

# A Study on the Awakening of Female Rights and Interests Reflected in Jiang Yong Women Script

Ziyu Huang<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shenzhen College of International Education, Shenzhen, Guangdong, China

\* Ziyu Huang, E-mail: [1306160554@qq.com](mailto:1306160554@qq.com)

Received: July 28, 2017

Accepted: August 8, 2017

Online Published: August 16, 2017

doi:10.22158/wjssr.v4n3p260

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/wjssr.v4n3p260>

## **Abstract**

*Jiang Yong Women Script is a unique branch of Chinese character and has triggered keen zest among scholars. However, the meaning of feminism reflected by Women Script has not been thoroughly studied or comprehensively understood, and there are still some misunderstandings about Women Script needed to be disabused. This article corrects several common misunderstanding and explain different aspects of Women Script, including Women Script's the definition, the origin, the rise, the retention and the difference between Women Script and Chinese character. Also, this article evaluates the feminism-significance of Women Scripts in an objective way—pointing out its progressiveness and limitation.*

## **Keywords**

*women scyipt, mimority, women's social status, ancient China*

## **1. Meaning of the Topic**

Jiang Yong Women Script is the only script for women to study, which boasts unique style, elegant and beautiful letters. According to estimation, it has 400 scripts or so, among which each script is very refined. Being composed of point, vertical and slant line, arc, it is the world's unparalleled gender script which now has been incorporated into the category of Intangible Cultural Heritage. We know that Jiang Yong Women Script is only popular around Xiaoshui—a drainage basin in Yongzhou, Hunan province, and is an anti-popularization character form. While through this script, we can feel awakening of women' rights and interests during its represented period, moreover, it is meaningful for studying other characters' development. Therefore, this article researched and discussed cultural phenomenon related to Jiang Yong Women Script and elaborated the meaning and connotation of it in combination with the trend of the times.

## 2. Research Status

Just as the team studying “The Story of the Stone”, the number of research team studying “Women Script” has been growing. Since 1985, CCTV reported that Women Script research has gone through thirty-five years, but compared to “The Story of the Stone” study, Women Script is only at the beginning of the study, but the research team has been growing and developing, with researchers changing from the original few people to current hundreds of people. Women Script researchers studied from the background level, like why the Women Script became popular, the role of Women Script at that time, and the relationship between Women Script and traditional and common Chinese script. While enthusiasts of Women Script research its stroke, meaning, pictograph and other points, as they are studying Oracle. This article will comprehensively discuss the development of Women Script with regard to the ancient and the modern.

## 3. The Content of This Article

### 3.1 Definition of Female Character

Women Script is a syllable phonetic character in Chinese dialects spreading around Xiaoshui, a drainage basin in Yongzhou, Hunan province, and up to now, it is the only gender script that has been found, which includes the female text, Women Script custom (culture), female song, female embroidery and Women Script works.

### 3.2 Overview of Rise of Women Scripts

Women Script is a script rose in Hunan and other places, and so far it is the script only exchanged among women, whose development has no historical records. It only spreads in folk where are many folk tales: imperial concubine Hu Yuxiu from Jingtian village of Sung Dynasty, created a female script named “Yu Xiu Visiting Book” to tell her family the loneliness toughness of life in palace (now circulated); a girl named Panqioa in Tongkou Village was kidnapped by a DaoXian scoundrel, so she wrote letters to her family for help, thus creating the Women Script; a girl named Jiujin created Women Script. Because in the traditional era, the status of woman is lower than that of man, so women are not qualified to read and write, they only need to do some needle works. The statement that “the woman without talent is virtuous” was also regarded as a measure of women’ virtue. While when we communicate with women, certain mediums are needed to connect the bridge of interaction, and carries are needed for some private topics, leading to the rise of “Women Script”. And the opposite “male script” is what we often refer to as Chinese characters. Women Script thus became a “text” exchanged among women, and gradually developed.

### 3.3 Retention of Women Scripts

#### 3.3.1 Current Situation of the Retention of Women Scripts

As Women Script is inherited naturally (mothers pass it to their daughters and teach it in singing) but not through systematic teaching system. At the same time, local people in Jiang Yong maintains the

custom that “burning books after people died”, and the existing Women Script works are most works from modern script successors. Moreover, because the Women Script is written on paper, or embroidered on fabric material, or represented through paper-cut. All these materials are perishable, making it difficult to find even a few ancient works of Women Script.

