A Source from Afar: Traces of Sarah K. Bolton’s 
*Lives of Girls Who Became Famous* (1886) in 
Tang Baorong’s *Huang Xiuqiu* (1905-7)

*Ellen Widmer* | ORCID: 0000-0003-1559-1950
Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts, USA
*ewidmer@wellesley.edu*

**Abstract**

How could lines from an American biography of educator Mary Lyon (1797-1849) have influenced the wording of the Chinese novel *Huang Xiuqiu* (1905-07)? Sarah K. Bolton’s (1841-1916) *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous* of 1886 entered Japan and was translated or adapted into several sets of biographies in Japan, among them one by Tokutomi Roka (1868-1927) in 1898, and another by Nemoto Shô (1851-1933) in 1906. From there they traveled to China on separate paths where they reappeared in translation or adaptation in *Shijie shi nüjie* (Ten heroines of the world; 1903, based on Tokutomi), and *Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi* (Magazine of the new Chinese woman; 1907, based on Nemoto). *Huang Xiuqiu* draws on the account in *Shijie shi nüjie*, but the trajectory from Nemoto to *Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi* makes an illuminating comparison to the other trajectory. Lines that can clearly be traced back to Bolton make up a very small proportion of the text of *Huang Xiuqiu*, but they relate to an important feature of the novel: the way its heroine settles on founding a girls’ school as her contribution to a national effort to make China strong.

**Keywords**


**Introduction**

Authored by Yisuo 孫縈 (a pseudonym), *Huang Xiuqiu* 黃繡球 first came out in 1905 in the journal *Xin xiaoshuo* 新小說 (New fiction), but in incomplete
form: only the first 26 of its 30 chapters were serialized. In 1907 the full book emerged, from Xin xiaoshuo’s publisher, with the four remaining chapters added.¹ According to the modern critic A Ying 阿英, this was the most successful of the “women’s novels” of the late Qing.²

This novel tells the story of its eponymous heroine, who early on changes the characters of her given name Xiuqiu from 秀秋 (Beautiful fall) to 繡球 (Embroider the globe) so as to signal her wish to connect with the modern world. Before that, she is a stay-at-home traditional woman, but thanks to a conversation with her husband, which sets her mind toward the future, she decides to unbind her feet, a step that soon lands her in jail, on the grounds that she is dressed like a man. Eventually she is released and goes back to her husband and two children, but she has been radicalized by the experience. Soon she resolves to bring education to the women of her area, a poor town not too far from Shanghai. Ziyou cun 自由村 (Independence village) is like practically all the other names in the novel in that it is allegorical. Not long afterwards, she has a dream about the famed foreigner Madam Roland (1754-93). In the course of her dream meeting, Huang Xiuqiu receives three readings – the first of which is a book Yingxiong zhuan 英雄傳 (Biographies of heroes). As the heroes originate in ancient Greece and Rome, Yingxiong zhuan is understood to be Plutarch’s Lives, which was one of Madam Roland’s personal favorites.³

Huang also receives Madam Roland’s own memoirs and a work on geography. It is her husband who identifies Madam Roland, whom Huang herself has never heard of. Her most important conclusion from the dream is that men and women are equal. The biographies also teach her that literacy is of crucial importance for Chinese women, and that women are of crucial importance in the larger project of making China strong. To this end she decides to press forward and found a school.

The project is launched soon after the dream visit, but it gains specificity through the help of two living interlocutors, Huang’s husband Huang Tongli 黃通理 (One who understands reason) and her woman friend Bi Qiang 博強, or Bi Qurou 博去柔 (Must be strong, or Must get rid of gentleness). Huang Tongli is a forward looking intellectual. Over the course of the novel he matches his wife’s ambitions by founding a school for boys. Bi Qiang is a medical doctor. Although initially from Jiangnan she is strongly influenced by Cantonese

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¹ Tarumoto Teruo 樽本照雄, Xinbian zengbu Qing mo Min chu xiaoshuo mulu 新編增補清末民初小說目錄 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2002), 294.
² A Ying 阿英, Wan Qing xiaoshuo shi 晚清小說史 (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1996), 121.
culture and wears Cantonese-style clothing. She has recently returned from a stint of medical training abroad. Like Huang, Bi’s feet are unbound. She is called Bi Taitai 毕太太.

Unlike either interlocutor, Huang is illiterate at first, but she gradually builds up competence with the written word. This buildup is inspired, in part, by the dream gifts summed up in Chinese by Madam Roland which she remembers clearly after she awakens. As her facility with reading develops, she comes across a biography of Mary Lyon (1797-1849), the founder of Mount Holyoke College in 1837. With this example before her, her ambitions increase to the point that the goal of founding a school begins to seem more realistic than it did before.

She faces many obstacles. At first no one takes her plan seriously. Then there are crises over how to raise money, what kind of people to enlist as teachers, and what kind of buildings to hold classes in. Huang also needs to figure out the curriculum, how many students to admit, what categories of woman to exclude, and where to get books and other materials. A benighted Manchu official, a hostile clan member, and others stand firmly in her way, but they are outmatched by good people who take her side. Eventually the school comes into being. It will have fifty students. None of them can be former prostitutes. Classes will take place in the Huangs’ home and in a former nunnery. Two nuns from that nunnery are enlisted to tell entertaining stories about the project. These are tanci 弹词 (plucking rhymes) but the point is clearly made that they are not the old kind of tanci, like Tianyu hua 天雨花 (Heaven rains flowers) or Zaisheng yuan 再生缘 (Destiny of rebirth), which are just stories. The new ones are designed to foster improvements in society.4 In this way, the interest of local gentry women is engaged, and they donate money. Bi Taitai acquires books and supplies in Shanghai. Both Huang and Bi will teach in the school.

As we read through these various steps and stumbles, we learn very little about Mary Lyon. Huang Xiuqiu does not discuss the book through which the heroine finds out about her. We are not told its title, and we do not learn much about what was inspiring about Lyon’s experiences, only that she had been a lowly farm girl, she had a good friend named Hitchcock who helped her think through her project, and she was able to found a women’s college with Hitchcock’s assistance.

The novel Huang Xiuqiu is quite typical of late Qing novels in its in-between-ness. The language is neither modern nor classical; the call to

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4 Tang Baorong 汤宝荣, Huang Xiuqiu 黄绣球 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1987), 130. But many sources attribute the novel to Tang’s pseudonym, Yisuo 颐硕, and see page 130.
educate women sounds progressive, but there is considerable evidence of traditional thinking about what women should and should not do; certain foreigners are admired, but there is much worry about the rapacious foreign interests that threaten China; the ideas are progressive for their time, but the style of the book is quite old-fashioned, with a strong narrator who tells the reader to turn the page at the end of chapters, and even take a tea break at the end of chapter 21. The author, too, seems somewhat in between in his interests. He has been identified as Tang Baorong 汤寶蓉 (1863-1935). Not much is known about him. He wrote old-style literature about courtesans, but his wife was well known in Shanghai circles as someone who unbound her own feet at age fifty. Perhaps some wifely input lies behind the progressive tone of Huang Xiuqi.

