A HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF CHINESE WOMEN

--THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE FEMINISM

by

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ABSTRACT

Ch'en Tung-yüan's History of the Life of Chinese Women, written in 1927, is the only comprehensive contemporary account of the early women's movement in China. For this reason it has been widely used by Western scholars who have recently become interested in the origins of Chinese feminism.

This thesis consists of a translation of the sections of Ch'en's History which deal with the period between 1895 and 1927, and a commentary which examines the value of Ch'en's work as a source for our understanding of women's history in China.

In general, Ch'en's description of the changes in women's lives is accurate; but its scope is too narrow; the only women it applies to are those of the Orthodox Confucian past and the Modern, May Fourth generation of the 1920's. The omission of working class and peasant women, and of the cultural stereotypes of the folk tradition, lead to a serious distortion of the nature of Chinese feminism.

Only by recognizing the limitations of Ch'en's approach and researching the role of women in the popular tradition, can we achieve a more balanced picture.

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Ah Sz's wife wagged her head and sighed. Then she rose to her feet and said angrily:

"No wonder Ah To says that the meek and humble haven't a chance!

"He's right. The world's going to turn head over heels!

"My father-in-law used to say that the Long Hairs will be coming again. I hear there are women Long Hairs too. You know, we've got a big Long Hair sword in our house . . . "[1]

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[1] Mao Tun, [Shen Yen-ping 沈雁冰], "Winter Ruins" in Spring Silkworms and Other Stories, (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1956 (1932)), p. 77.

INTRODUCTION

The standard treatment of "Women in China" is a Cinderella story. The Wicked Stepmother (the Confucian Tradition) inflicted endless hardships on women. Not only did they literally do all the housekeeping, they were also responsible for maintaining the moral cleanliness of society through a severe code of chastity, applicable in practice to them alone. Suddenly, just when the civil war, following the years of war with Japan, had made conditions unbearable, a fairy godmother, (the ideology of Marxism-Leninism) appeared. Prince Charming (the Chinese Communist party under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung) led Chinese women from their oppression into a new life of freedom and happiness.

This is in many ways a satisfying story, as all Cinderella stories should be; but it is not enough. Prompted by a revitalized Western feminism, some Western scholars have begun to study the beginnings of the Chinese women's movement early in the 20th century.[2] Here they hope to find a more accurate, if less dramatic story, material

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[2] See: Roxane Witke, Transformation of Attitudes Toward Women in the May Fourth Era of Modern China (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1970).

Janet Salaff and Judith Merkle, "Women in Revolution: The Lessons of the Soviet Union and China," Berkeley Journal of Sociology, Vol. XV, (1970), pp. 166-191.

Marilyn Young, ed., Women in China, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, No. 15 (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1973).

for a comparison of Chinese and Western feminism, and the reasons, beyond the Fairy Godmother, for the amazing progress which Chinese women have made.

In this search, Ch'en Tung-yüan's (陳東原) History of the Life of Chinese Women (Chung-kuo fu-nü sheng-huo shih 中國婦女生活史), published in 1928, is probably the single most important source of information.[3] Roxane Witke depends heavily on Ch'en for her account of the women's movement before 1919.[4] Jane Salaff and Judith Merkle rely on him almost entirely for their information on the earlier years of the women's movement,[5] as does Chow Tse-tsung in his brief note on feminism in The May Fourth Movement.[6]

It is easy to account for the popularity of Ch'en's History. In a spate of books on the women's question (fu-nü wen-t'i 婦女問題) published after the May Fourth Incident, it is unusual in providing a long and reasonably scholarly narrative rather than a collection of articles on the different aspects of the problem.[7] In addition, Ch'en

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[3] (Shanghai: Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan, 1928).

[4] For examples see Witke, Transformation of Attitudes, pp. 24-5, 44-45, 62-64, 68-69, 225.

[5] Salaff and Merkle, "Women in Revolution," pp. 179-180.

[6] Chow Tse-tsung, The May Fourth Movement (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 257-59, 437.

[7] For examples see:

Mei Sheng (梅生) ed., Collected Discussions on the Chinese Women's Question (Chung-kuo fu-nü wen-t'i t'ao lun chi 中國婦女問題討論集), (Shanghai: Hsin-wen-hua shu-she, 1924-1928).

Mei Sheng, ed., The Women's Yearbook (Fu-nü-nien-chien 婦女

is relatively nonpartisan. Although he supports the Nationalist government, he possesses a degree of political impartiality that became increasingly rare as the struggle between the nationalists and the communists developed.

As important a source deserves more careful consideration; and should ideally be available even to those who do not read Chinese. For this reason I have translated the final sections of Ch'en's History; essentially those pages describing women's emancipation in the twentieth century. (The book begins with the status of women in pre-Han times and gives detailed accounts of how it has changed through successive dynasties.)

In the course of translating Ch'en's work, I became convinced that although his information is, on the whole, reliable, it is incomplete; and for this reason his general interpretation is misleading. In an attempt to provide a more accurate picture of the way in which the women's movement developed, I will preface the translation with a short critique of Ch'en and his work. Part of the critique will be devoted to Roxane Witke's Transformation of Attitudes Toward Women During the May Fourth Era of Modern China, which is at present the only important

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年鑑), (Shanghai: Hsin-wen-hua shu-she, 1924-1926).

Mei Sheng, ed., Collected Research on the Women's Question (Nü-hsing wen-t'i yen-chiu chi 女性問題研究集), (Shanghai: Hsin-wen-hua shu-she, 1928).

Hsu Tsung-tse (徐宗澤) ed., Notes and Comments on the Women's Question (Fu-nü wen-t'i tsa-p'ing 婦女問題雜評), (Shanghai: Sheng-chiao tsa-chih she, 1931).

scholarly study of the early women's movement. Witke in many ways accepts Ch'en's intellectual outlook, particularly his emphasis on the May Fourth Movement as the most significant force in the history of women's emancipation in China.

I believe that this emphasis is misplaced. In general, I will argue that the source of Ch'en's inadequacies as a historian of women's emancipation is, paradoxically, his position as an intellectual of the May Fourth generation--the first generation of Chinese intellectuals to enthusiastically promote women's liberation. To accept Ch'en's analysis of the women's movement without examining his intellectual bias means imposing, as I would argue Witke imposes, a pre-conceived pattern on the development of the movement; and ignoring significant material which does not fit the pattern.

I will not attempt, in this critique, a thorough theoretical discussion of feminism, nor an analysis of the meaning and operation of feminism in societies which differ from our own in the absence of a liberal democratic tradition. I hope merely to point out inadequacies of approaching the history of women in modern China with the outlook of a May Fourth intellectual, and to suggest areas which seem to demand further research and more serious consideration.

CHAPTER 1

CH'EN TUNG-YÜAN AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Ch'en's Background

Ch'en Tung-yüan was born in 1902, a native of Hofei county in Anhwei province. He was seventeen years old in 1919; and it is quite probable that he was already studying in the Faculty of Education at Peking National University when the May Fourth demonstrations broke out. Whether he was an actual participant or not, the May Fourth Movement had a profound effect on his thinking, as it did on that of nearly all of the students of his time.

After the publication of A History of the Life of Chinese Women in 1928, Ch'en lectured at several universities in Shanghai on women's emancipation; but his greatest interest seems to have been education. He was a member of the Anhwei Provincial Education Department, held a lectureship at Anhwei University, and published three more books: The History of Education in China, Ancient Chinese Education, and Education Under the Old Examination System (as of 1936).[1]

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[1] Biographical information on Ch'en Tung-yüan was obtained from the Gendai Chugoku Jimmei Jiten (現代中国人名辞典), (Tokyo: Compiled by the Asia Section, Japanese Foreign Office, 1936), p. 389, and in correspondence with Mr. T'ao Hsi-sheng (陶希聖), Taiwan.

Ch'en is in many ways excellent material for a case study of the May Fourth mind. In his sympathies, a middle-class urban intellectual, he combined an idealization of the advanced West, and particularly the United States, with a desperate desire to see a new and strong China rise to her proper place among the powers. He had given up any hope that the Chinese tradition might be able to adapt to the modern world. Instead he placed his faith in the young intellectuals, who were to lead the people from the darkness of their age-old superstitions into the rational light of the modern world.

Ch'en was not an intellectual leader of his time. He could offer no brilliant solution for China's problems, nor even a synthesis of the solutions that others had proposed. Nor is his work particularly original; he relies heavily on quotations and in at least one instance, he plagiarizes. The result is a rather inconsistant piece of work, burdened with some glaring contradictions.[2]

Despite these deficiencies, several strong patterns of thought emerge which are typical not only of Ch'en, but of his whole generation. If we examine these patterns, and the ways in which they influenced Ch'en's analysis of the women's movement, perhaps we can gain greater

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[2] For example, pp. 104-122 below (the two sections on the New Youth magazine) are made up almost entirely of quotations and paraphrases with a minimum of critical commentary. Pages 135-36 contain a section plagiarized from F. Müller-Lyer, The History of Social Development, trans. Elizabeth Coote Lake and H. A. Lake, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1920), pp. 223-24. For contradictions in Ch'en's work, see p. 21-22.

distance from the "May Fourth mind," and more freedom to reach our own conclusions.

Ch'en's Intellectual Position

i. Positivism

With many other intellectuals of his generation, Ch'en was attracted to the popular gods of the early 20th century: progress, science, the power of reason, evolution and eugenics, and democracy. His intellectual position might best be described as a simplified nineteenth century positivism; for example, he accepted Herbert Spencer's argument that evolutionary theory could be applied to human society, apparently without Spencer's caution that evolution need not always work in a positive direction. In this way the theory of social evolution was reduced, in its most vulgarized form, to a blind trust in progress and a tendency to equate "modern" with "better."

Another part of Ch'en's positivism was derived ultimately from Comte--his belief in the value of a rational scientific examination of social institutions. The values of society and its moral codes should be based not on tradition or religion, but on reason backed up by the tested and systematized experience of the positive sciences. The Chinese tradition, and particularly the Confucian philosophy, was the ultimate authority for many of China's social institutions. Ch'en believed that these were long overdue for a rigorous examination in the clear light of reason.

This "rationalism" although not always rigorously applied, is an important element of Ch'en's thought. Its significance can be seen clearly in his consideration of the problem of sexual morality.

ii. Rationalism and Sexual Morality

By late 1927, when Ch'en wrote the epilogue to his History, the Nationalist Government had removed all of the legal barriers to sexual equality. In Ch'en's view, only two obstacles remained to block women's emancipation in China" the hardships resulting from China's economic problems, and an outdated sexual morality embodied in clan law. For the first obstacle, he had no solution beyond a rather vague socialism. The second, however, would yield to modern, rational sexual morality as soon as the adherents of modernism spread throughout the society.

The Confucian sexual code had placed enormous value on female chastity, presumably in order to ensure a true heir. Marital fidelity was essential for women, extending from the time of their engagement until their death. Women whose fiances died before the marriage were encouraged to remain single for life, to marry their husband's ghost, or to seek unity in death. Remarriage for widows was unthinkable, as was remarriage after the shame of a divorce.

This tremendous concern for women's chastity led to extraordinarily severe supervision. Ideally, an unmarried girl left her family's

home for the first time as a bride. While she stayed with her family she remained in the inner apartments, for her chastity could be endangered even by a glance from a passing stranger. Elaborate rules of avoidance were observed; it was improper for children above the age of seven to play in mixed groups, as it was for a man and woman to touch hands while exchanging anything. Ignorant of men outside of her immediate family, the girl was eventually married off to a man her parents chose.

Except for the arrangement of his first marriage, none of these sanctions applied to men. They were naturally free to stray outside the confines of the family home and to mix with their neighbours. No importance was placed on male chastity; a man might remarry after the death of his wife, or indeed, add concubines and secondary wives to his household at will--as long as he could afford them.

Ch'en Tung-yüan abhored the obvious sexual inequality of Confucian morality, and in addition thought it the expression of an irrational view which placed too much importance on sex.[3] Because sexual behaviour was given too much weight, the sexes were kept unnecessarily far apart, social intercourse was restricted, and the old sexual values were retained.

The result was needless suffering on a vast scale. Young women who could have raised families were forced into celibacy or suicide by the death of their husbands. Arranged marriages ignored women's right

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[3] See below, p. 146.

to self-determination; while love matches often failed through the social inexperience of both partners. Without the social contact provided by coeducational schools, many educated women failed to find a mate and lost their opportunity to marry.

The solution to all of these problems, Ch'en believed, was the adoption of a western style sexual code. Drawing from Western sexual theorists of the 1890's, like Edward Carpenter,[4] he advocated a newer and less restricted married life which would allow both partners room to grow. Ch'en argued that children should be brought up from infancy with companions of the opposite sex, and that the contact should be maintained during completely co-educational schooling. He also stressed the folly of attempting to repress women's sexual desires through strict supervision;[5] and the lack of any scientific basis for assuming women to be naturally more moderate in their sexual desires than men.[6]

As a final proof of the destruction wrought by the odd sexual code, Ch'en quoted statistics from the Ministry of Justice on the murder of husbands (presumably by their wives or the wives' lovers) and repeated a gruesome story of barbaric folk punishment for adulterers.[7]

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[4] Edward Carpenter (1844-1929) was an English poet, essayist and sexual theorist, at his most influential in the 1890's. His theories of modern sexual relations were popular among radical students in the May Fourth Period. See Stanley J. Kunitz, ed., British Authors of the Nineteenth Century, (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1936), pp. 118-19, and A Bibliography of Edward Carpenter, (Sheffield City Libraries, 1949).

[5] See below, p. 89.

[6] See below, p. 144.

[7] See below, p. 150.

He believed that this brutality was caused by "the senseless maintenance of loveless relations between husband and wife" and suggested that a new sexual code would solve the problem:

> If she could have divorced her husband when she fell in love with another man, things would never have reached an atrocity of these proportions, nor would women go to the extent of murdering their husbands.[8]

Ch'en's belief in reason made him disapprove of the Confucian moral code and advocate the "freely chosen, innocent and natural marriage"[9] of modern Western morality. In addition, it caused him to look with utter horror on the folk morality of the peasantry; the severity of folk punishments for adultery "only reveals the people's barbarism, brutality, and the total irrationality of their sexual attitudes."[10]

iii. Discarding Tradition and Welcoming the West

The distance which Ch'en felt from the uneducated poor, and particularly the peasantry, suggested in the above quotation, is another trait he shared with most of the intellectuals of his time. While students of the May Fourth generation may have sought the support of workers in demonstrations, they were in no way turning to the workers for instruction or inspiration, as another generation of students was

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[8] See below, p. 150.

[9] See below, p. 147

[10] See below, p. 150.

urged to do during the Cultural Revolution. If the Confucian system was to be broken in order that a new China might flourish, then to these May 4th intellectuals, the non-Confucian tradition, the predominantly Taoist and Buddhist folk culture of the peasantry with its myriad dieties and superstitions, was even less deserving of preservation, and even more certainly slated for destruction.

In the place of the old culture, whether classic or folk, Chinese people would accept "modern civilization."[11] Thus the strength of the May Fourth Movement lay not only in its attack on Confucianism, but also in its advocacy of modern ideas. As Ch'en says:

> If at this time there had been only the discussions in The New Youth, but no tendency to accept Western civilization, of course the movement would not have achieved success.[12]

The Western nation that Ch'en was most strongly influenced by was the United States; perhaps because of American 'returned students' like Hu Shih, or simply because of America's position as the youngest of the great powers. Aside from a lengthy quote from Hu Shih's "American Women," Ch'en gives a description of the modern American household originally part of F. Müller-Lyer's The History of Social Development.[13] The paragraph begins by referring to "Western" women, but by the end it is obvious that Ch'en is really using it to describe the life that he believes American women lead.

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[11] See below, p. 123.

[12] See below, p. 123.

[13] See below, p. 135.

It probably would have come as more than a mild shock to the majority of American women of the late 1920's to hear that they need no longer wash clothes or preserve food, but only cook, do housework and raise children. Ch'en imagines modern conveniences like running water and electricity to be universal, and presumes an availability of kindergartens and limitation of family size that had not yet been achieved. This freedom of American women had come about, so Ch'en argued, through industrial development which led to a highly efficient division of labour.

Chinese women were oppressed by a family structure that was still primitive in form and could not soon be expected to yield to a more sophisticated division of labour. As a solution, Ch'en advocated the remodelling of Chinese society along the lines suggested by European socialists like Auguste Bebel and F. Müller-Lyer.[14] In order to free women for production, the state was to provide cooking, cleaning and childcare, services which were less efficiently provided by each nuclear

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[14] Ferdinand August Bebel (1840-1913) was a German Socialist and a leader of the German Social Democratic Movement. He wrote on socialism, the peasantry and the status of women; Women And Socialism was translated into English by Meta L. Stern (New York: Socialist Literature Co., 1910).

(See Chamber's Biographical Dictionary, ed. J. O. Thorne, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969), p. 104).

Franz Müller-Lyer, (1857-1916) was a German sociologist and philosopher, the founder of the phaseological method in cultural history. For a translation of his work see The History of Social Development, trans. by Elisabeth Coote Lake and H. A. Lake, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1920).

(See also Webster's Biographical Dictionary, (Springfield, Mass: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1971), p. 1070).

family. At the same time, the importance of women's reproductive function was to be fully recognized and protection for mothers and children built into the national economy.

iv. Socialism and the Reorganization of the Family

Ch'en's discussion of the problems of working women is rather short, especially in comparison to the sections on his true interest, education. Nevertheless, his conception of the problem, and its solution, bring up some interesting questions.

Despite his insistence on economic oppression as the reason why women seek work, he totally ignores those women whose social class would expose them to this oppression.[15] Instead, he writes exclusively of women school teachers; women whose families had been able to afford an education for daughters as well as sons.

While Ch'en's analysis of the problems of working women obviously does not apply to the working class, we may be mistaken if we accept it as an accurate evaluation of the middle-class woman's situation. His portrait of the school teacher who must take care of children, cook meals and wash clothes in addition to her teaching duties seems rather unrealistic.[16] Even the "twenty odd dollars" which Ch'en gives as a teacher's monthly salary[17] was a healthy contribution to the family's economy, and with the husband's salary would easily have provided

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[15] See below, pp. 134-35.

[16] See below, p. 136.

[17] See below, p. 177.

servants to free the wife of household chores.[18]

Perhaps Ch'en's omission of the possibility of hiring servants is another reflexion of his study of European and North American socialism. Ch'en is trying to prove a point; he is advocating the replacement of the nuclear family by a collective family. The same approach is evident in Liu Pan-nung's analysis of the middle-class woman's life, and his rejection of the idea that time may be saved by delegating domestic work to servants.[19]

In both cases, the author goes on to suggest socialist reorganization of the family as a solution. And for both authors, the projected solution is far more important than the analysis of the problem. After World War I, when "the servant problem" became an inexhaustible source of small talk for Europeans and Americans, the collective family with newly developed machines to speed housework might logically have been suggested to increase the supply of available labour. China faced no shortage of domestic labour; her problem was instead providing employment and a reasonable livelihood for her population. Women of the middle-class were not tied to their homes by lack of servants. Their problems

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[18] In 1927 women workers in Canton received an average wage of $7 per month. In Shanghai cotton mills, wages for women ranged between $.36 and $1.03 per day. (Fang Fu-lan, Chinese Labour, (London: P. S. King & Son Ltd., 1931) p. 50, p. 47).

[19] Liu Fu 劉復, or Liu Pan-nung 劉半農 (1891-1934) was a distinguished teacher, linguist and writer, and an early advocate of the pai-hua movement. See Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, edited by Howard L. Boorman, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 394-95. The work in which his analysis appears is "Random Thoughts on Returning South" (Nan-kuei-tsa-kan 南歸雜感) The New Youth, Vol V, no. 2 (August, 1918).

were instead predominantly social; issues like arranged marriage and concubinage. While the new domestic systems envisaged by Ch'en and Liu have been largely realized, in the people's communes, this developlment came as a response to a different situation than that which faced the middle-class women of the 1920's.

It is interesting that Ch'en's suggestion for a new social organization does not involve any significant changes in the way men lead their lives. His cherished "rationalism" which supports him through his attack on Confucian morality does not extend to an examination of traditional sexual roles. Instead, he sees women's liberation as a widening of women's sphere. Before a woman was only a wife and mother; under ideal conditions, her duties as wife and mother will be lightened and she will be able to expand into areas formerly the exclusive preserve of men. There is little suggestion that domestic duties be shared, or that men might take part in traditionally female activities such as child-care. Liu Pan-nung's suggestion for social reorganization, which Ch'en quotes at length, would free from forty-two to sixty-one of every hundred women for work outside the home, but it would not change the traditional division of labour by sex.[20]

Furthermore, Ch'en is vehement in his insistence that women must marry and have children.[21] He is unwilling to submit the nuclear family to evaluation by reason; even his socialist reorganization takes the

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[20] See below, pp. 117-118.

[21] See below, p. 17.

family, not the individual, as its basic unit.

Apparently Ch'en believed that China would inevitably become a socialist nation, although the date of the transformation could not be predicted. Only under socialism could women become truly liberated and the dual oppression of domestic duties and work as "wage-slaves" under the capitalist system be broken.[22]

v. Nationalism Vs. Feminism

But Ch'en, no matter how sincere in his support for women's emancipation, was equally, if not more interested in national recovery. While he protested the injustice of treating women only as daughters, wives and mothers, without "independent human status"[23] he could not accept the idea of a large group of women turning against marriage and motherhood. This was especially true for those educated girls who could pass on their enlightenment to their children. In his concern for the number of educated women who were rejecting marriage Ch'en says:

> Girls who have received higher education naturally are the best mothers for excellent children; if they sacrifice this glorious role, then they cannot fulfill their one and only duty to society.[24]

This statement is surprising, coming after Ch'en's insistence on the need for completely co-educational "human education," the importance of "transcending the good wife and mother" and of having the

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[22] See below, pp. 138, 167.

[23] See below, p. 107.

[24] See below, p. 145.

"independence" of Hu Shih's American women. Although he softens the statement by saying that:

> Under a wholesome society . . . the fact that a mother has two or three children will not necessarily stand in the way of her giving service to society,[25]

it is clear that for Ch'en, a woman's responsibilities as the producer of a new Chinese race outweigh her right to choose a life not determined by her sex. It is even "a symptom of illness" for a woman to avoid marriage and dislike small children.[26] China's progress is tied to "increasing excellence of the bodies, minds and morality of the elements of society";[27] if a woman is to help to build "a new nation, a new society, a new family and a new race,"[28] then her "one and only duty" of producing excellent children cannot be ignored.

The conflict between women's emancipation and national interest has always been one of the most serious problems of world feminism.[29] It is doubtful that Ch'en Tung-yuan could have been aware of the complexity of the problem. When women's emancipation was first suggested in China, the advantages to national health and to the economy seemed

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[25] See below, p. 145.

[26] See below, p. 145.

[27] See below, p. 144.

[28] See below, p. 108.

[29] See Salaff and Merkle, "Women in Revolution" for a discussion of the role of national interest in the changing fortunes of Russian and Chinese feminism.

obvious, but by the time that Ch'en was writing, some doubts had begun to surface. The fear that educated women would not be attracted to family life was obviously uppermost in Ch'en's mind. He believed that the problem would be solved by socialist domestic organization which would simultaneously free women for productive labour, release them from their household duties, and provide the most suitable care for children. Ch'en never hints at what the solution would be if this new organization were too expensive for the state, or if freeing women for labour would take jobs away from men. It is interesting to speculate on how long his advocacy of women's emancipation would survive in a duel between women's interests and the interests of the state.

Most of the time, the conflict was not clearly drawn. The more pressing struggle for Ch'en was the fight for national survival, in which China's old culture had to be destroyed and replaced by the modern civilization of the West. If women could be freed from the bondage of the traditional way of life, freed to make a contribution to the struggle for a new China, then so much the better.

vi. The Educated Elite

In fact, Ch'en makes it clear that those who will lead the Chinese people into a new way of life are the educated young men and women of the middle-class. The ultimate example is of course the students of the May Fourth Period who spread the new culture through their magazines and newspapers. In the future, Ch'en hoped that educated women would "make a sacrifice for their sisters who lack wisdom and

morality, sick children and youth, and the pitiable people in general.[30] This would presumably include work in promoting birth control; to Margaret Sanger's suggestion that the Chinese begin their work in birth control with the poor and ill, Ch'en adds the observation that "promotion of contraception to these people always depends on the young men and women of the intellectual class."[31]

Because Ch'en sees women's emancipation as essentially an intellectual movement to be promoted by the intellectual classes, he quite naturally emphasises the literary landmarks in the movement's history. While he gives lip service to the role of social and economic forces in the development of the women's movement, it is obvious that his interest really lies in women's education and the changing intellectual content of women's emancipation.

These interests reinforce Ch'en's emotional commitment to the May Fourth Period as the most fruitful stage in women's history. He gives lengthy quotations from the articles in The New Youth, pointing out the increasingly advanced positions taken by their writers. To Ch'en, advances in theory are equivalent to improvement in actual conditions, and the events of importance in the women's movement are literary events. Thus Ch'en Tu-hsiu's article "Nineteen-Sixteen" "prompted the birth of the new woman"[32] while Liu-Pan-nung's "Random

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[30] See below, p. 145.

[31] See below, p. 157.

[32] See below, p. 108.

Thoughts on Returning South" and Hu Shih's "American Women" "had an enormous effect on the liberation of women."[33] The May Fourth Period, with its tremendous intellectual excitement and the sudden opening of higher education to women, was for Ch'en an unparalleled time of progress. The young intellectuals of the middle-class, using the power of propaganda with unprecedented skill and success, had brought the women's movement into intellectual maturity. All that remained was to extend and reinforce the gains they had made, and to fully implement their plans for sexual equality.

vii. Confusion: the Clans

It is difficult to get a clear understanding of how much progress the women's movement had made from Ch'en's book, despite his attempts in the last section to sum up its problems since 1919. This is partly Ch'en's responsibility, for he contradicts himself a number of times. On the question of sexual discrimination in employment, for example, he first says that:

> We may say that women have already won professional liberation; as long as there is work that they can do, they can be employed.[34]

Later, however, he complains that:

> more women every day are unable to find the work they seek because the boundaries of the professions which have already been opened are too small.[35]

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[33] See below, p. 115.

[34] See below, p. 135.

[35] See below, p. 138.

He is also contradictory on the question of clan law; at one point, it has "collapsed without waiting for the blow"[36] while later it is only "close to bankruptcy" and Ch'en admits that "Even in death the corpse will not stiffen, and remnants of thought and customs do great harm."[37] Part of Ch'en's problem in deciding on discrimination in employment and on the exact state of health of the clans, can be attributed to the extreme difficulty of making generalizations about a nation as full of contrasts as China was in the 1920's.

Evaluation of the strength of the clans is further complicated by geographical and social distinctions which pre-dated the family revolution. Clans had always been stronger in rural areas, cities were not regarded as real homes, and loyal members kept their allegiance to a country clan rather than bringing the organization into the city. Clans were far stronger in the south than in the north. Finally, although clans spanned a variety of social classes, they were much more important to the scholar-gentry class than to the lower orders of society.[38]

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[36] See below, p. 125.

[37] See below, p. 176.

[38] The term "clan law" tsung fa 宗法) may require some explanation. The Chinese clan was made up of all of the paternal relatives who venerated the common ancestor. Part of the purpose of the clan was to give extra stability to individual families within the clan, helping them to achieve the Confucian ideal of a joint family stretching over several generations.

The genealogies compiled by the more prosperous clans contain examples of clan rules. Intended to be a code of conduct for clan members, the clan rules tried to legislate the hierarchies of generation

Gaps in the Structure

i. The Working Poor

Contradictions aside, how accurate a picture of female emancipation in China emerges from Ch'en's History? Can he be relied on as a contemporary observer, or do his intellectual biases seriously interfere with his perception of events?

In his reporting of the details of the emancipation of women in China, Ch'en is generally accurate. It is not what he includes, but what he leaves out, that damages his work. His omissions are most serious in two areas: he completely ignores working class and peasant

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and sex and the virtue of filial piety. Naturally they were an impediment to the liberation of women, for they codified and re-inforced women's inferior position in the traditional family. The clan laws advocated, for example, the seclusion of women and the subordination of women to men at all points in their lives, and condemned the remarriage of widows.

In the clans with a fairly strong organization, penalties for violations of the clan rules were often prescribed. These ranged from oral censure and corporal punishment, through to expulsion from the clan or being handed over to the government for punishment under the law. (So strong was the emphasis on women's obedience that except for expulsion from the clan through divorce or the re-marriage of a widow, women did not usually suffer direct punishment. The men who were responsible for them received punishment from the clan for their inability to control the conduct of their subordinates).

Despite these provisions for penalties, it is unlikely that Ch'en was referring specifically to the clan rules in genealogies when he spoke of "clan laws." The real strength of the clan rules was not their (generally lenient) application, but rather the fact that they were a codified form of the prevailing mores. They showed the idealized peak that traditional institutions could reach, were imitated most closely by the gentry class and less so by the other classes. The efficacy of threat of punishment by the clan was probably slight in comparison to the effect of the internalized standards on public opinion and on women themselves.

(See Hui-chen Wang Liu, The Traditional Chinese Clan Rules, [New York: J. J. Augustin, 1959]).

women, and he ignores the native feminist strain within the folk tradition.

Ch'en Tung-yüan was basically of the same mind as Liu Pan-nung; neither could "bear to speak of the distress of women of very poor families. . . . "[39] Instead, they talked about, and addressed themselves to, women of the middle class.

