a fold binding, the individual leaves of an album are not glued together themselves to form a continuous display. Nonetheless, the album is an intimate format, intended to be opened on a table and viewed up close. On opening the album, two discrete spaces are made visible for the juxtaposition of pictorial or verbal compositions. Alternatively, a single sheet of paper or silk might be glued to the paper mounting and folded within the concertina. The superficial resemblance between the butterfly binding and the folding album thus becomes clear: opening their leaves allows the simultaneous and unbroken display of two parts of a composition.

Folios disassembled from a thread-bound book and mounted in a folding album (if only as a means of preservation) reveal at once their recto and verso sides. The surprise inherent in turning the folded leaf of the thread-bound book is lost.

A genealogy of *Lingyan ge* also indicates how the printed image was distinguished from the painted image. This further prompts the question of why the painted studies for *Lingyan ge* were ever carved and printed. Although the patron of *Lingyan ge* indicates in his preface that printing would permit the widespread circulation of the book, it is unlikely that many copies of *Lingyan ge* were produced.¹⁷ Despite the common interaction during this historical period between the printed word and the handwritten word, the printed image and the painted image, the ambivalent position of the printed book in the order of things is clear. As Anne E. McLaren explains here in Chapter 4, signs of “print anxiety” emerged in the fifteenth century, as books were increasingly produced for diverse social audiences, including women and readers with a limited education.¹⁸ It is unsurprising, then, that printed images, despite their ubiquitous presence, were neither analyzed nor catalogued in the abundant art histories of the seventeenth century, whose authors focused instead on calligraphy and painting.

Within the leaves of *Lingyan ge*, the tension between print and painting does not dissipate. The structure of the thread-bound book provided Liu Yuan with a means to present a distinctive pictorial sequence, one that would not have been available to a painter. As a printed object, the political argument of *Lingyan ge* is drawn into an analogous relation with the narrative structures of contemporary printed fiction. Print becomes a carrier of meaning rather than simply a technique of dissemination. Still, within the leaves of the book, Liu maintained the fugitive presence of the painted studies that had preceded the carving of the woodblocks. Their presence is evident in the title of the book. It is evident as well in the elimination of the graphic markers—such as borders, columns, and leaf numbers—that ordinarily defined the layout of the printed leaf.¹⁹ Liu’s designs appear on unlined sheets of paper, unconstrained by the shape of the woodblock. This peculiarity of *Lingyan ge* may have facilitated the transformation of the thread-bound book into other painterly presentations in later times and in different places. Indeed, the identification of the ways in which *Lingyan ge* was perceived once it became a folding album, or a wordless painting, highlights how, as Chartier has pointed out, transformations in the presentation of a text authorize new readerly appropriations and thereby create new publics and new uses for a text.²⁰

A genealogy emerges that is disruptive rather than continuous. Liu used the format of the thread-bound book to enhance subversive elements in his pictorial presentation. *Lingyan ge* was a politically unruly object, whose author tempted censorship. Once remounted as a folding album, the book was

reordered, and the dialogue between the recto and verso sides of the leaf altered. Cast in paint and bereft of its verbal texts, it was shaped to fit aesthetic categories irrelevant to the construction of meaning in its first manifestation on the folded leaves of the thread-bound book. The subversive irony that Liu was able to emphasize with the format of the thread-bound book was muted, or disciplined, by the painterly formats in which it reappeared. After all, it was the printed book that held the guarded secrets of the folded leaf, which, in turn, loosened the hierarchical relations between the text and the picture.

LICENSING THE PICTORIAL STAGE

Liu Yuan's *Lingyan ge* first assumed the form of a short, forty-five leaf, wood-block-printed book, bound with thread, and furnished both with pictures and with a variety of texts. At the start, the order of the book is familiar: a cover leaf, or *fengmian ye*, imprinted with the title and the house of publication, precedes six prefaces and a table of contents.²¹ Protocols of reading are thus established before the book becomes a less familiar pictorial object. Indeed, the exhortations of the preface writers make it clear that the pictorial aspect of the book required explanation, even justification. Thus, the front matter of the book is hardly neutral territory. I shall consider it a "paratext," a term invented by Gérard Genette. A paratext, in his words, "renders the book present." It serves as a membrane through which the reader moves forward and backward. It is an arena of transaction between text and reader.²²

The cover leaf of *Lingyan ge* is constructed of several parts, each aligned in columns, whose disposition on the half-leaf reveals a subtle bibliographic hierarchy (Fig. 32). Placed at the head of the leaf, and carved in a bold script, the title, *Liu Yuan jing hui Lingyan ge*, is primary. It is broken into two irregular columns, which begin, respectively, with the name of the author ("Liu Yuan") and the subject of the book ("Lingyan ge"). The words "Lingyan ge" are isolated; their elevation above the name of the author, a typographical sign of exaltation, enhances their importance.

But the title is especially remarkable for its semantic peculiarities. It is phrased as though it were a signature on a painting. The words "Liu Yuan jing hui Lingyan ge" resist the designatory action of a title, despite their appearance on the cover leaf. To parse the sentence, the name of the artist is the subject of the verb "*jing hui*" (*hui*), which is modified by the adverb *jing*, "respect"; the object of the verb is "Lingyan ge." Although the titles of illustrated books from the mid-seventeenth century often contain verbal phrases, such as "newly published" (*xinkan*), "illustrated" (*chuxiang*), or "newly compiled" (*xinbian*), these phrases convey the commercial strategies of publishing houses.²³ The verbal phrase "*jing hui*" is striking in this context. It distinguishes *Lingyan ge* from contemporary trade books whose titles entice a reader to buy, and prompts instead an analysis of other issues that pertain

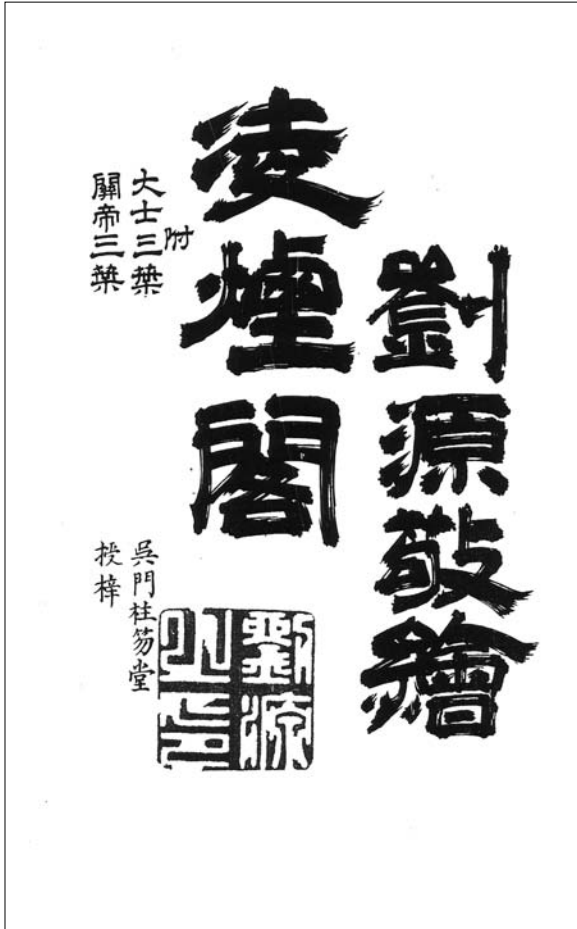


Figure 32. Liu Yuan (fl. mid-seventeenth century), cover leaf from *Liu Yuan jing hui Lingyan ge*. Suzhou: Zhuhu tang, 1669. Album of 45 leaves, woodblock-printed on paper, 25 × 14.8 cm. Kokuritsu kōbunshokan, Tokyo.

to the imagined readership of Liu's book. To paint with respect implies the making of a gift. But to whom was Liu proffering his designs? The answer is not entirely clear. The ambiguity of the "title" is thus as perplexing as it is unexpected. Modern historians have refrained from using the title/signature to designate the book. It has become customary instead to refer to the book as *Lingyan ge gongchen tu* (Pictures of the meritorious ministers of Lingyan

ge).²⁴ The erasure of the question inherent in the title/signature evidences the strangeness of the words that appear on the cover leaf.

The curious slip from title to signature suggests that the words “Liu Yuan respectfully painted Lingyan ge” do not simply refer to the contents of the book. Rather, it implies that the book is a re-presentation by the artist of the historical subject of the Lingyan Gallery. The artist repeats the past; he recovers a legendary portrait gallery. But the act of retrieval is never complete. Repetition, after all, entails a shift in focus or use. Mirrored within the book by Liu Yuan, Lingyan ge is always fugitive. The commanding presence of the author who recovers and reconstructs the portrait gallery is highlighted by a large seal on the cover leaf, “Liu Yuan’s Seal” (Liu Yuan zhi yin). This seal appears at the base of the second column of the title/signature. Carved into the woodblock, rather than impressed onto the leaf of the printed book, the seal is also a mimicry. Artifice is layered upon artifice.

Finally, the presentation of the book as a painting contradicts the work of carving that makes visible the text. The significance of the printed impression becomes problematic. Was the effort to cultivate a likeness to painting merely a commercial strategy, a means to distinguish this printed object from others that overwhelmed the marketplace? Was it a means to secure a particular readership that might appreciate the ambiguity of a printed facsimile? Or did the printed image and the painted image constitute competing discourses?

The reference to painting is not merely asserted in the title/signature. Zhu Gui (fl. mid-seventeenth century), the carver of the woodblocks used to print *Lingyan ge*, manipulated his knife to produce the effects of a brush used by a painter or calligrapher. For instance, the characters that compose the title/signature imitate an archaic form of writing, the “clerical script” (*lishu*), which was designed to exhibit the flexibility of an animal-hair brush in the skilled hands of a calligrapher. With astonishing precision, the stiff edge of the carver’s knife retained the sinuous curve and rhythmic attenuation of a brushed stroke; it created the illusion of ragged traces of ink left by a brush tip slowly raised to finish a stroke. During this historical period, the laborious reproduction of handwritten scripts on the cover leaf lent the printed book the authenticity that the unique manuscript alone had previously possessed. In this case, the illusion of authenticity also conjured the presence of the painter Liu Yuan, who presented the book as a gift.

Next to the title/signature, almost touching the words “Lingyan,” another field of text appears. Though similarly carved in the archaic clerical script, the characters are finer and more diminutive. Offset from the two evenly aligned columns that dominate this field, the word *fu*, “to attach,” introduces the text. It reads: “Attachments: Three Leaves of *Mahāsattva*, Three Leaves of Theocrat Guan.” Six sacred icons thus bring the *Lingyan ge* to a close. These icons include three different manifestations of the Buddhist savior Avalo-

kiteśvara (known in Chinese as Guanyin but also referred to as *dashi*, “great being,” a translation of the Sanskrit term *mahāsattva*) and three phases in the legendary career and theophany of the military hero Guan Yu, who was granted the imperial title of “theocrat” (*di*) in the early seventeenth century.

The announced conclusion of the book is unexpected, for the gallery of portraits to which Liu Yuan alludes did not include divine icons. The historical Lingyan ge was located on the grounds of the Tang imperial palace in Chang’an. It housed the portraits of twenty-four vassals of the state, commissioned in 643 by the second emperor of the Tang, Li Shimin. They were painted by Yan Liben (d. 673), an artist who was acclaimed for his recording of courtly events.²⁵ Although the paintings no longer survive, rubbings, which purport to have been taken from stone engravings made after Yan’s portraits, survive from the Northern Song period.²⁶

Li Shimin was concerned with defining the task of rulership, especially as it pertained to the selection of men to serve the government. The Lingyan Gallery was only part of a larger political endeavor. In the text of the imperial decree that initiated construction of the portrait gallery, the emperor situated Lingyan ge within a familiar genre of didactic and memorial art. He recalled that in the distant past the names of capable ministers had been cast into bronze bells and vessels; more recently, the physical likenesses of worthy subjects had been commissioned by rulers of the Han and displayed in portrait galleries, namely, Qilin ge (Gallery of the Qilin; 51 B.C.E.) and Yuntai (Cloudy Terrace; ca. 58–69). The emperor also explained that his selection of the twenty-four men to be pictured in *Lingyan ge* was based on an evaluation of the skills they had brought to the administration of the empire, some managerial, some ethical, others martial. However, the completed portraits also served as memorials to the intimacy that had bound ruler and minister, even if that intimacy was recalled for the political purpose of demonstrating an ideal. According to later records that describe the refurbishing of the gallery, each of the portraits faced north as though in perpetual audience with the ruler of the state.²⁷ Thus, Lingyan ge was a political space, one that connoted loyal service. Liu Yuan’s printed reconstruction, mysteriously supplemented with divine icons, begins to pose questions of the past.

Finally, to return to the cover leaf of *Lingyan ge*, a notice appears beneath the attachment, toward the bottom of the leaf, hedged by the large seal of the author. It reads: “Wumen Zhuhu tang Afforded Carving.” Presented in a plain standard script, and thus set apart from the title and its supplement, this statement identifies the publisher of the book. Sören Edgren has pointed out that the cover leaf, popularly adopted in late imperial times both by private print shops and by commercial print shops, served the function of advertising the book, and therefore often provides important information about the publishing house.²⁸ It appears, then, that *Lingyan ge* was published by an establishment known as Zhuhu tang, or Hall of Pillared Tablets,

located in the city of Suzhou, or Wumen, well known in the seventeenth century for its production and collection of printed books.

This announcement links *Lingyan ge* to one of the most prominent and politically powerful families of the early Qing. Zhuhu tang was a building on the Suzhou estate of Tong Pengnian, a member of the Chinese Plain Blue Banner and a highly placed local official of the Qing government.²⁹ (The *hu*, or tablet, which is featured in the name of his residence, was an emblem of official rank.) After serving in several provincial offices in northern China, Tong received the most prestigious appointment of his career early in the year 1662, that of right commissioner (*you buzheng shi*) of Jiangnan, charged with handling communication between the central government and this notoriously volatile region of southeastern China.³⁰ Tong served in this office through 1667, at which time changes in the provincial administration narrowed his supervision to the province of Anhui. He held this post through 1669.

Tong Pengnian's bureaucratic career mirrors the careers of many members of his clan. Historically associated with Ming period garrison towns of the Liaodong peninsula, the Tong clan, for the most part, allied itself early on with the Manchu confederation and accepted positions in the Chinese martial banners. During the early years of the Qing, trusted Chinese bannermen such as the Tong were appointed to a majority of provincial administrative positions. Finally, in 1688, the Kangxi emperor, whose mother was a Tong, elevated certain lineages of the clan to the Manchu banners.³¹

Perhaps it is these close links between Tong Pengnian, his family, and the Kangxi court that have persuaded some scholars to conclude that *Lingyan ge* emanated from the imperial print shops.³² Another factor may lie in the identity of the cutter of the woodblocks, Zhu Gui, who, during the later years of his career, worked at the Kangxi court. Nonetheless, the evidence of the cover leaf is indisputable: Zhuhu tang of Suzhou is identified as the publisher. An inscription by Zhu Gui, which appears on the last leaf of Liu Yuan's preface in most editions of *Lingyan ge*, indicates that he received the commission to cut the blocks from Liu himself. Zhu also signed the inscription as a native of Wumen.³³ Hence, there is little doubt that the publication of *Lingyan ge* was a private endeavor, initiated and sponsored by Tong Pengnian during the time that he held the position of right commissioner.

Following the cover leaf, there are six prefaces, each cut to imitate the hand of their authors. The practice of carving from a model in the preparation of a signed preface is another feature of the book trade that the publisher of *Lingyan ge* adopted.³⁴ The prefaces were composed by men stationed at very different positions within the new Manchu polity: two writers were high-ranking officials in the Qing government, including the book's sponsor, Tong Pengnian; three were commoners, including the author and the painter Shen Bai (fl. mid-seventeenth century), who held loyalist sympathies

for the fallen Ming house; one writer remains unidentified. It is also clear from these texts that the designing of the book, begun some time after 1662, occupied three years. The carving of the book was begun in autumn 1668; in the following autumn, 1669, the last of its dated prefaces was written.

Each of the preface writers insists that the book was not merely a thing to be looked upon. Visual pleasure should be subsidiary to a larger project; a skill in reading pictures is repeatedly advised. In other words, these pictures were not considered mere visual entertainment. Shen Bai, for example, insisted, “The reverence [Liu] inspires will bring about the gradual enlightenment of those who examine these pictures. If it were the case that he had only made painted images for scrutiny, would you not risk turning your back on Master Liu?”³⁵ The official Xiao Zhen (j.s. 1652), while admiring the life-like illusion of the portraits, still claimed, “It is their skill that leads to the Way.”³⁶ Valorizing the text and its pictures, the writers variously offer counsel or injunctions on how to read the book.

The series of prefaces closes with “My Own Narration,” written in 1668, in which Liu introduces himself and the book. With regard to the latter, he emphasizes two things. First, he acknowledges the inspiration he found in a painting by Chen Hongshou (1598–1652) kept in the collection of his patron. The painting depicted figures from the popular though controversial novel *Water Margin*.³⁷ Tong Pengnian confirms this point in his own preface. Criticizing the work of his painter-in-residence for its haphazard quotation of archaic styles, Tong observes that Liu’s painting did not become “god-like,” or “daimonic” (*shen*), until he had studied Chen’s work, specifically, a painting that depicted the Liangshan bandits.³⁸

Second, Liu defines *Lingyan ge* as a journey of withdrawal and advancement. Most of the preface writers emphasize a strict sequential ordering of the pictures, which begin with the vassals of the Lingyan Gallery, move toward the icons of Guan Yu, and conclude with the images of the bodhisattva.³⁹ Complicating this progressive order, Liu encourages the reader first to identify with the rebellious figures of *Water Margin*, whom he refers to as “stout vagabonds of the Green Forest.” However, the tale of chaotic rebellion that is recounted in *Water Margin* could not be read with indifference in the 1660s, after the devastation of the wars of the dynastic transition. Indeed, the novel was then annotated and abridged to emend its seditious content. Liu similarly alters Chen’s bandits, despite his admiration for the archaic method and striking design with which they were portrayed:

Like the hag who mimicked the knitted brow of [the beauty] Xishi, I separately produced an album of the meritorious ministers of Lingyan [ge]. . . . I shall withdraw from *Water Margin* to advance to Lingyan [ge]. And, in turn, from Lingyan [ge], advance to worthy sagehood. Advance to the bodhisattva. Those who look at these pictures will place themselves in a forest of generals and chancellors, before the mirror that sanctions and verifies enlightenment.⁴⁰

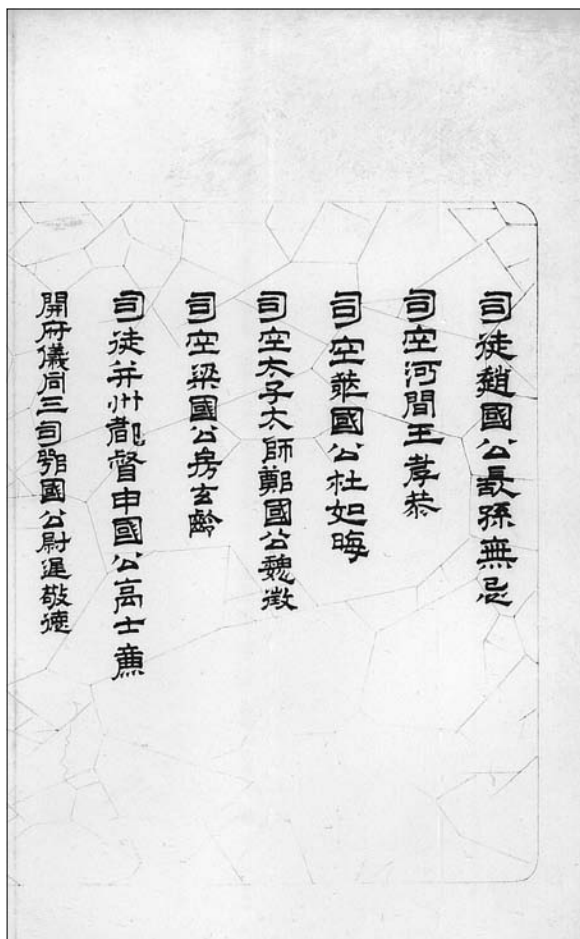


Figure 33. Liu Yuan, recto side of table of contents from *Lingyan ge*.

Metaphors of passageway and spiritual purification dominate Liu's preface. And they serve to justify his unexpected combination of the ministerial portraits with devotional images, which had no place in the historical *Lingyan Gallery*.

The sequence from the ministerial to the godly image that is emphasized by most of the preface writers is reinforced by the table of contents, which follows the prefaces (Fig. 33). There the names of the twenty-four founding ministers and military strategists of the early Tang empire are listed. Each character, isolated and bold, stands out in the asymmetry of the archaic cler-

ical script; dislodged from one another, they threaten to disperse, floating on the pattern of “cracked ice” that was printed beneath them. Nonetheless, the repetitive list of names in the table of contents regulates the reading of the text: what follows is expected to be an orderly passageway.

THE GALLERY OF PORTRAITS RECONSTRUCTED

With that, the book opens to the series of imagined portraits. One by one, the twenty-four vassals of the Lingyan Gallery appear on the recto side of successive folios. Some are aggressively suited in armor, others erect in courtly ceremonial robes. The figure of the statesman and calligrapher Yu Shinan (558–638) may serve to illustrate the general compositional structure of the portrait folios (Fig. 34). The presentation of a solitary figure, isolated on a blank surface, would have been familiar from classical paintings of various genres, including the portrait likeness. To the right side of the figure appears a block of text, headed by the administrative office, enfeoffment, and name of the subject represented. In this case, the heading of the text, carved in clerical script, reads: “Minister on the Board of Rites, and Duke of Yongxing Commandery, Yu Shinan.” An abbreviated biography follows, carved in a finer, less ornate rendition of standard script. Based on accounts registered in the standard histories of the Tang, the straightforward narrative elaborates the civic and military accomplishments of the subject. Finally, the signature and seals of the artist, placed either to the lower left or to the lower right of the figure, accompany each portrait.

Stylistically, the representation of Yu Shinan is one among four conventional depictions of the state official in *Lingyan ge*. The still body, pinned against the paper screen of the folio, is animated by no facial or gestural expression. Stance, costume, and symbolic accoutrements wholly define the self. Yu is shown wearing a “cage kerchief” (*longjin*), adorned at the front with a brush-like silken tassel whose undulating stem is quietly eccentric. Constructed of lacquered gauze applied to a stiff frame, the square *longjin* was worn only by eminent civil officials during court audiences. The ornate robe, emblazoned with twisted dragons and furnished with capacious sleeves, similarly indicates the social status of its wearer.⁴¹ Yu holds a tripod in both hands, an auspicious symbol that represents the heavenly sanctioned dominion of the state.

The symbolic language of such formal portraiture was long established in painting; the tradition was continued in printed books, notably in illustrated biographies and encyclopedias. The several portraits of the Lingyan ge vassals that are included, for example, in *Sancai tuhui* (Pictorial compendium of the Three Agencies), an encyclopedia completed in 1609, bear important traits in common with Liu’s images (Fig. 35). In these half-length portraits, the hat and the tablet serve to define the station of the subject. The banal rendition of the face, with a few exceptions, is distinguished



Figure 34. Liu Yuan, portrait of Yu Shinan, from *Lingyan ge*.

primarily by the name that is printed at the top of the leaf. Indeed, given the conventional nature of this genre of figural representation, the labels on the portrait folios of *Lingyan ge* cannot be ignored. The vassals portrayed by Liu lack any physiognomic feature that might ensure recognition; their identity rests entirely on the words that hedge them closely on the folio. Resemblance to the acclaimed members of the Lingyan Gallery is an illusion conjured by the indexical inscription.

However, Liu does not always obey this traditional canon of representation. The majority of the vassals in his portrait gallery are shown in extravagant



Figure 35. Wang Qi (fl. 1565–1614) and Wang Siyi, comps., portrait of Du [Ruhui] Keming, from *Sancai tuhui*, *Renwu*, j.6. 4a, 1607–9. Thread-bound book, woodblock-printed on paper, 25.4 × 14.7 cm. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.



Figure 36. Liu Yuan, portrait of Tang Jian, from *Lingyan ge*.

disregard of decorum. The warrior Tang Jian (ca. 579–ca. 656) is caught partly dressed (Fig. 36). Bent forward, he pulls the stiff encasement of his belt over his head. Otherwise, the costume appropriately signals his status as a civil official, notably the dark silk hat with stiffened, outstretched ribbons and the full robe adorned with a badge of office sewn to the front.

The odd corporeal talk that distinguishes the figure of Tang Jian jars against the solemnity of a figure such as Yu Shinan. The theatricality of Tang's portrait represents a deliberate allusion to the work of Chen Hongshou, who had endeavored to cultivate a reputation for eccentricity. As already indicated,



Figure 37. Liu Yuan, portrait of Du Ruhui, from *Lingyan ge*.

both Liu and his patron acknowledge in their prefaces the importance of this allusion; indeed, a reader of the book is burdened with this directive. Thus, Liu engaged his imagined audience in the popular seventeenth-century game of connoisseurship known as *fang*, or imitation.⁴² Adhering to the rules of this game, Liu did not directly mimic his source. Nonetheless, the allusion has a stylistic validity, as well as a programmatic significance, in his reconstruction of the portrait gallery.

The rendition of the statesman Du Ruhui (585–630) most clearly



Figure 38. Chen Hongshou (1598–1652), “Wu Yong,” leaf 20 from *Shuihu yezi*. Early 1630s. Thread-bound book, woodblock-printed on paper, 18 × 9.4 cm. From *Ming Chen Hongshou Shuihu yezi*, n.p.

demonstrates how Liu quoted Chen’s work (Fig. 37). The figure bears a striking resemblance to Chen’s portrayal of the fictional Wu Yong that appears on a playing card used in drinking games (Fig. 38). Wu Yong, a prominent character in the novel *Water Margin*, was the strategist of the Liangshan band whose two-fingered salute always preceded the divulgence of his schemes. The costumes of both Wu Yong and Du Ruhui are depicted with angular lines, whose rigid forms are flattened into an array of interlocking shapes. Such geometry distinguishes Chen’s archaic painting from the 1630s. Both the statesman and the bandit are shown in silhouette, with their backs to the viewer. Their hands, displayed against the empty field of the picture, assume an added significance in the delineation of a temperament, or perhaps that of a momentary act. Freed of their sleeves, they each make a vivid gesture.