What to make of this confusing swirl of data? I propose to introduce one small piece of background information: an American source that left a few clear traces on the wording of Huang Xiuqi, with a possibly larger influence on its ideas.

Much work has been done on the host of biographies of famous women that flooded into China toward the end of the nineteenth century. These have been well studied by scholars such as Nanxiu Qian, Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹, and Joan Judge, to name just a few. My approach differs from theirs. Unlike Nanxiu Qian’s research on the important collection Wai guo lienü zhuan 外國列女傳 (Exemplary biographies of foreign women) of 1906, compiled by Xue Shaohui 薛紹徽 (1866-1911) and her husband Chen Shoupeng 陳壽彭 (1857-ca 1928), which drew on materials in Western languages, my focus is on writings that entered China via Japan. However, unlike Xia Xiaohong and Joan Judge, who have also done important work on such materials, I trace the progression one step further back, from Japan to America. Thus, I focus on the efforts of Sarah K. Bolton (1841-1916), a writer of popular biographies in the United States. (Figure 1)

7 Nanxiu Qian, Politics, Poetics, and Gender in Late Qing China: Xue Shaohui (1866-1911) and the Era of Reform (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015).
Bolton's writing career was boosted by her series “Little Biographies – Success Stories” in *Wide Awake*, a children's magazine, from which publisher T.Y. Crowell learned about her and recruited her to write books for young adults. These sold many copies, so many that they supported her throughout her writing career. The resulting biographies were not long. Many were under fifteen pages, and to make a complete book, Bolton published them in sets of ten or twenty. Altogether she turned out over a dozen such volumes, as well as other types of writing. The biographies were well written and lively with snatches of conversation (no doubt invented) enhancing spirited prose. They were also well researched in libraries and with trips to the sites of the subject's life, as well as birthplaces and grave sites. They were not overtly religious in tone, but they promoted what the author thought of as Protestant virtues, as these were defined in her time. Qualities like thrift, punctuality, courtesy, honesty, and discipline were regularly touted, alongside efforts to identify the key trait or key moment that lifted the subject to his or her fame. These are augmented by moralizing commentary, like the following: “He was ambitious, but
there seemed no open door. There is never an open door to fame or prosperity, except we open it for ourselves, and assistance usually weakens rather than strengthens us.”

The moral climate of these biographies was a little different, depending on whether the subject was a boy or a girl. For boys, poverty early in life was thought to be an asset because it made them try harder and achieve more. For girls poverty was not necessarily advantageous. Hence Bolton’s first best-seller Lives of Poor Boys Who Became Famous, of 1885, was followed one year later by a book on girls, but the title was not Lives of Poor Girls Who Became Famous, but rather Lives of Girls Who Became Famous. In contrast to the book on boys, the book on girls has a fair number of subjects who were born wealthy. Another issue that plays out differently in the book on boys is temperance. The idea seemed to be that alcohol was a threat to growing boys, not growing girls. When Bolton writes about leaders of the temperance movement, like her friend Frances Willard (1839-98), her assumption is that women will stop men from drinking, not that they would ever drink themselves. We should note, parenthetically, that the temperance movement was not only devoted to curbing alcohol consumption. It also promoted feminist consciousness and gave women leadership roles.

Often what turned a girl into a heroine was not poverty but a cultural change like the American Civil War (1861-65), which provided women a chance to pursue activities outside the home, for example by giving speeches to raise money for the troops. This was true of Mary Livermore (1820-1905), a housewife who turned out to be an excellent orator and raised substantial sums of money for the Northern cause. Of course the Civil War is not an important issue in the entries on the British and European women, which constitute about half of the nineteen selections in Lives of Girls Who Became Famous, nor is it an issue for Mary Lyon, who lived before that time. Apart from the issues of poverty and alcohol, the books on boys and girls are quite closely parallel, so much that the one can be regarded as the template for the other. Thus, both assign categories to their subjects, like “Mary Lyon, Teacher,” and “Florence Nightingale, Hospital Nurse,” and both have engraved illustrations or photographs at the beginnings of entries.

The biography of Mary Lyon in *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous* is rather typical of Bolton's work. According to this biography, Lyon was poor in her youth, and her father died young, but her mother was a positive force and kept the family together until Mary was about thirteen. After that she remarried, and Mary's life was overtaken by housekeeping duties, but she was a very active learner. Coupled with extreme diligence, her intelligence is shown to have been her saving grace. Thanks to the kindness of her various schools and teachers, she was welcomed even when she lacked funds to pay for tuition. After she finished high school and began teaching, she constantly worried that there were no opportunities for women to advance beyond their high school educations. This nagging concern became the motivation behind her very radical – indeed, altogether unprecedented – plan to start a college for women. Along the way she had many conversations with an older man named Edward Hitchcock (1793-1864), who eventually became president of Amherst College. Important decisions included one to fundraise among women, and another to have the girls take care of their own housekeeping, so tuition could be low. Her modest personal manner is also emphasized. The biography ends with a tomb inscription and a summary of her various accomplishments at the college. All of this history and these values are packed into Bolton's biography of Lyon, which is eighteen pages long.\(^\text{12}\) It is not exactly hagiographic, but it blurs details that might undercut the praiseful tone.\(^\text{13}\) This biographical sketch played a role in the wording of *Huang Xiuxiu* when it came to describing Lyon, and it may have helped shape some of the novel's ideas.

How did Bolton's biography of Lyon manage to show up roughly twenty years later in China, and exactly what traces did it leave on *Huang Xiuxiu*? There are two intermediary steps, one in Japan and one in China. Before I describe them, let me further observe that Bolton's material made a second and parallel excursion, also via Japan to China, but this excursion left no mark on *Huang Xiuxiu*. We will look briefly at this second set of texts after the first one has been described.


