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*Global Concepts, Local Practices:
Chinese Feminism since the Fourth
UN Conference on Women*

WANG Zheng and Ying ZHANG

THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON WOMEN held in Beijing in 1995 marked a watershed in the history of Chinese feminism. But so far, little has been written, either in Chinese or in English, about significant changes in contemporary Chinese feminism.¹ In this article we examine how, since the early 1990s, Chinese feminists have enthusiastically embraced the global feminist concept of gender and used it innovatively to create local practices of “gender training.” Crucial to this process has been the dynamic relationship between the rise of feminist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in China and the transformation of Chinese state feminism as embodied in the Communist Party-led All-China Women’s Federation, a state-sponsored hierarchical organization with national headquarters in Beijing. Drawing on interviews of Chinese feminists produced by the Global Feminisms Project (GFP),² we illuminate feminist conceptual, organizational, and social transformations in China. These have unfolded in conjunction with transnational feminist movements during a period when China has become a global capitalist giant. Locating Chinese feminism at the intersection of local and global processes, we contribute to understanding the dynamics between locally grounded feminist strategies and the global circulation of feminist concepts and practices.

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Although a new cohort Chinese feminists had been in communication with feminists outside China since the 1980s, it was the 1995 UN conference that provided crucial “transnational opportunity structures” enabling Chinese feminists to generate dramatic changes.³ First, the conference provided an opportunity for Chinese feminists to legitimate NGOs in China. Second, it provided conceptual frameworks for Chinese feminist activists eager to break away from or transform a Marxist theory of “equality between men and women” that had dominated Chinese state socialism.

In the early 1990s, in the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations, the Chinese government curtailed spontaneously organized activism outside of government-sponsored organizations. Feminists used the opportunity of the UN conference and the accompanying NGO Forum to popularize the concept of the NGO in China for the first time. Chinese feminists published numerous articles in the mainstream media, especially in the Women’s Federation’s newspaper *Chinese Women’s Daily*, introducing women’s NGOs from around the world and carefully putting forth the argument that NGOs are not antigovernment organizations. Presented by Chinese feminists as a common practice in both the international arena and developed countries, the concept of the NGO served as a lever for Chinese feminists to pry open social spaces for Chinese citizens’ spontaneous activism. Taking advantage of the government’s eagerness to find ways for China to “re-enter” the world and to join capitalist globalization, Chinese feminists, including many of the GFP interviewees, successfully pitched the formation of Chinese women’s NGOs as one of the mechanisms to “connect [China’s] tracks with the world.”⁴

Since the mid-1980s, Chinese feminists had been eagerly looking for new analytical tools that would enable them to break away from the constraints of a Marxist understanding of “women’s problems.” During the socialist period, a Marxist theory of women’s liberation had provided the grounding for a “state feminism” that held a monopoly on defining “equality between men and women” (*nannü pingdeng*). The latter term is an early-twentieth-century translation of the English term “sexual equality” endorsed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since its founding in 1921. Socialist state feminists embraced its key tenets: sexual inequality between women and men is an expression of class inequality; private ownership is at

the root of women's oppression; "remnants of feudalism" explain sexual inequality where it persists under state socialism; state socialism ameliorates women's "low quality" (an ambiguous notion that could be interpreted in two ways: emphasizing women's lack of resources or disparaging women and blaming women for their own lowly social positions). Equality between men and women in state socialist feminist discourse, accordingly, was to be achieved mainly through women's equal participation in production under public ownership, a theoretical position often translated into policies with mixed impact on different groups of women.⁵ Feminists within the CCP made tremendous efforts to institutionalize "equality between men and women" in the Mao era. However, by the 1980s, it was apparent that thirty-five years of public ownership and women's participation in production had not resulted in the elimination of sexual inequality. As the state began to privatize the economy, discontent with the Marxist theory of women's liberation and a narrowly defined "equality between men and women" in socialist state feminism was on the rise among both Chinese academics and officials of the Women's Federation.

The UN's Fourth World Conference on Women enabled Chinese feminists to discover the transnational feminist concept of gender as well as other important concepts, such as "women-centered sustainable development," "women's empowerment," and "mainstreaming gender." Powerfully exposing gender blindness in a class-centered Marxist theory of women, the concept of gender was enthusiastically embraced by contemporary Chinese feminists in their efforts to review the socialist state practices of "equality between men and women" and to envision gender equality in new ways.

Taken together, the ten Chinese interviews in the GFP provide an excellent account of how the dynamics of transnational and local feminisms have played out in China since the 1990s. The interviewees, most of whom are academics in universities and social science academies, have all been leading figures in creating new areas of activism. Some began their feminist activism in the mid-1980s when intellectuals were attempting political transformations in the post-Mao era, and some rose to action in the period of China's preparation for the 1995 UN conference when international donors such as the Ford Foundation provided much-needed

funding for Chinese women's spontaneous activism as well as for interactions with feminists abroad. All of the interviewees are urban-based professional women, including academics and Women's Federation officials, who have had access to social and material resources to engage in sustained organized activism. Activities pursued by these ten activists since 1995 have included organizing against domestic violence, promoting legal aid for women, building leadership capacities among rural women, empowering women from ethnic minorities in rural development, addressing sex-ratio imbalances, providing vocational training schools for rural women and urban women without jobs, establishing women's and gender studies programs in colleges and even the Central Party School, and organizing cultural productions such as staging a Chinese version of *The Vagina Monologues*. (This range is similar to that in other developing countries such as India.) Each of these accomplished feminist activists had either been heavily involved in the preparation for the 1995 conference, participated in the conference and other international feminist conferences, or worked with feminists abroad on some projects; and all of them highlight such interactions with feminists abroad as transformative.

Having joined global capitalism for the last two decades, postsocialist China maintains many institutions from the socialist period, but these are experiencing profound transformations in the post-Mao era. The Women's Federation has organizations at each governmental administrative level, and its grassroots units, called women's congresses, have spread out in rural villages and urban neighborhoods all over China. The top officials of the Federation at each administrative level are still appointed by the CCP. Except for those working in the grassroots women's congresses, all the staff and officials of this huge mass organization are still on the government payroll. Because it was designed as an advocacy group for women, it has never had the administrative power possessed by many government branches. In this sense, when the Women's Federation defined itself as an NGO in the context of hosting the NGO Forum in 1995, it was not making a groundless claim. In fact, this CCP-led women's organization, the embodiment of Chinese state feminism, is transforming its conceptual frameworks so as to "connect the tracks" with women's movements in the world. Mainstreaming gender is high on its agenda now, although none of



Student performance of *The Vagina Monologues* at Zhongshan University, Guangzhou, in 2004. Photo credit: Haitao Huang

its official documents explicitly refer to this UN mandate as a “feminist” one. Considering the CCP’s history of accusing “feminism” as being “Western, narrow, and bourgeois,” in official terminology, state feminists strategically and skillfully deploy “gender equality” or “gender theory” rather than “feminism.”

