The Female Chef and the Nation: Zeng Yi's *Zhongkui lu* (Records from the kitchen)

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Women in China who wrote on food and cookery have been doubly neglected: first because elite males generated the gastronomic literature that defined the genre, and second because the masculine ethos has dominated the discourse of nation building and modernization. The modern neglect has deep roots in the association of women with the "inner quarters" (*nei*) and the kitchen and men with the larger, outer world of politics and action (*wai*). The *Yi jing* (Book of changes), for example, states that "only by making food at home can women ensure the harmony and prosperity of the whole clan" (*wu you sui, zai zhongkui, zhenji*).[1] A significant work that has been excluded from the male-dominated discourses is *Zhongkui lu* (Records from the kitchen), written by Zeng Yi (1852–1927), a female poet and doctor in the late Qing dynasty (1644–1912), and published in 1907 by her son as an act of filial tribute. Called a "meliorist" because of her largely conformative attitude toward Confucian traditions (Judge 2008: 17), Zeng nevertheless performed gender in far more complex ways than her conservative bent might suggest.

Records from the Kitchen is more than just a collection of terse-phrased and plain-worded recipes without literary pretension. Seen in

[1] The diagram, called *jiaren* (family), is often cited as dictating women's domestic role in the kitchen in traditional Chinese culture. For other interpretations, see http://baike.baidu.com/link?url=UElax9cmSORrBXw822pCXRzFpdWiKvoEy2g8I8FmPl5ZJrJC8wVlZkgTrJtMJD6C (accessed 7/19/2014).

the contexts of both Chinese modernization at the turn of the twentieth century, including such developments as the home economics movement in China (Schneider 2011), and Zeng's own corpus of works, the book enabled her to transform the acts of cooking and writing about cookery into technologies of identity formation, gender definition, and nation building. Zeng Yi's cookbook was born of a particular historical encounter in Chinese modernization. It illustrates the fluid, albeit fraught, relationship between the *nei* and *wai,* or the inner and outer quarters, in gender-inflected discourses of Chinese modernity of the time, stretching the boundaries of gender norms and practices in early twentieth-century China. Ultimately, *Records from the Kitchen* also performs Chinese feminism in a form worthy of further examination.

Gender in Chinese Gastronomic Literature

Collecting, reading, and compiling culinary literature were common among Chinese literati before the twentieth century. The recovery of 300 fragmentary bamboo strips bearing culinary recipes from the tomb of Wu Yang (d. 162 BCE) at Huxishan in Yuanling, Hunan Province provides solid evidence that cookbooks started from at least the Western Han (202 BCE–9 CE); they increased in number from the Sui (581–618 CE) on. Hsing-tsung Huang (2000: 126–132) estimates that some seventy titles published before 1800 belong to the food canon and diet therapy traditions.

Food was linked with moral education from the earliest times: James Legge (1879: 406) suggests that it was first through various forms of food and drink that ancient people expressed their reverence to spirits and gods. Following a cultural tradition that accentuated the symbolic meanings of food, premodern writers were able to transcend the level of personal dietary experience to reflect a common cultural ideology in society. As Siufu Tang and Issac Yue (2013: 9) argue, "Chinese food literature not only holds the key to the long tradition of development of nutrition and culinary practice in ancient China, but more importantly, is reflective of

the way Chinese society saw and interpreted the world throughout the imperial dynasties and up through modern times."

Chinese culinary writings not only reveal the ethos and sensibilities of different historical moments, they were also versatile vehicles for constituting the identities of the literati who wrote them. K. C. Chang (1977: 11) asserts that one of the essential marks of a premodern Chinese gentleman lay in "his knowledge and skills pertaining to food and drink." Literati displayed knowledge and expertise through writing about food, highlighting their connoisseurship and setting themselves off from both the merchant class and the hereditary aristocracy. By defining "good taste" through culinary writings (Campbell 2013), they buttressed their cultural identity and flaunted their virtue. Echoing both Confucian and Daoist teachings, they used food to indicate their spiritual superiority in the simplicity and wholesomeness of their lifestyle (e.g., *Benxin zhai shushi pu* [Recipes of vegetarian dishes from the Benxin studio], by Chen Dasou); freedom from the corruption and greed rampant in officialdom (e.g., *Shanjia qinggong* [Fresh offerings from a hermit's home], by Lin Hong); pursuit of the vital life force and universal truth (e.g., *Zunsheng bajian* [Eight chapters on following the course of life], by Gao Lian); or concern for the preservation of common people's livelihood (e.g., *Qimin yaoshu* [Essential arts of providing for the people], by Jia Sixie). For those steeped in classical Chinese traditions, eating was more than a simple satiation of hunger or a social activity; it was also a form of self-cultivation, and writing about food had the added benefit of generating cultural capital. As Vivienne Lo and Penelope Barrett (2005: 403) remark,

> Beyond the practicalities of food preparation, the culinary arts, as part of a body of knowledge that enhanced the life of the elite, might, like painting and poetry, be enjoyed for nostalgic reasons to do with times and places, to embellish educated discourse, insinuating a wealth of travel and culture in the reader and collector, or to ensure the continuity of [literati] lineage and tradition.

Nevertheless, the vast majority of both premodern and modern culinary literature was written by marginalized male literati who had been denied access to formal power for political, social, and cultural reasons. Famous premodern "gourmet" writers included hermits such as Chen Dasou and Lin Hong, authors of vegetarian cookbooks in the Song dynasty. The Qing scholar Yuan Mei (1716–1797), author of *Suiyuan shidan* (Recipes from the Sui garden), resigned from office at age forty and lived the next forty years as an artist, tutor, and poet. Similarly, modern intellectuals experienced personal and national crises after the civil service examination system was abolished in 1905, forcing them to explore alternative paths to meaningful livelihood and power. Shen Congwen (1902–1988), Liang Shiqiu (1903–1987), and Lin Yutang (1895–1976) wrote about hometown food, their childhoods, and the native soil, whereas intellectuals including Lu Xun (1881–1936) deployed eating, especially cannibalism, as a metaphor for the social ills and spiritual crisis they saw plaguing China. Radical intellectuals such as Lu Xun, moreover, frowned upon "frivolous" writings by the likes of Lin Yutang (Liao 1994: 83–89) and instead devoted themselves to constructing a grand narrative of nation building.

As much as the content of their writings, the gesture of embracing or rejecting gastronomy constructed identity for both premodern and modern men of letters. Culinary writing remained on the periphery of mainstream cultural production throughout Chinese history. Zhao Yuanren (1892–1982) and Lin Yutang self-consciously listed their wives as authors of cookbooks in Chinese and English, even though they themselves had contributed as much as or even more than their "better halves" to the production of these texts (Hayford 2016). Modern intellectuals, like Yuan Mei before them, presented their writings on food and eating as supplements to their works of poetry and essays, which were seen as more highbrow and essential to culture and nation building. However, male literati were still able to legitimize their culinary output by falling back on existing lineages of literary production and male patronage.