\(^\text{13}\) For example, that Lyon was given to depression, which is discussed by Amanda Porterfield, *Mary Lyon and the Mount Holyoke Missionaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 52-54.
Tokutomi Roka and Miyake Tensui

At least four derivations from Bolton’s work appeared in Japan between 1898 and 1906. Other very similar biographies came out in Japan around the same time, but they were not manifestly based on work by Bolton. The steps that led to *Huang Xiuqiu* began with a work edited by Tokutomi Roka 徳富蘆花 (real name Tokutomi Kenjirō 徳富健次; 1868-1927). It had the name *Sekai kokon meifu kan* 世界古今名婦鑑 (Mirror of famous women of the world, ancient and modern), and came out in 1898. It was not a book for young adults but rather part of a general wave of effort to enlighten Meiji era women about the world. Tokutomi was a Christian, perhaps as a result of his studies at the English language school at Dōshisha 同志社, a Christian school that later became Dōshisha University. He went on to a career in fiction and nature writing, but he also manifested a deep interest in Western literature, especially Tolstoy (1828-1910). His first blockbuster novel *Hototogisu* 不如歸 (Cuckoo) of 1898-1900 was probably on the drawing board at the time his set of edited biographies was underway. It features a woman who behaves in an ideal manner but runs afoul of her mother-in-law. (Figure 2)
Compared to the other three sets of Bolton-based translations, his is the most eclectic. It includes lives Bolton would never have taken up, such as revolutionary women and British suffragettes, alongside the more ordinary (and more Protestant) type of woman whom Bolton favored. It is also the most literary of the four. Each section ends with a quotation. These are drawn from a range of individuals, including women, clergymen, and historically famous authors like Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Matthew Arnold (1822-88). According to the paratextual materials, the aim of the collection was to open women’s minds to a broad array of lifestyles and to provide enjoyment.

This collection is divided into twenty-two categories. Many categories contain more than one biography, and the total number of biographies is quite large. In 484 pages, it is by far the most extensive of the four sets with clear ties to Bolton. Unlike in Bolton’s own work, there are no engraved portraits of subjects. Among the women are eight about whom Bolton wrote. Of these eight, six have counterparts in *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous*.20 As we learn from

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20 These are Mary Lyon, Rosa Bonheur, Madame de Staël, Maria Mitchell, Florence Nightingale, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Bolton also wrote about Frances Willard and Susanna Wesley, but not in *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous*. 

**Figure 2**
Tokutomi Roka (1868-1927).
Source: Wikimedia Commons
the preface and elsewhere, not all of the biographies were written by Tokutomi personally. Some were farmed out to other writers.

The collection drew from accounts in magazines and earlier biographies, often making it difficult to say exactly where Bolton's influence lay. Tokutomi's attempt to bring his subjects to life via a combination of narration and dialogue resembles Bolton's, and there are a few biographies for which a debt to Bolton can definitely be ascribed. This is most clearly the case with Mary Lyon and one other subject. Neither is authored by Tokutomi himself. Mary Lyon's is by Miyake Tensui 三宅天水, whom I have not been able to identify. It is far closer than any other in the set to Bolton, whose account it follows quite closely from beginning to end. To give some examples, both Tokutomi/Miyake and Bolton take up the case of a student who is faulted for not attending dinner but whom Mary Lyon gently shamed into better behavior. Both also discuss Lyon's comforting ruminations on death after a student died while in school. Finally, both include the full inscription from the west side of Lyon's tomb, no doubt an observation drawn from Bolton's direct inspection, which is presented in English in both versions, although the Japanese version goes on to translate the inscription into Japanese. Both conclude with a summary of Lyon's career.

How might Tokutomi or Miyake have come across Bolton's work? We do not have a firm answer, but Tokutomi had been publishing translations of English works on Western historical figures for about ten years before this collection came out. He must have been on the lookout for books like Bolton's. Although Tokutomi was a Christian, his version of Bolton's text is not evangelistic. Rather, Christian virtues are cast in terms that sound almost Confucian, such as when nurse Florence Nightingale is lauded for her jizen hakuai or

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21 The preface mentions Katei zasshi 家庭雑誌 and Kokumin no tomo 国民の友. It does not refer to Bolton.
22 The same point can be made about French painter Rosa Bonheur (1822-99).
24 Rosa Bonheur's biography is also quite close to Bolton's, but not as close as Lyon's. It is attributed to a person called Ōka joshi 黄花女史, who turns out to be Tokutomi's wife, Harada Aiko 原田愛子.
25 Tokutomi Roku's work drew upon that of his brother Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰 (1863-1957), who was well versed in Western studies. See Xia Xiaohon, “Shijie guji,” 35; and also, Piersson, Tokutomi Sohō, 40-78. Sohō was the editor of Minyūsha, the publisher of Sekai kokon meifu kan.
cishan boai 慈善博愛 (charity and universal love). It is also of interest that Mary Lyon’s frequent praying, which Bolton emphasizes, is somewhat toned down. Bolton’s focus on temperance is neither emphasized nor obscured.

Shijie shi nüjie

The next stop on our journey is Shijie shi nüjie 世界十女傑 (Ten heroines of the world; 1903). This Chinese text derives from Tokutomi’s Sekai kokon meifu kan of 1898. Like that text it is directed at women, especially young women, not so much to enlighten them about the world as to inspire them to help their country. Credit must go to Xia Xiaohong for making the connection, from very obscure materials. This collection was published in 1903 by an anonymous editor, presumably male. It is difficult to say what principle was used in making the selections from Tokutomi’s collection. Among the biographies of Western women in Shijie shi nüjie are three with parallels in Bolton (Madam de Staël, Mary Lyon, and Florence Nightingale), as well as seven that have no overlap with Bolton’s subjects. These are Louise Michel, Charlotte Corday, Catherine the Great, Millicent Fawcett, Dorothy Wordsworth, Olga Novikoff, and Anita Garibaldi. Xia brings out several linkages between the Japanese and Chinese biographies, but she does not pursue the case of Mary Lyon in much detail. It is to this case that we now turn.

A comparison of the versions of Lyon’s life from this transmission path yields the following impressions of Shijie shi nüjie. For the most part, the Chinese biography is quite faithful to the one in Tokutomi/Miyake, which as we have seen is quite faithful to the one in Bolton. The length is more or less the same, and events proceed in more or less the same order. This means that when mistakes occur in Tokutomi/Miyake they are faithfully replicated in

26 See Tokutomi, Sekai kokon meifu kan, 95.
27 A sequence in Bolton, Lives of Girls Who Became Famous, 131-33, in which Lyon’s failure to establish a school in Ipswich is accompanied by much inner dialogue with God, is sharply condensed in Tokutomi, Sekai kokon meifu kan. See page 230.
28 Thus, Frances Willard, the head of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, does not have an outsized entry, and she is paired with another woman under the heading “Shakai kairyrō undō no haha” 社会改良運動の母 (Mothers of the movement for social improvement). The other woman in this section is Catherine Booth (1829-93), a co-founder of the Salvation Army.
29 Xia Xiaohong, “Shijie gujin mingfu jian.”
30 I am grateful to Joan Judge for supplying me with a copy of these rare materials.
31 Xia Xiaohong, “Shijie gujin mingfu jian.”
Because Tokutom/Miyake's mistakes are not many, this collection's version of her life is still a recognizable version of Bolton's original, wherein episodes like Lyon's handling of the student who failed to go to dinner and her consolation of students when one of their number died are preserved.