Admittedly, the membership of the official women's rights movement, at least after 1919, was basically urban and middle-class. Ch'en's scope is far wider than merely the suffrage movement; but he discusses all aspects of women's liberation solely in terms of how it affects the educated young women of the city.

Some of the distortions that result from this limitation to one social class have already been discussed.[40] In addition, Ch'en's information on the increasing incidence of celibacy and on the marriage ceremony[41] should be adjusted to fit the experience of other classes.

Celibacy of women outside of religious orders was not entirely new in China, but had previously been confined to those women whose work in the traditional silk industry had given them some economic independence.[42] The spread of celibacy to women of the middle and upper classes which Ch'en views with such horror, was new, as was the gradual

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[39] See below, p. 115.

[40] See above, p. 14.

[41] See below, pp. 138-143.

[42] Lang, Chinese Family, pp. 108-109.

increase in the average age of marriage.[43] Ch'en's analysis of the causes of these two phenomena seem to be fairly accurate. These causes, fear of an old-fashioned marriage and increasing opportunities for work, produced much the same effects among factory women, although probably to a lesser degree. It is important to remember, however, that apart from areas surrounding industrial centres, peasant women, the bulk of the female population, were largely unaffected. As late as 1949, when celibacy was presumably even more common, most celbates were to be found in the new intellectual groups within Chinese society.[44]

Ch'en's description of the marriage ceremony is again, an adequate description of the way in which those of comfortable means carried out the ritual. Although the poor generally tried to follow the correct form, they did so in a far less extravagant manner, and even omitted steps entirely.[45] The ceremony could be drastically curtailed, for example, if the bride was an adopted daughter-in-law, who had been taken into her husband's family as a child. The use of go-betweens and the provision of a wedding feast by the groom's family seem to be two of the essential details, although the cost of the wedding feast might drive the groom's family into debt.[46]

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[43] Marion J. Levy, Jr., The Family Revolution in Modern China, (New York: Atheneum, 1968), pp. 301-302.

[44] Ibid., p. 307.

[45] Ibid., p. 101.

[46] Ibid., p. 103.

ii. Women and Industrialization

Ch'en mentions women factory workers in passing, but he is clearly not interested in their problems; for him "working women" means professional women, schoolteachers particularly.

His lack of interest in women outside of the gentry class left Ch'en unaware of one of the benefits of industrialization; the growing independence and economic importance of the woman factory worker. In the traditional society there were few opportunities for women to work outside of their families. The most common occupations for women were related either to sexual life or religion; they could be prostitutes, midwives, matchmakers, procuresses and nuns. Although peasant women were far from idle, their labour was not fully used, and the tasks they performed gave them little economic power in the family.[47]

With the growth of modern industry in China, this situation began to change. Opportunities for employment, particularly in light industry, suddenly expanded. Furthermore, women worked in factories, away from the supervision of the husbands and mothers-in-law, and were paid in cash. Their wages, although low, were often higher than those of men engaged in traditional occupations.[48]

Women became economic assets for the first time. In the groups of factory women interviewed by Olga Lang between 1935 and 1937, this

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[47] Olga Lang, The Chinese Family and Society, (n.p.: Archon Books, 1968, originally published by Yale University Press, 1946), p. 43.

[48] Ibid., p. 208.

new economic importance had raised the women's status in their families.[49] Wives were given far more power in making family decisions and were substantially free of subordination to their mothers-in-law.[50] The obvious financial advantages of having a factory girl in the family made parents less eager to marry off their daughters and more likely to treat the girls with some consideration and respect.[51]

It is true that these effects were confined to the areas around industrial centres, but the same might be said for the advances in education which Ch'en discusses in some detail.

Nor does Ch'en ever mention the growth of trade unionism among women factory operatives, and their readiness to use militant tactics against their employers. In fact, early in the process of industrialization, women in China were organizing and carrying out strikes of a respectable size for shorter hours and better pay. In 1922, 60 factories were struck in 80 strikes, and over 30,000 women workers were involved.[52] The business pages of the North China Herald yield a steady stream of

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[49] Although Lang's survey was taken 10 years after the publication of Ch'en's book, many of her observations on the social change caused by women's new economic value are valid for the 1920's. Women had already entered the work force in significant numbers; in 1927, 58.7% of the factory workers of Shanghai were women. (Ibid., p. 103). Women workers had also demonstrated considerable militancy and solidarity by this time. (See pp. 28-29 below.)

[50] Lang, Chinese Family, pp. 203-212.

[51] Ibid., p. 262-269.

[52] Hsiang Ching-yü (向敬予), "Chung-kuo tsui-chin fu-nü yün-tung" (中國最近婦女運動) in Mei Sheng, ed., Chung-kuo fu-nü wen-t'i t'ao-lun chi, pp. 78-79.

reports on industrial unrest, particularly in the silk filatures of Chapei.[53] The readiness of women workers to strike was remarked on by foreign observers; George E. Sokolsky, in a special article "The Strikes of Shanghai" wrote:

> The women workers are in this respect, [openness to communist propaganda through poor conditions] harder to handle than the men. . . . When the causes of the strikes during the past two and one half months are analysed; it will be seen that the women workers are more discontented and more virulent in indicating their antagonism that [sic] the men workers.[54]

Hsiang Ching-yü, a revolutionary executed by the Kuomintang in 1928, was greatly impressed by the strength and spirit of the women strikers. She believed that the women's labour movement was the strongest and most endowed with fighting spirit of any of the women's groups; and that if they renounced it, the women's rights and women's suffrage movements could never hope to grow.[55]

Violent demonstrations, some of a Luddite nature, seem to have been quite common in the women's labour movement. In 1926, a rumour of new machinery requiring fewer workers at the Nanyang Brothers Tobacco

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[53] See for example:
The North China Herald, August 12, 1922, p. 459, August 19, 1922, p. 532, February 3, 1923, p. 313, June 23, 1923, p. 816, June 21, 1924, p. 131, September 25, 1926, p. 602, October 23, 1926, p. 151, July 3, 1926, p. 14. The above articles deal only with strikes organized by women's unions, and not strikes in which both women and men participated. It is not a complete list; in general only large strikes or strikes in which physical violence occurred are included.

[54] The North China Herald, August 21, 1926, p. 376.

[55] Hsiang Ching-yü, "Chung-kuo tsui-chin fu-nü yün-tung," p. 86.

Company in Shanghai caused a riot by three hundred women workers, who picked up tools and "began to lay about themselves in a manner typical of the Chinese Amazon," resulting in $2000 damage.[56] Perhaps incidents of this kind convinced Ch'en that the women's labour movement was merely a violent, unthinking outburst, incapable of constructive leadership. It is rather more likely that he simply was uninterested in the women's labour movement, and put his hope for women's advancement wholly in the hands of the educated minority of women.

To omit the problems and struggles of women factory workers, or for that matter, women peasants, from a discussion of the life of women in China is to give a distorted picture, limited in its application to an extremely small part of the society. Because of this omission, the women's movement takes on the polite, non-violent character of the mainstream of Western feminism, especially as it evolved after the First World War.

Even more serious than Ch'en's fondness for the literary, middle-class manifestations of the changes in the life of women was his omission of the feminist tendencies in the folk tradition.

iii. The Great Tradition and the Folk Tradition

When Ch'en describes the status of women in traditional China, or the social restraints which bound them, he is almost always talking about one side of a multi-faceted situation. It seems obvious that it

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[56] The North China Herald, September 25, 1926, p. 602.

is a mistake to view China's cultural past as a homogeneous whole. There are at least two separate traditions: that of the learned minority, the great, or classical tradition, and that of the less educated and uneducated, the folk tradition. The content of the folk tradition is again divisible into several regional traditions. In order to achieve a balanced understanding of the way women lived in traditional China, we must turn to the popular tradition that Ch'en ignores.

The impressive unity of the Confucian tradition in China, both in area and over time, was achieved through the use of the classical written language. Everyone who had received an education in the classics shared a common fund of knowledge with all other educated men. They also shared an agnostic approach to life, scornful of the ignorance and superstition of the common people, and a belief in the inherent superiority of civil over military power--of the scholar over the warrior.

Below the level of literacy, this unity was broken into diverse local cultures, which may, with some modification of Redfield's ideal type, be called folk cultures.[57] The "little community" described by Redfield was small, distinct, homogeneous, and self-sufficient, providing for all or almost all of the needs of the people in it.[58] Personal relationships, especially kinship relations, predominated, and sacred values outweighed secular values.

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[57] Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. LII, (1946-47), pp. 293-308.

[58] Redfield, The Little Community, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 4.

The peasant community, in which the majority of Chinese lived, differs from this ideal type in several ways. It is less self-sufficient than the ideal type, depending on the larger community for defense and for administrative and judicial apparatus. It also tends to be more commercial and impersonal in relationships than smaller and more isolated folk communities.[59] Despite these differences, the degree of inter-communication between members and the stability of each group was great enough to produce distinct local cultures which may be called folk cultures.

Partly dependent on the classical tradition, and partly a purely local folklore, the popular traditions were a heterogeneous blend of beliefs. Some of the Confucian tradition was handed on orally, and in the process the originally rational moral and ethical system was permeated by superstitious beliefs. An even greater part of the popular culture was supplied by Taoist and Buddhist beliefs, again vulgarized. The folk pantheon was crowded with deities and semi-deities, some of them local heroes elevated to divine status after death, others members of the "immortals" of popular Taoism. Local festivals and special days for making offerings were common. In addition, the folk culture had a great number of popular heroes who were not considered to be deities; most often men of outstanding military skill or great physical strength. Thus, in contrast to the classical culture, the folk tradition was rife with

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[59] See G. William Skinner, "Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China," Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 24, (Nov. 1964, Feb. 1965 and May 1965), pp. 3-43, 195-228, 363-399.

gods and superstitions, and glorified martial prowess.

When we turn to the treatment of women in the popular culture we find an even greater contrast between the classical and the folk traditions. The great tradition of Confucian society confined and restricted women at every turn, forbade them any role outside of their homes, kept them perpetual minors, and burdened them with a severe moral code. It is this tradition that Ch'en Tung-yuan is fmiliar with; he describes the life of women in the families he knew, families which could afford to carry out every detail of the code of propriety.

The range of acceptable roles for women in the great tradition was extremely limited and with the exception of the matriarch, was characterized by weakness and passivity. Romantic heroines, when they appeared at all, were delicate fragile flowers, their wan complexions verging on illness. Daughters exchanged the authority of their father for that of their husband, and ideally in old age for that of their sons. Virtue for a woman consisted basically in rendering obedience to the person to whom, at that point in her life, it was due. The education of women in such circumstances was obviously unnecessary and perhaps even dangerous; as the proverb says, "Only unskilled women are virtuous." (wu ts'ai shih te 無才是德).

As it gradually became apparent that national survival depended in part on changing the status of women, the range of roles open to women through the Confucian tradition had to be abandoned. Women who were to be educated or to become part of a modern working force would not possibly observe the traditional rules of propriety. Nor could

women with bound feet, confined to the family home and subjected to their mother-in-law's discipline and sometimes vicious mistreatment, be expected to produce strong healthy children for China's next generation.

The Western concept of sexual equality and the new roles that Western culture suggested for women undeniably had an enormous impact on the Chinese women's movement. Despite the almost total anti-feminism of the Confucian tradition, however, the new influence from the West was not the only possible source of models. China's popular tradition had a strong feminist strain and provided roles for women which seem to be, on the whole, the roles which have survived into the present.

CHAPTER 2

MU LAN AND THE GIRLS--ALTERNATE STEREOTYPES

Swordfighters and Warriors

Any Westerner who frequents Chinese movies will soon become aware of the extraordinary stereotype of the female swordfighter and knight errant (nü hsia 女侠). No female role in popular Western entertainment can approach the independence and physical skill and courage of "the Golden Dagger" or "the Black Butterfly" and their countless cinematic variations.[1]

The women who make up this hardy group match or excel the skills of their male counterparts. Adept at ching kung (經功), they leap over houses and walls. They are expert swordswomen, often supplementing their blade with tasselled darts, and--as villians--with whips. They exist on a basis of easy equality with swordsmen and often enter into relationships of cloying sisterly love with other swordswomen. They do not recoil from killing, but take their part in mowing down the "thousands of extras" either by themselves, or with their comrades. It is not uncommon for a female knight-errant to rescue the hero from

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[1] For plot summaries of a number of nü hsia movies, see Wolfram Eberhard, The Chinese Silver Screen, Hong Kong and Taiwanese Motion Pictures in the 1960's, Asian Folklore and Social Life Monographs, Vol. XXLII, (Taipei: The Orient Cultural Service, 1972).

physical danger (by killing with darts all of the twenty-five desperadoes who have surrounded him late at night on a deserted mountain road . . .). As a villain, the swordswoman is no one to ignore. She may have mastered "the bloodnhand" which makes her able to despatch her adversaries at a single blow; and usually commands an enormous and faithful following of male and female ruffians.

This strong, competent woman co-exists with the "feminine" stereotype of dainty, completely helpless women, without any apparent conflict. There is no moral condemnation of the role of swordswoman, nor any suggestion that "what she really needs is a nice husband and a couple of kids." In fact, the status of wife and mother is one that the female knight seldom attains. Romantic love is less important than filial piety, and in any case, usually leads to the grave.

This role has been popular from the beginning of the Chinese film industry, as popular as the traditional stories from which it is drawn.[2] For centuries before that, the female knight errant had been prominent in dramas, ballads, storytellers' tales and historical romances, along with another strong female stereotype, the woman warrior (nü chan-shih (女戰士).[3]

Mu Lan (木蘭) is of course the most famous of the woman warriors. In approximately 500 A.D., her ailing father was called for

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[2] See Jay Leyda, Dianying, An Account of Films and the Film Audience in China, (Cambridge Mass: The M.I.T. Press, 1972).

[3] James J. Y. Liu, The Chinese Knight Errant (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).

military service. In order to protect him from both the rigors of military life and the dangers of disobedience to the throne, she went to war in his place, impersonating him for twelve years at the front, and eventually being promoted to the rank of general.[4]

The Mu Lan legend was extremely popular and was told and retold in every possible form. The women who joined the Revolutionary Army in 1911 saw themselves to some degree as successors of Mu Lan.[5] That they would call on her name in a proclamation designed to add recruits to the women's army suggests both the extent of her fame and the attractiveness of her legend.[6]

How can the existence of this tradition of heroic women be related to the development of feminism? Was it simply an escape mechanism by which the tedium of a quiet domestic life could be evaded for a short time, or did it actually correspond to some part of reality? How great an effect did popular stereotypes have on women's lives?

In "The Nature and Characteristics of the Boxer Movement," Jerome Ch'en argues that the Boxers derived their beliefs from popular novels and operas. Among the most important sources were Water Margin

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[4] See Wang Fan-t'ing 王藩庭 Chung-hua li-tai fu-nü 中華歷代婦女. [Chinese Women of Past Generations], (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1966), pp. 131-135.

[5] See below, pp. 93, 95.

[6] Even as "feminine and domestic" a woman as Mme. Wu P'ei-fu admitted to being a great admirer of Mu-Lan, the Chinese Joan d'Arc." See Edna Lee Booker, "Madam Wu Pei-fu", The Weekly Review (The China Weekly Review), July 29, 1922, p. 342.

and The Romance of the Three Kingdoms, books which had long been recognized as dangerous by the authorities.

If the tales of heroes and supernatural powers in popular culture could be taken over so literally by groups such as the Boxers, then surely we may expect that the images of women in the popular culture would have some appeal for women who were dissatisfied with the accepted female role. The example of Ch'iu Chin (秋瑾) comes to mind immediately. Although in many respects a self-consciously modern revolutionary, she was influenced by two famous knight-errants of the past, Ch'ing-k'o and Nieh-cheng, wore a short sword, and styled herself "Heroine of Chien Lake."[8]

The Underworld

Further evidences that some women actually did live out the life pattern of the female knight errant and the woman warrior may be found by looking at women's participation in secret societies, bandit groups and peasant rebellions. Because the role of women in extra-legal groups is difficult to research (as are the extra-legal groups themselves) there are really no satisfactory secondary sources to work from. Statements of policy toward women are rarely found and it is

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[7] Jerome Ch'en, "The Nature and Characteristics of the Boxer Movement--A Morphological Study," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XXIII (1960), pp. 287-308.

[8] The name of a lake near her family's home outside of Shaohsing, Chekiang. (Mary Backus Rankin, Early Chinese Revolutionaries, [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971], p. 44).

necessary to depend largely on eyewitness reports from foreign and Chinese observers. The research which would give a full understanding of women's role in extra-legal groups could not, within practical limits, be done for this thesis. But if it is possible to generalize from the information that I have so far, it would seem that extra-legal organizations provided an outlet for women who could not accept or were unable to fulfill their role as females in conventional society.

i. Secret Societies

Secret societies were in some ways a mirror image of the orthodox Confucian state; particularly in their hierarchy of leadership and their use of kinship ties (albeit fictitious) to strengthen the bonds between members. Their treatment of women was one of the great exceptions to this rule. In most societies, women could join as rank and file members and could become leaders; sometimes in the society as a whole, usually in parallel women's organizations. A Yellow Turban kingdom set up in present day Szechwan in the second century A.D. granted titles and grades of advancement to women as well as men, beginning with either Sons or Daughters of the Tao (Tao-nan 道男 or Tao-nü 道女) and working up to Father or Mother of the Tao (Tao-fu 道父 or tao-mu 道母).[9]

Approximate sexual equality and the mingling of men and women continued to be an important part of secret society life. In the White Lotus Rebellion of 1796, the chief commanders of the insurgents were

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[9] Howard S. Levy, "Yellow Turban Religion and Rebellion at the End of Han," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXXVI (1956), p. 223.

Yao Chi-fu, and a woman of the surname Wang.[10] Purcell remarks that "the mixing of men and women on an equality offended the Confucian sense of propriety more than anything else."[11]

It was not only the Confucian sense of propriety that was offended. Father Leboucq, a Jesuit missionary in Chihli, reported on the White Lotus Sect in 1875.[12] He claimed that it was the "harpies" of the White Lotus who held the first rank in the society, rousing and egging on the less courageous members; and that if a commune were formed from the White Lotus sect, then it would not want for "les pétroleuses." According to Father Leboucq, women of the White Lotus were not admitted to office, nor were they employed by the society;

> mais on sait les dédommager de cette exclusion apparente en leur confiant des missions et des postes de confiance qui les consolent largement de leur obscurité officielle.[13]

The Green Band, founded in 1725 as an association of transport workers on the Grand Canal, at first did not admit women, but after its reorganization in 1901, this rule disappeared. Women had to be admitted by women, and women could not admit men. They had their own system of organization within the Green Band. They were admitted to the Triad society (the Red Band) but could never gain admission to the inner

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[10] Victor Purcell, The Boxer Uprising, A Background Study (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p. 156.

[11] Ibid., p. 56.

[12] P. Leboucq, "Les Sociétés Secrètes en Chine," Etudes, Paris, Series V., Vol. 7 (November, 1875), pp. 179-220.

[13] Ibid., p. 207.

sanctum. In both organizations there were separate statutes for each sex.[14]

Despite the organizational division between male and female members, women in secret societies do not seem to have been relegated to a women's auxilliary role. If parallel organization calls forth an image of church kitchens and coffee making matrons, then the career of the following secret society member may be an antidote:

> Before the federation of Triad forces under Ho Lu was wiped out, another Triad army rose under the command of a savage female smuggler-gambler, Chai Ho-ku (Chai [the Lady of] Burning Temper). Imprisoned for gambling, Chai broke out of jail and joined Ho Liu's [sic] troops for a while. Then she became the leader of several independent Triad bands in Kuei-shan hsien. In the half-year following August 11, 1854, when her forces first took over the market town of San-tung in Kuei-shan, her troops and their affiliated bands were a powerful threat to the government forces in this region, attacking the Kuei-shan hsien capital twice, besieging the prefectural capital for more than twelve days, occupying the hsien capitals of Po-lo, Tseng-ch'eng, Ho-yüan, Ho-p'ing, and Hai'feng for various periods, and dominating Tan-shui, Ma-an, Pai-mang-hua, Heng-li, and a number of other market towns. It took two years for government troops to subdue the rebellions in this region.[15]

From the evidence of women's participation in secret societies, it is not surprising that they took part in the two greatest popular movements of the nineteenth century: the Taiping and the Boxer rebellions.

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[14] Jean Chesneaux, Secret Societies in China in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, trans. Gillian Nettle, (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1971), p. 207.

[15] Winston Hsieh, "Triads, Salt Smugglers, and Local Uprisings: Observations on the Social and Economic Background of the Waichow Revolution of 1911," in Popular Movements and Secret Societies in China, 1840-1950, ed. Jean Chesneax (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 154.

ii. Rebellion

Equality for women was one of the most unorthodox parts of the Taiping social program. Although sexual equality in the Taiping Tien-kuo has been attributed to Christian influence on Hung Hsiu-chuan, it seems more likely that its source was either the egalitarian tradition of the secret societies or the legendary strength and independence of Hakka women.[16]

It is true that the Taiping policies toward women were at best unevenly applied and soon completely corrupted, and that women who entered the movement after the capital was established at Nanking were economically and sexually exploited. What concerns us here, however, is the evidence of Taiping women who took on specifically military duties, and became part of the folklore of the woman warrior.

Virtually all of the female military heroes of the Taiping were Hakka women; members, with their families, of Hung Hsiu-chuan's God-Worshippers' Society. The Hakka women had never bound their feet and did most of the farming. In consequence, they were strong, healthy and economically valuable. At the beginning of the uprising, they were organized into separate women's camps, and into women's battalions which fought in the battles against the Ch'ing forces.

At least two of the women commanders were originally independent leaders, who brought their forces to join the Taiping. Not long before the Taiping rising,

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[16] C. A. Curwen, "Taiping Relations With Secret Societies and With Other Rebels," in Popular Movements, ed. Jean Chesneaux, p. 66.

> . . . two female chiefs of great valour named Kew erh [Ch'iu Erh] and Sze San [Su San-niang] each bringing about 2,000 followers, joined the army of the Godworshippers, and were received on submitting to the authority of Hung and the rules of the congregation . . . [17]

Three of the leading Taiping women warriors were close relatives of Hung Hsiu-chuan; his wife, his sister Hsuan-chiao, and one of his concubines. Hsuan-chiao was the commander of a women's army corps of God Worshippers known for its skill with firearms. Unlike other Taiping women, Hsuan-chiao apparently did not actually fight, but only directed her troops. The concubine Hsiao was said to be a great acrobat and very clever on horseback, while the T'ien Wang's wife helped to break the siege of Yuan-an, leading the women into the battle.[18]

In addition, there was Hsiao San-niang, "the Woman Commander," who led several hundred women soldiers in the capture of Chen-chiang, was reputed to be a great general on horseback, and could shoot an arrow with either hand. Finally, there was Yang Erh-ku, who carried a bag of seven inch knives into battle, threw them with amazing accuracy, and styled herself "the divine knife thrower."[19]

The Boxers, or the I Ho Chuan, also had large numbers of women in their ranks; or more accurately in the women's organization of the Red

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[17] Curwen, "Taiping Relations," p. 68.

[18] The T'ien Wang's father-in-law was a scholar whose study of the late Ming period led him into secret society activities. (See Vincent Y. C. Shih, The Taiping Ideology [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967], p. 610). Perhaps a father's or husband's interest in revolutionary groups was the means by which most women were introduced to secret society life.

[19] Ibid., p. 62.

Lanterns (Hung Teng Chao 紅燈照) for girls between twelve and eighteen, and the Green Lanterns (Ch'ing Teng Chao 青燈照) and Blue Lanterns (Lan Teng Chao 藍燈照) for widows.

The function and aims of the women's group were identical with those of the Boxers. The women had to undergo a period of training lasting from forty-eight days to five months. At the end of this time they would, it was said, be able to fly, and also to set fire to any object they wished to burn. Unlike the Boxers, the Lanterns had a supreme leader, called Huang Lien Sheng Mu (the Holy Mother of the Yellow Lotus). The daughter of a Grand Canal boatman, she was believed to have miraculous healing powers, as well as the ability to undo the screws of the enemies' cannons at a distance of several miles.[20]

The participation of women was a trait which the Boxers shared with the White Lotus sect, and is surprising, since the Boxers believed that women were a manifestation of yin, and thus unclean; an impediment to the spirits and to the working of spells. Paradoxically, because the members of the Lanterns were women, their magic was thought to be less fallible than that of the Boxers.[21]

iii. Banditry

Women also show up in the other great activity of outlaw society, banditry. It is of course difficult to draw dividing lines between

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[20] Purcell, The Boxer Movement, p. 238.

[21] Jerome Ch'en, "The Nature and Characteristics of the Boxer Movement, A Morphological Study," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Vol. XXIII (1960), p. 303.

secret society members, bandits and peasant rebels; the same person could, as conditions changed, move from one category to another. The same is also true of the hazy distinction between bandits and troops; and female bandits could, and did, take advantage of this along with the men. In 1922, a band of several thousand robbers were sworn into the Kuangtung Army, including about 300 women. It was reported that all of the women were armed with revolvers, and were quick to use them; that they were, in fact, "as bad as the men."[22]

A woman bandit chief called Lan Liu-tsang or "Lan Da Jo Ba" (Big Footed Lan) seems to have taken the same path to respectibility about two years later. She was first reported as leading a large band of old soldiers in an attack on the town of "Dehlongchang" (Szechuan) in June of 1922.[23] By April, 1924, she had joined General Yang Sen's First Szechuan Army, and was described by Mr. Elly Widler, who had been held captive by the army for six months:

> Lan Da Jo Ba is a robust and attractive woman, 30 years of age, and of very strong character. She travels in a two man chair and is always accompanied by her daughter, aged 15, who runs alongside and is armed with a Mauser pistol.[24]

In the same year, another woman bandit, "Old Mrs. Djao" described by the correspondent to The North China Herald as "perhaps the most cruel

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[22] The North China Herald, Feb. 11, 1922, p. 362.

[23] The North China Herald, June 16, 1922, p. 738.

[24] The North China Herald, April 12, 1924, p. 54.

leader the region has ever known," met a presumably richly deserved end. She was caught at Weihaiwei and executed at Ichoufu about June 5, 1924.[25]

Several women bandits were reported to be active in the country districts near Canton. Two were captured and executed in March, 1914, along with 10 men. The North China Herald reports that they "were young and beautiful women, who apparently were acting as leaders of the band."[26]

There is nearly no information of the social background of women bandits. It seems logical that their families would be poor, and that they might be driven to banditry in the same way as their brothers. On the other hand, the only woman bandit described in detail by The North China Herald was an eighteen year old graduate of a women's normal college. In 1923, she travelled to Anningchou in Yunnan, where she was to have married her fiance, a colonel under Tang Chi=yao. He was executed, however, on the same morning that she arrived in camp. In her disappointment, she took to the hills, and eight months later was leading a band of armed robbers in order to avenge her fiance's death. In this task she was apparently emulating the wife of a certain Yang Tien-fu who had spread devastation in revenge for her husband's death at the hands of the Ch'ing government.

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[25] The North China Herald, July 12, 1924, p. 51.

[26] The North China Herald, March 28, 1914, p. 90.

Interpreting the Mu Lan Tradition

Having examined these admittedly scattered and incomplete evidences of women's role in the folk tradition, we are better equipped to evaluate Ch'en Tung-yuan's assessment of women's emancipation in China. This is not to suggest that there are no problems in interpreting stereotypes of women in the popular culture. Certainly until more research is done it will be difficult to decide exactly what the connections were between this part of the tradition and the development of feminism.

For example, the fact that women are more often encountered as leaders of bandit and rebel groups than as rank and file members is puzzling. It is possible that women became leaders through religious powers; and that their "femaleness" might be part of their magic. In this case there is no real escape from definition by gender, but instead an exploitation of the belief that women are inherently more closely in touch with the supernatural. On the other hand, women who managed to escape from the patterns of life imposed on them by society may have had to be so strong that they would almost inevitably become leaders in any group.

Another question raised by the women of the folk tradition is the effect of strong female stereotypes on the self-image of Chinese women. Western feminists have become sensitive to the sexual typing of women in children's books and the influence that negative images of women may have on children. Our traditional children's stories present

a never ending parade of models for female helplessness: the frail and passive Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, the sensitive princess who could feel a pea through layers of mattresses, Rapunzel, and the heroine of Rumplestiltskin. Even Maid Marian, at least in her television incarnation, spent most of her time being rescued by Robin Hood.

The heroes of The Water Margin (Shui Hu Chuan 水滸傳) are often compared to Robin Hood and his merry men. The theme of good men forced outside the law by evil conditions is common to both legends as, on a superficial level, are some of the characters, like Friar Tuck and the monk Lu Chih-shen (魯智深). But nowhere in Robin's band was there a Hu San-niang (扈三娘), capable of dispatching enemies on her own as well as working in concert with the other heroes of Liang Shan.

The young, beautiful swordswoman, skilled in combat and well able to take care of herself, offered, in contrast to the passive heroines of the West, an exciting model for women who were trying to break out of a restrictive life forced on them by traditional society. It may indeed be escapism to idolize exceptional women who have refused to play the part determined for their sex; but it is escapism that leads to an expanded awareness of all women's capabilities, and therefore of one's own.

Perhaps the availability of strong female stereotypes is part of the reason why Chinese women of the present day seem to have had less difficulty in dealing with the problem of femininity than Western women, particularly with regard to occupation. While sex-typing of occupations

(child-care is an obvious example) is still present, Chinese women have been accepted in a wide range of jobs involving manual labour or technical skills which are still unusual for women in Western society.

