



Visual Narratives of Ming Dynasty Courtesans: Aesthetic Appreciation and Cultural Practice in "Wu Ji Bai Me" Illustrations

Jinyu Lan

Rinmin University of China School of Arts, Beijing China

2014810394@qq.com

Abstract. During the mid-Ming Dynasty and beyond, Flower Rankings literature gained prominence. This paper explores the work "Wu Ji Bai Mei" (The One Hundred Beauties of Suzhou) compiled by Zhou Zhibiao and published by Zhuhuaazhai. It reveals how this publication brought together lifelike depictions of famous courtesans with poetic verses by literati, employing the organizational framework of the imperial examination system. This fusion created an embellished portrayal of the ideal courtesan, shaping the traditional genre of "Bai Mei Tu," (Hundred Beauties Painting) which celebrates beautiful women through visual and poetic artistry. The paper posits that such "Bai Mei Tu" finds its origins in Flower Rankings activities, serving as a visual representation of the outcomes of these evaluations. These artworks adhere to the standards by which literati judged courtesans: a combination of emotion, talent, and beauty, with precedence given to emotional depth. Furthermore, the paper unveils the multifaceted significance of Flower Rankings and "Bai Mei Tu" in emulating the literary examination system. It suggests that these cultural phenomena served as a psychological refuge for literati during times of limited official prospects and a vital avenue for courtesans to transcend class boundaries through public recognition.

Keywords: Famous Courtesans, Flower Rankings, "Bai Mei Tu", "Wu Ji Bai Me", Courtesan Culture

1 Introduction

During the late Ming Dynasty, the Jiangnan region bore witness to the thriving publishing and printing industry, coinciding with the flourishing courtesan culture. Central to this cultural tapestry were literary works revolving around "Hua Bang" (Flower Rankings) and the evocative courtesans themselves. In 1617, a pinnacle of Flower Rankings literature emerged in the form of "Wu Ji Bai Mei (The One Hundred Beauties of Suzhou)," a remarkable fusion of courtesan evaluations, and intricate portrayals of feminine beauty.

This book was compiled by Wanyuzi (real name Zhou Zhibiao), hails from Changzhou during the Tianqi era of the Ming Dynasty. His journey into the realm of publishing commenced with "Wu Ge Cui Ya" in 1616, followed by subsequent works like "Si

© The Author(s) 2023

E. Marino et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 2023 5th International Conference on Literature, Art and Human Development (ICLAHD 2023)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 806,

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-170-8_85

Liu Guan Lang Ji" and "Yue Fu Shan Shan Ji " in 1653, spanning diverse genres including drama, poetry, and fiction. Significantly, these compositions were marked by the inclusion of illustrations, emphasizing the pivotal role of high-quality artwork in elevating the overall reading experience.

The structural framework of "Wu Ji Bai Mei " comprises four integral components: the preface, table of contents, illustrations, and main text. The preface acquaints readers with the evaluative criteria of the work, emphasizing the juxtaposition of a courtesan's "Mei" (charisma) against a man's "Sha" (aura). The table of contents systematically categorizes Suzhou's courtesans into distinct echelons, mirroring the format of an imperial examination. The text itself is graced with 25 enchanting illustrations, each corresponding to specific sections of the work, embodying the woodblock printing style characteristic of the era. The remaining segments of the book furnish comprehensive evaluations of the courtesans, meticulously detailed according to their respective rankings.

The presentation, selection, and evocative resonance of these 25 illustrations represent a compelling avenue for scholarly exploration. This phenomenon is not isolated but representative of a broader category during the late Ming dynasty known as "Bai Mei Tu ", such as "Jin Ling Bai Mei (The One Hundred Beauties of Jinling)" and "Qing Lou Yun Yu(Rhymes of the Brothel)". These artworks typically feature renowned courtesans as subjects and are often published alongside books, significantly influencing subsequent works in Qing dynasty in this genre.