### 3.3.2 Natural Causes

According to analysis of historians, transportation in Jiangyong County, Hunan is underdeveloped, although the environment here is favorable; it is relatively deviated from the core of the economic area. So after the emergence of Jiang Yong Women Script, it did not integrate with other languages, and there was no cultural collision and communication, instead, it became one of a kind and developed alone. The kind of terrain in Jiangyong contributed to independence of Women Scripts, and is also a major factor that why it preserved and is being studied. Discovery of Jiang Yong Women Scripts also displays the foundation and connotation of Huxiang regional culture.

### 3.3.3 Social Reasons

Because women have lower social status than men, and in the ideological level, they only talk about some trivial things in daily life, and don't have a broad-minded view of the world, leading to less interaction with male. But woman also want to express their feeling through writing, creating a historical product “Women Scripts”. Also because of this, women got higher independence, and had less communication with men.

## 4. Difference between Women Scripts and Chinese Characters

“Women Scripts” is one of the rare folk art forms. Because Women Scripts was developed to communicate with others and express emotions, so as for discovered Women Scripts, same pronunciations correspond to same script. It is not like Chinese characters, in which different meaning have according characters. Chinese characters are developed from the hieroglyphics, so it has certain pictographic meaning. Women Scripts is in line with the pursuit of beauty for female, which can be used as ornaments engraved on embroidered fabric material, handkerchief and other female personal items.

## 5. Female Rights and Interests Reflected in Women Scripts

From historical documents about suppression on women, we can clearly notice that restrictions on women' marriage, status restrictions of subordinating to their sons after their husbands died, and behavior restrictions of absolute obedience and full compliance of their fathers, husbands and sons, prevent female from speaking for themselves at any time. In this case, women express their feelings with Women Scripts, hoping to get a trace of relief. So in the Women Scripts, the text is often slant rhombus with beautiful letters, and yet it maintains romanticism of female, fully displaying feminine beauty and vitality of young girls. As to its spread, it only spreads among women with regard to

households. And although it is not as systematic as the spread of Chinese characters, it gradually formed a text genre through a long history of development. In the later development, there was social exploration for significance of female group, women then began to realize that as a member of this society, whether they have social status and interests.

## **6. Feelings Expressed by Women Scripts**

With social alteration, the female fertility status is gradually replaced by the survivability showed by male, which sprang up in the patrilineal clan society. While in the patriarch clan culture, Women Scripts can be considered a exquisite works. Through a silent vent, and from women' perspective, joint among women was formed, making people to know each other and express feelings. This way, comfort for heart and temporary inner tranquility and freedom are achieved, offering many suppressed female with spiritual sustenance. Like the most common exquisite works "San zhao Book", it subsists siblings' blessing and miss for bride; communication between sworn sister represents mutual comfort for each other on tragic life.

## **7. Limitation**

The concept of the status of women has sprout in that era, but it did not disturb the social order at all, instead, it is a way for women to escape from life and male society, to avoid a way of male society. Besides, Women Scripts movement is no more than a passively organized movement, which was forced to change only when environment deteriorate to a certain extent. Unlike the development of the revolution, it does not have the trend of active rise. Moreover, female writes most Women Scripts' works to express their feelings of sadness and loneliness or to warn women to comply with the traditional ideas which is absolute obedience to their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons, and they never expressed their will to struggle actively or search for change. Finally, Women Scripts has soft and slender shape, showing the feminine beauty of softness and tranquility—this is the definition of feminine beauty and expected form the patriarchal society entitled women. It can be regarded as a kind of obedience, or complaint and whine that the society cannot change. Simply speaking, Women Scripts is just an exit for women with tough life to escape from the reality.

## **8. Concluding Remarks**

Although as a reality miniature of women's lives in the traditional society, Women Scripts has a profound significance in studying female status and female interests in ancient time. We cannot cease the study of Women Scripts; we should form a certain system so that researchers can truly understand and study Women Scripts. We want to make it become as important as "The Story of the Stone" study, becoming a "subject" that everyone is willing to know and to master, forming a complete research process. This way, by combining other characters, we will better understand different aspects of

Women Scripts.

**References:**

- Liu, C. (2016). Protection study of copyright Law of Jiangyong Female Character. *School News of Yibing Institution*, 16(8), 72-78.
- Shen, L. N. (2015). Strategy of studying and protecting endangered languages-take Jiangyong Female Character as an example. *Culture and Education Material*, 2015(18), 30-31.
- Zhang, X. (2013). Art of pattern decoration of Jiangyong Female Character. *Creation and Remark*, 2013(22), 86-89.
- Zhou, Y. (2013). Inheritance plan of Jiangyong Female Character. *News of Hubei Adult Education Institution*, 2013(22), 86-89.