This transformation has been made possible not only by the historical opportunity of China’s hosting of the UN conference but also by generational change. A young cohort of state feminists, who never experienced the CCP’s internal suppression of feminists and have no vested interest in upholding a version of women’s liberation shaped by the Communist Revolution and socialist state building, now constitute the main force of this organization. Of the ten interviewees of the China site, four are affiliated with the Women’s Federation system. Gao Xiaoxian is an official in the Shaanxi Provincial Women’s Federation; Liu Bohong is deputy director of the Research Institute of the All-China Women’s Federation; Zhang Lixi is president of the Federation’s Women’s University. These three belong to the same cohort that grew up in the Mao era, while Wang Cuiyu is a retired official of the Shanghai Women’s Federation and one generation older. Positioned in important posts in the Women’s Federation, these women have all initiated feminist programs in and outside the system. They had no problem agreeing to be interviewed for the GFP project, whose title is unambiguously a feminist one. It is these and many more feminist officials who have brought significant changes to the CCP-led women’s federations, often in interaction with NGOs. A unique feature of what we call post-Mao Chinese state feminism is that Women’s Federation officials have initiated and led feminist activities and the organizational development of NGOs outside the official system.

In this article, we will delineate locally grounded contestations over transnational feminist ideas by closely examining (1) the “terminological” contention over “gender equality” and “equality between men and women”; (2) explore the meanings of “gender training,” a Chinese feminist innovation, in the context of China’s social and political transformation; and (3) investigate the institutional relationship between feminist NGOs and Chinese state feminism, especially the Women’s Federation, in the context of their interaction with transnational feminist ideas and practices.

“GENDER” vs. “EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN”:

MORE THAN A CONCEPTUAL ISSUE

The prominent theme in the Chinese interviews is how encountering gender theory transformed feminist activists as well as their activism. The narratives suggest that Chinese feminism experienced a major shift in the decade following the 1995 UN Conference. The official gender discourse of “equality between men and women” promoted by state feminists has been challenged and transformed by a new concept of “gender equality” (*shehui xingbie pingdeng*). This subtle distinction in terminology, which may be easily overlooked by non-Chinese speakers, signifies a crucial discursive negotiation between Chinese state feminism institutionalized in the Mao era and the post-Mao feminism stimulated by contemporary transnational feminisms.

The effects of “equality between men and women” remain powerful in the postsocialist period. As one interviewee, Zhang emphasizes: “You can never deny the work the Chinese government and the Communist Party has carried out in promoting equality between men and women. I think at the very least, no man dares to say, ‘I am a male chauvinist. I am just this way.’ Why? Because everyone thinks that ‘male chauvinism’ is a derogatory term and is not a good thing.”⁶

Because of the long history of socialist discourse on equality and because of the fact that the CCP is still in power in the age of global capitalism, the slogan of “equality between men and women” remains useful and powerful. However, the implications can be problematic, because China’s socialist past represents not only state feminists’ success in defending women’s equal rights but also the socialist patriarchy’s success in defining women’s liberation as doing whatever men can do in the service of the state.

The post-Mao feminists have tried to critically expose the confining statist agenda embedded in the slogan of “equality between men and women.” Li Huiying of the Central Party School, which trains CCP officials from the provincial to the national level, offers a reflection on the problem of the socialist state’s promotion of “equality between men and women”:

In the period of planned economy, actually we also frequently raised the concept of equality between men and women and promoted the idea that

men and women had the same rights. However, at that time we did not really understand the connotations of having rights. Moreover, we would often determine the value of this concept instrumentally. In reality, it was that we would do what the Party told us to do. I think it was a very sad situation in women's pursuit of rights since China's liberation, because women's pursuit of rights has been turned into a means to the end. But now in the concept of gender, the highlighted "rights" is about human autonomy and agency. People should know what rights they have and then should struggle for those rights.⁷

The attraction of "gender," in Li's emphasis, lies in an empowering notion that women should and can control their own destiny without subjecting themselves to the demands of a patriarchal state. The concept of "rights" invoked here is not that of equal rights between women and men that had been written into the Chinese constitution half a century ago. Rather, "rights" is deployed to demand citizens' rights against an authoritarian state. For this cohort of urban-educated women, "liberation" had been made for them by the socialist state. In the 1990s, gender theory that emphasized women's agency and explicated gendered-power relations and structures illuminated the limitations and constraints of that liberation. It brought about a sort of consciousness raising for these urban feminists who began to see the potential of exercising citizen's rights to demand gender equality beyond statist definitions.

Liu Bohong also elaborates on the difference between the two concepts, noting:

I think the concept of gender equality in other countries and China's concept of men's and women's equality are built on different foundations. The international concept of gender equality is established within the framework of basic human rights. For instance, obtaining dignified work is each and every person's natural rights. The government should provide opportunities and services for each person. Also reproductive rights are part of the basic human rights framework. This includes the basic human right to give birth to a girl. The law should not be used to naturalize the view that giving birth to a girl is not valuable. But our concept of men and women's equal rights is still built upon the idea that the government makes decisions for the people. When they decide to give you a right, you

then have that right. For instance, male and female officials have different mandatory retirement ages. Gender mainstreaming encourages us to set up a progressive, comprehensive view of human rights.⁸

In these feminists' analyses, "equality between men and women," a gender discourse of the socialist state, connotes the control of women by an authoritarian socialist patriarchy. Liu brings this vision to her work as coordinator and leading participant of many feminist projects both within and outside the Women's Federation system. The post-Mao feminists, empowered by gender theory, intend to reject state control and manipulation of women's rights. Their aim is not simply to replace an obsolete concept with a new concept that has more analytical power. Rather, they mean to put into play a feminist challenge to the continuing power of the party-state and a feminist demand for a new notion of citizenship that acknowledges women's agency and autonomy. In other words, the concept of gender has opened up intellectual and political possibilities for the exploration of the full meaning of a familiar phrase, "women's equal rights." In Li's words, feminists like her often encountered gender theory, then dug out the issue of rights and autonomous subjectivity from it. In this sense, the transnational feminist concept of gender is crucial in assisting Chinese feminists to establish a new subject position of an autonomous citizen in a moment when they are breaking away from and transforming the dominance of the socialist authoritarian state. "Gender equality" is thus a rallying cry of the post-Mao feminists to play a larger role in defining and addressing gender inequality in the era of a globalized market economy.