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of studies of the "Bai Mei Tu " genre of images from the Ming and Qing dynasties. Scholars have examined and analyzed the origins and development of the " Bai Mei Tu " images, generally regarding them as products of a patriarchal cultural context, lacking a sense of female subjectivity. For example, Wen-Tsuei Lu(2015) analyzed the development of the popular " Bai Mei Tu " image genre in the Ming and Qing dynasties, arguing that publications like "Wu Ji Bai Mei " demonstrated the fusion of traditional depictions of ladies with portraits of famous prostitutes, influencing the narrative mode of beauty paintings.^[1] Pei-chi Wen(2018) examined the identity of Wan Yuzi, the author of Wu Ji Bai Mei, and explored the significance of the beauty pageant and literary commentary in the work, studying gender observation, power criticism, and the depiction of courtesan life.^[2] Dandan Jin(2018)'s research think that "Wu Ji Bai Mei " provided a more intuitive understanding of the living conditions of prostitutes at the time and their encounters with their lives.^[3]Hsiang-Yu Kuo(2022) combed through the development of beauty charts and chants and believed that these female characters were still viewed from the perspective of men, lacking the viewpoints of the females themselves.^[4]

However, this paper argues that the flower list writings and "Bai Mei Tu", represented by "Wu Ji Bai Mei ", may not only be viewed from a feminist perspective as passive roles under the male gaze, but rather may imply more aspects: both reflecting the standards of male appreciation of beauty during the Ming and Qing dynasties, reflecting the anxieties embedded in the literati's application of the imperial examination model to the celebrated prostitutes, and also providing opportunities for upward mobility for the courtesans.

This research delves into the cultural phenomenon of the "Bai Mei Tu " genre, with a focus on Flower Rankings writings and "Bai Mei Tu " in "Wu Ji Bai Mei." Building on previous scholarship, it aims to examine the characteristics of "Wu Ji Bai Mei " illustrations to understand their role within Flower Rankings and the broader " Bai Mei Tu " genre, analyze the aesthetic evaluation and criteria applied to famous courtesans in these images, revealing the beauty standards of the Ming and Qing dynasties and Explore the metaphors and functions attributed to "Bai Mei Tu " and the Flower rankings, going beyond visual representations. By addressing these dimensions, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of courtesan culture and society during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, using "Wu Ji Bai Mei " as a central case study.

2 Characteristics of the illustrations in "Wu Ji Bai Mei "

The illustrations within "Wu Ji Bai Mei" vividly portray courtesans and literati in elegant settings such as landscapes or gardens. These illustrations can be categorized into three main types: standalone courtesans, combinations of courtesans and literati, and group compositions featuring maids and multiple literati. Each illustration primarily centers on a single courtesan character. Notably, there are 11 instances of male literati in these illustrations, with a recurring bearded, for instance, In the "Playing Ball " illustrations (figure 1), Jiang Yunxiang is depicted competing for a ball with two male literati by a mountainous riverside. The gentleman on the right, recognized as Zhou Zhibiao himself, is implied through a recitation following the song "Shan Po Yang," where he reminisces about playing ball with his friend Zhou Zhibiao under the moonlight at Huqiu Mountain riverside. This identification suggests that the gentleman on the right is Zhou Zhibiao, while the one on the left is his friend. Similarly, in the "Heart-to-Heart Talk " illustration (figure 2), we observe the same bearded gentleman engaged in conversation with a courtesan, correlating with Zhou Zhibiao 's earlier mention in the overall evaluation, where he notes, "I talked to her as before, and I know her well; She is probably not an ordinary person."



Fig. 1. Playing Ball



Fig. 2. Heart-to-Heart Talk

However, these illustrations generally don't necessarily depict specific events but rather serve as showcases of the elegance of courtesans and literati within refined settings. They portray their talents, cultured activities, and interests, aligning with the literati's desire for aesthetic appreciation of women. This aesthetic approach prioritizes the admiration of women over mere sensual desire, becoming an integral part of cultural practices.