But there are other sides to the attractiveness of the Mu Lan stereotype. Although female warriors and knights errant may have stepped outside of the prescribed behaviour for women, they did so most often for a reason which was supremely acceptable to the Confucian moral code--filial piety. In the earlier tales particularly, the most common motive for taking up the sword is the protection of the father, or revenge for his death. Women seldom act in groups, and never pursue aims that would benefit women as a group, or seriously threaten the existing power relationships between the sexes. In this way the female warrior stereotype may be the equivalent of the successful black athlete or entertainer, who can be tolerated as long as he remains an exception.

Despite these reservations, the available information on women in the popular culture suggests that at least on certain social and economic levels, women were less restricted in their activities than Confucian moralists believed they should be. It is by far the most serious failing of Ch'en Tung-yuan's History that he ignores this side of the women's tradition in China; not even the Taiping Rebellion and its promotion of female emancipation attract his attention.

CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEMINISM IN CHINA

Ch'en's interpretation of the development of the women's movement was probably an adequate explanation of events up to the time it was written, in 1926, despite its omissions. At that time China did appear to be moving in the direction of the democratic West. Her Republican system was being given new life by the recent successes of the Kuomintang, the party of the Republic. Women were making advances in education and in professional life, and though progress might be slow in rural areas, the large metropolises gave encouraging previews of the future.

Forty-odd years on into that future, we see an entirely different pattern of development. China moved towards the socialist rather than the capitalist West, and her new system was one which was tested and matured in the "backward" countryside. Women of no education, who had probably never heard of the Nationalist laws which declared the sexes equal, and in any case had no hope of seeing these enforced, became politicized. Their contribution to the victory of the Chinese Communist Party, primarily in production, and to a lesser extent as guerrilla fighters, and as members of the People's Liberation Army was enormous.

If we continue to accept Ch'en's estimation of the central position of the May Fourth period in the history of women's emancipation, in the face of later developments, then we force an artificial pattern on the development of the movement. Roxane Witke's dissertation, Transformation

of Attitudes Toward Women During the May Fourth Era of Modern China[1] is an excellent modern example of this approach.

Witke's Periodization: Feminism as a Product of the May Fourth Movement

Witke's estimation of the importance of the May Fourth period is obvious from her choice of subject. The larger part of the dissertation deals with the periodicals of the time and their debates on the "woman's question," although a background of traditional attitudes and an account of progress in women's emancipation are included.

Like Ch'en, Witke divides the history of the women's movement into three periods, beginning with the late years of the Ch'ing dynasty. While Ch'en sees the May Fourth period as the final division, the time at which the women's movement came fully to life, for Witke, it is the centre period, dividing early efforts at emancipation from mature, post-May Fourth efforts. She writes:

> Three stages of the historical process of female emancipation in modern China are discernible. There was first the early revolutionary stage when the "new woman," brought to intellectual life by the beginnings of modern education, struggled first against the Manchus, and soon after against the male. The second was the May Fourth era when the "woman problem" (fu-nü wen-t'i) coalesced as a major category of public debate, and gave rise to a variety of experimental programs, including the plain people's girls' schools, which were designed to extend modern consciousness to the masses of women. The subsequent period, in which women shift from being merely the subject of liberating arguments to being the agents of their own emancipation, constitutes the third phase.

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[1] (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1970).

> Only at this point is the term "feminism," in the sense of women campaigning and lobbying on their own behalf, appropriate.[2]

According to Witke, the significant change which occurred in the May Fourth period was not the recognition of the woman's question, for this had begun by the late nineteenth century; but the beginning of active pursuit of emancipation by women themselves. Earlier activity by women and youth had been directed toward national goals; now they sought their own liberation:

> As Mary Wright has pointed out, for the first time in Chinese history youth and women, the two most flagrantly persecuted though formally unrecognized orders of the old society, since the turn of the century began to rise as self-conscious interest groups. It is significant that their initial agitation was for public rather than private self-serving causes. Rising on the tide of nationalism which was moving to subvert the dynasty, it was not until the May Fourth years that youth launched a campaign to benefit themselves at the expense of the older generation, and women began concertedly to pursue their own emancipation.[3]

There is some difficulty in deciding from these two quotations exactly when "feminism" in Witke's terms began. In the first, women became "the agents of their own emancipation" only after the May Fourth period, while in the second it is during the May Fourth years that "women began concertedly to pursue their own emancipation."

What does emerge clearly, however, is Witke's emphasis on the May Fourth era as "a period of heightened vibrations in the revolutionary

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[2] Witke, Transformation of Attitudes, p. 330.

[3] Ibid., p. 7.

continuum of the last century."[4] During this period, according to Witke, a real change occurred in the understanding of the women's question in China, as topics like free love, individualism and the concept of chastity were widely discussed. Out of the social and intellectual turmoil of the May Fourth years, a new concept of women and the women's question was born, a concept which led directly to the development of feminism.

The May Fourth period was then, a turning point; the time at which the earlier, less-developed efforts at women's emancipation were superceded by a new, self-conscious, independent approach, by women and for women.

The Women's Movement of 1912

One of the great weaknesses of this periodization is its inability to adequately explain, within the boundaries of its self-imposed definition of feminism, the movement for equal rights which followed immediately on the establishment of the Republic. This movement grew directly out of the various women's corps in the Republican army.[5] The Women's Suffrage Alliance (Fu-nü ts'an-cheng t'ung-meng-hui 婦女參政同盟會), established in Nanking January 22, 1912, served as an overall coordinating organization for the various smaller groups. The long-range goals of the alliance included equal rights for men and women,

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[4] Witke, Transformation of Attitudes, p. 6.

[5] See below, pp. 97-101.

universal education for women, and social and familial reforms like ending the sale of women and ensuring monogamy and freely contracted marriage.[6]

One faction within the alliance, headed by T'ang Chün-ying 唐君英), presented a petition on March 2, 1912[7] to the parliament in Nanking demanding the inclusion of a clause regulating sexual equality in the constitution. On the 19th, in response to the assembly's refusal to immediately act on their demands, the suffragettes marched on the assembly building. They returned for a violent demonstration on the 20th.

Nowhere is there mention of male leadership, or even participation, in this early suffrage movement. Nor do the women seem to be acting on behalf of anyone but themselves.

In fact, in analysing the significance of the 1912 movement, Witke writes:

> . . . it shows that women's aggressive self-interest in equalizing their social roles was not the result of, but the prior condition of the May Fourth Movement.[8]

If this is so, on what grounds can we argue that feminism occurred only after the May Fourth Movement? Witke's definition of feminism is

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[6] Sun T'a (孫韙), "Chung-kuo fu-nü yün-tung chih chin-pu" (中國婦女運動之進步) Fu-nü-tsa-chih (婦女雜誌). IX, Special issue on the Women's Movement, (January, 1923) pp. 249-252.

[7] I have dated the petition from a North China Herald notice that: "Miss Chang Chun-yin (sic) and other amazons have demanded women's suffrage . . . " The North China Herald, March 2, 1912, p. 567.

[8] Witke, Transformation of Attitudes, p. 68.

simply "women campaigning and lobbying on their own behalf" a description which seems entirely applicable to the 1912 demonstration. Witke gives little explanation of the difference between the two periods; the first, which includes the 1912 demonstration, is called simply "the early revolutionary period." She elaborates slightly on her reasons for counting it as less mature, saying:

> The struggle for woman suffrage in China passed through two stages: the first in 1912 and the second a decade later, beginning in 1922. Differences of strategy and goal between these two periods indicate the greater seriousness with which the idea of female emancipation was taken in the early nineteen-twenties.[9]

Differences in strategy are readily apparent; differences in goals are rather less so. Certainly the emphasis on suffrage and legal equality were common to the two movements. The general approach to social and family reform was the same in 1922 as in 1912, though perhaps stated in a more organized way. In reference to 1912, Witke writes that:

> The fact that some seven years later these issues [the eleven items in the Women's Suffrage Alliance petition] were raised again as some of the most provocative topics of May Fourth debate indicates the degree of resistance to intellectual and social change which prevailed during the early years of the Republic.[10]

Surely it also indicates the degree to which feminist goals remained the same over the ten years between 1912 and 1922.

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[9] Witke, Transformation of Attitudes, p. 68.

[10] Ibid.

Nor is it entirely obvious that "differences in strategy . . . between these two periods indicate the greater seriousness with which the idea of female emancipation was taken in the early nineteen twenties." While some writers of the period would agree with Witke that the petitions and press receptions of 1922 were a more mature and effective approach,[11] the assessment was not unanimous. Hsiang Ching-yü argues that in 1912 the women had good organization and leadership and a good program of action, but were defeated by non-democratic conditions."[12] She is in turn rather scornful of the polite approach of the 1922 suffragettes, saying that "they have never dared make signs of resistance to the old society outside of kowtowing petitions and meek entreaties."[13]

We cannot even be sure that there really was an overall change in feminist strategy. As late as April, 1921, only a year before the "new" feminist movement began in Peking, women in Canton were demanding the vote in a style not far removed from that of the 1912 feminists. The North China Herald reports that:

> While the Provincial Assembly at Canton was discussing a bill for the election of district magistrates, 700 women rushed in demanding

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[11] See, for example, Chang Hsi-shen, (章錫琛) who charges that the women of 1912 harmed their cause by their militant, and to his mind, irresponsible, tactics. ("Chung-kuo fu-nü ssu-hsiang te fa-ta" 中國婦女思想的發達) in Homma Hisao (本間久雄) Ten Discussions on the Woman Question (Fu-nü wen-t'i shih-chiang 婦女問題十講) (Shanghai: Fu-nü wen-t'i yen-chiu hui, 1924), p. 262.

[12] Hsiang Ching-yü, "Chung-kuo tsui-chin fu-nü yün-tung," p. 80.

[13] Ibid., p. 83.

> the addition of a clause granting women the right to vote. Disorderly scenes ensued in which several of the suffragettes were injured and a number knocked down unconscious.[14]

The demonstration was followed by a meeting and a parade the next day which over one thousand women were reported to have attended. The women who had been injured in the March 30 demonstration later filed suit against the members of the assembly for damages for the injuries received.[15]

This incident is not mentioned in Ch'en's History; instead he implies that the student movement of 1922 was the first significant instance of feminist agitation to occur after 1912.[16] If, in fact, it was not, and if intervening demonstrations were not entirely peaceful in character, then the neat division in tactics between the two periods must be abandoned, and the apparent movement towards "greater seriousness" re-evaluated.

Further Conditions for Feminism

I would argue that in reserving the label "feminist" for the period after the May Fourth incident, Witke is setting up extra criteria which are not expressed in her definition of feminism: "women campaigning and lobbying on their own behalf." Two of the most obvious extra criteria are public debate and the idea of individualism.

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[14] The North China Herald, April 2, 1921, p. 11.

[15] The North China Herald, April 9, 1921, p. 83.

[16] See below, p. 159-60.

While there had been some public discussion of women's emancipation prior to 1916, it was only with the establishment of the New Youth and the flood of new periodicals which followed the May Fourth Incident that awareness of the problem spread widely in Chinese society.

Individualism (jen-ke chu-i 人各主義) was also brought into prominence during the May Fourth period. A direct adoption from Western thought, the concept of individualism was contrasted with the collective ideal of the patriarchal Chinese family and heralded as the new ethic. It supplied yet another argument against the oppression of women under the old society; the violation of their right to individual status.

Public debate and concern for women's rights as individuals are prominent characteristics of the Western women's movement. While not significantly present in the 1912 Chinese women's movement, these characteristics were fully developed by the time of the 1922 agitation for suffrage. The movement at that time had more participants and better staying power, but even more important in terms of classification, it resembled the Western feminist movement far more than had the violent outbursts of disbanded army women in 1912. It is tempting to see the 1922 agitation as a development from 1912; as progress in strategy and movement towards a more rational approach which is, comforting thought, so much like our own. To then consider the first manifestation as merely a prelude to fully grown feminism (or as a freak incident brought on by the euphoria of sudden revolutionary success), because it has little in common with our experience of the women's movement, is to bind the idea of feminism too tightly to a particular set of historical precedents.

Public debate and individualism were useful aids which furthered women's emancipation; but they do not seem to be prerequisites for women

"campaigning and lobbying on their own behalf."

Beyond unspoken qualifications for "feminism" lies another assumption, this time concerning the nature of Chinese history. Vastly oversimplified, it can be reduced to the syllogism: "the May Fourth Period marks the division between traditional and modern China. Feminism is a modern idea, therefore feminism in China must appear after the May Fourth Movement."

It is certainly true that feminism, in the sense of women seeking equal political rights, is as modern in China as the idea of political rights itself. The first time at which these rights became theoretically available, and feminism in this sense theoretically possible, however, was 1912, not 1919. The fact that women began immediately to agitate for suffrage may indicate more than just the degree to which the Western concepts of democracy and female equality had influenced Chinese intellectuals. It should, perhaps make us consider the question of cultural predisposition towards the acceptance of certain ideas. Perhaps a term such as "pre-feminist" would be useful to describe those aspects of traditional Chinese culture which furthered the eventual acceptance of female equality.

I have obviously oversimplified the argument for the May Fourth era as the dividing point between traditional and modern China. Research into language reform and the changing intellectual climate in general has made us aware that the May Fourth period was the culmination, rather than the beginning of enormous changes in Chinese society and thought.[17]

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[17] See for example, Michael Gasster, Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911, (Seattle and London: University of Washington

All of the concerns of the May Fourth period: nationalism, youth, women, language reform and cultural revolution, had previously existed and gone through separate stages of growth. Although in the revolutionary atmosphere of the May Fourth period they interacted and were influenced by one another, their relationship at this time should not blind us to the fact of their previous, less closely related development.

During the May Fourth era, feminism was bolstered by a new emphasis on individual rights and an all-out attack on the traditional family, while awareness of the problems of women was spread by modern magazines. But May Fourth feminism grew on a solid base, one that had been established with the women revolutionaries of 1911, who in turn, had available to them a native feminist tradition as well as the example of Western feminists. The May Fourth period was an exciting and important era in the development of Chinese feminism, one in which new aspects of the women's question were brought into prominence. It was a period of ideological enrichment in which discussions on the family, free love, the marriage system, chastity, and related problems widened public awareness of the social implications of women's equality. It was not, however, a transition period from immature to mature feminism, not if feminism is "women campaigning and lobbying on their own behalf."

It is even possible that the May Fourth period was a diversion of feminism in China from its original sources of energy. If we are to

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Press, 1969). Mary Backus Rankin, Early Chinese Revolutionaries, Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902-1911. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).

understand the women's movement as a whole, including the changes that have occurred since Ch'en wrote his History, we need a new interpretation, one which does not revolve around the literary excitement of the May Fourth period. Perhaps the best place to begin is with the images of women we find in the popular culture, and the evidence that some women actually lived these images. Once we are aware of the "pre-feminist" tendencies in the traditional culture we may be able to suggest a significantly different pattern of development.

An Alternate Interpretation

It may be that the women's movement is best explained in three stages: the first being a period of interaction between newly introduced ideas of republicanism and sexual equality and the feminist strains of the popular culture. This period ended with the women's attack on the assembly in 1912 and the participation of many of the feminists in the "second revolution" of 1913. The action which women took at this time, joining the Republican army and resorting almost immediately to violence in their attempt to win the vote, was directly influenced by the cultural stereotypes of the woman warrior and knight.

Increasing disillusionment with the political revolution and recognition of the need for intellectual change began the second phase of the women's movement. At this point, women's emancipation became much more intellectually fashionable, and ultimately became a symbol for the need for radical reform. During the May Fourth period, women's emancipation was taken out of the hands of women and carefully analysed

by male intellectuals who adopted ideas from Western theorists like Ellen Key and Edward Carpenter.[18] A new surge of feminist agitation began, this time adopting the rather milder methods of the English and American suffragettes.

Finally, as the hope for political progress under warlord governments died away, and the lines between the Communists and Nationalists hardened, the women's movement returned to its roots. Enriched, certainly, by the debates of the May Fourth Period, but despairing of finding either freedom from opporession or "individual human status" without revolution, feminists turned to the role that women had always played in extra-legal groups. In the Chinese Communist Party they re-lived the life of bandit and rebel women, supported, for the first time since the Taiping, by an official policy of sexual equality. In addition, the party's success in mobilizing women for resistance work might be partly explained by its skillful use of the image of women as revolutionary fighters in its propaganda. Some examples, now enshrined in every medium from revolutionary ballet to comic books, are: The White Haired Girl, the Red Women's Detachment, and the Red Lantern Brigade.

This interpretation is tenuous and will remain so until more research on the women's movement is done. In the meantime, it is necessary

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[18] Ellen Key, (1849-1926) was a Swedish feminist. Her theories on free love, (particularly the idea that mutual love was the only moral basis for marriage), and on the importance of motherhood, were widely discussed during the May Fourth period. Who Was Who, A Companion to "Who's Who" containing the biographies of those who Died During the Period 1916-1928, (London: A. & C. Black Ltd., 1929), p. 503.

for all who would study the movement to recognize the shortcomings of the interpretation put forward in A History of the Life of Chinese Women. Ch'en Tung-yüan's book can be useful as long as it is realized that it is a partial explanation of female emancipation in China before 1930. A satisfactory explanation will only be achieved when we take into consideration the material that Ch'en ignores, particularly the feminist heritage in China's popular culture.

A Note on the Translation

The work which follows is not a formal or highly annotated translation. This is, in part, due to the nature of the text; Ch'en writes in colloquial Chinese which does not demand detailed philological explanation. It is also a reflexion of my purpose in translating the History; that is, to make available the most important source on the early women's movement in China.

The History of the Life of Chinese Women is not a triumph of modern Chinese literature, but an interesting social document. My aim has been to produce a translation in colloquial English, with as few forays into side questions as possible. Annotation has therefore been limited to brief explanations of names and terms unfamiliar to Western readers. In conflicts between literal translation and smooth English I have tried to favour the latter. For example, the phrase Hsien mu liang ch'i (賢母良妻) has been translated as "good wife and mother" rather than the more accurate "virtuous mother and good wife."

A more important example of a sacrifice of literal translation to comfortable English usage is my alteration of Ch'en's metaphor for the intellectual revolution in China--"the new tide" (hsin ch'ao 新潮). When Ch'en was writing, "the new tide" was a conventional expression, close to cliché, stripped of any strong visual imagery by continuous use. Therefore it was not incongruous for him to divide the history of the women's movement into the "embryonic" (chieh t'ai 結胎) period of the new tide, the "immature" or "larval" (literally "wriggling

like worms" ch'un tung 蠢動) period of the new tide, and the period of the "birth" (tan sheng 誕生) of the new tide.

In English the metaphors are hopelessly scrambled, and there are no tidal terms to substitute which adequately convey the sense of Ch'en's three periods. In addition, our image of tides is inseparable from the idea of ebb and flow; the tide never remains full, but begins to wane almost immediately. I do not believe that Ch'en intended to convey an impression of endless mutability; rather he saw history in terms of continuous progress toward a more enlightened future.

For these reasons I have used "intellectual revolution" in place of "new tide," and have substituted "the germination," "the first growth," and "the flowering" of the intellectual Revolution for "embryonic," "larval" and "birth." The second period suffers most in the change, for Ch'en's use of ch'un tung suggests vigorous but undirected movement, a shade of meaning which is lost in "the first growth."

The early pages of the translation have been edited. I begin my translation with Ch'en's ninth chapter, "The Life of Women in the Reform Period," and give in full his "General Discussion" and the introductory paragraph of the first section of this chapter, ("Before the Reform Movement of 1898"). The rest of the section is not included. The translation resumes with the introduction to the next section, omits the following section devoted to a revolutionary tract in favour of women's emancipation, and is complete from then on, except for an appended chart of women mentioned in Chinese history up to the Manchu dynasty. Brief descriptions of the missing material are given in the body of the translation.

A HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF CHINESE WOMEN

CHAPTER 1

THE LIFE OF WOMEN IN THE REFORM PERIOD

General Discussion

Although it is widely known that the life of Chinese women in the recent past is quite different from that of former times, few realize that the women's movement in China has a history of more than thirty years. These thirty-odd years, moreover, should be divided into three stages during which today's conditions gradually evolved. Although the American and European influence had already entered China following the Treaty of Nanking signed after the Opium War (1842), the beginning of genuine reform was the period following the Sino-Japanese war. In 1894, China and Japan went to war over Korea, and China's armed forces were crushingly defeated by Japan. When, in March of the next year, Li Hung-chang, filled with feelings of disgrace and resentment, went to Japan and agreed to the twenty-one articles of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, China's international status immediately collapsed. This at last caught the attention of some Chinese, and the shock waves of their efforts to plan for strength engulfed the whole country; finally people came to realize the value of Western culture. The life of women also followed this tendency toward change. I call the period from this

time until just before the 1911 Revolution "The Period of Germination of the Intellectual Revolution."

Before the 1911 Revolution, the activities of the revolutionary movement were carried out with great intensity, and everywhere there were women participating in the movement. After the Revolution, in the first two years of the Republic, women enthusiastically joined the army, and ardently participated in politics; at first glance it seemed a glorious page in the movement for women's rights. Practically speaking, however, at this time the Intellectual Revolution still lacked a coherent system of thought and had only recognized its potential but was not yet ready to exploit it. The apparent freedom of women at this time was made possible only by the current situation; therefore I call this "The Period of the First Growth of the Intellectual Revolution."

The smouldering coals of the movement for women's revolution finally burst into flame in January of 1916 when Ch'en Tu-hsiu (陳獨秀) in The New Youth magazine (Hsin Ch'ing-nien 新青年) published an essay entitled "1916." He recommended that young women should rise from their status of being controlled to being in a position of control, and was the first to say that the Confucian theory of the Three Principles[1] ought to be destroyed. After this time there were repeated discussions of the woman question in The New Youth. The more the fire burned, the hotter it

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[1] The san Kang 三綱 are the three "net ropes," the three basic relationships of human society. They are: the relationship between a ruler and his minister, a father and his son and a husband and his wife. See Yen Shih-ku's 顏師古 annotation to Pan Ku 班固, Ch'ien Han Shu 前漢書 in the Ssu pu pei yao 四部備要 (Shanghai: Chung-hua shu-chu, 1936), Chuan 85, p. 15.

became, until in 1919 the May Fourth Movement burst like a single shell, exploding everywhere in the country. The movement to liberate women spread simultaneously all over China. Since that time, through academic discussion and practical experience, the life of Chinese women has finally reached its present state. It is now ten years since the publication of Ch'en Tu-hsiu's essay "1916." These ten years I call "The Flowering of the Intellectual Revolution."

I deal with the two periods "Germination" and "First Growth" under the chapter "The Reform Period." "The Period of the Flowering of the Intellectual Revolution" belongs to a different section, and is discussed in the chapter "The Life of Contemporary Women."

The Germination of the Intellectual Revolution

A. First Period--Before the Reform Movement of 1898

In the period between the Sino-Japanese war and the Hundred Days of Reform, there were two movements concerned with the life of women: the anti-footbinding movement and the movement to extend the system for women's education. Neither of these concerns was new, but it was only at this time that they took on the qualities of a movement and attracted the attention of a good many people. After the agreement to open five commercial ports under the Treaty of Nanking (1842), foreigners in China enthusiastically evangelized and established schools. By this time a missionary society had established a private girls' school, and foreigners

were ridiculing the custom of binding feet.[2]

The two following sections are omitted:

The Anti-footbinding Movement

The Movement to Extend Women's Education

The first section is made up of a quotation from Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's (梁啟超) Pien-fa tung-i 變法通議 (Suggestions for Reform) condemning footbinding as an inhumane custom and an impediment to women's education, and Liang's rules for an experimental anti-foot binding society.

The second section begins by pointing out the shortcomings of girls' schools established by missionary societies; that is, their preference for proselytizing instead of educating, and their willingness to comply with the restrictions that Chinese society had traditionally placed on women. The rules of the Chinkiang girls' private school are given at length to support this assertion.[3]

Next, Ch'en notes that, after the Sino-Japanese War, progressives like Liang Ch'i'ch'ao had begun to call for women's education. He again quotes from Liang's Pien-fa tung-i giving arguments in favour of establishing girls' schools.

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[2] It seems probable that the school referred to here was that established by Miss Aldersey, a missionary for the English "Society for Promoting Female Education in the East." Margaret Burton in The Education of Women in China says: "when, after the treaty of 1842, five ports were finally opened to foreigners, she at once went to Ningpo. . . . There in 1844 she established the first school for girls in all China. . . ." (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1911), p. 35.

[3] The school was established by the Methodist Episcopal Mission. (Samuel Couling, Encyclopedia Sinica, (Taipei: Ch'eng wen Publishing Company, 1967 (1917)), p. 363.

Liang's fundamental concern was strengthening the nation. He argues in the quotations given that until women are educated to support themselves they will always be parasites, an intolerable drain on the economy of China. Furthermore, the education of women will create good, competent mothers, who will care for, and in part educate, China's next generation. The quality of this generation can, according to Liang, determine China's future.

B. The Second Period--After the 1898 Reforms

Historical perspective should not be used to judge an event as fortunate or unfortunate. When we look at the reasons for the failure of the 1898 Reform Movement, all we can do is trace back to the social environment at that time, which did not allow the movement to succeed. From another viewpoint, however, the defeat of the 1898 Reforms was a great loss to the government of China and the state structure, and a heavy blow to those seeking changes in the life of women. The Reform Movement faded like a short-lived flower. The aims of anti-footbinding societies were not realized, and no system of women's education was established.

The Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi, who was representative of those who did not recognize the hardships of women, then gave her support to the Boxer Rebellion. In 1901, when the Allied Armies occupied Peking, she fled, taking the Kuang Hsü Emperor with her. In September of the next year, peace treaties were established and the allied armies slowly withdrew. The imperial court did not dare to return from Sian until January 1902. The officials had then been without a prince for two years.

The Empress Dowager's heart was like a ravening beast, and she was not concerned for the good of the country. But after she had suffered this blow she was reprimanded by good officials within the court, and officials outside sent memorials to the emperor. Thus, in outward appearance at least, she could not refuse to plan for reform.

Another strong incentive for governmental reform was the revolutionary thought which sprang up spontaneously among the people. The revolutionary party published many pamphlets; one very radical book concerning the women's reform movement was The Women's Bell, (Nü-chieh chung 女界鐘) by "freedom lover" Chin I, (金一) published in 1903.[4]

The following section, "The Promotion of Women's Rights in The Women's Bell, (consisting of quotations from The Women's Bell and Ch'en Tung-yüan's comments on the quotations) is omitted.

In the excerpts from his book, Chin I argues that men and women are essentially equal, but that women are made subservient by their lack of education.

He sees bound feet, the style of women's clothing, superstition and the traditional restrictions on women as the four great impediments to the achievement of equality. He also lists the rights that women should have, including the right to an education, the right to own property,

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[4] Chin I, or Chin Sung ts'en (金松岑), was the translator of Kamayama Sentaro's Kinsei museifu shugi which appeared in 1904 as Wu cheng-fu chu-i (Anarchism).

See Martin Bernal, "The Triumph of Anarchism over Marxism, 1906-1907," in China in Revolution: The First Phase, 1900-1913, ed. Mary C. Wright, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968, p. 117.

freedom of movement, social contact, and freedom of marriage.

Chin I separates women into three groups, according to their educational and social advantages: those who can change the social climate, those who can free themselves, but are unable to free others, and those who are trapped in the old society. He urges women, especially those in the first group, to get involved in the revolution and shoulder the responsibilities that their relative enlightenment has placed upon them.

i. The Establishment of a System for Women's Education

In 1901, two years before the publication of The Women's Bell, the government ordered that private colleges should be turned into government schools. All colleges would be changed according to their location: those situated in a provincial capital would become middle schools, and those in chou and hsien would become primary schools. Finally, the Peking Normal School was established. The government did not even bother to consider women's schools.

At that time, however, privately established girls' schools sprang up everywhere like bamboo shoots after the spring rain. (The Shanghai Patriotic Girls' School was founded in the winter of 1902 by Ts'ai Chieh-min (蔡孑民) and others).[5] Outside of the capital there were quite a number of officials at all levels petitioning for the establishment of women's education.

The government opened a Bureau of Education in 1905, and ruled that women's schools would be regarded as part of family education. In

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[5] Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei (蔡元培).

this year, an official school system was established, and women's education began to come under the control of the Bureau of Education. In the first month of 1907, the Bureau of Education fixed thirty-six regulations for women's normal schools, and twenty-six regulations for women's primary schools, finally giving women's education a position within the educational system. The first article of the statement of general principles in the establishment of women's normal schools said:

> In women's normal schools, our basic purpose is to train teachers for girls' primary schools and also to lecture on methods to protect and nourish young children in the hope of benefiting the family livelihood and being of advantage to family education.

Thus, aside from producing teachers, the purpose was still that of training women to further family education. At this time, too, the standard of "good wives and mothers" was formally declared. The first rule in "The Essentials in Women's Normal School Education" said:

> In China, female virtue has been exalted from one age to another. The Way of being a woman, a wife and a mother can be found in the classics and the histories; the works of the ancient scholars give the details clearly. Today, when teaching women normal school students, from time to time we must encourage them to cultivate all the womanly virtues: modesty, serenity, obedience, virtue, compassion, purity, uprightness and frugality, in the hope that they will not turn their backs on the ethical teachings of China's past, and the virtues customarily esteemed in women. All bizarre talk of letting loose, and freedom, (Original note: from not maintaining separation between men and women, to choosing one's own mate and speaking at assemblies on political matters) we must rigorously reject and throw out, holding fast to tradition. (Original note: Among China's men there are those who regard women as too base, or do not treat them fairly. This is an evil custom, and we must concentrate, in men's education, on rectifying and improving this. As for women, we must emphasize obedience to mother, father and husband.)

