

The Rise of Women's Modern Schooling in Late Qing China (1840–1911)

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The rise of women's modern schooling in late Qing China was deemed to be, by the historical trend of modern China, a progress that coincided with China's modernization and national self-strengthening movement after the humiliating defeat of the Opium War. This article is an examination of this process from 1840 to 1911, which had undergone three stages: (a) 1840–1898, dominated by Western Protestant missionaries, who had founded pioneering girls' boarding schools in major cities and treaty ports. Women's schooling was regarded as an effective way to disseminate Christian doctrines and to cultivate indigenous female evangelists; (b) 1898–1907, dominated by China's patriotic gentry, who had established women's schools all over the country. They saw women's schooling as an effective tool to cultivate "future mother of a superior citizenry"; (c) 1907–1911, dominated by the Qing government, which had incorporated women's schooling into the national education scheme. The policy of promoting women's schooling was adopted as one of the reformative efforts to save the declining Qing regime from extinction.

At a Glance: Chinese Women's Traditional Education and the Phenomenon of "Talented Women"

To help explain the difference between Chinese women's modern schooling and its traditional counterpart, efforts must be made to give a general overview of the latter. Arguments that pre-modern China

was a place of female illiteracy can easily be invalidated by records in great abundance indicating China's special heritage of producing female talents. *Cainu*, "talented women," had contributed significantly to literature in the form of poems, verses, *Ci* (lyrics), operas, and essays. Generally speaking, this category embraced two groups of women — the high-level courtesans, whose wit and style enlivened urban culture, and cloistered women from established families (Widmer, 1997).

Although talented women were admired throughout centuries, the issue of female literacy had aroused much debate as to how the orientation ought to be geared toward a seamless conformity with the set of traditional Chinese social value known today as Confucian ethics. Qing scholar Yuan Mei, a feverish advocate for women's education and who had admitted many female disciples to his literary circle, once commented on the education of his own daughter:

I do not want my daughter to be an expert of *Jiujing* [*The Nine Classics*], serving at the imperial court, and being addressed by the emperor as Master. I just want her to have sufficient knowledge to be able to understand the wine and tea menus, and serve her husband well. (Yuan, 1928, p. 3)

Another Qing scholar Niu Yunzhen's opinion toward women's talent was even more unflattering. In writing to his younger sister concerning her literacy, Niu (1803) said:

As a matter of fact, I admit that you are cleverer than me. However, as a woman you cannot attend the public examination, nor can you be awarded any official title. So what's the good of our parents granting you so much talent if you cannot honor them by your virtuous conduct? Did you not see the behaviors of the model women recorded in *Lienu Zhuan* [*Various Biographies of Women*]? You should learn and try to attain their standards. In theory, women's literacy is not so desirable. However, it is still worthwhile should you be able to demonstrate your conscience and behave yourself according to the family regulations. (p. 16)

The chorus of belittling female literacy was cordially joined by talented women themselves. Judge (2001) allegorically uses the term "cultural matrix" to describe the preexisting webs of cultural relations, in which the more preferable of the dichotomy of the virtue (*de*) and talent (*cai*), originally ungendered, had been always the sound morality

instead of the flashy talent. The cultural matrix unavoidably shaped women's attitude and awoke their consciousness as to whereabouts they could position their talents, should they have any, to be in accordance with the prevailing Confucian partiality on the modest virtue over the exuberant talent. The attitude can be best reflected from the remarks of Xue Baochai, one of the talented heroines depicted in *Hong Lou Meng*.¹

Chinese women's education can be traced back to the Zhou dynasty. Zhou noble women received instructions in three aspects: inner-chamber behaviors, court music, and proper conducts of pregnancy (Du, 1996, pp. 16–18). The Eastern Han dynasty saw a prestigious female historian, Ban Zhao, who succeeded her deceased brother Ban Gu in finishing a state-sponsored project — the *Later Han History*. Because of her distinguished talent, Ban Zhao was employed in the Han palace by the emperor to instruct imperial consorts and princesses. She finished a memorial called *Admonitions for Women* during her tenure, which was intended for regulating the behaviors of her palace students to conform to Confucian ethics. From a modern feminist's view, Ban Zhao seemed to be more a co-conspirator of women's denigration than a female educator, for the content of *Admonitions for Women*, quite divorced from the concerns of pure scholarship, focused on the illustration of female inferiority.² But some argue that when an objective reevaluation of her work is given, one finds that much of her advice for women can be seen as “astute psychological counseling for coping in a social role fraught with difficulties and dangers” (Li, 2000, p. 178). It was exactly her role as an educator, moralist and writer — or, to put it in another word, her transcendence of gender liability — that enabled her to guide women through the thorny sexist Confucian cultural matrix and save them from being scraped by such difficulties and dangers.

Following the collapse of the Eastern Han dynasty, China had entered a period of lasting political separation and military turmoil. It was also a period of ethnic mixture and cultural blending. The cherishing of celebrated conversational wits and personal grace by the aristocrats during the Age of the Great Division resulted in the acquiescence, or even encouraging of the upper-class women seeking intellectual accomplishment. In more than one cases we find erudite women acting as instructors for men. For example, in the Former Qin of Northern Dynasties, Wei Cheng's mother, née Song, had under the request of the emperor, taught 120 Confucian scholars the *Scripture of the Constitution of Zhou*. Her lecture was uniquely carried out — a red

curtain was laid between the female teacher and her students, for according to Confucian ethics, adult men and women, when not bonded by a conjugal relationship, were not supposed to stay under the same roof without a physical barrier. Her lecture was regarded as an event “unprecedented in a thousand years.” However, one ought to be reminded that née Song’s revered status was but a product of academic emergency, that is, to save the *Scripture of the Constitution of Zhou* from extinguishing. She was the only person alive in the world still well-versed of the *Scripture* by the time (H. Wu, 1988, p. 253).

The Tang and Song dynasties continued to witness a flourishing of Chinese literature, for the Tang, in the form of poetry, and for the Song, *Ci* (lyrics). “Talented women” as poetesses or *Ci* composers kept emerging, only differentiating their forebears by their greatly improved quantity of published works. The Southern Song and Yuan dynasties were both contributors to the growing popularity of an inner-chamber practice, footbinding, which had lasted for over a thousand years and brought Chinese women endless suffering. A philosophical movement known as Neo-Confucianism must be taken into the context to help construe women’s declining status. Particularly in reaction to the relative independence of the elite women of the Tang and early Song dynasties, Neo-Confucianism strongly emphasized the segregation of genders, the seclusion of women and their subordination to men.³ In regard to women’s education, although most Neo-Confucian scholars did not object to educating women, they insisted that only selected books such as *The Four Books for Women* be adopted as orthodox textbooks.