Research by Wang Hongtai reveals that literati during the late Ming and Qing Dynasty elevated the appreciation of female beauty to a cultural practice, akin to activities such as appreciating paintings and collecting antiques, thus forming a novel aesthetic approach. [5] The depiction of courtesan scenes in "Wu Ji Bai Mei" reflects the ideal cultural milieu envisioned by literati. It encapsulates scenes of refined literati life while incorporating elements of the natural landscape. In these illustrations, courtesans are often presented in a three-quarter profile, with a slightly turned posture toward the viewer, exuding an enticing allure. The background of the images remains relatively simple, featuring elements like artificial mountains, railings, and doorways that form natural frames, confining the courtesans within an intimate spatial range. However, open doorways and the outdoor setting allow viewers to glimpse typically private spaces, including the courtesan's bed, desk, and even her body. This voyeuristic element entices viewers to imagine the lives of the courtesans and immerse themselves in the ideal cultural ambiance. These illustrations offer not only visual enjoyment but also an opportunity for literati to observe the world of courtesans as intrigued onlookers.

Since the late Ming Dynasty the significance of illustration increased. Xie Zhaozhe (1567-1624) once voiced his discontent with the prevailing trend in the publishing industry at the time, where visual appeal and craftsmanship eclipsed textual content. [6] This trend is reflected in the greater prominence of natural environments in the images, coupled with a reduction in characters and thematic shifts. In "Wu Ji Bai Mei," both courtesans and literati are often placed within garden settings or expansive landscapes, diminishing the prominence and scale of the main characters within the compositions. This trend aligns with Meng-Ching Ma's observations regarding late Ming illustrations

for operatic works, such as "Romance of the Western Chamber" and "The Story of Pipa," where landscape elements took precedence.^[7]

These illustrations in "Wu Ji Bai Mei" rarely depict specific events; instead, they construct idealized courtesan scenes. The environmental arrangements, particularly the placement of flowers, serve as metaphors for evaluating the courtesans' floral attributes rather than portraying real-life settings. Take the "Lotus-Picking" illustration (figure 3) for example, apart from the illustration corresponding to Li Ziyang's floral attribute as the "White Lotus," the main text makes no mention of the act of lotus picking. This suggests that the "Lotus-Picking" illustration (doesn't document a specific event but rather materializes the abstract floral attribute "White Lotus" into a lotus-picking scene. In Chinese culture, lotus flowers often symbolize beauty, and activities like lotus picking and lotus viewing are associated with elegant pursuits. Other illustrations in "Wu Ji Bai Mei" similarly feature flowers corresponding to the courtesans' floral attributes mentioned later in the text. Whether these flowers naturally grow in the garden landscape, are placed in vases, picked by the courtesans, or incorporated into the paintings, the visual connections between the beauties and the flowers are established in these images. The primary purpose of these images is to create an idealized courtesan scene rather than depicting specific events. This trend of reduced narrative elements persisted in later beauty illustrations.



Fig. 3. Lotus-Picking

In summary, the illustration layout in "Wu Ji Bai Mei" represents a distinctive visual narrative of Ming Dynasty courtesans. These illustrations transcend mere depictions of events, instead immersing viewers in idealized courtesan scenes, underscored by an aesthetic approach that elevates the appreciation of female beauty to a cultural practice. This trend in beauty illustrations, exemplified by "Wu Ji Bai Mei," leaves a lasting imprint on subsequent works in the genre, shaping the narrative mode of beauty images in Chinese art history.

3 The Aesthetic Evaluation and Criteria for famous Courtesans

The concept of "Hua Bang" (Flower Rankings) emerged as a metaphorical approach for literati to assess the beauty of women, drawing inspiration from the imperial examination rankings. This unique system for appraising courtesans originated during the Song Dynasty but gained prominence in the Jiangnan region of the Ming Dynasty. These Flower Ranking activities provided a platform for literati to evaluate famous courtesans, giving rise to literary works like "Liantai Xianhui Pin (The Book of Evaluating Courtesans in Liantai Xianhui)" and "Yandu Jipin (The Book of Evaluating Courtesans in Yan Capital)." These works celebrated renowned courtesans, offering detailed accounts of their lives and talents while serving as a form of entertainment and social interaction.