However, these two key terms, "gender equality" and "equality between men and women," although suggesting different theoretical and political grounds, mark neither fixed meanings nor institutional divides. The political conditions in China demand a strategy that does not polarize the two terms. Post-Mao feminists who embrace "gender equality" are in and outside the official system. They have made tremendous efforts to popularize the concept of "gender equality" in multiple, innovative ways. Sometimes it is necessary to camouflage the new concept with the old one. At a time when the state has shed most of its socialist egalitarian policies, the Women's Federation has been the major force in upholding and

consolidating the power of “equality between men and women” while opening up this statist discourse to transformation. Mainly because of these discursive maneuvers, “equality between men and women” is now formally recognized as a “fundamental state policy,” supposedly a high priority of the state.⁹ It constitutes one of the few socialist egalitarian policies remaining in postsocialist China, at least at the discursive level.

Illustrating the importance of strategizing in promoting “feminism” (a term still shunned by both state officials and the public), Li describes a talk that she was invited to give at a meeting of provincial officials on the designated title “How to Implement the Fundamental State Policy of Equality between Men and Women.” Without changing the title, she introduced the notion of structural problems of gender inequality and the concept of rights, as she understood it in gender theory. In her GFP interview she emphasizes that

the strategy is to avoid causing rejection of a new culture. We should try to give new meanings to the existing mainstream language that has been accepted by the state. We should place gender into the content of our talk. I believe that in this aspect we need to develop more of these kinds of tactics. I do not think this is a compromise on our part, because if we don't use this strategy, our ideas wouldn't be accepted. It will be a gradual process.¹⁰

The strategic utilization of the discursive power of “equality between men and women” often accompanies an enthusiastic effort to infiltrate the official system with a feminist concept of gender or, rather, to “mainstream gender.” With careful maneuvers, Li succeeded in creating a required course on “Gender and Public Policy” for several graduate programs at the Central Party School. Using this major feminist breakthrough as a model, feminists in provincial and municipal CCP schools in various locations have followed suit and set up courses on gender equality, sometimes with the title “Equality between Men and Women.” Li, with her crucial position at the top of the hierarchical system of the CCP schools, is playing a leading role in organizing gender trainings for professors of local CCP schools.

Li's activism does not stop at incorporating gender analysis into the curriculum of another CCP school. In the GFP interview, she observed that the issues faced by rural women are often related to the traditional patrio-

cal marriage system. Since the time of her interview, she has initiated a range of activities around the heated issue of the sex-ratio population imbalance with the goal of influencing state policies. These have included a large-scale research project investigating selected rural villages with various sex ratios. In 2007, Li organized a conference and presented findings to an audience that included top government officials in charge of population policy. The sex-ratio imbalance has caught the attention of both the state and the public because “millions of men will have no wives.” In China the global discourse on girls’ birthright circulates only among feminists. Li and her feminist colleagues not only introduced to the government officials feminist analyses of the patrilocal marriage system, as well as of patrilineal and patriarchal family systems, pointing out the connection between the sex-ratio imbalance and structural gender inequality; but they also openly critiqued state socialist “women’s liberation” for its neglect of the patrilocal marriage system. Li also introduced South Korean feminist interventions in addressing the skewed sex ratio in South Korea to show the failure of Chinese public policies. The conference successfully exposed the weakness of a gender-blind Marxist theory on women and showed the analytical power of feminist gender theory. At this conference, Li’s tactics earned the explicit pledge of some top officials to pay closer attention to “gender equality” at the structural level, including transformation of the patrilocal marriage system. In Li’s case, the use of “gender equality” denotes conscious engagement with the difference between a gender analysis and the socialist slogan of “equality between men and women.”¹¹ Shaped by the Chinese political context, the ongoing contest between “gender equality” and “equality between men and women” does not manifest in an open repudiation of the latter by the former. Rather, frequently interchangeable use of the two feminist discourses, each with different origins, reveals a productive process in which Chinese feminists in and outside the official system have attempted simultaneously to retain the former socialist state’s commitment to social justice while transforming the state feminist definition of women’s liberation.

MEANINGS OF A LOCALIZED “GENDER TRAINING”

Since the 1990s, many international and local feminist organizations have utilized “gender training” to educate governmental and institutional leaders and officials about gender issues. The United Nations, for example, promotes “gender training” in conjunction with gender mainstreaming—the effort to assess the impact of all policies on women and men.¹² Chinese feminists have enthusiastically turned gender training into an innovative form of activism in their engagement with the existing political system and social institutions. Most of the Chinese interviewees are important initiators or practitioners of gender training activities in multiple settings.

While working for the Ford Foundation’s Beijing Office in 1992, Ge Youli had founded the feminist East Meets West Group, focused on translating articles on global feminist movements for Chinese women’s magazines. Consisting of professional women in Beijing, the group served as a gender training program that enabled intellectual growth and empowerment of many women activists who in subsequent years became leading figures in various feminist organizations.¹³ They included Liu and Zhang, two of the Women’s Federation officials interviewed in the GFP. In 1997, then working for the UN Development Program, Ge organized the compilation of the first gender training manual in Chinese in order to popularize the practice in China. The booklet has been widely used since then in gender training programs, which have become one of the most significant mechanisms for mainstreaming gender in China.¹⁴

The GFP interviews illustrate the breadth and depth of gender training, a hallmark of Chinese feminism in the decade following the UN conference. Liu regards it as her legitimate responsibility to educate government officials about a feminist conceptualization of “gender and development.” She has been in charge of many policy-oriented research projects and gender training sessions for government officials. The UN slogan “mainstreaming gender” appears frequently in her interview, and her critique of current official policies offers a glimpse of the contents of her gender training sessions:

Our government and the Women’s Federation have tried to solve the pressing, real problems faced by women. But they do not pay enough attention to changing gendered structures and systems. . . . The Women’s Federa-

