

Voices Amid Silence: New Directions in Scholarship on Chinese Women's History

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1. Lu Fang-shang (ed.), *Wusheng zhi sheng 1: Jindai Zhongguo de funü yu guojia, 1600-1950* [Voices Amid Silence 1: Women and the Nation in Modern China, 1600-1950] (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2003), 290 pp.
2. Yu Chien-ming (ed.), *Wusheng zhi sheng 2: Jindai Zhongguo de funü yu shehui, 1600-1950* [Voices Amid Silence 2: Women and Society in Modern China, 1600-1950] (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2003), 276 pp.
3. Lo Jiu-jung and Lu Miaw-fen (eds.), *Wusheng zhi sheng 3: Jindai Zhongguo de funü yu wenhua* [Voices Amid Silence 3: Women and Culture in Modern China, 1600-1950] (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2003) 404 pp.

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The volumes in the *Voices Amid Silence* trilogy draw together scholarship from some of the finest scholars of Chinese women's history around the globe. The Academia Sinica's women's history group had already provided a crucial locus for research on the modern period with the publication of the influential journal *Research on Women in Modern Chinese History*. The publication of the three volumes under review here confirms the international importance of the Academia Sinica as a key center for innovation and leadership in the history of women in China more broadly. The chapters included in the *Voices Amid Silence* trilogy emerged from an international symposium "Women, Nation and Society in Modern China" held at the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica in August of 2001. The editors for the three volumes, Lu Fang-shang, Yu Chien-ming, Lo Jiu-jung and Lu Miaw-fen stand preeminent in the field. We owe the editors a great debt for bringing these chapters to publication so soon after the conclusion of the conference.

The twenty-eight separate chapters necessarily reflect the diverse methodological and ideological perspectives of the individual authors. However, several themes recur throughout the trilogy that point to new directions within scholarship on Chinese women's history. Before outlining the contributions of each individual contributor to the trilogy, this article will present a view of the potential new research directions the chapters alert us to and inspire us to continue.

The first of these is the challenge to explore women as rebels, as antagonistic agents effecting and leading radical social change, across as wide a range of social movements as possible. Several contributors to this trilogy point us further in this direction (see discussion of chapters by Wu Jen-shu, Lo Jiu-jung, Hu Siao-chen below). Publishing scholarship on the full diversity of women's political interests and their antagonistic agency in defending or promoting these interests may help liberate women's history from the task of ideological house-keeping for whatever group dominates social narratives at any

one time in any one location. Much scholarship on the history of women in China has been dedicated to excavating a history of women's oppression, and this has led to a silencing of the history of women's on-going, antagonistic (and not always successful) negotiation of the patriarchal parameters of the overarching Chinese social order. In part this preoccupation with "excavating oppression" has emerged from a neat confluence of May Fourth and Marxist imperatives over the course of the twentieth century, which found a self-verifying teleology in critiques of Confucianism and/or feudalism. As political parties the world over have shown us, the most efficient method of presenting a political party or a political movement as a liberator of women is to rhetorically heighten the intensity of the oppression women faced in earlier times regardless of the veracity of the narrative. As we will see below, much innovative, detailed scholarship of the last few years points to a far more complex picture of women's experience in pre-Republican China. This picture includes a voice of agency that has hitherto been silenced by what Mechthild Leutner described as "victim narratives."¹ To further avoid this trap, a study of women rebels, harridans and other "stroppy" women (one that consciously avoids the traps where legitimacy is conferred through class struggle alone), could potentially serve to create new icons of female agency that are dedicated to a wide range of political interests be they ethnic, religious, feminist, anti-feminist, locality or clan-based or purely economic.

Second, historians of Chinese women are challenged by these chapters to untangle women's experiences from the images of the iconic "woman" deployed within master narratives that reinforce patriarchal structures and masculinist social paradigms. This task requires both the recovery of as much material as possible about the every-day lived reality of women's lives in previous eras of

1 Mechthild Leutner, "Women's, Gender and Mainstream Studies on Republican China: Problems in Theory and Research," *Research on Women in Modern Chinese History*, 10 (2002), p. 128.