At the same time, this biography makes some changes. For example, the tomb inscription and the final summary of Lyon's accomplishments are reduced in scale. At the level of language there are also modifications, mostly minor. For example, Bolton provides a description of Lyon's initial failure to convince wealthy people of the value of education for women. It states the matter in the following terms: “In vain she talked with college presidents and learned ministers. Nearly all were indifferent. They could see no need that women should study science or the classics.”

Tokutom/Miyake's account contains essentially the same line.

Shijie shi nüjie puts the matter a little more elaborately:

When she made up her mind to return home and establish a school in the county the people of the county laughed at her; when she proposed it in the city the city people thought her wrong; when she appealed to the great families they mocked her.

Although the phrasing differs from text to text, the core issue is the same.

Greater license is found in Shijie shi nüjie's comparisons between education and planting, thus, “A country's education is like sowing trees and grain, the more seeds you plant, the greater the harvest you will reap.”

One could argue that this passage is not found in Bolton's biography of Lyon or in Tokutom/Miyake's adaptation. Clearly, in this case, Shijie shi nüjie has embellished Tokutom/Miyake's version with reflections of its own, or perhaps it brought in reflections from other sources.

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32 For example, Lives of Girls Who Became Famous notes that the student body during Mount Holyoke's first year numbered 116 (page 135). In both Sekai kokon (page 232) and Shijie shi nüjie (page 56) the number has changed to 160 (bailuoshi 百六十 not baishiliu 百十六).
34 Tokutom, Sekai kokon meifu kan, 229.
35 Shijie shi nüjie, 54. My thanks to Waiyee Li for help with Chinese translation.
36 Shijie shinüji, 54.
Focusing now on Huang Xiuqi, we find that it invokes Lyon’s name at about ten points, beginning in chapter seven and continuing in chapters ten and seventeen. Huang Xiuqi first mentions Lyon in the following way: “I have a book on the subject [of Lyon], one I have only recently seen.”

At first she set up a school in the county and talked about it with the people there, who laughed at her ambition; she talked about it in the city, and the city people told her she was wrong; she appealed to the great gentry families, who mocked her.

The analogy to sowing and reaping is likewise repeated, but in somewhat altered form:

A country’s educational [system] is like a farmer scattering seeds; to have one extra fine seed is to have an extra acre of fine grain.

A further sign of connection to Shijie shi nüjie is found in the portrayal of Lyon’s most supportive friend, Edward Hitchcock. In both Bolton’s and Tokutomi’s accounts, his role is to give Lyon the courage she needs to found Mount Holyoke at a time when no one else took her seriously. In Huang Xiuqi Hitchcock is invoked by the physician Bi Taitai, Huang’s closest woman friend, as Bi’s model for the friendship between herself and Huang, with no explicit acknowledgment that in Lyon’s life story the analogous friendship was between Lyon and a man. Bi Taitai then references Hitchcock’s congratulations to Lyon after Mount Holyoke was established:

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37. Huang Xiuqi, 60.
38. Huang Xiuqi, 60.
40. Huang Xiuqi, 88.
I will follow the lead of Hitchcock, Lyon’s friend, in congratulating Huang Xiuqiu as follows: ‘I do not congratulate Huang Xiuqiu on her own behalf but rather on how she has embellished the world’.41

我就同萊恩所遇的一位朋友，叫做喜齊確科的，前來祝賀，仿他的祝詞道:吾不為黃繡球賀，吾為黃繡球果然繡成了地球賀.

This line is not found in Bolton or Tokutomi, but Bi Taitai follows it more or less as it appears in Shijie shi nüjie.42 (However, the pun on Huang Xiuqiu’s name – “embellish the world” – is new with the novel.) Here is another sign that Huang Xiuqiu’s wording was somewhat shaped by the depiction of Lyon that appears in that source, which Tang Baorong (like his heroine) had presumably come across at some point before the novel was composed, or possibly even when it was already underway. This means that many of his references to Lyon conform, more or less, to what is found in Shijie shi nüjie, which often (but not always) means that they conform to Tokutomi/Miyake and hence to Bolton’s original.

Now I present an example of a line from Huang Xiuqiu with antecedents that go all the way back to Bolton:

[Huang, speaking on her own behalf]:
If I had a hundred thousand lives I would like to sacrifice them for education. If I had limitless property I would like it to underwrite education.43

苟妾有千百之生，願盡為教育界之犧牲。苟妾得無量數之財產，願盡為教育界的資本.

Like the equivalent lines from Shijie shi nüjie, which are basically identical to the ones in the novel,44 this is a recognizable rendition of lines from Tokutomi/Miyake:

41 Huang Xiuqiu, 88.
42 “吾今日不為萊恩賀，吾為今日世界製造新國器製成之日賀云云.” Shijie shi nüjie, 56.
43 Huang Xiuqiu, 60.
44 The passage uses almost exactly the same words: 苟妾有千百之生命，願盡為教育界之犧牲。苟妾得無量數之財產，願盡為教育界的資本. See Shijie shi nüjie, 54. The only difference is the addition of the second qie 契 in Huang Xiuqiu. See also Huang Xiuqiu, 88, where Bi Taitai refers back to part of this same line.
If I had one hundred thousand lives I would like to sacrifice them all for Mount Holyoke Women’s College, if I had limitless fortune I would like to give it all to this school even if I am poor in old age.\textsuperscript{45}

妾に千百の生命あらんか盡く之を マウント、ホリヨーク女學校の為めに犧げん、又若し莫大の財産あらんか此學校の為めに盡く之を捨てて寧ろ貧く暮さん」と。

These lines in turn are a recognizable rendition of these lines of Bolton’s:

(quotting Lyon): “Had I a thousand lives, I could sacrifice them all in suffering and hardship, for the sake of Mount Holyoke Seminary. Did I possess the greatest fortune, I could readily relinquish it all, and become poor, and more than poor, if its prosperity should demand it.”\textsuperscript{46}

Despite the switch from Mount Holyoke in particular (in Bolton and Tokutomi/Miyake) to education in general (in \textit{Shijie shi nüjie} and \textit{Huang Xiuqi}), this is still very close to what Bolton had to say.