In this statement, the emphasis on the Way of being a woman, wife and mother, and the promotion of the three obediences,[6] was carried to an extreme. The school rules of all girls' schools were comprised of the eight big characters; modest, serene, obedient, virtuous, compassionate, pure, upright and frugal. Women's education at this time was merely a repetition, in a different form, of the accumulated views of over two thousand years, without even the slightest new significance. There is no need to quote the passages on women's normal school education which follow this as they are all similar to these words on "good wives and mothers." However, in the section dealing with the aim of each course in the curriculum, there is one clause explaining the way in which the course on moral values should be taught:

> All ethics textbooks must base themselves on the classics, gathering together the finest parts of Biographies of Women, Prohibitions for Women, Advice to Women, the Women's Classic on Filial Piety, Rules for the Household, Advice for the Women's Quarters, Rules for the Women's Apartments, Mr. Wen's Advice to Mothers, A Compilation of the Classics of Women's Education, Standards Bequeathed to Women, Girls' Education, Education for Ladies, and other such books, as well as those Western Books on ethics for women which are not contrary to China's customary teachings. In writing textbooks we should extract the essence from these works and blend them together; and, moreover, grade them in order of difficulty, and add explanatory illustrations in order that they be easily understood.

When this regulation was decided on, much effort was put into the project of making anthologies from books on women's education from

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[6] The san ts'ung 三從, or three obediences; the obedience of a woman to her father, until married, her husband until widowed, and to her son until her death. See Ta Tai li-chi 大戴禮記 (n.p., Kuang ya shu-chu, 1899), chuan 13, 11.

Han times to the present.

After the regulations had been made public, in Peking and in the large cities of each province, numerous women's normal schools were established. The medical school outside Chien Gate at Pachiao, Liuliching was reorganized as the Peking Women's Normal School. It had not been open long when something happened that attracted the attention of the Bureau of Education, which then dispatched an order to all girls' schools:

> Recently, we have heard that students from all of the girls' schools are going to the charitable society at the girls' school established at Liuli Yao and are selling handicraft articles there in order to contribute to the society's funds. Moreover they are holding concerts of singing and dancing. On reading the Peking Women's Daily,[7] we see advertisements placed by the society, and furthermore, there is talk of holding a circus.
>
> When one examines the raising of funds to help alleviate disasters, one sees that, in essence, it is a noble action; we should bow to public opinion in this. These girls who sell their handicrafts are comparable to the virtuous beauties of ancient times who pawned their hairpins and earrings and sold their books and paintings in order to help raise money; they are not second in virtue. But in this society, the programmes of dancing and singing go on for days and days--this really flies in the face of China's customs. Furthermore, it necessitates great neglect of schoolwork. If, beyond this, they hold a circus, and add to the confusion, this Bureau will not tolerate it.
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> Today, women's education is in the early stages of growth. Those enthusiasts who want to extend education ought to co-operate and face difficulties together, and not give people a pretext

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[7] Pei-ching nü-pao 北京女報 (The Peking Women's Daily) was founded in 1905 and ran for at least 2 years. It published transcript matter from the Peking Gazettes, news of women's schools and organizations and articles promoting women's education. The financial backing for the paper was probably supplied by the Empress Dowager; in any case the paper is unusual among women's papers in advocating staunch nationalism on a basis of Manchu-Han solidarity and loyalty to the throne.

(Charlotte L. Beahan, "The Women's Press in China Prior to the Revolution of 1911," (draft of a paper prepared for a conference on "Women in Chinese Society," San Francisco, June 11-15, 1973), pp. 32-37).

> for gossip and for causing obstructions.
>
> Now this department wishes to explain clearly its exhortations to each student: when contributing handicrafts in order to raise relief funds, you should, as much as is possible, send others out to deliver them, and not go to the society in person. Attending society meetings and singing and dancing is even more inappropriate social conduct. Holding a circus in the midst of all this shows further lack of respect for the Way of being a student. Because the Capital City is the foremost district, every woman student must recite the classics and listen fully to teachings on propriety [as an example to other districts].
>
> This Bureau takes as its responsibility all of the schools in the country. We wish to impress upon everyone who establishes a school that they must make each woman student understand the profound way in which this Bureau respects women students, and the great pains it takes in protecting women's schools.

Twenty years have passed since all of this happened, and we can see how trivial it was. But the Bureau of Education blew up the incident out of all proportion, to the point where it seems almost ridiculous.

ii. Reaction Against the Idea of Women's Rights

Support for the idea of women's rights, expressed in works such as The Woman's Bell, began to attract a great deal of attention at this time, and a group of "defenders of the way" rose in opposition. The Ministry of Education's adoption of the good wife and mother as the educational standard cannot really be considered very conservative. On the other hand, at the end of the commentary on ethics in The School of Dialects (方言學堂), which we see from the preface was written by Ch'en Tseng-shou (陳曾壽), is a section bitterly attacking those who advocate women's rights, saying:

> There are some petty husbands, blind to the great principle that man rules outside the home, who cast aside this sacred responsibility, and call out for women's rights. They won't be satisfied

until women rule outside the home. To do this is to take a serious and far-reaching duty and entrust it to someone who can only worry about immediate interests.

To do so not knowing that it shouldn't be done is unwise. If it is a case of taking these weak creatures and entrusting to them this difficult and vast mission, knowing their inability, like letting a monkey climb a tree and ignoring the consequences, then this is inhumane.

If a man is unable to carry out his righteous duty to preserve life, and yet would seek protection in the hands of women, then he is shameless.

Those who would promote this doctrine will cause men to cast aside their sacred responsibility of ruling outside, and so the affairs of the country will fall into ruin; and the women to neglect their sacred duty of ruling inside, and the Way of the home will also be laid waste. Hard and soft will lose their virtue, and the way of men will be perverted, inner and outer transposed, and propriety and righteousness destroyed. Heaven and earth will be shut off from one another, principles will change to chaos; as in the first six of the k'un diagram, "when there is hoarfrost underfoot, solid ice is not far off," to six at the top, "dragons battling in the meadow, their flowing blood is black and yellow." How can a gentleman of broad wisdom have foresight to see this and not tremble with fear?[8]

Even today this kind of thinking cannot be avoided, and so it is worthy of our attention. Whenever an intellectual revolution develops, it will be opposed by a group of conservatives. Out of this

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[8] The second diagram of The I Ching is k'un, the receptive (earth, female). It is the complement of ch'ien, the creative (heaven, male). The two are interdependent but not equal, for the receptive is only productive of good when it is led by the creative. If it tries to become equal with the creative, it becomes evil.

When Ch'en Tseng-shou quotes the text "when there is hoarfrost underfoot, solid ice is not far off," he is warning that signs of decay, like hoarfrost signalling the coming of winter (death), are present, and will go on increasing unless measures are taken to stop them.

The "dragons battling in the meadow" are the male and female principles at war in a struggle which will end in defeat for the female principle, but with injury to both.

For a full explanation of the texts see Richard Wilhelm, The I Ching or Book of Changes, translated by Cary F. Baynes, (Princeton University Press: Princeton, New Jersey) 1970 (1950) pp. 10-15.

situation will evolve a compromise faction, the largest group in any society, which is able to gain power. All of the regulations for girls' schools decided on by the Ministry of Education were the result of compromise.

In 1905, Lai Chen-huan (賴振寰) of Shun-te (順德) published a book called Collected Evidence in Favour of Women's Education (Ch'üan nü hsüeh chi cheng, 勸女學集證). From the author's preface we read that in 1897 he had advocated an anti-footbinding society, and in 1903 had promoted women's education in his home village. His thought, however, was extremely corrupt; the book at the most recorded earlier people's praise for admirable conduct, which coincided with the stipulations in the Ministry of Education's self-cultivation course in Women's Normal Schools. He also printed a book for the enlightenment of the common people called A Few Words on Women's Education (Nü-hsüeh szu-wu yen ho pien 女學四五言合編). Although it was all the same old line of "the Way of reverence and filial piety," "respect for the husband," and "honouring her domestic function," he repeatedly said that he took the promotion of women's education as his personal mission and still regarded himself as a man of the times.

In 1909, the Peking I Shen Company lithographed a popular tract called Domestic Models for Women (Nü-tzu chia-t'ing mu-fan 女子家庭模範). It is said that the Chen Kuo-kung's (鎮國公) wife, Su-wan-kua-erh shih ch'ien nien (蘇完瓜爾佳錢年) was the editor.[9]

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[9] I have not been able to identify this woman, but it seems probable that she was a Manchu, and the characters given are a transliteration

This also was a repetition of the old formulas for women's education, but it still received a great welcome. In the appendix there is an article called "The Right Path of Womanly Virtue." It says:

> Home and family were established with the most ancient principles. All men seek wives who will regard the rearing of children and keeping the house as their purpose; the woman serves the man and regards rearing children and keeping house as the root of her being. But in the demoralized customs of the modern world, women look on marriage as a means to obtain honour, if the clothes and financial resources are a little less than sufficient, then she rouses her resentment and becomes insatiable. Coveting the dowry of others, she resents her husband's poverty. Who would have thought that a wealthy and noble life is accumulated from virtue and caused by human heartedness, as in the ancient saying, "great fortunes come from fate, small fortunes from diligence?" Since she is a woman she should take up the broom and dustpan, operate the well and the mortar, taking the bitter and sweet together. Even ancient and modern kings, vassals, generals and ministers, have their periods of prosperity and decline. How much more so for a woman. If they don't concentrate on diligently accumulating virtue, how can they hope to enjoy good fortune for long? After a woman has married, these are her duties:
>
> 1. to treat her husband's parents with filial piety, to serve them with her labour.
> 2. to aid her husband in respecting his brothers, in order to create honest and true friendship and love.
> 3. to rear children for her husband and continue the ancestral hall.
> 4. to aid her husband in cultivating virtue so that he may be an outstanding man.
> 5. to instruct the children for her husband so they bring honour to the family.
> 6. to help her husband to acquire property to avoid falling into poverty.
>
> The above six items are necessary for a woman to establish herself in life.

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of her name. In any case, the title Chen Kuo-kung was a Ch'ing dynasty title of the seventh rank reserved for members of the royal family. See Li tai chih kuan piao 歷代職官表 (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chu, 1965), p. 201.

Not only are the Ministry of Education regulations and the popular texts conservative, when we look at the titles of essays at women's schools at that time, we realize that women's education was equally conservative. The great majority of the essays written in girls' schools at that time were:

--On Post Hsia Marriage and the Consort Chiang of the Chou[10]
--Dynasty Bringing About Dynastic Restoration
--On the Classic handed down by Fu Sheng's daughter,[11] and Pan Chao's continuation of the History of the Han.[12]
--On Meng Mu and Le Yang's wife breaking the shuttle[13]
--Discussion on Nu Wa's patching the sky[14]
--Discussion on the necessity of respectfulness and self-denial and not disobeying one's husband and sons.
--Plan for giving up jewelry and establishing banks.
--Thoughts after reading the ballad of Mu Lan.[15]

(Consult Essay Models from Lung Chiang Girls' School, printed in 1910. (Lung Chiang Nü-Hsüeh wen-fan 龍江女學文範)

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[10] Chiang Hou 姜后 was the consort of Prince Hsüan of the Chou dynasty in the ninth century B.C. She reprimanded her husband for his irresponsible behaviour, causing him to reform. Herbert A. Giles, A Chinese Biographical Dictionary, (Taipei: Literature House Ltd., 1965 (1898)), p. 132.

[11] Fu Sheng 伏生 concealed a copy of the Shang Shu (The Canons of Yao and Shun) at the time of the destruction of the classics in the Chin dynasty (221-209 B.C.). His daughter learned the book from him and passed it on when Fu Sheng grew old, and his speech became garbled. See Ch'ien Han Shu, chuan 88, p. 9.

[12] Pan Chao 班昭 was the sister of the Han historian Pan Ku 班固 . He died before he was able to finish his history of the early Han; she completed it for him. See Hou Han Shu 後漢書 in Ssu pu pei yao, chuan 114, 3-8.

[13] Meng Mu 孟母 the mother of Mencius, was considered to be the most virtuous of mothers. She was a widow and supported herself and her child by weaving. In order to reprimand him for his negligence in his studies she slit the unfinished weaving on her loom from top to bottom. See Liu K'ai 劉開 Kuang Lieh nu chuan 廣列女傳

They are all in the same vein, never rising above this level. But it is not even necessary to visit the inside of the school. If we look at the couplets inscribed on the pillars of girls' schools of that time, we can see the essential meaning of their education. The couplets at Lung Chiang Girls' School were:

> Confucius and Mencius are resources for the education of a mother.
> The classic of Fu' and Pan's history have significance for all.
> A sagely mother can do the work of fostering and guiding.
> A fledgling daughter knows how to sing the song of the republic.

Women's education at this time was all like this, reformed on the surface but conservative in essence.

iii. The Accomplishments of Girls' Schools Established by Missionary Societies

Girls' schools established by Chinese were still rare in the first five years after the Bureau of Education's statement on regulations for girls' schools. The schools established by foreigners had

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(n.p., 1884), Chuan 19, l. 7.

Lo Yang 樂羊 went away to study, but returned after one year. When his wife asked the reason for his return he said that he had come back to see her. She then cut her weaving in order to show him that like the weaving on her loom, his studies, once abandoned, could never be completed. See the Hou Han Shu, chuan 114, l. 8.

[14] Nü Wa 女媧, a legendary figure, the sister and successor of Fu Hsi 伏羲. When Kung Kung 共工 rebelled and broke one of the eight columns supporting heaven, she repaired the breach by melting down stones. See E.T.C. Werner, A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology, (New York: The Julian Press, Inc., 1961), pp. 334-335.

[15] See above, pp. 35-36, and note 4, p. 36.

already accomplished a great deal. The American Young J. Allen in the tenth collection of A Comprehensive Examination of the Life of Women in All Lands (translation published in 1903) gives statistics for girl students of missionary society schools:[16]

Type of School	No. of Schools	Total No. of Students	Women Students
Colleges	12	1,814	96
Theological Colleges	66	1,315	543
Higher and Middle Schools	166	6,393	3,509
Technical Schools	7	191	96
Medical Schools and Service Hospitals	30	251	32
Kindergartens	6	194	male and female students estimated equal at 97
Primary Schools		no details	
Total		10,158	4,373

The First Growth of the Intellectual Revolution

A. The First Period--Before the 1911 Revolution

i. Women Who Studied Overseas

The Ch'ing court began sending students overseas very early; by 1872, they had already sent students to the United States, and later

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[16] Young J. Allen, or Lin Lo-chih 林樂知 was a Georgia Missionary who left the United States for China in 1859. He presented a copy of Women in All Lands to the Empress Dowager, "who graciously acknowledged it,"--according to The North China Herald, February 21, 1925, p. 305.

continuously sent people abroad. Government policy on overseas students was formally set down in 1894. In Kiangsu, as early as 1883, women were allowed to sit for the examination given to determine which students should be sent abroad; three women were selected, becoming qualified for government support for overseas students.

But there were already several women studying abroad. In Complete Works of the Ice-Drinkers' Studio[17] there is an essay written in 1896 called "The Diary of Miss K'ang of Kiangsi." Miss K'ang Ai-te[18] was twenty-five years old at this time, and had already returned to China after graduating from Michigan University in the United States. According to the account, Miss K'ang became an orphan in her infancy, and travelled to America at the age of nine with an American woman, Gertrude Howe. In 1880, while in America, Miss K'ang was a schoolmate of Miss Shih Mei-yu;[19]

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[17] The author is Liang Ch'i'ch'ao. Levenson notes: "His [Liang's] own work began to appear in a more permanent form; in 1902-1903, to facilitate distribution in China, Liang made a selection of articles and lessons written for the Ch'ing'i pao and Ta-t'ung hsueh-hsiao and published them in Tokyo under the title Yin-ping shih ch'üan-chi (Complete Works of the Ice-Drinkers' Studio). Joseph R. Levenson, Liang Ch'i'ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 68.

[18] Ida Kahn (1873-1930), who later became a prominent physician, was adopted as an infant by Gertrude Howe of the Methodist Mission at Kiukiang. She made her first trip to the United States with Gertrude Howe in 1882, returning to China in 1884. It was on the second trip, in 1892, that she studied with Mary Stone at the University of Michigan Medical School, not, as Ch'en states, in 1880. See Howard L. Boorman, (ed.), Biographical Dictionary of Republican China. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967). Vol. 2, pp. 225-226. According to Boorman, Ida Kahn's Chinese name was K'ang Ch'eng (康成) rather than K'ang Ai-te (康愛德).

[19] Shih Mei-yu (石美玉), or Mary Stone, (1873-1954), trained as a physician in America and was best known for her work as superintendent of the Elizabeth Skelton Danforth Hospital at Kiukiang. Boorman, Biographical Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 128-130.

they should be considered the earliest women returned students from America.

But K'ang Yu-wei's daughter, T'uug-pi (同璧) went to India by herself to visit her father when she was nineteen years old. A poem she wrote says: "I am China's first woman scholar to come from the West." This is in reference to India. Japan's proximity to Chekiang and Kiangsu makes it probable that after the 1898 Reforms, numerous women from these provinces went there to study. Returned students from Japan were the majority of the participants in the actual revolution.

ii. Women Who Sacrificed for the Revolution

After the Boxer rebellion, the revolutionary movement was fitful in its development. Many women participated in the movement at this time. In A New History of Chinese Women (Shen-chou nü-tzu hsin shih 神州女子新史), published by the China Bookshop in 1913, Hsü T'ien-hsiao (徐天嘯) quotes a portion of a certain gentleman's notes:

> In midwinter of 1901, I returned home to China from Kyoto with several Japanese friends, aboard the Genkai Maru, and then travelled over the country, with the exception of Korea and Manchuria. One day, near twilight, we were about to lodge at an inn, when we met with a woman, pretty and elegant in appearance and simply dressed. The cold moonbeams congealed; the wintry mountain wrinkled blue-green. Accompanied by an old nurse and a maidservant, she hurriedly set out for the north. I was intrigued by all of this. On entering the inn, I saw several poems jotted on the wall; the ink was not yet dry on the elegantly written characters. The first poem said:
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> I was originally a bright pearl and had self-respect,
> Incense from the golden urn gently hugged the kingfisher robe.
> For whom did I throw away the land of my native village?
> A limitless expanse of white snow.

The second poem read:

My rosy cheeks in the bright mirror fade
with time.
The cold wind, like scissors, cuts my icy
flesh.
Grieving, again I take the Elm Pass Road'
Everywhere the wind flutters the five-
coloured flags.

(Author's note: this refers to the variegated colours of the flags of foreign nations and definitely not to the five coloured national flag adopted after the Republic was established).

The third poem read:

There is no way to waken this country's
people
Streams of pure tears she wiped away with
her red handkerchief.
I could willingly get used to the insults
of other races
But how could I ever live with injustice
from men.

There was still another poem, but the characters were so freely written that I could not make them out. Ah! Who was this person? I asked the landlord, but he didn't have the slightest idea.

In the end, did this woman really exist? Or was she only an ideal in the minds of the revolutionaries of the time? From this account alone, it is very difficult to decide. Before 1911, however, a great many women died for the Revolution.

Twelve years before the Republic, at the time of the Boxer uprising, T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang plotted an uprising at Hankow, but the affair was divulged and T'ang was killed.[20] Miss Chou Fu-chen, (周福貞)

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[20] T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang (唐才常) was a Hunanese reformer, and a follower of K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao. He arranged for his own

Miss Mao Chih-hsiang (毛芷香) and Miss Liu Hui-fang (劉蕙芳) were also martyred at this time. They were the earliest women to sacrifice their lives for the revolution.

Five years before the Revolution, Hsü Hsi-lin shot the governor of Anhwei province, En-ming, (恩銘) at Anking.[21] After the uprising was defeated, the Ch'ing court ordered each province to seize and deal with the remaining members of the group. Hsü's cousin, Miss Ch'iu Chin, (秋瑾) had beforehand set up association offices in Cheng and Hsien Chü districts of Shaohsing, (Chekiang province) with Chu Shao-k'ang,[22] Wang Chi-fa[23] and others. After the plot failed, she was seized

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student group (the Tzu-li hui or "Independence Society") to join with the central Yangtze branches of the ancient Ko-lao hui (Brothers and Elders Society) for a rising at Hankow in 1900--only to be discovered, seized, and executed." John K. Fairbank et. al., East Asia, The Modern Transformation. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965) p. 636.

[21] Hsü Hsi-lin (徐錫麟) was born in 1873 in Tung-pu village, near Shaohsing. He was interested in Western learning and spent a short time in Japan where he became involved with the revolutionaries living there. He was taken on as an assistant by the Manchu En-ming (恩銘) when the latter was appointed Governor of Anhwei in 1906, and given charge of the police academy in Anking. From this position, Hsü attempted to lead an uprising which was spectacular in its lack of organization and common sense. The uprising was to be supported by several secret societies and Ch'iu Chin's group at Ta T'ung School, but coordination was poor and Hsü had been executed before the others realized that the revolt was underway. See Mary Rankin, Early Chinese Revolutionaries (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) for a full account.

[22] Chu Shao-k'ang (竺紹康) was the founder, in 1900, of the P'ing-Yang Society, a secret society with its greatest strength in Cheng hsien of Shaohsing prefecture. He worked closely with the revolutionaries in the area until 1907, and held several military posts after the 1911 Revolution. Ibid., p. 139.

[23] Wang Chin-fa (王金發) was the chief assistant of Chu Shao-k'ang. A military graduate under the old system, he became more

at Shaohsing and executed at Hsüant'ingk'ou. The attention of the people was strongly aroused at this incident.

Ch'iu Chin, also called Hsüan Ch'ing (璿卿) or Ching Hsiung (競雄) was a native of Shanyin hsien, Chekiang province. She admired heros such as Ching-k'o and Nieh-cheng,[23] and called herself the "Heroine of Chien Lake."[25] At nineteen she was married to a member of the Wang clan of Hunan, and had one son and one daughter. After the Boxer Rebellion, she studied in Japan,[26] organized an "Encompassing Love Society"[27] and planned with her comrades for the revolution. After she returned to China (1906) while teaching at the Shaohsing Ming-tao Girls' School, she established the Chinese Women's Journal,[28] strongly advocating male and

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closely identified with the revolutionaries than with secret societies after 1907, and was assassinated after the Revolution. Ibid., p. 135.

[24] Ch'ing-k'o (荆軻) and Nieh-cheng (聶政) were "assassin-retainers." Ch'ing-k'o attempted the assassination of the Chin prince who later became the "First Emperor." Nieh Cheng was a Chou dynasty hero who assassinated Hsieh Lei, a minister of the Han state. Giles, Chinese Biographical Dictionary, p. 156, 597.

[25] See above, p. 37, note 8.

[26] In 1904, Ch'iu attended the normal school of the Aoyama Girls' Vocational School in Tokyo. Rankin, Early Revolutionaries, p. 41.

[27] Ch'iu seems to have revived the Encompassing Love Society rather than actually creating it. A group by the same name promoting women's rights and education had been formed earlier, but existed in name only when it was revived by Ch'iu. Rankin, Early Revolutionaries, n. 99, p.a254.

[28] Ch'en calls this the Nü pao, (女報) or Women's Journal, but the covers reproduced in Ch'iu Chin shih chi (秋瑾史跡) (Shanghai: 1958) bear the title Chung-kuo nü pao (中國女報). Rankin describes the journal as "directed particularly at women students with the idea of subsequently establishing a woman's association. The

female equality. This was China's first women's newspaper.[29] When Ch'iu was seized, in 1907, the investigator forced her to write a confession. At first Ch'iu wrote only a few words in English, but the investigator did not understand it and ordered her to use Chinese. She then wrote one character, "autumn." She was again interrogated and added several more characters, saying: "The autumn rain and the autumn wind will make me die of sorrow."[30] She was then executed.

In the spring of 1911 a righteous uprising at Canton was defeated, and government guards killed seventy-two people.[31] After the uprising, the government again thoroughly searched out the participants. Two women, Wu Yen-niang (吳炎娘) and Wu Ch'i-niang, (吳七娘) were killed as a result.

In the last few days before the 1911 Revolution, the government found and seized military weapons at Wuchang, and on October 9 seized and

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paper was written in a simple style and avoided overly erudite subjects. The aim was to exhort women to study and be active outside the home." Rankin, Early Revolutionaries, n. 8, p. 255.

[29] At least two important women's papers preceded Ch'iu Chin's Chung-kuo nu-pao. The first was the Nu-pao (女報) (Women's Journal) published by Ch'en Chieh-fen (陳撷芬) the daughter of the publisher of the Su-pao, Ch'en Fan (陳範). The primary concern of the paper was women's education as a means of strengthening the nation. See also p. 74 above, note 7 for information on the Peking Women's Daily, first published in 1905.
(Roswell Britton, The Chinese Periodical Press, 1800-1912, (Taipei: Ching-wen Publishing Company, 1926), p. 115, and Charlotte Beahan, "The Women's Press in China," ibid., pp. 8-16).

[30] The character is the same as that for her surname (秋). The story of the poem is probably apocryphal--see Rankin, Early Revolutionaries, p. 187--but was of great value as propaganda.

[31] This was the "Canton Revolution" or Huang Hua Kang Uprising of April 26, 1911.

killed some party members. Woman party member Lung Yün-lan (龍韻蘭) was also captured at this time. In the afternoon of the next day, the revolution broke out in Wuchang.

iii. Women Who Sacrificed for Love

In the period before the 1911 Revolution, yet another topic, aside from that of women who participated in the revolution, is worthy of discussion. That is, those women who tried out new patterns in love.

That freedom to marry was an important issue in the mind of the society at that time can be seen by the fact that freedom to choose one's mate was regarded as deviant and uncivilized, and prohibitions against it were clearly written into girls' school rules. It is not that there are no love stories in China's past--love affairs had developed even under the strictest supervision--but the majority were of an unnatural, clandestine nature. Consequently, there was in the Chinese concept of love between men and women an unconscious idea that it was an indecent and ugly thing. This attitude was extremely harmful to the development of new patterns in sexual relationships.

Think, on what was the Chinese concept of love between the sexes based? The earliest stories are of "Sang Chien on the River p'u,[32] and "Chance Meeting at East Gate."[33] Wen chün's elopement[34] and

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[32] Sang Chien on the River P'u (桑間濮上) was a notorious place for profligacy. The phrase was used in the Li Chi (禮記) [Book of Rites] and the Han Shu (漢書) [Book of the Han]. See Huang Yen-kai, A Dictionary of Chinese Idiomatic Phrases, (Hong Kong: The Eton Press, 1964), p. 791.

[33] I was unable to find any classical reference for Chance Meeting

Miss Chia's present of incense to her lover[35] were things which happened in the Han and Chin dynasties. Again, in the T'ang dynasty there was the tradition of "Waiting for the Moon in the West Chamber."[36] These stories were very popular. Historically, this type of thing was common but these few famous affairs were especially well known. Reader, how did later people regard this type of thing? "Illicit intercourse is the certain result of romances between men and women"--this was the attitude of all later people! Surely, if illicit intercourse is immoral, this type of immorality is only nurtured by taking excessive precautions! But ten or twenty years ago, how many people would have reasoned to this point? As the author of the brilliant tract, "The Women's Bell" says:

> The rays of light of the mind
> Every day tortuously seek to extend themselves.
> If they cannot reach out to this,
> Then they will reach out to that.

Why would such a passionate and emotional girl be locked up year after year? Desiring proper social contacts and being denied them, once

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at East Gate (chieh-hou tung-men 邂逅東門). From the context it seems obvious that it refers to a story of an illicit love affair.

[34] Chuo Wen-chün (卓文君) was a woman of the second century B.C. who was so charmed by Sze-ma Hsiang-ju's lute music that she eloped with him. See the Ch'ien Han Shu, chuan 57:1, 1.2.

[35] Miss Chia Wu, (賈午), a Chin dynasty beauty, saw Shou Tzu-yung, and made him a present of incense, in other words, made the first advances. See Chung-kuo jen-ming ta tz'u-tien, (Shanghai: Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan, 1922), p. 1, 328.

[36] Hsi-hsiang chi (西廂記), a T'ang dynasty love story which was expanded into a play in the Yüan dynasty. It has been translated into English as The Romance of the Western Chamber, by S. I. Hsiung, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968).

she is given the opportunity, she finds it even easier to have secret sexual relations. Society refuses to recognize that this is its own fault, and furthermore ridicules from the side and whips from behind. This is really too unreasonable.

Then there are the so-called romantic scholars who could be forgiving towards the affairs of men and women; such incidents appear in many poems and songs. In the era of Ch'ien Lung (1736-1795), in Jenho hsien of Chekiang province, a girl of the Kao clan had sexual relations with her neighbour, a certain Mr. Ho, without her parent's knowledge. Later on, when Miss Kao was about to be married, she sent Ho away from her one day, and then hung herself from a beam. When Ho returned, he was greatly grieved; and took the rope and strangled himself. The two families abhorred this lack of propriety, and did not want to prepare the corpses for burial, but the district magistrate, Master T'ang, at his own expense, bought coffins and buried them together. Moreover, he ordered the women scholars of the city to compose poetry to be chanted for them. (Some of the poems by Sun Yün-hsüan are found in The Women Disciples of Suiyüan (Sui-yüan nü-ti-tzu shih-hsüan 隨園女弟子詩選).[37]

Although this can be considered forgiveness, the idea that "Illicit intercourse is the certain result of romances between men and women" was

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[37] Sün Yun-hsüan (孫雲鶴) was a woman poet of the Ch'ing period, a disciple of Yüan Mei, (袁枚) (1716-1798) the poet and owner of the "Garden of Contentment" (sui-yüan). Yüan broke with Confucian tradition by accepting women as pupils and publishing their poetry. See Arthur W. Hummel, ed., Eminent Chinese of the Ching Period, 1644-1912, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1943-1944), p. 955-957, Vol. 2.

never completely eradicated from the mind of the Chinese people.