Yuan Mei provides a perfect case in point. Yuan systematically discourses on the culinary styles and techniques of both northern and southern China in his *Recipes from the Sui Garden*, not only listing instructions regarding ingredients, spices, cooking heat, containers, and ways of maintaining a clean kitchen, but also prescribing appropriate behavior for serving and eating food. This cookbook highlights Yuan's deep involvement with food, revealing at the same time the social milieu that validated his investment of time and energy in the culinary arts. Yuan (1984: 38) claims that he enjoyed food so much that whenever he tasted something delicious at a friend's or acquaintance's home, he immediately sent his family chef to learn the recipe and cooking tips. He also records how he trained family chefs using a system of bonuses and punishments based on daily assessment and evaluation. The most famous of his chefs, Wang Xiaoyu, later became well known through Yuan's (1988: 1330–1332) essay "Chuzhe Wang Xiaoyu zhuan" (Biography of chef Wang Xiaoyu).

Yuan's food scouting and training of chefs were not merely personal hobbies. As Yuan explains (1960: 19), Yin Jishan, a high-placed Qing official and Yuan's patron in officialdom for many years, showed great enthusiasm for food in his old age. He occasionally gave Yuan food, such as cured meats, and also asked him to sample foods in various official residences and recommend the best to him in private. This anecdote shows that thanks to his literary fame and powerful connections, Yuan enjoyed access to officials' homes despite his self-identification at the time as a "commoner." It also demonstrates that the appreciation and assessment of food were signs of connoisseurship and enjoyed favor among high officials and literati in the Qing. In addition to the high interest in and unbridled curiosity about food revealed by Yin Jishan, literati-officials of Yuan's time considered it de rigueur to train and show off their family chefs and to exchange recipes. For instance, the family chef of Yuan's friend, the scholar and poet Zhao Yi, was so good at making steamed duck that Yuan dispatched Wang Xiaoyu to learn from him (Deng 1970: 101). Food appreciation and

assessment thus secured cultural status for educated individuals and made it possible for them to socialize as a group, cementing a collective identity and establishing homosocial networks through the circulation of culinary knowledge, as well as gastronomic and artistic pleasure.

In contrast to their male counterparts, whose writing on food was supported by cultural lineage and social networks, Chinese women published little culinary literature or, in fact, any other kind of writing before the Ming dynasty. Commenting on female Chinese writers in the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing dynasties, Grace Fong (2010: 10) remarks that for long periods of Chinese history, "because of women's proper place and function in the home, which complemented men's proper place and function in the world outside, women's writing, when it was produced, had no sanctioned function or status in public life." Gang Yue's (1999: 8) study on the representation of food and eating in twentieth-century Chinese literature notes the silence of women writers on this topic, speculating that they "seem to be rather 'fed up' or find alimentary writing uninteresting."

Chinese cookbooks written by women were most likely not published until Zeng Yi's *Records from the Kitchen* in the late Qing, even though the figures of female chefs had appeared from time to time in male-authored official historiographies, cookbooks, memoirs, and collections of *biji* essays (Tao 1993: 128–143). An earlier example, *Mrs. Wu's Records from the Kitchen* (Pujiang Wushi zhongkui lu), on food of the Jinhua region in Zhejiang, is thought to have been written by a woman, a certain Mrs. Wu of the Southern Song (1179–1279). The cookbook was included in Tao Zongyi's (1329–1412?) *Shuofu* (Collected words), but no other sources corroborate its female authorship. While recognizing the significance of Zeng Yi's *Records from the Kitchen* as the first Chinese cookbook published by a female author, we should also note that Zeng's work shares more similarities with Mrs. Wu's text than with culinary writings authored by male literati, even though both male- and female-authored cookbooks pay tribute to the Chinese tradition of linking food with morality. Rather than discoursing on

the transcendental values of food, as male literati did, Mrs. Wu's cookbook provides recipes and practical tips on how to make preserved foods such as pickles, fermented eggs, and fermented tofu. By devoting much space to these pre-prepared foods, it promotes frugality and good housekeeping.

Both tendencies can be detected in Zeng Yi's cookbook. More important, the term *zhongkui*, which in *The Book of Changes* denoted women's food preparation, later became a synonym for wife in classical Chinese, reflecting a male-dominated cultural value system. For instance, Zeng Guofan (1811–1872), the Qing military statesman who led the mid-nineteenth-century restoration of Confucian government and society after the Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion, linked gender, family, politics, and cookery in instructing his sons that when women were in the family kitchen and men pursued studies and farming, family prosperity and clan longevity would soon follow and the nation would be in order (Zeng Guofan 1997: 330). Zeng Yi, like Mrs. Wu before her, apparently adhered to this kind of male definition of "woman's work." By characterizing her cookbook as born out of female domestic responsibilities, she acknowledged from the very start that cooking was an integral part of wifely duties and being a woman.

Biographical Notes

Zeng Yi was born into a gentry family in 1852.[2] Her father, Zeng Yong, died during an official posting in Jiangxi Province while resisting the Taiping Rebellion; Zeng Yi was just ten. Her mother, Zuo Xijia, a native of Yanghu (now Changzhou), Jiangsu and a famous "lady" (*guixiu*) poet of the time, took the children back to their father's hometown, Huayang (present-day Chengdu), Sichuan, and settled down near Huanhuaxi, a scenic area a little outside of Chengdu, once inhabited by the famous Tang (618–907) poet Du Fu (712–770). Tutored by her mother, Zeng was known from an early age for her skill in poetry writing, painting, and calligraphy, all essential traits for an accomplished "talented woman" (*cainü*). She fell seriously ill upon

[2] This section is drawn from the prefaces for Zeng Yi's works as well as from her own writings, all collected in Zeng Yi 1907. The archive at the Harvard-Yenching Library provides online access to scanned images of the entire anthology (http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/mingqing/search/results-work.php). In cases where page numbers are not legible, I instead list chapter and section numbers in my citations.

reaching puberty, most likely suffering from complications of typhoid fever, further exacerbated by the inaccurate diagnoses of mediocre doctors. While suffering four bouts of this illness, she decided to teach herself medicine, taking her own pulse and prescribing for herself. She consulted Wu Jutong's *Wenbing tiaobian* (Itemized distinctions of typhoid), an authoritative traditional Chinese medical book.[3]

[3] Zeng mentions this in the "Preface" (Xu), to her *Yixue pian* (On medicine), which is collected in Zeng 1907.

After she cured herself, the family arranged a marriage to her cousin, Yuan Xuechang. Yuan was the son of her mother's widowed older sister, Zuo Xixuan, another "lady" poet who, like Zeng's mother, had shared fame in their youth as one of the three "Zuo Sister Poets" of Yanghu. The marriage was by all accounts a happy one: she and her husband often wrote poems to each other as a way of displaying poetic talent and showing affection for each other; they traveled together to Fujian, Jiangxi, Anhui, and Zhejiang, where he held various official posts over a twenty-year period; and she gave birth to six sons. All through life she studied medical books, combined book learning with her own experience of treating patients, and finally wrote *Yixue pian* (On medicine) in two volumes in 1906, when she was fifty-four. The first volume of this book includes general comments on traditional diagnostic skills, such as reading the pulse and the color of the tongue, as well as general comments on *wenbing*, *shangfeng* (colds), and *shanghan* (typhoid fever). It also lists specific treatments for different types of *wenbing* and for cold-related illnesses. The second volume covers gynecology, pediatrics, surgery, and miscellaneous illnesses.