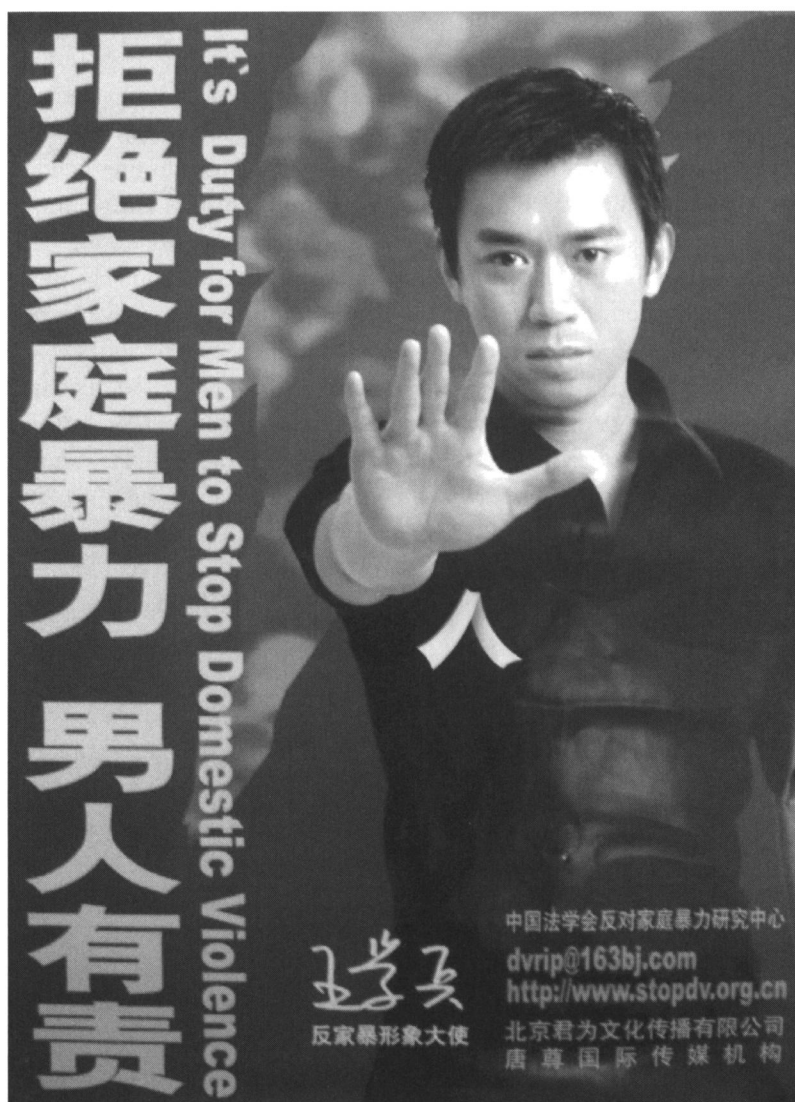
tion's goals stop at meeting the government's goal of reducing the rate of unemployment and helping these women find work. However, no one has considered the deeper issues of social security, career development, women's decreasing position in the employment structure, and the traditional view that men should tend to matters outside the home, while women should be concerned with matters inside the home. This kind of mentality still finds its way into programs for women's development. . . . It regards women as the object of development and the development of women as a means of the government to realize its goals of social development.¹⁵

In the years since the UN conference, the UN mandate of gender mainstreaming has provided legitimacy for feminists within the official system, such as Liu, to actively promote gender training among government officials and to influence the policymaking process of the central government. Another example Liu gives is an International Labor Organization (ILO) project on mainstreaming gender in China. She played a central role in providing gender training to the project participants, including officials from the government, the trade union, the employers' association, and the Women's Federation. Led by Liu, the ILO project also produced a guide to gender training at different administrative levels in China. This booklet popularizes the Chinese state's commitment to gender mainstreaming as well as gender analyses of structural problems in employment.¹⁶ Liu jests that she has had to leave her own land uncultivated while plowing the fields for others: The demand for gender training is so high that this gender expert has to travel all over the country giving lectures on gender analysis to officials while leaving her own research projects on the back burner.

Chen Mingxia, a senior legal scholar interviewed for the GFP, believes that "gender training" enabled her to realize the limits of the old framework of "protecting women's rights" and to replace it with a new approach that questions the gendered nature of laws, legal practices, and legislation. After participating in an anti-domestic violence symposium in India, Chen worked with Ge to initiate an anti-domestic violence project in China in 1998. Attending the first required gender training program that was integrated into the project design, Chen started to acquire a "real feminist perspective." In other words, a focus on gender has enabled scholar-activists such as Chen to examine deeper structural inequalities,

an approach that was not available to state feminists in the Mao era. The original anti-domestic violence project eventually evolved into China's largest women's NGO, the Stop DV Networks, a process in which Chen has played an important role. This NGO has effectively engaged in battles against domestic violence on multiple fronts, including running nationwide gender training workshops in government agencies. In addition, in 2002, Chen founded the Center for Research on Gender and Law at the China Academy of Social Sciences. This new center is located in the most important institution for legal studies in China. She has been able to use this space to run many gender training workshops for legal scholars and activists involved in legislative processes related to women's concerns and rights, such as the Marriage Law of 2001. She defines the first feminist legal workshop that gathered legal scholars nationwide, organized by her in 2004, as "a preliminary literacy class of feminist legal studies." Chen's gender training projects have targeted various groups and have included discussions with both "perpetrators" and "victims" of domestic violence cases, dialogues with community leaders who want to develop better methods to deal with domestic violence cases, and debates with scholars from universities and research institutions on feminist legal theory. Through years of practice, Chen and her colleagues have developed a variety of gender training methods to suit the needs of different communities.

Wang Xingjuan describes gender training related to domestic violence at the urban neighborhood level. Now a prominent activist in her seventies, Wang created China's first women's hotline in the late 1980s that evolved into the Maple Women's Counseling Center, a renowned NGO in Beijing. Wang and her colleagues have participated in a program titled "Community Intervention in Family Problems." The program provides gender training for cadres of neighborhood committees, local police, judges of local courts, and doctors of local clinics—in short, for all the parties in the local communities that play a role in preventing or intervening in domestic violence and bringing justice to women who have few social or material resources to protect their legal rights. As a result, local power holders have formed special committees in neighborhoods to empower victims of domestic violence.



A poster designed for the Stop Domestic Violence Campaign in 2005. Posters were displayed on billboards in many cities throughout China. Credit: Stop Domestic Violence Campaign

The fight against domestic violence is perhaps the major success of Chinese feminists' gender training efforts in the post-UN conference decade. The local community-based work to prevent domestic violence described by Wang is a widespread practice in urban China today, thanks to the collaborative efforts of feminists within and outside the official system. Feminists from NGOs and women's federations at different administrative levels have worked together to raise awareness among the public as well as among legislators about domestic violence from a gender perspective, challenging the widely adopted notion of domestic violence as a "common" domestic matter. Consequently, the new Marriage Law of 2004 stipulates that "domestic violence is forbidden." Also, by the end of 2004, twenty-two provincial and municipal governments had passed local statutes against domestic violence. Enforcement of the law against domestic violence is now high on the agenda of the Stop DV Network and the Women's Federation, and gender training is a crucial component.

If domestic violence is an issue that has generated the largest number of gender training activities in urban settings, gender and development projects are the places where gender training activities occur most often in rural China. Feminist NGOs in China have been mainly relying on international donors' financial support, and the ability to obtain funding from international donors is crucial to the development of an organization. Many feminists who had initiated research on women in the mid-1980s switched their activist focus to gender and development projects in the 1990s when international donors began to pay increasing attention to development projects in China. The interview of Gao, founder of the Shaanxi Association for Research on Women, Marriage, and Family, epitomizes this trajectory. In the post-UN conference years, Gao and her colleagues have run hundreds of gender training workshops for officials, researchers, and NGO activists who work at different administrative levels and in many provinces on rural development, poverty, children, education, health, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, environment, women's political participation, and women's leadership. Gao and her organization now have well-developed methods and plans for a wide range of gender training programs for diverse communities. In fact, Gao has become in high demand, traveling all over China to run gender training workshops with

the goal of raising gender consciousness and providing gender analyses to various social groups that actively engage in transforming public policies and social practices.