Figure 39. Chen Hongshou, "Lord Mengchang," leaf 17 from *Bogu yezi*. Hangzhou (?), 1651–53. Album of 54 leaves, woodblock-printed on paper, 21 × 12.4 cm. Mr. and Mrs. Wango H. C. Weng Collection, Lyme, New Hampshire.

Nonetheless, the meaning of Du's gesture remains obscure. Is this the two-fingered salute of the crafty Wu Yong, or is it an unknowable gesture directed to an invisible interlocutor?

A similar kind of obscurity marks the compositional strategies of Chen Hongshou, particularly those of his late work. A printed playing card from the justly celebrated set titled *Bogu yezi* (Leaves that comprehend all of antiquity), completed in 1651 and published posthumously, exemplifies this trait (Fig. 39). On card seventeen, Chen illustrated an imagined scene from the life of Tian Wen (fl. fourth century B.C.E.), popularly known as Lord

Mengchang, minister to the rulers of the state of Qi and famous for having regaled thousands of guests at a time. Hence, Chen depicted a banquet. But the celebrants, who make salutation and raise the toast, face an absent party. Only one figure, whose face turns away from the viewer, sits on the opposite mat. Just visible, he is lodged beneath the trunk of a pine tree in the lower right-hand corner of the picture.

Refraining from simple mimicry, though clearly inspired by such unusual compositions, Liu greatly amplified his figures' motions of withdrawal and hiding. Many of his portraits are imbued with a sense of mystery and fantasy. The warrior Liu Zhenghui (fl. late sixth century–early seventh century) walks away from the viewer to deliver what seems to be a weapon wrapped in cloth (Fig. 40). The apron of his costume flaps with his step; the parting folds of his robe appear to rustle. But to whom, and to what purpose, is his offering made? On another leaf, Zhang Liang (d. ca. 646) raises a *hu* tablet in one hand, while cradling it within the sleeve of the other (Fig. 41). Whether his exaggerated action signifies rapture, reverence, or play is unclear. His face, obscured in the sleeve of his gown, discloses nothing. Indeed, his act threatens to subvert the ceremonious function of servitude that is invested in the tablet. The movements of both of these figures are unusual and private. They do not fit the expected activity of ritual actors at court. The beholder stands at a decided distance from them. The very project of the portrait, to evoke the presence of an exemplary historical figure, is undermined: Can we know these figures? Can the labels be trusted?

Another question begs to be answered. However indisputable Liu's allusion to the artistry of Chen Hongshou may be, what did he gain in picturing the Lingyan ge vassals under the guise of Chen's irreverent outlaws? Liu's artistic decision is especially puzzling in the light of his preface, in which he rebukes the fictional bandits and criticizes Chen for having depicted them.

I want to suggest that the unexpected disguise of the Lingyan ge vassals does not obscure or mistake their identity. Rather, it brings forward an aspect of their history that might be otherwise forgotten or misremembered.

In the analysis of *Lingyan ge*, it is important to recall that many of the men who were first pictured in the emperor's portrait gallery had not been loyal to the Tang royal house from its origins. A number of the Lingyan ge vassals had been allied with enemies of the uprising that Li Shimin organized in the mid-610s in collaboration with the Turks. Others had been loyal officials in the reigning Sui (586–618) court and actively fought against Li's rebellion. Abandoning the traditional didactic reading of the portraits, I find, instead, a shift of historical focus away from the vassals ensconced within an established state, the makers of its legitimacy, to the more ambiguous beginnings of these men during the chaotic and uncertain years of the transition from Sui to Tang sovereignty. Thus, the resemblance between the great vassals and the Liangshan bandits who rebelled against the civil values of the



Figure 40. Liu Yuan, portrait of Liu Zhenghui, from *Lingyan ge*.

court becomes uncanny and ineluctable. The honorable men pictured on the walls of the Lingyan Gallery were not unambiguous representations of the virtue of loyalty to a single dynasty; in fact, they offered their allegiance to the Tang in many cases reluctantly and late—and often by betraying the loyalty they owed the Sui.

Liu Yuan confirms this fact without condemning their action. His point of view seems to be that of a historian. His interest lay in the spectacle of continuous change, which, in the Chinese tradition, was likened to the natural revolution of the seasons. Similar observations were also made by



Figure 41. Liu Yuan, portrait of Zhang Liang, from *Lingyan ge*.

contemporary novelists who rewrote histories of the Sui and Tang.⁴³ In the historical record, there is an ominous continuity of rebellion and conquest. And Liu, who was a native of the northern Chinese plains, had probably witnessed the worst of the rebellions that ravaged the country in the mid-seventeenth century, during the course of the dynastic transition.

Thus, in reconstructing the Lingyan Gallery, Liu's practice of *fang* constituted a historical commentary. It was a form of hermeneutics, though visually displayed. The drama of Tang history was brought to bear on recent events of the mid-seventeenth century, that is, the fall of the Ming house and the gradual domination of the Manchu polity. The conflation of bandit and vassal, accomplished through an art-historical allusion, made a political point.

References to Chen Hongshou also imbued the book with the memory of *yimin*, “remnant subjects,” who were elevated to the status of heroes in the histories of the Ming written in the early years of the Kangxi period. Indeed, Chen’s reputation as a Ming loyalist was invented by biographers who were contemporaries of Liu Yuan.⁴⁴ The conversion of the pictorial stage into a spectacle of Ming history was also accomplished through picturing a number of the great vassals of the Tang state—with meticulous precision—in Ming period costume. In fact, none of the vassals in *Lingyan ge* appears wearing the costumes of the Tang. This need not be interpreted as a defective anachronism. Such a transposition allowed a reading of history as a text over which other histories might be written and rewritten. But, again, visual elements formulated the historical argument.

Mark Twain once wrote, “A good legible label is usually worth, for information, a ton of significant attitude and expression in a historical picture.”⁴⁵ However, the labels in *Lingyan ge*, despite their utility in the identification of the subject represented, hardly control the contradictory meanings of the portraits.

TURNING THE LEAF

Liu introduced another perspective on the history of the *Lingyan ge* vassals through the poetic couplets printed on the verso sides of the portrait folios. The general structure of these half-leaves may be illustrated by the one that appears on turning the portrait of the warrior Liu Hongji (582–650) (Fig. 42). The couplet, centered on the half-leaf, was carved in a distinctive form of standard script, modeled on the work of Zhong You (ca. 165–230), whose calligraphy was still admired in the seventeenth century.⁴⁶ Liu indicated in his preface to *Lingyan ge* that he intended to emulate various historical models of calligraphy in transcribing the poems selected for the book. Thus continuing to play the game of *fang* that he initiated in the portrait folios, Liu exaggerated traits of Zhong You’s small standard script, in particular, the unusual spacing of the characters and their squat shape, as well as the dramatic flare and imbalance of individual brushstrokes. The acknowledgment of Liu’s source appears to the left of the couplet, “Done after [*fang*] Zhong [You] Taifu.” Above this phrase, the name “Zhong You” shows white within a blotch on the folio, as though it glimmered from behind the paper through the ragged edges of a worm hole. Or is this, perhaps, Liu’s rendering of a scrap from an old rubbing, which would have provided the exemplary script? A *trompe l’oeil*, the image plays at the same time with the materiality of the book, which Liu manipulated throughout with wit.

A seal appears to the left of the phrase “Done after Zhong Taifu.” Its shape and placement mimics those impressed on works of Chinese calligraphy and painting to indicate authorship. But the seals that Liu designed for the verso

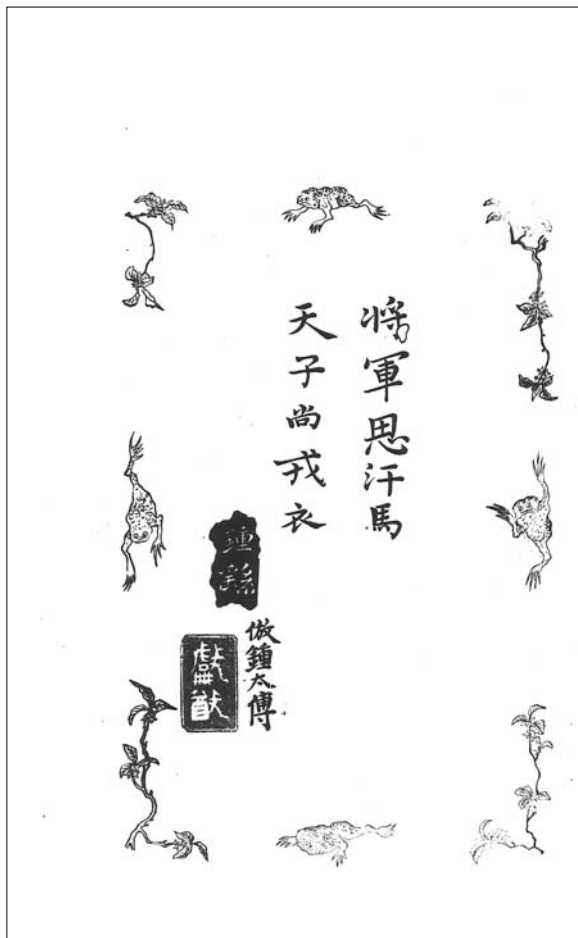


Figure 42. Liu Yuan, verso side of the portrait of Liu Hongji, from *Lingyan ge*.

sides of the portrait folios were carved with legends that do not bear names. These unexpected and supplementary seals carry instead cogent instructions on how to behave in a social and political community, precepts based on classical Confucian writings. In this case, the legend reads, “Offer Memorials to the Throne” (*xian you*).

Finally, the poetic fragments are embraced by a wreath of symbolic objects, each ornately detailed. Celebratory and auspicious, they include flying bats, flaming pearls, and an unbroken chain of rings. Such symbols were commonly woven into clothes, carved into the parts of a piece of furniture,

painted onto the surface of ceramic vessels, or impressed onto the surface of ink-cakes. In this case, the three-legged “money toad” (*qianchan*) that spits coins is repeated four times around the edge of the leaf. The broken branches of a flowering cassia mark off the corners. Whereas the toad signifies a wish for wealth, the cassia branch represents the elevated status of a government official. However, situated within the violent and repetitive history that Liu presents in *Lingyan ge*, these commonplace symbols are surprising and unexpected. They seem to prompt another reading of the book. In the face of the inevitable reversals of history and the transitory events of the past, is it the present day, which saw the establishment of a new political order, that is to be celebrated?

The incongruence of the wishful marginalia is especially manifest in the light of the poetic couplets that they embrace. In his preface, Liu identified the poet Du Fu (712–70) as the author of the fragmentary texts that he chose to have carved within the book. The choice was not haphazard. Du Fu wrote extensively about the political events of the mid- to late eighth century, covering the troubled years of the late Tang empire that followed the 755 uprising of Rohkshan “the Bright” (also known in Chinese as An Lushan, d. 757). The interior of the country was devastated in the wars, but posing much more of an immediate threat were the incursions from hostile neighboring states. The couplets found in *Lingyan ge* are mostly drawn from Du Fu’s late poems, those preoccupied with war and his flight from disaster. Ultimately, these lines of poetry reinforce the subversive picturing of the *Lingyan ge* vassals under the guise of the bandits of *Water Margin*. They temper as well the grandness of their achievement in a historical perspective that acknowledges the eventual faltering course of the Tang empire.

Thus, the very act of turning the leaves of *Lingyan ge* initiates a transformative, ironic exchange between visual image and verbal text. Just as the *Lingyan ge* vassals had risen to power by shifting their loyalties from the weakened Sui to the upstart Tang house, so was their security not everlasting. The evocative, discontinuous tale about the destruction of the Tang empire through the waste of rebellion and foreign invasion begins to disturb the portraits of the famous ministers and generals, which embody memories of the empire’s glorious and legendary beginnings.

Two examples from the body of couplets that are quoted in *Lingyan ge* indicate the tone that they lend to the ministerial portraits. The couplet discovered on the verso side of the portrayal of the reckless Zhang Liang is taken from the well-known work “Out to the Frontier, First Series of Nine Poems”:

Merit and fame are pictured in the Gallery of the Qilin.
The bones of war must quickly decay.⁴⁷

Probably written in the early 750s, the set of poems from which this couplet was quoted describes the lot of conscripted Tang soldiers stationed at the

frontier in the far northwest. Warfare was almost constant at this border, where Chinese armies battled against hostile Tibetans. The couplet, cited from the third poem in the series, describes a wounded soldier stranded on the field. The cruelty of his death might be lessened were his likeness to be preserved in a portrait gallery, such as *Qilin ge*, which was commissioned by the royal Han house to honor meritorious officials. But only his bones will briefly remain. The allusion to the historical portrait gallery, which provided a model for the construction of *Lingyan ge*, expressly brings the specter of war to bear on the ministerial portrait shown on the recto side of this leaf.

Another of the *Lingyan ge* vassals, Li Xiaogong (591–640), was a member of the Tang royal family. The couplet that appears on the verso of his imagined portrait derives from a poem titled “Lament for a Prince.” This poem was written in summer 756 when the rebel Rohkshan “the Bright” ordered the execution of members of the royal family who had been captured in the Tang capitals after the emperor fled to Sichuan. The couplet reads:

Descendants of the theocrat Gao all have prominent noses;
Seeds of the dragon naturally differ from ordinary people.⁴⁸

The fugitive prince described by Du Fu betrays his lineage in a prominent nose, which was said to have distinguished the dragonlike visage of the founder of the Han house. Here, the relation to divine kings—normally much to be prized—makes the prince particularly vulnerable to the violence of insurrection. The juxtaposition of portrait and couplet throws into question the fate of those members of the Tang royal family who succeeded Li Xiaogong.

Seventeenth-century readers of fiction who encountered *Lingyan ge* would not have been surprised by the use of poetry as either an ironic or a dialogic commentary. Nor would they have been surprised by its juxtaposition to illustration. Modern scholars have analyzed, for example, how poetry serves as a counterpoint to, and exegetical commentary on, events described in the novel *Plum in the Golden Vase*.⁴⁹ And publishers of the late Ming had already begun to experiment with placing poetry outside the fictional text, bound instead to the companionate illustrations with which the text was furnished.

One of the original set of eighty illustrated folios designed for the novel *Sui Yangdi yanshi* (The romantic affairs of Emperor Yang of the Sui), published with prefaces dated 1631, may serve as an example. This illustration, whose recto side displays a captioned picture and whose verso side displays a poetic couplet framed by marginalia, accompanies the last half of chapter 17, titled “Emperor Yang of the Sui Looks at a Picture and Thinks of Former Travels.”⁵⁰ On the recto side of the illustrated leaf (Fig. 43), the emperor, surrounded by the empress and several palace ladies, is shown absorbed with a landscape painting. He points emphatically to the large hanging scroll, as though to instruct the empress, whom he has embraced. A table, set for a



Figure 43. Anonymous, “Emperor Yang of the Sui Looks at a Picture and Thinks about Former Travels,” in Anonymous, *Sui Yangdi yanshi*, chap. 17, leaf 34a. Renrui tang, 1631. Thread-bound book, woodblock-printed on paper, 23.7 × 14.5 cm. C. V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

meal, has been abandoned, while servants look on; the imperial chair has been pushed away.

This illustration, in general, re-presents an event that occurs in the last half of the chapter. In the text of the story, a drunken emperor, wandering here and there in the palace, is suddenly transfixed by a landscape painting that he notices hung on a wall. Insisting to the empress that he is indifferent to the artistry of the picture, he claims that “the more he looks, the more he awakens” to the memories of places to which he has traveled, especially

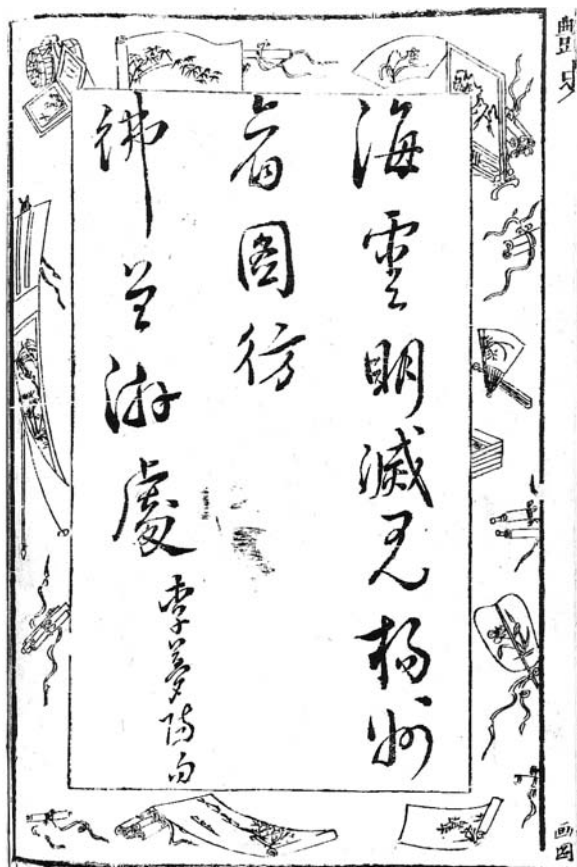


Figure 44. Poetic couplet framed by marginalia (verso side of Fig. 43), in Anonymous, *Sui Yangdi yanshi*, chap. 17, leaf 34b.

Guangling, thus referring to the southeastern area of Jiangsu.⁵¹ The empress then joins him in a meticulous analysis of the picture, which leads to a discussion of the scenery of Guangling and the emperor's desire to construct a multitude of lavish buildings there. Finally, the empress encourages Emperor Yang to consider building a waterway to facilitate travel to the place of his longing. Thus, a painting incites the emperor to construct the Grand Canal, which is represented in the novel as the beginning of his demise.⁵²

The verso side of the illustration (Fig. 44) was carefully orchestrated to complement the story that was represented in the text and in the picture. A poetic couplet, whose carved words exhibit gracefully modulated lines, is cen-

tered on the half-folio and held within a rectangular border. William H. Nienhauser has observed that the couplets that appear on the verso sides of the illustrated folios in *Sui Yangdi yanshi* “create new dimensions of meaning” both by enhancing the pictorial narrative represented on their recto sides and by enriching the text with allusions to parallel historical incidents.⁵³ The poetic couplet carved on the verso side of this illustrated folio, taken from a long poem by Li Mengyang (1475–1529), is no exception. The second line of the couplet reads: “I look at the picture: it appears to be a place I once had wandered.”⁵⁴ The poet thus concludes a lengthy description of a place he had visited the previous year, which clearly echoes the experience of the fictional Emperor Yang.

Surrounding the lines of poetry is a rectangular frame within which are strewn various forms of painting: fans, both flat and folded; a standing screen and a folding album; hanging scrolls and handscrolls, both rolled and unrolled. The marginalia draw attention to the different ways that paintings are viewed. After all, it was the viewing of a painting that incited Emperor Yang to excavate the canal, and the act of viewing a hanging scroll is the primary event of the pictorial story. The marginalia thus effectively “connect and combine” (*guanhe*) with the visual image, in a way that reinforces the textual story.⁵⁵ The calculated web of correspondences between the visual image and the different verbal texts with which it is associated is emphasized in the *fanli*, or “General Regulations,” that preface *Sui Yangdi yanshi*.⁵⁶ “Truly,” it was claimed by the publisher, “this is something that none of the books in the country have.”⁵⁷ The hyperbole of this statement appears to be a commercial calculation, for many printed books from this historical period exhibit marginalia and poetry on the verso sides of their illustrated leaves. However, the publisher of *Sui Yangdi yanshi* made an exceptional effort to define and delimit the range of significance of a format or a marginal motif, however commonplace, to fit the tightly controlled program of the book. This strategy of containment distinguishes the novel from a book such as *Lingyan ge*, in which much is left deliberately ambiguous or contradictory.

Nonetheless, it is well worth noting that *Sui Yangdi yanshi*, a historical novel that dwells on events not too far removed from those related in *Lingyan ge*, holds much in common with the latter publication. Although Liu chose to use poetry as a form of ironic commentary, rather than as a means of exegetical enhancement, the layout of the verso half-leaves of the illustrations in *Sui Yangdi yanshi* resembles that of the verso sides of Liu’s portrait folios. In both cases, the poetic text is surrounded by symbolic images printed at the margin of the folio. Whether Liu was familiar with the novel is unknown. Yet it demonstrates the habits of reading, and the expectations associated with turning the leaf, that he might well have assumed of his imagined audience.

Turning the last of the portrait folios in *Lingyan ge* would have brought to view the most unexpected vision of them all. Following the series of ministerial

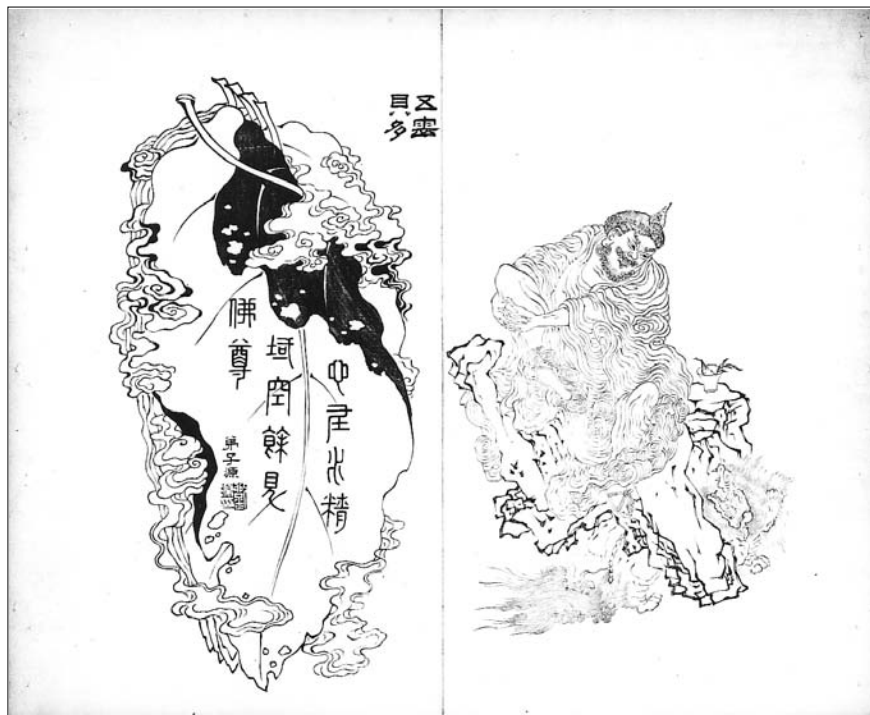


Figure 45. Liu Yuan, recto and verso sides of icon of Guanyin, from *Lingyan ge*.

portraits is a series of divine icons, including three manifestations of the bodhisattva Guanyin and three phases in the career and theophany of the military hero Guan Yu. A couplet taken from the work of Du Fu was printed on the verso sides of each of the icons. However, these words enhance, rather than subvert, the identity of the image printed on its recto side.

The first of the three icons of Guanyin, for instance, shows him seated on a rock, looking down upon a snarling lion (Fig. 45). The tiara, which displays an image of a meditating buddha, together with the willow branch at his side, confirms the identity of the bearded figure. The structure of the verso side of the icon is as new as the content of the poetic couplet that appears there: the marginalia that surrounded the couplets on the portrait leaves are replaced with objects on whose surfaces the couplets appear; four-character labels identify the objects pictured. In this case, the lines of poetry on the verso side of the icon are displayed on the tattered surface of a leaf, whose curling dark underside threatens to obscure the text. (Or, rather, does Liu Yuan represent the sensation of turning the leaves of a book within the book itself?) The inscribed leaf is one of five, which are layered on top

of one another; they seem to float above the paper surface of the folio on swirling clouds. The label, carved in clerical script at the upper right-hand corner, identifies the image: “Five-Colored Cloud, *Pattra*” (*wuyun beiduo*). The multicolored clouds indicate the auspicious manifestation of the bodhisattva; *pattra*, the Sanskrit term for “leaf,” denotes ancient Indian palm-leaf books that contained sacred Buddhist texts.⁵⁸ The artist alludes to the devotional practice of transcription through the writings carved on the surface of the palm leaf, but here they carry fragments of devout poetry, which read:

The mind resides in a realm of rock crystal.

Remnants of emptiness manifest the sanctity of the Buddha.⁵⁹

Although drawn from different poems, both lines describe aspects of the enlightened mind, notably its clarity and remoteness, as well as its awareness of the emptiness of all phenomena.

The supernatural beings that bring *Lingyan ge* to a close both offer escapes from the darkness of history, though the escapes that they offer are different and exclusive. As Liu explained in his preface, “I used the compassion and grief of the *mahāsattva*, the faithfulness and zeal of the Lord Theocrat, to cap the end of the leaves.”⁶⁰ Thus, the artist moved the reader out of what he had called the “forest of generals and chancellors” and into otherworldly realms from which the reader might transcend a position in human history and awaken from the transitory struggles of political change. The elimination of the ironic commentary, which made the initial part of the book an unpredictable passage, accompanies the dispersal of the historical stage. Like the wishful marginalia that embrace the sorrowful lines of poetry on the verso sides of the ministerial portraits, the icons that close *Lingyan ge* prompt a divergent reading of the book. But whether the reader chooses to rest with the mirrorlike wisdom of the bodhisattva or with the loyal sword of Guan Yu is left open.

A GENEALOGY OF *LINGYAN GE*

Begun as a series of painted images that were carved and printed, *Lingyan ge* did not cease transformation. The afterlife of the thread-bound book demonstrates not only the historical specificity of *Lingyan ge* and its imagined readership but also the critical importance of print in its first public manifestation. After all, the most striking alterations that were made to *Lingyan ge* after its initial publication, and those on which I shall focus, involve its formatting.