Zeng Yi went on to write *Nüxue pian* (On women's learning) and *Records from the Kitchen*. In 1907, when she turned fifty-five, her son Yuan Lizhun (1876–1935), a Qing official who was assisting in reestablishing Peking University after the Boxer debacle ended in Chinese defeat in 1901, gathered all three works and published them together with all her poems (three volumes of *shi* and one volume of *ci*) under the collective title *Guhuan shi ji* (Collected works from the Guhuan studio), named after Zeng Yi's studio, Guhuan shi, Room of Ancient Happiness.

To understand the significance of Zeng Yi's *Records from the Kitchen*, I examine its content and also the context in which it was produced and published. I first sketch the place of this cookbook in the collection of her works, then discuss it in light of her other works to investigate the sociocultural milieu that validated such cultural production.

Prefaces

Twelve people, in addition to Zeng Yi herself, wrote prefaces for individual parts of *Guhuan shi ji*. Zeng requested prefaces for her poetic works from an intimate circle of family, friends, and old acquaintances: her older brother Zeng Xuchu; her younger sister Zeng Yan (Jishuo); her female poet friend's nephew Yan Qianrun; another "lady poet," Qu Huixiang, whose husband was a colleague of Zeng's husband in Anhui; and Miao Quansun. Miao had made the acquaintance of Zeng's mother in Chengdu, and had known of her mother's and aunts' reputations for talent even earlier, because he was from Jiangyin, close to their hometown of Changzhou. All of those who wrote prefaces were poets or artists of some renown.

The prefaces provide biographical details of Zeng Yi's family, marriage, artistic accomplishments, and life experience. Strikingly, the authors unanimously remark on Zeng Yi's unparalleled achievement: she had fulfilled her duties to both her birth family and her in-laws while also producing excellent poetry. In their eyes, Zeng had not only integrated talent and virtue in her person, but also achieved the seemingly impossible feat of living a happy and fulfilling life as daughter, wife, mother, and accomplished poet, a combination that, they claimed, had eluded many famous female poets before her.

These prefaces, written by friends and family members strategically selected by the author, reveal the restricted circumstances of female writers, even published and established writers such as Zeng Yi. Despite her son's filial piety in publishing her works and her own impeccable reputation as daughter, wife, and mother, she and her close circle still felt the need to

justify her poetic avocation by framing it as a sideline, an addendum to her main gender roles and responsibilities. In his preface, her brother states that she composed poetry in her leisure time, only after caring for her widowed mother, tutoring her younger siblings, and sewing and embroidering to contribute to domestic production.[4] As Zeng Xuchu describes it, her calligraphy, painting, and poetry, although earning her fame for reaching the ultimate level in all three types of art (*sanjue*) in Sichuan, all revolved around her wish to show filial piety to her widowed mother, who was a famous poet and artist and also her tutor (母入蜀备历艰险。斯时诸妹弟均皆幼稚，唯妹居长。奉亲乡居，先意承平。年将及笄，课诸妹以针黹，授幼弟以诗书，无不曲体亲心。暇耽笔墨，尤好吟咏以奉). Yan Qianrun's preface to the same poetry volume further praises her achievement as an educated and literary mother, citing her sons' success in civil service examinations and officialdom as testimony to her cultural mentoring and moral instruction.[5]

All the preface authors emphasize that Zeng Yi's poetic style differed from those who composed poetry merely to vent personal grievances and discontent with life, even though her poetry focused mostly on traditional themes such as the sadness of parting from family and friends. To boost Zeng Yi's cultural cachet, they frequently mention Du Fu, who took refuge in Sichuan after the An Lushan Rebellion (*An Shi zhi luan*) in the mid-Tang dynasty, because she grew up close to Du Fu's old residence and, they claimed, had absorbed the natural inspiration and cultural traditions of the area.[6] However, while conceding that setbacks and suffering produce high-quality poetry (*wen qiong er hou gong*), as exemplified by Du Fu, they quickly point out that Zeng's works adhered to the Confucian cultural tradition embodied in the *Book of Songs* (Shi jing). That is to say, for Zeng to write poetry that was gentle and good (*wenrou dunhou*) was to realize the Confucian ideal of "teaching through poetry" (*shi jiao*) while fulfilling her role as mother and ensuring the prosperity of her family.[7]

The prefaces for Zeng's prose works, including *Records from the Kitchen*, display similarly conservative views on gender roles, even as they

[4] See Zeng Xuchu's "Xu" (Preface) to *Guhuan shi shici ji*, in Zeng 1907.

[5] See Yan Qianrun, "Xu" (Preface) to *Guhuan shi shici ji*, in Zeng 1907.

[6] See Qu Huixiang, "Xu" (Preface) to *Guhuan shi shici ji*, in Zeng 1907.

[7] Yan Qianrun, "Xu" (Preface) to *Guhuan shi shici ji*, in Zeng 1907.

seek to harness private feminine virtue for nation building. The authors of these prefaces include the Manchu high official Duan Fang (1861–1911) and Zhang Baixi (1847–1907), the Minister of Education who established Peking University, the first Chinese-style institution of higher education to introduce "new learning." Zhang was responsible for drafting regulations for Chinese girls' and women's education, which the Dowager Empress Cixi (1835–1908) promoted in an imperial edict in 1906. The third was Wu Qingdi (1848—1924), supervisor of education in Sichuan and Hunan. All three knew of Zeng Yi's works through her son Yuan Lizhun, their colleague or subordinate, and all three were respected for their learning, artistic talent, and interest in education, not merely for their high official status.

Commissioned by her son rather than by Zeng Yi herself, this group of prefaces starts with praise of Zeng Yi's sterling character as mother and wife. But compared to her confidants who wrote prefaces for her poetry volume, these authors, as officials in charge of government-sponsored education reforms, not only focus more on the content and influence of Zeng Yi's essays than on her life experience, but also draw on their own knowledge of Japanese and European models, lending a "global" rather than a "local" perspective to their commentaries. Zhang Baixi's preface to *On Medicine*, for instance, finds Zeng Yi's text superior to works that "plagiarized" from Western medicine.[8] Zeng's work, he comments, integrates her thirty-some years of medical experience, whereas those blindly imitating Western medical books, all superficial and distorted, could kill more people than they heal. Similarly, in his preface to *On Women's Learning*, Wu Qingdi endorses Zeng's promotion of women's "practical education" (*shijian jiaoyu*), in contrast to those "empty" and "strange" works on women's education by her contemporaries.[9] Wu also delivers a scathing criticism of contemporary Chinese women's education, denouncing what he considers two extremes: one group neglects women's education and turns millions of women into parasitic human beings, and the other attempts to overthrow the *yin-yang* gender hierarchy and demolish Confucian rituals and morality (*lijiao*).

[8] See Zhang Baixi, "Xu" (Preface) to *Yixue pian*, in Zeng 1907.

[9] See Wu Qingdi, "Xu" (Preface) to *Nüxue pian*, in Zeng 1907.