After the 1898 year of Reform, thinking about rights for women had become very advanced. In large cities like Shanghai, there were many women students, and social contacts between men and women were becoming more free. Naturally, love affairs developed in this environment. At the Patriotic Girls' School, there was a student called Wu Ch'i-te (吳其德) who fell in love with Jao Fu-t'ing (饒輔庭) (also called K'o-ch'üan, 可權), a student at the Shanghai Public School. They decided to marry, but at the time of the marriage, someone said that Miss Wu was guilty of improper conduct. The rites of marriage consequently could not be performed. Wu saw that Jao doubted her, and realizing that there was no way to prove her innocence, she drank poison and died. She may be considered the first woman to be sacrificed in the cause of the new patterns in sexual relationships. Jao Fu-t'ing was one of the seventy-two martyrs of Huang Hua Kang. It is said that he devoted himself to the revolution in order to pay back his debt to Miss Wu. (See the first 6-7 pages of the supplement to A New History of Chinese Women.)

B. The Second Period--After the 1911 Revolution

At the sound of a great cannon blast in the afternoon of October tenth, 1911, the huge edifice of several thousand years of despotism began to crumble. Women, who had been oppressed for over two thousand years, took advantage of this opportunity to change their lives. The spring thunder woke a dragon which had been hibernating for so long that perhaps his eyes were dazed by the flash. Therefore, the contemporary women's rights movement did not succeed; but the experiment was a valuable part of women's history.

i. Enthusiastically Joining the Army

Once the revolutionary army had occupied the three cities of Wuchang, its greatest need was for soldiers. On October 14th, a proclamation was sent out to summon a revolutionary army.

Miss Wu Shu-ch'ing (吳淑卿) wrote to Li Yüan-hung (黎元洪) saying that she wanted to join the army to devote her life to service. Since the army was all male, Li thought that it would be difficult to place her, and so politely refused. Shu-ch'ing, however, argued forcefully that there should be no discrimination between men and women; furthermore, drawing on the history of our country's soldiers, she talked with enormous courage. Li then ordered the levy of a separate women's army, with Shu-ch'ing in charge of it. As soon as the proclamation was sent out, hundreds of people came to enlist. (See the supplement to A New History of Chinese Women).

Several women's army brigades were established at this time; Ch'iu Chin's pupil, sister Yin Jui-chih (尹銳志), organized a Chekiang Women's Army (Chekiang nü-tzu chün 浙江女子軍) which participated in the battle of Hangchow. She also bombed the Provincial Governor's yamen, wanting to kill the Manchu Kuei Fu[38] in order to avenge her teacher. Hsin Su-chen (辛素貞) and others organized a Women's National Army, (Nü kuo-min chün 女國民軍), a Women's Suicide Squad (Nü-tzu chueh-ssu tui 女子決死隊) and a Women's Assassination Squad (Nü-tzu an-sha tui 女子暗殺隊) which were used to defend Wuchang, and also took part in the Nanking-Hankow

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[38] Kuei Fu (桂福) was the Prefect of Shaohsing who was in charge of the capture and interrogation of Ch'iu Chin.

offensive. Shen Ching-yin (沈警音) and others raised a women's army at Shanghai. Aside from these, the most famous of the other brigades were the Women's Northern Expedition Brigade (Nü-tzu pei-fa tui 女子北伐隊) the Women's Military Regiment (Nü-tzu chün-shih t'uan 女子軍事團) and the United Women's Military Drill Squad (T'ung meng nü-tzu ching-wu lien-hsi tui 同盟女子經武練習隊).

If we look at their proclamations we can understand how unwilling they were to be in a secondary position to men. Take, for example, this statement of the Women's Northern Expedition Brigade:

> In my humble opinion, China, an ancient country, was master of East Asia. The heavenly power having arisen, extraordinary women came forth in every generation; the female spirit giving birth and nourishing, heroic women were born in every age. Thus Fu Hsi[39] laid the foundation, but had to depend on the help of Nü Wa;[40] Hsüan Wang, when his reign became despotic, was helped by the virtue of Chiang Hou.[41] Before the three dynasties, there was no lack of gemlike and pure women; until after the two Han dynasties there were many turbanned heroines. Mu Lan[42] enlisted in the army in the place of her father. She was brave and strong. Madame Liang[43] helped her husband destroy the enemy, beating

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[39] Fu Hsi (伏羲) whose traditional dates are B.C. 2953-2838, was the first of the five emperors of the legendary period. He is said to have taught the Chinese people basic skills, like hunting, fishing, and cooking, and to have introduced the calendar and regulated the marriage contract. See Giles, Chinese Biographical Dictionary, p. 234.

[40] See above, p. 80, note 14.

[41] See above, p. 89, note 10.

[42] See above, pp. 35-36 and note 4, p. 36.

[43] Madame Liang, (Liang Hung-yü 梁紅玉), was the wife of Liang Shih-chung, a Sung dynasty general. In his battle against the Chin at Hant'ientang, she took part, encouraging the soldiers and urging them on. As a result, the Chin were not able to cross the river. Chung-kuo jen-ming ta tz'u-tien, p. 988.

loudly on the drum. By these examples we know that there are great people in the eastern chambers; not all are as weak as Yao Niang.[44]

If the Southern Sung had not advocated appeasement of the Chin bandits, how could they have been so violent? But the ancients did not rise to the occasion, only fretting and worrying in vain. In a time of many difficulties, how can one sit back and watch?

Ever since Yao[45] established the borders, for four thousand years the Chinese race has maintained itself. But then Manchurian slaves entered the pass. In two hundred years this barbarian foe had not been pacified. They butchered Yangchou and Chiating, and the remaining sorrows of ten thousand families have not yet been forgotten; they were harsh in taxation; how could nine generations of deep hatred be endured? Beyond this there were traitors working for the government; they wanted to please the Manchus, and tried to be close to people in high positions in order to gain power, inviting the odium of the Han race. Thus, when the monarch established a government, public indignation was already deep. Why was it necessary to wait for the government to confiscate unlawful goods[46] before the righteous army arose? Therefore once the Hupeh army erupted, the territories of Yü[47] united with them; the barbarian fortunes came to an end; what could Yüan[48] do to help?

Only in the southeast had the revolution succeeded; but it must be known that as for the one corner of the north-west, it was unfortunately lost. Sleeping with weapons as a pillow, waiting for dawn, the heroic males had already presented their

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[44] Yao Niang (窅娘) the concubine of Li Yü, whose rule ended in A.D. 975. She bound her feet for dancing; some writers suggest that this was the origin of foot-binding. See Wang Fan-t'ing (王灣庭) Chung-hua li-tai fu-nü, pp. 131-135.

[45] Yao (堯) is said to have died B.C. 2258. A legendary emperor who abdicated his throne after a long reign (traditionally estimated at 70 or 98 years), in favour of Shun. The names Yao and Shun together evoke China's Golden Age. See Giles, Chinese Biographical Dictionary, p. 921.

[46] Perhaps a reference to the government's seizure of weapons prepared for the rebellion on October 9, 1911.

[47] Yü or Ta Yü (大禹) was the legendary successor of Shun and the first emperor of the Hsia dynasty. His death is traditionally dated B.C. 2197. E.T.C. Werner, A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology (New York: The Julian Press, Inc., 1961), p. 597.

[48] Yüan Shih-k'ai (袁世凱) who at that time had been appointed Governor General of Hu-Kwang in charge of suppressing the rebellion. See Boorman, Biographical Dictionary, Vol IV, p. 83.

> giant strategies; they are buying saddles to join the army, and all sisters should now express their righteous anger. Don't you know of France's shepherd girl, who vigorously repelled the English soldiers, or the beauties in the palace of Wu who studied martial arts, and whose valour could swallow up the state of Ch'ü? From this we know that when they are willing to sacrifice everything, young girls are not second to bearded men; when they avail themselves of a shield for glory, the people of a great country do not make light of women. Then pour out the contents of your trousseau trunks and collect together military expenses. Sweep the caves and clear the courts; let us get rid of this barbarian cruelty. Then, when we see the revolution succeed, we can present Mu Lan's work as finished; and when the republican position is secure, we can soothe China's spirit. This truly is the glory of the Han race, not just the good fortune of women compatriots!

This statement was copied over and over by different people, and everyone recited it. The delight in novelty of the Chinese masses, who had long been forced to submit to corrupt conditions, caused them to react with astonishment and admiration. This is very natural. But the praise of the general public was of absolutely no use to the women themselves. Moreover, people who were somewhat conventional thought that this sort of thing was just a game, and criticised them on many points. In reality, the women's rights movement in the first few years of the republic was not defeated by the fact that women's army corps were not formally established, nor was it defeated by the failure to obtain the right of political participation. Rather, it was defeated because, being startled by the magnitude of what was happening, women did not have a penetrating grasp of the situation; they were defeated because they did not eliminate the male habit of not taking women seriously.

The women's armies of this time did have shortcomings. Miss Chang Chu-chün, (張竹君) one of the new women of the older generation, a doctor, and the subject of a biography by Liang Ch'i-ch'ao in

Hsin-min ts'ung-pao,[49] wrote an essay, "Women's Organized Army Corps" (Nü-tzu tsu-chih chün-tui 女子組織軍隊) expressing some frank opinions:

> From antiquity the warning has been handed down of the disaster of weapons and the danger of war. . . . As for the women's armies formed today, they can choose qualified people. Speaking from a physical standpoint, however, they still fall far behind men. . . . Even if the women put special effort into doing their duties, at the time when the two armies are fighting, I fear that this army will not be able to kill the enemy efficiently. And if [the men's army] is to protect our women's army, I fear they will not have time.

Although Chang Chu-chün was opposed to women organizing army brigades, she was willing to act as head of the Shanghai Red Cross Society. After the uprising at Wuhan, all of the hospitals of Shanghai and Nanking organized a Red Cross Society, and recommended that Chang Chu-chün be its head.[50] On October 23, Chang Chu-chün led the first group to Hankow, and on November 13, continued with a second group to Chinkiang.

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[49] The Hsin-min ts-ungpao (新民叢報) (New People Periodical) began publication between 1900 and 1903. Levenson writes: "Liang's first concern in these years was his new fortnightly journal, the Hsin-min ts'ung-pao . . . published in Yokohama. Each number contained about forty pages of creative writing, commentary on current events, and dissertations on many facets of the problem of Chinese culture, its past and its future." Levenson, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, p. 68.

[50] I have not been able to find any corroboration for Ch'en's account of the formation of the Red Cross. The North China Herald, on October 28, 1911, ran an article announcing the departure of a Red Cross party for the front. According to this account, "The party is under the charge of Dr. Cox, who will be assisted by Dr. Olesen, Dr. Bennett, Dr. B. Y. Wong, and Dr. C. S. Yang and twenty-five students with three Chinese and three Japanese nurses." p. 205. Nor have I been able to find any reference to the second group organized in Shanghai.

After sending out this group, the people of Shanghai organized a second Red Cross Corps. Some of the women who helped in the creation of the second corps were: Madame Chang Shan-fu (張善甫), Madame Ho Hui-p'ei (何蕙培), Madame Sun Ai-jen (孫藹仁), Madame Su Li-shang (蘇荔裳), Madame Feng Yang-shan (馮仰山), Miss Ho Yung-hsi (何榮西), Miss K'ung Ch'ing-ping (孔慶萍), Miss T'ienSSsu-p'ing (田思平), Miss Chiang T'ung-shih (江桐士), and Miss Ch'ü Chih-cheng (瞿志爭). Their accomplishments were even greater than those of the women's army units.

ii. The Movement for Political Participation

Women's army corps had not long been in existence when the Ministry of War of the Nanking Provisional Government dismissed them; offering only alternative service as nurses in the hygiene corps. Moreover, each province was later ordered not to raise any new women's armies. Women's army corps at this time were treading on thin ice, which was being melted away by the spring sun; but out of them grew the movement for political participation. When the republic was established and women's army corps were first organized, there were already people who advocated and struggled for political rights. There were others who changed direction and took part in the movement for political participation only after the dispersal of the women's army units. Thus, the China Women's Political Participation Alliance (Shen-chou nü-chieh ts'an-cheng t'ung-meng-hui 神洲女界參政同盟會); and the Women's Union (Nü-tze t'ung-meng-hui 女子同盟會) was the reorganized United Women's Military Drill Corps. Aside from these, there were also the

Shanghai Women's Political Participation Comrades Association (Shanghai nü-tze ts'an-cheng tung-meng hui 上海女子參政同盟會), the Women's Re-inforcement Association (Nü-tze hou-yüan hui 女子後援會), the Women's Republican Association, (Nü-tze kung-ho hui 女子共和會), the Association for the Support of Equal Rights for Men and Women (Nan-nü p'ing ch'üan wei ch'ih hui 男女平權維持會), the Women's National Association, etc. (Nü kuo-min hui 女國民會).

When the Nanking parliament was formulating the provisional constitution, Miss T'ang Ch'ün-ying (唐羣英), with twenty other people, presented a petition demanding that a clause regulating equality of the sexes be included in the provisional constitution. In brief, it said:

> . . . Thus China has been restored to light, despotism has been changed to republicanism. The revolution in government was first to be achieved, the social revolution will rise later. If we wish to stop the tragedy of the social revolution, we must first seek social equality, if we wish to seek social equality, we must first seek equality between the sexes; if we want to find equality between the sexes, it is absolutely necessary to extend to women the right of political participation. . . . We request that in the actual text of the constitution it be stated clearly that regardless of sex, all will be legally equal, and all will have the right to vote and to be elected. Of it this is not clearly stipulated, we ask that a speech be made to the people of this country, concerning the question of male and female equality. In addition, we request a formally published official dispatch so that women will have documentary proofs of their right of political participation.

In the provisional constitution promulgated by the parliament on March 11 of that year, there was, however, no regulation assuring equality of the sexes. A group of suffragists was extremely angered by this, and, on March 19, T'ang Ch'ün-ying and others from the Women's Political Participation Alliance presented a brief to President Sun Yat-sen

strongly denouncing the fact that there was no clause on male and female equality in the provisional constitution. They demanded that the president advocate a revision of the constitution under the provisions of the fifty-fifth article. In the second part, "Citizens," under the fifth article, "All citizens of the Chinese Republic are equal," the clause below that, "Regardless of race, class or religion" should be altered to include sex as well as race, class, and religion.

In order to placate the suffragists without actually doing anything, the members of the assembly agreed to table the March nineteenth petition for women's political participation for discussion. After investigation, they decided to hand the matter over to the formally constituted parliament for its decision. The women, however, were not satisfied, and that day a vehement argument developed with the members of the assembly.

The next day the suffragists called together many comrades, and burst into the assembly. They broke some of the windows in the building and kicked down the police guards who had been called out. Once the news of this incident had been published, the whole country was startled, regarding it as an unpredented, fantastic occurrence. The foreigners were also amazed.

After the mediation of the President, a promise was made to propose a revision of the constitution to the legislature. Only then did the situation improve. (See Chang, ed., "The Development of the Thought of Chinese Women," in Ten Discussions of the Women's Question, pp. 238-259).[51]

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[51] See above, p. 55, note 11.

Once peace was restored, the women's movement for political participation was like a waterfall flowing towards level ground; after making several whirlpools, it was not able to again raise the wind and the waves. The surprise attack on the legislature on March 20 revealed the shortcomings of the women's rights movement in the ten odd years since the reform period. It was shallow, lacked actual strength and was unthorough. The contribution of the suffragists, however, is that at the least, they made everyone realize that China's women would never again be as docile as they had been in the past. This incident has an historical value in the life of Chinese women which cannot be obliterated.

At the same time, there was a group working for gradual progress--The Women's Republican Co-operative Progressive Association, (Nü-chieh kung-ho hsieh chin hui 女子共和協進會), with Madame Wu T'ing-fang (伍廷芳), Madame Chang Ch'ing-chiang (張靜江) and others as leaders. They advocated first founding a women's legal and political school and publishing a women's republican daily newspaper in order to prepare for political participation, then waiting until their political knowledge and qualifications were complete before again putting political participation into effect. Their program was comparatively peaceful, but they too had no real power.

iv. Women's Education in the First Few Years of the Republic

After the establishment of the republic, both the educational system and the curriculum were reorganized; but there was comparatively little affecting women's education in this change. Boys' and girls' schools were still separate. In government primary schools girls studied needlework more than boys did, and the higher levels of girls' primary

schools offered a course in Home Economics. However, middle schools for women were now established; before there had only been women's normal schools. Aside from those subjects studied in boys' middle schools, girls' middle schools added courses in home economics, gardening and needlework. The course in mathematics could omit trigonometry. Handicrafts consisted primarily of such things as embroidery, crochet, and flower arranging, and physical exercise replaced the military drill class. Women's normal schools took as their aim the training of elementary school and kindergarten teachers; their differences in curriculum from men's normal schools are similar to the differences between men's and women's middle schools. Women were prohibited from entering universities, and in 1916 no higher schools for women yet existed. The education of women at this time always took as its highest standard the "good wife and mother." Not only was the system regulated in this way, but the professors' course guidelines and the materials were also geared toward this standard.

The rate of growth of the number of girl students, however, was actually changed by the Republic. Male students all cut off their queues, and female students unbound their feet. Most parents had already lost their fear that they would not be able to marry off their daughters unless their feet were bound. There were, however, quite a few mothers who still were confused and worried, and could not help but want to go to work on their daughters' feet, still rising early every morning to wrap and wrap them.

Speaking only in terms of the increase in the number of women compared to the increase in male students; we know, according to the

first five charts of educational statistics issued by the Department of Education, that:

Date	Male Students	Female Students
1912	2,792,257	141,130
1913	3,476,242	166,964
1914	3,898,065	177,273
1915	4,113,302	180,949
1916	3,801,730	172,724

Happily, the rate of increase in the numbers of male and of female students in the first four years is very similar. In 1916, the rates suddenly fell, as a result of the conditions caused by the Hung Hsien monarchy.[52]

An interesting comparison can be made here by considering the number of women students in 1916 republic and determining what increase there had been over the women students of fifteen years before. At that time, women's schools established by Chinese were very rare; the majority of China's women students attended schools built by missionaries, which were already drawing up statistics. (See the first chapter of The Achievements of Missionary Society Girls' Schools (Chiao-hui-pang te nü-shu ch'eng-chi 教會辦的女塾成績)). The details of the lower grades and kindergartens are not made clear in these statistics, but the number of women students, when both the higher and primary grades are considered, did not exceed 4,373. In 1916, referring specifically to women students in

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[52] Hung Hsien (洪憲) was the title adopted by Yüan Shih-k'ai. With the restoration of the Imperial system, many people may have expected the return of the examination system, and therefore may have doubted the value of modern education, and removed their children from modern schools.

high schools established by Chinese, the number had risen to 8,005 students. As for basic education, there were 164,718 female students (in both higher and lower level elementary grades). This is more than forty times as many female students as there had been fifteen years before. What a startling number this is! From this point we can conclusively say that many of the people of the Chinese Republic already were awakened to the necessity of education for women.

CHAPTER 2

THE LIFE OF CONTEMPORARY WOMEN

A. The Flowering of the Intellectual Revolution

i. The First Period--Before the May Fourth Movement

An intellectual revolution must be part of the trend of the times; then, as soon as someone actively promotes it, it will rise up spontaneously like stirring waves. The abilities of those who promote it are also formed by the times; their talents are borrowed so that the revolution may begin.

Everyone who discusses China's modern "new culture" must give credit to the May Fourth Movement, and it is obvious that when we speak of the May Fourth Movement, we must again acknowledge the role of The New Youth magazine. But The New Youth magazine's advocacy of the new culture also followed the tendency of the time. If we understand this principle, then it is easy to understand how the intellectual revolution came into full flower.

The life of Chinese women had begun to change in the twenty years between the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 and 1914. In these twenty years, there had been rapid progress; the criterion for women had changed from "stupidity is a virtue" to the "good wife and mother," from life inside the women's quarters, to a life of studying in schools. However, only after The New Youth promoted it did a life of independent status for women really materialize. Furthermore, the May Fourth

Movement was a crucial point in this development.

ii. The First Period of The New Youth

Ch'en Tu-hsiu (陳獨秀) established The New Youth Magazine at the same time that Yüan Shih-k'ai was attempting to become emperor. After Yüan accepted the Twenty-One Demands of Japan, the Ch'ou-an Hui[1] beat the drum of constitutional monarchy until its sounds shook the heavens. The Chinese people, especially the young, were confused about these affairs. Ch'en Tu-hsiu felt that those who should personally shoulder the task of innovation in China must be young people, and for that reason, he wanted to bring about a transformation in the thought of youth. The first issue contained a letter to him from Wang Yung-kung (王庸工), in which the latter hoped that Ch'en would discuss the problem of state structure, and educate the people. In his reply he said:

> All of the reasons which the gentlemen of the Ch'ou-an Hui hold for changes in the state structure are unsatisfactory.
>
> You, honourable sir, wish this magazine to refute them. Although we would wish to refute them, we take as the natural duty of this magazine the remolding of the thought of the young and instruction of the young in moral cultivation; criticism of the present government is not its aim.

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[1] The Ch'ou-an Hui (籌安會) or Society of Planning for Peace and Stability was founded in August 1915, by Yang Tu (楊度), one of Yüan Shih-k'ai's advisors. Under the guise of a study group with a special interest in comparing the relative merits of monarchism and republicanism, the Ch'ou-an Hui tried to drum up support for the establishment of a new dynasty with Yüan as emperor. See Jerome Ch'en, Yüan Shih-k'ai, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), pp. 172-78.

Is it possible that his thinking really bore no relationship to the political darkness of that time? No. He was absolutely opposed to this political darkness. He says:

> If the thinking of the citizens does not yet have a basic awareness, then there is truly no reason for criticizing the government. The tendency of governing in the past few years has always been to abide by China's laws and the teachings of her first kings; suffering criticism in order to protect the national essence. To govern is extremely difficult. Do you think that the ambitions of neighbouring states should warn the people? The citizens of my country are not willing to involve themselves in politics. The Japanese ultimatum [the Twenty-one Demands] was not enough to warn them; how could an essay in this magazine?

This quotation adequately shows that he was greatly pained by the government and by the thinking of the people; he turned to reforming the thought of youth only after struggling in vain to find a solution. Can we not say that he was moved by the trend of the times?

In the first four issues of The New Youth, there was no new contribution to the life of women. Finally, in an article entitled "Nineteen-sixteen" which appeared in the fifth number, Chen Tu-hsiu formally advocated that women should not remain in a subservient position, and that they should not be accessories to other people. This essay appeared in January of 1916; it was written when Yüan Shih-k'ai's attempt to become emperor was underway. (Yüan issued orders that he be recognized as an emperor on December 20, 1915). Deeply regretting the conditions of the time, Ch'en Tu-hsiu hoped that in 1916 China would undergo a gigantic change; hear his anguished cries:

> The citizens of our country ought to have special feelings for this year of 1916 and unprecedented hopes. From the beginning

> of history until 1916, in politics, society, morality and scholarship, even the Yangtze River could not wash away all the crimes which have been committed and the humiliations which have been suffered. At this time of abolishing the old and establishing the new we ought to repent from the beginning and undergo self-improvement. The year of 1915-1916 is a gaping chasm in history. From creation until 1915 everything is ancient history--past events up to 1916 are dead, the events after 1916 are alive. We must first renew our efforts for a new human status, a new nation, a new society, a new family, a new people. Only when the nation is renewed will we be worthy to deal with enlightened peoples and have the qualifications to dwell in this corner of the earth. Youth must cherish this hope, must praise youth and not age; youth must seize this hope, it must kill old age and rejuvenate youth. The youth of 1915 must kill themselves and bring forth the youth of 1916.

This first declaration of The New Youth Magazine's support for the New Culture Movement, was also the first writing of modern China's New Culture Movement. We can see how strongly they hoped for the innovations of youth:

> What will be the guidelines for the thought and action of the youth of 1916?
>
> First, to take on the status of conquerors and not the status of the conquered. In all of mankind, the male is the conqueror, the female is the conquered; the white races are the conquerors, the non-white races are the conquered. Those who pride themselves on being the young men and women of 1916 must wash out with iron and blood this disgrace which permeates the whole body.
>
> Second, to have respect for the status of individual independence and self-determination; to refuse to be an accessory to others. The Confucianist's theory of the three bonds is the source of all morality and politics: the bond of ruler and subject makes the people accessory of the ruler, without the status of independent self-determination; the bond of parents and children makes the children the accessories of the parents, without the status of independent self-determination; the bond of husband and wife makes the wife the accessory of the husband, without the status of independent self-determination. It is this theory of the three bonds which leads everyone to be a subject, a child, a wife, without seeing that there is an independent human status. These bonds and the precious and golden moral sayings--loyalty,

> filial piety and chastity, are not a self-determined morality of putting oneself in another's place, but are a slave morality of those who are the possessions of others. All human acts take the self as the centre; apart from this self and its loss, there is nothing worth talking about. Once those who follow slave morality lose this self, they receive all praise and blame as the accessory of another. May those who pride themselves on being the youth of 1916 struggle to escape from the position of being an accessory and recover an independent and self-determined status.

This was the first bombshell of the new Culture Movement, aimed at destroying slave morality and establishing a new nation, a new society, a new family and a new race. This essay also prompted the birth of the new woman, and, furthermore, had a profound meaning and value not only in the history of the life of women, but also in the history of Chinese culture.

But 1916 was, in the end, a year of reverses for China; the waves of the imperial restoration had hardly subsided, when the dense fog of venerating Confucius rolled in. The Constitutional Assembly wanted to make Confucian morality the national religion. Such reactionary thinking aroused argument throughout the country. Ch'en Tu-hsiu wrote an essay called "The Constitution and Confucianism," (Hsien fa yü k'ung-chiao 憲法與孔教) (II:3) criticizing this matter. The next issue of The New Youth (II:4) carried an essay called "Confucian Morality and Modern Life" (K'ung tzu chih tao yü hsien-tsai sheng-huo). In it, Ch'en argues that, although the theories of the three bonds and the five relationships were not invented by Confucius, other people have used him in this connection. Therefore, if we want to dig out slave morality, we must destroy the Confucian idol; how then

could we adopt Confucianism as the state religion? In "Confucian Morality and Modern Life" (K'ung-tzu chih tao-yü hsien-tsai sheng-huo 孔子之道與現在生活), he condemns the Confucian Way as inappropriate for today's world. Several points in the essay are related to the life of women:

> In all modern constitutional states, whether monarchies or republics, there are political parties. Those who engage in political activities cannot help but express a spirit of individual independence, each one going his own way. The son need not necessarily agree with the father, nor the wife with her husband. When people follow the Confucianists' teachings of filial piety, of obedience, of not changing from the father's way even three years after his death, and of a wife obeying her father and husband, and finally her son, how can they choose their own political party?
>
> The movement for women's political participation is also a part of today's civilization. For those who follow the Confucian teachings that "To be a woman is to submit," "A wife's words should not go beyond her quarters," and "Women do not speak of affairs outside the home," how can the idea of women participating in politics be anything but nonsense?
>
> As for the life of widows in the West, some remain single out of love for their old husbands, and some prefer a single life; there is no question there of the chastity of widowhood. When women remarry they are never despised by society. In Chinese moral teaching, there is the concept of "When the husband dies there is no remarriage." If man has two masters, or a woman two husbands, it is considered by all as a loss of virtue and a disgrace. Furthermore, propriety prohibits widows from crying at night, and prohibits other people from befriending the son of a widow. For the sake of the family reputation, people force their daughters-in-law to remain widows. This involuntary moral integrity creates a miserable life. Year in and year out, many competent women in their prime, are made to lead physically and spiritually abnormal lives. This is the gift bestowed by Confucian morality.
>
> In today's civilized society, social intercourse between men and women is the rule. Some even say that because women have a tender nature, they can control men's crudeness, and thus are necessary in public and private gatherings. It is not considered improper even for strangers to sit together and dance together once the host has introduced them. The Confucian teachings say: "Men and women should not sit together," "Brothers and sisters-in-law should not be in contact," "Once she has married and left home, brothers should not share a seat with her, nor eat from the same dishes," "If men and women have not engaged a matchmaker then they should not know each other's names, if they have not exchanged

> engagement gifts then they should not be in contact and should not show affection," "Women must cover their faces when they go out." Such etiquette is not only inconsistent with the way of life in modern Western Society; it cannot even be practiced in today's China.
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> Western women make their own living, they work in all professions, from lawyers, teachers and doctors to shop-girls. And the Confucian Way says "men and women should not touch hands when exchanging anything," "men do not speak of household matters, women do not speak of outside matters, only in religious sacrifices do they use the same utensils," "A married woman must obey." This is because the husband is taken as the standard of the wife, women are of course supported by their husbands and do not need an independent livelihood. A married woman does not know her husband's parents before the marriage, she has only affection toward them and no obligation. In the West the majority of parents and children do not live together, the daughter-in-law has no obligation to serve her parents-in-law. But the Confucian ways says: "Cautious and respectful, from morning to night she does not disobey a command," "Wifely obedience is due to the parents-in-law," "A wife should serve her husband's parents as she would serve her own parents," "the orders of parents and parents-in-law must not be disobeyed or disrespected." "If a man is fond of his wife but his parents are not pleased with her, then she should be divorced." "Unless the wife is told to go to her room she would not dare to retire, if a woman has an errand to do, then large or small, she must ask permission from her parents-in-law." This is reason why the tragedy of the evil mother-in-law and the persecuted daughter-in-law are a part of Chinese society.

