

Abstract

This thesis examines the image of women as source of chaos in society (or, possibly, in nature) in selected literary works of Ancient China.

The primary subject of study is the chapter *Nie Bi* 孽嬖 (Favourites causing Disaster) of the book of *Lienü Zhuan* 列女傳, (*Biographies of Women*, or, *Categorized Biographies of Women*) written by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BC). In this thesis we shall examine the traits and qualities in these women which enabled them to cause chaos and disarray in the state and society.

We are trying to specify the general image of such women described in the study by Jakub Maršálek published in the volume *Order and Chaos in Archaic Cultures (Řád a chaos v archaických kulturách)*, the mentioned volume being devoted exclusively to the analyses of chaos and order in ancient societies. Furthermore, we analyse the implicit characteristics of each of the “favourites causing disaster” and their impact on the affairs of the state.

Key words

Liu Xiang, *Lienü Zhuan*, woman, chaos, ancient China, gender