Sometime in the middle Edo period (1615–1868), *Lingyan ge* was brought to Japan. In the eighteenth century, figures from the book were quoted singly or in miscellaneous groups by the compilers of printed painting manuals. A



Figure 46. Yoshimura Shūzan (1700–1773?), “Picture of Officials and Archer,” from *Wakan meihitsu gaei*, j. 1.18a. Osaka: Shibukawa Seiueimon, 1750. Thread-bound book, woodblock-printed on paper, 27.0 × 18.0 cm. Photograph courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.

notable example is the finely carved *Wakan meihitsu gaei* (Painterly excellence from the brushes of renowned Japanese and Chinese artists), assembled by Yoshimura Shūzan (1700–1773?) and printed in Osaka as a thread-bound book in 1750.⁶¹ A triumvirate of the ministers, disposed in a triangular formation, appears on the recto side of a folio whose verso displays a blossoming camellia; they follow a rendition of fishermen attributed to the painter Zhang Lu (ca. 1490–ca. 1563) (Fig. 46). The composition is titled “Picture of Officials and Archer” in the table of contents. Although the vassals are labeled, the poetic inscriptions that played a significant part in Liu Yuan’s representation of their history are absent. The detached portraits are presented only as models of figural depiction. Although they are closely modeled



Figure 47. Anonymous, Portrait of Du Ruhui, from *Ryōen kōshin gazō*. Leaf 12a. Published by Tani Bunchō (1763–1840) in 1804. Thread-bound book, woodblock-printed on paper, 26 × 18.1 cm. By permission of the British Library, 16088.d.8.

on Liu's designs, Shūzan does not acknowledge the source of the pictures. (Compare Figs. 46 and 48.)

Indeed, later, in a far more extensive printed reproduction of *Lingyan ge*, produced as a thread-bound book by Tani Bunchō (1763–1840) in 1804 and now kept in the British Library, the pictures are attributed to Chen Hongshou. In his postscript, Bunchō admires how Chen imitated the antique in portraying the twenty-four vassals; he observes that Chen was the outstanding portraitist of his time. He refers to the authority of Shen Nanpin (fl. early

to mid-eighteenth century), who, in a colophon attached to the original painting in Bunchō's collection, upon which the book was modeled, identified Chen as the author. These assertions notwithstanding, the ministerial portraits are clearly based on *Lingyan ge*, despite alterations that lessen the dramatic impact of the figural designs. For instance, in rendering Du Ruhui, the carver eliminated the striking and ambiguous hand gesture of the original, which brought out a resemblance to a fictional outlaw. (Compare Figs. 37 and 47.) Nonetheless, in his postscript, Bunchō compares a painting of the *Lingyan ge* vassals, on which the reproduction was based, with a painting of characters from *Water Margin*, attributed to Chen, which he had seen in a private collection. He follows a form of critical writing that appreciates style, lineage, and authenticity. In such a text, there is no place for the discussion of historical issues, such as those with which Liu and the preface writers of *Lingyan ge* were concerned. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the reproduction omits the poetic inscriptions and the sacred icons, as well as the conspicuous cover leaf.

Curiously, although it is clear that prints of *Lingyan ge* were known in Japan in the eighteenth century, no thread-bound edition of the book survives in Japanese collections. A finely preserved exemplar of *Lingyan ge* is kept in the National Archives of Japan (Kokuritsu kōbunshokan; also the Naikaku Bunkō). However, at some point, the folios of the book were disassembled and separately mounted onto the stiff leaves of a folding album. Although there is no doubt that this is a rare original edition of *Lingyan ge*, the reformatting of the book significantly alters the reading experience. For on opening the album, both the recto and verso sides of the printed sheet are visible at once (Fig. 48). As the portrait of Gao Shilian (577–647) is juxtaposed with the couplet, the surprise inherent in the act of turning the leaf is eliminated. The irony held within the folded leaf of the thread-bound book is diffused.⁶²

The reformatting of the thread-bound book, which appears to have been a habit of Japanese collectors, indicates the new uses to which a new readership put *Lingyan ge*. Neither the political drama of dynastic change nor the natural revolutions of history concerned the late Edo period readers of *Lingyan ge*. Rather, the printed leaves, which surely afforded a sophisticated aesthetic experience, were turned into objects of purely artistic looking. It might be argued that the very beauty and intricacy of Liu's exclusive games of connoisseurship operated as a tool to distance its first readers from the spectacle represented on its folded leaves. But the later Japanese reader, who was entirely disassociated from the politics of the late 1660s, read the book for its singular way of representing the figure and its supposedly authoritative embodiment of the artistry of Chen Hongshou.

The presentation of the opened folios in a format that was closely associated with painting also changed the way in which the printed image was



Figure 48. Liu Yuan, recto and verso sides of the portrait of Gao Shilian, from *Lingyan ge*.

perceived. The act of opening the leaves of a folding album had the power to seduce the viewer into perceiving *Lingyan ge* as a series of printed paintings. Of course, the printed folios, whether bound within a book or not, always were carvings of painted designs. And the figure of painting was always present within *Lingyan ge*, given its eccentric title/signature. But the remounting of the thread-bound book as a folding album more directly evoked the absent painting. A valuable collectible, the print became a reproduction of a painting that was perceived as lost or inaccessible. The format of the folding album betrays an attempt to capture the glamour of the unknown original, which was made all the more enchanting by its attribution to Chen Hongshou. Thus, it was only in its afterlife that the printed folios of *Lingyan ge* may have been perceived as painted images, however illusory.

Sometime in the eighteenth century, an unknown Chinese painter in fact transformed *Lingyan ge* into the painting that was secreted within its printed folios. A long handscroll, made of roughly woven silk, and now kept in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, displays a series of state officials.



Figure 49. Anonymous, “The Twenty-four Ministers of the Tang Dynasty.” Early eighteenth century. Last section of a handscroll, with portraits of Tang Jian and Qin Shubao, ink with pale color and traces of gold paint on silk, 26.3 × 421.1 cm. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

Closely modeled on Liu Yuan’s designs, each figure is finely executed with ink (Fig. 49). The stains of an ocher pigment, along with touches of gold, highlight the costumes and symbolic accoutrements. The figures, poised against the blank ground, are detached from one another. No label or biographical text identifies them; no poetic inscription complements their portrayal. Presented one after the other, they exemplify an innovative style of figural representation, but, isolated, they signify little else. Finally, none of the sacred icons from *Lingyan ge* was copied at the end of the series. Again, here in a later reproduction, Liu Yuan’s political argument is suppressed, his densely constructed dialogues erased. The subversive characters of his portrait gallery, dressed under the guise of fictional outlaws, are now appreciated as clever visual artifacts outside of history.

The genealogy of Liu Yuan’s *Lingyan ge* is disruptive rather than continuous. It demonstrates that changes wrought in the format of the thread-bound book brought with them changes in both the content and the significance of its first printed edition. The genealogy that includes the printed book and the painted handscroll does not chart qualitative distinctions.

Rather, it charts how differently different audiences read the same book. Liu Yuan's respectful painting of *Lingyan ge* could not offer coherence or moral authority in the late 1660s to readers still troubled by the fall of the Ming house. He offered instead an arena from which to observe the workings of the social and political orders, as well as a position from which to choose participation or withdrawal. The turning of the leaves of *Lingyan ge* initiated such observations. Loosened from the book and from the historical moment, however, the illustrated folios became the object of an aesthetic analysis, one that was distinctly apolitical.

NOTES

The completion of this chapter depended on the generous assistance of many people, to whom I am deeply grateful. But for their meticulous readings and thoughtful commentaries, I am thankful in particular to Cynthia J. Brokaw, Timothy Chasson, Marcia Yudkin, and two anonymous readers for the University of California Press.

1. Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 22. Techniques of analytic bibliography are an abiding concern of Chartier, exemplified as well in his *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), viii–ix, 9–11.

2. Ye Dehui, *Shulin qinqhua (fu Shulin yuhua)* (Plain talks about books, supplemented with further talks about books) (1920–28; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957), 16–17. Ye indicates that the term “leaf” was in use since the Tang period to refer to the sheets of paper in a whirlwind binding (p. 15). Therefore, the term “leaf” seems to have been closely associated with the development of the foliated book. To verify this point, the reference of Ouyang Xiu (1007–72) to the “leaves” (*yezi*) of Tang period rhyming dictionaries is cited by Li Zhizhong, *Zhongguo gudai shuji shi* (History of ancient Chinese books) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1985), 164–65. Today, a homophonous character for the word “leaf,” which originally denoted the human head, is used to refer to the pages of a book. However, note that it is incorrect to speak of “pages” in a traditional Chinese book since the leaf, which is ordinarily folded, bears text only on one side. See David Helliwell, “The Repair and Binding of Old Chinese Books, Translated and Adapted for Western Conservators,” *East Asian Library Journal* 8.1 (spring 1998): 43. I am grateful to M. Brigitte Yeh for this reference.

3. I have depended on the following sources for the history of traditional Chinese bookbinding: Monique Cohen and Nathalie Monnet, *Impressions de Chine* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1992); Jean-Pierre Drège, “Du rouleau manuscrit au livre imprimé,” in *Le texte et son inscription*, comp. Roger Laufer (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989), 43–48; Helliwell, “Repair and Binding of Old Chinese Books,” 27–149; Li, *Zhongguo gudai shuji shi*; Edward Martinique, *Chinese Traditional Bookbinding: A Study of Its Evolution and Techniques* (Taipei: Chinese Materials Center, 1983).

4. See Li, *Zhongguo gudai shuji shi*, 160–69, for variant reconstructions of the whirlwind binding. I follow the conclusions of Li Zhizhong.

5. Li, *Zhongguo gudai shuji shi*, 164–65, 168–69.

6. Jean-Pierre Drège, “La lecture et l’écriture en Chine et la xylographie,” *Études chinoises* 10.1–2 (1991): 90–91.

7. Drège also refers in “La lecture,” 91–92, to particular Buddhist practices of recitation that would have been facilitated by the rapidity with which the fold binding can be opened to a particular place.

8. The palm-leaf book is discussed by Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T’ang Exotics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 270–71. He observes that Tang Chinese referred to such books with the Sanskrit word for “leaf,” *pattra*, commonly transcribed with the Chinese characters *beiduo*, according to an erroneous etymology.

9. Susan Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54.1 (June 1994): 39–40, esp. notes 76–79.

10. Robert E. Hegel suggests that the discontinuity between image and text on the leaves of a thread-bound book was “meant to draw the reader even further into the text: one would have to turn the page [*sic*] to appreciate the poetic commentary on the block print, which would bring the next illustration—but not its poem—into view, and so on” (*Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998], 204). He further describes this effect as a “kind of suspense,” not unlike the suspense created by the formulaic endings of chapters in vernacular fiction that urge the reader onward to know what happens next (204). Therefore, according to Hegel, the reader yearns for the printed word; visual images provide no satisfaction. In its fundamental bias against the pictorial image, Hegel’s point about the act of turning the leaf of an illustrated thread-bound book differs radically from mine, despite their apparent similarities.

11. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 6, 73, 102, 103. However, unlike Cherniack’s remarks on the butterfly binding, cited in note 9 above, Hegel’s assertion is not based on the recorded views of contemporary Wanli period readers. Shang Wei, on the other hand, proposes that daily-life encyclopedias and literary collections from the early Wanli period, printed in a multiple-row format, would have encouraged the habit of “what might be called random, non-linear reading when skimming” (“*Jin Ping Mei* and Late Ming Print Culture,” in Judith T. Zeitlin and Lydia H. Liu, eds., *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 58 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003], 218–19). He cites an unusual record of contemporary reading habits to support his argument (218).

12. Three thread-bound exemplars of *Lingyan ge* are kept in the National Library of China, Beijing. A fourth, which I have only studied in a microfilm, is kept in the Beijing University Library. I learned of its existence from Sören Edgren in a personal communication, March 31, 1999. Wang Bomin reports that the Zhejiang Library holds an edition of the book in *Zhongguo banhua shi* (A history of woodcut prints in China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1961), 148. The rarity of the book is noted by Guo Wei-qu, *Zhongguo banhua shilüe* (Summary history of Chinese woodcut prints) (Beijing: Chaohua meishu chubanshe, 1962), 153. This is confirmed by Tao Xiang (1871–1940), who reassembled the folios of *Lingyan ge* from two damaged books and reproduced them by means of photolithography in *Xiyong xuan congshu* (Collectanea from Studio That Takes Pleasure in Chant) (1926–31),

vol. 9. A readily accessible facsimile reproduction of *Lingyan ge*, based on the exemplar formerly in the collection of Zheng Zhenduo and now in the National Library of China, Beijing, appears in Zheng Zhenduo, comp., *Zhongguo gudai banhua congkan* (Old Chinese woodcut illustrations, collected and reproduced) (Shanghai, 1958; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988), vol. 4, j. 29.

13. See, for example, Scarlett Jang, "Form, Content, and Audience: A Common Theme in Painting and Woodblock-Printed Books of the Ming Dynasty," *Ars Orientalis* 27 (1997): 8, 18, 19, 21; Jang contends that readers expected little of illustration. Among the numerous dismissive comments on illustration by seventeenth-century writers, few are as condemnatory as the following passage from a preface to an edition of the *Record of the Western Chamber*, published in the early 1620s: "But today's generation values red grease-paint and powder. I fear that there are those who suspect that not having illustrated the book makes it deficient" (Cai Yi, ed., *Zhongguo gudian xiqu xuba huibian* [Prefaces and colophons on classical Chinese dramas, compiled according to categories] [Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 1989], vol. 2, p. 678).

14. For the practice of mounting rubbings of engraved calligraphy in folding albums, see R. H. van Gulik, *Chinese Pictorial Art as Viewed by the Connoisseur* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1958), 94–99.

15. John Hay, "Chinese Fan Painting," in *Chinese Painting and the Decorative Style*, ed. Margaret Medley, Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia no. 5 (London: University of London, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1975), 104–5.

16. See, for example, the confusing discussion by Jerome Silbergeld, who claims that the folding album is a butterfly binding, in *Chinese Painting Style: Media, Methods, and Principles of Form* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 13–14.

17. Tong Pengnian, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 4a, lines 2–3.

18. The phenomenon of "print anxiety" is also discussed by Anne E. McLaren, chap. 4, this volume. See also Anne E. McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), 67–76, 284–85.

19. The graphic markings on a printed leaf that was intended for a thread binding ordinarily included a border, carved with a single or double line, which enclosed the entire text or illustration printed on each half-sheet. A narrow column appeared at the "heart of the block" (*banxin*), at which the leaf was folded; it contained space for the carving of the title of the publication, its publisher, and leaf number. For a diagram of the format of the woodblock-printed leaf, see Sören Edgren, "Introduction," in idem, *Chinese Rare Books in American Collections* (New York: China Institute in America, 1984), 15.

20. Chartier, *Order of Books*, 14–16.

21. For the term "cover leaf," see Sören Edgren, "The Chinese Book as a Source for the History of the Book in China," paper presented at the Conference on Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China, June 1–5, 1998.

22. Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987), 7–8.

23. See Edgren, "The Chinese Book."

24. See, for example, Philip K. Hu, comp. and ed., *Visible Traces: Rare Books and Special Collections from the National Library of China* (New York: Queens Borough Public Library; Beijing: National Library of China, 2000), 69; Li, *Zhongguo gudai shuji shi*, 146; Wang, *Zhongguo banhua shi*, 148.

25. A biography of Yan Liben is registered by Zhang Yanyuan, *Lidai minghua ji* (Record of famous painters through the ages) (847; rpt. Yu Anlan, ed., *Huashi congshu* [Collectanea of histories of painting], [Shanghai, 1963; rpt. Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1974], vol. 1, j. 9, pp. 103–6. For a discussion of the Lingyan ge portraits, see Nagahiro Toshio, “En Ritsutoku to En Ritsubon ni tsuite” (Yan Lide and Yan Liben), *Tōhō gakuho* 29 (1959): 33–36.

26. These rubbings, kept at the Central Arts Academy, are discussed by Jin Weinuo, “‘Bunian tu’ yu ‘Lingyan ge gongchen tu’” (“Emperor Carried by Porters” and “Meritorious Vassals of Lingyan ge”), *Wenwu* (Cultural relics) 10 (1962): 13–16. Only four of the twenty-four portraits are preserved in the rubbings, which were produced from a stone stele engraved in 1090 and, at the same time, collected in a book.

27. Li Shimin’s decree is recorded in several texts, including Liu Xu et al., *Jiu Tangshu* (The old *History of the Tang*) (945; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), j. 65, pp. 2451–52; *Tang huiyao* (Collection of important documents of the Tang), comp. Wang Pu (961; rpt. Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1960), vol. 2, j. 45, p. 801. Imperial sentiment about the portraits is observed in the biographies of two Lingyan ge ministers in *Jiu Tangshu*, j. 58, p. 2308; j. 69, p. 2514. The location and structure of the gallery is described in Xue Juzheng et al., *Jiu Wudai shi* (The old *History of the Five Dynasties*) (974; rpt. Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1975), 45.6b.

28. See Edgren, “The Chinese Book.”

29. The site Zhuhu tang is identified in Tong, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 2a, line 4. Zhuhu tang also appears in the title of another book designed by Liu Yuan, *Zhuhu tang ximo* (Playful ink from Hall of Pillared Tablets), as listed in Fu Xihua, comp., *Zhongguo banhua yanjiu zhongyao shumu* (Important list of books for research into Chinese woodblock prints), in *Sibu zonglu yishu bian* (Compilation of art texts, completely recorded from books in the four categories), comp. Ding Fubao and Zhou Yunqing (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1957), vol. 4, 2b.

30. A record of Tong’s early bureaucratic career appears in *Fengtian tongzhi* (Comprehensive record of Fengtian) (1934), 155.22b. His appointment to the office of right commissioner is recorded in *Da Qing shengzu ren huangdi shilu* (Veritable records of the great Qing Kangxi emperor) (1937), 7.24a. A summary of Tong’s bureaucratic career appears in Qian Shifu, comp., *Qingdai zhiguan nianbiao* (Chronological chart of Qing period officials) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), vol. 3, pp. 1775–80; vol. 4, p. 3154.

31. For a general history of the Tong family and the ambiguity of their ethnic identity, see Pamela Kyle Crossley, “The Tong in Two Worlds: Cultural Identities in Liaodong and Nurgan during the 13th–17th Centuries,” *Ch’ing-shih wen-t’i* 4.9 (June 1983): 21–46; Pamela Kyle Crossley, “The Qianlong Retrospect on the Chinese Martial (*hanjun*) Banners,” *Late Imperial China* 10.1 (June 1989): 63–107. For an illuminating study of the consequences endured by members of the Tong clan who served both the Ming and the Qing governments, especially with respect to the censorship of their writings, see Okamoto Sae, *Shindai kinsho no kenkyū* (Study of Qing period censorship) (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo, 1996), 449–96. I am grateful to Professor Okamoto for having brought her work on this subject to my attention.

32. Those who have referred to *Lingyan ge* as an “imperial imprint,” or *dianban*,

include Kobayashi Hiromitsu, *Chūgoku no hanga: Tōdai kara Shindai made* (Chinese woodblock prints: From the Tang to the Qing) (Tokyo: Tōshindō, 1995), 130; Wang, *Zhongguo banhua shi*, 148.

33. For a biographical record of Zhu Gui, see *Suzhou fuzhi* (Prefectural gazetteer of Suzhou) (1883), 110.21a. For Zhu's activity at the Kangxi court, see Wang, *Zhongguo banhua shi*, 143–47.

34. Frederick W. Mote and Hung-lam Chu, "Calligraphy and the East Asian Book," *Gest Library Journal*, special issue, 2.2 (spring 1988): 169–202.

35. Shen Bai, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 2a, line 3–2b, line 1.

36. Xiao Zhen, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 2a, line 4.

37. There are no surviving handscrolls or hanging scrolls by Chen that depict the characters of *Water Margin*. However, a set of playing cards designed to be used in drinking games, and printed with images of the Liangshan bandits, was said to have widely circulated in the seventeenth century. See Zhou Liangong, *Duhua lu* (Record of reading painting) (1673; rpt. Huashi congshu), vol. 4, j. 1, p. 11. Several editions of the cards are still extant; for a complete reproduction of one of them, see *Ming Chen Hongshou Shuihu yezi* (The *Water Margin* playing cards by Chen Hongshou of the Ming), with postscript by Li Yimang (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1980).

38. Tong, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 3b, lines 2–3.

39. The order of the sacred icons is unsettled, especially with regard to which set of images should end the book. The preface writers contradict themselves; the table of contents contradicts the prefaces. The significance of this disorder must be put aside here; I explore the issue in a book on *Lingyan ge* forthcoming from the Harvard University Asia Center.

40. Liu Yuan, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 1b, line 3–2a, line 1.

41. For a reference guide to traditional Chinese costume, see Zhou Xibao, *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi* (History of ancient Chinese costumes) (Beijing: Zhongguo xiqu chubanshe, 1984).

42. For a lucid explanation of the practice of *fang*, see James Cahill, *The Compelling Image: Nature and Style in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), 39–44.

43. Robert E. Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 189–208.

44. The three primary Kangxi period biographers of Chen Hongshou—Zhu Yizun (1629–1709), Mao Qiling (1623–1716), and Meng Yuan (fl. late seventeenth century)—exaggerate the painter's allegiance to the former Ming emperors. To judge from his extant writings, Chen's political position was far more complicated. For a discussion of these biographical texts, see Anne Gail Burkus, "The Artefacts of Biography in Ch'en Hung-shou's Pao-lun-t'ang chi" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1987), 8–55.

45. Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* (1883; rpt. New York: Viking Penguin, 1984), 316. J. Hillis Miller cites this passage in a discussion of Twain's bias against visual imagery in *Illustration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 61–65.

46. Dora C. Y. Ching analyzes interpretations of Zhong You's calligraphy in "The Aesthetics of the Unusual and the Strange in Seventeenth-Century Calligraphy," in

Robert E. Harrist Jr. and Wen C. Fong, eds., *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection* (Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999). 348–49.

47. Du Fu, “Qian chusai jiu shou” (Out to the frontier, first series of nine poems), in *Dushi xiangzhu* (Du’s Poems, with detailed commentary), ed. Qiu Zhao’ao (rev. 2d ed. 1713; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), vol. 1, j. 2, p. 120.

48. Du, “Ai wangsun” (Lament for a prince), in *Dushi xiangzhu*, vol. 1, j. 4, p. 311.

49. *The Plum in the Golden Vase or, Chin P’ing Mei, Volume One: The Gathering*, trans. David Tod Roy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), xlv–xlvi. Indira Suh Satyendra examines the nature of what she understands to be a dialogic relation between the poems that preface each chapter of *jin Ping Mei* and the narrative text that follows in “Toward a Poetics of the Chinese Novel: A Study of the Prefatory Poems in the *Chin P’ing Mei Tz’u-hua*” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1989).

50. Exemplars of *Sui Yangdi yanshi* are rare, since the novel was censored in the late nineteenth century. I have studied the partial text that is kept in the Harvard-Yenching Library; only the prefatory materials and forty illustrations are contained in this edition. Hegel indicates that this separated fascicle was printed from the original woodblocks in *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, 242. Otherwise, for the purposes of this study, I have depended on a modern reprint of *Sui Yangdi yanshi*, published in three volumes, and included in *Guben xiaoshuo congkan* (Old editions of vernacular fiction, collected and reproduced), comp. Liu Shide, Chen Qinghao, and Shi Changyu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987–91), vol. 18.

51. *Sui Yangdi yanshi* (1631; rpt. *Guben xiaoshuo congkan*), vol. 2, p. 1792.

52. Hegel, *Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, 90.

53. William H. Nienhauser Jr., “A Reading of the Poetic Captions in an Illustrated Version of the ‘Sui Yang-ti Yen-shih,’” *Hanxue yanjiu* 6.1 (June 1988): 26.

54. Li Mengyang, “Tihua yaobi chengshi” (Inscribing a painting, I moved the brush and completed a poem), in *Kongtong xiansheng ji* (Collected writings of Elder Kongtong) (1522–67; rpt. Taipei: Weiwen tushu chubanshe, 1976), vol. 2, p. 475. The source of the first line of the couplet still eludes me.

55. *Sui Yangdi yanshi, fanli*, vol. 1, p. 1069.

56. *Sui Yangdi yanshi, fanli*, vol. 1, pp. 1069–71. For instance, the editor indicates that the poems selected to accompany the illustrations all match the depicted events and bear witness to them; the brocade-like borders were designed to make a connection with the illustration that they enclose.

57. *Sui Yangdi yanshi, fanli*, vol. 1, p. 1069.

58. See note 8 above for Indian palm-leaf books.

59. The first line of the couplet derives from Du, “Dayun si Zangong fang sishou” (Room of the Venerable Zan of Great Cloud Temple, four poems), in *Dushi xiangzhu*, vol. 1, j. 4, p. 333. The second line derives from Du, “Wang Doulü si” (Gazing from afar at Tušita Temple), also in *Dushi xiangzhu*, vol. 3, j. 12, p. 993.

60. Liu, preface to *Lingyan ge*, 1b, line 4.

61. See Hiromitsu Kobayashi, “Figure Compositions in Seventeenth Century Chinese Prints and Their Influences on Edo Period Japanese Painting Manuals” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1987), 110–19.

62. A similarly remounted edition of *Lingyan ge*, now kept in the British Library,

was once owned by Tomioka Tessai (1836–1924), an avid collector of things Chinese. Yu-ying Brown introduces Tessai's remounted edition of *Lingyan ge* in "Pictorial Printing in Chinese Books: Three Examples from the Seventeenth Century," *British Library Journal* 4.2 (autumn 1978): 193–94. In the process of remounting the printed leaves of the book within the folding album, many of the recto sides were matched with the wrong verso sides.