Because Mary Lyon is not the only Westerner to inspire Huang’s endeavor and because reform-minded Chinese are invoked as well,\textsuperscript{47} we cannot claim that Huang mindlessly follows Lyon’s example or that Tang Baorong merely regurgitates what is found in \textit{Shijie shi nüjie}. Here we should note that the quotations derived from \textit{Shijie shi nüjie} are bunched together on just a few pages, although \textit{Huang Xiuqi} puts them in a somewhat different order. For example the passage about extreme self-sacrifice comes first in \textit{Huang Xiuqi} and last in \textit{Shijie shi nüjie}. Also Tang Baorong presents Roland and Lyon as joint inspirations for change (in Huang’s imagination), something Bolton would never have done. This is not only because Bolton avoided Catholic women like Madam Roland, but also because she was not given to elaborate dreamscapes, like the one through which Roland appeared to Huang. Her focus was firmly on the here and now. Nevertheless, especially when \textit{Huang Xiuqi} quotes directly from \textit{Shijie shi nüjie}, or does so with minor alterations, all the more

\textsuperscript{45} Tokutomi, \textit{Sekai kokon meifu kan}, 232.
\textsuperscript{46} Bolton, \textit{Lives of Girls Who Became Famous}, 134. It is of incidental interest that neither Nemoto nor \textit{Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi} carry this particular line, although it is found in the work of Katô Minryû, the earliest Japanese translator/adaptor of Bolton, 94.
\textsuperscript{47} The Cantonese woman Xue Jinqin 薛錦琴 (1883-1960), who graduated from the University of Illinois and became a leader in political circles in China, is also mentioned as an inspiration for Huang. See \textit{Huang Xiuqi}, 24.
when the quotes have identifiable precedents in *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous*, Bolton's connection to the novel is affirmed.

A Second Path

Let us now turn briefly to the other path by which Bolton's work reached China. It is interesting for comparative purposes. It, too, begins with a Japanese version, which is followed by one from Japanese into Chinese. This second Japanese version is by Nemoto Shô 根本正 (1851-1933). It came out in 1906 under the English title *Famous Women, or American and European Girls Who Became Famous*.48 Of the four translations of Bolton's work into Japanese that I know of, this one is the best schooled in English language and culture. This is because the translator made extensive efforts to develop his skill in the language, even finding a way to attend college at the University of Vermont, from which he graduated in 1889. Furthermore Nemoto was especially taken with Bolton's work, both because of its Christian underpinnings and because of its support for temperance, one of his abiding concerns.49 Another strong point of attraction was her *Poor Boys Who Became Famous*, which no doubt appealed to him even more than the book on girls. This is because it could have described his own life experience, which led him from poverty to success in politics once he returned to Japan. Indeed he translated the book on boys twice, first on its own and then in a revised edition, which he turned into a pair with the book on girls.50

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48 The Japanese title is Ō-Bei joshi risshin den 歐米女子立身傳.
49 It was also a major concern of his sponsor, Frederick Billings (1823-93), who bequeathed money to Nemoto to pursue this cause in Japan. See Yasutake, *Transnational Women's Activism*, 71-72.
50 The English title of the first of these was *Poor Boys Who Became Famous*. The Japanese title was Ō-Bei binko shose bidan 歐米貧子初世美談. It came out in 1902. The second has the English title *Self-Made Men* and the Japanese title Ō-Bei seinen risshin den 歐米青年立身傳. Its date was 1906. The second Japanese title was intended to match that of the book on girls, so *Famous Women* in English and Ō-Bei joshi risshin den 歐米女子立身傳 in Japanese. In both the book on girls and the two on boys there is considerable revision of Bolton's originals. For example, the first of the two books on boys adds James Garfield (1831-81) and Ulysses S. Grant (1822-85) to Bolton's list. The second adds Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), William Gladstone (1809-98) and Frederick Billings (1823-90). Both books also make subtractions, mainly of those of lesser fame. The same is true of the book on girls, where some have been subtracted and others have been added. The additions include Dorothea Dix (1802-82), Susanna Wesley (1669-1742), Frances Willard, and Mrs. Julia Parmly Billings. Most of the additions come from other books by Bolton. The biographies of Mr. and Mrs. Billings are the work of Nemoto. All of these titles can be retrieved at
Both books in his pair take up the themes of temperance and anti-smoking. In so doing they pick up on Bolton’s own support of temperance, but they also use words that are not found in her original, especially on smoking, about which she had nothing to say. Nemoto would later introduce legislation outlawing drinking and smoking for minors in Japan. In this way they are similar. The books on boys and girls manifest differences, too, in that Nemoto sometimes tries to point his female readers in the direction of something less than full-fledged citizenship. This is a difficult balancing act, partly because several of the American women he celebrates were not what would

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51 Nemoto tends to link drinking and smoking through the compound *kinshu kinen* or *jinjiu jinjan* 禁酒禁煙. See for example his biography of Lucretia Mott, 26. Compare Bolton, p. 41.

52 Yasutake, *Transnational Women’s Activism*, 106.

53 Up to a point, Nemoto’s thinking was imbued with the rhetoric of “good wives and wise mothers,” as Joan Judge has noted. See Judge, *The Precious Raft of History*, 115-22.
conventionally be called ideal mothers. Yet Nemoto is willing to be impressed with impressive women, even when they put the national cause ahead of their children.⁵⁴ In his mind the main point of appeal for women was *jinkei jizen* or *renhui cishan* 温惠慈善 (graciousness and charity), no matter what their area of achievement. However, when it came to his Japanese woman readers, he tended to want them to learn but not to imitate, and he often signaled a preference that they become mothers of citizens, not full citizens themselves.⁵⁵

How might Nemoto have come across Bolton’s work? There are two possibilities. One is that Nemoto found out about Bolton’s books through friends in the temperance movement and undertook his translations with no knowledge of Tokutomī’s prior activity.⁵⁶ Alternatively, he could have been alerted by one of the three earlier translations.

*Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi, 1907*

Nemoto’s work was partially adapted into Chinese by *Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi* 中國新女界雜誌 (Magazine of the new Chinese woman) in 1907, which had a circulation of five thousand.⁵⁷ This magazine’s woman editor was Yan Bin 燕斌 (1869-?), a medical student living in Japan and studying medicine at Waseda University in Tokyo. A strong believer in male-female equality, she saw inequality as a source of China’s weakness. It is sometimes suggested that the reason the magazine discontinued publication and did not finish the series was that it ran out of money; but it appears that it also managed to offend Japanese

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⁵⁴ See for example his biography of Mary Livermore, which praises her for her oratory and reporting, that “thundered across the land” 其英名を轟すことなかりしならん, even though she had a husband and children back at home. Nemoto, *Famous Women*, 32-41, and see page 32. My thanks to Terry Kawashima for help with Japanese translation.