Gender training has become a popular Chinese feminist practice because it serves feminist goals of social and political transformations by creating a process that suits the local culture. It is a practice that introduces feminist concepts to both the public and government officials in a persuasive manner. “Training” (*peixun*) is perhaps the most prevalent form of adult education in today’s China where people of all trades are eager to replenish or update their knowledge and skills for a new market economy that rewards “new” expertise. Those who can offer training achieve the high status of “experts,” the holders of new knowledge. Furthermore, “gender training” (*shehui xingbie peixun*), known as an important part of the UN mandate of gender mainstreaming, is also understood as a “new phenomenon” associated with “modernization,” because it originated in the global arena. In an era when capitalist globalization is represented in the dominant discourse as the proper mode of modernization, Chinese feminists appropriate the modernization fervor by translating global feminist concepts into local practices of global integration. Thus, the UN mandate has been made especially appealing to government officials who have been looking for ways to “modernize” an “old” bureaucracy. Moreover, the implementation of the UN mandate means that improving women’s status and guaranteeing gender equity in social and economic development is now measured by hard statistics and compared with that of foreign countries. “Mainstreaming gender” is deftly turned into a sort of Olympic Games of women’s status by Chinese feminists to make it an imperative. In their negotiations with officials of different levels, feminists try to frame gender mainstreaming as a crucial way for China to elevate itself in the eyes of the global community because a country’s level of “civilization” is measured by the status of women in the international arena.¹⁷ In this sense, “gender training” is also an everyday practice of feminist enunciations of modernity. Engagement with gender in China is therefore more than adopting an analytical category for academics. It is a focal point of feminist engagement with both the state and local societies.

SHAPING A NEW MODE OF CHINESE FEMINISM

As the GFP interviews demonstrate, gender training was initiated by feminists who were organizing on their own and identifying issues for feminist action without a mandate from the state. The fact that post-Mao feminists are able to create social spaces for women's organized activism is a significant indicator of the profound political transformation in China in the past two decades. That gender training as a feminist innovation has become a legitimate practice even within the official system is part of a complicated historical process, in which the rise of feminist NGOs has been intermingled with the transformation of state feminism.

A close look at Gao's reflection on her initial involvement in feminist work illuminates this interesting phenomenon. Founder of one of the largest women's NGOs in China today, the Shaanxi Association for Research on Women, Marriage, and Family, Gao was one of the first college graduates after the Cultural Revolution. A history major who wrote her thesis on Kant, she was more interested in China's political reform than in women's issues when she was assigned to the Shaanxi Provincial Women's Federation in 1982. Although the job was not her choice, it provided opportunities for her to investigate many of the problems women confronted in rural economic reform, the centerpiece of the "reform and opening-up" policy that had been initiated in the late 1970s. Cases of women's resistance to forced marriage, traffic in women, and women's suicide quickly changed her attitude toward her job: "I had not been aware of apparent sexual discrimination. But having observed these cases after I got to the Women's Federation, I truly realized that China was still a country with serious inequality between men and women. Only then did I think that promoting equality between men and women was my responsibility."¹⁸

In the 1980s she expressed her concern about gender inequality by conducting policy-oriented research projects on women's issues. In 1986, in the context of the Women's Federation's promotion of associations for research on women, Gao founded Shaanxi Research Association for Women and Marriage, which became an independently operating organization in 1987 when the Shaanxi Provincial Women's Federation stopped subsidizing various affiliated women's associations. Having survived financial constraints and political pressures after 1989, Gao found a changing

Women in
Chaoyang
village (a site
of the
Shaanxi
Research
Association's
program in
Ningshan)
celebrate
International
Women's
Day, March
8, 2006.
Photo credit:
Gao Xiaoxian



political environment for women's spontaneous activism in the period of preparing for the UN Conference on Women. In the summer of 1993, she attended the first feminist workshop run jointly by feminist scholars in China and members of the Chinese Society for Women's Studies, a Chinese feminist organization based in the United States. There she encountered the concept of gender for the first time, networked with overseas Chinese feminists, and also learned that the Ford Foundation was the sponsor of feminist projects like this workshop. Gao at the time was involved in drafting provincial legislation on protecting women's rights. With suggestions and help from Sharon Hom, a feminist legal scholar and a member of the CSWS, Gao decided to run a national feminist legal training workshop for those working on provincial women's rights legislation. She received a grant from the Ford Foundation for the workshop; however, the All-China Women's Federation did not approve of this workshop even though she had received approval from the Shaanxi Provincial Women's Federation. After discussing the issue with the provincial Women's Federation leaders, Gao decided to organize a regional workshop instead of a national one. To remove any potential liability from the provincial Women's Federation, she ran the workshop in the name of the Shaanxi Association for Research on Women, Marriage, and Family. It became the event that launched Gao's career as a conscious leader of women's NGOs: "This activity suddenly made me realize that the Shaanxi Association for Research on Women, Marriage, and Family had a much bigger space to act in than did the Women's Federation."¹⁹

In subsequent years, after additional encounters with international women's NGOs during a trip to Australia in 1994, Gao has actively sought funding from international donors and initiated many intervention programs, ranging from establishing a women's hotline and women's legal aid services, to starting a rural women's education fund with a collective art project, the Red Phoenix (an embroidered tapestry made by over 1,000 rural women), to gender and development projects involving rural women's health and rural women's political participation and leadership capacities. These locally grounded practices aim at creating mechanisms to enable women's full citizenship. In the process of engaging in multifaceted activities, Shaanxi Association for Research on Women, Marriage, and

Family has become an influential NGO in the western region of China and in the area of gender and development. By 2009 it operated with a ten million yuan (\$1.3 million) annual budget with more than twenty staff members.

When individual Women's Federation officials are interested in the issues that the Federation has not yet put on its agenda, they are given the option to start something on their own in their "spare time." The implications of this institutional boundary crossing are significant. As feminist officials have developed multiple locations of feminist action, they have also made the Federation porous for current transnational feminist ideas and issues. Their practices of striding between the official and autonomous women's organizations have made collaborations between the two types of organizations a "natural" thing. The rapid development of feminist NGOs in the 1990s did not create a rigid demarcation between NGOs vs. governmental "NGOs" (such as the Women's Federation and government institutions) in China but instead led to multiple levels of collaborations on many fronts among them, such as jointly running gender training programs within government bureaucracies. Leading feminist activists within and outside the official women's organization predominantly belong to one social group—urban professional women, who in most cases have jobs in state-run institutions. They have long formed an informal feminist network through participating in feminist activities and conferences organized by either NGOs or the Women's Federation.