Didactic Illustrations in Printed Books

Julia K. Murray

The role of pictures in developing a common and widely distributed “Chinese” culture during the late Ming (1368–1644)–early Qing (1644–1911) period has not been much acknowledged in scholarship on the Chinese book. As Cynthia Brokaw describes in Chapter 1, woodblock-printed books became widely available during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for a number of reasons. Cultural knowledge moved into different social realms when commercial publishers reprinted books that were originally issued by government agencies or private individuals. The woodblock-printed illustrations included in some of them not only gave visible form to ideas contained in the texts but also made the books appealing to a diverse constituency. However, the movement of pictures from one printed context into another might well alter their meaning and significance. Thus, another effect of their wider circulation was to acquaint ordinary people with aspects of elite visual and material culture, much as explicitly popular works helped to “construct a new reading public” in the late Ming, as discussed by Anne E. McLaren in Chapter 4. Furthermore, it makes sense to study the history of the illustrated book in relation to other media of visual culture and social communication. If the same picture were rendered in painting or incised stone tablets, it became subject to the assumptions and conventions governing those media and moved to a different position on the larger continuum of visual culture.¹ The prior history, functions, and accumulated connotations of each medium—all influenced the reception of a picture and its “message.”

Pictures have long been considered useful for teaching people of inferior mentality or inadequate literacy. It was a truism that pictures helped “stupid men and women” (*yufu yufu*) to improve themselves, by giving them access to instruction in a form that they could comprehend.² But it was not just the

illiterate who could benefit from pictures; claims were regularly made that pictures were able to communicate information that was beyond words, particularly concerning the visual appearance of things.³ In the early centuries of the common era, most if not all of the major and minor Confucian classics were provided with illustrative matter (*tu*), encompassing what English differentiates as diagrams, charts, maps, and pictorial representations.⁴ From the Han period onward, instructive stories and biographical anecdotes of moral exemplars were also associated with pictures, such as Liu Xiang's (ca. 79–6 B.C.E.) illustrated accounts of filial sons and virtuous women.⁵ In addition, historical accounts were illustrated, particularly at court, at the initiative of either the emperor or a minister. Such pictures were reproduced in woodblock, evidently for the first time, when Song Renzong (r. 1022–63) had printed copies made of a set of one hundred paintings of early Song historical events to bestow on great ministers and close imperial relatives.⁶ There is no indication that this compendium circulated outside the court or survived beyond the Southern Song's demise in 1279.

By contrast, in the late Ming period, the illustrated collections of didactic stories that were produced at court quickly entered more general circulation. Moreover, multiple versions of certain subjects might be available concurrently in different woodblock-printed editions. Although some critics claimed that the information disclosed in pictures was less important than what could be transmitted in words, the very idea that pictures did convey something that words could not made it legitimate for a person of any social status to look at them.⁷ In addition, some writers recognized, usually with disapproval, that viewing pictures might be pleasurable in itself. In any event, illustrations in books not only served to gratify late Ming readers' desires to "see" people and places that were otherwise inaccessible but also spread and shared elite views of history and culture across a broader social spectrum.

My interest here is to examine the conception and evolution of three sets of narrative illustrations about famous men of earlier times that originated in the Ming period: *Dijian tushuo* (The emperor's mirror, illustrated and discussed), *Yangzheng tujie* (Cultivating rectitude, illustrated and explained), and *Shengji tu* (Pictures of the Sage's traces). The first two were created by tutors to the Wanli emperor (r. 1572–1620) and his son (Zhu Changluo; 1582–1620), respectively, and contained instructive anecdotes about former rulers, princes, and ministers. The third was the pictorial biography of Confucius, conceived and circulated by officials outside the court. All three were published as woodblock-printed books or albums, and all appeared in a variety of editions varying in content and quality of production. The illustrations might be arranged on the page in different ways, new framing texts might come to surround them, and their compositions might even be fundamentally redesigned from one edition to another. Such variations help us to distinguish among categories of intended or implied viewers, who are assumed

to have different tastes, interests, or needs for instruction. By considering multiple publications of ostensibly the same work, we may analyze the changes in meaning that occur when pictures move from one context to another within the realm of woodblock publishing.

Under some circumstances, the three subjects were also painted in handscrolls and albums accompanied by handwritten calligraphy, or carved onto stone tablets from which rubbings could be made. Changes of media suggest that these illustrations had certain contexts and purposes for which incised stones or painting and calligraphy were more appropriate than woodblock printing. Depictions of the same subject in different media provide an opportunity to examine the role of the medium itself as a factor in generating meaning. Not only do the technical constraints of each medium affect a work's material properties and condition the viewer's experience, but the previous uses of the medium, the viewing practices customary to it, and its connotations or associations also shape the viewer's interpretation. The relative position of printing within the larger range of late Ming pictorial media will emerge more clearly after we consider the implications and consequences of using each of the three related modes of visual representation.

DIJIAN TUSHUO

An illustrated anthology of 117 anecdotes about earlier rulers, the *Dijian tushuo* was compiled in 1572–73 for the Wanli emperor, who had just ascended the throne at the age of nine.⁸ Conceived by the powerful Senior Grand Secretary Zhang Juzheng (1525–82) to help prepare the young sovereign to assume his weighty responsibilities, the work is essentially an illustrated primer on ruling. It is divided into two major sections, models to imitate and examples to avoid, each arranged in chronological order. The eighty-one stories of admirable deeds are associated with exemplary rulers ranging from the legendary emperor Yao to the Northern Song emperor Zhezong (r. 1085–1100), and the thirty-six cautionary tales of unwise actions by bad rulers start with Taikang in the purported Xia dynasty and end with Emperor Huizong (r. 1100–1126) in the late Northern Song.

Under Zhang Juzheng's direction, officials of the Grand Secretariat collected instructive stories from historical texts, punctuated the accounts, translated them into simple classical language, and annotated them with explanations of names and difficult terms. Next, a painting was made for each episode, and Zhang himself composed a moralizing general statement (*shuo*) for each of the two sections.⁹ In his memorial presenting the compendium to the emperor, Zhang explained its title but did not name the artist(s) who illustrated the stories, treating the pictures merely as aids to understanding, not as artistic productions. In fact, probably because objective pictorial representations were increasingly considered vulgar by elite critics, Zhang made

a point of assuring the emperor that the presence of pictures did not debase the lofty models.¹⁰ An annotation at the end of Zhang's memorial indicates that the Wanli emperor ordered the "picture album" (*tuce*) to be sent to the History Office (Shiguan) so that it could also be shown to officials.

It is clear from Zhang's memorial that the *Dijian tushuo* initially took the form of a two-volume (*ce*) album containing handwritten texts and painted pictures. Although this original album seems not to have survived, its major features can be reconstructed from a woodblock-printed replica (discussed below). The hand-painted and handwritten album had separate volumes for the good and bad models, with their respective titles, *Shengzhe fanggui* (Honorable patterns of the sagely and wise) and *Kuangyu fuche* (Destructive tracks of the uninhibited and stupid), written in large and bold running script. The pages were large and almost square, and a pair of facing leaves presented the illustration on the right and its matching text on the left. Inside the upper right edge of each picture appeared the title for each story, usually consisting of four characters. Labels within the picture identified the emperor and other important figures. The painting technique was meticulous and finely detailed, and architectural settings were particularly sumptuous. The accompanying text consisted of a transcription of the relevant excerpt from a historical source, written in the classical language, followed by a much longer indented passage (introduced by the character *jie*, "explanation"), which provided a simplified account of the event and explicated its significance.

Within a year of submission to the emperor, two very different kinds of woodblock-printed reproductions were made. Immediately after presenting the album, Zhang Juzheng had an edition printed for distribution to capital officials, in sufficient numbers that multiple examples survive today (Fig. 50). Considerably smaller than the album and divided into stitch-bound fascicles, his printed edition was convenient for carrying and reading. The other early woodblock reproduction was made toward the end of 1573 by Surveillance Commissioner Pan Yunduan (1526–1601) in Huaian, Jiangsu. Pan had obtained the original album from his father, Pan En (1496–1582), who in turn had gotten it from the History Office. Probably reproduced in the same size as the painted album, Pan Yunduan's printed version is so large that it must be laid flat on a table for viewing, and the pages are hinged together at the outer edges, accordion-style (Fig. 51). Outstanding in workmanship and materials, it is finely carved and carefully printed on high-quality paper, whereas Zhang Juzheng's edition is good but not superb. Moreover, only one example of Pan's facsimile is extant, an incomplete version now in the Japanese Imperial Household Agency,¹¹ suggesting that it was made for private enjoyment and preservation rather than for broader dissemination.

Replication in the woodblock medium transformed the album from a deluxe textbook for the young emperor into a vehicle for other projects. To

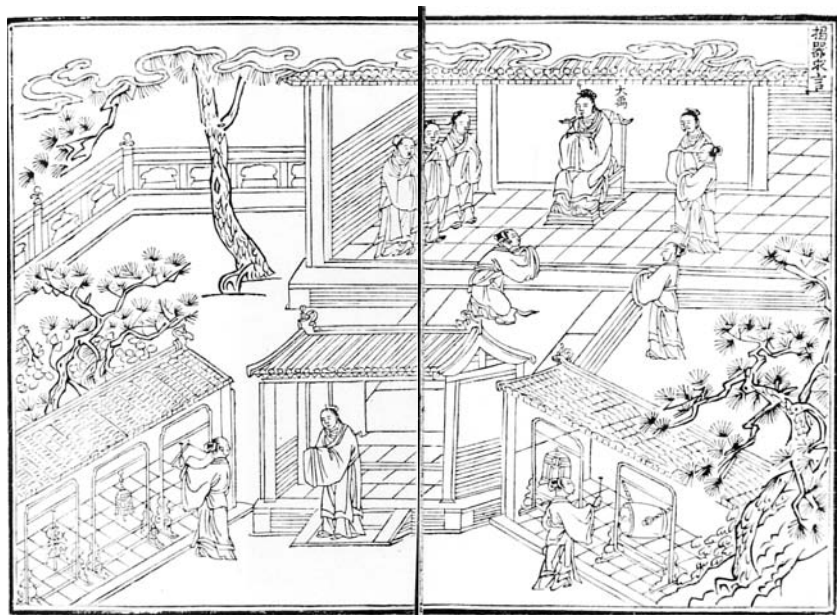


Figure 50. *Dijian tushuo*, edition of Zhang Juzheng (1573, Beijing). Illustration of story no. 4: "Setting up Instruments to Seek Opinions" (*Jie qi qiu yan*). Woodblock-printed book, pp. 9a–b. Block frame ca. 20 × 28 cm. National Central Library, Taiwan, Rare Book no. 05239. Divided in half by the page fold, this scene could not be viewed all at once. It shows the instruments set up by the exemplary Emperor Yu of the Xia dynasty so that people could keep him informed. The architecture and furnishings of the palace are those of late imperial China rather than high antiquity.

impress the intended audience for his printed edition more effectively, Zhang Juzheng added framing texts that addressed the preoccupations of officials in the kind of language to which they were accustomed, dense with allusions to lofty precedents and enduring values. He solicited a preface and an afterword (*houxu*), respectively, from Lu Shusheng (1509–1605) and Wang Xilie (j.s. 1553), both of whom were high officials and Hanlin academicians. Lu described in detail how the *Dijian tushuo* album had been compiled, presented to the throne, and subsequently reproduced by woodblock printing. In addition, he explained how the compendium of role models would teach the young emperor to rule well. Comparing Zhang favorably to various Tang and Song officials who had presented compilations of instructive stories in order to advise their rulers more effectively, Lu flattered Zhang and his prodigious endeavor. Wang Xilie's afterword emphasized that Zhang wanted the

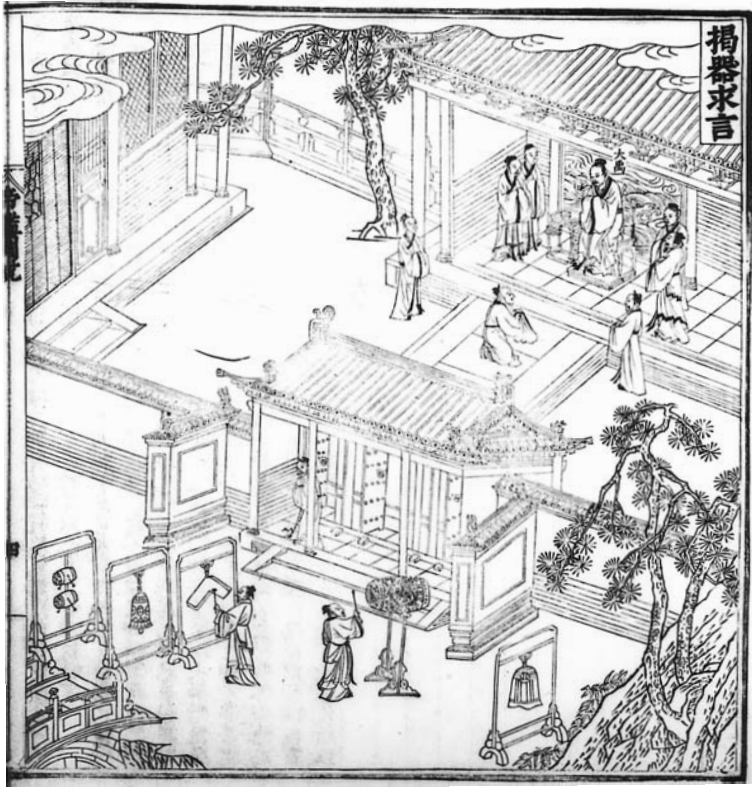


Figure 51. *Dijian tushuo*, edition of Pan Yunduan (1573, Huaian). Illustration of story no. 4: "Setting up Instruments to Seek Opinions" (*Jie qi qiu yan*). Woodblock-printed album, p. 4a. Block frame ca. 40 × 38 cm. Japanese Imperial Household Agency, acc. no. 500–64. Occupying a single page, this depiction of the instruments installed at the gate of Emperor Yu's palace could be seen in its entirety, along with the explanation on the facing page. This edition most faithfully reflects the original painted album.

work more widely distributed to encourage other officials to shoulder their duties properly, thus creating conditions in which the ruler could become a sage and preside over a well-governed and peaceful realm. Finally, Zhang Juzheng also included the memorial he had submitted with the original album and reproduced the notation at the end describing its enthusiastic reception by the emperor. All of these additions to the core work repositioned Zhang's printed edition as a monument to his exemplary relationship with the young emperor and promoted his authority among officials. The four-

character frontispieces of the original album were scaled down in size to fit the smaller format of Zhang's printed book and reproduced with one character per folio, and a table of contents was added at the head of each of the two major sections for convenient reference. Besides providing the titles of the eighty-one exemplary stories and thirty-six cautionary tales, the tables identified the emperor featured in each account.

In contrast to Pan Yunduan's woodblock-printed replica of the original *Dijian tushuo*, whose illustrations are large and almost square (block frame approx. 40×38 cm), the format of Zhang Juzheng's edition is distinctly oblong and much smaller (block frame approx. 20×28 cm), perhaps to enable the work to be carved on blocks of "normal" size rather than require extremely large ones. The latter's pictures accordingly are wider than they are tall, but the page folds divide them in half and prevent the viewer from seeing an entire illustration all at once. Likewise, the accompanying texts are also extended horizontally, sometimes over multiple pages, so that the reader of Zhang's edition must turn pages in order to examine the picture and its explanation, whereas the two appear on a single two-page spread in Pan's replica of the original album. Lu Shusheng and Wang Xilie both note that Zhang based his edition on a *fuben* (duplicate version) that he had kept after presenting the painted album to the emperor. The pictures consistently display fewer figures and less intricate detail than the scenes in Pan's edition, suggesting that the *fuben* was a draft, still somewhat sketchy, that had been made for Zhang's approval before the final preparation of the sumptuous album.

Later impressions and recarved reprints of Zhang Juzheng's woodblock-printed edition of the *Dijian tushuo* were variously sponsored by government officials and commercial publishers. In winter 1573, only a few months after Zhang's edition appeared, the Nanjing commercial publisher Hu Xian produced a recut version to market to a wider readership (Fig. 52).¹² Most significantly, he simplified the system of page numbers and moved those for the illustrations into the pictorial space, where the reader would readily see them. Despite minor variations, as in the depiction of tree species, Hu's recarved edition is faithful to Zhang's prototype and contains all the same texts and pictures. However, the viewer's initial impression is that Hu's pictures are different because many areas are solidly inked (requiring less carving), rather than defined by their outlines, and decorative patterns occasionally also differ. Conspicuous registration marks (*heikou*) straddle the page folds at top and bottom, down the center of each picture, suggesting that the blocks had been formatted for text ahead of time, en masse, rather than prepared explicitly for this book. Perhaps the publisher already had them in stock and thought it unnecessary to have the obtrusive marks removed from the blocks on which pictures were to be carved. Additional signs that he perceived his market as undemanding include errors in the texts and a precipitous decline in the quality of picture-carving toward the end of the book.

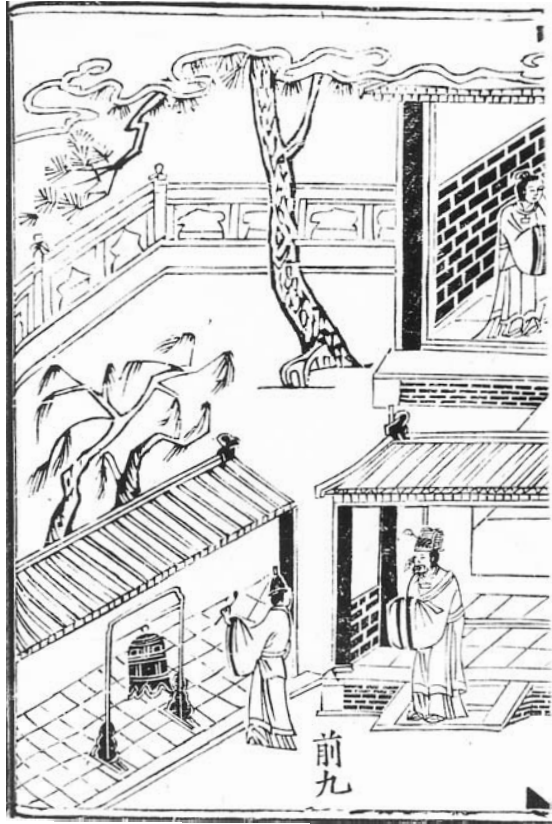


Figure 52. *Dijian tushuo*, edition of Hu Xian (1573, Nanjing). Left half of illustration of story no. 4: “Setting up Instruments to Seek Opinions” (*Jie qi qiu yan*). Woodblock-printed book, p. 9b. Folio frame ca. 20.6 × 14.1 cm. National Central Library, Taiwan, Rare Book no. 05240. The page number is clearly visible on the verso of the two folios illustrating the story of Emperor Yu and the instruments outside his palace. In contrast to the left half of Figure 50, it displays areas of solid ink, simplifies the trees, and reduces three instruments to one.

In 1575 a high-quality government edition was published in Yunnan by the Investigating Censor Guo Tingwu (j.s. 1565). Although closely based on Zhang's woodblock-printed edition, virtually every block of Guo's recut version is signed by one of about two dozen carvers, some of whom were local minorities, suggesting that many carvers were assembled to execute the job quickly. Guo's preface describes how he brought Zhang's book when he was assigned to the province in 1574 and showed it to local officials, who urged him to reprint and distribute the book in order to acculturate the inhabitants of this rustic area.¹³ Much of Guo's preface reviews the education of young rulers in earlier eras and ends by stating that Zhang Juzheng's compilation of stories and his insightful explanations were worthy of comparison with the Duke of Zhou's accomplishment in instructing King Cheng. Thus, Guo Tingwu's edition of the *Dijian tushuo* simultaneously proffered traditional core culture to a marginal region and served as a means of flattering Zhang Juzheng, who was then at the height of his power.¹⁴

However, shortly after Zhang Juzheng died in 1582, the Wanli emperor turned against him, stripping him posthumously of his honors and punishing his family. Until 1622, when the Tianqi emperor (r. 1620–27) reinstated Zhang, his association with the *Dijian tushuo* posed a problem for publishers who endorsed the work's moral prescriptions and wanted to extend its influence. Editions of this period omit Zhang's memorial, Lu Shusheng's preface, and Wang Xilie's afterword, because they referred too directly to Zhang and his now-discredited undertakings.¹⁵ These deletions opened the work to potentially broader uses and interpretations. In 1604 the scholar-official Jin Lian published a totally new edition of the *Dijian tushuo* that appealed to connoisseurs of fine woodblock printing (Fig. 53). Although based on an example of Zhang Juzheng's edition, the 117 pictures were completely redesigned and finely executed by craftsmen of the renowned Huang family.¹⁶ They reformulated the book's layout to enable a complete illustration to appear on facing pages, instead of being divided between recto and verso, so the reader did not have to turn the page to view an entire composition. This change required the two halves of the picture to be carved on separate blocks. Moving away from the textbook-like prototype, they also discarded the labels that identified major figures in each illustration and shifted the scene titles to a less obtrusive position along the outer right edge of the picture frame. In addition, where the compositions in Zhang Juzheng's printed edition were monotonously uniform, mostly depicting small figures in diagonally arranged palace courtyards, Jin Lian's 1604 edition exhibits far more variety and creativity, and landscapes dominate many scenes.

The diminished emphasis on narrative may indicate that the designers of Jin Lian's edition of the *Dijian tushuo* either did not know or deliberately ignored the stories in their concern to make the pictures more varied and interesting. A viewer leafing through the book savored its ever-varied points of

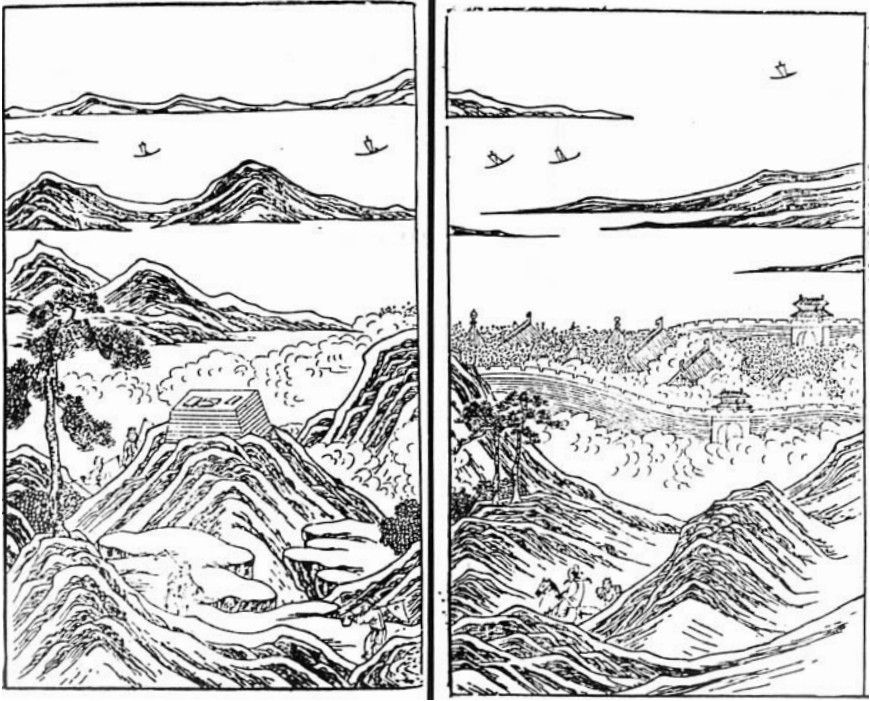


Figure 53. *Dijian tushuo*, edition of Jin Lian (1604, Nanjing). Illustration of story no. 21: "Begrudging the Expense of an Observation Platform" (*Lutai xi fei*). Woodblock-printed book, vol. 2 [*ren ji*], pp. 4b–5a. Folio frame ca. 21.4 × 12.8 cm. Pictures carved and probably designed by Huang Jun and Huang Yingxiao. National Library of China, Beijing, Rare Book no. 14125. A grand panorama of Jiangnan scenery illustrates the story of Han Wendi (r. 180–157 B.C.E.) abandoning his plan to build a viewing tower to avoid extravagance. By coordinating the two halves of the picture, which were carved on different blocks, the designer enabled readers to view the entire composition without turning the page.

view and its many evocations of contemporary material culture. Nonetheless, the prefaces by both Jin Lian and Li Weizhen (1547–1616) proposed the work as an appropriate antidote to the growing political and moral disorder of the times. This combination of elegant artistry and reformist spirit suggests that the intended viewers were scholars whose ambitions for government service had been thwarted or who had found the conditions of service dangerous or degrading in the increasingly factionalized political environment. As men of culture and conscience, they could both appreciate the

beauty of Jin Lian's aesthetically sophisticated publication and commend its moralistic substance.¹⁷ Although Jin suggested that the *Dijian tushuo* could benefit everyone from the emperor down to rural villagers, his edition did not circulate widely and was never republished, in contrast to Zhang Juzheng's 1573 edition. Nevertheless, Jin's assertion that its lessons could benefit all classes of society became the common view, one sometimes mentioned in prefaces to later editions.