For these preface writers, Zeng Yi's work offered a feasible curriculum for women's education along the model of that proposed in Japan: her curriculum both emphasized practical household management skills, such as cooking and accounting, and preserved traditional feminine virtue by carefully delineating the boundaries of *nei* and *wai*. They believed that Zeng's plan allowed Chinese women to shoulder their "natural-born duties" (*tianzhi*) to the family and, in so doing, produce morally upright and biologically fit male offspring for the nation (Wu Qingdi). Similarly, they extolled Zeng Yi as a paragon of female virtue (*nüjie wanren*), for she not only fulfilled her duties as loving wife and good mother, but also recorded her experience for later generations and thus adapted domestic knowledge to strengthening the race and the nation (Zhang Baixi). Yet in lauding Zeng Yi and her plan for women's education as the perfect model, they in effect prevented Chinese women from participating in nation building in any role other than as wife and mother. Although this form of conservative nationalism enhanced the social, cultural, and political significance of women's traditional gender roles, it also privileged the domestic sphere as the essential domain for feminine self-definition. Therefore, like the prefaces for Zeng's poetry, this group of prefaces established a constraining framework rooted in Confucian notions of femininity.

Moving between the Inner and Outer Quarters

As exemplified in the *Yi jing*, in traditional thought men are identified with *wai* (outside or external) and women associated with *nei* (inside or internal). Susan Mann's (2000) work and Bryna Goodman and Wendy Larson's (2005) coedited volume suggest that rather than setting up a rigid dyad, *nei-wai* is more about how individuals actually inhabit *nei* and *wai* and enact gender norms. Although men had a set of responsibilities associated with *wai* and women a set of responsibilities associated with *nei*, their actual practices illuminate the fluidity of the boundaries between the two spheres and two sets of gender norms. Zeng Yi's example shows that a spectrum going

from *nei* to *wai* provides a more fruitful theoretical construct for discussing her works than the classic private-public dichotomy, which designates the "private" and "public" spaces as respectively feminine and masculine and mutually exclusive.

When discussing female Chinese students studying in Japan at the turn of the twentieth century, Joan Judge (2001: 802) says they "recast the dichotomy between talent and virtue in a new nationalist idiom," replacing the maxim that "only a woman without talent is virtuous" with the unspoken dictum that "only a woman who did not indulge her private talents was patriotic." She concludes that their acts created "the ultimate paradox" within radical Chinese female nationalism: although the "students' deepest desire was to leave their own mark on national history, they would become complicit in efforts to erase the feminine aesthetic from national culture" (802). Zeng Yi's example suggests another way to cross the boundaries between talent and virtue. She succeeded in legitimizing talent with moral authority, and was able to move between the *nei* and *wai* spheres without renouncing her own poetic and artistic achievements in absolute or irreversible terms.

Circumscribed in Confucian moralistic terms by the preface authors, Zeng Yi remained highly cautious about the dichotomy between talent and virtue, public and private, and *nei* and *wai*. As mentioned, she showed her poetry only to family and friends in order to request prefaces. In her own "Preface" (Zixu) to *On Women's Learning*, she too dismisses her poetry as "useless for the difficult times" facing the nation (*wu bi shijian*). Yet both paratextual and textual elements of her collected works, such as the careful organization of the parts, her prefaces, and the content of her essays, all demonstrate her strategic movements *from* the inner to the outer, from showcasing individual artistic talent to patriotism and morality, which was at least partially sanctioned by Confucian ethics; and she also moves back and forth *between* the inner and outer spheres, in an effort to avoid being defined entirely by one or the other.

Zeng Yi arranged her 1907 collection in the following order: first, four groups of poems in chronological order that respectively represent her childhood (*Huanhua ji*), exchanges between her husband and herself (*Mingluan ji*), her travels as his companion to various official posts (*Feihong ji*), and her *ci* poems of general musings (*Huanyue ci*); next, *On Medicine*, followed by *On Women's Learning*, and finally, *Records from the Kitchen* as an appendix to *On Women's Learning*, as if an afterthought. Although Confucian gender norms privilege women's domestic duties, and Zeng Yi derived moral authority from her roles as wife and mother, she devotes more space to poetry than to cooking. Moreover, presenting *Records from the Kitchen* as an addendum to *On Women's Learning* and as a part of the curriculum for good mothers of modern citizens also privileges the moral significance and utility of cooking more than the cooking per se, underscoring the link between food and morality while recapitulating male ranking of the cookbook as less highbrow than cultural products such as poetry.

The placement and allocation of space for *Records from the Kitchen* partially reflect Zeng Yi's genteel background: she undoubtedly spent more time composing poetry than cooking. Yet the thought and care she and her son devoted to compiling and organizing her complete works reveal other factors at work as well. Indeed, even by themselves, the prefaces that she had commissioned for her poetic works would show that Zeng Yi challenged the male-centered maxim that "only a woman without talent is virtuous" by valuing and spotlighting her poetic and artistic achievements. Her discourse on Chinese women's education further shows that she attempted to make public use of women's private virtue and to develop her own female subjectivity through such an act, at times traversing the boundaries set by a patriarchal society.

She begins her "Author's Preface" (Zixu) to *On Women's Learning* by invoking autobiography, citing both her matrilineal heritage and her extended travels with her husband. She thus sets up a revealing contrast

between her maidenhood and her marriage, and between her youthful domestic pursuits—poetry writing, antique collection, and sewing and cooking inside the home—and her wide exposure to a changing external world marked by imperialist invasions in the years after her wedding. Following the self-awakening brought about by her travels, she issues a call for national awakening, outlining for Chinese women three "natural-born responsibilities" (*tianfu zhi zeren*). In contrast to Wu Qingdi, who defines women's domestic roles as their sole "natural-born duties," Zeng highlights their contributions to the nation through domestic work: educate children in order to lay a solid foundation for these future citizens; be diligent and frugal when managing household finances so as to contribute to a healthy national economy; and pay attention to medical and hygienic care at home in order to strengthen the Chinese race. Not only does Zeng Yi expand Chinese women's responsibilities from the domestic space to the national sphere, she also holds that they possess unique strengths as well as weaknesses. She believes that women possess traditional virtues such as chastity and filiality (*jiexiao*) regardless of class. However, most women lack proper schooling; they remain ignorant and helpless or pick up only superficial trappings from the West (Taixi): pursuing free love, imitating Western diets and clothing, discoursing on China's fate of being "carved up" by imperialist Western powers, yet are still confused about and oblivious to their individual duties. As a remedy, she promotes a "comprehensive education" (*wanquan jiaoyu*) that would combine the best of Chinese and Western learning.

Her proposal for Chinese women's "comprehensive education" shows that Zeng combines "new learning" with her own background and experience, again integrating influence from the outer sphere with inspiration from the inner sphere to execute a strategic movement from *nei* to *wai*. Zeng often invokes social Darwinism in her call for national rejuvenation. The key national figure in the introduction of this theory into China was Yan Fu, who at the turn of the twentieth century translated

Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* and Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Sociology* into Chinese. Zeng Yi cites Spencer in chapter 2, section 1 of *On Women's Learning*, presumably using Yan Fu's translation.