The creation of Flower Rankings and the associated "Bai Mei Tu" primarily followed two distinct models. The first, exemplified by works like "Liantai Xianhui Pin," involved large-scale evaluations of famous courtesans. Courtesans would showcase their talents, and literati would rank their performances, with the results translated into written records and wine labels. The second model involved authors personally assessing courtesans they had encountered during their travels. Works like "Jinling Bai Mei," "Wu Ji Bai Mei," and "Northern Tune Songs and Lyrics" featured evaluations based on the authors' personal experiences, devoid of large-scale Flower Ranking events. These assessments often provided deeper insights into the lives of these courtesans.

"Bai Mei Tu," visually representing Flower Rankings, was typically published alongside Flower Ranking results and often served as wine labels for banquets. These images, both within books and as wine labels, aimed to please the audience.^[8]

When examining various Flower Ranking literature and "Bai Mei Tu" images, we could find that the criteria for evaluating famous courtesans consistently revolved around "emotion", "talent", and "appearance." However, unlike physical appearance and sensual desire, the charm and talent of famous courtesans held greater significance in the eyes of literati. This shift reflected the changing role of famous courtesans from mere "sexual companions" to "intimate confidantes" with a deeper sense of aesthetics in literati culture.

For instance, in "Records of Qinhuai Beauties," Cao Dazhang (1521-1575) employed a method of evaluating courtesans based on their emotions and talents, with emotion taking precedence, followed by talent and then physical appearance. The emphasis on the emotional qualities of famous courtesans is evident in "Wu Ji Bai Mei." For example, in "Zhuangyuan Jiang Wu", the author expresses deep longing and affection for the courtesans, "The love affair is short and you don't need to hate it", "I still know the love of my girlfriend in the leftover branches", "The dew is cool and the tears of love-sickness, it's not an obsessive love, who can I say it with", "Whose love is short together? "The importance of "love" or emotion can be seen in those words... Besides, in the "Heart-to-Heart Talk" illustration (figure 2) in "Wu Ji Bai Mei," the outdoor enclosures confine Wang Hongru and the male figures within a limited space. Scholars and famous courtesans sit on opposite sides of the table. Wang Hongru turns her head slightly to the side, presenting a three-quarter profile, which seems to be a little unwilling to talk to the author, which corresponds to the state of small anger

mentioned in the later article that Wang Hongru has not seen the author for months because of jealousy. In the image, the courtesan appears to retain a hint of lingering jealousy, while the male figures gaze affectionately at her, seemingly soothing the courtesan's melancholic emotions with tender affection. The scene depicted on the enclosures features a scholar and two beauties in a rowboat, aligning with the later text that mentions glimpsing Wang Hongru in the boat and the interruption by Jiaoru. This possibly suggests the activity scene of Zhou Zhibiao, Wang Jiaoru, and Wang Hongru, while also adding a touch of distant reverie. However, the presence of the table separates the two figures, creating a sense of distance in their interaction. The courtesan turns her head to the side, and her conservative attire prevents us from further glimpses of her graceful figure. In summary, the overt aspect of the courtesan's sexually transactional relationship with the scholar is concealed in the entire scene, while the emotional exchange is showcased. This emphasis on "emotion" aligns with prevalent erotic views in the late Ming period. Feng Menglong (1574-1646), in his work "The History of Love," considered emotion to be the supreme guiding principle in all human relationships, advocating for the establishment of a "doctrine of emotion." He asserted that without emotion, nothing could exist in the world, and he believed that emotion was the foundation of life itself.

Talent also played a pivotal role in evaluating courtesans. In the Ming and Qing periods, literati had their standards for the talents of women, "Records of Beautiful Women" included a section on "skills," listing thirteen talents, such as playing musical instruments, reciting poetry, playing chess, painting, playing ball game, imitating famous calligraphy, embroidery, weaving brocade, playing the flute, playing cards, and more. ^[9] Wei Yong, in "Yue Rong Bian," mentioned that when women could read, they possessed a form of Confucian culture. He emphasized that women who couldn't read a single character were not suitable for marriage, implying that knowledge was essential for women. ^[10] Literati in the late Ming period had a broad definition of female talents, including proficiency in painting, music, literature, needlework, calligraphy, dance, board games, and more. Among these, literature and painting were considered more important than the others.