After Zhang Juzheng was officially pardoned and his honors restored, his edition of the *Dijian tushuo* was reprinted or recarved several times through the Qing period. Editions with texts translated into Manchu also appeared both before and after the Qing conquest, making its lessons on governance and depictions of palace protocol accessible to the conquerers. Among the Qing editions in Chinese is one published in 1819 by Zhang Yijin, an obscure descendant of Zhang Juzheng, who sought prestige by associating himself with his famous ancestor. According to a preface by the Hanlin scholar Cheng Dekai (j.s. 1805), Zhang Yijin possessed a manuscript copy that was missing seven sections of text and had no pictures at all. At Zhang's request, Cheng located the missing passages (in an illustrated edition) and oversaw publication of the complete text in the capital. The illustrations are *conspicuously* absent: every story in the reconstituted book is accompanied by a notation that its picture was lost. Nonetheless, a postface by Zheng Ruohuang claimed that the work was not only appropriate for lectures in the palace but would also benefit ordinary people, who would learn the way to preserve themselves and their families as they enjoyed the book. Both Cheng and Zheng call the *Dijian tushuo* an aid to molding (*jiao*) because the *stories* were easy to understand. Consistent with a trend recently discussed by Joseph McDermott, the pictures had lost the importance accorded them in the late Ming period.¹⁸

YANGZHENG TUJIE

Sometime between 1594 and 1597, a generation after Zhang Juzheng presented the *Dijian tushuo* to the Wanli emperor, the Hanlin official Jiao Hong (1541–1620) compiled another illustrated anthology of sixty instructive short stories about exemplars from the past, entitled *Yangzheng tujie* (Fig. 54).¹⁹ Ordered chronologically, the narratives concern emperors, crown princes, and wise statesmen whose advice and actions enabled the realm to be well governed, ranging in time from shortly before the founding of the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1025–256 B.C.E.) through the early Northern Song period (960–1126). Although in some stories an adviser pointed out an unwise plan or misguided action on the part of his lord, there are no negative role models comparable to the depraved rulers featured in the second part of the *Dijian tushuo*. As in the earlier compilation, each episode is introduced



Figure 54. *Yangzheng tuji*, reprint of Jiao Hong's edition (ca. 1597, Nanjing). Illustration of story no. 55: "Scattering and Dispatching People of the Palace" (*Sanqian gongren*). Pictures designed by Ding Yunpeng and carved by Huang Qi. Woodblock-printed book, p. 109a. Folio frame ca. 23.5 × 16 cm. National Central Library, Taiwan, Rare Book no. 05656. The scene shows Song Taizu dismissing palace women, to reduce yin forces that he believed responsible for recent floods. His attendants and the ladies demonstrate the body language appropriate to rituals of giving and receiving gifts.

by a picture labeled with a four-character title, then is recounted in a punctuated text transcribed from a historical source and followed by a more colloquial explanation indented from the primary account. However, in contrast to the illustrations in the *Dijian tushuo*, those in the *Yangzheng tujie* were designed by an artist of considerable reputation, Ding Yunpeng (1547–ca. 1621), who was active both in Anhui and in the Nanjing-Songjiang region.²⁰ The blocks were carved by Huang Qi (1568–after 1614), a member of the Huang family workshop of Anhui, who was also active in Nanjing and produced work of the highest quality.²¹ The compositions are close-up views that focus on interactions between a few relatively large figures, rather than panoramic scenes with many small figures, and there are no labels inside the picture frame.

Like Zhang Juzheng, Jiao Hong created his compendium as an illustrated textbook to complement instruction in the Four Books and Five Classics, the standard palace curriculum for a future ruler. Early in 1594, Jiao had been appointed to serve as a lecturer (*jiang guan*) to Zhu Changluo (1582–1620), the eldest son of the Wanli emperor. In response to pressure from officials, the emperor had agreed to let the boy begin his formal education but had not designated him crown prince. A preface by Zhu Shilu (1539–1610) to the *Yangzheng tujie* diplomatically suggests that the emperor was actually following ancient precedents in seeing to his heir's education before proceeding with the investiture.²² In his own preface, Jiao Hong claimed that the Ming founding emperor's example had inspired him to compile the *Yangzheng tujie* for Zhu Changluo. Ming Taizu (r. 1368–98) had ordered palace tutors to teach his sons stories about wise rulers, good ministers, filial sons, and loyal servants and show them pictures detailing the hardships of agricultural livelihood and examples of filial conduct in former times. In this way, Jiao asserted, the education of the princes had been “complete from root to tip” (*benmo ju ju*).²³

Having lectured to Zhu Changluo on the Four Books and Five Classics for about a year, Jiao Hong was also concerned that the prince did not grasp their abstract principles and needed something more concrete to stimulate his understanding. Pictures of historical events could help him because they showed the principles in practice. Although the prince was already too old to use an illustrated primer in his formal studies, Jiao thought that he might peruse the *Yangzheng tujie* during moments of leisure. Concurring with Jiao, Zhu Shilu also heartily endorsed the use of illustrations to explain abstract concepts, as well as for admonition. Calling attention to the unusually high artistic quality of the *Yangzheng tujie*, Zhu ended his preface by naming the illustrator (Ding Yunpeng), the block carver (Huang Qi), the author of the explanations (Wu Jixu), and the man who had underwritten the costs of block carving and printing (Wu Huairang).²⁴

Several stories in the *Yangzheng tujie* appear to have been selected because

their lessons had resonance for Jiao Hong's own project. For example, the last one is about Wang Zeng (978–1038) presenting Song Renzong with scrolls containing sixty illustrated stories about the deeds of ancient sages and former worthies. According to the appended account, Renzong received the instructive compendium with enthusiasm and had it reproduced in a woodblock edition so that he could bestow copies on officials. The correspondence of the number of illustrated stories with the sixty of the *Yangzheng tujie* suggests that Jiao Hong ended with this precedent in order to improve the chances that his own compilation would be accepted. Perhaps it also reveals his wishful thinking that the Wanli emperor's reception of his work would parallel Song Renzong's gratifyingly Confucian response to Wang Zeng's. Unfortunately, the opposition of other tutors prevented Jiao from submitting the book until 1597, and it was never used for instructing the prince.²⁵

Despite its failure to be adopted at court, the *Yangzheng tujie* was recognized as artistically outstanding and soon entered wider circulation through various reprints and recut editions. The original edition carved by Huang Qi and published by Wu Huairang was reprinted several times (e.g., Fig. 54), but only very minor modifications were introduced. Nonetheless, they generally were of the type that adapted the book to a more diverse readership. For example, a table of contents carved by Dai Weixiao was added, probably in or soon after 1597,²⁶ to give readers an overview of the book's scope and enable them to select specific stories quickly and conveniently. Another early edition divided the sixty stories into two *juan* of thirty apiece, with a separate table of contents for each. Published by Wang Yunpeng under the imprint Wanhu xuan (Playing with the Tiger Studio), with new blocks carved by Huang Lin (1565–after 1617), the latter edition is slightly smaller in size than the original (folio frames 22.4 × 14.6 cm vs. 24 × 16 cm).²⁷ Although the pictures are similar in all but the most minor details, such as slight changes in facial expressions and postures and grander screens and carriages, such modifications intensify the atmosphere of exclusivity and privilege. Moreover, the Huang Lin/Wang Yunpeng pictures have no four-character titles, and the calligraphy of the accompanying texts was changed to a “printed” style (*jiangti*), rather than following the “brush calligraphy” style (*xieke ti*) of the original edition. Perhaps these changes made the book both cheaper and more similar to other books for sale. There were at least three new Qing editions, including one in Manchu and a faithful replica (*fanke ben*) of the Huang Qi/Wu Huairang edition produced for the Guangxu emperor (r. 1875–1908) by the Wuying dian in 1895. The latter was augmented by a volume of poems by the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–96) and another of encomia by the Jiaqing emperor (r. 1796–1820), written to complement each of the sixty stories.

Although Ding Yunpeng created his illustrations for the *Yangzheng tujie* in the medium of brush painting, it was not a painted album that was sub-

mitted to the emperor but rather a printed book. Even in the earliest edition, the picture occupied only one folio of the bound book, always a recto, which sometimes required the extravagance of leaving the facing page blank. Probably because the *Yangzheng tujie* was intended from the outset to be a small book that was convenient to read, its general layout remained stable through subsequent editions. By contrast, the *Dijian tushuo* had been created initially in a large-album format, requiring modifications for publication as a much smaller book, which permitted just half of an illustration to be seen at a time.

The evolution of printed editions of the *Yangzheng tujie* was accordingly more limited than that of *Dijian tushuo*, and fewer examples survive.²⁸ But the work had another life in the medium of hand-done painting and calligraphy. Several late Ming and early Qing handscrolls contain eight or ten illustrations excerpted from the book, which are clearly based on the woodblock-printed prototypes (Fig. 55). Although otherwise very similar to the printed compositions, the paintings display a consistent tendency to elaborate beyond the essentials (like the painted *Dijian tushuo* album presented to the Wanli emperor). A more detailed setting is created for each story, and the supporting cast of figures is expanded. By contrast, the texts that accompany the paintings are much reduced from the printed models and in general provide only the most essential information for each incident. The texts not only occupy less space but also are given less visual weight than the pictures, which are colored, sometimes in bright hues. Moreover, in at least one instance, the texts are written on strips of paper, whereas the pictures are on silk.²⁹ The title of each episode is also translated into a more colloquial wording and the name of the protagonist incorporated into it, so it is easy to understand who and what a given story is about. Significantly, these scrolls are titled not *Yangzheng tujie* but simply *Yangzheng tu*: “Depictions of cultivating rectitude.”

Out of the larger set of printed illustrations, the episodes that were selected for painting cover virtually the entire time span of the *Yangzheng tujie* and represent its main didactic themes. Thus, the painted stories served as a digest of the compendium. The reasons for including only a selection from the complete work probably turned on considerations of practicality, convenience, and the social conditions of viewing handscroll paintings as opposed to reading printed books (which are vividly portrayed in Figs. 56 and 61, below). Although very large sets of paintings occasionally were made, most often in the album format, painted sets typically contained far fewer segments.³⁰ In woodblock printing, by contrast, there was no such convention, and a book might have many illustrations. The selection of a small number of pictures from the *Yangzheng tujie* and the reduction of their accompanying texts to visual pendants adapted the subject to the conventions of painting in general and of the handscroll format in particular.



Figure 55. *Yangzheng tu*, paintings falsely attributed to Wang Zhenpeng (ca. 1280–ca. 1329), mid- to late seventeenth century(?). Illustration of “Scattering and Dispatching People of the Palace” (*San qian gong ren*). Handscroll, ink and colors on silk; sec. 10. Painting dims. ca. 33.2 × 39 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., acc. no. F1911.514. Typical of colorfully painted versions of the story of Song Taizu dismissing palace women, this scene draws back to include architectural structures and additional figures, to emphasize the luxurious palace setting, while the accompanying text is much reduced. The forged signature of the Yuan court painter Wang Zhenpeng appears in the upper left corner of the painting, while the texts purport to have been written by the Ming official Shang Lu (1414–1486) in 1454.

The intended market for these hand-painted/handwritten scrolls seems to have been the socially ambitious but unsophisticated collector, because most of them display impressive-looking but fake documentation purporting to be from the hands of famous people. Three known examples bear forged signatures of the Southern Song court painter Liu Songnian (fl. late twelfth century),³¹ and a fourth purports to be by Wang Zhenpeng (ca. 1280–ca. 1329), a prominent artist at the Yuan court (see Fig. 55). Colophons appended to such scrolls also are falsely attributed to important figures, such as the eminent court official-literatus-connoisseur Wu Kuan (1436–1504), the noted Cheng-Zhu scholar Shao Bao (1460–1527), the renowned Suzhou scholar-painter-calligrapher Wen Zhengming (1470–1559), and the scholar-

calligrapher-connoisseur Chen Jiru (1558–1639). The texts of the colophons variously affirm the didactic value of the illustrations or authenticate them as works of art. Some colophons put the work into the context of other uplifting subjects with courtly origins, such as the *Gengzhi tu* (Pictures of agriculture and sericulture).³² Other discussions focus on the purported artist's biography and oeuvre, topics that were part of the discourse of connoisseurship that validated paintings as "art." Such comments were intended to enhance the prestige of these handscrolls.³³ Although experienced connoisseurs would have readily recognized the attributions as false, the opportunity to develop the specialized knowledge and skills of connoisseurship was not available to most people, not even scholars. Thus, the artistic pretensions of the handscrolls were as useful as their worthy themes for attracting viewers and buyers. The subject matter was appealing for its combination of morality and entertainment, and the attachment of famous names made the scrolls enticing as cultural artifacts potentially able to establish their owners as persons of taste.

SHENGJI TU

Another kind of collection of moral-didactic imagery that had considerable currency in late Ming visual culture was the illustration of events in the life of a single exemplar, above all the sage Confucius (Kongzi) (see Figs. 56–61, below). Often called *Shengji tu*, or some variation of this title, illustrated narratives of the life of Confucius were made in the form of printed books and albums, incised stone tablets (from which rubbings could be made), and painted albums and handscrolls.³⁴ The appearance of the same subject in various kinds of woodblock editions as well as in other media makes it possible to compare the effects of different contexts of production and reception. Depending on its particular setting, the *Shengji tu* could serve as a vehicle of argument, instruction, pious affirmation, or even entertainment.

The earliest pictorial account of Confucius's life was created by the censor Zhang Kai (1398–1460), who selected some thirty episodes from Confucius's biography in Sima Qian's *Shiji* (Records of the grand historian),³⁵ composed poetic eulogies (*zan*) for them, and had an anonymous artist illustrate them. Zhang presented Confucius as a man of virtue and integrity who devoted his energies to writing and teaching when unable to serve a worthy ruler, and who lived the moral ideals professed by scholar-officials. In his colophon to the work, Zhang proposed that the pictorial biography would "help to make the correct path be followed more widely, in order to avoid the delusion of heterodox ideas."³⁶ After the project was completed in 1444 and before Zhang died in 1460, he had the entire set of pictures and texts carved onto stone tablets and installed in a courtyard of his home in Siming (modern Ningbo).³⁷ Rubbings from this illustrated biography circulated



Figure 56. *Shengji tu*, edition of Zhu Yinyi, Prince of Shen (1548, Luzhou [Changzhi], Shanxi). Illustration of episode no. 34: Confucius with his disciples [untitled]. Woodblock-printed album, p. 38a. Block frame ca. 25 × 56 cm. National Library of China, Rare Book no. 16646. (After *Zhongguo gudai banhua congkan*, comp. Zheng Zhenduo.) This scene of students and their master probably reflects the ambience of Ming schools and academies. Some disciples read from bound codex volumes (anachronistic for Confucius's era), while others have handscrolls.

among literati and eventually became the basis for the first of several woodblock-printed albums, published in 1497 on the initiative of He Tingrui (fl. late fifteenth century), a prefect of Hengyang, Hunan. Wanting to redress what he considered serious omissions in Zhang Kai's account, He Tingrui chose the woodblock medium in order to promote a more hagiographic conception of Confucius's life that included additional episodes involving supernatural phenomena and powers.³⁸ Over the course of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, many reprints and new editions of this expanded *Shengji tu* appeared. Two Ming princes published versions based on the 1497 edition, one in ca. 1506 and the other in 1548 (Fig. 56),³⁹ and these in turn became the basis for lower-quality reprints and smaller-format recarved editions issued by commercial publishers. By the late sixteenth century, some versions of the *Shengji tu* in circulation included many more illustrations, and competing editions differed considerably in the scenes they included.

Late Ming commercial publishers made the pictorial biography of Confucius available to a much broader audience, not only under its own title, but also by using it to embellish a variety of other publications. Titled something other than *Shengji tu*, these books ranged in content and intended au-

dience from the erudite to the relatively popular. One of the more scholarly productions was the *Kongsheng jiayu tu* (Illustrated family sayings of the sage Confucius; Fig. 57) of 1589, in which a forty-scene illustrated biography served as the introduction to a replica of a Song edition of *Kongzi jiayu*.⁴⁰ Published privately in Hangzhou by an aspiring scholar, Wu Jiamo (j.s. 1607), the original edition was of a high artistic standard. However, commercial publishers soon pirated the work and made it widely available in several editions of varying quality.⁴¹

A work that probably attracted broader interest was An Mengsong's *Kongsheng quanshu* (Complete writings of the sage Confucius) of 1599, a compendium of Confucian learning aimed at nonelite men who aspired to the higher status potentially attainable through education.⁴² Published by Zheng Shihao of the Zongwen shushe, a Jianyang commercial publisher, the book began with a selection of nineteen biographical pictures without accompanying texts, except for four-character titles. Robert Hegel has argued that grouping illustrations together at the head of a book appealed to the tastes of literati accustomed to viewing painted albums,⁴³ but it seems likely that middlebrow viewers were also attracted to pictorial sequences, making them a useful marketing device.

Pictures from the life of Confucius might even be published purely for entertainment, as in the *chuanqi* (Southern drama) *Xinbian Kongfuzi zhouyou lieguo dacheng qilin ji* (Newly compiled record of Master Kong traveling around all the states, great fulfilment *qilin*), by the pseudonymous "Huanyu xianshenggong" (Duke for Manifesting the Sage in the World).⁴⁴ A suite of nineteen pictures bearing four-character titles (Fig. 58) preceded the script, whose narration, dialogue, and songs were all written in accessible language. Probably published in Nanjing in the late Wanli period, the work displays the signature of Liu Suming, a Jianyang carver who also worked in Nanjing.⁴⁵ The illustrations evoke the architecture, furnishings, and clothing of late Ming material culture, rather than those of Confucius's own day, and a disproportionate number of pictures imagine Confucius in family situations that contradict traditional textual accounts of his life. All these features suggest that the subject was meant to appeal to a broad audience in terms familiar to it.

As conceptions of Confucius's life and the uses of his pictorial biography became increasingly diverse, one group of patrons sought to establish their interpretation as authoritative by having it literally set in stone. In 1592 a combination of sojourning officials and local elites (including descendants of Confucius) in Qufu, Shandong, sponsored a monumental version of the pictorial biography in 112 pictures. Along with four ancillary texts, it was incised on 120 rectangular stone tablets (Fig. 59) and enshrined in the Shengji dian (Hall of the Sage's Traces), a new building at the end of the central axis of the Kongmiao (Temple of Confucius).⁴⁶ The choice of site was extremely significant because the Qufu temple traced its origins to the pre-Han period



Figure 57. *Kongsheng jiayu tu*, edition of Wu Jiamo (1589, Hangzhou). Illustration of episode no. 5: "Heavenly Music and a Written Talisman" (*Tianyue wenfu*). Woodblock-printed book, *j.* 1, p. 5b. Folio frame ca. 20.8 × 13.8 cm. Pictures designed by Cheng Qilong and carved by Huang Zu. National Central Library, Taiwan, Rare Book no. 05326. Illustrating the belief that Confucius was born with a prognostication mysteriously inscribed on his chest, this depiction of Confucius's birth is very like the birth scenes of popular gods and deities. A typical ensemble of musicians hovers in the clouds above his mother's well-appointed chamber as her maids bathe the baby.

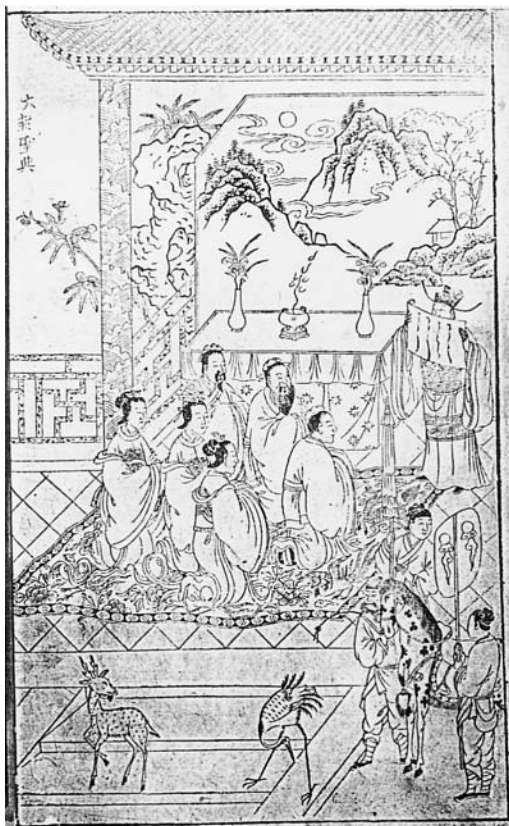


Figure 58. *Xinbian Kongfuzi zhouyou lieguo dacheng qilin ji*, by “Huanyu xianshenggong” (early 17th c., probably Nanjing). Illustration no. 19: “Statute of Grand Enfeifment as Sage” (*Dafeng shengdian*). Pictures carved and probably designed by Liu Suming of Jianyang. Woodblock-printed book, *j. shou*, p. 10b. Block frame ca. 21.9 × 13.6 cm. National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Rare Book no. 02761. In the last illustration to the play about Confucius’s life, an envoy from heaven reads a proclamation conferring titles upon the entire family as a reward for editing the Six Classics. Portrayed as a well-heeled late Ming Jiangnan family lucky enough to be commended by the emperor are Confucius himself, his wife, his parents (who died during his childhood), his son, and his daughter-in-law.

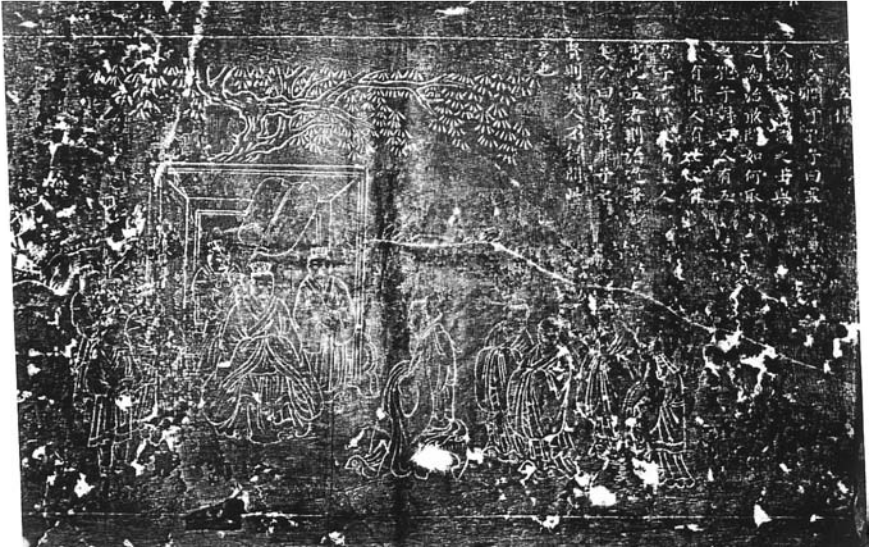


Figure 59. *Shengji zhi tu* (1592, Qufu). Illustration of episode no. 49: “Discussing the Five Human Relationships” (*Lun ren wuyi*). Pictures designed by Yang Zhi of Yangzhou and carved by Zhang Cao of Wujun. Rubbing of incised stone tablet installed in the Shengji dian, Temple of Confucius, Qufu. Frame ca. 28.8 × 55.3 cm. Field Museum of National History, Chicago, acc. no. 244658.49. One of 112 illustrations from a large pictorial biography of Confucius, this scene represents many in which the master responds to a disciple or guest’s question by discoursing on core principles. The simple outdoor setting conveys a sense of antique simplicity, in contrast to most woodblock-printed illustrations of Confucius’s life.

(206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) and enjoyed great prestige as the oldest temple of Confucius in the state cult. The permanent display of this formulation of Confucius’s life could function in multiple ways, as noted by the project director, Surveillance Vice-Commissioner Zhang Yingdeng (j.s. 1583). In his commemorative inscription, Zhang declared that the pictures would forcefully impress viewers with Confucius’s virtue and stimulate them to emulate his example.⁴⁷ Visitors could come in person to have an “audience” with the Sage by means of the biographical tablets, while others would encounter the pictures through rubbings. He stressed that the images on stone were “set up in a hall where they could be solemnly admired” (*dianlie er yanfeng*) for generations to come, in contrast to the various woodblocks from an earlier set that were strewn about the corridors of the temple and could easily become lost. Unlike the relatively volatile woodblock-printed pictures, stone offered permanence and durability while permitting wider circulation through rubbings.

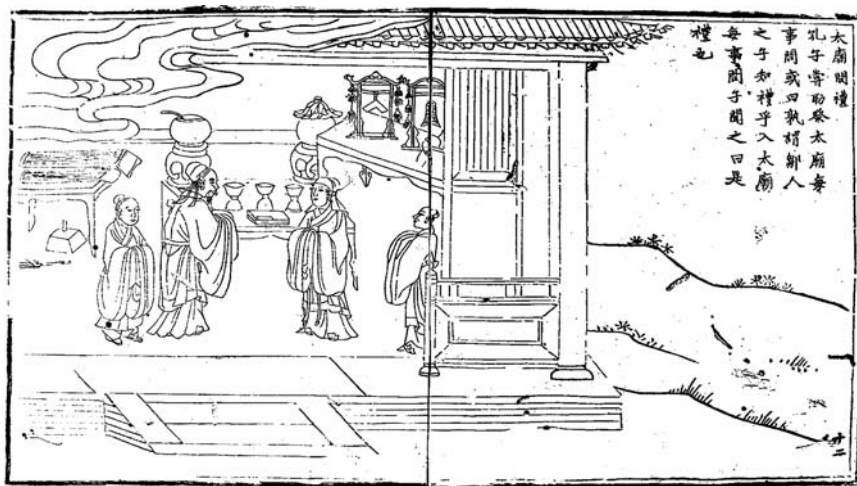


Figure 60. *Shengji zhi tu*, reproduction of 1592 stone tablets (late seventeenth century, Qufu). Illustration of episode no. 11: “Asking about Rituals in the Ancestral Temple” (*Taimiao wen li*). Woodblock-printed album, p. 12. Block frame ca. 28.5 × 51.5 cm. Harvard-Yenching Library, Rare Book no. T1786.2/1346. Because it is based on a composition designed for cutting in stone, the scene of Confucius’s visit to the Zhou ancestral temple has little detail. The profusion of wormholes in the paper suggests that the book’s owner did not care well for it.

The pictures on the *Shengji dian* tablets did not simply reproduce those of previous woodblock models but were redesigned for clarity and didactic efficacy. The compositions were streamlined and made more spacious, so that the figure of Confucius drew the viewer’s attention immediately. Instead of keeping writing and illustration visually separate, the incised tablets included texts and four-character titles inside the pictorial space to facilitate recognition and recall. The content of the texts was somewhat simplified from the classical sources, and Zhang Kai’s poetic eulogies were dropped.