Another key influence was the female Japanese Christian educator Shimoda Utako (1854–1936), who, according to Judge (2001: 772), "played a central role in establishing both the discursive and the practical link between female virtue and the nation in early twentieth-century China." Shimoda was a highly placed proponent of the ideology of "good wife, wise mother," which she had promoted in Japan, and she was committed to establishing East Asia as an equal political and cultural counterpart to the modern West. She advocated extending educational opportunities to Chinese women while preserving the traditional Confucian way of womanhood. She established a publishing house in Shanghai, which produced a number of books translated from Japanese into Chinese, including her own *Domestic Science* (Jiazhengxue) and Naruse Jinzo's (1858–1919) *Women's Education* (Nüzi jiaoyu lun), both of which became foundational texts in Chinese discussions of female education. Shimoda's views on women's education were featured in Chinese journals and other publications, and her attempts at transforming traditional feminine virtues into useful tools for nation building won her respect from a wide range of Chinese educational and political authorities, including Zhang Baixi, one of Zeng Yi's preface writers (Judge 2001: 772–778).

Like Shimoda and the Qing officials who supported her method of reforming Chinese women's education, in *On Women's Learning* Zeng Yi reinforces gender lines by limiting women's work to the domestic sphere. For instance, in chapter 2, which discusses marital relationships, she argues that domestic management is a woman's "natural-born duty," whereas political participation belongs to the masculine realm. When talking about childhood education, she asserts that a mother should develop good habits in boys before they start elementary school. But once they do, she should care just for their diet, clothing, and other practical aspects of life; for his

part, the father should cultivate their spirit and morality to prepare them to become modern citizens for a prosperous and strong nation. Zeng also advocates different types of education for boys and girls once they reach puberty, preferring more practical household knowledge and skills for the latter.

Yet Zeng does not reaffirm the time-honored inner-outer division between the two sexes for its own sake; instead, she promotes gender-based division of labor as the foundation of national rejuvenation. In her "Zonglun" (Introduction) to *On Women's Learning*, she asserts that the nation is the accumulation of families and the family that of individuals; a well-educated woman thus benefits both her family and the nation, for she can assist her husband, take care of the household, educate her children, and "accomplish the education of the whole country without leaving her home." Conversely, if a woman lacks learning and morality (*wu xue wu de*), she could both ruin her husband and children and bring harm to the world.

Although this sounds like putting the burden of nation building solely on women's shoulders, Zeng Yi's work also emphasizes both "education" and "morality," and she implicitly sees both talent and virtue as essential ingredients for modern female subjectivity. Based on her assessment of current developments, she also paints a rosy picture of future prospects for the education of Chinese women. She praises Chinese women's "natural qualities" of focus, quietude, purity, and faithfulness (*zhuan jing chun yi*), which she believes make them amenable to moral instruction. Moreover, with provincial girls' and women's schools being established all over China, she considers the time ripe to "turn the tide in women's education" (*nüxuejie zhi zhuanji*). She asserts that once they are allowed to attend schools and receive a proper education, women will be able to compete with men in knowledge and learning and achieve gender equality without having to struggle for it. More important, the two sexes could then motivate each other and unite in the fight for progress, and "the strength of the yellow race can thereby ascend in the whole world." This harmonious state

of combining the strengths of both men and women to eliminate national poverty and weakness (*pin ruo*), she concludes, can be achieved only after two million Chinese women receive proper education.

Although Zeng's rationale for developing Chinese women's education resonates with Shimoda's scheme of linking traditional Confucian virtue with nation building, Zeng also modifies it by deriving inspiration and authority from her personal background and experience. Shimoda generally placed more emphasis on strengthening the bodies, especially advocating physical education and the abolition of foot-binding, than on improving the minds of Chinese women. In contrast, as a cultured gentry woman, Zeng considered moral and cultural education, more than physical education, the way for Chinese women to achieve gender equality and contribute to the nation, although she by no means ignores health and hygiene. For instance, while also advocating the abolition of foot-binding, she argues in the "Zonglun" that only a well-educated woman, and hence a competent household manager and productive member of society, could compel men to share their responsibilities and rights and thereby benefit both the family and the nation.

Further, elevating the maternal role to the supreme position of ensuring gender equality, family harmony, and national prosperity, she claims agency for Chinese women by characterizing them as enthusiastic caregivers for the family and, by extension, patriots for the nation, rather than passive receptacles of Confucian moral teachings. Significantly, *On Women's Learning* starts "in the middle," with marriage and women's duties and authority as wife and mother, rather than following the traditional Confucian prescription of *sancong* (three obediences), which charts out a woman's path from filial daughter to good wife and loving mother, even though Zeng Yi disapproves of the Western model of "free love."

Furthermore, of the nine chapters in *On Women's Learning*, Zeng devotes one chapter each to betrothal and marriage, marital relationships, supporting the elderly, household finance, and hygiene, but uses four

chapters to describe maternal duties in great detail: pregnancy, feeding the baby, and rearing children from preschool to adulthood education. She covers practical topics such as breast-feeding, hiring a wet nurse, and the proper way to swaddle a baby, but also exhorts mothers to pay attention to children's psychological needs and their spiritual and moral cultivation, something that elsewhere in *On Women's Learning* she had said was the responsibility of fathers.

By privileging the maternal role, Zeng Yi implicitly draws from her experience in parenting to establish authenticity and authority. As the prefaces show, her family and cultural lineages and her achievements as wife and mother all won her respect and admiration not just from friends and family but also from reformist Qing officials. Small wonder that she worked autobiographical detail into her argument to transform her personal experience into national allegory, merging the individual and the national, the domestic and the public, and *nei* and *wai*. Recalling her childhood envy of the freedom of movement and energetic lifestyle her brothers enjoyed and her deep sorrow over her own bound feet, Zeng Yi unequivocally denounces the custom of foot-binding as more harmful than "big floods and ferocious beasts" (*hongshui mengshou*). She further exposes its harmful effects on the "seed" of the race: restriction on exercise produces weak women, who in turn become weak mothers who produce less robust children. Her personal suffering is thus turned into a metaphor for a sickly race, and her personal opposition to foot-binding becomes a patriotic call for reform.

Zeng Yi also draws on the legacies of her widowed mother and widowed mother-in-law (who was her aunt), praising both their artistic talent and their chastity and filiality. Moreover, she alludes to her decades of travels, in China and perhaps even to Japan (*she dajiang, yue chongyang*), that had taught her a global perspective, with which she considered China's relations with foreign powers and China's position on the world stage. By moving agilely between and from *nei* to *wai* in her discursive practice,

Zeng Yi delineates her *bildungsroman* from a "talented woman" in the Qing empire to an open-minded and patriotic citizen of the new Chinese nation, transcending the confines of domesticity prescribed by Confucian norms to claim a larger stage for her self-realization.

Records from the Kitchen

Zeng Yi's proposal for modern Chinese women's education is practical, apparently domestic, and distinctly food-oriented. She discusses diet in each chapter of *On Women's Learning*: for pregnant women, for women who have just given birth, for the entire household, and for the elderly. In the chapter on "hygiene" (*weisheng*), she describes in painstaking detail how to obtain clean drinking water, and lists dietary rules such as eating regular meals and alternating between rice and wheat products as the main starch. She even employs "scientific" terms such as fat (*zhifang*), starch (*dianfen*), and microorganism (*weishengwu*), relying on modern nutritional science to ensure family health even while criticizing the foreign habit of eating raw eggs. *Records from the Kitchen,* as an appendix to *On Women's Learning*, was likewise intended to help establish both a happy domicile and a strong nation through the feminine art of cooking and domestic management.