In the late imperial period, China experienced a thriving of female writing and publishing. In the commercialized Yangzi area, there were growing opportunities for women to receive education, read books, publish, and travel. Susan Mann and Dorothy Ko, among other feminist scholars who study late imperial history, believed that the late Ming had witnessed a heyday of courtesan culture, while the High Qing period of Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong reigns, also known as “China’s long eighteen century,” generated a large group of elite women writers, who in turn left an indelible mark on the urban culture of the region (Ko, 1994; Mann, 1997). Both Mann and Ko agreed that the stability of the High Qing promoted commercialism, fluidity of society, and easy access to education in general. Because wealthy and liberal families usually permitted their daughters to sit in and audit their brothers’ classes, and

because the family co-educational style was mutually beneficial among siblings, it makes sense to say that there was a correlation between the high investment made for the civil service examination for men and the increasing prominence of female poets. All “women talents” were products of their time, family background and regional spirit.

However blissful it may appear to be, the female literary paradise, Ko and Mann extolled, remained a realm that excluded the majority of Chinese women. Although China by now had produced many “talented women,” a policy that addressed the needs of general education was never enacted. By the time of the late Qing, this problem was made manifest. Zheng Guanying, author of *Shengshi weiyao* (*Alarming Utterances of a Prosperous World*), lamented that in traditional China, “although the rules for women were strict, the education for women was indeed overlooked” (Zheng, 1994).⁴

An unflattering estimate of women's literacy in the late Qing was that “one in two or three thousand can read.” A missionary woman in Jiujiang wrote back home in 1874, saying that for three years and by diligent inquiry, she could not find a woman who could read. Arthur H. Smith complained at the Shanghai Missionary Conference of 1890 that “among the thousands of women we have met, not more than ten had learned to read” (Burton, 1911). The prejudice toward female intelligence was so strong that women themselves accepted it.

A glimpse into men's education in late Qing China finds it equally unproductive. From the Ming onward, the independent spirit of the Chinese intellectuals abated significantly, a situation at least partially due to aggravated intellectual control embodied in the civil service examination. The unyielding format and wordplay of the “Eight-Legged Essay”⁵ had a stifling effect on the writer's creativity, and taking Zhu Xi's interpretations as the only correct answers limited the range of free expression. Since the mastery of the Eight-Legged Essay did not bring the students any practical knowledge, the government faced a constant insufficiency in finding capable civil administrators. It is worth noting that not all scholars agree on the negative effects of the much resented writing format. Benjamin Elman, for one, argues that the Eight-Legged Essay was not necessarily a bad literary style, and the disdain toward it from modern scholars should be reexamined. He also disapproves the assumption that the examination system had hindered the development of scientific studies, since after Qing, “philological discoveries

associated with Han Learning and evidential research had begun to filter into the examination system” (Elman, 1994, p. 136).

However controversial the overall effectiveness of men’s schooling is, most historians agree that, by 1840 when China was forced to open its door to the West, the view that China provided education for both men and women was seriously flawed. Facing a drastically different new world, the only remedy was to undergo a series of thorough reforms, the initiative of which, however, was not taken by the Chinese, who had not been previously exposed to any notion of, nor had they mastered the administrative skill of managing the public education. Although the “white man’s burden,” original associated with the Westerners’ — and mostly Americans’ — innate passion for world liberation and improvement of human conditions (Cheung, 1998, pp. 3–4), oftentimes in the Orient understood as the euphemism of expansionism instead of the wholehearted altruism, the burden of founding the first batch of Chinese women’s schools indeed had been fallen upon the shoulders of the white men and women, a fact both orthodoxy Marxian and nationalist historians have mightily resented, and still occasionally being phrased in some Chinese history book as “harbinger of the Western expansionism.”

Missionary Contribution to Women’s Schooling

The Treaty of Nanjing following the first Sino-British military conflict known as the Opium War was imposed upon China in 1842 and recognized by the country as a humiliation. According to the Treaty, five ports were to be opened to foreign trade and residence. Missionaries, who helped negotiate the Treaty, insisted that the expansion of Christian evangelism be permitted. Additional treaties forced upon China during the following two decades further opened the country’s interior to imperialist penetration.

The Protestant missionaries who arrived during and after the Opium War period were in many ways differed from their forerunners who had come to China before the Qianlong reign. Assuming the cultural superiority of the “light of science and revelation,”⁶ this 19th century Protestantism embodied individualism, an admiration for competition and the belief in progress; on the other side of the coin, from ancient time, China had regarded itself the most civilized nation in the world. The sense of cultural superiority held by both Westerners and Chinese

encouraged a confrontation between the concepts of the “white man’s burden” and that of the “Middle Kingdom” (Cohen, 1963, pp. 262–273). Many missionaries saw themselves ready destroyers of the traditional culture and builders of a new Christian order for China, because they believed that many of the Chinese religious and social customs were nothing but barriers to the Gospel (Chao, 1987). During the first stage of missionary enterprise in China, they had established five types of activities: preaching, teaching, healing, publishing, and distributing tracts (Flynt & Berkley, 1997, p. 6).

Missionary education was considered a practical instrument for establishing contact with Chinese and insuring a regular audience for Christian teachings. With the growth of the Chinese Christian community, missionaries desired schools other than those of the traditional types to educate their converts. They hoped that by providing schools, they could train Chinese assistants for evangelical works. Establishing girls’ boarding schools was deemed to be an effective method to exert Christian influence upon Chinese women.

Miss Grant, an English woman, opened the first school for Chinese girls in Singapore in 1825. Nine years later, in response to an appeal made by Reverend David Abeel for working among the women of the Orient, a small group of English women organized The Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, a devout member of which, Miss Mary Aldersey, founded China’s first missionary girls’ school in Ningbo in 1844 (Chinese Educational Commission, 1922, p. 256). Wives of missionaries and single female missionaries often initiated small schools for girls soon upon their arrival in China. In 1849, Mrs. Bridgman opened a school for girls in Shanghai; in 1864, she again opened a girls’ school in Beijing (Gale, 1953, p. 204). The Girls’ Boarding School of the Methodist Mission at Fuzhou, formerly known as The Baltimore Female Seminary, was initiated by Mrs. Woolston in 1859 (Burton, 1911, p. 41). Later it changed its name to Fuzhou Yuying Junior High. From 1847 to 1860, the Protestant missionaries had reportedly established 12 girls’ school in the five treaty ports, and by 1876 there were more than 2,000 female students studying in at least 121 missionary schools for girls (quoted in Fan, 1997, p. 54). Mission schools were so widely dispersed that it was said, “Wherever a church is founded, a girls’ school ensues” (quoted in Lu & Zheng, 1990, p. 38).