Although the stone tablets in the Qufu Kongmiao established an authoritative and enduring account of Confucius’s life and teachings, becoming a monument within a monument, they did not meet all the needs that arose. For one thing, the stones became very worn from rubbing, and their details soon were difficult to discern, as a visitor noted in 1687.⁴⁸ Also, the laborious process of taking rubbings was not conducive to high-volume distribution. Accordingly, in the Kangxi period (1661–1722), all but seven illustrations from the *Shengji dian* stones were reproduced in a new woodblock edition that preserved the details of their compositions and facilitated their continued circulation (Fig. 60).⁴⁹ The woodblock replica of the stone

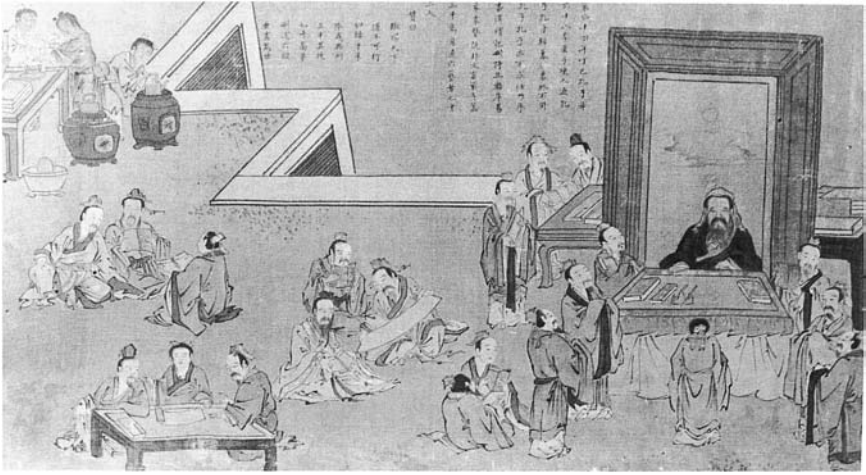


Figure 61. *Shengji tu*, paintings, (Anonymous, mid- to late sixteenth century). Illustration of episode no. 31: Confucius with his disciples. Album, ink and colors on silk, unpaginated. Painting dims. ca. 33×59 cm. Cultural Relics Commission, Qufu. (After *Shengji zhi tu*, pl. 31.) As in Fig. 56, Confucius is instructing some of his disciples while others read in small groups from handscrolls and bound books.

tablets was in turn reprinted or recarved a number of times during the Qing and Republican periods, with little modification of content. Although these later editions contain most of the same pictures, their enframing prefaces and colophons repositioned the pictorial biography as a vehicle to popularize and nationalize Confucius, identifying his teachings with the essence of Chinese civilization.⁵⁰

A few painted versions of Confucius's pictorial biography were also made. Typically done in ink and color on silk, they were based on printed models and may carry forged documentation, like the *Yangzheng* paintings discussed above. A late Ming or early Qing album falsely attributed to Wang Zhenpeng is very similar to the *Yangzheng* handscrolls, not only because the same artist's name was invoked for both subjects, but also because it, too, was a ten-scene excerpt from a larger compendium.⁵¹ An anonymous and somewhat earlier (mid- to late Ming) album of thirty-six leaves appears to be based on He Tingrui's 1497 woodblock edition of similar size (Fig. 61).⁵² The texts are written directly on the paintings in both albums, and those in the "Wang Zhenpeng" attribution also include four-character titles. A third late Ming painted version also has thirty-six illustrations but was done as a handscroll and closely resembles a woodblock-printed edition that was published circa 1629.⁵³ The texts precede the spare, linear illustrations and begin with a large title that ends in the word *tu* (picture), facilitating viewer recognition. Except for the

first passage, which includes a short eulogy for the iconic portrait of Confucius that follows, the inscription for each section is simply a straightforward prose explanation of the event illustrated. As in the *Yangzheng* handscrolls, the texts have been downsized and streamlined to become appendages rather than counterparts to the pictures.

CONCLUSION

The case studies discussed above suggest some insights into the objectives and meanings attendant on the choice of medium for presenting moral-didactic illustrations. Some basic distinctions may be made among the three media considered here, that is, woodblock printing, incised stone, and painting. Woodblock printing appears to be most appropriate for disseminating pictures widely within a short period. Although certain kinds of artistic aspiration may be projected through woodblock illustrations (as in cases examined by Katherine Carlitz and Anne Burkus-Chasson in their essays in this volume), painting is chosen when it is desirable to shift from a primarily didactic realm to an aesthetic one. Incising images on stone is both the most reliable way to claim importance and authority for the subject, by monumentalizing it, and the best suited for preserving pictures over multiple generations.

The prior history of woodblock printing constituted part of the environment in which the *Dijian tushuo* and *Yangzheng tuji* initially functioned and subsequently evolved. Because the medium had been used to disseminate imperial editions of important texts in the early Ming period, later works published by the palace or central government projected at least a vestige of official authority. Printing also retained favorable associations from its long use in a Buddhist context as a means of generating merit through replications of images and texts. During the Ming, however, printing was used to disseminate a wide range of unofficial works and allowed originally high-minded didactic subjects to take on less elevated functions, attracting readers from social groups below the ruling elite. The very qualities that made the *Dijian tushuo* and *Yangzheng tuji* accessible to a boy-emperor and a young prince, respectively, also made them potentially appealing to others of modest learning, who might be more interested in gaining voyeuristic access to the exotic realm of the palace than in learning how to be a good ruler. Moreover, the illustrations of these ostensibly uplifting themes shared visual properties with pictures of beautiful women and illustrations for drama and fiction, making them susceptible to use as mere entertainment.

It seems significant that neither subject ever appeared on stone tablets, a medium that had been used since antiquity to confer permanence and assert authority. Important monuments and places were commemorated with stone tablets at least as early as the Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.E.), when

the First Emperor erected stelae at the numinous mountains he visited. In addition, before the Ming period, the central government disseminated official editions of the Classics through rubbings made from texts carved on stone tablets kept in the Imperial University.⁵⁴ The medium thus carried the connotations of official authority and enduring importance. Texts were far more likely to be fixed in stone than were pictures, however, and of the three subjects examined here, only the pictorial biography of Confucius (*Shengji tu*) claimed the kind of lasting significance that is affirmed through stone.

The Sage's life was considered a model for generations upon generations of men who aspired to roles in governance, and his pictorial biography was incised on stone tablets in at least three different contexts. First, Zhang Kai transferred the original pictures and texts to tablets installed at his home, in order to preserve them and make them available to colleagues and descendants through rubbings. Later, Zhang Yingdeng and his associates made an official monument out of their version of the pictorial biography by having it carved on stone tablets and installed in a special building in a state temple, thus establishing it as definitive and universal. Third, carved-stone pictures played an important role in creating a shrine that alleged Confucius's presence in a place that he never even visited, the Kongzhai (Kong residence) near Qingpu, Songjiang.⁵⁵ In 1610 the site's sponsors erected stone tablets incised with a pictorial biography that purported to reproduce Zhang Kai's original version. By installing permanent images of Confucius "in action," they both endorsed a local belief that a descendant had buried the Sage's clothing and cap there and enhanced the Kongzhai's appeal as a destination for scholarly pilgrimage.

Paintings played a relatively minor role in the evolution of the three didactic subjects discussed here. As a practical necessity, illustrations for all three were initially painted and served as prototypes for subsequent replication. Thereafter, the subjects were rarely painted, and if they were, the later paintings usually followed a printed model fairly closely. Even when paintings introduced changes or embellishments, as did the *Yangzheng* handscrolls, the modifications were not incorporated into subsequent printed versions. Paintings were collected by people who wanted an object that purported to be a unique work of art, rather than something whose very medium implied the existence of multiples. However, the people who bought painted versions of the *Yangzheng* stories or the life of Confucius were novice collectors, who were easily fooled by grandiose attributions and forged documentation. Moreover, by the late Ming, narrative paintings were no longer highly regarded by elite connoisseurs, and their possession probably conferred relatively little prestige. Mimetic representation was out of favor in the most exclusive painting circles just when its presence in woodblock printing was

reaching its height. In contrast to Japan, where large folding or sliding screens made for military rulers' residences were decorated with paintings based on illustrations in a printed edition of the *Dijian tushuo*,⁵⁶ the only paintings of that theme in China appear to be those in the hand-painted and handwritten album originally submitted to the Wanli emperor.⁵⁷ Once the *Dijian tushuo* made its swift transition into a woodblock-printed book, it subsequently evolved entirely within that medium.

Indeed, a reconsideration of the origins of the *Dijian tushuo* and *Yangzheng tujie* suggests a noteworthy conceptual shift in the status of the printed book. Zhang Juzheng chose to submit an album containing finely finished paintings and handwritten calligraphy to his young emperor and pupil, and only afterward did he reproduce it as a woodblock-printed book for wider distribution. This movement from painting to printing was consistent with the traditional relationship between the two media from at least the mid-eleventh century, when Song Renzong had ordered a set of one hundred paintings and texts on early Song historical events to be reproduced in woodblock.⁵⁸ A generation after Zhang Juzheng submitted the *Dijian tushuo* to the throne, Jiao Hong compiled the *Yangzheng tujie*, a work very similar in subject matter, layout, and instructional purpose. However, the physical object was a superbly printed book, not a painted album or set of handscrolls. Although Jiao had engaged the services of an accomplished painter and could have submitted paintings accompanied by handwritten calligraphy, he chose instead to have the designs carved by an outstanding craftsman on fine hardwood and then printed, at substantial additional cost.⁵⁹ By the end of the century, didactic figure paintings may indeed have become too vulgar to offer to the throne, but the genre was vital and flourishing in the rapidly evolving medium of the woodblock-printed book.

Nonetheless, a significant number of literati did not agree that pictures could or should be used to promote learning and cultivation. According to this view, the Way was too subtle to convey in pictorial illustrations, which were all too likely to encourage just a superficial understanding or to distract the viewer with their visual appeal. Shao Yiren (j.s. 1580) succinctly laid out the advantages and liabilities of using pictures for promoting moral cultivation in a thoughtful colophon written for the Shengji dian stone tablets in 1592.⁶⁰ On the one hand, he agreed with Zhang Yingdeng that viewers who reverently gazed upon images of Confucius in action might be stimulated to renew their commitment to cultivate virtue. On the other hand, Shao believed that the texts of the Classics were more reliable than pictures as a guide to the exemplary heart-mind of the Sage: "Images are just the external aspects of the words and passages. . . . I am concerned that someone looking at these pictures might grasp only the [external] 'traces' and not think about what they are traces of."⁶¹

As for narrative illustrations in woodblock-printed books, a late Ming moralist might find them too close to the “floating world” of illustrated dramas, novels, and other ephemeral publications, whose pictures gratified a viewer’s less worthy or even reprehensible desires.⁶² Indeed, with the same designers, carvers, and publishers producing a range of illustrated books, it was all too easy to transform instructive images into voyeuristic ones.⁶³ Although the debate over the utility of didactic pictures seems ultimately to resolve in favor of those who advocated reliance on texts to mold the superior man, the proliferation of reprints and later editions of the *Dijian tushuo*, *Yangzheng tujie*, and *Shengji tu* may demonstrate a continuing belief that pictures could promote and inculcate desirable patterns of behavior. From the Qing period onward, however, their expected viewers were not scholar-officials but commoners, to whom the illustrations offered not just moral homilies but also lessons on the physical demeanor and material environment of the social elite.

NOTES

1. For an excellent introduction to the relative positions of various visual media, see Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

2. For a challenge to one aspect of the widespread belief that pictures could help the illiterate or semiliterate to understand texts, see chap. 1, note 110, this volume.

3. A classic presentation of the issue is Zhang Yanyuan’s essay “Lun hua zhi yuanliu” (On the origins of painting), in his *Lidai minghua ji* (Record of famous paintings through the ages; 847), modern punctuated edition in *Huashi congshu* (Collectanea of histories of painting), vol. 1, ed. Yu Anlan (rpt. Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1974), 1.1–3 (pp. 5–7); partially translated in Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 50–52. A sharply focused discussion of the complementarity of picture (*tu*) and writing (*shu*) for conveying different kinds of information is given in Wang Yinglin, *Yuhai* (Sea of jade) (rpt. Shanghai: Jiangsu guji chubanshe and Shanghai shudian, 1987), 56.31b–32a (pp. 1072–73). See also Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, chap. 1.

4. Relevant discussions of the semantic range of the term *tu* appear in Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, 104–9; also Michael Nylan, “Calligraphy, the Sacred Text and Test of Culture,” in Cary Y. Liu, Dora C. Y. Ching, and Judith G. Smith, eds., *Character and Context in Chinese Calligraphy* (Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999), 16–77; and in papers presented by Donald Harper, Wu Hung, Eugene Yuejin Wang, and Michael Lackner for the panel “*Tu* (Diagrams, Charts, Drawings) in Traditional Chinese Culture,” at the 1998 conference of the Association for Asian Studies.

5. Wu Hung, *The Wu Liang Shrine: The Ideology of Early Chinese Pictorial Art* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), esp. 170–86, 272–75.

6. That is, *Sanchao xunjian tu* (Illustrated instructive mirror of the [first] three reigns), described in Guo Ruoxu, *Tuhua jianwen zhi* (Treatise on paintings I have seen

or heard of; late 1070s), modern punctuated edition in *Huashi congshu*, vol. 1 (rpt. Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1974), 6.85 (p. 231).

7. This point is also discussed by Anne Burkus-Chasson, chap. 10, this volume.

8. I provide detailed discussions and references for the evolution of the *Dijian tushuo* in a much longer study based on extensive firsthand research and visual comparisons; see “From Textbook to Testimonial: *The Emperor’s Mirror, An Illustrated Discussion (Dijian tushuo /Teikan zusetsu)* in China and Japan,” *Ars Orientalis* 31 (2001): 65–101. My reconstruction differs substantially from those of other scholars, which contain many errors: e.g., Jia Naiqian’s introduction to a modern edition, *Dijian tushuo pingzhu (The Emperor’s Mirror, an illustrated discussion, with annotations)* (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1996), 1–11; Kobayashi Hiromitsu, “Kyūroku-zu byōbu ni miru *Teikan zusetsu no tenshi*” (A reincarnation of the *Dijian tushuo* in the Kyūroku-zu screens), *Kokka* (National splendor) 1131 (1990): 11–31; Sakakibara Satoru, “*Teikan-zu shokai*” (A minor note on *The Emperor’s Mirror* pictures), in *Kinsei Nihon kaiga to gafu: E tehon ten* (Japanese paintings and painting manuals of recent centuries: Exhibition of painted handbooks), comp. Machida Shiritsu Kokusai Hanga Bijutsukan (Tokyo: Machida Shiritsu Kokusai Hanga Bijutsukan, 1990), vol. 2, pp. 124–27; and Kōno Motoaki, “Tan’yū to Nagoya-jō Kan’eidō zōei goten” (Tan’yū and the Kan’ei Palace of Nagoya Castle), pt. 2, *Bijutsushi ronsō* (Discussions of the history of art) 4 (1988): 131–53, esp. 142–43.

9. For a punctuated and annotated rendition, see *Zhang Juzheng ji* (Collected works of Zhang Juzheng), comp. and ed. Zhang Shunhui (Wuhan, Hubei: Jing Chu shu she, 1987), j. 3, pp. 107–14. For a useful overview of Zhang’s views on Confucian philosophy and statecraft, see Robert Crawford, “Chang Chū-cheng’s Confucian Legalism,” in Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *Self and Society in Ming Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 367–413.

10. I discuss this issue in “The Temple of Confucius and Pictorial Biographies of the Sage,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 55.2 (May 1996): 269–300; see also Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, esp. chap. 2. Besides being out of favor with critics of painting, prosaic pictures also could be considered déclassé in printed books, a point discussed by Anne McLaren in chap. 4. Ironically, Qing imperial bibliographers did characterize *Dijian tushuo* as vulgar, because its language had to be simple enough for its young recipient; see *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (Synopsis of the comprehensive listing of the *Complete Books of the Four Treasuries*), comp. Ji Yun et al. (1782; rpt. Taipei: Dadong shuju, 1970), j. 90, sec. 17, *shi bu* 46, *shiping cunmu* 2, p. 98.

11. The extant pictures, for stories nos. 1–39 and 82–117, are reproduced in microscopic size in *Kinsei Nihon kaiga to gafu*, vol. 2, cat. no. 21.

12. Hu Xian’s imprint on the final folio gives the date as “an auspicious winter morning in the first year of the Wanli reign” and identifies him as a commercial publisher who had blocks carved (Wanli yuannian dongyue jidan, Jinling shufang Hu Xian xiu zi). He is also mentioned by Lucille Chia, chap. 3, this volume.

13. Guo’s preface is transcribed and punctuated in *Guoli zhongyang tushuguan shanben xuba jilu* (Collected record of prefaces and colophons on rare books in the National Central Library), *Shibu* (History section), vol. 4 (Taipei: National Central Library, 1993), 400–401.

14. Perhaps Guo’s flattery paid off, because his next official posting was in Beijing, and he served in or near one of the two capitals well into the 1580s.

15. Jia Naiqian, Introduction to *Dijian tushuo pingzhu*, 9–10. Perhaps the last edition to omit Zhang’s memorial and statements was one published in 1622, with a preface signed by eight palace eunuchs, among them the notorious Wei Zhongxian (1568–1627).

16. The signatures of Huang Jun (alternate names Junpei and Xiuye; 1553–1620) and his son Huang Yingxiao (Zhongchun; 1582–1662) appear on the work. Like other members of the Anhui workshop, they may have been working in Nanjing, where Jin Lian held office. Zhou Wu puts them in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth generations of the Huang family, respectively, and identifies other publications they carved; see *Huipai banhua shi lunji* (Collected essays on the history of the woodcuts of the Huizhou school) (Hefei: Anhui renmin chubanshe, 1983), 39, 42.

17. Robert E. Hegel provides a useful discussion of the social backgrounds and tastes of men involved in late Ming book culture; see *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), esp. chap. 1.

18. McDermott noted this trend in his paper “An Image Problem,” presented at the Conference on Text and Image in Chinese Culture, St. John’s College, Cambridge University, December 1999.

19. Unlike the *Dijian tushuo*, which has attracted scholarly attention because of its importance to later Japanese art (see note 8), *Yangzheng tujie* has been little studied. Only the most schematic descriptive information, often error-ridden, accompanies its reproduction in various exhibition catalogues and compendia of printed books. I am currently preparing a separate study of the book, from which the present account is drawn.

20. For Ding’s career, see Sewall J. Oertling II, “Ting Yun-p’eng: A Chinese Artist of the Late Ming Dynasty” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1980). Ding is also mentioned by Chia, chap. 3, this volume.

21. Huang Qi (also called Huang Deqi, z. Weizheng) was a member of the twenty-sixth generation in the Huang genealogy and carved blocks for books published between 1589 and 1614; see Zhou Wu, *Huipai banhua shi lunji*, 28–30, 40, 55 (notes for pls. 22–23).

22. For an account of the controversy surrounding the designation of the Wanli emperor’s heir apparent, see Ray Huang, 1587, *a Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 1–41. For a punctuated transcription of Zhu Shilu’s preface, see *Guoli zhongyang tushu guan shanben xuba jilu, Zibu* (Philosophy section), vol. 1 (Taipei: National Central Library, 1993), 197–98.

23. Jiao’s preface to *Yangzheng tujie* is included in *Jiaoshi Danyuan ji* (Collected writings of Jiao Hong) (1606; rpt. Taipei: Weiwen tushu gongsi, 1977), 15.1a–2a (pp. 541–43); a punctuated transcription appears in the *Guoli zhongyang tushuguan shanben xuba jilu, Zibu*, vol. 1, p. 197.

24. Shen Defu also commented on the participation of Ding and Huang and noted the use of expensive hardwood for the blocks; see *Wanli yehuo bian* (Compendium of gossip from the Wanli era) (1619; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), j. 25, p. 636. Zhou Wu identifies Wu Jixu and Wu Huairang as men of Shexian, Anhui, but he erroneously suggests that the first edition of *Yangzheng tujie* was carved there in 1593 by the Wanhu xuan; see *Huipai banhua shi lunji*, p. 55, notes for pl. 23.

The Wus were wealthy merchants and art collectors; see Joseph P. McDermott, "The Making of a Chinese Mountain, Huangshan: Politics and Wealth in Chinese Art," *Asian Cultural Studies* 17 (March 1989): esp. 161. Craig Clunas discusses the significance of the late Ming emergence of "name" craftsmen from previously anonymous traditions; see *Art in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), chap. 5.

25. Jiao's memorial submitting the book in October 1597 is reproduced in the front matter of some examples and is included in *Jiaoshi Danyuan ji*, 3.6a–7a (pp. 187–89). His colleagues were suspicious of his motives for preparing the compilation on his own and angered when it was submitted to the emperor. For early accounts, see Zhu Guozhen, *Yongchuang xiaopin* (Vignettes from the portable kiosk) (1622; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), j. 10, p. 216; and Shen Defu, *Wanli yehuo bian*, j. 4, pp. 102–3, and j. 25, pp. 636–37.

26. The table of contents first appears in a version that includes Jiao's 1597 memorial. I have studied one example in the National Central Library (Rare Book 05656), which is unmistakably printed from the same blocks as the original (e.g., Rare Book 05654), but on much lower quality brownish paper.

27. A page from an example in the British Museum (OA 1992.1–7) is reproduced in Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art* (London: The British Museum, 1992), 123. The name "Wanhu xuan" appears in the lower margin of every page. Chia identifies Wang Yunpeng as a prolific publisher and book dealer from Shexian who was also active in Nanjing; see chap. 3, this volume. Wang's signature after his transcription of Jiao Hong's memorial identifies him only as a student in the Imperial University (Guozhi sheng). Huang Lin (*zi* Ruoyu) was a member of the twenty-fifth generation in the Huang genealogy and carved blocks for other Wanhu xuan editions, such as *Bei xixiang ji* (Northern record of the western chamber) and *Chengshi moyuan* (Cheng's album of ink designs); see Zhou Wu, *Huipai banhua shi lunji*, 29, 31, 38, and pl. 23.

28. Perhaps another reason why the *Yangzheng tujie* circulated less widely than the *Dijian tushuo* is because its earnestly uplifting stories offered less potential for entertaining diverse audiences, particularly by contrast with the earlier book's lurid tales of bad rulers.

29. Freer Gallery acc. no. F1909.221, attributed by forged signature to the Southern Song court artist Liu Songnian. In other examples, both text and picture are on silk.

30. Albums usually contain an even number of pictures, most often 8, 10, or 12. The number of separate illustrations typical of a handscroll is more variable but usually does not exceed 12.

31. Two in the Freer Gallery of Art (acc. nos. F1909.221, F1914.60–61), and one in the National Palace Museum, Taiwan; see *Gugong shuhua tulu* (Illustrated record of calligraphy and painting in the Palace Museum) vol. 16 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1997), 255–60.

32. The *Gengzhi tu* consists of two related sets of pictures and poems that catalogue each phase of the occupations assigned by Confucian ideology to men and women, respectively: 21 scenes of rice cultivation and 24 scenes of silk production. Created for Song Gaozong (r. 1127–62), the theme was also painted in the Yuan and Qing courts, and it was printed in the latter as well.

33. Clunas provides an insightful discussion of the type of painting that was valued by elite critics and the kind of discourse appropriate to it; see *Pictures and Visuality*, esp. chap. 1.

34. The following account is drawn from my published research on the contents, filiation, and purposes of the *Shengji tu*; see “The Temple of Confucius and Pictorial Biographies of the Sage,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 55.2 (May 1996): 269–300; “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius: Their Evolution, Functions, and Significance in Late Ming China,” *Artibus Asiae* 57.1–2 (1997): 73–134; and “Varied Views of the Sage: Illustrated Narratives of the Life of Confucius,” in Thomas A. Wilson, ed., *On Sacred Grounds: Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 222–64.

35. Sima Qian, *Shiji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962) j. 47, pp. 1905–47.

36. *Yi ju guangju zun zhenglu, buwei yiduan ta qi zhi huo*.

37. Yang Shouchen, *Yang Wenyigong wenji* (Collected writings of Yang Shouchen), in *Siming congshu* (Collectanea of Siming), ser. 7, comp. Zhang Shouyong (1940; rpt. Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1988), j. 7, p. 609.

38. Most of the added episodes came from Kong family lore, initially transmitted orally and later included in books by descendants of Confucius, such as Kong Chuan, *Dongjia zaji* (Miscellaneous records of the Eastern House; 1334), and Kong Yuancuo, *Kongshi zuting guangji* (Expanded record of the ancestral court of the Kong family; 1227); Lionel Jensen discusses some of the stories in “The Genesis of Kongzi in Ancient Narrative: The Figurative as Historical,” in Wilson, ed., *On Sacred Grounds*, 175–221.

39. That is, by Zhu Jianjun (ca. 1455–ca. 1512), the Prince of Ji, in Changsha, Hunan; and Zhu Yinyi (d. 1549), the Prince of Shen, in Luzhou (modern Changzhi, Shanxi); extant examples are in the National Library of China, Beijing, Rare Book nos. 14385 and 16646, respectively. For discussion, see my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 88–90, and Appendix A-1–A-6 and A-8–A-9.

40. See my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 95–96, Fig. 19, and Appendix D-1–D-2. As indicated by signatures on the first picture, the illustrations were designed by Cheng Qilong (z. Boyang) of Xindu (Chengdu), and the blocks were carved by Huang Zu of the Huang family workshop in Shexian.

41. See my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” Appendix D-3–D-9.

42. See my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” Appendix E-1–E-3; I reproduce one page in “The Temple of Confucius and Pictorial Biographies of the Sage,” Fig. 11.

43. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction*, 198–201, 314.

44. Perhaps a member of the Kong family in Qufu, the author’s pseudonym plays off Yanshengong (Duke for Perpetuating the Sage), the title held by the senior member of each generation of Kong descendants. The work has been reproduced in the series *Quan Ming chuanqi*, *Zhongguo xiju yanjiu ziliao* (Research materials on the complete Ming *chuanqi* and Chinese drama) (Taipei: Tianyi chubanshe, 1983); see also my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 96, 109–10, and Appendix F-1.

