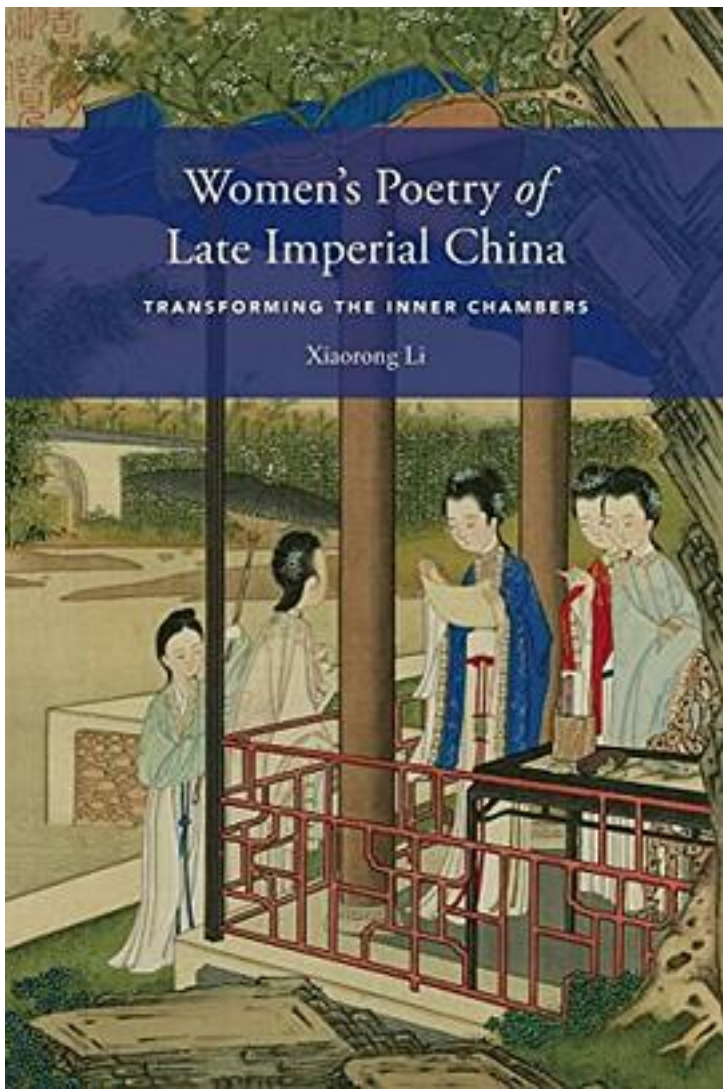


Women's Poetry of Late Imperial China



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出版者:University of Washington Press

出版时间:2012-9-12

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780295992297

This study of poetry by women in late imperial China examines the metamorphosis of the trope of the "inner chambers" (gui), to which women were confined in traditional Chinese households, and which in literature were both a real and an imaginary place. Originally popularized in sixth-century "palace style" poetry, the inner chambers were used by male writers as a setting in which to celebrate female beauty, to lament the loneliness of abandoned women, and by extension, to serve as a political allegory for the exile of loyal and upright male ministers spurned by the imperial court. Female writers of lyric poetry (ci) soon adopted the theme, beginning its transition from male fantasy to multidimensional representation of women and their place in society, and eventually its manifestation in other poetic genres as well.

Emerging from the role of sexual objects within poetry, late imperial women were agents of literary change in their expansion and complication of the boudoir theme. While some take ownership and de-eroticizing its imagery for their own purposes, adding voices of children and older women, and filling the inner chambers with purposeful activity such as conversation, teaching, religious ritual, music, sewing, childcare, and chess-playing, some simply want to escape from their confinement and protest gender restrictions imposed on women. *Women's Poetry of Late Imperial China* traces this evolution across centuries, providing and analyzing examples of poetic themes, motifs, and imagery associated with the inner chambers, and demonstrating the complication and nuancing of the gui theme by increasingly aware and sophisticated women writers.

作者介绍:

Xiaorong Li's areas of research are concerned with gender and literary production, women's writings, literati culture, and literary trends in the late imperial period (ca. 1500–1900). She also conducts research on classical Chinese poetry in Japan and Korea from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Her first monograph, *Women's Poetry of Late Imperial China: Transforming the Inner Chambers*, uses the physical, social and symbolic location of women in the gendered division of space—the inner chambers [gui or guige]—as a theoretical focus of an examination of Ming-Qing women's approach to the writing of poetry. Her second book is titled, *The Poetics and Politics of Sensuality in China: The "Fragrant and Bedazzling" Movement (1600-1930)*. "Fragrant and bedazzling" (xiangyan) is a Chinese phrase synonymous with sensual and bewitching feminine beauty and, in literature, eroticism. Drawing on extensive archival research, this book argues that sensual lyricism is more political than its sensuous surfaces—and China's lyrical tradition is sexier and more "modern"—than existing histories have led us to believe. It demonstrates that dominant political ideologies and cultural practices of early modern China always faced counteractions in the form of a discourse of sensuality, femininity, and romance. In her new projects, she continues to explore one of the most remarkable achievements in poetic culture during the late imperial period, the production of an unprecedented number and variety of anthologies. Li was trained in Chinese linguistics first at Peking University and subsequently studied late imperial Chinese literature at McGill University. She taught at Swarthmore College and Beijing Language University (formerly known as Beijing Language Institute) before coming to UCSB.

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评论

看了第二和第五章，感觉中规中矩，四平八稳

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