

# Unruly Women in Chinese Popular Prints of Late Qing Shanghai

Current scholarship on modern Chinese print and gender culture has been focusing on leading newspapers and magazines produced by new printing technologies, images of new public women including courtesans, female students as well as reform-minded women, in tracing Chinese modernity. However, the burgeoning modern print culture in urban areas also promoted a niche market using traditional woodblock printing to produce materials oftentimes considered by the educated class as conservative, or improper and vulgar. This paper studies a specific type of Chinese woodblock prints produced in turn-of-the-twentieth century Shanghai. Contrary to the conventional representation of idealized women as “good wives and wise mothers” prescribed by Confucian values, early twentieth century Shanghai popular prints depicted the opposite—the unruly women—in a time when women’s social roles were increasingly questioned. In so doing, this paper intends to reveal how ordinary Chinese people maintained a more conservative and cautious view of women and modernity.

*Keywords:* popular prints; Shanghai prints; unruly women; shrew; adultery; murder; *Shenbao*.