

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910814551503321
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Titolo	The eternal present of the past [[electronic resource]] : illustration, theatre, and reading in the Wanli period, 1573-1619 // Li-ling Hsiao
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Leiden, : Brill Biggleswade, : Extenza Turpin [distributor], 2007
ISBN	1-281-92101-7 9786611921019 90-474-1995-2
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (369 p.)
Collana	China studies, , 1570-1344 ; ; 12
Disciplina	895.124609 951.026
Soggetti	Chinese drama - Ming dynasty, 1368-1644 - History and criticism
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [313]-334) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Preliminary Materials / L. Hsiao -- Introduction: Theater, Illustration, And Time / L. Hsiao -- Chapter One. Toward The Contextualization Of Woodblock Illustration: A Critique Of Art Historical Method / L. Hsiao -- Chapter Two. The Stage Or The Page: Competing Conceptions Of The Play In The Wanli Period / L. Hsiao -- Chapter Three. Performance Illustration / L. Hsiao -- Chapter Four. Performance As An Interaction With The Past / L. Hsiao -- Chapter Five. Image As An Interaction With The Past / L. Hsiao -- Chapter Six. Reading As An Interaction With The Past / L. Hsiao -- Conclusion: The Role Of The Publisher / L. Hsiao -- Appendix / L. Hsiao -- Glossary / L. Hsiao -- Bibliography / L. Hsiao -- Index / L. Hsiao.
Sommario/riassunto	This study draws together various elements in late Ming culture – illustration, theater, literature – and examines their interrelation in the context of the publication of drama. It examines a late Ming conception of the stage as a mystical space in which the past was literally reborn within the present. This temporal conflation allowed the past to serve as a vigorous and immediate moral example and was considered a hugely important mechanism by which the continuity of the Confucian tradition could be upheld. By using theatrical conventions of stage

arrangement, acting gesture, and frontal address, drama illustration recreated the mystical character of the stage within the pages of the book, and thus set the conflation of past and present on a broader footing.