China's lengthy past, but also the creation of data about the present experiences of women in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Contributions by the majority of authors in this trilogy do indeed provide us with much new data about the diversity of Chinese women's experiences across a broad sweep of the historical past. However, historians need to work with archivists, activists, sociologists and anthropologists to develop materials about contemporary Chinese women that display a clear awareness of historical method and practice. Current historians of women in China can participate in the creation of materials and data of lasting value to future historians of Chinese women's lives. It would be a tragedy for scholars committed to the development of women's history to forgo the opportunity to create historical documents and data for future historians; our present is a later scholar's history. The crucial problem we face as scholars of women's history is the paucity of data about women that goes beyond the "iconic woman" of the master narrative. There is a real danger that this dearth of good data on women could be repeated if contemporary women historians, activists, archivists and social scientists ignore the value of the "every-day present" to the creation of women's history to be written in the future. Contributions by Wang Zheng and Katz point us in promising directions in this regard.

Third, historians of Chinese women are in a strong position to problematize Chinese manhood; to de-naturalise the male narrative and thereby highlight the gender specificity of social power. With gender analysis skills and techniques, historians of women's lives have a wealth of material about the masculinist structures, customs and regimes that have been embedded in every sphere of Chinese society. While work needs to continue on the discovery and analysis of women-specific space it is also crucial to explore "manhood," just as race theorists are currently exploring "whiteness" as part of a process of advocacy for black or indigenous voices. In our research on women, their lives and histories, we are presented with a wealth of opportunity for exploring the

obverse. Many contributions to the trilogy have unrealized potential to explore masculinist power structures and ideologies (see for example Lin's chapter on Zeng Jize's diaries and Ch'en Tsu-yu's discussion of marriage and family influence).

The first volume, *Women and Nation*, includes nine chapters that discuss woman as a political category in relation to the changing conceptions of the Chinese nation. Wu Jen-shu opens the volume with a chapter on Ming and Qing transformations in the image of Tang Saier woman leader of a Shandong-based revolution during the 18th year of the Yongle reign (1420). Wu's chapter draws together a wide range of discussions of Tang Saier, both historical and literary, to trace the evolution of scholarly perceptions of a woman revolutionary. Through the chapter we read of sources that described her in a typically reductive binary as a witch or a saint as Tang Saier moves through Ming to Qing renditions. Wu's chapter presents further evidence of the extent to which prominent women serve iconic functions within the overwhelmingly masculine "stories of statehood." The article's detailed exegesis of the commentaries on the Tang Saier incident will provide a foundation for scholarship on the perception of women in Ming political history as well as future research on Tang Saier herself.

The second chapter is Chang Yu-fa's discussion of the transformation of the women's suffrage movement in the first half of the twentieth century. The article provides an important overview of the main tensions within the women's suffrage movement in the 1910s and 1920s. Chang outlines key debates from women activists during these decades about the value of women's suffrage to enhancing women's status generally. Chang rightly places events in China within a global context; women's suffrage activists in China were embedded within a world-wide movement for "votes for women" and functioned with full support from a truly global movement. *Shenbao* serves as the primary source for Chang's discussion of the early republican events, which like much of women's

history, are difficult to map. As with most histories of the women's suffrage movement, the chapter skips discussion of the crucial campaign for minimum quotas in the 1930s when China's women's suffragists extended their campaign along new lines once voting rights were guaranteed.

The volume's editor, Lu Fang-shang, contributed a stimulating chapter on discussions of love and marriage in the 1920s. Lu explains how love and free marriage were perceived by intellectuals of the time as markers of a "new people." We learn that love combined with "revolution" and "democracy" as well as with "individualism" and "collectivism" to create potent political discourses that would make the personal intensely political. Lu reveals how intellectuals' discussions about love forged a new relationship between individuals and the state. Liang Hui-chin's chapter on freedom in marriage in the ten years from 1920 provides a tidy companion to the preceding chapter. Liang provides a thorough discussion of the major debates on free choice in marriage across a wide range of primary sources from the decade. The article includes two fascinating tables: one listing male supporters of women's advocacy of marriage reform and another outlining the major women's organizations and their marriage reform platforms. An equally innovative part of the paper is the section exploring the impact women activists had on legislative change regarding marriage law in provinces where women were politically active (e.g. Hunan).

