



Women Poets of China (New Directions Paperbook)

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“The poetry proves again that stereotypes mislead. Chinese verse is supposedly cool and distant, detached and dispassionate. The opposite seems true; poets are exalted or downcast, drunk with wine or, in the case of women, frankly sensuous....Nothing stands still in this poetry: the wind blows the trees, the lake water ripples and the ever-present road runs in and out of the hills.” ?*America*

This book (originally published in 1972 by The Seabury Press as *The Orchid Boat*) is the first representative collection of the poetry of Chinese women to appear in English. Unlike Japan with its long tradition of women writers, poetry by women did not become fashionable in China until the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911), although poems from earlier centuries that do in fact survive will quickly dispel any stereotyped views. Included here are samplings from the legendary earliest poetry of courtesans, palace women, and Tao priestesses to works by contemporary Chinese women living in both the East and West. Appendixes include notes on the poems, an introductory essay on Chinese women and literature, a table of historical periods, and a bibliography.

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