The cultivation of famous courtesans' talents was diverse. They could receive basic training and education from the madams of courtesan houses, receive personal instruction from relatives who were courtesans, or even benefit from direct guidance from literati during their social interactions. In "Wu Ji Bai Mei," the images that depict female talents include playing chess, playing ball, playing musical instruments, painting orchids, performing music, and requesting poetry, covering various aspects of literary and artistic cultivation. However, there are no images related to women's needlework skills, suggesting a deliberate distinction from virtuous women and highlighting the unique aspects of courtesans' education under the culture of courtesan houses. These talents could be shared and appreciated by literati, constituting daily activities in the courtesan world and making famous courtesans more appealing to literati. In contrast, women's needlework skills were typically practiced within female circles, with limited interaction with men, leading to their lesser importance in this context.

Physical appearance and gracefulness were also vital aspects of courtesan assessments. According to "Records of Beautiful Women", women's appearance should include characteristics such as a slender neck, almond-shaped eyes, ivory teeth, tender breasts, delicate eyebrows, alluring glances, a lotus-like face, cloud-like hair, jade-like fingers, charming lips, willow-like waist, graceful steps, and an appropriate body size.^[11] Li Yu(1611-1680) emphasized the importance of fair skin for women, stating that "the most challenging thing for women is to have fair skin."^[12] Regarding facial features, thin and delicate eyebrows and eyes were considered the most beautiful. Slim and graceful fingers, a natural and charming demeanor, and appropriate adornments were also valued. While literati emphasized the talents and emotional qualities of famous courtesans, "Bai Mei Tu" were still products of the courtesan culture, inevitably involving physical interactions between courtesans and patrons. Some "Wu Ji Bai Mei" images, like "Spring Sleep"(figure 4) and "Drunk Spring"(figure 5)," vividly portray these sensual desires.



Fig. 4. Spring Sleep



Fig. 5. Drunk Spring

Flower Ranking literature and "Bai Mei Tu" images, as crucial components of literati socialization and aesthetics in the Ming Dynasty, reflected the characteristics of contemporary cultural concepts and aesthetic tastes. Emotion, talent, and physical appearance were fully embodied in this aesthetic system, creating a comprehensive image of famous courtesans. The formation of this aesthetic system was closely related to the prevailing erotic views in the late Ming period, where famous courtesans evolved from being mere sexual companions to more complex and multi-dimensional aesthetic objects in literati culture. Additionally, the talents and knowledge of famous courtesans received recognition, reflecting the evolving social and aesthetic perspectives of literati.

4 Ming Dynasty Literati's Anxieties and Courtesans' Aspirations

Flower Rankings, a cultural phenomenon reminiscent of the imperial examination system, found deep symbolism within its processes and expressions. Drawing parallels to the final palace examination of the Ming Dynasty, where scholars gathered at the imperial court to take the examination, Flower Ranking activities mirrored this structure. It began with scholars evaluating courtesans' talents, mirroring the examination questions set by the emperor. The results, akin to the ranks of successful candidates, were divided into three tiers: Zhuangyuan (first place), Bangyan (second place), and Tanhua (third place), who were bestowed the title of Jinshi (Successful Candidate). There were also Second and Third Ranks with several scholars, and once the rankings were determined, they were presented to the imperial court, with names announced. Subsequently, officials escorted the Jinshi back to their residences.

The intricate structure of Flower Rankings didn't stop there. In addition to the ranking system, large-scale Flower Ranking events closely resembled the palace examination process. For example, "Qin Lou Yue" narrates an event where General Liu of Shandong visited famous courtesans, evaluated their talents, posted the results, and held grand banquets. The procession accompanying General Liu, complete with precious horses, embroidered umbrellas, colorful flags, and drum music, strikingly echoed the grandeur of the palace examination process.

But what purpose lay beneath this design? Zhou Zhibiao, in the playful preface of "Wu Ji Bai Mei," titled "Summer Day in Wu Xia's Wan Yu's Drunken Pen Playful Title," suggests a lighthearted attitude among literati, reveling in sensual pleasures. Similarly, Binghua Meishi, in the preface of "Yandu Jipin (The Book of Evaluating Courtesans in Yan Capital)," takes a whimsical tone, emphasizing the playful nature of the book, contrasting it with the more serious imperial examinations.

