

Contemporary Tiger Girls: Women and Enterprise in the
People's Republic of China, 2003-2005

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Candidate

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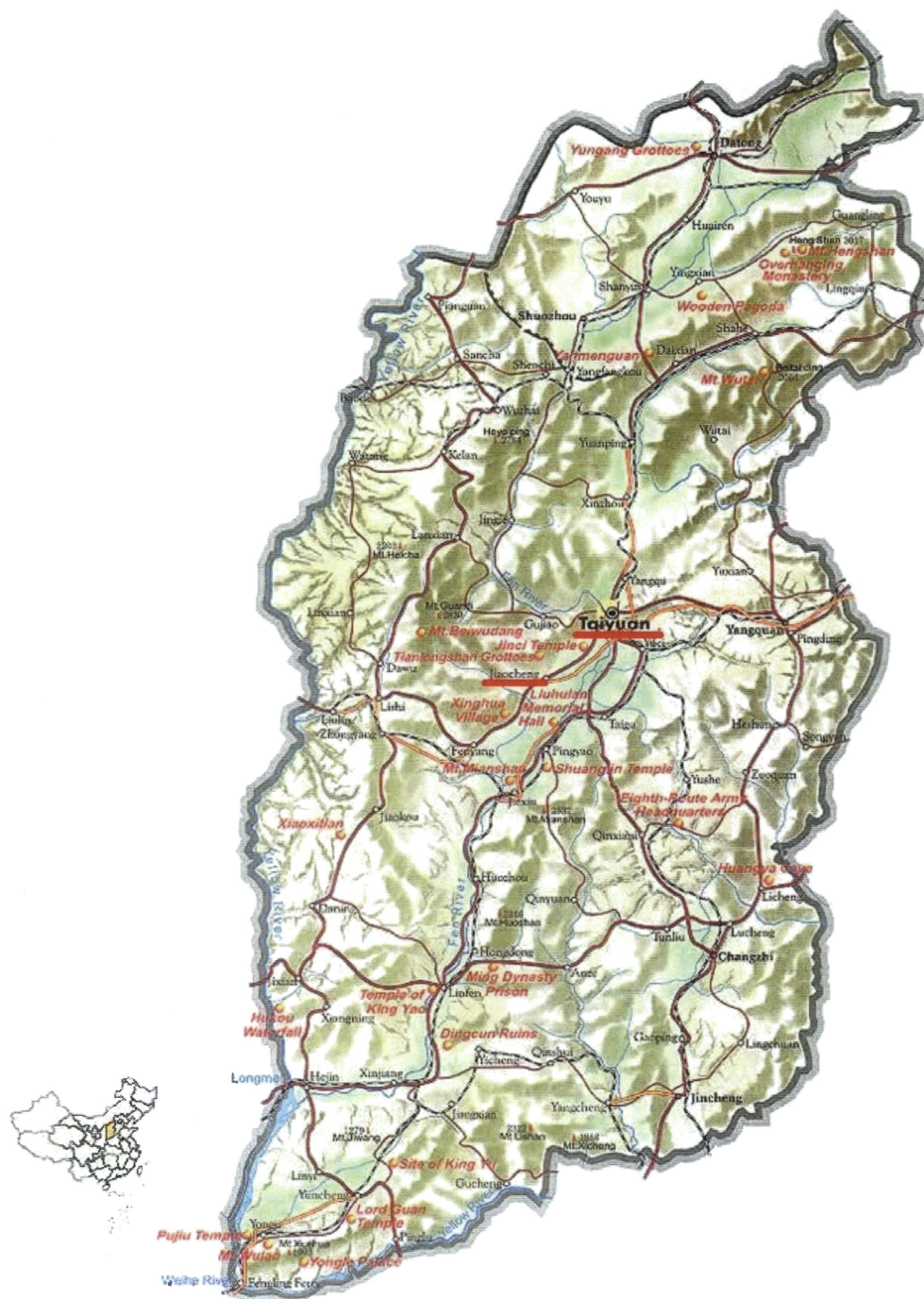
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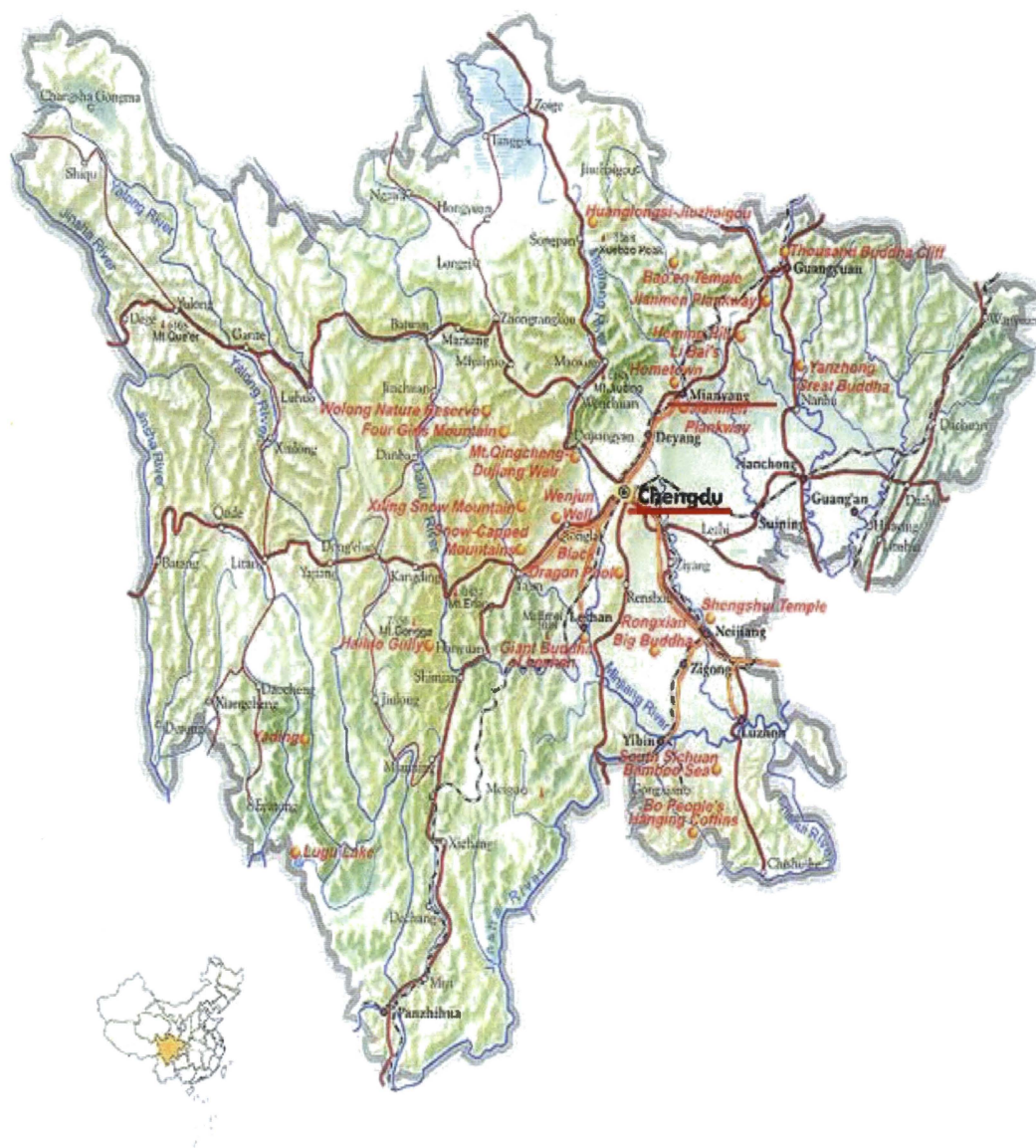
People's Republic of China