For the burgeoning women's NGOs, the existing Women's Federation, with its 90,000 paid officials and staff nationwide, has become a substantial institutional resource that they can utilize as long as the necessary connections are available. Chen, the coordinator of the Stop DV Network, offers the following insightful discussion of the relationship between the Stop DV Network and the Federation:

At present people abroad have many (critical) views towards the Women's Federation, thinking that the Women's Federation is both a governmental institution and non-governmental organization. But I think regardless of whether it is governmental or non-governmental, the Women's Federation, from the top to the bottom, is a national network at six administrative levels. Such a network of six levels could greatly help our anti-domestic

violence project. . . . [T]he Director of the Department of Women's Rights and Interest in the All-China Women's Federation is a special consultant in our network, and local Women's Federations at various levels are members of our network. We have made it very clear to the All-China Women's Federation that we are not out to compete with the Women's Federation for work; . . . but we still must maintain our principle of independence. . . . Within our conceptual framework, based on the principle of feminism, or gender mainstreaming, we can collaborate in many aspects. Therefore, we have really good relations with local Women's Federations.²⁰

Although Chen is inspired by the concept of the NGO and has effectively built China's largest women's NGO, she nonetheless critiques the notion that there exists, or should exist, a rigid divide between NGOs and government organizations, a notion that came to China, together with the concept of the NGO, via transnational feminist encounters. In her view, intellectual efforts to mark a conceptual line between NGOs and the Women's Federation do not make much political sense in the context of the current Chinese political system. In fact, the development of women's NGOs, such as the Stop DV Network, has made such a conceptual distinction difficult. This largest women's NGO accepts local Women's Federations as members. The institutional overlap of these two types of organizations poses thorny challenges to conceptualizing efforts that maintain a distinctive line between state and society in Western theories. As Chen makes clear, Chinese feminists are not obligated to follow any ready-made conceptual script from abroad but can deftly explore the most effective ways to generate social and political transformations in the local context.

The past decade witnessed not the growth of an "autonomous" feminist movement detached from the official system but, rather, an intertwined process in which rising women's NGOs and the Women's Federation interacted and collaborated on feminist agendas. Working with the Women's Federation has tremendously augmented the influence of women's NGOs such as the Stop DV Network in their attempts to engage with the state. Or more precisely, the Women's Federation has become an important channel for feminist infiltration at different levels of government administration because of its ambiguous identity as both an "official"

and “mass” organization, or in the official terminology, because it serves as a “bridge” between the CCP and the masses of women. For feminist NGO leaders, the collaboration with the Women’s Federation is a conscious decision that has led to a distinctive mode of Chinese feminism. Chen articulates this understanding, noting that we “have become a collective organization that adopts a bottom-up method to combat domestic violence. I think that this has enriched the content of the feminist movement. As for global feminism, China has provided a unique experience. This is an approach that has combined the bottom-up with top-down methods.”²¹

Here, the “bottom-up” refers to women’s NGOs that initiate their own actions and make their activist decisions independent of the state. The “top-down” refers to the state feminism embodied by the Women’s Federation that has the official power to place women’s issues on the agenda of different levels of administration. The combination of the two on such an extensive and intensive level is a unique mode of feminism that we do not see in other GFP sites.²² When Chen emphasizes in the interview that “we really have good relations with local Women’s Federations,” she is making a distinction between the headquarters of the Women’s Federation, the All-China Women’s Federation, and the local Women’s Federations that have a better understanding of local women’s issues because of their local community-based structures.

The collaboration between feminist NGOs and the Women’s Federation system should not be attributed entirely to the formers’ initiatives. In the post-Mao era, the Women’s Federation has increasingly approached urban professional women, and these efforts created important conditions for later collaborations between the Women’s Federation and NGOs. Wang Cuiyu’s narrative reveals some of the historical background of this collaboration. An official of the Shanghai Women’s Federation, Wang was assigned to open a new line of research among urban professional women in 1978. Among these elite women, she discovered the “glass ceiling” that hindered their development. She recalls in her GFP interview that “women comrades did most of the work on a daily basis. However, when it came time for awards and promotion, if a man and a woman were presented together, inevitably it would be the man who would move ahead.”²³ To

redress the problem, she created opportunities for professional women's career advancement, such as inaugurating a program that would annually select professional women for honorary titles, the "March 8 Red Flag Bearers." Previously the Women's Federation had made such awards only to women peasants and workers, but Wang extended the practice to professional women as part of the Women's Federation's efforts to attract them to the Federation after the Cultural Revolution.

The Women's Federation system's expansion from focusing on women in rural villages and urban neighborhoods to absorbing urban professional women was the precondition for the later collaboration between the two. In the Mao era, because of the Women's Federation's rigid class line (it was supposed to represent the interests of women of "proletarian" or "laboring" classes), urban professional women were largely unaware of the existence of the Women's Federation. In fact, taking housewives as its major constituency in the urban area and operating mostly in neighborhoods during the Mao era, the Women's Federation could not elevate its stature in the eyes of urban professional women, who perceived themselves as liberated women by the very fact that they held prestigious social positions previously occupied only by men. For example, Gao, Liu, and Zhang had no interest in the Women's Federation in their early years. Wang's earlier view of the Women's Federation expresses a shared sentiment of urban professional women in the Mao era: "I did not have any kind of gender consciousness. In the past I also looked down upon the Women's Federation. I thought that they were just associated with those old women with bound feet who made a fuss over nothing important. Yeah, I really looked down upon them."²⁴

Wang began her collaboration with the Women's Federation when it decided to institutionalize research projects on women in the early 1980s and invited urban professional women scholars to participate, a strategic move to elevate the Women's Federation when intellectuals were regaining elite status in the post-Mao state drive for scientific modernity. In fact, the Women's Federation's resources enabled many women scholars to become involved in research on women in the 1980s before the availability of international funding. In the 1990s, when urban professional women began their organized activism, they soon recognized the institutional

power of the official organization as well as the effectiveness of many women officials at the local level of the Women's Federation system who often had a better understanding of local women's issues.

Without the existence of local Women's Federations that could reach rural villages and urban neighborhoods, urban professional women's NGOs were not likely to successfully conduct intervention projects at the grassroots level or to adopt a bottom-up method. In other words, community-based activism has long been the realm of the Women's Federation, and the channels to grassroots organizing have long been established and institutionalized by feminists within the CCP. This is a unique feature of Chinese feminism in contrast to India and the United States, where activists from lower-class backgrounds have taken the leading role in community-based activism. The fact that in China we have found few lower-class women activists emerging in community-based activism may have much to do with the existence of community-based women's congresses established nationwide in the early 1950s by socialist state feminists.²⁵ Lower-class women with few resources would more likely look for help from a local Women's Federation than organize on their own to address practical issues of gender inequality.