45. Liu Suming is briefly discussed in Chia, chap. 3, this volume.

46. I have analyzed this undertaking in detail in “The Temple of Confucius and Pictorial Biographies of the Sage.”

47. Zhang Yingdeng, “Record of the Hall of Pictures of the Sage” (Shengtudian

ji), transcribed in Baba Harukichi, *Kōshi seiseki shi* (Treatise on the traces of the Sage Confucius) (Tokyo: Daito bunka kyokai, 1934), 173–74.

48. Yu Zhaohui, *Shengmiao tongji*, quoted in *Queli wenxian kao* (An investigation of documents in Queli), comp. Kong Jifen (1762; rpt. Taipei: Zhongguo wenxian chubanshe, 1966), 34.32a–b (pp. 891–92).

49. See my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 114–15 and Appendix C-2–C-5. The blocks for printing this edition are preserved by the Cultural Relics Commission in Qufu.

50. I discuss these developments in “Varied Views of the Sage,” 247–52.

51. See my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 117–18 and Appendix A-18. The present status of the album is unknown.

52. The album, kept by the Cultural Relics Commission, Qufu, is fully reproduced in Kaji Nobuyuki, *Kōshi gaden* (Pictorial biography of Confucius) (Tokyo: Shueisha, 1991) and in *Shengji zhi tu* (Pictures of the traces of the Sage) (Jinan: Shandong youyi shushe, 1989); see also my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 118–19 and Appendix A-17.

53. See my “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 120–21 and Appendix A-19 (painting) and A-15 (book). The handscroll, in the Idemitsu Museum, Tokyo, is fully reproduced at small scale in *Chūgoku kaiga sōgō zuroku, zokuhen* (Comprehensive illustrated catalogue of Chinese paintings, 2d ser.), comp. Toda Teisuke and Ogawa Hiromitsu (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1999), vol. 3, JM18–041.

54. For example, the “Stone Classics” of Song Renzong were established in Bianliang in 1054–55; after they were largely destroyed by the Jin invasion, Song Gaozong created a new set of tablets in Lin’an between 1143 and 1146.

55. I discuss this site in “Illustrations of the Life of Confucius,” 115–16, and in several unpublished papers; it is also the subject of a forthcoming monograph.

56. The book had arrived by the beginning of the seventeenth century, and a Japanese edition was produced for Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615) in 1606; the pictures are fully reproduced in *Kinsei Nihon kaiga to gafu*, vol. 1, cat. no. 22, and discussed in Sakakibara’s catalogue essay, p. 128; see also Kōno, “Tan’yū to Nagoya-jō,” 143–144; and Kobayashi, “Kyūroku-zu byōbu ni miru *Teikan zusetsu no tensei*,” 21. Screen paintings by artists of the official Kano atelier are discussed by Sakakibara (129–33), Kobayashi (25–28), and Karen M. Gerhart, “Tokugawa Authority and Chinese Exemplars: The *Teikan Zusetsu* Murals of Nagoya Castle,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 52.1 (spring 1997): 1–34; and Gerhart, *The Eyes of Power* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999).

57. A possible exception concerns four hanging scrolls that may illustrate stories from the *Dijian tushuo*, recently published as the work of one Qiu Shilun, in the inventory of an unidentified Japanese private collection; see *Chūgoku kaiga sōgō zuroku, zokuhen*, vol. 3, JP12–516. Although identified as a Ming artist, Qiu does not appear in Chinese biographical sources and may be Korean; moreover, since the paintings are in Japan, it is possible that he emigrated after the fall of the Ming dynasty and produced them there.

58. See note 6.

59. His colophon is transcribed with minor abridgments in *Queli wenxian kao*, 889–90; and fully in Baba Harukichi, *Kōshi seiseki shi*, 171–73.

60. Zhu Guozhen implies that *Yangzheng tujie* initially was an album of hand-

written paintings and calligraphy, which Jiao Hong's son took to Nanjing to be printed for private circulation after other tutors opposed its use for instructing the prince; and that Jiao submitted his 1597 memorial only after a eunuch showed the book to the Wanli emperor. See *Yongchuang xiaopin*, j. 10, p. 216.

61. *Yu lü fu du situ zhe, chi qiji, er busi qi suo yi ji ye.*

62. For a discussion of negative views of the power of representational images, particularly erotic ones, see Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, esp. chap. 6.

63. These links are discussed by Katherine Carlitz, "The Social Uses of Female Virtue in Late Ming Editions of *Lienü zhuan*," *Late Imperial China* 12.2 (1991): 117-48.

GLOSSARY

- An Guo 安國
An Lushan 安祿山
An Mengsong 安夢松
Anzheng tang 安正堂
baihua wen 白話文
Baijiang zhuan 百將傳
Baijia xing 百家姓
Bai Juyi 白居易
Baitu ji 白兔記
Baixue lou zhuren 白雪樓主人
Baiyun sanxian 白雲散仙
banben 版本, 板本
banben xue 版本學
bangzhi 榜紙
bankuang 板框, 版框
banquan 版權
banxin 版心
banyan 板眼
Bao'an 寶安
Bao'en si 報恩寺
baojuan 寶卷
Baosheng lou 寶聖樓
baqi guanxue 八旗官學
beiduo 貝多
Beijing chuban shizhi 北京出版史志
Bei Xixiang ji 北西廂記
Beixi ziyi 北溪字義
ben 本
bencao 本草
Bencao gangmu 本草綱目
Bencao mengquan 本草蒙筌
ben mo ju ju 本末具舉
bianzi 扁字
bianzuan 編纂
bigeng 筆耕
biji 筆記
bingjie 并節
bingzi 丙子
Bishu sheng 祕書省
Bogu yezi 博古葉子
bu 補
Bushi zhengzong 卜筮正宗
butong hu zhongren 不通乎眾人
buxue zhi ren 不學之人
buyi 補遺
Cai Bojie 蔡伯喈

- Caidiao ji* 才調集
caifang 采訪
cangban 藏板
canyue 參閱
 Cao An 曹安
Caojue baiyun 草訣百韻
 Cao Rong 曹溶
ce 冊
Chajiu zhengqi 茶酒爭奇
 Chang'an 長安
 Changshan 常山
 Changshu 長熟
 Changting 長汀
Changwu zhi 長物志
 Changzhi 長治
 Changzhou 常州
chao 鈔
chaoben 鈔本
 Chaoku jie 鈔庫街
chaolu 鈔錄
chaoxie 鈔寫
chatu 插圖
 Chen Dalai 陳大來
 Cheng Dekai 程德楷
 Cheng Dengji 程登吉
 Chengdu 成都
 Chenghua 成化
 Cheng Qilong (Boyang) 程起龍
 (伯陽)
Chengshi moyuan 程氏墨苑
cheng shu zaji 成書雜記
 Cheng Wang 成王
 Cheng Yi 程頤
chengyu 成語
Chengyu kao 成語考
 Cheng-Zhu 程朱
 Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬
 Chen Jiamo 陳嘉謨
 Chen Jimo 陳季模
 Chen Jiru 陳繼儒
 Chen Jitai 陳際泰
 Chen Renxi 陳仁錫
 Chen Ruyuan 陳汝元
 Chen Suowen 陳所聞
 Chen You 陳友
 Chen Yujiao 陳與郊
 Chen Zhensun 陳振孫
 Chen Zi'ang 陳子昂
Chongke jiaozheng Tang Jingchuan xian-sheng wenji 重刊校正唐荆川先生文集
 Chongwen yuan 崇文院
Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi leizheng beiyong bencao 重修政和經史類證備用本草
Chongxu zhide zhenjing 沖虛至德真經
 (Liezi 列子)
 Chongzhen 崇禎
Choushi jinnang 酬世錦囊
 Chu 楚
chuanqi 傳奇
chuangxiu 創修
Chuban shizhi 出版史志
Chunqiu fanlu 春秋繁露
Chunqiu Zuozhuan Du Lin huican 春秋左傳杜林匯參
 Chunxiu tang 純修堂
 Chu Renhuo 褚人獲
chuxiang 出像
Chuxue zhinan 初學指南
cihua 詞話
Cilin zhaiyan 詞林摘豔
congshu 叢書
cun xuejiu 村學究
Dafeng shengdian 大封聖典
 Dai Weixiao 戴惟孝

- Dajing Side tang 大經四德堂
 Damo chang 打磨廠
 Damo chushen chuandeng zhuan 達摩出身傳燈傳
 dang hang 當行
 Dangui ji 丹桂記
 Daoxue 道學
 Da Qing lüli 大清律理
 dashi 大士
 Da Song yanyi zhongxing—Yinglie zhuan 大宋演義中興—英烈傳
 Da Song zhongxing tongsu yanyi 大宋中興通俗演義
 Da Tang liudian 大唐六典
 datong pu 大同譜
 daya 大雅
 Daye tang 大業堂
 Dazang zunjing 大藏尊經
 de 德
 Deng Lin 鄧林
 Deng Yuyao 鄧煜耀
 Deng Zhimo 鄧志謨
 Di 氐
 di 帝
 di . . . ce . . . zhencang 第 . . . 冊 . . . 珍藏
 di . . . hao gei . . . shoucang 第 . . . 號給 . . . 收藏
 Di [Qing] 狄 [青]
 dianban 殿版
 dianban 點板
 dianji 典籍
 dianke 殿刻
 dian lie er yan feng 殿列而嚴奉
 Dijian tushuo 帝鑑圖說
 Dingjie Jingben quanxiang Xiyou ji 鼎鍬京本全像西遊記
 Ding Xiongfei 丁雄飛
 Ding Yunpeng 丁雲鵬
 Dizi gui 弟子規
 Dong Guangsheng 董光昇
 Dong Han yanyi zhuan 東漢演義傳
 Dong Xi Han tongsu yanyi 東西漢通俗演義
 Dong Xi liang Jin zhizhuan tiping 東西兩晉志傳題評
 Doupeng xianhua 豆棚閑話
 du 讀
 Duchua yuan 都察院
 Du Dingji 杜定基
 Du Dingsheng 杜鼎昇
 Duduan 獨斷
 Du Fu 杜甫
 duilian 對聯
 Du Ruhui 杜如晦
 Du Ruiyu 杜瑞玉
 dushu fa 讀書法
 “Dushu fa” 讀書法
 Dushu xun 讀書訓
 dushu yin 讀書音
 Dushu zhiguan lu 讀書止觀錄
 dusong 讀誦
 (Du) Wanyu (杜) 完宇
 Du Xitong 杜錫同
 Du Xizhou 杜錫周
 Du Yingquan 杜應泉
 Du Yi siji 讀易私記
 Du Yuan 杜元
 Du Yunkang 杜韞康
 Er Cheng quanshu 二程全書
 Erlun chuanwen beizhi 二論串文備旨
 Ershisi xiao 二十四孝
 fadui 發兌
 fanfu suzi 凡夫俗子
 Fang 方

- fang* 倣
fangben 坊本
fangke 坊刻
fang xiang shimo 坊廂始末
fang, xiang, xiang 坊, 廂, 鄉
fanjia zhuang 梵夾裝
fanke ben 翻刻本
fanke bijiu 翻刻必究
fanli 凡例
fanmin 凡民
Fan Qin 范欽
Fanyi zongxue 翻譯宗學
fasi 法司
Feihong 飛紅
Feng Ban 馮班
fengbo jiao 封帛校
Feng Dao 馮道
Fengmen 葑門
Feng Menglong 馮夢龍
fengmian ye 封面葉
Fengshen yanyi 封神演義
Feng Shu 馮舒
fengsong 諷誦
fengxia 縫罅
Foshan 佛山
fu 附
Fubao tang ji 負苞堂集
fuben 副本
Fuchun tang 富春堂
Fu Hai 傅海
fuke 復刻
furen 婦人
Furen liangfang daquan 婦人良方大全
(Fu) Rubing (傅)汝炳
Fu Yikang 傅以康
Fuzhou 撫州
Gao 高
gaobai 告白
Gao Shilian 高士廉
"Gaozi jiezhi" 告子節旨
"Gaozi zhangzhi" 告子章旨
Gaozong 高宗
Ge 葛
ge 閣
Gengxin tang 耕心堂
Geng Yu 耿裕
Gengzhi tu 耕織圖
geyong 歌詠
gong'an 公案
gongyuan 貢院
gong zhu zixing 公諸梓行
Guan 關
guan 觀
guanban 官板 (or 版)
Guangde 廣德
Guanghua tang 光華堂
Guangling yue 廣陵月
Guanglu si 光祿寺
Guangxu 光緒
Guangyi shuju 廣益書局
guanhe 關合
guanhua 官話
guanke 官刻
guanshujū 官書局
guantu 冠圖
Guan Yu 關羽
Guanyin 觀音
guaxian 掛線
guazhi pu 瓜帙譜
Gu Dadian 顧大典
Guifan 閨範
Gui Youguang 歸有光
Gujin tushu jicheng 古今圖書集成
Gujin zaju xuan 古今雜劇選

- Gumingjia zaju* 古名家雜劇
Guochao guixiu zhengshi ji 國朝閩秀
 正始集
Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛
Guo Tingwu 郭庭梧
guoxue 國學
Guo Xun 郭勛
Guozi jian qian Shulin Zhao pu 國子
 監前書林趙鋪
guozi sheng 國子生
Guozi xue 國子學
gushi 故事
Gushu zhuanwen 古書篆文
Gu Yanwu 顧炎武
Hai Gangfeng xiansheng juguan gong'an
zhuan 海剛峰先生居官公案傳
Haishang hua liezhuan 海上花列傳
Hanfen lou 涵芬樓
Hangong qiu 漢宮秋
Hanji 漢紀
Hanlin 翰林
Han Qi 韓琦
Hanshu 漢書
Han Wendi 漢文帝
Han Xiangzi 韓湘子
Han Yu 韓愈
Hanyuan xinshu 翰苑新書
haoshizhe 好事者
He Bi 何璧
He Huishu 何繪書
heikou 黑口
He Liangjun 何良俊
Hengyang 衡陽
hepu 合譜
 (He) Shenshu (何) 紳書
He Tingrui 何廷瑞
 (He) Xixun (何) 錫勛
He Yan 何晏
Honglou meng 紅樓夢
Hong Mai 洪邁
Hongwu 洪武
Hongwu zhengyun 洪武正韻
Hongyuan tang 鴻遠堂
Hongzhi 弘治
hon'ya nakama 本屋仲間
ho-pi (hebi) 合璧
Hou Hanshu 後漢書
Houshan ji 後山集
 “Hou shupu jie” 後書鋪街
Hou Xianchun 侯先春
Hou Xiyou ji 後西遊記
houxu 後序
hou zhi junzi 後之君子
hu 笏
Huaian 淮安
Huainan zi 淮南子
Huancui tang 環翠堂
Huancui tang xiansheng quanji 環翠堂
 先生全集
Huancui tang yuanjing tu 環翠堂園
 景圖
Huancui tang yuefu 環翠堂樂府
Huandu zhai 還讀齋
Huang 黃
Huangchao jingshi wenbian 皇朝經世
 文編
Huangchao suoxie lu 皇朝瑣屑錄
Huang Daozhou 黃道周
Huang Jun (Junpei, Xiuye) 黃鉞
 (君佩, 秀野)
Huang Lin (Ruoyu) 黃鱗(若愚)
Huang Ming diangu jiwen 皇明典故
 紀文
Huang Ming kaiguo gongchen lu 皇明開
 國功臣錄

- Huang Qi (Deqi, Weizheng) 黃奇
(德起, 惟正)
- Huang Yingxiao (Zhongchun) 黃應孝
(仲純)
- Huang Yingzu 黃應組
- Huang Zhen 黃震
- Huang Zhuzhong 黃居中
- Huang Zu 黃組
- Huang Zuo 黃佐
- Huan yu xiansheng gong 寰宇顯生公
- Hua Sui 華燧
- Hu Chenglong 胡承龍
- Hudie meng 蝴蝶夢
- hudie zhuang 蝴蝶裝
- Hufu ji 虎符記
- Huguo si 護國寺
- hui 繪
- Huichun ji 回春記
- huiguan 會館
- Huizhou 徽州
- Huizong 徽宗
- Huizuan Jiali tieshi jiyao 彙纂家禮帖
式集要
- Huqiu 虎丘
- Hu Tianlu 胡天祿
- Hu Xian 胡賢
- Hu Yinglin 胡應麟
- Hu Zhengyan 胡正言
- Hu Zhenxiang 胡震亨
- Huzhou 湖州
- Idemitsu Bijutsukan 出光美術館
- jiacheng 家乘
- jiadie 家牒
- Jia Fu 賈復
- Jiajing 嘉靖
- jiake 家刻
- jian 賤
- Jia Naiqian 賈乃謙
- Jiandeng xinhua 翦燈新話
- jiang 講
- Jiang Daqi 蔣大器
- Jiangdu 江都
- jiangdu 講讀
- jiang guan 講官
- Jiangling Zhengshi 江陵鄭氏
- Jiangning 江寧
- Jiang Ruzao 蔣汝藻
- Jiangshi jia shu 蔣氏家塾
- “Jiangshu er lun xu” 講書二論序
- Jiangsu Guangling guji keyin she 江蘇
廣陵古籍刻印社
- jiangti zi 匠體字
- Jiang Weilin 江為霖
- Jiang Yi 蔣乂
- Jiangyin 江陰
- Jiang Zisheng 江子升
- Jianning 建寧
- Jianshi zhuren 蘭室主人
- Jianyang 建陽
- jianyin 監印
- jianzhi 簡帙
- Jiao 交
- jiao 教
- jiading 校訂
- Jiao Hong 焦竑
- Jiaohong ji 嬌紅記
- jiakan 校勘
- Jiaoniang 嬌娘
- jiawu 甲午
- Jiaxing 嘉興
- Jiaye tang congshu 嘉業堂叢書
- Jiaze 嘉則
- Ji Dian dashi zui puti quanzhuan 濟顛
大師醉菩提全傳

- jie* 解
jielu 節錄
Jie qi qi yan 揭器求言
Jiexia ji 節俠記
jiezhi 節旨
Jiezi yuan huazhuan 芥子園畫傳
Jigu ge 及古閣
Jigu lu 稽古錄
jikai 計開
jikai fensong gefang xihao 計開分送各房細號
Jin 晉
jin 金
Ji'nan 濟南
Jinchang 金閻
Jindiao ji 金貂記
jing 敬
jingben 京本
Jingben tongsu yanyi an Jian Quan Han zhizhuan 京本通俗演義按鑒全漢志傳
Jingfu xinshu 警富新書
Jingshi chuanwen 警世傳文
Jingshi Wang xiangguo duanzhu baijia pinglin Ban-Ma yingfeng xuan 荆石王相國段註百家評林班馬英鋒選
Jin'gu qiguan 今古奇觀
jingzhe zhuang 經摺裝
Jin Lian 金濂
Jinling kejing chu 金陵刻經處
Jinling/Moling shufang Sanshan jie 金陵/秣陵書坊三山街
Jinling Sanshan jie Jianyang Ye Gui Jinshan tang 金陵三山街建陽葉貴近山堂
Jinling Sanshan jie shusi Duifeng Zhou Yuejiao 金陵三山街書肆對峰周曰校
Jinling Sanshan jie Xiugu dui xi shu-
- fang Tang Fuchun* 金陵三山街繡谷對溪書坊唐富春
Jinling Shide/Rongshou tang zi xing 金陵世德/榮壽堂梓行
Jin Ping Mei 金瓶梅
Jin Shengtang 金聖嘆
jinshen wenshi 縉紳文士
jinshen xiansheng 縉紳先生
jinshi 進士
Jinshu 晉書
Jinsi lu 近思錄
Jin Wenjing gong beizheng lu 金文靖公北征錄
Jin Youzi 金幼孜
juben 舊本
Jiuru tang 九如堂
Jixian yuan 集賢院
Ji Zhenlun 紀振倫
Jizhi zhai 繼志齋
juan 卷
juanduan shuming 卷端書名
juanzhou zhuang 卷軸裝
Jubao men Jiangjia Laibin lou 聚寶門姜家來賓樓
Jubao men li xilang xia Shijia 聚寶門里西廊下施家
juben 局本
juke ben 局刻本
junzi 君子
juren 舉人
juti 句題
Juzhen tang 聚珍堂
kan 看
Kangxi 康熙
Kangxi zidian 康熙字典
Kano 狩野
kan wenji 刊文集
kan wenzi ru zhuo zei 看文字如捉賊

- ke* 刻
keben 刻本
 Kongguan zhuren 空觀主人
 Kong miao 孔廟
Kongsheng jiayu tu 孔聖家語圖
Kongsheng quanshu 孔聖全書
 Kong Yanjin 孔彥緜
 Kong zhai 孔宅
 Kongzi 孔子
Kongzi jiayu tu 孔子家語圖
Kuang yu fu che 狂愚覆轍
ku li zhi yu 酷吏治獄
kunqu 崑曲
kuocheng 括成
 Lai Fengqian 賴鳳謙
lan 覽
Langshu fatie 稂書法貼
Leijiang ji 酌江集
leishu 類書
 Li 李
 Liangshan 梁山
Liang Shanbo Zhu Yingtai 梁山伯祝英台
lianshi zhi 連史紙
 Li Ao 李翱
 Liaocheng 聊城
Liaozhai zhiyi 聊齋志異
 Li Bai 李白
Li Chunshan 李春山
Lidai mingyi tu xingshi 歷代名醫圖
 姓氏
 Li Danian 李大年
Lienü zhuan 列女傳
Liezi 列子
 Lifan yuan 理藩院
 Li Guangming 李光明
 Li Jianyuan 李建元
 Li Kaixian 李開先
 Li Lian 李濂
 Li Mengyang 李夢陽
 Lin 林
 Lin'an 臨安
Linchi kaifa 臨池楷法
 Lin Chunqi 林春祺
 Ling Mengchu 凌濂初
lingpu bianhao 領譜編號
lingpu renming 領譜人名
 Lingyan 凌煙
 Lingyan ge 凌煙閣
Lingyan ge gongchen tu 凌煙閣功臣圖
 Lin Han 林瀚
 Linlan tang 林蘭堂
 Li Rihua 李日華
liru 里儒
 Li Ruyi 李如一
 Li Shaoshan 李少山
Li Shilang Zixiao ji 李十郎紫簫記
 Li Shimin 李世民
 Li Shizhen 李時珍
lishu 隸書
Lishu fatie 隸書法帖
 Li Tinghua 李廷華
 Li Tingji 李廷機
 Li Tiyun 李梯雲
 Liu 劉
 Liu Chaozhen 劉朝箴
 Liu Chenggan 劉承干
liuchuan duben 流傳讀本
 Liu Dayi 劉大易
 Liu Hongji 劉弘基
 Liu Jinhou 劉盡候
 Liu Kongdun 劉孔敦
 Liuli chang 琉璃廠
 Liu Mao 劉懋

- Liuren shike* 六壬時課
Liushi Bencheng tang 劉氏本誠堂
Liu Shiheng 劉世珩
Liu Songnian 劉松年
Liu Suming 劉素明
Liu Suming juan 劉素明鑄
Liu Suwen 劉素文
Liu Xiang 劉向
Liu Yuan 劉源
Liu Yuan jing hui Lingyan ge 劉源敬繪
 凌煙閣
Liu Yuan zhi yin 劉源之印
Liu Zhenghui 劉政會
Liuzhi ji 柳枝集
Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元
Li Weizhen 李維楨
Li Xiaogong 李孝恭
Li Xu 李詡
Li Yanji 李延基
Li Yingzhen 李應禎
Li Yu 李漁
Li Yuxiu 李毓秀
Longfu si 隆福寺
longjin 籠巾
longlin zhuang 龍鱗裝
Longtu gong'an 龍圖公案
Longtu shenduan gong'an 龍圖神斷
 公案
Lou Fang 樓昉
Lou Yue 樓鑰
Lu Di 路迪
Lugui bu 錄鬼簿
Lu Guimeng 陸龜蒙
Lu Ligang 陸立剛
Lü Kun 呂坤
Lu Nan 盧柟
 “Lun hua zhi yuanliu” 論畫之源流
Lun ren wuyi 論人五儀
Luo 洛
Luojing jie 羅經解
Lu Rong 陸容
Lu Shen 陸深
Lu Shusheng 陸樹聲
Lutai xi fei 露臺惜費
Lu Wenchao 盧文弨
Lu Xun 魯迅
Lu Yidian 陸貽典
Lu Yu 陸游
Lu Zhi 陸贄
Luzhou 潞州
Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙
Ma Dingbang 馬定邦
Magang 馬崗
maobian 毛邊
Mao Jin 毛晉
Mao Qiling 毛奇齡
Mao Zonggang 毛宗崗
Ma Quanheng 馬權亨
Mawu 馬屋
Ma Zhiyuan 馬致遠
Mei nai he 沒奈何
meipi 眉批
Mengchang 孟嘗
Meng Jiangnü ku changcheng 孟姜女
 哭長城
meng shi gongfu lihui 猛施工夫理會
Meng Yuan 孟遠
Mingfeng ji 鳴鳳記
minghao 名號
mingjing 明經
Mingshi 明史
mingzhi 冥紙
mizhu tengxie 秘諸膳寫
Mochou hu 莫愁湖