The fifth chapter of this first volume re-introduces the military theme in Lo Jiu-jung's analysis of gender, war and traitors. In an analysis of the case of a female traitor from the period during the War against Japan, an artist named Li Qingping, Lo discusses the relations between men and women and economic independence often regarded as the key problem for women's liberation. Lo's fascinating chapter demonstrates that the condition of war presents specific opportunities and hazards for women (and their artistic production) precisely because they are regarded as symbols of the race/nation in ways that men are

not. Many other chapters in this volume show us that women are limited in their realization of individual life-goals by the ideological function “women” perform as icons of national or local virtue. Lo’s chapter provides a particularly poignant case-study of this ancient, patriarchal ideological practice. Wang Zheng’s contribution explores gender within the Neighborhood Committees established after 1950 with a specific focus on Shanghai. Drawing on archival material from the Shanghai Government as well as interviews with cadres from Neighborhood Committees, Wang explores the formation of these grassroots urban groupings in mid-1949 and their connections to the Women’s Federation. The Neighborhood Committees were clearly intended to be focal points for the mobilization of women to the socialist agenda. In addition to providing details of the numbers and impact of these groups Wang also includes biographical summaries of individual women’s perceptions of their roles and import. The case studies of Zhang Xiulian, Li Yinmei, Mo Yaqian, Gao Wenling each provide personal stories of life at grassroots urban politics and service. Their stories relate the transition in gender roles brought about by the CCP in an urban setting and together stand as a benchmark for a social system that is disintegrating in the face of new forms of urban community arrangements in twenty-first century China. Wang has provided an important snapshot of individual women’s connections to the nation through the neighborhood in her stimulating chapter. This data and the no doubt extensive field notes Wang gathered will stand as a significant resource for later historians of women’s lives who will bring to the discipline of history new insights and perspectives relevant in their particular historical moment.

The volume concludes with three chapters in English. Susan Mann’s discussion of women’s poetics and politics in the mid-nineteenth century, Hon-ming Yip’s analysis of the protection of women in early British Hong Kong and Gail Hershatter’s theoretical discussion of the public/private dichotomy in historical scholarship relating to China. Mann’s chapter explores

the works of Zhang Qieying as public political comment written from the private realm of the women's quarters. As context for the analysis of Zhang Qieying's poems, Mann provides a moving description of the poet's natal and marital families. The discussion further reinforces the view that education and erudition was central to elite women's lives in the Qing. The chapter's innovation stems from its linkage of the poetic with the patriotic as Mann explores the expressive manifestation of politics during the Opium Wars from a female perspective.

Yip's discussion of women in Hong Kong provides a rare glimpse of processes of colonization in a Chinese context. While studies of colonization and post-coloniality are commonplace in South Asia and Southeast Asia, China, with the notable exception of Hong Kong provides limited scope for deployment of similar methods. Yip discusses in fascinating detail the problem of the kidnapping, trafficking and forced prostitution of women that plagued southern China and Hong Kong from the mid-nineteenth century. Yip explores problems of cross-cultural conceptual transfer within notions of slavery, servitude and maidservants as peripheral members of family units. The chapter concludes by revealing the interconnections between race, gender and class that ultimately prevented many women from achieving the protection they might otherwise have expected from the colonial authorities. As Yip reveals, the colonizers and the colonized had many areas of commonality when upper class and male gender interests coincided.

Hershatter's contribution provides an apt conclusion to the first volume of the series. Its discussion of the changing perspective of the connection between the inner realm of the household and the outer world of political and economic activity over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries reveals the central role women played within the moral order of pre-communist China across the broadest possible social reach. It also demonstrates that the transformation of inner/outer division in the years after 1949 present a range of

new questions about the silencing of the domestic realm in the socialist narrative. What happens to women's contributions from the private realm when they are allocated legitimate voice only as "women peasants" or "women workers"? Laboring for the state did not diminish the work required raising and bearing children. Each of the chapters in this volume has in various ways addressed Hershatter's problem. For example, Mann's revelation of the interaction of the public and private in the poetry of Zhang Qieying shows the permeability of supposed border between the two realms in the Qing; Wang Zheng's analysis of women active in neighborhood communities reveals women as mediators of the connection between home and state; Lu's and Liang's chapters similarly explore the negotiation of individual privacy and personal rights with discourses mobilized from the public sphere. Hershatter's chapter will no doubt provide scholars of women's history with rich sources of stimulation for further work into the future.