The route to secure Chinese social acceptance had been cumbersome for missionary girls’ schools. A lack of understanding

about Chinese tradition and convictions of Western superiority had both led the mission schools toward unpopularity. Local hostility to foreigners and social prejudice on women's receiving education accounted for other difficulties. For example, innumerable suspicions were generated upon Miss Aldersey's opening of her school in Ningbo. One rumor in the community was that she had killed all her own children, and now had the same evil plan toward those of other people (Burton, 1911, pp. 35–36; Silvani & Whately, 1866). Mrs. Bridgman's school in Beijing was initially opened for a few beggar girls. For thirty years, it provided primary training in the Chinese classics, Christianity, domestic science, and mathematics. The enrollment during this period averaged about only 18 pupils per year. The low enrollment was partially due to the school's policy of anti-footbinding. In 1895, the school was developed into Bridgman Academy and began to offer education at the secondary level. But the Boxer Rebellion (or the Boxer Uprising) of 1900 brought serious setbacks, and one-third of its pupils were killed. Several years passed before the school could manage to regain its previous size (Chen, 1979, p. 123).

The girls' boarding schools usually provided their pupils food, clothing and shelter, not to mention free books and tuition. However, still so unwilling were the Chinese parents to send their daughters to the schools that the founders had to solicit the students to join them. In 1850, several missionaries founded a girls' school in Guangzhou. By the opening day, none of the pre-registered students had shown up. Afterwards only a few girls, due to the repeated urging of the missionaries, went back to study, but before long they had all dropped out (Gu, 1981, p. 227).

These pioneering girls' schools gained attendance slowly by enrolling any and every possible pupil: slave girls, "little daughter-in-law,"⁷ homeless girls, or girls from the poorest families. After attaining a certain degree of popularity, some of the schools began to ask for returns for the education provided. The Methodist Mission School in Fuzhou had been supplying its girls with clothing ever since its opening, but from 1888 on, the parents were required to furnish their daughters with clothing. A Presbyterian school in Shanghai had adopted a "self-supporting" plan, requiring the pupils to "work at spinning, weaving, making and mending clothes, knitting, crocheting, embroidering" to support the school financially.

Missionary schools at first existed largely apart from the upper-levels of society, having virtually no contact with the class of Chinese gentry. With the steady growth of their attendance rate, they began to desire the enrollment of girls from more refined origins. Young J. Allen (Chinese name Lin Lezhi), the “great Mandarin of the Methodists” in 19th century China, coordinated the MECS (Methodist Episcopal Church South) Women’s Missionary Society in China. Allen advocated the redirecting of educational efforts to the “best and most hopeful class” (Ross, 1996, pp. 211–212). The most successfully planned girls’ school under the criteria was McTyeire School for Girls, or *Zhongxi Nushu* in Chinese, founded in 1892 in Shanghai. The school’s grand opening was a well-publicized affair attended by prominent Chinese and American officials including the acting Shanghai Governor as well as the vice-consul of the U.S. consulate. Reporters and editors of local newspapers and magazines were also invited. The students’ fathers included three “mandarins,” a manager of the imperial telegraph, an editor of a well-known Shanghai newspaper, and five Episcopalian and Methodist ministers (Ross, 1996, p. 214). By the end of the 19th century, missionary girls’ schools had passed the most difficult stage. Advanced educators moved ahead to goals that stressed on the academic standards rather than the quantity of the schools. According to prestigious missionary Timothy Richard, a widespread change in Chinese attitudes toward Christianity was going on in the 1880s. Richard urged the Christians to take advantage of Chinese people’s new interests in science, mathematics and Western languages by offering such subjects under Christian auspices. An investigation of the curricula of five missionary girls’ schools during this period indicated that those “new interests” were well considered. All of them offered some work in science: five of them physical geography, four physiology and astronomy, two physics and chemistry, one zoology, one biology, one geology, one political geography, and one hygiene. In mathematics, most of them did not offer anything above arithmetic, but one included courses in algebra, geometry and elementary trigonometry (Burton, 1911, pp. 74–75).

Of the curricula of missionary girls’ schools, Bible courses were generally given throughout the study. All students, Christian or non-Christian, received intensive exposure to Christian doctrines and rituals. Most schools required at least one course in religion every year, and the students were obliged to attend one or two daily chapel services.

Very much contradictory to the Chinese custom, physical exercise was practiced in most of the girls' schools. For example, gymnastics was regarded as a compulsory activity in Zhenjiang Missionary Girls' School. In the British Mary Vaughan School for Girls in Shanghai, students had to exercise for an hour every day. Due to the famous anti-footbinding attitude the missionaries held, girls who attended missionary schools were either asked to unbind their small feet or to keep their feet in natural shape (Fan, 1997, p. 58).

The founding of Christian women's colleges began to receive consideration at the commencement of the 20th century. In 1907, the China Centenary Missionary Conference had urged mission boards to cooperate in establishing a few women's colleges and normal schools in strategic centers. In line with this recommendation, a series of conferences were held in Shanghai in 1911–1912 to discuss the issue. In 1904, Bridgman Academy unified with North China Education Union and gained increasing support from many missionary societies in the West, especially from women's associations. By constantly raising its academic standards and providing a limited number of advanced courses, it soon assumed the title of North China Union College for Women. In 1919, it unified with the new Yenching University, which on that account became co-educational (Lutz, 1971, p. 136). Encouraged by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the China Christian Educational Association, Lydia Trimble began in 1904 to solicit funds for a women's college in Fuzhou. Four years later, Hua Nan College was established on the ground of the unification of Fuzhou Girls' Boarding School and Fuzhou Conference Seminary, both of which were under the sponsorship of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society. The College closely resembled, in its beginning stage, the Christian colleges designed for men, only being limited in the course availability by its meager library and laboratory facilities. Another important Christian college for women is Jinling Women's College, debuted in 1915, the fund-raising campaign of which began actually as early as around 1907. Until 1911, virtually no women's education was held at the college level, but the advocating for advanced education for Chinese women had already gained notice from the general Christian community (Lutz, 1971, p. 133).