Records from the Kitchen consists of twenty sections (*jie*). In the first section, "Introduction" (Zonglun), Zeng Yi (1984: 4) alludes to "Caiping," a poem from the *Book of Songs* describing women picking duckweed for ceremonial offerings, and declares that "all worthy women and ladies of the past were good at cooking" (*gu zhi xianyuan shunü, wuyou bu xianyu zhongkui*). Her cookbook, she asserts, is intended to help women fulfill this sacred (kitchen) duty by offering cooking tips and recipes. Following this rather traditional opening, which reaffirms the Confucian prescription of women's domestic role, Zeng cites the eating habits and dietary preferences attributed to Confucius in the *Analects* and claims that her book fits the Confucian model of paying meticulous attention to one's food. By associating the preparation of food by women with sacrificial ceremonies

prescribed by Confucian rituals, Zeng benefits from the sage's cultural cachet and moral authority. But more important, she also claims her rightful place in the Confucian tradition of performing sacrificial rituals and moral instruction through food, even though, or perhaps precisely because, she seems to speak from a feminine and "domestic" position. Interestingly, Zeng ends this section with a promotion of both "hygiene/sanitation" (*weisheng*)—an imported modern idea—and "economy" (*jieyong*), or frugality in women's household management, and thus integrates modern and traditional ideas on home economics and on women's perceived role in their implementation.

Zeng then uses nineteen sections to offer recipes and tips for cooking a variety of dishes and for making sauces and wine; she includes Chinese ham (*huotui*), sausage (*xiangchang*), dried fish (*fengyu*), preserved crab (*zuixie*), preserved eggs (*pidan*), fermented tofu (*furu*), pickled vegetables (*dongcai*), soy sauce (*jiangyou*), sweet fermented wine *(tianlao jiu*), and pastry moon cakes (*su yuebing*). For each dish, she covers the main ingredients and their appropriate amounts, spices, cooking methods, seasons suitable and unsuitable for its preparation, and precautions. The majority of her recipes, such as those on dried fish and preserved crab, represent the traditional favorites and dietary habits of Changzhou and its surrounding areas, where her mother and mother-in-law came from and in whose food traditions she had been tutored since childhood. However, they also include regional cuisines of Yunnan and Sichuan, where she had traveled and lived with her husband.

The cookbook's geographical span and implied progression through time and social space represent the stages in Zeng Yi's own life journey. The sections proceed from childhood to adulthood, and from mother-centered birth family to husband-centered married family. Yet her cookbook overwhelmingly features preserved, pickled, and salted foods. In privileging prepared dishes with long shelf life, Zeng emphasizes culinary skills that enable women to save money and prepare for hard times, possibly

following in Mrs. Wu's footsteps. This lesson in family budgeting also echoes what Zeng mentions as one of the three most important natural-born duties for women: "be diligent and frugal in household management," which she sees as the essential part of home economics in her *On Women's Learning*.

Also manifest in the volume is her attention to modern ideas of hygiene and sanitation. For instance, when instructing readers on how to make a certain type of pickled vegetable, *pao yancai*, the earliest extant recipe of authentic Sichuan pickles according to some experts on Sichuan cuisine (Zhang 2007: 11–13), Zeng stipulates what type of pickle jars to use, what to put in the brine, and how frequently to change the water that seals the lid:

> When making the pickle called *pao yancai*, one must use a "water-seal jar." This type of jar has a rimmed lid that resembles a winter hat to hold the water. To prevent the pickle from going bad, put the lid on the jar and add water to soak it so that air cannot get in. The pickle brine must use Sichuan pepper and salt boiled with a little hard liquor. Any vegetable can be used, especially green beans and green and red peppers, which can last a long time. However, the vegetables must be sun dried before they can be soaked in the solution. If mold appears, add a little more liquor. Add a little salt and liquor whenever adding vegetables to the solution, to keep the pickle from going sour. The water in the jar rim must be changed every other day. Never let it go dry. If you follow these instructions, the pickle will get better and better over time.
>
> 泡盐菜法，定要覆水坛。此坛有一外沿如暖帽式，四周内可盛水；坛口上覆一盖，浸于水中，使空气不得入内，则所泡之菜不得坏矣。泡菜之水，用花椒和盐煮沸，加烧酒少许。凡各种蔬菜均宜，尤以豇豆、青红椒为美，且可经久。然必须将菜晒干，方可泡入。如有霉花，加烧酒少许。每加菜必加盐少许，并加酒，方不变酸。坛沿外水须隔日一换，勿令其干。若依法经营，愈久愈美也。(Zeng Yi 1984: 16)

Starting with a description of the pickle jar for novices unfamiliar with Sichuan cuisine, Zeng then provides more details such as using boiled water,

adding distilled alcohol, and changing water frequently. While still using (accessible) classical Chinese and not being precise with measurements, in the style of traditional Chinese cookbooks, she nevertheless adds a modern flavor to her pickle recipe: she both crosses geographical borders to present a recipe from Sichuan and cites modern scientific ideas to boost her authority, namely that hygiene and sanitation can be achieved by preventing air from getting into the jar.

Zeng Yi's meticulous attention to food safety in an ostensibly traditional cookbook reflects her role as a doctor influenced by modern medical knowledge. But more important, it also underlies her understanding and promotion of new gender norms for Chinese women. Her *On Medicine* exhorts patients to breathe fresh air to safeguard their lungs, to exercise regularly to circulate the blood, and, especially for women, to go outside in the open air to ward off illnesses caused by stuffy air and depression born of confinement. Furthermore, *On Women's Learning* proclaims that medical science and hygiene are essential to the future of the Chinese people and the nation and that it is up to women to utilize this kind of new knowledge in service of the family and the nation. That is to say, by playing their roles as wives and mothers well, Chinese women could become custodians of the family kitchen and mothers of the new nation.

Observing China besieged by Western powers *(jia wo shuguo, ju wo gangwan, rang wo zhuquan, gan wo neizheng)*, Zeng cries out in her "Author's Preface" to *On Women's Learning* for Chinese women to receive a good education in order to contribute to nation building; they can thus become better teachers for their children, who would in turn grow up to be better citizens of the nation. Moreover, women should train their own bodies and abolish foot-binding in order to preserve "good seed" for a strong nation (*qiangguo baozhong*). This line of thought echoes both the Japanese educator Shimoda and the late Qing reformer Liang Qichao (1873–1929), who in his famous "Lun nüxue" (On women's learning) also claims that women's level of education determines national strength

or weakness given their roles as mothers of future citizens (Liang 1999: 32). However, Zeng also speaks from her unique experience as a medical doctor. She urges women to be vigilant about family hygiene: their duties range from overseeing pregnancy, birth, breast-feeding, children's diets and immunization, to tending to the sleep, eating, clothing, and living arrangements of the whole family. In addition to the traditional role of family cook, Zeng Yi demands that Chinese women be the family nurse, nutritionist, and general medical doctor who safeguards the health of the whole family and ensures its happiness and prosperity.