The second volume of *Voices Amid Silence*, edited by Yu Chien-ming, focuses on social phenomenon within Chinese women's history. Lin Li-yueh's provocative chapter on female infanticide in the Ming explores this ancient phenomenon through gazetteers and official proclamations attempting to curb the practice. Lin's work fills a major gap in our knowledge since previous work on this problem centered almost exclusively on the Qing. The chapter provides important information on Ming government attempts to eradicate female infanticide through changes in marriage laws by reducing the cost for parents of daughters, for example. Lin's chapter reveals that during the Ming girls were drowned largely for economic reasons, and the practice extended beyond poverty-stricken households to include those that simply wanted to "economize." This chapter places studies of contemporary and Qing dynasty infanticide into an important historical context. By providing evidence of deeply rooted traditions of female infanticide in provinces like Fujian, the chapter does little to inspire confidence that the current PRC campaigns to prevent female

infanticide will have long-term impact.

Chang Che-chia's contribution explores fortune-telling within a gendered context. Chang notes that China is unique in its longstanding conceptualization of "women's fate" as opposed to "men's fate." However, fortune telling was not immune to pressures of modernization. By the early Republican era, women visiting fortunetellers were likely to be told that their fate was not necessarily different from a man's. Previous scholarship in the area has argued that fortune-telling customs further reveal the extent to which women were held in disdain in Chinese society and are unimportant to understandings of fortune-telling per se. However, Chang proposes the opposite view; while customs surrounding fortune-telling do reflect women's relative disadvantage, they cannot be fully understood without full reference to women and concepts of "the female" embedded as icons within the ritual and belief systems underpinning this widespread social phenomenon.

The volume progresses to a study of family disputes among Banner families in the Qing by Lai Hui-min and Chu Ch'ing-wei. Banner family structures were similar to Han families for their respect for Confucian principles whereby the household remained intact while the parents were alive and where brothers lived together with the parents. However, they differed from Han customs in that often Banner households would include relatives such as married daughters, nephews or even relatives by marriage. Moreover, as a group on the official payroll, women in the Banner families did not have to work outside the home as was the case for most Han women. Banner women appear to have embraced Han codes of modesty and chastity within a social formation that saw the men of their households away for extended periods. Lai and Chu point out that many family disputes revolved around questions about women's chastity and fidelity. Ding Yi-zhuang provides readers with a further study of the intricacies of ruptures in ideal marriage practices and formations in Qing China with a study of marriage contracts and problems of remarriage for women.

Taking deeds of marriage as primary source material, Ding explains that issues of remarriage are not exclusively related to widows; indeed they also include situations where women were sold as brides. The chapter provides new details drawn from specific case studies of the diversity of remarriage practice in the Qing and the many complex ways it interacted with Qing legal codes. The chapter will inform the way we conceptualize remarriage well into the future.

Ch'en Tsu-yu's chapter on marriage and family influence in Taiwan during the period of Japanese rule provides a fascinating case study of the powerful Yan family from northern Taiwan. One of the five "big families" of Taiwan, the Yan clan made their fortune in coal mining in cooperation with the Japanese. Ch'en demonstrates the dexterity with which the Yan family mobilized daughters and sons-in-law within their business and political agendas. The material Ch'en presents invites a close reading of masculinist power structures that could potentially yield new avenues for understanding maleness and denaturalizing its link with social authority and influence. Further, Ch'en's detailed case study of patriarchal family authority provides an insight into the way that women's education and literary talent became a commodity within the business of marriage and the marriage of business.

Lo Su-wen's chapter on late Qing women's fashion provides a valuable analysis of the rise of commercialism and western cultural influence and their impact on clothing and style. It highlights the importance of differences in desirable fashion style among discrete categories of women within public life; prostitutes, workers, students and mothers. In these respects the chapter provides important new evidence of and perspectives about transformations in fashion prior to the twentieth century. Antonia Finnane's study of clothing in the 1950s, later in the volume, challenges the notion that fashion in the PRC was somehow isolated from global trends and influences. She explores in detail the clothing reform campaign of the 1950s where the artist Yu Feng promoted the return to less androgynous uniforms for women in line with CCP thinking at the

time. Anxieties about the appropriate dress for the nation emerge within the discussions between commentators of the time: is the Chinese collar too restrictive, the *qipao* too bourgeois? Should China's women wear the Russian "Frock" or the decorative patterns of China's minorities? Clothing reform, as Finnane reveals, was a problem of dressing the national woman. How should men and women be adequately differentiated and women suitably adorned in a Chinese socialist state? In this context Finnane convincingly demonstrates that women served symbolic functions within the project of constructing the new national identity.