In this paragraph we can see that he advocated women's political participation, the remarriage of widows, the extension of social intercourse, economic independence, and the small household system. All of these are forbidden by Confucian morality, but were promoted by Ch'en with all his strength. Again, in the next issue (II:5) in reply to K'ung Chao-ming's (孔昭銘) letter, dealing with Ch'en's destruction of the basic principles of Confucianism, he said:

> If Confucianism and Confucian morality are not completely destroyed, there will be no way to save China's government, morality, ethics, social customs, and scholarly thought.

The same issue also carried Hu Shih's (胡適) "Tentative Proposals for Literary Reform (Wen-hsüsh kai-liang ch'u-i 文學改良芻議). Everyone acknowledges the role of The New Youth in the literary revolution; but few realize that this proposal followed discussions on the problems of women. Ch'en Tu-hsiu's "On Literary Revolution" (Wen-hsüeh ke-ming lun 文學革命論) and Wu Mü's (吳虞) "On the Clan System as the Basis of Despotism" (Chia-tsu chih-tu wei chuan-chih chu-i chih ken-chü lun 家族制度為專制主義之根據論) both appeared in the next issue (II:6) published in February, 1916. Those who were working on The New Youth were well aware of the intimate relationship of the women's problem and the clan system to social problems, and for that reason they encouraged discussions of the women's problem.

iii. The Heyday of The New Youth

T'ao Meng-ho (陶孟和) wrote an essay called "The Problem of Women (Nü tzu wen-t'i 女子問題) in The New Youth for January, 1918 (IV:1). He used his viewpoint as a sociologist to point out the reasons why European and American social phenomena had prompted the woman question to become a new social problem. These reasons are: economic development, educational and professional development, and intellectual development. Taking Europe and America as a precedent, he changed the way people thought about the woman question and made them aware that the women's movement was the new world tide which could not and should not be resisted. He was well aware that China's economy, her professions, and her thinking were far inferior to those of Europe and America, and

also that under Chinese social restraint women had no opportunity to initiate any kind of effort. He supposed, however, that the rapid transportation and communication of today's society would spread economic, professional and intellectual development everywhere. Thus, that which appeared yesterday in American and European society will appear in Chinese society today; the European and American woman question was, without doubt, on the point of appearing in China. What he said was most astute, and today, eight years later, it has already been largely confirmed.

Four months after T'ao Meng-ho's article, The New Youth published Chou Tso-jen's (周作人) translation of Yosano Akiko's (與謝野晶子) essay "On Chastity (Chen-ts'ao lün 貞操論) (IV:5).[22] She did not regard chastity as morality, and this new viewpoint startled the people of that time. Yosano argued that a morality which sees chastity as something that only women have to maintain, is an enormous flaw in human life. We cannot possibly believe in this hypocritical old morality. She felt that a moral code ought to be something which everyone could maintain and practice; one group of people being made to suffer the unhappiness and injustice of hypocritical oppression by another group of people, is not the new morality we have demanded. But what is the present social situation? She says:

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[2] Yosano Akiko (與謝野晶子) 1878-1941) was born in Sakai, Osaka Prefecture. She was famous as a poet for the freshness of style of her work, and the freedom and unconventionality of her ideas. She has not survived as a poet.

The Japan Biographical Encyclopedia and Who's Who (2nd ed; Tokyo: The Japan Biographical Research Department, 1961), p. 1,922.

> For a man there is no spontaneous demand for the morality of chastity, and no social restraint. As long as a married woman stays with her husband, even if there is absolutely no sympathetic affection between them, then she is a chaste woman. Society demands only this kind of chastity from women. Even after love and sexual intercourse have been broken off, causing her to suffer great unhappiness, if she still lives with her husband for scores of years, managing the house and raising the children, then she will be praised by all as a chaste woman. Again, even if she gives her love to another, as long as she has sexual intercourse only with her husband, she will be praised by all as a chaste woman. Examples of this kind are truly numerous.

Once the mask of the old morality was stripped off, the movement very easily captured the minds of the young. But will this society of the new man have absolutely no place for chastity? Yosano Akiko says: "I do not consider chastity as morality, it is only a taste, a belief, a kind of fastidiousness." Because it is a taste, a belief or fastidiousness, it does not force itself on others. Without being under any moral restraint, a person can cherish his chastity completely spontaneously, in the same way as a love for art or scholarship. Yosano also compares chastity to wealth; having it oneself is wonderful, but whether others have it or not is of no great importance. This attitude destroyed the old viewpoint of the past two thousand years; when infused into the minds of youth, it exerted an enormous influence. Later, Hu Shih published an essay "The Question of Chastity," (Chen-ts'ao wen-t'i 貞操問題) published July, 1917 (V:17). T'ang Ssu (唐俟) wrote an essay "My View on Chastity," (Wo chih chieh-lieh kuan 我之節烈觀) published in August, 1917 (V:2), in which the basic opinions were the same as those of Yosano Akiko. They all started with the one-sided demand that only women should preserve chastity, and worked at "smashing

the withered and pulling down the decayed," frequently pointing out the absurdities of the Chinese concept of chastity. Later they stimulated Lan Chih-hsien's (藍志先) discussion, which was published in The New Youth for April of 1919 (VI:4).[3] By that time The New Youth had already created an uproar throughout China. Lan Chih-hsien was the chief editor of The National Daily (kuo-min jih pao 國民日報); his essay had first been published in that newspaper, where it aroused the attention of the people of Peking. The time was now ripe for the changes advocated by The New Youth. Shortly after this, the May Fourth Movement began and, with the help of the political movement, the new thought advocated by The New Youth engulfed the entire country.

The area in which The New Youth was most constructive was not its discussions on the problem of chastity, but rather its pointing out of specific absurdities in the life of women and its tendency to guide the liberation of women. Hu Shih's skill in using concrete methods of pointing out problems was the reason for his great success, whether in lectures or in essays. The New Youth issued a special number on Ibsen (IV:6), in which the specific examples of Ibsen's dramas were used to point out problems. Hu Shih explained that the household of which Ibsen wrote had four great vices:

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[3] Lan Chih-hsien's article is "Chen-ts'ao wen-t'i," (貞操問題) (The Problem of Chastity), pp. 398-405. In it he argues that the traditional concept of chastity is wrong because it is one-sided. But importing Western ideas of sexual morality and trying to base marriage on romantic love alone is equally mistaken. Instead he suggests marriages based on spiritual love and an appreciation of the marriage partner's personal integrity. Chastity should still be an essential moral quality, but should be demanded from men as well as women.

> The first is its selfishness; the second its dependent, slavish nature, the third its hypocritical morality and the fourth its timidity and lack of courage.

He further argued that this is an actual reflection of the Chinese family. Hu Shih then pointed out that the ideas of Ibsen's dramas were good medicine for China's ills; this argument was well received. Later, Hu Shih himself wrote a comedy, The Life-long Affair, (Chung-sheng ta shih 終生大事) in which T'ien Ya-mei, who had not won her demand for freedom of marriage, ran away with her lover. This play was actually simpler and more forceful than Ibsen's dramas. When this manuscript was published in March, 1919, the play could not be performed because no woman student would dare to take the part of T'ien. After the May Fourth Movement, however, performances of The Life-long Affair at girls' schools were not in the least unusual.

Prior to the May Fourth Movement, there were two more articles in The New Youth which had an enormous effect on the liberation of women.

One of these was Liu Pan-nung's (劉半農) "Random Thoughts on Returning South," (Nan kuei tsa kan 南歸雜感) published in August, 1918 (V:2). In the essay, he enumerated the sufferings of Chinese women through the mode of leisurely conversations with his wife:

> Of all humanity, Chinese women suffer most. I cannot bear to speak of the distress of women of very poor families, who worry about their evening meal while they eat their breakfast.
>
> Women from rich and noble families, wearing their short pants and silk stockings, going everyday to Yang-ch'ing-ho and Lao-pao-ch'eng to have their jewelry taken care of, to Ta-lun and T'ien-ch'eng to buy fabrics, suppose themselves to be very happy. In reality, they are more miserable than the old beggar women in the streets. But I have no wish now to discuss these "gilded parasites." I would simply

like to talk to you middle class women, who need not worry about your next meal, and have from thirty or fifty to one or two hundred dollars a month in income, and can plan how to spend it. You do not seem to suffer too much. But you are human beings; if we judge you by the status which human beings ought to have, you are extremely miserable.

In the first place, before you have married, your parents do not teach you to read: after you are ten years old, however, they frantically look for a profitable match. Human beings ought to be knowledgeable, but your parents won't allow you to gain any knowledge. Human beings have the right to dispose of their own bodies, but your parents decide this for you. This is the method of raising piglets--raise them any which way, and when they have grown up, then thoughtlessly grab them and throw them out of the sty.

Secondly, after you have married, because you are not knowledgeable, you will have to take "stupidity" for "virtue;" because you cannot stand on your own, you must mouth the "three obediences;" because you will die of hunger if you fall out of favour with your man, you must mouth the "four virtues;" you must be "virtuous and wise" and "a good wife and mother." In reality, the saying that only an untalented woman is virtuous is the placard of a human pig. The "three obediences" only mean, after all, that the master of the household changes three times. The "four virtues," "virtue and wisdom" and "a good wife and mother" are only euphemisms for "long-term prostitution," and in reality are just the same as the stories published in cheap newspapers: "Her room is clean and she is a perfect hostess," and "clever in conversation, she pleases host and guest alike."

This was an extremely profound criticism. Let us see what he says of women's daily life:

I will calculate your daily work: you get up at seven in the morning, comb your hair, cook breakfast, step outside to buy food, supervise the children's meal, dress the older ones and prepare school bags for them, and later take them to school. By the time this is done, it is already nine o'clock. After nine o'clock you must wash the breakfast dishes, take out the ashes and cull the vegetables (often five cash of green vegetables and ten cash of bean sprouts. To cull them takes one or two hours.) You wash the fish and slice the meat, and suddenly its already eleven o'clock. You are instantly in a hurry, boiling rice and cooking food, continuously busy until twelve o'clock. Once you have eaten and washed your face it is about one o'clock, and you look to see what clothes need to be washed, then soak them in hot water. Washing clothes by hand is time-consuming--a pair of stockings takes approximately ten

> minutes, a short gown approximately twenty minutes. By the time a few pieces of clothing are washed it is already dusk, and even if it isn't, you are tired and have to rest, but only until six o'clock, when again you must prepare dinner and again wash the dishes. In the evening you make shoes for the children and mend clothing. Any remaining time is filled by flipping through the Daily Accounts book, and using characters that are half-wrong and half-right, recording one or two accounts of pocket money. At ten o'clock, urged on by yawns, you will hurry along to bed.

Women of middle class households really do live this kind of life. Even today's women, who are already liberated, and have had a higher education, still live this way once they marry and have children. They truly suffer--the only improvement is that they do not mistake characters when writing accounts. But is it possible that they are unable to hire servants? Liu says:

> Even if there is a slave girl and a maid helping in the house, you will at most only be able to decrease your work load by one-third. If you are tied down by a nursing child, then your work is doubled. What do you have to show for it?

He believes that to change Chinese society and rescue Chinese women, the present "life-pattern" of Chinese women must be destroyed. How can it be destroyed? In the case of the first abuse he mentioned, the reverse must happen. Parents must carry out the responsibility of educating their daughters, but have no right to interfere in marriage and no duty to bear marriage expenses. Before the second abuse can be corrected, however, society must be reorganized. Reorganized in what way? He says:

> Let us take the street I live on as an example. There are approximately fifty families living on the street. Estimating on the

basis of two adult women per family, there is a total of one hundred women. These one hundred useful persons live today according to the standard "life-pattern;" naturally they die without having accomplished anything. If we could unite the fifty families, then:

1) A nursery could be established, to bring up all under the age of five who live on the street. (According to the Chinese way of calculating age:[4] This would require approximately ten people, or at most fifteen.

2) A kindergarten could be established, to educate all of the children between five and seven years of age. This would require approximately five people, or at most eight. Children older than seven years would enter public school; there would be a public school for every three or four streets, but this need not be taken into account here.

3) A boarding house could be established, to supply meals to all of the families. This would require approximately seven people, or at most ten.

4) A laundry could be established which would wash each family's clothes, requiring approximately six people, or at most eight.

5) A tailoring shop (which would also mend old clothes) could be established which would take care of each family's clothes. This would require approximately ten people, or at most twelve.

6) From four to eight public maids could be hired to take care of cleaning and hygiene in each house, as well as errands like shopping and mailing letters.

According to these calculations, only forty-two, or at most sixty-one women would be needed to maintain family life for these fifty families; if we subtract them from the total of one hundred, then we have fifty-eight, or at the least, thirty-nine people left over. If these fifty-eight people could all go into society and work, then China's social enterprises would not be in their present ghastly state. (By social enterprises I mean jobs such as primary school teachers, nurses in hospitals, sales clerks and secretaries. I disapprove of women's political participation--I don't even approve of men participating in government). Even these forty-two people who work on this street have discharged their duty to society and escaped from the disgrace of "long-term prostitution."

What he advocated is exactly the same as the ideal social organization of later socialists. Now, eight years later, it is still an ideal. The ideal has not yet been realized, but the seed has been planted in

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[4] A child is one year old at birth and becomes two years old at the lunar New Year.

the minds of the young.

Another important essay, published in September, 1918 (V:3) was Hu Shih's "American Women," (Mei-kuo te fu-jen 美國的婦人) the manuscript of a lecture given at the Peking Women's Normal School. Right from the start he used concrete methods to express his viewpoint, saying:

> Last winter, my friend, Mr. T'ao Meng-ho, asked me to dinner. One foreign guest was an American girl, representing several newspaper offices as a special investigator to Russia. At the same dinner there was an English couple and two Chinese couples. In this "pot-pourri of Chinese and Westerners and men and women" I made some comparative observations. Little distinction could be seen in learning or wisdom between the two Chinese wives, the English wife, and the American woman. But somehow I ultimately felt that the American woman was different. I asked myself, in what way does she differ from them? From what I could see, this point of difference rested on a basic difference in their philosophies of life. The philosophy of the three married women was one of being "a good wife and mother." The American woman's was a philosophy "transcending the good wife and mother." At dinner I judged that she was probably not more than about thirty, but she had a mature manner and a hardy spirit. In each word and action she seemed to express this "philosophy of transcending the good wife and mother." She might as well have said:
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> > "Being a good wife and mother has never been a bad thing. But I am a dignified individual; there are many responsibilities I should discharge and there is much work I can do. Why must I necessarily be a good wife and mother for others, and consider that this is the only way to discharge my natural duty, and do my work?"
>
> This, then is the life philosophy of "transcending the good wife and mother." I looked at this woman who had traveled several thousand miles alone, unafraid of hard work and danger, in order to reach the chaos of Russia, and investigate the actual conditions of the post revolutionary civil war. This spirit is a manifestation of the life philosophy of "transcending the good wife and mother," it is also a manifestation of the spirit of American women.

What after all, is this life philosophy of "transcending the good wife and mother?" Hu Shih explains further:

> The philosophy of "transcending the good wife and mother" is, in other words, the concept of "independence." I certainly do not claim that no American woman considers it worthwhile to be a good wife and mother, nor do I claim that all of them want to investigate conditions in Russia. I do say, however, that from my observations, American women, whatever their circumstances or profession, whether they are married or single, generally preserve an "independent" mind. The woman of other countries generally take "the good wife and mother" as their goal, while American women generally take "independence" as their goal. The meaning of "independence" is the development of individual abilities; the ability to not depend on others, to have an independent life for oneself and to work for society oneself. The attitude handed down from ancient China assumed that "women manage the kitchen," and "man rules outside the household, woman rules inside the household." A wife called her husband "the outer master," while a husband called his wife "the servant inside." These kinds of distinctions are unacceptable to today's American women. They think that men and women are "human beings" who should all work to make a free and independent "human" life, with no distinction between "inner" and "outer."

Later he gives several examples of American women moving towards this aim, and several times makes detailed comparisons with the faults in the aims of Chinese women. Finally he speaks of his hopes for China's women:

> If our Chinese sisters can use this independent spirit to correct our dependent nature, if they can take this "philosophy of transcending the good wife and mother," and improve the concept of "the good wife and mother," then they can bring some fresh air into the world of Chinese women, and make China produce a few women who can be truly independent. The spirit of independence is contagious. In the future, this trend to independence will be as contagious as the microbes of the plague, the more it is transmitted the further it will spread, until gradually it will create countless independent men and women, each seeing themselves as dignified individuals with duties to perform and work to do. Once there are a number of these independent men and women, they will, of course, create a good society. The good society will be absolutely unlike that which today's men and women, mutually dependent and unable to stand alone, are able to create. Therefore, I say that this spirit of independence, although it at first appears to be completely selfish individualism, in reality, is one of the necessary conditions for

a good society. This, then, is my modest hope in pointing out this problem.

The effect of Hu Shih's essay was enormous. We can see that he is advocating the philosophy of "transcending the good wife and mother." This philosophy is very similar to the "feminism" later advocated by Chang Hsi-shen (章錫琛).[55] The above essays may be considered as The New Youth's contribution to raising the "woman question."

B. The Second Period--After the May Fourth Movement

i. The May Fourth Movement and Women's Liberation

At the time of the European war, there was a great change in China's economic conditions. Because of the war, each Western country had to temporarily reduce or halt its Eastern trade. Chinese industrialists took advantage of this to extend the movement for industrialization, and during these years, countless cotton mills and factories were established everywhere in China. The collapse of handicraft industries, however, did not start at this time. As soon as foreign nations were allowed free trade, the Chinese handicraft industries were doomed and the people's economic livelihood was already in distress. Even then, the phenomenon of "sitting and waiting for death" could gradually be discerned. The people in general, however, could not be made to understand that the development of industrialization could cause social change. This was because the lives of the great majority of

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[5] See above, p. 55, note 18.

people were still far removed from the conditions of social industrialization, even though they were already indirectly suffering from the oppression of Western industrial development. At the time of the European war, capitalists established many factories, because they believed that it was an opportune enterprise. The poor people entered the factories because there they could evade hunger and cold. Social conditions, directly or indirectly, sustained very great changes. Only then did the entire nation feel the relationship between industrial development and society, and become willing to accept modern Western civilization. This then, is the background of the New Culture Movement.

When the European war came to an end, the Chinese supposed that this was an opportunity to strengthen themselves, and were full of hope that at the peace conference they would achieve victory without having worked for it. Who could foresee that in the end, the news would be inauspicious? The source of this catastrophe was misinterpretation by petty bandits. This was the reason for the development of the May Fourth Movement.[6]

Although the May Fourth Movement sprang from immediate circumstances, if it was to be maintained and given strength and meaning, then

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[6] The Chinese had hoped that after the German defeat in 1918, the German territories in China would be returned. Japan had occupied Kiaochow, the leased German territory, in 1914, and eventually occupied most of Shantung province. At the Versailles Peace Conference, secret treaties between Japan and the Great Powers were revealed, in which the Powers had promised to support Japan's claim to German territories in Shantung. In addition, the Japanese argued that China's acceptance of the Twenty-one Demands in 1915, and the agreements made in 1918 in connection with a loan from Japan for the construction of two railroads in Shantung gave Japan a legal right to the territory. See Chow Tse-tsung, The May Fourth Movement, pp. 84-94. The term "petty bandits" seems to refer to the warlords who controlled China at this time.

it would need the help of an ideology, for a movement must rely on continuous effort for success. At the same time, those who took a broad view of this political movement, felt that solving the political question alone was an impossibility, for China had problems on all sides; the economic problem, the industrial problem, the social problem, the ethical problem . . . and all of these were related to the political problem. The problems were as difficult to unravel as the strands of a spider's web, but they could all be traced back to one source, which was ultimately a cultural problem. The realization that China was part of the modern world made it necessary to accept modern civilization. The reforms advocated by The New Youth Magazine were valid, and so the young people of the May Fourth Period made every effort to achieve them, to destroy the old ethical relationships and accept the new culture. If at this time there had been only the discussions in The New Youth, but no tendency to accept Western civilization, of course the movement would not have achieved success.

The tools of the May Fourth Movement were "organization" and "propaganda."[7] The cries of a minority without organization will certainly be unable to arouse the attention of the people. In the May Fourth Period, unity of organization sprang from unity in accepting the new thought. Because the new thought set no boundaries between men and women, the May

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[7] The Chinese use of "propaganda" (hsüan ch'uan 宣傳), does not have the negative connotations that we associate with the word in English, but simply means an effort or movement to spread particular doctrines or information, or the doctrines or ideas spread through propaganda.

Fourth Movement was a good opportunity to press for more freedom of social contact.

Propaganda must have content, for a cry without content is unpleasant to those who hear it. Since the May Fourth Movement took as its aims the destruction of the old ethical relationships and the absorption of the new culture, the propaganda of the movement naturally made every effort to start from these aspects. During the May Fourth period, there were very few places which lacked a movement publication; every province and every county had a student organization, and every student organization wanted to put out a publication, whether it be lead type, lithograph or mimeograph. And, when we look at each publication, aside from news of the movement, it is full of talks on "the revolution in ideas," "opening up of social contacts," "liberation of women," "freedom in love," and "educational equality." At the very least, the minds of the young people writing these discussions, accepted in some way the molding of these thoughts, and again, when they wrote the manuscripts, they had at least to read numerous magazines. Thus, the ideas advocated in The New Youth spread spontaneously over the whole country.

Once it enters the mind, thought can be mischievous. Although there are in the world ideas which might be realized only after ten or one hundred years, the ideas closely concerned with oneself, that can be put into immediate operation, are the ones that people are eager to try out. The ideas promoted in the May Fourth Period were all "good medicine to save the age," especially this question of "women's liberation" (fu-nü chieh fang 婦女解放). Everyone felt it to be urgent;

moreover, action on it was feasible, and so, in the May Fourth Period, women began to achieve liberation.

Something that we must not forget, is the transformation of economic conditions. China's self-managed industry was originally a pagoda built on the sand, without the slightest bit of foundation. After the European war, the foreign economic invasion poured into China like a tidal wave. In the face of this force, our old system could no longer function, women could no longer go on peacefully and securely living their parasitic lives within the home. With economic conditions being in such straits, jobs being so hard to get, and the cost of living rising, it was difficult for a man to support his wife and children so that they did not cry out from hunger. For this reason, women had to enter society and look for work. Those who had some foresight then quickly allowed women to study, in order to prepare to hold a job. The ideal of a man always staying in his home community was also destroyed by the difficulty of finding work. Because of the economic situation, inherited property was often not enough to provide a living, and all the brothers of a household had to plan their own livelihood. At this time the power of clan law collapsed without waiting for the blow. The convenience of communications, however, also had a great influence. Once the concept of ancestral law had been destroyed, a great oppressive stone was lifted from women's backs. This is an important change which furthers the liberation of women.

ii. Liberation in Education and its Defects

The first harbinger of women's liberation after the May Fourth Movement was educational liberation. To raise the status of women it is

necessary to have equality in men's and women's education. In order to achieve educational equality, that is, a "human education" for all without regard to sex; male and female education should not be segregated. In 1911, the Department of Education called a central educational conference to discuss methods of co-education and decided that it was permissable in the lower grades of primary school. When the Ministry of Education was established, in the first year of the Republic, a widely circulated statement of aims mentioned co-education in the first grades of primary school. In 1915 it was further decided that in the co-educational higher level primary schools there must be separate classes for men and women. From this it is apparent that the educational methods decided upon in co-educational primary schools were only for the convenience of educational administration. In small places where they could not erect a girls' primary school, girl students could enter separate classes in boys schools. This measure was born of necessity; the Department of Education definitely did not want boys and girls to receive the same kind of education. Because the society of the time also strongly disapproved of this method, it was pointless to have a regulation allowing co-education. Primary schools only truly became co-educational after the May Fourth Movement. In 1920 there were boys' primary schools containing girls and girls' primary schools containing boys almost everywhere in the country.

Before the May Fourth Movement, there were absolutely no higher level women's schools run by Chinese. Of those established by missionary societies, Peking had Hsieh Ho Women's University, Nanking had Ginling Women's University, and Fuchow had Southern School--these were the most

famous places for Chinese girls to get a higher education. In 1917, the Peking Women's Normal School (Pei-ching nü-tzu shih-fan 北京女子師範) established a special course in teaching national language and literature, and in the next year further established technical courses in drawing and handicrafts. Although there were plans for reorganizing higher normal school education, these were never completely carried out.

The May Fourth Incident took place during the school term of 1919. In the autumn of that year, three women students, Wang Lan (王蘭), Hsi Chen (奚貞) and Teng Ch'un-lan (鄧春蘭) demanded that Peking University lift its prohibition on women students. At that time the entrance examinations had already been held so they could only be allowed to audit courses. In all there were nine women students who either qualified in the entrance exams or were allowed to audit courses. At a combined party of the men's and women's schools of Yenching University, Ts'ai Chien-min[8] gave a humorous lecture on the lifting of the prohibition against women at Peking University. He said:

> In the past there have often been people asking, "When will the universities lift their prohibitions against women students?" I can only reply, "Originally there was no prohibition against women students. There is not a university in Europe or America which does not accept women students. In the regulations for universities set by our national Ministry of Education there is absolutely no rule that only men students can be accepted. In the past, however, women middle school graduates never came to demand entrance, and we naturally had no reason to advertise for women students. If women students came to sit for the examinations

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[8] Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei.

> when the entrance examinations were announced, we would of course allow them to. If the results of the exam were up to the standard, we would of course allow them to enter preparatory classes. Since there was no prohibition to begin with, today we cannot lift it. (Yen Hsing Lu, page 415-416).

From our point of view his speech is ridiculous, but it was able to gagethe Ministry of Education and resist the aims of the opposition.[9] It was not long before the Nanking Higher Normal School also started admitting women students. The Peking Women's Higher Normal School was also completely established in the next year. Except for specialized professions such as communication and transportation and tax affairs, there is co-education today in all the universities in the country. There are still, however, two universities which teach only women students. (Tsing Hua at present has no women students, but I hear that it will soon advertise for women students).

According to the investigation of the China Society for Educational Progress, during 1922, there were already 665 women students receiving higher level education in China, aside from those studying at missionary schools (which were not counted). This was an achievement of the May Fourth Movement. The distribution of these 665 students was:

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[9] In this speech, Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, then the Chancellor of Peking National University, solved the whole problem of legal obstruction to women's higher education by pointing out that women had never been explicitly prohibited from attending universities. In the past, co-education had been so unthinkable that there had been no need to formally bar women students. Once the oversight had been pointed out there could be no further excuse to deny women higher education; and in the face of rising demands for women's education and the examples of European and American co-education systems it was impossible for conservatives to enact regulations prohibiting women students.

National Schools

Peking University	11
Peking Normal University	15
Peking University of Law and Political Science	7
Peking Agricultural University	4
Peking Women's Higher Normal University	236
Peking Industrial Technical School	8
Peking Medical Technical School	14
Peking School of Art	30
Nanking Southeastern University	44
Shanghai Commercial University	13
Wuchang Higher Normal School	19
Canton Higher Normal School	19

Provincial Schools

Tientsin Hopeh University	13
Fukien Amoy University	4
Wuchang School of Foreign Languages	7
Canton University of Law and Political Science	13
Yunan Eastern Continental University	8

Private Schools

Peking China University	14
Peking People's University	12
Peking Hsin Hua University	4
Tientsin Nankai University	23
Shanghai Southern University	4
Shanghai School of Art	52
Shanghai Chinese Public School	3
Kiangsi Yüchang School of Law	6
Wuchang Chinese University	35
Changsha Self Study University	3
Changsha Tatsai School of Law	3
Changsha Ch'ün-Chih Law School	12
Kwangchow Lingnan University	27

This was the situation in 1922; by now of course, it has improved even more.

The opportunity for Chinese women to officially enter university and receive a higher education dates from the May Fourth Movement as I have clearly explained above. Why then was the Peking Women's Normal

School formally changed in 1920 to the Higher Normal School?[10] The idea of changing Peking Women's Normal to Women's Higher Normal School was brought up before the May Fourth Movement. At that time it was necessary to establish a women's higher normal school because there was nowhere for students who had graduated from women's elementary normal to proceed to a higher school. Today there is no need for specially established schools for women's higher education. Theoretically speaking, women must receive the same human education as men, and in practice, the curriculum of women's higher normal schools and women's universities is the same as that of other universities.

We have, however, two national women's universities, which point up the defects in women's education by giving shelter to women students when they are not able to enter other universities, and thereby fostering the laziness of students in women's schools. The flowering of the intellectual revolution almost ten years ago, has not yet been able to correct this attitude of the past three thousand years which ranked women's ability below men's. The liberation of women in education is still not complete in this respect.

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[10] Students at an elementary normal school had completed seven years of elementary education; four years of lower elementary school, from seven to eleven years of age, and three years of higher elementary school, from eleven to fourteen years of age. At fourteen, they entered elementary normal, and graduated at nineteen, qualified to teach in elementary schools.

Higher normal school followed the completion of four years of high school or four years of elementary normal school. At the end of the four year course, students were qualified to teach in high schools. Lin Paotchin, L'instruction Féminine En Chine (Après la Revolution de 1911), Paris: Librairie Geuthner, 1926, p. 18.