However, this playful facade may conceal deeper anxieties and expressions. Cao Dazhang, in "Liantai Xianhui Pin," criticizes the provincial examination officials, venting his frustrations about the unfair favoritism towards certain candidates. Scholars, he suggests, weren't given a fair chance to showcase their talents, and the selection of officials was beyond their control.^[13]

Cao's grievances were not isolated incidents, especially during the mid-Ming period. Paul Ropp (1997) has pointed out that in an increasingly competitive world, prostitutes

resonate with the diminishing hopes of the literati themselves for success in exams and official advancement.^[14] The era was marked by political instability, with eunuchs and low-ranking officials wielding power. Intrigue and power struggles within the government were rife, followed by the notorious dominance of Wei Zhongxian. Many members of the Donglin Party faced harsh persecution. Even after Emperor Chongzhen's ascension, political turmoil persisted. Suspicion led to the arbitrary exile and execution of cabinet officials, leaving many ambitious scholars without opportunities for official careers. They sought solace and expression in the relatively stable Jiangnan region.

Simultaneously, the Eight-Legged Essay system reduced knowledge pursuit to rote memorization, leading to rampant cheating and bribery in the imperial examinations. This disillusionment among literati made them turn to cultural activities like Flower Rankings to express their emotions and frustrations. As Beauvoir(2010) points out, "One of the daydreams in which man takes delight is that of imbuing things with his will-modelling their form, penetrating their substance. And woman is par excellence the clay in his hands, which can be passively worked and shaped."^[15] By evaluating and admiring famous courtesans, they found an outlet for their dissatisfaction.

Moreover, Flower Rankings provided an avenue for courtesans to seek upward mobility. As these rankings gained popularity, famous courtesans, once confined to brothels, ventured into the urban commercial environment. Recognition by literati elevated their status, allowing them to break through class barriers and establish relationships with literati. In "Wu Ji Bai Mei," Zhou Zhibiao expressed dissatisfaction with courtesans who hadn't made it to the Flower Rankings, suggesting that their true worth was unrecognized. However, other courtesans, such as Li Xiangjun, Dong Xiaowan, and Liu Rushi gained fame through the patronage of literati. This fame allowed them to break through the class barriers of courtesans and establish stable relationships with literati. The Flower Rankings and "Bai Mei Tu" listed various talents and attributes possessed by famous courtesans, serving as role models for other courtesans aspiring to achieve upward mobility. These rankings and images motivated courtesans to continuously improve their talents and cultivation, potentially altering their destinies. These cultural phenomena became spaces of interaction between literati and courtesans, offering motivation and role models for courtesans seeking to improve their lives.

In essence, Flower Rankings served as a multifaceted expression of the anxieties and aspirations of literati in a tumultuous era, a platform for their playful indulgence, and a means for courtesans to navigate societal boundaries and aspirations.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, "Bai Mei Tu" originated from the important assessment activities of famous courtesans in late Ming Dynasty, where literati imitated the imperial examination system, following a pattern reminiscent of the "Lian Tai Xian Hui Pin." This served as a playful game for disheartened literati, expressing their gender power projection onto courtesans with similar circumstances and allowing them to exercise their gender power. Simultaneously, it provided them with some advantage in competing with merchants for cultural dominance. However, Flower Rankings and "Bai Mei Tu" possess

a "dual nature." On one hand, they are still a product of male gaze, with characters selected, created, and received mostly by men. Their combination of openness and intimacy offers endless possibilities for male voyeurism and imagination. On the other hand, connected to the trend of female liberation in late Ming, under the male "gaze," the courtesans in "Bai Mei Tu" gained the possibility of "gazing back." Motivated by Flower Rankings and "Bai Mei Tu," courtesans continuously improved their talents and appearances, actively expanding the boundaries of their existence, moving between different genders, and achieving upward mobility. Therefore, "Wu Ji Bai Mei" is an important historical document for studying the late Ming Flower Rankings and the courtesan culture.