How to evaluate missionary contributions to the modernization progress of the post-Opium War era has been a vexing problem to indigenous scholars. As mentioned above, strictly trained Marxian

historians tend to ascribe all the social changes brought by missionaries to Western expansionism. Having realized the transparency of the linear statements such as “Bible in hands, heralding imperialism,” today’s indigenous scholars have adopted a more complicated tone. Missionaries, they argue, functioned dualistically in modern Chinese history. They were both collaborators of Western expansionism as well as promulgators of Western science and culture. Their roles were both unholy and inspiring. To illustrate the subtleness laid under such a dichotomy is too big an undertaking to presume in this writing. However, if we confine the examination of missionary contributions in the domain of women’s schooling, at least two conclusions can be drawn within: first, missionary education took initiative to shape the Chinese women’s school system in a modern sense; second, the structure of missionary schools became the model of the first batch of indigenous girls’ schools founded after 1890, as this article shall illustrate below. In the light of the above two facts, we can reasonably argue that missionary education had brought more positive than negative effects to Chinese women. It brought the notion of women’s education to the general public, furnished a prototype, and paved the way for the forthcoming national education campaign for women.

Indigenous Development of Women’s Schooling

The humiliations suffered by China during the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) evoked within Chinese the consciousness of the national self. The reforms in Russia under Peter the Great and that of Meiji Japan since 1868 were cited as foreign parallels and examples. With the translated works of Yan Fu such as Thomas Huxley’s *Evolution and Ethic* and Herbert Spencer’s *Study of Sociology* eagerly read by Chinese intellectuals, Social Darwinism was at the tip of every tongue. The military defeat by Japan propelled patriotic Chinese intellectuals to become cognizant of a cruel fact — that is, China had become a living example of the loser according to Social Darwinism. The new batch of reformers, unlike their more reserved peers during the Tongzhi Restoration, were no longer satisfied by the Western learning simply in terms of the manufacture of ships and cannons; they wanted to construct similar political and educational institutions for China by borrowing institutional experience from the West.

Through repeated appealing of his memorials to the Throne, Kang Youwei, leader of the reform movement, secured a series of audiences from Emperor Guangxu, who was also perplexed by the defeat of 1894. Under the sponsorship of the Throne, a short-lived reform known as the “One Hundred Day Reform” was carried out in 1898 (Belsky, 2002).

In Beijing, an educational reform was vigorously underway. The “Eight-Legged Essay” was abolished by the civil service examination while “modern practical subjects” were adopted as testing topics. Regular schools were established to offer modern subjects on science, mathematics and geography, while special institutions were founded to provide training in agriculture, mining and railway construction (Charle, Schriewer, & Wagner, 2004, p. 297).

Women’s modern schooling suddenly acquired a great deal of attention at this point. Radicals argued that the weakness of China was a consequence of the physical and spiritual inferiority of Chinese women, who assume the responsibility of giving birth to Chinese citizens. Liang Qichao, the brightest and most far-sighted disciple of Kang, took charge of the *Shiwu Bao Journal* in the climax of the reform and became a productive writer. Liang had developed a profound interest in women’s emancipation issues through his keen observation of Confucian society. He denounced the Chinese custom of preventing girls from attending school as “the way to bring the world into catastrophe.” He convincingly illustrated the drawbacks of the practice from three aspects (Liang, 1975, pp. 549–550):

1. Since women cannot support themselves and have to wait to be supported, men are extremely burdened and incline to treat them like horses and dogs;
2. Women are limited to such a small domain that triviality maims their minds and spirits;
3. Before a child reaches ten years of age, his mother ought to act as his first teacher. Should the mother be uneducated, the child would likely have grown up uncultured.

On all accounts, the reformers of 1898 juxtaposed women’s learning with the strengthening of the nation. They were convinced that offering girls’ schooling would help produce enlightened future mothers for the next generation of Chinese citizens. In 1897, under the sponsorship of a small group of patriotic merchants and gentlemen, the Women’s Education Society was formed in Shanghai. Tan Sitong (another reform

leader) and his wife Li Run, as well as Kang Guangren (brother of Kang Youwei) and his wife Huang Jinyu played active roles in the founding of the Society. They proposed the establishment of the first indigenous girls' school: China's Girls' School. Liang Qichao personally drafted the provisional prospectus for the school, which exactly embodied the spirit of their design. Major items of the prospectus read as follow:

1. All teachers, superintendents, and servants shall be women. Rigid discipline shall be enforced. No men shall be allowed to enter the door of the School;
2. Pupils between the ages of 8 and 15 may be enrolled. They must come from reputable families and know how to read and write;
3. As of now we can admit pupils with bound feet, but after a few years no girl with bound feet shall be accepted.

The courses of study will be half English and half Chinese. There shall be three special courses of study: mathematics, medicine and law (Burton, 1911, pp. 100–105).

The girls' school was registered under the title "China's Girls' School," but in practice it was named after the Principal, Jing Yuanshan, a radical social reformer and a patriotic merchant. For this reason the school was also called "Mr. Jing's Girls' School." The School had sought advices from Mrs. Richard and other female missionaries and wives of diplomatic personnel before its grand opening. Although Mr. Jing's Girls' School was unarguably the first indigenous girls' school, in management it was actually modeled after earlier missionary schools. The Chinese administrators unanimously set McTyeire as the best model for the School. Among the teachers there were two missionaries as well as graduates from McTyeire, Bridgman, and St. Mary's. Maps, charts, and textbooks published by the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge Among the Chinese and by the Christian Churches' Educational Association were used. The school claimed a small enrollment of 16 students at its opening. But in the second academic year, the number of regular attendees reached 70. Mr. Jing's Girls' School opened for two years before it was forced to close in the August of 1899, following the failure of the "One Hundred Day Reform." Jing Yuanshan (a close associate of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao) was under political persecution by the Qing government and his life became endangered. After Jing's flight to Macao, discouragement directed from a suspicious society crippled the existence of the School.