Because the schools which were set up during the reform period set the "good wife and mother" as their aim, they first put women's education under the laws for domestic education, and only later brought it under the Ministry of Schools. The goal of women's normal school at the time was "to give women a primary education and to teach methods of rearing infants, in hopes of assisting the family livelihood and benefiting the home." Half of this aim was acknowledged in the first years of the Republic; the goal was said to be "the education of primary school teachers and kindergarten governesses." There was no mention of anything concerning the home, for at that time there were already doubts about the principle of "good wives and mothers." Furthermore, the creation of women's middle schools was undertaken in the hope that women would have the opportunity to receive a higher education and thereby escape the confines of the role of good wife and mother. But in the end, they couldn't say that women's middle school education should be identical to men's. As a result, there were more home management, sewing, and related courses than in the curriculum at men's middle schools. This inadvertently created an inconsistency in the system, and made the aim of women's education confused and lacking in direction. Should the aim of educating women ultimately be the same as that of educating men? Should it be the production of good wives and mothers, or should it transcend good wives and mothers? If the aim should be the same as that of men's education, what is the point of women studying more home management, and sewing courses? If good wives and mothers are to be the educational standard, can they be produced by the study of needlework?

China's new education was originally conceived on the style of the old examination system. All that counted was that a person would have certain qualifications after passing through school grades, and would be able to lay his hands on a position in the civil service (school teachers qualify as a kind of civil servant). No one gave any thought to whether or not education was relevant to the student's life. Although there was great concern for the management of schools, the effect on the life of the students was, as before, very slight. Since the goal of women's education was so unclear, the whole question could only float in the great sea of the old life, rocked by the new intellectual tide, high with one wave and low with the next, passing through its vague and undefined existence.

Today's women's schools completely evade their responsibilities. They ignore all questions of whether or not their students should marry, or whether, after having married they should take up the responsibility of home management and child rearing. Instead, in accordance with these far from perfect ministry regulations, they cram the student's brains with courses and text books. When these great questions develop in a student's life, she must rely on her environment to provide a solution, and has no choice but to struggle in the cross currents of the conflict between new and old. The knowledge which school has given her is of no advantage. What an enormous defect this is! The prevailing situation is such that almost everyone will admit that education for a woman is nothing more than an ornament. A woman who has an education has outgrown her own home but cannot take a place in another. (That is to say,

she does not have the ability to manage a household). What a tragic result this is!

In higher level education it is unnecessary to separate men and women, but there are two universities in China which do separate them. From the beginning, middle school education was segregated, although there is no difference in teaching methods and teaching aims. Is this not a contradiction?

In my opinion, the purpose of higher level education is to shape special talents; what sexual distinctions are there in special talents? Even without mentioning the positive advantages of co-education it is obvious that men and women should be studying together, since the directing purpose is the same, and the teaching materials used are again the same.

As for girls with middle school education, I believe that whether they are going on to further schooling or will be finding work, they should be given an education for the special needs of women, apart from courses connected with the school system. Although the idea that "women rule within the house" is completely unsuitable for contemporary society, no one advocates totally obliterating women's native abilities and spiritual endowment, their interests, affection and beauty, and causing masculinity to be the ultimate standard of life. Certainly no feminist would want to demand the elimination of the responsibility, glory and pain of motherhood. For this reason, women ought to have their own female education aside from the "human" education they receive. If women of the new era suppose that it is all right not to study home

management and related areas, then they make the same mistake as those who earlier took simply the good wife and mother as their aim. Ellen Key divided mother's education into three courses:

> The first course consists of the study of principles of national economics, home management, personal hygiene and aesthetics. Although this course does not include actual practice, it communicates to young women the first principles of domestic science.
>
> The second course consists of hygiene, psychology and theories concerning the education of healthy children and children with various kinds of handicaps.
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> The third course consists of physiological and psychological theories which young girls should know before or after becoming a mother, as well as the basic principles of eugenics. (Ten Discussions on Women p. 146).[11]

Although all modern women believe in the philosophy of "transcending the good wife and mother," they should still acquire the common knowledge of the good wife and mother. To say that those women who miss out on motherhood, or do not know how to be a woman, are best able to transcend the role of a good wife and mother is a delusion and cannot be believed. Educators, especially women's educators, ought to carefully consider this problem and find a means of solving it. The solution advocated by Ellen Key may be worth consulting.

iii. Liberation in Professions and its Difficulties

Although the entry of women into factories began before the May Fourth Movement, it was only after May Fourth that boys' schools employed women teachers. Today, teaching has already become the most

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[11] See above, p. 55, note 11.

common profession for women. Aside from this, there are some women working in commerce; often in the great metropolises such as Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai, and Canton, there are businesses run by women. We may say that women have already won professional liberation; as long as there is work that they can do, they can be employed. So far there has not been discrimination because of sex, nor do men consider working women as outsiders. Women who participate in professions today, do not do so because they no longer have responsibilities as housewives, nor is it because they have no children to raise. Why must they go into society seeking work? The answer is economic oppression!

In the West, because industrial products are inexpensive, the domestic economy is diminished, and the work of the home has become extremely slight. The housework which women had to do in the past, such as grinding grain, making hemp and yarn, weaving cloth, washing clothes, bleaching linen, brewing wine, making soap, candles, and various kinds of fruit juices and herbal beverages for medicinal use, soaking fruits, preserving food, making clothes, baking bread, carrying water, feeding pigs, and raising chickens, is now no longer necessary because of the expansion of co-operation in labour. The only tasks which the modern western housewife has to do are cooking, housework and raising children. Even these few duties have been greatly alleviated by running water, gas stoves, electric lights, gas lights, central heating, and other modern conveniences, as well as schools and kindergartens. In addition, the burden of childrearing is lightened not only by kindergartens and schools, but also by the popular "two child system." Today there is no

need for constant labour, and those who have ability are therefore not willing to be cramped in the small sphere of the home, but want to have a profession. This goes without saying, naturally, for those who must make their own living because of economic oppression. No matter what her situation, however, the American working woman is more fortunate by far than the Chinese woman of today who is looking for a job.[12]

What is the condition of working women in China today? A woman teacher has twenty or thirty hours of classes a week. When she goes home, she still has to take care of children, cook meals, wash clothes, and in the evening correct papers and prepare classes. If she has any spare time, then she would still plan on knitting and making shoes and stockings for the children. Even if there is a maid, there are several tasks which she must do personally. How bitter a life this is! But this is the normal situation. If the woman becomes pregnant, then she has to worry about her health. Most of the time she takes temporary leave from work, has the child, and then, not having regained the greater part of her energy, she becomes tired of her work. Married women, therefore, generally do not hold a job for long. Because of this two things happen:

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[12] This paragraph was originally part of Müller-Lyer's explanation of the development of the women's movement. (See F. Müller-Lyer, The History of Social Development, trans. Elizabeth Coote Lake and H. A. Lake, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1920, pp. 223-224). Ch'en later cites a Commercial Press translation by T'ao (陶) which was probably his source for this section (p. 168). It is interesting that the original version applies to Western Europe, while Ch'en, by the end of the paragraph refers specifically to America. This is indicative of both the popularity of the American example at the time and of Ch'en's tendency to exaggerate the uniformity of material progress in America.

1) Some unmarried working girls see marriage as something to be feared. In order to earn a living outside of marriage they have to sacrifice their treasured youth, and later on they often lose the opportunity to marry. In the Chinese intellectual class today there are a great number of women who endure the suffering of late marriage or even of not marrying at all.

2) Since late marriage is so difficult, most unmarried women cannot help but see work as something unpleasant. They recover their old concepts, think that being a housewife is their only natural work, and frantically look for a man with property to marry. If economic pressure forces them to work for a time, they feel that this work is only aimless drifting in a vast sea, that one morning they will sail into the port of marriage, and will immediately cast aside their hated professional work.

For these reasons, women are still not able to stand on their own feet. Although the majority of liberated women who fall in love and marry feel that they have destroyed all the old restrictions completely; in fact, the institution of marriage has still not improved. None of them realize that after being married a short time they will find that they still have not achieved liberation and still require the protection of a man. The yoke of the past several thousand years is still fastened round their necks.

Why do Chinese women suffer these difficulties in working? The reason is that our family structure is still primitive in form. Household labour has not yet been simplified, and greater division of labour

is still not possible. It is imperative, therefore, that we have a new organization. Until this re-organization, women will, on the one hand, be bound by domestic shackles, and on the other, become slaves to wages. Under these two layers of oppression, women's problems are even more severe than men's. Even so, more women every day are unable to find the work they seek because the boundaries of the professions which have already been opened are too small. Their grievance cannot be exaggerated. What form will the new organization take? Liu Pan-nung has already discussed this in "Random Thoughts on Returning South." We will take up this subject again in the eighth section of this chapter.

iv. Liberation in Marriage and its Inadequacies

After the May Fourth Movement, the concept of freedom of marriage seemed to have become universal in the intellectual class. Most people already believed that a marriage without love was immoral. Pure love matches, however, had still only been tried by a minority. Even if a man and woman had decided between themselves to get married, they still had to ask for the agreement of their families, and then engage a matchmaker to handle various procedures, like matching the characters of the time of birth, in order to formalize the engagement. This procedure can be taken for granted in those marriages which were decided entirely by the family. The formalities of marriage are almost the same as those of the Sung dynasty. They are:

1. Requesting horoscopes/

The father and older brother ask someone to be an intermediary to propose the match to the girl's family. If the girl's family agrees,

then the girl's horoscope is sent to the man's home.

2. Making Enquiries

If the horoscopes are compatible, then each side must make enquiries about the circumstances and character of the other's home; if the enquiries do not give enough information, then they are continued through divination. This step, of course, is not necessary if there has been agreement from the beginning.

3. Engagement

If the enquiries produce agreement, and divination is auspicious, then a lucky day is chosen for the engagement ceremony. On this day the man's household sends to the girl's household: jewelry, (called the six gifts, they may be all gold, half gold, or silver coins may be substituted, while some people use none of these) then tea, fruit and ceremonial cards, (the two cards used are "sending greetings" and "seeking assent") and other gifts to fill the tray. The girl's family receives them and returns ceremonial cards ("sending greetings," "eight Characters" (of the horoscope) and "card of assent"), as well as happy cakes, etc.

4. Publicizing the date

If the man's family wants to go ahead with the marriage, it must first choose an auspicious day by divination, and again engage matchmakers to inform the girl's family of the date. If the girl's family agrees, then they can begin; if not, they must choose another date.

5. Sending of the Betrothal Presents

Ten or twelve days before the wedding the man's family has to send presents to the girl's family--this is called the sending of

betrothal presents. First the girl's family says which articles are necessary: jewelry, clothes, wedding clothes and silver coins, etc. The man's family sends the gifts on the chosen day; the girl's family accepts them, and then gives the bridegroom a ceremonial hat and shoes, and some happy cakes.

6. The Trousseau

One day before the wedding, the trousseau that the girl's family has collected for her must be sent to the man's home. The size of the trousseau is determined by the wealth or poverty of the bride's family: there are those with four trunks and eight boxes, those with two trunks and four boxes, and those consisting only of several boxes. In addition, there are tables and stools, and copper and china utensils. These utensils are, for the most part, only for show and not for practical use. Traditional women believed that their trousseau bound them to either glory or infamy, and therefore wanted the outside appearance to be especially good. Even modern educated women cannot escape from this attitude. Frequently girl students work hard as school teachers after graduation, but do not use the money they earn to help support the family, for their only aim is to increase their dowry.

7. Fetching the Bride

On the day of the wedding, the man's family sends a bridal sedan chair or a carriage to the girl's family to receive the bride. The bridegroom also goes to the girl's house at this time. This procedure is called "taking a wife." Formerly its purpose was that of meeting the wife in person for the first time. When the sedan chair arrives at the

brides's home, the girl's family must demand some money--this is called "fees to doorkeepers." If too little money is given, then the sedan chair is not allowed to enter. Once the chair has entered, the bride, dressed in her wedding gown, with a veil of red silk, is helped into it by her younger brother. The mother and daughter are now about to separate; they must weep bitterly, for if they didn't, they would be ridiculed. There is, moreover, a superstition to the effect that, if there is tremendously noisy wailing then the bridegroom's home will prosper in the future. It is difficult for an educated women to know how to deal with this situation.

8. Marriage

An exact time must be selected for the marriage; it is unlucky to be later than this selected time. The sedan chair returns to the man's home, the bridegroom puts on his ceremonial clothes, a female attendant draws the bride from the sedan chair to stand with the bridegroom, and then ties them together with a long green scarf. The marriage candles are lighted, music is played, and the master of ceremonies announces the steps for the ceremony. The couple make four deep bows to the north and south, being led all the time by the female attendant, exactly like puppets. When the bowing is finished, they must be taken to their room by close friends who carry the wedding candles. Those who carry the candles are at the front of the procession, the bride and groom at the rear. Mischief makers dawdle at each step and won't go forward, so that even if it is only two rooms away, they will walk for ten minutes, as an excuse to make the bride suffer. When they finally

get to the room, the two of them are made to sit on the edge of the bed together and sacrifices are made to the ancestors. Next there is the introduction ceremony, beginning with the father and mother, then in order from senior and junior uncles to older and younger brothers and sisters and other close relatives. When the ceremony is finished, the elders are formally presented to the bride, and she in turn must meet the younger generation.

This kind of ceremony is still commonly used. Liberated people, by comparison, simplify some of the procedures a little--they do not use wedding candles or bow to the ancestral tablets, but substitute a sort of "civilized wedding," (wen-ming chieh-hun 文明結婚), exchanging rings and getting a marriage certificate, while the rest of the ceremony remains much as before. This certainly is not a thorough liberation. There is also the "banquet style" (Yen-hui shih 宴會式) wedding ceremony, most of which are held in the great metropolises, for they are not easy to arrange in one's home village. There are very few marriages of complete freedom which do away with all red tape. Generally this happens only if all family connections have been severed. In fact, only the organization of clan law hampers the breakdown of the Chinese marriage system. Once clan law is destroyed, the old marriage system will naturally change, and will be easier to oppose than the Western marriage system which is bolstered by religion.

We spoke above of the old marriage ceremony, which is still more or less preserved today, with the exception that marriage must be based on love. Because the majority of people recognize this, parents are not

as obstinate as before about their son's or daughter's marriage. Two diametrically opposed social phenomena have resulted from this: extreme ease of marriage, and extreme difficulty of marriage.

In cases of extreme ease of marriage, the couple often meet in a public park, a theatre, an assembly hall or other such place. Once they come into contact they fall in love, and shortly after are united in marriage. This sequence of events unfolds everywhere, but is especially common in the large metropolises. The couple believe that they are in love, and put all their efforts towards the goal of getting married; there is naturally no room for investigating the other's suitability as a mate. This is nothing but the hurried search for an outlet for passion of which Carpenter speaks, driven on by the desire of the two sexes.[13] What a grave danger this is! Not only when couples get to know each other by themselves, but even when they are introduced by friends and then quickly fall in love, the same kind of carelessness occurs. However, since it is easier to find out about the opposite partner from friends, the latter arrangement is preferable.

What then is extreme difficulty of marriage? One reason for the gradually developing difficulty in getting married is the realization by the working girls, of whom we spoke in the last chapter, that marriage is a dangerous road. Those Chinese girls who have received higher education are also having difficulties in getting married. They lose the first bloom of their youth when studying at university, and, when they put on the cap of a Bachelor of Arts, their former attraction and fascination for men is gone. Who could foresee that university education would

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[13] See above, p. 10, note 4.

make them unconsciously adopt a haughty attitude, often despising men? They suppose that relations between men and women are a spiritual companionship, a union of interests and opinions which develops human potentiality. For them it is better, if no good opportunities for marriage occur, to devote their lives to a profession, thus achieving economic freedom and freedom of action.

The above two phenomena, extreme ease of marriage and extreme difficulty of marriage, should not exist in a wholesome society. It is obvious that a careless marriage easily produces unhappy results. Extreme difficulty in getting married, or failure to marry at all, is also a misfortune. Human nature makes marriage necessary for both men and women. If a man has a profession or receives a higher education, his right to marry is unharmed. Why then does a woman who holds a job or gets a high level of education sacrifice her right to marry? There is no scientific foundation for the argument that it is all right for women not to marry because their sexual desires are naturally more moderate than men's. Sexual morality is determined by social organization. We may ask whether the expression of female sexual desires would still be as mild as it is now, if women had the same freedom as men. Today's superficial moderation is entirely the result of excessive repression.

Social progress is dependent on the increasing excellence of the bodies, minds and morality of the elements of society. The superior element is created by a good inheritance from a superior mother and father, a good home life and a complete education. Girls who have received a higher education naturally are the best mothers for excellent children;

if they sacrifice this glorious role, then they cannot fulfill their one and only duty to society. We certainly hope that girls who have received higher education will, with their male counterparts, serve society, and make sacrifices for their sisters who lack wisdom and morality, sick children and youths and pitiable people in general. Under a wholesome system, however, the fact that a mother has two or three children will not necessarily stand in the way of her giving service to society.

Naturally those "masculine women" who feel that there is no happiness in marriage, and even dislike small children (this in itself is a symptom of illness) can choose not to bear and rear children. The fact that the majority think that celibacy is appealing because they suffer from today's social restraints is, however, a symptom of disease in present day society. We must find a way to treat this symptom. Aside from changing the social structure to free women from having to slave in the home, and making children's education less painful for girls, the method of treatment is to ease social contact. This is an urgent matter for China, for if social contact was truly open, truly easy, then the fault of careless marriage could be corrected, and the problem of difficulty in getting married diminished. In American co-educational universities, the marriage rate of girl students is somewhat higher than that of students of girls' schools, because there are more opportunities for social intercourse with male students. Even up to the present day, there has never been free social intercourse between men and women in China, and an old attitude of coquettishness persists. This truly is an enormous drawback.

v. The Extreme Need for Change in Sexual Attitudes

Social intercourse has not been liberated because sexual attitudes have not been reformed. Although the majority of people in China already realize that marriage requires love between those who are involved, they still worry too much about sexual misbehaviour, and the two sexes are made to keep very far apart. Isn't the abuse arising as a result of this attitude greater than the abuse produced by freedom of social contact? When too much importance is placed on sexual behaviour and men and women are kept too far apart, the male sex can see in women only objects for pleasure. Thus a woman seems to be nothing but a barnyard hen raised by a man. Although he can slaughter her at his wish, once he lets his guard down she may become a fowl in someone else's pot seduced by a chicken snatcher's handful of grain. Are stories of illicit and treacherous intercourse rare in China's past? The cause of the widespread corruption developing in China now--careless marriages, etc.--also lies in the past. Although the ideas of the past two thousand and more years, that "boys and girls are not seated together after they are seven years old" and "there should be no contact between boys and girls," seem, at first glance, to have already disintegrated, their ghosts as before work mischief in the minds of China's people.

It goes without saying that difficulty in getting married is caused by the restriction of social intercourse. When people are together there is nothing that they cannot understand. People do not despise others because the others are despicable, but because they do not know them completely. Greater knowledge of other persons brings greater

understanding. In this life where each must struggle, it is necessary that we replace misunderstanding with sympathy.

Girls who embrace celibacy in this society often do so only because they cannot find their ideal mates. Society will certainly pity them. Few realize that, out of ignorance, they despise all men--how can those who have not known any men chose their ideal mate? For this reason, true social liberation would also greatly ease the problem of difficulty in getting married.

If we want to give young girls a deep and thorough understanding of relations with the opposite sex, and the ability to distinguish clearly the most important aspects of male-female relationships, then our most urgent work at present is to make them fully accustomed to the opposite sex from the start.

Our former sexual morality demanded the maintenance of chastity only from women; if a man loved another woman it was not important, but a woman's infidelity brought lifelong misfortune. These concepts are still preserved at the present time. People do not realize that a married man should not keep his wife in a stranglehold, lest relations between man and wife become insipid.

When husband and wife allow each other distance and freedom of action, it binds them in absolute sympathy. This freely chosen, innocent and natural marriage is all the more attractive because of its freedom. Through the extension of the boundaries of life, marriage is made richer in content, its vitality increaseses, and in a certain sense it becomes indestructable. Carpenter advocates this in Love's Coming of Age,[14] and

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[14] (London: Methuen and Co., 1896).

it is strongly praised by Homma Hisao. (See Chang's translation of Ten Lectures on the Woman Question, page 44).[15]

He who travels the farthest away from home longs for his native land the most. The prosperity of home need not be greater than the places to which he has travelled, but as a result of exceptional longing, his viewpoint broadens and the scope of his mind grows, because he can now see the beauties of his native place. After the extension of social intercourse, when the boundaries of life are enlarged, relations between husband and wife will be easier and more forgiving because of an expanded vision and a broader mind.

The old-fashioned husband kept too close a watch on his wife. She not only had no freedom after marriage, but even when she was a girl her life could never be called free. Never having known freedom, her life is eternally dry, monotonous and boring. Marriage to this kind of woman gives you only an acquiescent slave; your life together cannot be vital, and you face only bordom and monotony. Even in the new, half-liberated society, however, the majority of women who have made a love-match still do not enjoy the taste of real freedom. This is the poison left behind from an old sickness: supervising women too closely, not even allowing them to have an appetite for social contact and placing too much emphasis on slave-like chastity.

What are the fine results of the old society's excessive emphasis on a one-sided sexual morality, and its harsh supervision of the female

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[15] See above, p. 55, note 11.

sex? According to the records of the Ministry of Justice, in the five month period between May and September of 1914, over forty per cent of the criminals for whom the Ministry of Justice approved the carrying out of the death sentence, had killed a legal husband, (the indicted person being a man) or had killed their own husband, (the indicted person being a woman), (see table below). This fact alone proclaims the bankruptcy of the old system and the ineffectiveness of the law! By this I mean that the law's majesty cannot frighten the common people, nor make them refrain from crime.

Note: Statistics on the approval of the Ministry of Justice for the carrying out of death sentences of criminals. (From The Communique of the Ministry of Justice, nos. 19, 20, 21).

Month	No. of persons executed for the murder of a husband	Total no. of persons executed
May	0	9
June	19	34
July	9	22
August	2	7
September	7	19
Total	37	91

Percentage--40.6

Among the Chinese folk, there have always been extremely inhumane punishments for adulterers; punishments which the law often tacitly allowed, and did not treat as crimes. But adultery has in no way diminished because of this. In today's view it only reveals the people's barbarism, brutality, and the total irrationality of their

sexual attitudes. For example, the National Daily (Min-kuo jih-pao 民國日報) for August 7th, 1913, carried a news story of this type:

> In Chiukiang, a few days ago, a plank with someone on it was suddenly seen, floating in the rapid current of the river. The ferry service quickly sent out a life boat to fish the person out of the water. When they could see closely, there was a live young woman on her back on the plank. The upper half of her body was naked, and on the lower half there were only a pair of unlined trousers. Her hands and feet had been nailed down securely with iron nails so that she could not move. Between her legs had been placed a man's head blurred with fresh blood, and there was a sign saying, "Any man who saves this woman is a thief, any woman who saves her is a whore." The people in the rescue boat, seeing these strange things, then disregarded her entirely. The woman said, "Please turn this plank over so that I may die quickly." The driver of the rescue boat, without making further enquiries, sailed back and told people the things he had seen. Everyone agreed that this must be a case of murder because of adultery, but they thought they should fish her out of the water and tell the government office so it could be thoroughly investigated. Later, because the plank drifted down the river, they were unable to save her, and did not know where it had drifted to. (Quoted from Chou Chien-jen, (周建人) "Change in Sexual Morality," Min Te Magazine, (民鐸) (VI:2, p. 6).

When the senseless maintenance of loveless relations between husband and wife can result in this kind of brutality, who can argue that there is still value in preserving China's old moral code? If this woman could have divorced her husband when she fell in love with another man, things would never have reached an atrocity of these proportions, nor would women go to the extent of murdering their husbands.

Chastity is no less esteemed today than it was in the past, and remains a basic impediment to freedom of social intercourse and ease of divorce. For a man, divorce brings a new life; for a woman it still proclaims a death sentence. Even if she is economically independent, opportunities for re-marriage are still very rare. Many advocate that

men who are already married should, for this reason, forgive their mate and try hard to create love. If the woman is unhappy in her marriage, then she should struggle with all her might against the power of the old society, and demand a divorce in order to destroy its out-dated social ideas. I agree with this, and moreover hope that all divorced women will find it easy to remarry. When divorced women are more numerous, outdated ideas of sexuality will lose their strength, and will be completely destroyed as soon as divorcees are no longer regarded as something outrageous.

Today, many of those who have already become engaged regret the engagement. For the most part they are men who do not wish to marry the woman their parents have selected for them. A woman who encounters this situation ought to strongely urge her parents to cancel the agreement with the man's family, or she will have a loveless marriage, a situation even more unsatisfying than remaining single for the time being.

In a word, if the concept of chastity is not destroyed, it will be difficult to change sexual attitudes, widows will still find it difficult to remarry, and divorces will still be difficult to obtain. These are the mortal wounds which make it impossible for a woman to stand on her own.

vi. Mrs. Sanger's Visit to China and the Birth Control Movement

China is well known as a country of numerous progeny, but even in the Han dynasty it often happened that poor people did not raise their children. For the past two thousand years, abortions and the drowning

of girl babies have been common social phenomena. Although China had no scientific birth control methods, it is obvious that in actuality, economic oppression forced people to practice birth control. The Chinese people had no natural desire for large families. These clumsy methods, however, harmed the mother's health time and time again, or else generated acts of atrocity and murder--it is simply too pitiful that these things should happen. Therefore, abortion is subject to legal interference, and public spirited men strongly attacked the drowning of girl babies. Wang Chi (王吉) of the Han dynasty, and Yen Chih-t'ui (顏之推) of the Northern and Southern dynasties, are representatives of this kind of person. In Lin Shu's[16] New Music Bureau of Fukien, written at the end of the Ch'ing dynasty, there is a poem called "Unfeeling Water," about the drowning of girl infants:

> Who says that water has no feelings?
> If it had no feelings how could it make these broken-
> hearted sounds?
> Who says that water has no feelings?
> It has feelings and insists on drowning newborn babes.
>
> A girl costs money in the beginning
> How can one know that she will bring honour to the house?
> The placenta is still connected to the navel and full
> of blood,
> The spirit pass is close before her eyes.
>
> The father is worrying to himself about food,
> He is pained that there are no family holdings to leave
> to his sons.

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[16] Lin Shu (林紓) (1852-1924) (New Music Bureau of Fukien 閩中新樂府). The first major Chinese translator of Western fiction; he proposed reforms including the education of women and the abolition of foot-binding. See Boorman, Biographical Dictionary, Vol. pp. 382-86. Hummel, Eminent Chinese, p. 306.

If on top of this he has to buy wedding gowns,
When can he afford to find wives for them?

For mother there are other worries,
Her milk accumulates painfully morning after morning.
She sits on her bed sewing shoes and socks,
She combs her hair at the mirror.
Rather than having to put up with a big expense in the
future,
Why not make the move in advance?

A single candle burns in the sour wind.
A bowl of clear water as pure as the heart,
This water was hardly for washing the baby,
Seven parts foam and three parts blood.

The parents' minds are at last at ease,
Now they will no longer be faced with these difficulties.
It's too bad that the child had no voice,
The little soul will not ask her mother,
"Mother, when you were a baby daughter, who raised you?
Perhaps you'd say that feeding and clothing me would stand
in the way of your sons,
But I would only beg for life.
I would be willing to suffer poverty.
Who could have guessed you to be so deaf, blind and stupid?
All you can think of to say is that bearing sons is good.
In killing girls and leaving boys you plan for your
own benefit.
Perhaps you should first look up to Heaven!"

Female infants are no less human than male infants. Why then refuse them the right to live? But the bigotry of society and economic oppression cause this kind of thing; people cannot change even if you use the terrifying power of Heaven to frighten them. Extreme poverty has grown even more prevalent in the last few years, the life of the people is more difficult, and life is increasingly devalued. In these dark social conditions, how can there be a decrease in incidents of abortion and drowning? Scientific birth control is really an urgent need in China.

Mrs. Margaret Sanger, an American, is the most forceful advocate of birth control, or family planning, in the world today. Mrs. Sanger was born in Corning, New York, in 1883.[17] She worked as a nurse for fourteen years, seeing women in poor homes burdened with too many children. Their life was often difficult, and many died from abortions. Because of this, Mrs. Sanger became aware of the necessity for birth control, and published a small pamphlet called The Woman Rebel, giving information about contraception, and mailed it to the slums.[18] The American Federal Government and New York City Hall considered this pamphlet an obscene publication and accused her of a criminal act. According to the clearly prescribed law, all who had sent it and received it should be sentenced to a five thousand dollar fine and five years in prison. This affair, however, received a great deal of attention from the world's people. The famous Englishmen H.G. Wells and Edward Carptenter sent a

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[17] The date of Margaret Sanger's birth was actually 1879. 1883 was the year of birth of her sister, Ethel. Emily Taft Douglas, Margaret Sanger: Pioneer of the Future, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970, p. 5.

[18] The Woman Rebel was actually a magazine, not a pamphlet. Eight issues were published, beginning in March 1914. The magazine discussed family limitation in general, outlining the benefits of small families and the sorry results of having too many children, but never published specific information on birth control. In spite of this restraint, Mrs. Sanger was indicted on nine counts for alleged violations of the federal statutes, and would have been liable for forty-five years in prison had she been found guilty. Ch'en seems to be confusing The Woman Rebel with a small pamphlet called Family Limitation which Mrs. Sanger wrote shortly after being indicted for sending The Woman Rebel through the mails. This pamphlet did give specific birth control information.
Douglas, pp. 48-56.

letter to American President Wilson, saying that Mrs. Sanger's action was entirely moral, and that the pamphlet should not be regarded as an obscene publication.[19] After a detailed investigation, she was found innocent.[20] As a result of this incident, one can actually say that the American government had already tacitly acknowledged the birth control movement.