Zeng Yi remained committed to fundamental Confucian principles even while promoting important changes in Chinese women's lives. She endorsed Confucian values such as chastity and filial piety and criticized what she saw as the negative influence of "Western learning." In *On Women's Learning*, even while citing from Japanese books on nutrition and children's education, she remains skeptical of total Westernization, frequently criticizing what she saw as deep flaws in the European lifestyle, ranging from lack of support for parents to inappropriate clothing in winter and summer. Yet she ultimately came to embrace and relish her own "middle position" (*zhongli*) on Chinese women's education, dismissing both hatred from the conservatives (*shoujiu zhe*) and derision from the reformers (*weixin zhe*).[10] She believed she had found a good solution by combining the best of both worlds, integrating Chinese and Western learning to transform domestic arts into technologies of nation building.

[10] See "Author's Preface" to *On Women's Learning*, in Zeng 1907.

Bingbing Yang (2008: 113–118) argues that Zeng Yi produced *On Medicine*, *On Women's Learning*, and *Records from the Kitchen* out of a sense of futility when looking at her literary and artistic accomplishments. As Zeng admitted, she considered her poetry writing useless for the hardships facing China and offered her three later works as alternative "self-help" books. Yet, as discussed earlier, she also spoke from a secure position as successful mother, respected doctor, established poet, and, perhaps, revered educator for modern women. She claimed that by following her teaching,

Chinese women would at the least become adept at traditional women's work, such as sewing and cooking, and at best even come to understand the principles of modern education and hygiene.

But from her rejection of the image of "talented woman," if only as a gesture to prove her own modernity and patriotism, we can also detect the widespread influence of male-sponsored and increasingly radical discourses on Chinese modernization. Liang Qichao's "On Women's Learning" (1999: 31) describes "talented women" as essentially the type of traditional woman "who toys with ditties on the wind and the moon, the flowers and the grass . . . who makes ditties on spring sorrow and sad departures." He summarily excludes them from the project of Chinese modernization on the basis of their sentimental tendency and their lack of contact with and concern for pressing social realities. Echoing Liang's judgment, radical male intellectuals of the May Fourth era criticized the sentimental literature produced by both "traditional" and "liberated" women writers, although in the guise of cautioning modern women to guard against the reemergence of this traditional trait in their literary creation.

The tactical use of the new woman as a reference point in the process of male self-signification becomes even clearer when seen in the light of the relationships the talented women of old forged with their male sponsors. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, talented women formed a visible literary and social force through their publication of poetry, distribution of literary anthologies, and, in some cases, their ironical privileging of "female virtue" over literary creativity in discussions of female talent and morality (Chang 1997: 236–258). Insofar as talented women formed a complex relationship with the dominant discourse of Confucianism, sometimes seeking power through the adoption of the male voice, they disproved the May Fourth myth of the unrelieved victimization and literary incapacity of the traditional Chinese woman.

Interestingly, although male intellectuals dismissed women who married for financial security as "confirmed slaves" (Zhang Xichen 1927),

some of their most enthusiastic discussions concerning Chinese women focused on surprisingly domestic topics. For example, there was heated discussion in 1926 in *Xin nüxing* (New women) as to whether the journal should include recipes to teach women how to bake cakes. A distinctly domestic action, making Western-style cakes nonetheless became a trope used to discuss modern women's education. Sun Fuyuan, for one, derived from this discussion the idea that education for women should be "practical." Sun (1926: 417) argued that although teaching how to bake cakes should not be an end unto itself, it was certainly better than "aiming too high and offering only impractical advice." Zhou Zuoren (1926: 560) more explicitly voiced his dissatisfaction with the state of women's education: "Modern women really lack knowledge of any kind, let alone practical knowledge [such as making cakes]," uncannily echoing conservative nationalists such as Zhang Baixi and Wu Qingdi in their critique of Chinese women's inferior education and ability.

Cakes, as objects imported from the West, were a rhetorical stand-in for Western modernity. But the fact that Zhou Zuoren and his colleagues employed a domestic image to signify new women's education exposed their unwittingly "traditional" view of women's roles, even if for the alleged purpose of promoting their own version of Chinese modernization. By recommending that Chinese women learn household chores such as cooking, they revealed their tacit agreement that women's proper place was and should be at home. They also betrayed condescension toward women and ignorance about their individual needs, as is evident in their demand that topics they knew very little about themselves, such as baking cakes, be included in the curriculum for the education of new women.

One may speculate that these male intellectuals should have welcomed and supported Zeng Yi's promotion of domestic skills, a prospect that failed to materialize perhaps only because of the growing radicalization that oriented liberated women more toward political activism than to domestic achievements. Yet the gendered male criticism of women's writings made it

clear that the climate was not favorable for Zeng Yi's traditional-oriented works. Radical male intellectuals often invoked gender stereotypes in their criticism of female writings and applied a double standard through the careful maintenance of categories such as "rational" versus "emotional," "social" versus "autobiographical," and "modern" versus "traditional." Whereas evocative works by male writers were hailed either as frontal attacks against traditional morality or as masterful artistic achievements, comparable fiction by female writers was criticized for its lack of social consciousness and artistic control. Male writers who privileged male emotions were not accused of being "effeminate," yet female writers were accused of being "backward" if they wrote about women's emotions.

Simply put, the alleged lack of modern consciousness in female literary production in early twentieth-century China was associated with the perceived inferiority of women (Larson 1998: 177–188). This gender-inflected male criticism of women's writings led to the construction, in the critical literature of the May Fourth, of a new form of the new woman: the woman writer. The frequent appearance of the female writer as a target of radical criticism in effect created a real-life counterpart to the new woman in fiction and who, like the fictional figure, served as an Other, the tutoring and guidance of whom defined the modernity of the radical male intellectual (Feng 2004). Zeng Yi's advocacy of Chinese women as competent household managers and patriots of a new China, it would follow, would have been dismissed as too traditional and too narrowly focused on women's domestic sphere only by radical male intellectuals, if they had bothered to concern themselves with it at all.

Conclusion

Although Zeng Yi's educational modernization scheme did not gain much traction, her cookbook did leave a legacy. According to Mark Swislocki (2009: 137), Zeng's *Records from the Kitchen* "set the parameters for cookbook writing during the closing years of Qing and the early Republican period."

The *Ladies Journal* (Funü zazhi), Shanghai's leading women's magazine, ran a food column named after her book. Two lengthy cookbooks appeared in 1917, Li Gong'er's *Jiating shipu* (Family recipes) and Lu Shouqian's *Pengren yiban* (Fundamentals of cooking), and new titles came out on average more than one per year for the duration of the Republican period (Swislocki 2009: 261, *fn*118). These cookbooks and journal articles all exhort Chinese women to make the right choices about food so as to ensure that their family members receive the right amounts of vitamins, minerals, fiber, carbohydrates, and protein. Although it focuses mostly on Chinese dishes and is relatively unsophisticated in citing modern nutritional science, Zeng Yi's cookbook proved to be a precursor to this mini publication boom of modern cookbooks that attempted to use domestic science to make modern families and, by extension, a modern nation.

Seen in light of her other works and the sociocultural milieu of the time she wrote them, Zeng Yi's *Records from the Kitchen* accomplished several larger goals beyond merely listing recipes: it validated her life experience, legitimized her roles as wife, mother, doctor, and all-over family guardian, and elevated her to the rank of patriots and nation builders who were exploring paths for China's self-strengthening. That Zeng Yi's works deal with China's self-strengthening from a unique gender and class position need not detract from their value as historical documents or as examples of strategic gender performance.