Though Ono Kazuko, the Japanese scholar who studies women's educational history in modern China, laments that "The first women's school run by Chinese closed without producing a single graduate" (Ono, 1989, p. 29), and though it was true that the closing of the School disappointed many advocates of women's modern schooling, the first indigenous attempt of women's schooling was not by nature a fruitless abortion. The spirits persisted and eventually nourished the forthcoming undertakings of the next decade. However, a deeper exploration into the fundamental design of Mr. Jing's Girls' School finds that the guideline of the School, "setting the base to cultivate virtuous wives and virtuous mothers for future China," was largely a compromise with the spirit of China's traditional education of women, and its curriculum had embraced many Confucian-oriented books. Liang Qichao's design of "virtuous wives and mothers" of China's future women can be read as a typical notion held by most male intellectuals at the cross of the 19th and 20th centuries. They had been fully awakened to the importance of women's independence, and yet hesitated to divorce with the traditional value of "virtuous wives and mothers." To these hesitations, Judge (2001) is acutely aware of and has deployed a full-fledged analysis in her study of the ambivalent psyche of Chinese male educators at the juncture of the two centuries. The ambivalence, however, was not at a fixed level. As Judge has convincingly demonstrated, the acceptance levels toward women's public display of their talents differed significantly in conservative monarchists, constitutional monarchists, and radical nationalists and revolutionaries.

The flight of the Qing court to Xi'an during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 and the consequent subscription to the Boxer Protocol in 1901 had profoundly humiliated China and weakened the regime. When Empress Dowager Cixi issued at Xi'an the first of the long series of decrees destined to reform the educational system of China, it seemed that even the Manchu court, the most conservative political entity of late Qing China, had sensed the necessity of an institutional change. Zhang Zhidong, the Governor-General of Huguang, together with Liu Kunyi, the Governor-General of Liangjiang, proposed to the Throne that a national education system modeled on that of Japan be adopted. Although women's schooling had not been officially advocated, private enterprise was encouraged. Chinese gentry now felt perfectly justified in promoting indigenous girls' schools, fearing no more opposition from the Qing court. Wu Huaijiu founded Strive for Duty Girls' School in

Shanghai in 1902, aiming at “cultivating and promoting girls’ education to make it popular.” The school made rapid progress, providing advanced study for middle school girls, and in 1907 it boasted two grades in both primary and secondary level, totaling 207 girls in attendance (Du, 1996, p. 327).

Cai Yuanpei, distinguished educator in modern Chinese history, founded Patriotic Girls’ School in 1902 in Shanghai. The school was managed by experienced educational entrepreneur Jing Yuanshan and received support from anti-Qing revolutionaries. Oriented around anti-Qing guidelines, the school had endeavored to infuse nationalist ideas into its pupils, including in its curriculum a philosophy course of Nihilism, a history course on the French Revolution and chemistry courses about bomb-making. Girls who received nationalist education were inclined to join anti-Qing parties such as the Revolutionary Alliance, and committed themselves to anti-Qing activities. Patriotic Girls’ School was closed due to financial difficulties later but revived after the 1911 Revolution as a regular school for girls (Fan, 1997, p. 87).

During the turmoil of the Boxer Rebellion, Russia took the chance to occupy Manchuria by sending 200,000 troops.⁸ After the signing of the Boxer Protocol in 1901, not only did the Russians refuse to take back its army, they also proposed a twelve-article treaty, trying to legalize the occupation of Manchuria by disguising Russian troops as “railway guards.” When the news about Li Hongzhang’s signing the secret treaty leaked out, grave indignity was aroused and Chinese people decided to boycott the treaty, even with military cost.

At the end of April 1903, overseas students in Japan held a convention in Tokyo, proclaiming the birth of “Anti-Russian Militia,” which was to return to China and fight the Russians. Hu Binxia, organizer of the female student society “Mutual Love Society,” launched a speech in the convention, urging female students in Japan to do their best helping the military undertakings. In her speech, Hu (1990) campaigned:

Being women does not abate our ability to join the army. Although I am not of great merit, I do want to devote my humble strength to serve my country. Hereby I am willing to join the Militia and go north with it. Even if my efforts turn out to be in vain, I will not regret this decision. My fellow sisters, I am sure you’d agree with me. Saddened by the fate of our occupied motherland and enslaved people, how

can we still have the tranquility in mind to stay in Japan and study?
My fellow sisters, let's strive to do something! (p. 91)

Nine female students joined the Militia on spot, volunteering as military medics. Soon after, they were consolidated into the Red Cross Organization and given medical trainings and battlefield nursing knowledge.

The Red Cross Organization of China was founded in Shanghai in January 1904, by several female students, Chen Wanya, Tong Tongxue and Zheng Suyi from Zong Meng Girls' School. Like its peer Patriotic Girls' School, Zong Meng also endeavored to introduce nationalist ideas to the schoolgirls, and had been aggressively engaging in a variety of anti-Qing activities. Zheng Suyi had donated a great fortune looking for assassins to carry on the missions of the anti-Russian movement.

The most remembered heroine in the 1911 Revolution was Qiu Jin. A pampered daughter from a scholar-official family, Qiu Jin had enjoyed the best education availed to a girl at her time. She read widely and was greatly influenced by the nationalist thoughts. After leaving an unhappy arranged marriage behind, Qiu Jin went to Japan to attend women's school (Pao Tao, 1992). During her years in Japan, she stayed in Tokyo, took intensive Japanese classes, and majored in physical education. She founded *Baihua*, a magazine promoting revolution, feminism and vernacular literature. Dressed like a man, Qiu Jin was also good at drinking, swordsmanship, horse riding, and poem writing. She was one of earliest female participants of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance. Upon her returning to China, she organized the Association for Physical Education in Zhejiang, her home province. Her plan was to give military education to female student-cadres and train them to be soldiers. After her comrade Xu Xilin assassinated Enming, the then Zhejiang governor, Qiu Jin was arrested by the Qing government. Though under the cruelest excruciation, she refused to reveal any information related to the revolutionary organization, and was executed in Shaoxing at the age of thirty-one (Pao Tao, 1992).

According to an English journal, *The North China Herald*, by 1907 Shanghai had about 1,000 girls attending schools, some 12 missionary and 12 indigenous. From 1902 to 1906, Hunan had established 12 girls' schools (C. M. Lewis, 1976, p. 152). By 1908, there were 25 girls' schools in Guangdong province (Burton, 1911, p. 128). Women's schooling started in coastal cities and gradually moved to central China.

According to the statistics made by Educational Commission of the Qing government, by 1907 all provinces except Gansu, Xinjiang and Jilin had established girls' schools, totaling 15,498 students in enrollment. The number of girls' schools counted 428 throughout of the country (Du, 1996, pp. 331–333).