The creation of new cultural ideals of female beauty in the twentieth century is the focus of Yu Chien-ming's chapter. Yu explores the campaigns conducted during the two decades from 1920 to create "strong and beautiful" women (healthy beauties). The revolutionary nature of this campaign is clear when one considers the persistence of romanticized ailing female beauties from the Qing, in the Lin Daiyu mode, into the twentieth century. Narratives of female sickness and frailty circulating among intellectuals continued during the first half of the twentieth century. As Yu explains, a counter-narrative emerged that linked characteristics of fitness and beauty to improving women's status. However, the political importance of healthy beauty in Chinese women was not only related to the women's movement, it was also credited with international significance. Yu explains how debates about the importance of strengthening women's bodies was intimately linked to national debates about modernizing and strengthening the nation. This chapter thus further reveals the extent to which women are iconic of broader political agendas and the extensive way in which women's bodies carry a far greater burden of "ideological housework" for the nation than do men.

Paul Katz's chapter on marriage in East Haven, in Taiwan southern province of Pingdong, explores the relationship between women's employment opportunities and marriage prospects. Katz concludes that in contrast to earlier

studies, his research suggests that the ability of young women to engage in paid work was a major influence on the timing and nature of their marriages. Women with gainful employment outside the domestic sphere had increased marriage prospects and married later. Katz's study confirms the importance of financial independence and access to work in the public sphere to women's status. These features were central planks of the women's movement in the early twentieth century and Katz's study of East Haven demonstrates the clear reasons for women to have these concerns; dependency led to lower status.

The third volume of *Voices Amid Silence*, edited by Lo Jiu-jung and Lu Miaw-fen, focuses on women and culture. Readers are treated to a host of vibrant articles on women's literary contributions. For example, Tsai Yu discusses a key study of women's poetry from the Ming, *Poetry of Famous Beauties* (*Ming yuan shi gui*) and argues that the editors of the collection, Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun, created a new legitimacy for women poets in their commentary on the poetry. Zhong, in particular, believed that women poets were able to be more "truly literary" in their creative output because they were freed of the pressures for career advancement that many male scholars faced. Tsai interrogates the relationship between authors (as gendered beings), male commentators, compilers and annotators and the specificity of a female literary voice; a voice, according to the compilers of this unique collection of women's poetry up to the Ming, that expresses with greater honesty personal feelings and perspectives than was commonly achieved by men. Hua Wei's contribution discusses women's sentiment and desire within operas written by women. She notes that female creators of opera are few and gives us an overview of the main figures in the industry. Hua argues that these women created a distinctive female voice in their operas that reveal female emotion and longing within a sector that was dominated by men as creators, performers and audience. Hu Siao-chen's chapter explores the impact of the republican era *tanci* author, Jiang Yingqing, and the value of criticism on women's literary production, by people such as

Tan Zhengbi, to the promotion of a woman's public voice at this time. In Hu's discussion of early twentieth century *tanci* it is clear that women were asserting their presence in both the literary and the political sphere. Many *tanci* written by women incorporated modern themes: expanding women's education, achieving suffrage rights, and the importance for women's advancement of participating in the nationalist revolution. This process both modernized an ancient literary style and feminized it with a public female voice. Within literary circles Jiang Yingqing represented a revolution in both form and content.

Two chapters on social and religious moral codes follow the literary ones outlined above. Lu Miaw-fen's chapter focuses on Confucianism's impact on women's life goals in the Ming. Beginning with an analysis of Ming scholars' demands on women in terms of a gendered morality, the chapter continues by analyzing their exegesis on women deities and exemplary women. It concludes with a discussion of how women responded to male exhortations of correct female behavior. Lin Mei-mei's chapter moves the discussion of morality to a global framework with an analysis of American protestant mission work in Shanghai between 1881 and 1907. The educational endeavors of this particular missionary enterprise again point to the large extent to which missionaries performed international philanthropy as part of their homeland agenda; both religious and feminist.