Thus, the interviews from the China site have shown that Chinese state feminism is not simply constituted by feminist bureaucrats close to state power or involved in the policymaking process. The official women's organization is structured in such a way that the units at its lowest level are constituted by women in local communities. The original design of Chinese state feminism in the Mao era was to pursue a combination of bottom-up and top-down methods, and many lower-class women did rise to leadership roles in those years. However, their activism was often directed by the CCP to fulfill the needs of the socialist state. Thus, a central goal for some post-Mao Chinese feminists seems to be to achieve a genuine combination of the bottom-up and top-down methods that will truly empower women at the grassroots level to the extent that they can take the initiative on issues concerning them.

The Women's Federation has been exposed to challenges and competition, as well as inspiration from feminist NGOs at home and abroad. The transformation of the Women's Federation from a monopolizing repre-

sentative of women's interests in the Mao era to one of the women's organizations that at times claims NGO status is a process that the Women's Federation has undertaken in the context of "connecting with the track of international women's movements."²⁶ It has not been an easy one. As Liu sharply points out, "Under the new historical conditions, how should the Women's Federation represent women's interests? How do we maintain independence and autonomy in our work? How do we position ourselves?"²⁷ Such critical views of the official organization by the post-Mao cohort of Women's Federation officials suggest a significant process of redefining the nature of the official women's organization, a process that is fostered by the interactive dynamics of local and global feminisms.

This article has focused on the contested terms of "gender equality" and "equality between men and women," a unique form of activism—"gender training"—and the relationship between the rise of women's NGOs and the transformation of Chinese state feminism. "Gender," once introduced to China as a global feminist concept, has taken on a life of its own. Chinese feminists use it to critique a socialist state feminist discourse of "equality between men and women" from the Mao era. Equipped with the UN mandate of gender mainstreaming, they have created "gender training," enabling feminist NGOs' engagement with the state and society and generating not only conceptual but also institutional transformations, as the case of anti-domestic violence activism illustrates. Activism on this transnational feminist issue has led to the creation of national and provincial legislation against domestic violence as well as the rapid growth of the largest Chinese feminist NGO, the Stop DV Network. Furthermore, activism in feminist NGOs organized around the "gender" terminology at times not only utilizes the legacy of socialist state feminism—the institutional structure and official power of Women's Federations—but also aims to transform state feminism conceptually. The interactive and interconnecting dynamics between the rise of feminist NGOs and the transformation of the Women's Federation system in the context of increasing interactions with transnational feminist movements and organizations is the main motif of the evolving and exciting drama of contemporary Chinese feminism. These dynamics demonstrate blurred boundaries be-

tween NGOs and official organizations in China, questioning the usefulness of the conceptual distinction between the state and society in studying Chinese feminism. The lack of clear boundaries between NGOs and the Women's Federation, a governmental NGO, in the narratives of feminist activists often works to the advantage of feminists in their efforts to engage with the state in promoting gender-sensitive public policies. However, an awareness of the possible negative effects of blurred boundaries on spontaneous feminist organizations, such as co-optation by the state or bureaucratization of NGOs, has yet to emerge in Chinese feminist discourse.²⁸

Our analyses are mainly based on the ten narratives of Chinese feminists interviewed by the GFP. However, as anyone who has worked with oral material knows, what is unsaid can be more telling than what is said. When we contrast Chinese interviewees' narratives with issues and terminologies expressed in interviews produced by other sites, what is missing in the China site material becomes glaring. China has been engulfed in global capitalism in the past two decades. Class inequality or polarization is certainly a grave issue in contemporary China. However, the term "class" is absent in China site narratives, either as a conceptual category or as an issue for activism. This striking absence in fact reflects the complicated political history of China's transformation from a Marxist socialist country to a postsocialist market economy, a political history that also delineates the political parameters for Chinese feminist activism. Although women's NGOs and the Women's Federations have created some programs to help laid-off women workers and migrant workers, such as providing job training or legal aid to women in this predicament, these programs are framed in the state-sanctioned language of "protecting women's rights." Organizing around class against the exploitation of global capitalism is taboo in postsocialist China, and Chinese feminists are fully aware of this political reality.

The absence of class in the China interviews is by no means accidental. It is intricately related to the ascendance and centrality of "gender" in contemporary Chinese feminism. In the 1980s, concerted efforts of mainstream intellectuals and the CCP discredited "class" for having served as the theoretical foundation for political persecutions in the Mao era. Since then, a Maoist-inflected sense of "class" has been further erased as a useful

category for analyzing power relations in a state-promoted market economy that endorses social Darwinism. Accompanying the conceptual erasure of class is the state's ban on workers' spontaneous organization. As neoliberalism has risen to replace socialism as the dominant political discourse of postsocialist China, no legitimate language exists to express concerns for social justice and equality without suggesting a "backward" identification with a Maoist past. When freedom of association is granted only to selective social groups by the state, embracing "gender" functions both as a feminist effort to maintain and promote the value of social justice in the capitalist economy and a feminist evasion of more sensitive issues such as class inequality. The interviewees have talked at length about poverty and unemployment issues that are affecting millions of women as well as their activism in these areas. But, overall, the absence of class as an analytical category in the China interviews demonstrates that Chinese feminists inside and outside the official system operate at this historical moment largely within the political parameters set by the state. How far Chinese feminists will go to extend the analytical power of gender theory to other systems of oppression may be a crucial issue in the future development of Chinese feminism.

This set of ten GFP interviews from China provides us with invaluable testimonies to a profound historical transformation in which feminists have ingeniously changed the social and political landscape in significant ways. At the time of our writing this article, "gender equality" had already secured its legitimacy in Chinese official discourse. The neologism even appeared in President Hu Jintao's talk at the national conference commemorating the tenth anniversary of the UN Conference on Women in 2005, even though it is not yet a common term among the general public. As the ongoing activism of our ten interviewees indicates, feminists in China will fully utilize and consolidate this legitimacy in their efforts to address mounting gender inequality and discrimination. It will be most challenging for Chinese feminists to explore ways to foster feminist subversive power in areas that have remained politically sensitive. In the current political context, that the pursuit of gender equality has been officially legitimated may have mixed effects on Chinese feminist activism. It allows feminists to operate effectively in the official system, but only so

long as they restrict the nature of their activism. In this scenario, pursuing gender equality could become a safe zone (although still contentious) that segregates feminists from other parallel struggles for justice that have yet to obtain legitimacy. Conceptually, desires to protect feminist legitimacy may hinder the development of theories critical of the official dominant discourse. Although a gender analysis can include critical examinations of multiple power relations, a concern for legitimacy may inhibit intellectual practices that could openly challenge political boundaries. Thus, in the second decade after the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women, Chinese feminists are confronted with new challenges partly derived from their success in the first decade.