Looking into the indigenous movement of women's schooling, we find the role of women both centered and marginalized. This paradox was a consequence of positioning the figure of Woman as “mother of future citizenry” from a male patriot's perspective, which focused on her physical strength, educational level, and financial capability — all attributes that comprised “a good mother” — at the expense of her self-interest. While conservative monarchists, represented by the constellation of Chinese ministers of Tongzhi Restoration, and Constitutional monarchists, represented by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, had congruously appealed to the desired quality of her as being strong, educated and virtuous, the radical nationalists, represented by Cai Yuanpei, linked her existence directly to the nationalist agenda. Either as the mother who will give birth to and bring up the “future citizens of the new China” or as the anti-Qing assassin and revolutionary, her role was defined as critical yet instrumental.

Has women actively and self-consciously fought for their own interests? Even Qiu Jin and Hu Bingxia's cases can barely constitute a yes answer to this question. Indeed their courageous involvement in the revolutionary actions was by itself a great enlightenment to the spirit of women's liberation movement, but their heroic deeds had been too accorded with the discourses promoted by the male radical nationalists to be considered having an independent feminist agenda.⁹

Recent scholarship by Prof. John K. Leung of Northern Arizona University on women-student writing in the first decade of the Republican era prior to the New Culture Movement reveals that women's critical thinking ability remained unoptimistic on the eve of the May-Fourth Movement, that is, one decade after the rising of indigenous women's schooling. Essays written by the women students show that although they had debated on gender/women issues, social ethics of education, and issues related to nation, national cultural identity, social freedom and equality, much of their mentality was drawn to the fundamentals of the “mother of future citizenry” concept, and only very few had raised questions on the *xianqi liangmu* (literally “virtuous wife, good mother”) doctrine at all (Leung, 2009).

At the dawn of China's modernization, the relationship of women's education/talent and the calling for national survival had been glued into one piece in a way probably not met the approbation of modern feminists. Women were unjustly criticized for not having enough education, but when they did, their literary tendency, which resulted in the "excessive individualism, lack of social commitment, realism, and patriotic fervor" (Judge, 2001), would again be associated with the national weakness. From a modern point of view, we can easily see through the fallacy of the unlikely bond — that is, even if those accuses were true, the logic to link illiterate or literary women's innate flaws to the national weakness was flawed at its heart. We might also reasonably propose that, only when one comes to terms with the impossibility of swiftly transforming the majority of the illiterate, foot-bound Chinese women of the late 19th century into beacons of modernity, can one understand the arduousness of women's liberation process in modern China.

Government Promotion on Women's Schooling

In 1903 when Zhang Zhidong and Zhang Baixi were commissioned to draft regulations to establish an educational system for the nation, they did not include women's schooling into the institutional framework. In the issued *Kindergarten Regulation and Family Education Regulation: Memorialized and Decided Upon* of 1903, it was stated clearly that "If China is to establish women's schooling, there will be many negative consequences"; and that "It's absolutely not proper to allow young girls to go to school in line, parading and wandering on the streets. Moreover, they are not encouraged to read Western books so as to mistakenly accept Western custom, selecting husbands freely and disrespecting their parents."¹⁰

As time went by, however, even the most conservative Qing Mandarins began to soften their rigid views. Duan Fang, one of the five imperial commissioners sent overseas to observe political institutions of Western countries, came back with positive impressions of women's schooling. It was under his recommendation that the Empress Dowager Cixi, who had opposed pioneering girls' schooling before 1901, decided to push women's education instead.

In December 1905, Cixi ordered the creation of the Ministry of Education, which made advances in systematizing women's schooling

on a nationwide scale. On 24 January 1907, the Qing government issued *Women's Primary Education Regulation by Ministry of Education: Memorialized and Decided Upon*. The Regulation, drafted by Zhang Zidong, totaled 26 items in different categories: Tenet (6), Course Level (10), School Facilities (4), Teachers and Supervisors (6). It decreed that women's primary education be divided into two categories: lower elementary school and higher elementary school, both of which required four years of attendance. Five courses were taught at lower primary school level: morality, Chinese, mathematics, needlecraft, and gymnastics, plus music and drawing as electives. Nine courses were taught at higher primary school level: morality, Chinese, mathematics, Chinese history, geography, physics, drawing, needlecraft, and gymnastics. The Regulation made it clear that modern education for girls should not depart from the traditional value of Chinese womanhood: being quiet, chaste, subordinate, and soft. It also regulated that "elementary schools for girls and for boys shall be separated," "principals for primary girls' schools shall be senior women experienced in teaching and with considerable scholarship," and "only men above 50 years old may be employed to work as secretaries for the girl's schools," and so on. In the same year, *Women's Normal Education Regulation by Ministry of Education: Memorialized and Decided Upon* was promulgated. The objective of women's normal education (i.e., teacher education), as set in the "Tenet," was "to cultivate teachers for primary girls' schools and to teach women the right ways to rear children, so as to make women contribute to the family livelihood." The Normal School curriculum embraced a large variety of courses: psychology, logic, philosophy, history of education, educational administration, practical teaching, Chinese literature, penmanship, modern language, history, geography, mathematics (arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry), bookkeeping, methods of teaching, natural science (botany, zoology, mineralogy, geology, physics, chemistry), political science, drawing, manual training, domestic science and gardening, sewing, music, physical education, and so on. The teaching of these courses was subject to the availability of faculty for each individual normal school (I. B. Lewis, 1919).

Women's Normal Education Regulation by Ministry of Education: Memorialized and Decided Upon requested that women's normal schools be founded in all provincial capitals and extended to the prefecture level gradually. Women's normal schools of private enterprise were encouraged but required governmental supervision. The Regulation

also reinforced the inviolability of the Confucian foundation of women's traditional value.

Prof. Xiaoping Cong of the University of Houston has been a dedicated researcher of the history of teachers' schools/normal schools. She regards the incorporation of women's education into the state agenda as a compromise made by the declining Qing dynasty. The rise of state-sponsored teachers' schools, she argues, was inextricable from the multifaceted tradition of women's education. Not without realizing the benefits the new school system brought to women, creating as it did a public realm where women can escape from domesticity, Prof. Cong notes that those Regulations promulgated by the Qing court also reinforced the traditional role of femininity (Cong, 2007, pp. 56–60).