⁵⁶ Nemoto was closely involved in temperance circles, both in America and in Japan. He and Bolton both had contacts with leaders like Dwight L. Moody (1837-99), head of the Student Volunteer Movement, and Frances Willard, director of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union.

authorities when it suggested that assassination might be used as a weapon against Qing officials. This meant that it was soon shut down.  

In any event, among the seven biographies in this source are six which drew on Nemoto, who is cited as the source of the information. All are from the original Bolton's *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous*. Joan Judge has worked on this source and has compared the biographies of Mary Lyon here and in Nemoto. Her conclusion is that the magazine version drops the "good wife wise mother" theme and focuses on Lyon's heroism in refusing to marry and

59 Margaret Fuller Ossoli (1810–50) and Florence Nightingale, part one, in issue 1; Mary Lyon and Florence Nightingale, part two, in issue 2; Joan of Arc (?–1431) in issue 3; Mary Livermore (1820–1905) and George Eliot (1819–80) in issue 4; Lucretia Mott (1793–1880) in issue 5. Joan of Arc is the only figure in this series who is not found in Bolton.

The citation of Nemoto’s translated title (*Oumei nüzi lishen zhuan* 歐美女子立身傳) comes at the end of the Eliot biography.
developing education for women, which, it is thought, would help strengthen the Chinese nation as a whole.\textsuperscript{60} One interesting link between this series and Nemoto and Bolton is the set of illustrations, which are based on Nemoto’s modifications of Bolton’s originals.\textsuperscript{61} (Figures 4 and 5)

How can we be sure that this second transmission path had no influence on \textit{Huang Xiuqiu}? There are two compelling reasons. The first is the date. As previously noted, the references to Mary Lyon come in Chapters 7, 10, and 17. They do not continue after that point. This means that they were all composed by 1905, whereas \textit{Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi}, with its entry on Lyon, did not appear until 1907. Another substantial clue is the Chinese characters used for the names Lyon and Hitchcock. The Japanese translations use \textit{katakana} for Western names rather than characters, but the Chinese re-translations use characters, just not the same ones. In \textit{Shijie shi nüjie}, Mary Lyon is Meili laien 美利萊恩 and Hitchcock is Xiqiqueke 喜齊確科; in \textit{Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi}, they are Maili lihen 麥里梨痕 and Xijikeku 西吉可苦. \textit{Huang Xiuqiu} pursues the lead of \textit{Shijie shi nüjie}.

Following the trail of Chinese characters leads us to a second conclusion: that Tang Baorong had read (or at least skimmed) more than just the Lyon

\textsuperscript{60} Judge, \textit{Precious Raft}, 71.

\textsuperscript{61} Li Youning 李又寧, ed., \textit{Chongkan Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi} 重刊中國新女界雜誌 (Taipei: Youshi wenhua, 1982). Of the biographies of the seven women who appear in this series, four are accompanied by photographs (at least in current reprint editions. It is possible that all of the women originally had pictures but that some were lost over time.) Three of those extant are derived from Nemoto’s rounded versions of Bolton’s rectangular photographs.
biography in *Shijie shi nüjie*. This is because of three other names of woman heroines that come up in *Huang Xiaoqiu*. All are also found in *Shijie shi nüjie*, and all use the Chinese characters from that source. Two of those three, Catherine the Great of Russia (Jiatuoli 茄陀釐; 1729-96) and Frances Nightingale (Naijingkailu 奈經慨卢; 1820-1910) come up in many sources. In Nightingale’s case she is found in Nemoto and in *Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi*, as well, but the characters *Huang Xiuqiu* uses are from *Shijie shi nüjie*. The third heroine, Millicent Fawcett (Fu’e shade 傅萼紗德; 1897-1919), was a prominent leader in the British suffrage movement. Always true to the romanization in *Shijie shi nüjie*, *Huang Xiuqiu* mentions Catherine, Nightingale and Fawcett, along with Lyon and Roland, as persons worthy of emulation in chapter ten.

It is interesting that a second woman’s novel of about the same vintage, Wang Miaoru’s 王妙如 (fl. late nineteenth-century) *Nü yuhua* 女獄花 (Female jail flower) of 1904, also uses the romanizations from *Shijie shi nüjie* when it mentions four Western women in Chapter 6.

**Deeper Influences?**

What we have established so far is that faint traces of the work of Bolton appear, via Tokutom/i/Miyake and *Shijie shi nüjie*, in the prose of *Huang Xiuqiu*. Sometimes the translated line is not found in the original Bolton, but one can still claim an indirect link, even when that line was added by subsequent translators. Of course there are also lines of Bolton’s that are completely lost in translation.

The question now is whether there is any evidence of deeper influence. Several features of *Huang Xiuqiu* are structurally congruent with Bolton’s biography of Lyon. For example, both Huang and Lyon may be credited with pathbreaking achievements. As the novel and biography describe these, in founding their schools, both the fictional and the historical women identified a need that no one else had identified in quite the same way, and both brought a school into being, often in the face of skepticism or even sabotage. Admittedly, Lyon’s originality was greater, inasmuch as there were no colleges for women in the United States in 1837, whereas in 1905 there were several girls’ schools in

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62 *Huang Xiuqiu*, 146.
63 The portraits are hanging on the wall of a private home. See Wang Jiquan 王繼權, ed., *Zhongguo jindai xiaoshuo daxi* 中國近代小說大系 (Nanchang: Baihuazhou wenyi chubanshe, 1993), vol. 64, 700-59. See page 733. The four are Mary Lyon, Florence Nightingale, Dorothy Wordsworth (獨羅瑟), and Madam de Staël (蘇泰流夫人).
Shanghai, albeit run by foreigners, as well as one failed experiment launched by Chinese in Shanghai in 1897-98.64

Secondly, both heroic women began life under rather difficult circumstances. Lyon was poor and the death of her father made her early life a struggle. Lyon's poverty is recognized in Huang Xiuqi. However, Huang's early life was a good deal more trying. She was essentially kidnapped by a sister-in-law, who bound her feet, disparaged women, and made her do menial and degrading work. It was only after she died that the marriage to Huang Tongli set her life on a happier course. Despite important differences, the trajectory from difficult beginning to triumph (factual or fictional) makes for a rough similarity between Lyon and Huang.

Another similarity is the serious nature of the two women. Lyon is described by Bolton as “all intellect ...[and] doesn't know she has a body to care for,” so much did she prioritize study.65 In Huang Xiuqi, Huang Tongli worries at first that for his wife to go outside at all after her feet were unbound might lead to frivolity, but he is eventually reassured by her strength of purpose. In some or all of these matters, Tang Baorong could have been inspired by the Bolton biography (via the intervening translations), or he could merely have used Lyon's case to add specificity to a plot that he already had in mind. There is no way to know for sure.