NOTES

1. Ping-chun Hsiung et al., eds., *Chinese Women Organizing: Cadres, Feminists, Muslims, Queers* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), remains the major volume on the subject.
2. For definitions of feminism employed by the Global Feminisms Project and a discussion of activists selected in China, see Jayati Lal et al., "Recasting Global Feminisms: Toward a Comparative Historical Approach to Women's Activism and Feminist Scholarship," *Feminist Studies*, in this issue. Also see www.umich.edu/~gblfem/GFP for more information in Chinese, English, and Polish. China site transcripts can be found at www.umich.edu/~gblfem/ch/china.html. In this article, we cite most, but not all, of the Chinese interviewees.
3. See Wang Zheng, "Research on Women in Contemporary China," in *Guide to Women's Studies in China*, ed. Gail Hershatter (Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1998), 1-43. Myra Marx Ferree discusses the concept of "transnational opportunity structures" in her chapter, "Globalization and Feminism: Opportunities and Obstacles for Activism in the Global Arena," in *Global Feminism: Transnational Women's Activism, Organizing, and Human Rights*, ed. Myra Marx Ferree and Aili Mari Tripp (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 3-23.
4. Literally translated as such, this phrase implies "integrating China into the world community." It frequently appears in official documents and media, connoting efforts to modify Chinese institutions in order to either catch up or merge with the global system in all aspects of social, political, and economic life. In their GFP interviews the Chinese activists mention how they take advantage of this official rhetoric to promote feminist work.
5. For the mixed effects of Chinese socialist policies on women's liberation, see Kimberley Ens Manning, "Making a Great Leap Forward? The Politics of Women's Liberation in Maoist China" (574-593); Gao Xiaoxian, "'The Silver Flower Contest':

- Rural Women in 1950s China and the Gendered Division of Labor" (594-612); and Jin Yihong, "Rethinking the 'Iron Girls': Gender and Labor during the Chinese Cultural Revolution" (613-634), all in "Translating Feminisms in China," ed. Dorothy Ko and Wang Zheng, special issue, *Gender and History* 18 (November 2006); and Gail Hershtatter, "The Gender of Memory: Rural Chinese Women and the 1950s," *Signs* 28 (Autumn 2002): 34-70. See also GFP China Booklet, interview with Liu Bohong, 190-91, for an understanding of the pervasiveness of the Marxist theory of women in the All-China Women's Federation.
6. GFP China Booklet, interview with Zhang Lixi, 271.
 7. *Ibid.*, interview with Li Huiying, 145.
 8. *Ibid.*, interview with Liu Bohong, 190-91.
 9. See Wang Zheng, "Gender, Employment, and Women's Resistance," in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance*, 2d. ed., ed. Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden (London: Routledge, 2003), 158-82.
 10. GFP China Booklet, interview with Li Huiying, 160.
 11. Presentations by scholars and government officials at the conference on population sex-ratio imbalances are collected in the *Newsletter of Gender and Public Policy of the Women's Studies Center at the Central Party School*, No. 2 (2007). This is an informal publication for internal circulation.
 12. For more information on UN "gender mainstreaming," see "Gender Mainstreaming: Extract from Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3, 18 Sept. 1997)," www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/GMS.PDF. For an explanation of gender training as an essential part of gender mainstreaming, see the document created by a 2001 UNDP/UNIFEM joint workshop on gender training, "Introductory Gender Analysis and Gender Planning Training Module for UNDP Staff," www.undp.org/women/docs/GenderAnalysisTrainModule.pdf.
 13. Ge Youli wrote about her experiences with the group in "East Meets West Feminist Translation Group: A Conversation between Two Participants," coauthored with Susan Jolly, in *Chinese Women Organizing*, 61-75.
 14. *Shehuixingbie yu fazhan peixun shouce* (A manual for gender and development training), ed. Bu Wei et al. (UNDP Representative Office in Beijing, China). An informal publication, the manual does not contain a publishing date and it has been circulated internally among feminist activists (Zhang Lixi and Li Huiying, two of the GFP interviewees, helped in the compilation; Ge Youli, the organizer and initiator of the project, did not list her name in the manual).
 15. GFP China Booklet, interview with Liu Bohong, 188.
 16. *Tiqao shehuixingbie zhuliuhua nengli zhidao shouce* (Enhance the capacity of gender mainstreaming: a guidance brochure) by China's Team of the Project "Enhance the Capacity of Gender Mainstreaming in Members of the International Labor Organization" (Beijing: Chinese Society Press, 2004).
 17. The widely circulated statement on women's status first appeared in French socialist Charles Fourier's 1808 *Théorie des quatre mouvements* and as such was incorporated into the Marxist theory of women's liberation. Generations of Chinese feminists, since the

- early twentieth century, have deployed this “universal truth” to compel state power holders to live up to “international standards” on gender equality.
18. GFP China Booklet, interview with Gao Xiaoxian, 62.
 19. *Ibid.*, 67.
 20. *Ibid.*, interview with Chen Mingxia, 36.
 21. *Ibid.*, 43.
 22. Indian interviews in the GFP also show some level of the combination of bottom-up and top-down model. However, the China case fully reveals the crucial role that this pattern of operation works in Chinese feminist practice.
 23. GFP China Booklet, interview with Wang Cuiyu, 202.
 24. *Ibid.*, interview with Wang Xingjuan, 227.
 25. See Wang Zheng, “‘State Feminism’? Gender and Socialist State Formation in Maoist China,” *Feminist Studies* 31 (Fall 2005): 519-51.
 26. “Connecting with the international track” has been a widely circulated phrase in the dominant discourse since China associated itself with global capitalism. Deploying the universal logic but twisting the content, Chinese feminists have instead promoted the phrase “connecting with the track of the international women’s movements.” The usage appears quite frequently in feminist writings in Chinese. Examples can be found on these websites: www.help-poverty.org.cn/helpweb2/ngoyj/ngoyj18-1.htm and www.china-gad.org/Infor/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=4209. For a discussion of Chinese feminists’ efforts to “connect with the international track,” see Min Dongchao, “What about Other Translation Routes (East-West): The Concept of the Term ‘Gender’ Traveling into and throughout China,” in *Gender and Globalization in Asia and the Pacific: Method, Practice, Theory*, ed. Kathy E. Ferguson and Monique Mironesco (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008), 84-89.
 27. GFP China Booklet, interview with Liu Bohong, 181.
 28. For a critical assessment, see Wang Zheng, “Feminist Networks,” in *Reclaiming Chinese Society: The New Social Activism*, ed. You-tien Hsing and Ching Kwan Lee (New York: Routledge, 2010), 101-18.