By comparing women's education with the educational system designed for Chinese men, one finds that the aforementioned two Regulations had three major limitations: (a) Women's education was entirely separated from the men's education; (b) The highest educational level set for women was that for cultivating teachers for elementary girls' schools, whereas men's highest education was set at university level; (c) Unlike its counterpart, women's education entirely skipped middle schooling (junior high and high school), nor did it boast any schooling in practical subjects (Du, 1996, p. 340).

Zhang Zhidong's design for China's modern education, including women's schooling, represented a paradoxical stance held by the majority of China's intellectuals in the epoch of great changes. A Confucianism-imbued mind as well as a keen Qing viceroy with historical insight, Zhang reached his understanding of the urgency of educational reform through a painful progress. His famous *Ti-Yong* dichotomy, "Chinese learning as *Ti*, or the basic; Western learning as *Yong*, or the practice," was a philosophical compromise in dealing with the influx of Western influence. With regard to women's issues, his firm adherence to traditional values did not prevent him from realizing the stupidity of restricting women's learning; on the other hand, his eagerness to have women enlightened so as to strengthen the country was conflicted by feelings of fear and caution. This ambitious attitude can best serve to construe the lack of progressive features and the imposition of limitations on women's education on the part of the government initiation.

One is to be reminded that Zhang Zhidong, besides being a reformative minister of the late Qing, was also one of the legacy

successors of the Tongzhi monarchists, who had persistently espoused the core values of traditional Chinese culture. Albeit the promulgation of the Regulations occurred half a century after the Tongzhi Restoration, its spirit had never wandered far from the agenda of the pack of leading conservative monarchists 50 years ago. Since the ideas such like co-education, freedom of marriage, and women's free choice of professions had never ever registered the mind that had masterminded the women's education project, it is not surprising for us to find it parochial and compromised.

In the same vein of conservatism, Liang Qichao wrote an article in 1904, opposing the practice of co-education. His major argument was that, if girls were to be given too advanced an education, they might look down upon boys and refused to marry in the future, thus annihilating the whole plan of cultivating good future mothers. On this point, we find late Qing male reformers, radical or conservative regardless, were of a similar mindset.

After the promulgation of the 1907 Regulations, Qing Mandarins, along with Qing imperial family members, had been vehemently promoting women's education. Beijing quietly witnessed the transformation of several Buddhist temples into girls' schools. Madame Shaoying, wife of a royal family member, volunteered to teach as an instructor for the Promoting Confucianism School. After obtaining enough teaching experience, she opened a school in north Beijing, offering elementary courses to kindergarten girls (Shuntian Times Newspaper Article, 1975, p. 1115). A memorial appealed to the Throne suggested the founding of a "Royal Girls' School" to "infuse patriotic ideas" to princesses and daughters of provincial viceroys ranked grade three or above, regardless of the ethnic origins as Manchu or Chinese. Two Manchu princesses, after feverishly advocating girls' schooling for a period of time, went to teach in person at one of the schools they had patronized (I. B. Lewis, 1919, p. 26).

The Qing government exercised relatively loose control on both private schools and mission schools. If a private school was financially independent from the government, virtually no inspection was imposed on it. But in case it received subsidies from the government, periodical inspections on its fiscal management may be involved. Mission schools were given even greater freedom in extending their education to advanced levels. Some missionary educators felt uncertain about the prospects of missionary education in China, a few even complaining that their

enterprise was being challenged by government competition. Due to their reputation accumulated over decades, prominent Chinese families were still willing to send their daughters to the well-known mission schools. One criticized the principal of a newly founded government school in Shanghai as being “willing, but poorly prepared.” Government schools were sometimes described as “having to take many years before they can send students into any grade above the high school” (Burton, 1911, p. 145).

Recently discovered materials revealed that even the most remote regions had witnessed a flourishing of girls’ schooling at the commencement of the 20th century. In Heilongjiang, the northmost province of Manchuria, which had been under constant military threat by Russia, girls’ schools were established in spite of various practical difficulties (Jia, 1991). Cheng Dequan, a Qing General on military duty in Heilongjiang, auctioned the dowry he prepared for his daughter and donated the money to help found a girls’ school in the provincial capital, which the Russian army still occupied. At the humble beginning of the school in 1906, the 20 girl students huddled together on a large earth bed in a rented thatching, where classes were held. Five years later, the school developed into a well-established institution with 24 branch schools, enrolling 260 students from 15 provinces, most of whom were Manchu (Jia, 1991).

Yunnan, the southwest corner of China, largely insulated from the inland by the rugged and varied terrains, had long been exposed to Christian influence due to its geographical significance. Missionary penetration on the border area can be traced back to as early as the middle of the 17th century, though the first Christian girls’ school was not seen until late 19th century (Committee of Kunming City Gazetteer Compilation, 1984). In the spring of 1905, the earliest indigenous women’s schools — one normal school and two elementary schools — were set up in the Taihe county (today’s Dali City) by a local gentry called Zhou Zongluo, who also participated in the compilation of the county gazetteer in a much later time. The Taihe girls’ schools were designed to enroll *bai* (literally “white”) ethnic minority students (*Draft of the Dali County Gazetteer*, 1917).

Modern scholar Wu Mi, a native of the remote province of Shanxi, recorded in his autobiography that by 1908 even his family boasted a girls’ school, An Wu Girls’ School, which offered modern courses to girls of the Wu family and those from “other surnames” (non-family

members). Although the family school was shabby, it endeavored to bring about the atmosphere of a modern school. Paper slips were pasted on the doors of the schoolrooms, specifying the different functions of each room. Wu Mi recalled seeing the titles of “self-study room,” “student rest room,” “student recessing area,” “office of the principal” and “office of the warden” (M. Wu, 1995, p. 82).

According to statistics recorded in I. B. Lewis's (1919) *The Education of Girls in China*, in 1916, Protestant missions reported 49,916 girls in school; in 1912, the Catholic mission reported 49,987 girls in school; in 1918, the government reported 170,789 girls in private and government educational enterprises. Therefore, by 1919, there had been a phenomenal rise in the number of girls attending missionary, private and government schools, roughly totaling 270,000 (p. 41). However, from a nationwide perspective, the girls in school accounted for only a small fraction of the eligible female population. Girls who were not attending school numbered 28,042,412, or roughly 95% of Chinese girls of school age (I. B. Lewis, 1919, p. 41). This figure indicated that schooling for girls was still far from being established. In view of the vast number of country girls still untouched by modern education, any overestimation of the influence of girls' schooling would be improper.