In a chapter on women in the movie industry and women movie stars in the 1930s, Chou Hui-ling raises questions about the internationalization of perceptions of Chinese gender roles during the first half of the twentieth century. While analyzing a cinematic industry that was distinctly Chinese, Chou shows us the impact of international conventions of stardom on women actors. Her thoroughly researched paper reveals the extent to which pressures of westernization within the movie world created a concomitant stream of masculinized women movie personae. These striking images, some reproduced in illustrations in the chapter, perhaps served as fetishes that transferred anxiety

about the process of modernization, China's national strength and Chinese masculinity in a global context. The daring assumption of the masculine form by women in film at once challenges China's men to assume masculine roles and provides comfort to damaged male egos by revealing the undeniable femininity of the cross-dressing actress.

Lin Wei-hung's chapter is a study of Zeng Jize's diary during his period as China's diplomatic envoy to France, England and Russia. During his travels in Europe between 1878-1886, Zeng Jize (the second son of Zeng Guofan), kept a detailed diary. Accompanying him on this journey was his wife, younger sister and two daughters, and Lin's chapter explores the depiction of their experiences through Zeng Jize's eyes. Lin is fully aware of the limitations of this second-hand, reflected narration of women's experience. She acknowledges that the diaries do not purport to directly or intentionally narrate women's experiences; indeed, women are peripheral characters within Zeng's diary. Lin makes a convincing case for using these diaries as sources to explore women's active participation in a cross-cultural experience. The chapter positions Chinese women within a new space; the international diplomatic world where the public and the private intermingle in a global arena. The women accompanying Zeng are both public figures (as representatives of the Chinese nation) and private attendants (as wife, daughters and sister). In this regard, the chapter contributes to the trilogy's concern to complicate the apparent simplistic binary between the inner and the outer realms Hershatter alerted us to in the first volume.

Ellen Widmer's chapter commences remarking on the dearth of novels written by women until the end of the Qing. The absence of women's fiction writing in earlier times may in part be a factor of the low status of novels compared to poetry. Women's public literary activity was fraught with moral dangers even within the respected genre of poetry. Novels may have been too great a moral risk for women. Alternatively, perhaps women literary creators aimed to improve their reputations by publishing primarily in the prestigious

genre of poetry rather than fiction. The answer may also lie in the very materiality of production; novels require extensive leisure time and this may not have been available to women to the same extent as men (see for example the limitations on Zhang Qieying's poetry output discussed by Mann in volume one). Widmer examines in detail four novels produced between 1861 and 1911 and most notably Gu Taiging 1877 *Honglou meng ying*, which Widmer introduces as most likely the first extant novel by a woman.

The continued impact of *Honglou meng* on women and men in late Qing China is clear in Joan Judge's chapter on Chinese students abroad. Judge builds her discussion of the late Qing belief in the transformative power of overseas study for China's women from the *Honglou meng* sequel novel *A New Story of the Stone* where overseas study transforms the ailing beauty Lin Daiyu into a modern citizen. Judge's chapter aims to unpack the complexity of Chinese women's experiences of study abroad in Japan as a personal and political transformation and deepen our appreciation of women's agency beyond the dominant nationalist narrative. Paul Bailey's chapter explores the anxiety the phenomenon women students produced within China itself. Described as "unharnessed horses," women students were perceived as a potential threat to an essentialized conception of Chinese gender boundaries. Supporters of enhanced education for women conducted vigorous debates between radicals and conservatives. Bailey provides an enlightening and comprehensive discussion of the arguments about curriculum, appropriate behavior and ideal decorum for female students. This chapter represents a long overdue analysis of the narratives that contextualised women's experience of education in the early twentieth century.

The trilogy includes articles in both Chinese and English, and incorporates Japanese language references amidst the multitude of footnotes, thus continuing the admirable custom of *Research on Women in Modern Chinese History* of accommodating multilingual contributions. Similarly, flexibility in romanisation

systems enhances the volumes; Hanyu Pinyin and Wade-Giles sit comfortably together. Each volume includes an English and a Chinese index and draws upon specific case study data as well as materials from legal, media, government and literary sources. In sum, the volumes stand as a strong reminder of the dynamism and high quality of research being conducted on Chinese women's history today.