- moke* 摹刻
Moling Zhutan Zhou Zongkong,
Shaogang Gong Yaohui tongzi
 株陵竹潭周宗孔，少岡龔堯惠全梓
Mudan ting 牡丹亭
muyin 木印
muzi 木字
Nan Bei liang Song zhizhuan tiping
 南北兩宋志傳題評
Nanjing 南京
Nan jiugong pu 南九宮譜
Nanzang 南藏
neidi 內地
neike 內刻
Neiqiao 內橋
Neiwu fu 內務府
Ningbo 寧波
Ni Zan 倪瓚
Nü tongjian 女通鑑
Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修
Pai'an jingqi 拍案驚奇
Pan En 潘恩
pangxun 旁訓
Pan Jixing 潘吉星
Pan Yunduan 潘允端
Peiwen yunfu 佩文韻府
pi 癖
Piling 毘陵
ping 評
Pingding Zhun' gaer fanglüe 評定準噶
 爾方略
pinghua 平話
pinglin 評林
pingxuan 評選
Pipa ji 琵琶記
piping 批評
poju 破句
pudie 譜牒
pujiang 譜匠
puju 譜局
pushi 譜師
qi 妻
Qi 齊
qian 錢
qianchan 錢蟾
Qian Daxin 錢大昕
Qian Gu 錢谷
Qianjia shi 千家詩
Qianjin fang 千金方
Qian Qianyi 錢謙益
Qianshan 鉛山
Qian Tongai 錢同愛
Qian Zeng 錢曾
Qianzi wen 千字文
Qiaoshan tang 喬山堂
Qi Chenghan 祁承漢
Qie liang zhuangyuan bianci Huang
Ming renwu kao 銀兩狀元編次皇
 明人物考
Qilin 麒麟
Qilin ge 麒麟閣
Qilin ji 麒麟廟
"Qiliu jiezhì" 杞柳節旨
"Qiliu zhangzhi" 杞柳章旨
Qilu deng 歧路燈
Qimin yaoshu 奇民要術
Qin 秦
Qinding Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao
 欽定四庫全書總目提要
qindu 勤讀
qing 情
Qingbai tang 清白堂
Qingbo biezhì 清波別志
qingchang 清唱
Qingpu 青浦

- Qingren shumu tiba congkan* 清人書目
題跋叢刊
Qingshu zhinan 清書指南
Qin Guan 秦觀
Qingwen huishu 清文彙書
Qingyun lou 青雲樓
Qinhuai he 秦淮河
Qin Shubao 秦叔寶
Qin Xiyan 秦西岩
Qin Zhirou 秦知柔
Qisheng ji 七勝記
Qiting ji 旗亭記
Qiu Jiucheng 邱九成
Qiu Jun 邱濬
Qiu Shilun 丘仕倫
Qi Wenyou 祁文友
qu 曲
quan 圈
quanpu 全譜
Quanshan ji 勸善記
Quanshi wen 勸世文
quanxiang pinghua 全相平話
Qufu 曲阜
Qunyin leixuan 群音類選
qupin 曲品
Quzhou 衢州
ren ji 任集
Renjia riyong 人家日用
Renjing yangqiu 人鏡陽秋
Renzong 仁宗
Rongyu tang 容與堂
Rulin waishi 儒林外史
ryui 儒醫
Ryōen Kōshin gazō 凌煙功臣画像
sailian zhi 賽連紙
San Bai Qian 三百千
Sancai tuhui 三才圖會
Sanchao xunjian tu 三朝訓鑒圖
Sanfen shiliu 三分事略
Sanguan 三館
Sanguan miaojing 三官妙經
Sanguo yanyi 三國演義
Sanguo zhi 三國志
Sanguo zhi pinghua 三國志平話
Sanguo zhi tongsu yanyi 三國志通俗演義
Sanguo zhi yanyi 三國志演義
Sanguo zhizhuan tongsu yanyi 三國志傳通俗演義
Sanhuai tang 三槐堂
San qian gongren 散遣宮人
Sanqu 三衢
sanqu 散曲
Sanshan jie 三山街
San Sui pingyao zhuan 三遂平妖傳
Sanyi tang 三易堂
Sanzi jing 三字經
Sanzi jing tukao 三字經圖考
saoke 騷客
Shagou ji 殺狗記
shan du 善讀
shanben 善本
Shanghai shuju 上海書局
Shang Lu 商榘
shangtu xiawen 上圖下文
shangyinze 賞音者
Shangyuan 上元
shanqing 繕清
shanren 善人
Shanshui zhengqi 山水爭奇
Shantang si kaogong ji 山堂肆考官集
shanzeng 刪增
Shao Bao 邵寶
Shao Jinhan 邵晉涵

- Shaoxing 紹興
 Shao Yiren 邵以仁
shao zhanshi 少詹事
shen 神
 Shen Bai 沈白
 Shen Bianzhi 沈辨之
 Shen Chunze 沈春澤
 Shen Defu 沈德符
sheng 盛
 Shengji dian 聖蹟殿
Shengji tu 聖蹟圖
Shengmiao tongji 聖廟通記
Sheng tudian ji 聖圖殿記
 Shen Gua 沈括
 Shengxian 嵯縣
shengyuan 生員
Sheng zhe fang gui 聖哲芳規
 Shen Jing 沈璟
 Shen Nanpin 沈南蘋
Shennong bencao jingdu 神農本草經讀
 Shen Qiliang 沈啓亮
shenqing 神情
 Shen Zhou 沈周
 Shexian 歙縣
shexue 社學
 Shi 石
 Shibukawa Seiueimon 澁川清右衛門
 Shide tang 世德堂
 Shiguan 史館
Shigui 詩歸
 Shi Guoqi 施國祁
shihua 詩話
Shiji 史記
 “Shijing” 市井
Shijing zhu 詩經註
shijunzi 士君子
shike ben 市刻本
Shilüe 史略
 (Shi) Pingyi (施) 平一
 (Shi) Qianshan (施) 遷善
Shitou ji 石頭記
 Shi Xiangyun 史湘雲
shiyi 釋義
shiyi 世醫
shiyin 石印
Shizhu zhai jianpu 十竹齋箋譜
Shizhu zhai shuhua pu 十竹齋書畫譜
shizi 士子
 Shizong 世宗
shouchao 手抄
shouxie 手寫
shu 書
 Shuangfeng tang 雙峰堂
Shuanglie ji 雙烈記
Shuangzhao lou ci 雙照樓詞
shuayin suo 刷印所
shu du 熟讀
shufang 書坊
shuhua 書話
Shuihu zhizhuan pinglin 水滸志傳評林
Shuihu zhuan 水滸傳
shuji 書籍
Shujing jinghua 書經精華
shukou 書口
shulin 書林
 Shulin Xiong Yunbin chong qie 書林
 熊雲濱重鋟
shunao 書腦
shuo 說
Shuo Hu quanzhuan 說呼全傳
Shuolie 說略
Shuo Tang yanyi quanzhuan 說唐演義
 全傳
Shuowen jiezi 說文解字
 Shuoyuan 碩園

- shuppan bunka* 出版文化
shutong 書童
shuxiang 書香
 Shuye tang 書業堂
shuyuan 書院
Shuyuan jinghua 書苑菁華
Shuyu tang chuanqi 屬玉堂傳奇
 Sibao 四堡
si da qishu 四大奇書
sifang zhi ren 四方之人
sike 私刻
siku 四庫
 Sili jian 司禮監
 Sima Guang 司馬光
 Sima Qian 司馬遷
simin 四民
 Siming 四明
Sishu 四書
Sishu baiwen 四書白文
Sishu beiyao 四書備要
Sishu beizhi tiqiao 四書備旨題竅
Sishu buzhu beizhi tijue huican 四書補注備旨題訣匯參
Sishu hejiang 四書合講
Sishu huowen 四書或問
Sishu jicheng 四書集成
Sishu jizhu 四書集注
Sishu jizhu beizhi 四書集注備旨
Sishu tijie 四書題解
Sishu tijing 四書體鏡
Sishu Wang daquan 四書汪大全
Sishu yizhu 四書繹註
Sishu zhangju jizhu 四書章句集注
Sishu zhengwen 四書正文
Sishu zhiyu 四書摭余
Sishu zhu daquan 四書注大全
 Sixue caotang 四雪草堂
Siyou zhai congshuo 四友齋叢說
songdu 誦讀
 Songjiang 松江
 Song Minqiu 宋敏求
 Song Qi 宋祁
Songshi 宋史
Songti 宋體
Songti zi 宋體字
 Song Yingxing 宋應星
 Songzhu si 嵩祝寺
ssu-i kuan (Siyi guan) 四夷館
su 俗
Suanfa cuoyao 算法撮要
suben 俗本
 Su Fuzhi 蘇復之
Sui Tang yanyi 隋唐演義
Sui Tang zhizhuan tonggu yanyi 隋唐志傳通俗演義
Sui Yangdi yanshi 隋煬帝艷史
Suiyuan shihua 隨園詩話
Suming tushu 素明圖書
 Sun Daoming 孫道明
 Sun Zhu 孫洙
suren 俗人
 Su Shi 蘇軾
sushi 俗士
 Suzhou 蘇州
 Taicang 大倉
 Taichang 泰昌
Taihe zhengyin pu 太和正音譜
 Taikang 大康
Taimiao wen li 太廟文禮
Tai yiyuan jiaozhu Furen liangfang daquan 太醫院校註婦人良方大全
 Taiqing 大清
 Taixue Zhou Shitai 大學周時泰
 Taizong 太宗

- Taizu 太祖
tang 堂
 Tang Fuchun 唐富春
Tang Huiyuan jingxuan pidian Tang-Song mingxian celun wencui 唐會元精選
 批點唐宋名賢策論文粹
 Tang Jian 唐儉
Tangjian 唐鑑
Tang leihan 唐類函
 Tang Liyao 唐鯉耀
tangming 堂名
Tangshi guchui 唐詩鼓吹
Tangshi hexuan xiangjie 唐詩合選
 詳解
Tangshi sanbaishou 唐詩三百首
Tangshi sanbaishou zhushu 唐詩三百
 首註疏
 Tang Shunzhi 唐順之
Tangshu yanyi 唐書演義
Tangshu zhizhuan tongsu yanyi tiping
 唐書志傳通俗演義題評
 Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖
 (Tang) Xirui 唐錫瑞
 Tani Bunchō 谷文晁
 Tan Yuanbiao 譚元標
 Tan Yuanchun 譚元椿
taoban 套板
tian 填
Tianfei chushen zhuan 天妃出身傳
Tiangong kaiwu 天工開物
 Tianqi 天啓
 Tianshun 天順
 Tian Wen 田文
tianxia zhi ren 天下之人
 Tianyi 天一
Tianyue wenfu 天樂文符
 Ting 汀
 Tomioka Tessai 富岡鐵齋
 Tong 佟
 Tongbo 桐柏
Tongdian 通典
Tongjian 通鑑
Tongjian gangmu 通鑑綱目
Tongjian jishi benmo 通鑑紀事本末
Tongjian zuanyao chao hubai 通鑑纂要
 抄狐白
 Tong Pei 童珮
 Tong Pengnian 佟彭年
tongpu 統譜
tongsu 通俗
 Toyotomi Hideyori 豐臣秀賴
tu 圖
tuce 圖冊
tuhua 圖畫
Tuhui zongyi 圖繪宗彝
tuxiang 圖像
Wakan meihitsu gaei 和漢美筆畫英
 Wang Ao 王鏊
 Wang Daokun 汪道昆
 Wang Duanshu 王端淑
 Wang Guanglu 王光魯
 Wang Heng 王衡
 Wang Jide 王驥德
 Wang Jing 王敬
 Wang Kentang 王肯堂
 Wang Mingqing 王明清
 Wang Qiao 王樵
 Wang Qinchen 王欽臣
 Wang Shaohuai 王少淮
 Wang Shizhen 王世貞
 Wang Tingna 汪廷訥
 Wang Xijue 王錫爵
 Wang Xilie 王希烈
 Wang Xiqi 王錫祺
 Wang Yangming 王陽明

- Wang Yunpeng 汪雲鵬
 Wang Zeng 王曾
 Wang Zhenpeng 王振鵬
 Wang Zhideng 王程登
 Wanhua lou Yang Bao Di yanyi 萬花樓
 楊包狄演義
 Wanhu xuan 玩虎軒
 Wanli 萬曆
 Wanli yuannian dongyue jidan,
 Jinling shufang Hu Xian xiu zi
 萬曆元年冬月吉旦，金陵書坊胡
 賢繡梓
 Wanyan Yun Zhu 完顏惲珠
 Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢
 wen 文
 Wencui lou 文萃樓
 Wenhai lou 文海樓
 Wenhai lou jiaozheng jianyun fenzhang
 fenjie Sishu zhengwen 文海樓較正
 監韻分章分節四書正文
 wenji 文集
 Wen Jia 文嘉
 Wenliao dacheng 文料大成
 Wenlin ge 文林閣
 wenren caishi 文人才士
 wenshi 文士
 Wen Tianxiang 文天祥
 Wenxian tongkao 文獻通考
 wenxin 文心
 Wenxuan 文選
 wenyan wen 文言文
 wen yi zai dao 文以載道
 Wenyan ge 文淵閣
 Wenyan yinghua 文苑英華
 Wen Zhengming 文徵明
 wenzì 文字
 Wu 吳
 Wubei zhi 武備志
 Wu Changshou 吳昌綬
 Wu Cheng'en 吳承恩
 Wuding qiao 武定橋
 Wuge 霧閣
 Wu Guolun 吳國倫
 Wu Huairang 吳懷讓
 Wuhu pingnan 五虎平南
 Wuhu pingxi 五虎平西
 Wu Jiamo 吳嘉謨
 wujing 五經
 Wu Jixu 吳繼序
 Wujun 吳郡
 Wu Jupō 巫鞠坡
 Wu Kuan 吳寬
 Wulun quanbei ji 五倫全備記
 Wumen 吳門
 Wuxi 無錫
 wuxia xiaoshuo 武俠小說
 Wuxing congshu 吳興叢書
 Wuying dian 武英殿
 Wuying dian juzhenban congshu 武英殿
 聚珍板叢書
 Wuying dian Xiushu chu 武英殿
 修書處
 Wu Yong 吳用
 Wu Yue chunqiu 吳越春秋
 wuyun beiduo 五雲貝多
 Wuyun lou 五雲樓
 Xia 夏
 Xi'an 西安
 xiang 像
 Xiangshan wenji 象山文集
 xiangshu 鄉塾
 xian you 獻猷
 xianzhuang 線裝
 Xianzong 憲宗
 xiaobao 小報

- Xiao fanghu yudi congchao* 小方壺與地叢鈔
- Xiaojing* 孝經
- Xiao Mingsheng* 蕭鳴盛
- Xiaoshi* 蕭氏
- xiaoshuo* 小說
- Xiao Zhen* 蕭震
- Xiaozong* 孝宗
- xie* 寫
- Xie Hongyi* 謝弘儀
- Xie Liangzuo* 謝良佐
- xie yu li'er* 諧於里耳
- Xie Zhaozhe* 謝肇淛
- Xi Han yanyi zhuan* 西漢演義傳
- Xihe yan* 西河沿
- Xijizi* 息機子
- Xin'an* 新安
- Xin'an Huiguan* 新安會館
- xinbian* 新編
- Xinbian Gujin shiwen leiju* 新編古今事文類聚
- Xinbian Kongfuzi zhouyou lieguo dacheng qilin ji* 新編孔夫子周游列國大成麒麟記
- Xinbian zanying biyong Hanyuan xinshu* 新編簪纓必用翰院新書
- Xinchu duixiang Menggu zazi* 新出對像蒙古雜子
- Xinding Sishu buzhu beizhi* 新訂四書補注備旨
- Xindu* 新都
- xingli* 性理
- Xing Liang* 邢量
- xingming* 性命
- Xingshi hengyan* 醒世衡言
- Xinjuan quanxiang Bao Xiaosu gong baijia gong'an yanyi* 新鐫全像包孝肅公百家公案演義
- Xinjuan saomei dunlun Dongdu ji* 新鐫掃魅敦倫東度記
- xinkan* 新刊
- Xinke chuxiang guanban dazi Xiyou ji* 新刻出像官板大字西遊記
- Xinke Gujin xuan xie* 新刻古今玄屑
- Xinke Qianjia shi* 新刻千家詩
- Xinke quanxiang Ershisizun dedao Luohan zhuan* 新刻全像二十四尊得道羅漢傳
- Xinke Shenglü qimeng duilei* 新刻聲律啓蒙對類
- Xinke zengbu Baijia xing* 新刻增補百家姓
- Xinke zengbu Sanzi jing* 新刻增補三字經
- Xinqie pinglin Dansui dong gao* 新鐫評林甌甌洞稿
- Xinzeng Renjia riyong* 新增人家日用
- Xinzeng Sishu beizhi ling tijie* 新增四書備旨靈提解
- Xiong Damu* 熊大木
- Xiongshi Zhongde tang* 熊氏種德堂
- Xiong Zhonggu* 熊鐘谷
- Xiong Zongli* 熊宗立
- Xishi* 西施
- xishu* 細書
- xiu* 繡
- Xiugu dui xi shufang Tang Fuchun* 繡谷對溪書坊唐富春
- Xiuke yanju* 繡刻演劇
- Xiuning* 休寧
- Xiuranzi* 修髯子
- Xiuru ji* 繡襦記
- Xiuxiang Gelin shicui* 繡像歌林拾翠
- xiu zi* 繡梓
- Xixiang ji* 西廂記
- Xixiang ji zhugongdiao* 西廂記諸宮調

- Xiyou ji* 西遊記
Xiyu tongwenzhi 西域同文志
Xiyu tuzhi 西域圖志
xizi hui 惜字會
 Xuande 宣德
xuanfeng zhuang 旋風裝
xuanshu 選述
xuanyan 選言
xu da sha yi fan 須大殺一番
xueshi 學士
xuezhe 學者
 Xu Fepeng 徐奮鵬
 Xu Fuzuo 徐復祚
 Xu Naichang 徐乃昌
Xunzi 荀子
 Xu Sanjie 許三階
Xu Tongjian gangmu 續通鑑綱目
 Xuwan 洵灣
 Xu Wei 徐渭
 Xu Yuanpu 徐元圃
 Xu Zhi du kan 徐智督刊
 Xu Zichang 許自昌
ya 雅
 Yan 燕
Yanfang xinbian 驗方新編
 Yang 楊
 Yang Erzeng 楊爾曾
*Yangjiafu shidai zhongyong tongsu yanyi
zhizhuan* 楊家府世代忠勇通俗演義
志傳
Yangjiafu yanyi 楊家府演義
 Yang Shiqi 楊士奇
 Yangshi Qingjiang tang 楊氏清江堂
 Yang Weizhen 楊維楨
 Yang Xianchun 楊先春
 Yang Xianchun Guiren tang 楊先春歸
仁堂
 Yang Xunji 楊循吉
 Yang Yi 楊儀
Yangzheng tujie 養正圖解
 Yang Zhi 楊芝
 Yang [Zongbao] 楊[宗保]
 Yan Liben 閻立本
 Yan Maoyou 顏茂猷
 Yanshengong 衍聖公
Yantie lun 鹽鐵論
Yanzhi ji 胭脂記
 Yao 堯
 Yao Shilin 姚士燦
 Yao Shuntai 姚舜臺
 Yao Zi 姚咨
yashi 雅士
ye 葉
ye 葉
 Ye Jinquan 葉錦泉
yelao 野老
 Ye Maoliu 葉懋塗
 Ye Mengde 葉夢得
 Ye Sheng 葉盛
 Yeshi Baoshan tang 葉氏寶山堂
Yesou puyan 野叟曝言
 Ye Xianggao 葉向高
 Ye Yaoyuan 葉耀元
 Ye Zaisheng 葉再生
 Ye Zhou 葉晝
yezi 葉子
yi 詒
yi bei chakao 以備查考
Yicang mulu 醫藏目錄
Yijing 易經
 Yijing tang 翼經堂
*yi ju guangju zun zhenglu, buwei yiduan
ta qi zhi huo* 以居廣居遵正路，不為
異端他歧之惑

- Yili* 儀禮
Yilie ji 義烈記
yimin 遺民
yin 陰
yinban 印板
yinban shang 印版上
yinban shu 印板書
yindian 印店
yinduan 引端
yingke ben 影刻本
Yingtian fu 應天府
yingxiong haojie 英雄豪傑
Ying Yun Meng zhuan 英雲夢傳
Yingzao fashi 營造法式
Yinian shiyong zazi 一年使用雜字
yinkuo chengbian 隱括成編
yinshi 音釋
yinshua 印刷
Yin Yuanjin 尹源進
Yin Zhongchun 殷仲春
Yishuo Fan Tang yanyi 異說反唐演義
Yiwen zhi 藝文志
yixiu 議修
yixue 醫學
Yixue sanzi jing 醫學三字經
yizhuang 義庄
Yizong jinjian 醫宗金鑒
yongchang 庸常
Yongle 永樂
Yongyuzi 庸愚子
Yoshimura Shūzan 吉村周山
you buzheng shi 右布政使
You Mao 尤袤
Yougui ji 幽閨記
Youxue 幼學
Youxue gushi qiongtin 幼學故事瓊林
Youxue qimeng tijing 幼學啓蒙提經
Youxue xuzhi 幼學須知
Yuan 元
Yuanben Erlun qiyou yinduan 原本二論
啓幼引端
Yuanben Hai Gong da hongpao zhuan
原本海公大紅袍傳
Yuan Fengzi 元峰子
Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道
yuanjia changben 院家唱本
Yuan Jiong 袁聚
Yuan Mei 袁枚
Yuan Shao 袁詔
Yuanshi 元史
Yuanshi yiquan 袁氏義犬
Yuan Yuling 袁于令
Yuan Zhen 元鎮
Yuanyang tiao 鴛鴦條
Yuanyu zhai 宛羽齋
yue 約
Yue 越
Yuechi 岳池
Yuejia 岳家
yufu yufu 愚夫愚婦
Yu Jideng 余繼登
Yulei 語類
yulu 語錄
yu lü fu du situzhe, chi qiji, er busi qi suo-yi ji ye 余慮夫睹斯圖者，執其蹟，而不思其所以蹟也
Yuming tang simeng 玉茗堂四夢
Yuming tang sizhong chuanqi 玉茗堂四種傳奇
Yunhe qizong 雲合奇蹤
Yuntai 雲臺
Yun Zhu 惲珠
Yu Shaoyai Zixin zhai 余紹崖自新齋
Yu Shinan 虞世南
Yushu tang 玉樹堂

- Yu Wenxi 余文熙
 Yu Xiangdou 余象斗
 Yuxiu tang 毓秀堂
 Yu Zhaohui 俞兆會
Yuzhi Man Meng hebi Qingwenjian 御製滿蒙合璧清文鑒
Yuzhi Manzhou Menggu Hanzi sanhe qieyin Qingwenjian 御製滿洲蒙古漢字三合切音清文鑒
Yuzhi Qingwenjian 御製清文鑒
Yuzhi siti Qingwenjian 御製四體清文鑒
Yuzhi wuti Qingwenjian 御製五體清文鑒
Yuzhi zengding Qingwenjian 御製增定清文鑒
Yuzuan Yizong jinjian 御纂醫宗金鑒
 Zaizi tang 在茲堂
 zaju 雜劇
 zan 讚
 Zang Maoxun 臧懋循
Zengding Nan jiugong qupu 增字南九宮曲譜
Zengguang 增廣
Zengguang xianwen 增廣賢文
Zengguang zhengwen 增廣正文
 zengshi 增釋
Zeshi ju congshu 擇是居叢書
Zhan denghua jixiong 占燈花吉凶
 zhang 章
 Zhang Cao 章艸
 Zhang Chengyu 張成遇
 Zhang Fengyi 張鳳翼
 Zhang Fu 張復
 Zhang Jiuling 張九齡
 Zhang Junheng 張鈞衡
 Zhang Junming 張俊明
 Zhang Juzheng 張居正
 Zhang Kai 張楷
 Zhang Liang 張亮
 Zhang Lu 張路
 Zhang Lu 張祿
 Zhangqiu 章丘
 Zhang Shangde 張尚德
 “Zhangshi jiapu” 張氏家譜
 Zhang Siwei 張四維
Zhanguo ce 戰國策
 Zhang Xianzhong 張獻忠
 Zhang Xiongfeng 張雄飛
 Zhang Xuan 張萱
 Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠
 Zhang Yijin 張亦縉
 Zhang Yingdeng 張應鄧
 Zhang Yue 張說
 zhangzhi 章旨
 Zhang Zhupo 張竹坡
 Zhao Buyu 趙不迂
 Zhao Qimei 趙琦美
 zhen 鎮
 Zheng 鄭
 Zheng Qiao 鄭樵
 Zheng Ruohuang 鄭若璜
 Zheng Shihao 鄭世豪
 Zheng Siming 鄭思鳴
 Zheng Yuanmei 鄭元美
 Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸
 Zheng Zhiwen 鄭之文
 Zheng Zhizhen 鄭之珍
 Zhenzong 真宗
 zhezhuang 摺裝
Zhibi tushi 執筆圖勢
 zhi yin 知音
 zhiyinze 知音者
Zhong Bojing xiansheng dingbu Qianjia shi tuzhu 鍾伯敬先生訂補千家詩圖註

- Zhong Qi 鍾琦
 Zhong Taifu 鍾太傅
 Zhong Xing (Bojing) 鍾惺 (伯敬)
 Zhongyi Shuihu zhuan 忠義水滸傳
 Zhong You 鍾繇
 Zhongyuan yinyun 中原音韻
 Zhou Bida 周必大
 Zhou Gong 周公
 Zhou Lianggong 周亮工
 Zhou Yuejiao 周曰校
 zhu 註
 Zhuang Su 莊肅
 Zhu Changluo 朱常洛
 Zhu Changwen 朱長文
 Zhu Gui 朱圭
 Zhuhu tang 柱笏堂
 Zhuhu tang ximo 柱笏堂戲墨
 Zhu Jianjun (Ji Wang) 朱見浚
 (吉王)
 Zhu Kueixin 朱葵心
 Zhu Kun 朱坤
 Zhu Qifeng 朱綺峰
 Zhu Shilu 祝世祿
 Zhushi San Bai Qian Zengguang heke
 諸釋三百千增廣合刻
- zhu shu 著書
 Zhu Xi 朱熹
 Zhu Yinyi (Shen Wang) 朱胤彬
 (藩王)
 Zhu yi tang 著易堂
 Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊
 Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋
 Zhu Yunming 祝允明
 Zhu zi yulei 朱子語類
 zi 梓
 Zibian xinzha 字辨信札
 Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑
 Zizhi tongjian gangmu 資治通鑑綱目
 zongjiao 總校
 zongpu 宗譜
 Zongwen shushe 宗文書舍
 Zou Shengmai 鄒聖脈
 zu 族
 Zuixiang ji 醉鄉記
 Zuoyin xiansheng jinding jiejing Yi pu
 座隱先生精訂捷徑奕譜
 Zuoying xiansheng quanji 座隱先生
 全集
 zupu 族譜

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