However, it is essential to be cautious, as Gail Hershatter (1999) pointed out the challenges in researching courtesans, stating, "For an elite audience, precise mechanisms of entry into the profession were not of interest. Not only with respect to the brothel, but also in matters of national significance, the women were portrayed as agents, not victims." [16] Readers of publications like "Wu Ji Bai Mei" may mistakenly believe that this represents the actual lives of courtesans in the Ming period, far removed from moral, legal, economic, or political troubles, forever living in a peaceful and idyllic garden or landscape. Therefore, the real situation of courtesans under the mythology of famous courtesans remains to be further investigated.

Reference

1. Lu Wen-Tsuei . (2015) On the Narrative Cultural Transition of "Portraits of a Hundred Beauties" During the Late Qing Dynasty and the Early Republic of China Period. *Studies In Sinology*, 37_1: 39-71. DOI: 10.6238/SIS.201503.02
2. Wen Pei-chi.(2018) Appreciation of Pin Hua-On Literary Criticism and Image Narration of Wu Ji Bai Mei. *Kaohsiung Normal University Journal: Humanities and Arts*, 44: 59-82.<https://www.airitilibrary.com/Publication/alDetailedMesh?DocID=P20120111001-201806-201807120013-201807120013-59-82&PublishTypeID=P001>
3. Jin Dandan.(2018)Analysis of Wu Ji Bai Mei and Its Influence and Dissemination.*Journal of the staff and worker's university*,2018(5): 7.DOI:CNKI:SUN:ZDXB.0.2018-05-008
4. Kuo Hsiang-Yu.(2022) The Jiangnan and Shanghai Beauty Portrait and Criticism In 19th Century Study—Talents, Talented Women/Lady and Cultural Market Context. National Central University Master's Thesis(Taiwan).http://ir.lib.ncu.edu.tw:88/thesis/view_etd.asp?URN=107121012
5. Wang Hongtai. (2013) Accompanied by Beauties: The Appreciation of Beauty and the Management of Love and Art in the Lives of Ming and Qing Literati. *New History*, Volume 24 2: 72-130. <http://lawdata.com.tw/tw/detail.aspx?no=205045>
6. Xiezhaozhe.(2001) Five Miscellanies, Volume 13. Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House, Shanghai:266.ISBN: 978754580034
7. Ma Meng-Ching.(2002) Looking through the Frame: Visuality in Late-Ming Illustrations to "The Story of the Western Wing".*aida Journal of Art History*,13:201-276+279.DOI: 10.6541/TJAH.2002.09.13.04
8. Cao Dazhang.(2002)Liantai Xianhui Pin, Continuation of the Complete Library in Four Sections," Vol. 44, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, Shanghai. ISBN: 9787532543502

9. Xu Zhen.(2014) Records of Beautiful Women, XiangYan Congshu,Vol.1, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, Shanghai. ISBN: 9787545808803
10. Wei Yong.(2014)Yue Rong Blan, XiangYan Congshu,Vol.1, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, Shanghai. ISBN: 9787545808803
11. Xu Zhen.(2014) Records of Beautiful Women, XiangYan Congshu,Vol.1, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, Shanghai. ISBN: 9787545808803
12. Li Yu.(2015)Xianqing Ouji. Knowledge Publishing House, Beijing:107.ISBN:9787501584482
13. Cao Dazhang.(2002)Liantai Xianhui Pin, Continuation of the Complete Library in Four Sections," Vol. 44, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, Shanghai. ISBN: 9787532543502
14. Ropp P S.(1997) Ambiguous images of courtesan culture in late imperial China, edited by Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang, Writing Women in Late Imperial China[M], Stanford University Press, Redwood City: 21-22.ISBN:0804728712
15. De Beauvoir S.(2010) The Second Sex[M], Alfred A. Knopf, New York:193.ISBN:0307265560
16. Gail Hershtatter.(1999)Dangerous pleasures: Prostitution and modernity in twentieth-century Shanghai[M]. Univ of California Press,Berkeley:17.ISBN: 0520204395

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