Also similar is the strongly woman-centered nature of the two schools. In both Lyon's and Huang's cases, the students and teachers are women, and even fundraising is conducted among women. This last point comes out in this quote from Bolton: “She determined to raise her first thousand dollars from women.”66 The same sentiment is captured in Tokutomi/Miyake, but it is blurred in Shijie shi nüjie, so it is not clear how much Huang Xiuqi draws on Lyon's idea. In any event, the students and teachers at her school are women, and fundraising is led by two active women storytellers, who use their art to appeal to gentry women in the area. These gentry women fund the school, at least in its early stages. Here, rather than look for influence, it might be wiser to consider the social mores at work in both nineteenth-century America and twentieth-century China, which made it difficult for a woman to approach

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64 On the failed school set up by Chinese, see Nanqiu Qian, Politics, Poetics, and Gender, 123-58. Huang Xiuqi also mentions schools that failed. See page 147, for example. This is likely not the school Qian discusses. Instead, it may be Wuben nüxue 務本女學, where makeup was prohibited. On Wuben, see Paul J. Bailey, “Modernizing Conservatism’ in Early Twentieth-Century China: The Discourse and Practice of Women’s Education,” European Journal of East Asian Studies, 3:2 (2004): 217-41, and see pages 224-25.


men for money. Obviously a women’s school had to have women students, the teachers were likely to be women, and individuals like Lyon and Huang would have faced less backlash if they appealed to women rather than men when it came to raising funds.67

Additionally, we can look at the kind of company kept by the two central figures. Mary Lyon is not shown to have a female friend. If one approaches Huang Xiuqiu with only Lyon in mind, one might be surprised that Huang needs Bi Taitai, in addition to Huang Tongli, since Huang Tongli appears to be sympathetic, at least most of the time. Hu Ying’s analysis of the subtleties in the relationship between the two Huangs provides a basis from which to understand this situation.68 In Hu Ying’s view, Tang wanted to establish some independence on Huang’s part, even though her husband was almost as progressive as she was. In any case, we have seen that Bi Taitai invokes Hitchcock’s friendship with Lyon as the precedent for her own friendship with Huang. Here lies clear evidence of inspiration from Bolton’s biography, through its successors, even though the outcome in terms of gender is not the same.

On balance, we find some overlap and some partial revision of material from Lyon’s biography in Huang Xiuqiu. There is also one obvious point of difference. Tang Baorong is not comfortable extolling the single, celibate women. We see this at once in the addition of Huang’s husband and children, in contrast to Lyon’s unmarried state. Similar reasoning must lie behind Bi Taitai’s marital situation, for she is always Bi Taitai, even without a husband visibly in evidence. In another context, Huang Xiuqiu explains that nuns are the victims of prejudice because they are not married and cannot lay claim to a man.69 Perhaps a similar logic affects the ways Huang and Bi are portrayed.

What of the other Western woman in the story, Madam Roland? This character has already been carefully analyzed by Hu Ying.70 Hu finds a model for Huang Xiuqiu’s version in Liang Qichao’s 梁啓超 (1873-1929) popular biography of Madam Roland from 1902, as well as in Chen Wanlan’s 陳挽瀾 (1887-1917) Faguó nü yìngxióng tancí 法國女英雄彈詞 (Tancí on a French heroine) of 1904, which is derived from Liang’s work. Hu Ying’s analysis is very helpful, but I believe room can also be made for an amendment, one that puts Mary Lyon in the picture too. In other words, I agree that the proximate cause of Huang’s

67 In Bolton’s account Lyon is explicitly criticized by her peers for fundraising with Edward Hitchcock. Bolton does not endorse this view. See Lives of Girls Who Became Famous, 133-34.
69 Huang Xiuqiu, 104-5.
70 Hu Ying, Tales of Translation, 153-96.
initiative was her dream of Madam Roland, but Mary Lyon was another inspiration, as she modeled education as a field in which women could make a contribution, and she provided a blueprint for how to found a woman’s school. Furthermore we have to remember that Madam Roland’s fame came from her leadership role in the moderate wing of the French Revolution, as well as from her execution in 1793. It had nothing to do with education.

One last character to consider is Bi Taitai. Bi Taitai is not foreign, but she is the only other prominent woman in the novel who thinks in progressive ways. As a medical doctor who has studied abroad, her life could well be based on the much celebrated Kang Aide 康愛德 (1873-1931) and Shi Meiyu 石美玉 (1873-1954), who had had that experience, although those two doctors do not come up explicitly. Bi Taitai’s background in Canton may also have been inspired by contemporary events, inasmuch as the Canton Hospital began granting the MD degree to Chinese women in the 1890s.

Enlarging the Context

Our focus has been narrowly on Huang Xiuqiu. However, many interesting side issues have arisen, and they can at least be mentioned, if not assiduously pursued. For example, there are three ways Bolton’s emphases have been abandoned by the time we get to Tang’s novel. The first is the pursuit of fame for its own sake. This shift can be approached through the question of intended readership. Unlike Bolton’s girls and boys, and unlike Nemoto, who follows Bolton, the other texts are all directed at women who want to be (or should want to be) enlightened about the world. Tokutomi/Miyake is not heavily ideological, but he does not encourage readers to think in terms of their own fame. By the time we reach Shijie shi nüji, and especially Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi, the emphasis has shifted considerably. Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi ends its life of Lyon by recounting her tomb inscription, then goes on to praise her heroism. However, the core lesson of this source comes out more clearly in the case of Mary Livermore:

71 There is a second progressive character surnamed Shi Taitai 施太太 who comes up much later in the novel, in Chapter 26. She is not a major character.
73 Since the tomb is inscribed on all four sides, it would have made more sense to mention that the inscription came from the west side, but this detail, which is included in Nemoto’s account, does not survive in the Chinese adaptation.
Sisters, I believe you will respect [Livermore’s] filial piety, honor her bravery, admire her speaking ability and praise her talent ... But there is still one more point to bring out for sisters ... It is that [every country] has days of peace and days of disorder. When they live in a period of disorder, people must make an extra effort to apply themselves to a course of action. This will help them repay their country, and also add to their fame. If Livermore had not stepped up to sacrifice herself for her country during the Civil War and thus revealed her ability, who would know of her, who would respect her today? Sisters, we must consider Livermore is a woman, and we are women too. If she can accomplish something, who is to say that we cannot accomplish something? Is our current crisis any different from America’s crisis of 1861? 74

我想列位姐妹讀到這篇傳記必定佩服他的孝心，崇拜他的肝膽，羨慕他的演說，稱賞他的才幹。。。但是有一件事情。列位姐妹尚須注意。。。大凡地球上無論上下古今東西各國總有太平的日子及擾亂的日子，必須拿些力量出來做個事業。一可以報國，二可以成名。黎佛瑪當南北戰爭時倘若不出來為國家犧牲，就是他腔子裡有許多本領，那個曉的他呢。到了如今那個崇拜他呢？列位姐妹更須想想黎佛瑪是一個女子，我們也是一個女子。他既然能彀造成事業，難道我們就不能彀造成事業嗎？咳回想我祖國危急的形狀，比之一千八百六十一年美國何如？

Here the goal is to enlist women in the service of the nation, a goal not found in Bolton but one that Huang Xiuqiu most obviously shares.