However, as Borthwick (1983) in her *Education and Social Change in China* points out, “The symbolic significance of girl students was due not to their actual numbers but to the breach they created in the Three Bonds and Five Constant Virtues (*sangang wuchang*) — the basic ordering of state and family, synonymous with Confucianism” (p. 118). In this sense, the engagement in women's schooling by the moribund Qing regime in its last few years had become a valuable legacy.

Conclusion

The rise of women's modern schooling remains a part of the history of late Qing China's forced opening to the outside world. Western missionaries played a crucial role in introducing the industrialized Occidental civilization to China from the Opium War on. Although the initial opening of girls' schools was merely a byproduct of the coming of Western missionaries and their evangelic objective — wedging Christian influence into China, it did inaugurate a new era for the education of Chinese women. The new schooling system differed

fundamentally from the traditional education prepared for women of established families; the mass enrolling of girls from various classes and background was part of tradition of the much cherished “educated leisure” of elite women, but rather, an endeavor to bring about the evangelic spirit of enlightenment and progress to Chinese society.

The First Sino-Japanese War triggered a large-scale reform movement, which, despite its failure, exerted a significant influence on social development over the next two decades. Radicals ascribed China’s infirmity to its women citizens’ deteriorated being, both physically and spiritually, and felt the necessity to utilize women as “mothers of citizens” to improve the “ethnic quality” of Chinese people, while the Qing regime enforced educational reform to save the shaken dynasty from extinction. Conclusions can be drawn from this study that each special group who played leadership roles in promoting Chinese women’s schooling had its own special interests, while women themselves were being marginalized. Upon examination of the social context from the Opium War to the 1911 Revolution, we must acknowledge that women’s self-interests had been poorly served. These were the facts that characterized the process of women’s emancipation movement in modern Chinese history.

Notes

1. *Hong Lou Meng (A Dream of Red Mansions)*, a masterpiece of 18th century China, is one of the most comprehensive reflections of the late imperial Chinese society. The heroines of the novel, “the twelve golden-hairpin beauties,” are all well-versed young ladies from prestigious noble families. Their talents in composing poems, writing essays and reading classics are of a formidable degree of literacy. However, when warning her cousin Lin Daiyu about the vice of reading “unorthodox books,” one of the beauties, Xue Baochai, says: “So it’s best for girls like us not to know how to read. Boys read, but if they study for unorthodox purposes, it would have been better that they are illiterate; and that’s even truer in our case. Poetry writing and calligraphy are not essential for us, nor are they for boys for that matter . . . We should just stick with needlework. If we happen to have received a little education, we ought to choose the proper books to read. If we let ourselves be influenced by those unorthodox books, there’s no hope for us.” Baochai is the most erudite and “virtuous” girl among the twelve beauties. Her emphasis on women’s virtue over scholarship revealed an uneasy feeling among educated women. The “unorthodox books” refer to romance poetry or dramas such as *The Western Chamber*, *Tale of the Lute*,

- A Hundred Dramas of the Yuan Dynasty*, and so on. Due to the booming publishing business, these books had gained a sizable circulation in the Yangtze area during the Ming and Qing dynasties. However, traditional families generally prevented their girls from reading these books, worrying that the romantic narratives would do harms to the minds of young girls. In *Hong Lou Meng*, Daiyu is but fascinated by the charming style of *The Western Chamber*, and casually quotes one or two sentences. Baochai feels very uneasy by her reading inclination and finds a chance to reprimand her (Cao, 1978).
2. In Ban Zhao's *Admonitions for Women*, the most important features of women's education were defined in seven aspects: (a) the state of subjection and weakness in which women are born; (b) the duties of a woman when under the power of a husband; (c) the unlimited respect due to a husband, and the constant self-examination and restraint she must exercise; (d) the qualities that render a female lovable, divided into those relating to her virtue, her conversation, her dress and occupations; (e) the lasting sentiment expected from a wife to a husband; (f) the obedience due to a husband and to his parents; (g) the cordial relations to be maintained with her husband's brothers and sisters (Burton, 1911).
 3. The influence of Neo-Confucianism aside, Bray (1997, p. 42) also offers an alternative explanation to the decline of women's status from the Song and onward. She hypothesizes that before the 11th century, women were responsible for half of the family's financial burden in the form of weaving cloth, since tax were collected in both cloth and grain. But with the Song dynasty's enforcement of the new tax policy — cash instead of concrete production being collected, textile production had been since then largely taken over by workshops stuffed by male workers. Bray perceived this change as having “deskilled” women in the history, causing them to be devalued and marginalized.
 4. A bestseller of the post-Sino-Japanese War period, Zheng Guanying's *Shengshi weiyán (Alarming Utterances of a Prosperous World)* attracted so many eager readers that even high-ranking Qing Mandarins deigned to talk about issues discussed in the brochure. Although not a progressive thinker of gender equality, Zheng believed that women should not be deprived of the right of education.
 5. An Eight-Legged Essay contains a four-part opening of “breaking the topic,” “continuing the topic,” “starting the explication” and “entrance.” It then proceeds to the four-part body: “the initial leg,” “center leg,” “hind leg” and “tie-up leg” (Foster & Russell, 2002, p. 70).
 6. British missionary Robert Morrison, who was dispatched to China in 1807 by the London Missionary Society, defined his goal as follow: “The light of science and revelation will peacefully and gradually shed their luster on the Eastern limit of Asia and the islands of the rising sun” (Chen, 1979, p. 94).

7. “Little daughter-in-law” is a form of arranged marriage in traditional China, in which an impoverished family would sell a young daughter to a richer family. Her role varies: maid, free labor, and adopted daughter. She is expected to be married to a young male member of the adopted family in the future.
8. The Russians occupied Aigun on 23 July, Tsitsihar on 30 August, and Mukden on 1 October. In three months they had gained control over Manchuria (Hsü, 1970, p. 482).
9. Only after the Qing regime was overthrown in 1911 had women political activists, who were previously occupied by the anti-monarchy movement, started to bring up the issue of women’s suffrage, which is identified as the first feminist movement in the modern Chinese history.
10. Among accounts of the contributions made by Zhang Zhidong to the establishment of the national network of education and the related imperial regulations, the most detailed English work was William Ayers’s *Chang Chih-tung and Educational Reform in China* (Ayers, 1971).

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