Later Mrs. Sanger, together with her sister Mrs. E. Byrne, established a birth control institute in the slums of New York, and was seized and imprisoned. Mrs. Byrne went on a hunger strike in prison, arousing great sympathy from the women of New York, who assembled many supporters to present a petition. Again a special committee was sent to investigate, and again they declared that no crime had been committed. From this time, the problem of birth control received a great deal of attention. The Birth Control Association sponsored by Mrs. Sanger already has over twenty chapters, and publishes a magazine called Birth Control Review. Birth control institutes are gradually being established in every European country.

On her way to London to attend an International Conference on Birth Control, to be held in July of 1922, Mrs. Sanger made a detour

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[19] The open letter to President Wilson originated with Dr. Marie Stopes. She had obtained the signatures of nine of England's most famous authors. Douglas mentions William Archer, Arnold Bennet, Gilbert Murray and H. G. Wells.
Douglas, p. 90.

[20] There was actually no detailed investigation. The government decided not to prosecute, Feb. 18, 1916.
Ibid., p. 92.

through the East. In March of that year, she left the United States for Japan. The Japanese government at first refused to allow her to go ashore, and later restrained her from spreading information about contraceptive methods.[21] She left Japan for China in the middle of April. After Mrs. Sanger arrived in Peking, she gave a lecture at Peking University translated by Hu Shih as "Birth Control, What and How?" Great crowds heard the lecture at that time, and after the manuscript of the speech was published, people were even more interested. Some saw it as timely rain, and others thought it was an intriguing idea. Mrs. Sanger must ultimately be considered the first to come and destroy the all pervasive atmosphere of secrecy about sex in Chinese society. Had there ever been anyone, at any time in China's past, who made a speech in front of the public on the topic of sexual intercourse? As well as planting the seeds of birth control the first time she spoke, she also established a good attitude, making Chinese aware that in matters of sexuality, it is after all, worthwhile to use scientific methods of discussion!

The principle of birth control is to prevent the union of sperm and egg, and thus avoid pregnancy. Although the methods are simple, the ultimate goal is the solution of a far reaching problem. The great English economist, Malthus, said that if the people of the world continue to multiply at the same rate as at present, the population must double each

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[21] Mrs. Sanger was allowed to land in Japan on the condition that she would not lecture publicly about birth control.
Douglas, p. 166.

twenty-five years. This kind of increase is a geometrical progression, but even with the greatest effort, the increase in the world's production can only be an arithmetical progression. Mankind simply is in danger of extinction. "Malthusianism" is the use of various methods to restrict population growth. "Neo-Malthusianism" advocates the use of scientific methods of contraception to replace other inhumane methods of restricting the population. "Birth control," therefore, receives a great deal of attention, and is called by some "restricting the birth of children."

The calamity of over-population is present everywhere in China today; the need for birth control is urgent. After Mrs. Sanger came to China, people in both Peking and Shanghai organized groups to do research on contraception, a project which regrettably went underground soon after. Certainly the methods used at present are not entirely convenient, but continued promotion and research are necessary. Mrs. Sanger also advised that we begin with our poor, our invalids and our lower levels of society, but the promotion of contraception to these people always depends on the young men and women of the intellectual class.

Even without mentioning the fact that restricting the population would make the country rich and powerful, and the society wholesome, we can still point out several personal advantages to the practice of birth control:

1. Birth control allows a mother to give birth only to children she wants. If her health is poor, or if she is overworked, then she can lighten her share of difficulty by not bearing children.

2. Birth control will preserve the husband's love for her. Because the time between births will be longer, the husband and wife will

be financially better off and their love will become deeper.

3. Because the poor people lack knowledge, many children do not receive a wholesome upbringing. If they are lucky enough to grow up, they are only able to perform manual labour, or, because they have had to bring themselves up since childhood, they become simpletons, never having one happy day in their whole lives.

4. Birth control can prevent the passing on of illness from parents to their offspring.

5. Young people will be free to marry early and use birth control until their economic situation is capable of supporting the birth and rearing of a child. Prostitution and other forms of illegitimate intercourse can in this way be avoided.

6. Birth control can prevent the burden of too many children, thus creating peaceful and harmonious homes, and giving men and women the opportunity of developing freely.

Because the advantages mentioned above affect the happiness of women's entire lives, they really ought to take an active role in the question of birth control. It would be best if women did research themselves, advocated contraception themselves, implemented it themselves, and kept themselves mutually informed.

It is not necessary that birth control methods be taught as one of the school courses for women, (although there are already numerous birth control institutes in Europe and America, and even if birth control were recognized as a course in women's education, there would be no harm in it). But educated women should consider ignorance of birth control a

disgrace! Going a step further, we can say that in today's China, we need, at the least, a woman like Mrs. Sanger, giving earnest and sincere advice, and working with the spirit of a martyr for the happiness of her sisters!

Unrestricted population growth is the worst sin. We have been told that to be without progeny is the worst sin, but this concept, the product of clan law, is already dead. What has the birth control movement to fear? The previous birth control research organizations in Shanghai and Peking were initiated by men, and as they failed, it is not worthwhile looking at their example. In the future there must be organizations initiated by women.

vii. The Movement for Political Participation and its Theory

Is it possible that once it was defeated in the first year of the Republic, the movement for women's political participation dissipated in the fire and smoke? Not so. After the May Fourth period, women had the opportunity to get a higher education. At once the women's world produced some able people, and they, of course, having sharpened themselves, were eager to try their hands on this problem. Governmental collapse gradually became apparent after 1921. There were strong demands for regional self-government, and everyone was hoping for a good government to come and solve the nation's problems. The scholarly community cried loudly for this "good governmentism."[22] Women university students found this

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[22] On May 13, 1922, a group of intellectual leaders, including Hu Shih and Li Ta-chao, published a declaration entitled "Our Political

atmosphere contagious; they felt that an opportunity had arrived which they should develop. As a result, the movement for political participation rose up a second time.

During the summer vacation of 1922, Wan P'u (萬璞), a woman student at Peking National University, and women students Chou Huan (周桓), Shih Shu-ch'ing (石淑卿) and others from the Institute of Law and Government, formed a liaison with students of the Women's Higher Normal School and began a movement for political participation. They held a preparatory meeting at the Institute of Law and Government on July 25th. Since there was disagreement, they split into two groups: Wan, Chou and others organized the Society for the Advancement of Women's Political Participation (Nü-tzu ts'an-cheng hsieh-chin hui 女子參政協進會) and those from the Women's Higher Normal School organized the Women's Rights Alliance (Nü-tzu yün-tung t'ung-meng-hui 女權運動同盟會).

The new movement for political participation differed in method from that of the first year of the Republic; at that time it was violent, this time it was non-violent. However, the founding meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Political Participation encountered police interference and had no alternative but to become a lecture group with the intention of demanding women's participation in national politics after the formal opening of the National Assembly. In their declaration they

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Proposals" calling for the reform of warlord government and the creation of a "good government" which would combine efforts to improve the welfare of the nation with guarantees of individual liberty.
See Chow Tse-tsung, The May Fourth Movement, p. 240-241.

stated their aims:

1. To overthrow the constitution which was established exclusively for men, in order to demand protection of the rights of women.
2. To destroy the inheritance rights which consider only male heirs, in order to achieve economic independence.
3. To destroy the educational system which is only concerned with managing the home, in order to achieve educational equality.

Looking at this carefully, the first two items must be gained through changes in legislation, but the third item is not really necessary. There were no unequal regulations in the educational system established by the Republic. If the training at girls' schools was not the equal of that at boys' schools, this is the fault of current attitudes, not the fault of the system. Let me put aside my criticism and repeat their forthright slogan:

We demand women's right to political participation!

The aims of the Women's Rights Alliance were more comprehensive than those of the Society for the Advancement of Political Participation. On the 13th of August, they gave a tea party at which they entertained press and academic circles, and gained their warm approval and praise. After a founding meeting on the 23rd, they held a series of public lectures and published a special report on the movement for women's rights. They were said to have three hundred members. Their proclamation stated seven principles:

1. All national educational organizations should be open to women.
2. Men and women should enjoy equally the constitutional rights of citizens.

3. In civil law, the relationship between husband and wife, the relationships between parents and children, inheritance rights, property rights, rights of action, etc. should all be greatly revised, according to the principle of male and female equality.

4. A marriage law based on sexual equality should be instituted.

5. Regulations concerning "the age of consent" and the consideration of those who take concubines as bigamists should be added to the criminal code.

6. Public prostitution, the sale of servant girls, and the binding of women's feet should be prohibited.

7. Laws should be formulated to protect women workers in accordance with the principles of "equal pay for equal work" and "the protection of mothers."

China's men and women have never enjoyed equal rights under the law. Women's conduct is restricted. As the ninth article of the Draft of the Civil Law says:

> On reaching maturity, one simultaneously achieves power of discrimination and the ability to act, however, wives are not in this category.

Again, in the same law, the sixth and seventh articles say:

> In those matters which are not common household affairs, the wife must obtain her husband's permission.

Thus, in the relationship of husband and wife, the woman is not independent by law. Women's hopes in regard to inheritance rights are extremely slight. If she has parents, all this goes without saying. If she does not have parents, then the property will go to the oldest male in the family. If there are no sons and no male heirs, then the property must be handed down in a set sequence of inheritors, namely:

1) husband or wife
2) the lineal ascendant
3) an elder or younger brother of the family
4) the family head
5) a daughter of the family
(Civil Law, Article 1,468)

Since the daughter's status in the order of heirs is so low, she clearly has little hope of inheriting property. Again, men and women are not equal in law on the question of divorce. The law recognizes the taking of concubines. The "age of consent" is nowhere regulated in Chinese criminal law, although if a girl under ten years old has intercourse, we ordinarily regard this as rape. The idea of the "age of consent" is that if a girl has intercourse with a man before reaching the legal age of consent, then no matter what the circumstances, she cannot be assumed to have given consent. The man must be considered to have seduced her and must suffer the punishment set by criminal law. Since no "age of consent" has been fixed in China, its maintenance is entirely dependent on popular sentiment, and thus it cannot give young girls true protection. Trade in human beings and the business of keeping brothels hold women's stature in contempt and go against humanitarianism. Moreover, there is not, in the laws of any country, the determination and methodology to thoroughly root out these two practices. In China, women's professions are still not absolutely free, and the narrow choice of professions is gradually becoming insupportable. Even when women do the same work as men it is difficult for them to get the same wages. Furthermore, the rearing of children does not have suitable protection.

From the above types of unequal treatment we can see that it is necessary that women demand political participation. Even if men are not

completely selfish, there are some areas which they either forget, or they neglect. These things forgiven, I do not know how long we would have to wait if we had to depend solely on men to bring sexual equality: this is the basis of the suffrage movement. The suffrage movement is only a means, its end is the women's rights movement.

After woman's suffrage has been put into effect, the rights of women can be extended. What effect will this have on society, on the nation, on women themselves, on men, and on the world? Let us look:

1. The effect of women's suffrage on women's thought

An elective system has a function of political education. After women have attained suffrage, they will pay more attention to political questions than in the past, in this way widening their viewpoint, increasing their knowledge, and heightening their powers of judgment.

2. The effect of women's suffrage on home life

Those who are opposed to women's rights assume that after women's suffrage is achieved, home life must be greatly affected. They do not realize that unless a woman accepts the responsibility of being a politician, the carrying out of elective duties is simple, and need not hinder the performance of domestic responsibilities. Again, some people fear that conflicts in the political views of husband and wife will lead to separation over their differences. They do not realize that if both men and women had political viewpoints, these viewpoints would have to be largely in agreement at the time of marriage. Because of this the relationship between husband and wife can, on the contrary be strengthened.

3. The influence of women's suffrage on women's rights

After the achievement of political rights, women's professional sphere will be wider, they will be able to fill all kinds of official positions in Justice and State Administration, and will find it much easier to make a living. At that time there will also be a few jobs in which the principle of "equal pay for equal work" can be put into effect.

4. Women's suffrage and the protection of women's rights and status

After the achievement of suffrage, the property rights of married women can be made equal to those of men, so parents will have no need to be stingy in educating girls. Pregnant women and widows can be given special help, and a high "age of consent" can be set.

5. Women's suffrage and its contribution to the protection of children

Feminists recognize that children's education, children's hygiene, the relief of poor children's distress, and problems of children's morality must wait for the achievement of women's suffrage before we can begin to find a statisfactory solution, for these problems are all closely related to women, and women's disposition and abilities can best help to thoroughly solve them.

6. Women's suffrage and the correction of men's vices

A man's vices do not affect only himself; they indirectly harm his wife. Women who are demanding suffrage strongly advocate the prohibition of such things as prostitution, alcohol, gambling and opium.

7. Women's suffrage and its contribution to governmental morality

Feminists assume that women are morally purer than men. If women enter politics, then they can sweep out corruption and improve the people's political morality. This must be decided, however, on the basis of the level of men's political morality in each local area. If men's political morality were totally degraded, women might not necessarily be able to maintain their purity in this base environment.

8. Women's suffrage and its contribution to world peace

All those concerned with the future of mankind and with humanitarianism place enormous hope in women. They assume that women far excel men in pacifist mentality, and that if women's suffrage is allowed, perhaps mankind's wars can be eliminated. (The above viewpoints are from Wang Shih-chieh (王世杰), Research on Women's Suffrage (Nü-tzu ts'an-cheng chih yen-chiu 女子參政之研究), (University of Peking, Publications Division.)

The items outlined above are the theory behind the demand for women's suffrage.

Although the movement for political participation has twice been defeated, women's political participation must one day materialize if China still wants to adopt the parliamentary system. Moreover, this day is not very far off. The earliest Kwangtung provisional provincial assembly provided limited electoral rights for women and all together chose ten women assembly members from one hundred and sixty famous women elected from the people. A few years ago, Hunan's provincial constitution

stipulated sexual equality, and Miss Wang Chang-kuo (王昌國) was elected as a member of the assembly. Furthermore, Miss Ho Hsiang-ning[23] is the head of the Department of Industry in the latest Nationalist government. All of this proves that China's women have the ability to take part in government, and that the political stage can include women. Women's political participation is, of course, a voluntary expression of all women and certainly does not limit its hopes to merely creating a number of women politicians. If those women who are fighting for political participation do not use governmental positions for their own advancement, then their female comrades can trust them for the creation of their future happiness.

viii. Women Under Ideal Socialism

How could the life of Chinese women ever be free or happy under the present dual oppression? In their struggle for a free life, many people make every effort to support the birth of new systems and new organizations. Oxygen cannot be allowed to encounter fire, therefore the entrance and spread of socialism in China was met with undue alarm,

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[23] Ho Hsiang-ning (何香凝), 1880-1972. The wife of Liao Chung-k'ai, Ho was the first woman to join the T'ung-meng-hui. She took part in the First National Congress of the Kuomintang, in January, 1924, with Soong Ching-ling and Ch'en Pi-chün (Mme. Wang Ching-wei) and was appointed director of the women's department of the party. She was elected to the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang in January, 1926. There is no mention of Ho as head of the Department of Industry (實業廳長) in Boorman, or in the Gendai Chugoku Jimmei Jiten. After the KMT/CCP split of 1927, she resigned her posts in the Kuomintang and moved to Hong Kong. She helped to found the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee in 1948, and was Chairman of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission, 1949-1959. See Boorman, Biographical Dictionary, pp. 67-68, and Gendai Chugoku Jimmei Jiten, p. 114.

and, although there are very few Chinese socialists, socialist thought is extremely widespread. We certainly cannot predict the time at which socialism will be realized in China, but even then, perhaps it is not necessary that everyone in the country will be socialist.

Women's lives have already changed to some degree in the past ten years. In retrospect, it seems that in the last three thousand years, women have leapt out of seventeen of the eighteen layers of hell. Once they have completed this last layer, they can ascend into paradise. This paradise is life under socialism.

We spoke previously of women seeking work, hindered by the home and without independence. This is caused by the primitive form of domestic organization which does not meet the needs of working women. A new kind of organization is absolutely necessary. Women working outside the home is the certain result of social evolution. We cannot oppose its realization and must think of ways to relieve the difficulties of the transitional period, thereby hastening the appearance of the new organization. Liu Pan-nung has spoken briefly about this new system in The New Youth magazine (V:2). It is worth speaking of in detail again today.

In his book The History of Social Development, the great German sociologist Müller-Lyer speaks of how cumbersome the old domestic system is, and how simple and convenient the new:

> Our homes have until now been like small businesses, with extremely fragmented direction. In sixty small households, there must be sixty women to manage domestic affairs, to go to the market to buy goods, to light the fires of sixty stoves, to adjust several hundreds of small cooking pots of food and wash countless utensils. Moreover, because machines are still not suitable for use in these small

> businesses, they must use tiresome hand labour. If they were in a combined household, one tenth of the women would be sufficient to handle this kind of work, and moreover handle it better, more economically and less laboriously. If sixty small households united into one organic body, established a common kitchen and hired a cook, it would be possible to produce more difficult dishes with more numerous processes, and with the least possible waste. Each household would be linked to this common kitchen by an elevator, and no matter what time people ordered the food and beverages they wanted it would be prepared. In this greater domestic organization, labour-saving machines could be used. These machines have already been invented, but have not been adopted for use. A dishwasher can clean several hundred plates and pots in a few minutes; central heating can save the trouble of transporting coal; a vacuum cleaner can sweep up the household dust; and boot brushing machines, gas lights, electric lights, hot and cold running water, steam cleaners etc., can lighten all of women's hard and bitter duties over which they are so depressed at present. (See T'ao's translation, Commercial Press edition, p. 238).

Müller-Lyer speaks in detail of the outstanding advantages of the new organization. The work of today's women in the small household is not only more laborious than this new system, but the loss to the nation in labour and material resources, calculated from an economic viewpoint, surely would amount to millions of dollars each day. The socialist family organization of the future is the same as that outlined above. Meta Stern Lilienthal, in Women of the Future says:

> In the future, there will be no need for the women of twenty houses to prepare food in the kitchens of each home. They will hire from society three or four men or women, and organize a kitchen and dining hall in a central place, using the best and most efficient methods to cook for these twenty households. The cooks will all be specialists, having undergone suitable training, like a physician, because they have a very important relation to the health of a society. The social status of cooks in the future will be different from that of today's cooks. Unlike today's cook who is only a household slave, they will all be well-educated people, and will be public servants. (Ch'en's translation, Tientsin; Women's Daily Press Publishing Company edition, p. 24).

When cooking is socialized in this way, the remaining work like washing, ironing, sewing and sweeping can all be socialized. Since domestic work will be completely moved into society and done by specialists, the home of the future will naturally become the sweetest place, and the most conducive to happiness. Women will then have the maximum time to take part in society's work, and the opportunity to fully develop their free individuality.

Because women of the future will all go out into society to work, and will receive ample wages, they will be completely economically independent, and will not need to enter marriages of long-term prostitution for food and clothing. Their work will not be that of wage slaves, for the factories of that time will be suitably healthy places, and people will go and do a short period of labour voluntarily each day for amusement. The pay for this labour will give women a secure and happy life.

The women of the future will know marriage only as a love of free volition, the action of choosing a perfect companion. It will have absolutely no other function. In the future, men and women who love each other will not be prevented from marrying because of economic hindrances. The women will not have to wonder, "Is this man able to provide for me?" because she will provide for herself. The man will have no need to worry about whether or not the woman can cook, (unless her profession is cooking), because he can eat in the public dining halls. With economic barriers eliminated, the body and the soul healthy, and knowledge sufficient, the conditions of life will naturally improve. Men

and women will all have the opportunity to officially marry, and it is unlikely that there will be people thirty and forty years old who have remained single.

Socialism holds that the marriage ceremony is not worth a cent. Men and women who marry in the future will only need a legal declaration, and perhaps will not want any ceremony. But people nowadays are very suspicious of this idea, supposing that these conditions make the development of marital chaos certain--even to the point of a man not knowing who his next day's wife will be and children not being able to find out who their natural parents are. This idea is really only an illusion. There is no love that is not free; all that socialism advocates is the elimination of artificial and unnecessary hindrances, so that the people concerned have the greatest right of free choice and no outside interference. If freedom of love is suspect, we must consider whether or not civilized mankind is promiscuous by nature. There are people today who have made a happy love match. Is the maintenance of their marriage completely dependent upon national law and social morality? Do they want to abruptly renounce yesterday's loved one and seek a new lover for today? When you get down to the bottom of it, does everyone, or do the majority of people, like a life of insecurity, and are they willing to casually desert their loved ones? If you, reader, or your friends, have ever had a beloved companion, you can certainly test this. Your mutual love does not change because of changes in the law, and is solid irrespective of outside interference. It is, therefore, not necessary to fear the abolishment of the marriage ceremony; it will do no harm to keep it but we must make it absolutely free.

After marriage, when a child is born, problems are bound to develop. The people in general suppose that "public childcare" cannot bring good results and are very suspicious of it. In fact, socialist women do not surrender their child rearing responsibilities to others. Under socialism, pregnant women will stop their work if they are in poor health. From the time that the child is born until the time it stops nursing, all mothers will quit their work in society, and leave their professions to be mothers. The state will not decrease their wages in the slightest. When the child is a little older, the mother can take him to a nursery when she goes out to work, just as at present slightly older children are taken to kindergarten. The curriculum of these model nurseries is the deepest foundation of school education. Because all of the equipment must be the most suitable for children, and each teaching method must be able to withstand thorough research, the nurseries will be even more beneficial for children than the most ideal of homes. The period that the child will spend at the nursery each day will be exactly the same as the period his mother spends at the factory, not exceeding five or six hours. When the mother has finished work, she can pick her child up at the nursery and take him home.

The governesses in nurseries will, of course, have a very specialized nursery school training, but all other women will have skills in child-care. The socialist state will have instruction and practice on a large scale in teaching methods and responsibilities toward children. Each woman must master child-care--the study of children will become a compulsory subject in women's education. Because a child in this way will

be assured of good care from the moment of his birth, the same at home as in a nursery, the infant mortality rate will be very low.

Not only will the infant mortality rate drop, but children's abilities will be developed much more than they are at present, because young men and women will all have received an education in how to be parents. While women ought to have the practical knowledge of "good wives and mothers," men should also study the knowledge of "good husbands and fathers." These terms will not be used in the future, but, the meaning is really the same. Therefore, all parents will know how to make the children of the future intelligent and healthy. A young wife will feel that the hardships of raising a child are the most important and most sacred of a mother's duties. She will, moreover, have the learning and the interest to be equal to this work.

Since women will have the maximum opportunity to freely develop their individuality, and motherhood will receive the maximum protection, thorough and deep liberation of women will have been achieved. Not only will women ascend from hell into paradise, but men, and in fact all of humanity, can rise into paradise. The evolution of the life of Chinese women is now headed in this direction.

CHAPTER 3

EPILOGUE

When I came to Shanghai this time, the type for this book had just been set. I was able to personally proofread it, and moreover to make added revisions from Mr. Hu's corrections which were of greatest interest to me.

Last winter, when I finished writing the manuscript of this book, the National Revolutionary Army had just taken Hupeh and Kiangsi provinces and I left Peking under "the white sun and blue sky."[1] That is now one year ago. In this one year, changes in the life of women have been truly enormous. Under the leadership of the Kuomintang, the women's movement has made great strides.

When I first went to Hankow and saw the women students in the Central Military and Political School, or other cadre schools, with weapons and military uniforms, without powder or paint, like Mu Lan or Liang Yü[2] come back to life, I felt boundless admiration for them, but I could not escape from certain doubts. Although the traditional trappings of femininity are not the real life demanded by real women, how can the

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[1] The Nationalist flag.

[2] Ch'in Liang-yü (秦良玉) was the wife of the Ming dynasty general Ma Ch'ien-ch'eng (馬千乘). A large woman, expert in horsemanship, she always dressed in men's clothing. After her husband's death she led his troops against rebel forces. Chung-kuo jen-ming ta tz'u-tien, p. 827.

obliteration of the female sex, and the adoption of a bold, swaggering walk so that people on the road cannot tell male from female, be the highest criteria for women's life? At the same time I congratulated myself on being able to see this kind of thing, otherwise, I would have written a History of the Life of Women in vain. I had not dreamt that Chinese women would so soon advance this far.

But there was little good in later news. At the most the women in the army corps did some political work and at times they were actually a hindrance to the army's movements. Conservatives made a pretext of this to criticize the movement. By the time of the Kuomintang-Communist split, the Wuchang Central Military and Political school was dispersed, and those women students who followed the fourth unit of the second army to Kiangsi were dispersed in Chiukiang. Having suffered this blow, they had to, as before, act the part of women. But this was only a momentary phenomenon; the seeds which they had scattered in the two fields of women's liberation and the opening of social intercourse were truly numerous.

The Kuomintang sets forth clearly and in detail women's legal, educational and economic equality in its platform.[3] Therefore, absolute

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[3] The Women's Department of the Kuomintang was headed by Ho Hsiang-ning from 1924 to 1927, covering the period of the Northern campaign of which Ch'en writes. The most important arm of the women's department was the Women's Union, founded in 1925. In KMT held villages, the union tried to implement the principle of sexual equality that the party endorsed, usually by giving women support in family disputes. Their efforts to gain divorces for women who were mistreated by their husbands met with strong opposition from the peasants' unions, whose members saw their wives as property they could not afford to lose. In the conservative

freedom of marriage and divorce, the recognition of inheritance rights, the lifting of the prohibition against women from various organizations have all been realized in sequence. There are organizations such as women's associations everywhere, working for the protection of women's interests. The advantages to women of Kuomintang government are enormous. But true happiness must ultimately be created by women themselves.

In today's China, both men and women still suffer from economic oppression combined with the oppression of clan law. Because economic conditions worsen daily and transportation and communication become daily more convenient, the system of clan law is close to bankruptcy. But even in death the corpse will not stiffen, and remnants of thought and customs do great harm. Of course women suffer even more because for them there is also sexual oppression.

From the viewpoint of historical evolution, all periods are transitional periods. I do not pray that Chinese women will someday reach the other shore, I only pray that their life will be daily more progressive, more beautiful and happier!

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reaction, which followed Chiang K'ai-shek's suppression of the Communist Party, the women's unions were destroyed and many of their members were tortured and killed.

It is interesting the Ch'en makes no mention of the violence with which the women's movement was suppressed after the KMT/CCP split, and in fact, suggests that the movement was still making progress. Whether this was the result of fear of censorship, ignorance of the actual situation, or committment to the KMT government is difficult to determine.

See "Ho Hsiang-ning" in Boorman, Biographical Dictionary, pp. 67-68. Paul Blanshard, "Women of New China Loose their Age-old Shackles," China Weekly Review, December 12, 1927, pp. 72, 74.

For a list of the regulations adopted by the Women's Movement Committee of the Hupeh Provincial Kuomintang Union, see J. B. P., "Chinese Women Take their Place in the Struggle for Freedom," China Weekly Review, May 21, 1927, pp. 312-314.

But I cannot bear to see either the prostitutes of the "Green Lotus Pavillion" and the hostesses of the "Goddess World," or the women teachers who embrace celibacy for the sake of a salary of twenty odd dollars. And then there is the ultimate human tragedy of those surrounded by the power of clan law; young women who even now are accepting the ideal of chastity and the belief that widows must not remarry. These are the two grave problems in women's life at present.

Shanghai, December 1, 1927

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The author sees the women's movement as a product of modern nationalism, and emphasises the role of the T'ung-meng-hui and Kuomintang.

II. Articles:

Chang Hsi-shen 章錫琛 "Chung-kuo fu-nü szu-hsiang te fa-ta." 中國婦女思想的發達 (The Development of thought of Chinese

Women). Fu-nü wen-t'i shih-chiang 婦女問題十講 (Ten Discussions on the Woman Question). By Homma Hisao, Shanghai: Fu-nü wen-t'i yen-chiu hui, 1924.

Hsiang Chin-yü 向警予 "Chung-kuo chih-shih fu-nü te san p'ai." 中國知識婦女的三派 (Three Groups of Women in China). Fu-nü nien-chien 婦女年鑑 (Women's Yearbook). Edited by Mei Sheng 梅生, Shanghai: Hsin-wen-hua shu-she, 1924.

_____. "Chung-kuo tsui-chin fu-nü yün-tung." 中國最近婦女運動 (The Contemporary Women's Movement in China). Fu-nü nien-chien.

_____. "Shanghai nü-ch'üan yün-tung chin-hou ying chu-i te san chien shih." 上海女權運動今後應注意的三件事 (Three Things the Shanghai Women's Rights Movement Should Concentrate On From Now On) Fu-nü nien-chien.

Sun T'a 孫鐸 "Chung-kuo fu-nü yün-tung chih chin-pu." 中國婦女運動之進步 (Progress in the Chinese Women's Movement). Fu-nü tsa-chih 婦女雜誌 (The Ladies Journal) Vol IX, (January, 1923).

Wu Yu-chang 吳玉章 "Chung-kuo fu-nü tsai wu szu yün-tung-chung tsou-shang-le tzu-chi chieh-fang te tao-lu" 中國婦女在五四運動中走上了自己解放的道路 (During the May Fourth movement, Chinese women begin to stand on their own feet.) Fu-nü yün-tung wen-hsien 婦女運動文獻 (Archives on the women's movement. Hong Kong: Hsin-min-chuheh'ü-pan-she, 1949.

Arguing from economic determinism, Wu Yu-chang sees the development of Chinese industry during the first world war as the material basis for the women's movement of the May Fourth period.