Two others of Bolton’s emphases also fall away by the time we reach the Chinese texts. These are temperance and Christianity. Nemoto is the strongest advocate of temperance among our set of authors, more than Bolton herself, who ranks second. Indeed, it could well have been because of the temperance theme that he took up Bolton’s books in the first place. 75 But this preoccupation does not make its way into the Chinese sources. In fact one or two of the Chinese biographies sound rather tolerant of alcohol, and smoking is no longer a vice to be avoided. 76 Likewise Huang Xiuqiu does not worry about

75 As mentioned earlier, Nemoto was closely involved in temperance circles, both in America and in Japan.
76 In the biography of George Eliot, the translator adds alcohol (jiu 酒) to the description of how Eliot entertained her friends after selling the manuscript of Romolo (1862-63). See Li Youning, ed., Chongkan Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi, “Yingguo xiaoshuojia Ailiatuo
smoking and is comfortable with a celebratory glass of wine.\textsuperscript{77} As for Christianity, it mattered to both Tokutomi and Nemoto, but left no trace on the Chinese texts derived from theirs. This includes \textit{Huang Xiuqiu}. In other words, fame for its own sake, temperance, and Protestant virtues are simply not among this novel's concerns. Like \textit{Shijie shi nüjie}, and especially like \textit{Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi} (which emerged at around the same time as \textit{Huang Xiuqiu}), Tang's novel is less interested in thrift or punctuality and more interested in iconoclasm, if not for every reader at least for heroine Huang.

There is another, quite different type of contextualization to introduce at this point. It stems from what little we know of the life of Huang Xiuqiu's author Tang Baorong. The evidence is shadowy, but it suggests that Tang himself could have been involved in trying to launch new schools, just as Huang Xiuqiu was. At least he was friends with the Zhan brothers, Zhan Xi 詹熙 (1850-1927) and Zhan Kai 詹垓 (1861?-1911?), fellow writers of “women's novels,” who worked on educational projects at the very end of the Qing.\textsuperscript{78} Some of the steps Huang Xiuqiu goes through to get her school up and running, such as taking over a nunnery and using its buildings for classrooms, are close to steps that Tang's friends took as they worked out their project. Another strategy was to sidestep hostile local officials by transferring from one jurisdiction to another.\textsuperscript{79} At the end of the novel, Huang's mission leads her and her allies first to seek a new jurisdiction and then to foment a modest secession from governmental control.

As observed above, all of the lines from Bolton's writings are found in Chapters 7, 10, and 17. Between Chapters 18 and 30, \textit{Huang Xiuqiu} never once refers to Mary Lyon. Rather it describes in detail, often painful detail, the slog that must be endured if progress against determined conservative opposition is to be made. After these chapters, four of which were added after 1905, issues like Lyon's tactful handling of students or Hitchcock's encouragement may have seemed overly tame. By contrast, Madam Roland's psychological support stays relevant even through the final chapters, and she returns to the scene at the end. There she appears to Huang in another dream and compliments her

\textsuperscript{77} For example, \textit{Huang Xiuqiu}, 4.\textsuperscript{4} In Nemoto's \textit{Ô-Bei joshi risshin den} it is just food. See page 128. Bolton mentions neither food nor wine. She does state that Eliot bought a house with her proceeds. See Bolton, \textit{Lives of Girls Who Became Famous}, 233-34.

\textsuperscript{78} On his ties to the brothers Zhan Xi and Zhan Kai, and their work in educational reform, see Ellen Widmer, \textit{Fiction's Family: Zhan Xi, Zhan Kai, and the Business of Women in Late-Qing China} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2016), 13-14, 56. Another associate was Zhan Xi's son Zhan Linlai 詹麟來 (1877-1919). See pages 237-38.

\textsuperscript{79} See Widmer, \textit{Fiction's Family}, 237-38.
on her achievements, even stepping aside so that Huang can enjoy the limelight on her own.

**Conclusion**

Tang Baorong took ideas from a range of literary sources and historical examples, even as he rejected possibilities that might plausibly have been explored. The Bolton biography of Mary Lyon influenced his novel in its wording at certain moments, whenever Mary Lyon was under discussion. Whether Bolton’s work played a more formative role in its ideas is not a matter that we can fully resolve. At the very least, we have suggested, it pointed the way toward education as a field in which Tang’s heroine might contribute to nation building, once she had learned how to read. After that other, more China-specific processes, like appropriating religious spaces for educational projects, could take over.

One other point to emerge from this material is the extent to which biography mattered in the world of *Huang Xiuqiu*. We can see its importance on three levels, first in the effect of the book on heroes that Madam Roland gives to Huang Xiuqiu during her dream visit, which is a major inspiration for everything else this heroine sets out to do. Although Plutarch’s *Lives* is an ancient, western and male-focused text, the idea that one life can infuse another with inspiration is fundamental to this novel’s concerns. A second kind of biography emerges as the novel progresses. It still features Westerners, but now the models are more modern, and they are women, too, not just Madam Roland and Mary Lyon, but also Catherine the Great, Millicent Fawcett, and Florence Nightingale. It might be said that *Huang Xiuqiu* completes the picture by offering its heroine as a final source of inspiration: neither male-centered and ancient but female and contemporary, not foreign but Chinese.

Biography’s transformative power can also be seen in its intended effects on readers. Although they do not intersect with *Huang Xiuqiu*, Bolton’s young consumers were supposedly steered in wholesome directions by the lives of her subjects, female and male. In Tokutomi/Miyake’s or Nemoto’s versions of the same heroines and heroes one can infer Meiji state building, albeit with some important differences in emphasis between the two. Later *Shijie shi nüjie* and *Zhongguo xin nüjie zazhi* offered other kinds of heroics, now revamped to fit Chinese values of the time. Fictional though Huang herself may be, her “biography” completes the process with its last step forward, one for which Plutarch, Liang Qichao, and Bolton had set the stage.
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