The status of Chinese women from elite households in the late Qing was often mediated by and conjoined with patriarchal rule. Zeng Yi did not resist traditional moral codes and prevailing gender roles; she supported them, and she accumulated moral and cultural authority precisely by invoking the time-honored model of linking food with morality and traditional gender norms. At the same time she appropriated the aura of Western-imported new learning to evoke patriotic feelings and a burgeoning awareness of the nation, as can be seen, for example, in her crossing of regional boundaries and inclusion of recipes from different culinary styles. By producing culinary

discourse from her unique perspective "in the middle," she also recast and reshaped gender norms by inviting Chinese women to the project of modern nation building, otherwise a strictly male-dominated pursuit.

Zeng Yi's particular prescription for China's revival rests in the application of home economics to Chinese households and the education and making of Chinese women into modern household managers and mothers. Her brand of nationalism and feminism was more conservative than radical, because she promoted domesticity rather than political activism for Chinese women's self-realization. Yet we would do well to avoid knee-jerk dismissals of domesticity as nothing more than the complete subjugation of women. As Helen Schneider argues (2011: 6), "Chinese thinkers long imagined the supposed private realm of the family and the public realm of imperial power as interconnected spaces. In traditional Chinese statecraft, correct family management was foundational to the ruling of the state." As Schneider further demonstrates, the development of Home Economics as an academic discipline and as an integral part of Chinese women's education at the turn of the twentieth century meant that Chinese intellectuals did not necessarily see domestic responsibilities as negative or less important in the proper maintenance of the nation.

Instead of assuming that Confucianism played an unchangingly rigid and constrictive role in Chinese women's lives, we can better understand through Zeng Yi's life and works how a women's culture in late imperial China was able to thrive in conjunction with accepted gender roles. *Guhuan shi ji*, published through the filial act of her son to preserve her writing, also preserved a life lived. The collection highlights the intertwining of tradition and modernity in one "intermediary" female subject at a transitional moment in history. It records Zeng Yi's self-conscious and skillful movement between *nei* and *wai*, the inner and outer spheres of a woman's life, despite restrictive prescriptions. It reveals that Chinese women's agency sometimes came not from rebellion against patriarchy but from the appropriation of patriarchal power and male-centered discourses

for women's own empowerment. Ultimately, we can see that the project of Chinese modernization, as well as that of Chinese feminism, involved different strands of intertwining thought. Some of these strands, however, were later elided and even obliterated by prevailing political powers or dogmatically ideological historical narratives.

Glossary

An Shi zhi luan	安史之乱
Anhui	安徽
Ben cao gangmu	本草纲目
Benxin zhai shushi pu	本心斋蔬食谱
biji	笔记
cainü	才女
"Caiping"	采萍
Changsha	长沙
Changzhou	常州
Chen Dasou	陈达叟
Chengdu	成都
"Chuzhe Wang Xiaoyu zhuan"	厨者王小余传
ci	词
dianfen	淀粉
dongcai	冬菜
Du Fu	杜甫
Duan Fang	端方
Feihong ji	飞鸿集
fengyu	风鱼
Fujian	福建
Funü zazhi	妇女杂志
furu	腐乳
Gao Lian	高濂
gu zhi xianyuan shunü, wuyou bu xianyu zhongkui	古之贤媛淑女, 无有不娴于中馈
Guhuan shi	古欢室
Guhuan shi shici ji	古欢室诗词集
guixiu	闺秀
hongshui mengshou	洪水猛兽
Huanhua ji	浣花集
Huanhuaxi	浣花溪
Huanyue ci	浣月词
Huayang	华阳
Hunan	湖南
huotui	火腿
Huxishan	虎溪山
Jia Sixie	贾思勰
jia wo shuguo, ju wo gangwan, rang wo zhuquan, gan wo neizheng	夹我属国, 踞我港湾,攘我主权, 干我内政
Jiangsu	江苏

Jiangxi	江西
Jiangyin	江阴
jiangyou	酱油
jiaren	家人
Jiazhengxue	家政学
jie	节
jiexiao	节孝
jieyong	节用
Jinhua	金华
Jingshi da xuetang	京师大学堂
kongqi	空气
Liang Shiqiu	梁实秋
lijiao	礼教
Lin Hong	林洪
Lin Yutang	林语堂
Lu Xun	鲁迅
Miao Quansun	缪荃孙
Ming	明
Mingluan ji	鸣鸾集
Naruse Jinzö	成濑仁蔵
nei	内
nüjie wanren	女界完人
Nüxue pian	女学篇
nüxuejie zhi zhuanji	女学界之转机
Nüzi jiaoyu lun	女子教育论
pao yancai	泡盐菜
pidan	皮蛋
pin ruo	贫弱
Pujiang Wushi zhongkui lu	浦江吴氏中馈录
qiangguo baozhong	强国保种
Qimin yaoshu	齐民要术
Qing	清
Qu Huixiang	屈蕙纕
sancong	三从
sanjue	三绝
shangfeng	伤风
shanghan	伤寒
Shanjia qinggong	山家清供
she dajiang, yue chongyang	涉大江，越重洋
Shen Congwen	沈从文
shi	诗
Shi jing	诗经

shijian jiaoyu	实践教育
shijiao	诗教
Shimoda Utako	下田歌子
shoujiu zhe	守旧者
Shuofu	说郛
Sichuan	四川
Song	宋
su yuebing	酥月饼
Sui	隋
Sun Fuyuan	孙伏园
Taixi	泰西
Tang	唐
Tao Zongyi	陶宗仪
tianfu zhi zeren	天赋之责任
tianlao jiu	甜醪酒
tianzhi	天职
wai	外
Wang Xiaoyu	王小余
wanquan jiaoyu	完全教育
weisheng	卫生
weishengwu	微生物
weixin zhe	维新者
Wen qiong er hou gong	文穷而后工
wenbing	温病
Wenbing tiaobian	温病条辨
wenrou dunhou	温柔敦厚
Wu Jutong	吴鞠通
Wu Qingdi	吴庆坻
wu xue wu de	无学无德
Wu Yang	吴阳
wu you sui, zai zhongkui, zhenji	无攸遂, 在中馈, 贞吉
xiangchang	香肠
"Xu"	序
Yan Fu	严复
Yan Qianrun	严谦润
Yanghu	阳湖
Yi jing	易经
Yin Jishan	尹继善
yin-yang	阴阳
Yixue pian	医学篇
Yuan	元
Yuan Lizhun	袁励准

Yuan Mei	袁枚
Yuan Xuechang	袁学昌
Yuanling	沅陵
Yunnan	云南
Zeng Guofan	曾国藩
Zeng Xuchu	曾旭初
Zeng Yan (Jishuo)	曾彦（季硕）
Zeng Yi	曾懿
Zeng Yong	曾咏
Zhang Baixi	张百熙
Zhao Yi	赵翼
Zhao Yuanren	赵元任
Zhejiang	浙江
zhifang	脂肪
zhongli	中立
Zhou Zuoren	周作人
zhu zhongkui	主中馈
zhuan jing chun yi	专静纯一
"Zixu"	自序
"Zonglun"	总论
zuixie	醉蟹
Zunsheng bajian	遵生八笺
Zuo Xijia	左锡嘉
Zuo Xixuan	左锡璇

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