Shanxi Province



Hainan Province



Sichuan Province

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Abbreviations

ACWF	All-China Women's Federation
ACFIC	All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FIC	Federation of Industry and Commerce
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMP	Gross Material Product
PPCC	People's Political Consultative Conference
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
SELA	Self-Employed Labourers Association
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
STC	Science and Technology City
UFWD	United Front Work Department
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States (of America)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEA	Women Entrepreneurs' Association
WF	Women's Federation

Abstract

The existing scholarship on women in China suggests that gender inequality still exists against the background of the country's reform and opening in recent years. However, the situation of women in enterprise ownership and leadership seems to indicate that under the surface of women being disadvantaged, some of them are playing a more active and significant role in China's economic development.

Based on a series of interviews with women enterprise owners, wives of enterprise owners and women managers conducted in three localities in three difference provinces of China, this research aims to discover the deeper socio-political realities of leading women in enterprises. By analyzing information on these women's personal experiences, career and families, this thesis investigates their status at work and at home, as well as their connections with local politics. The research results suggest that although traces of gender inequality can still be found in these women's lives, they appear to be actively engaged in the business establishment and operation and gradually casting off the leash of domestic responsibilities. At the same time, these women have developed strong connections with the Party-state, not necessarily in their own right, but largely through their family ties. The research has also highlighted that the varied socio-economic development of each locality has its effects on these women's development.