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For biographical information on Chinese literary and political personalities of the last 100 to 150 years, research had to rely heretofore mainly on A.W. Hummel's Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1943-44) and H.L. Boorman's Biographical Dictionary of Republican China (1967-1971), in addition to a number of Chinese and non-Chinese who's who's, in monographic form or merely as appendices to yearbooks, listing a rather motley assortment of Chinese "elite." More immediate and topical biographical information was hard to get at. On the other hand, there was no shortage of biographical writing. Especially on Taiwan, after 1949 and the move to that island of a great number of Chinese educational, business and political leaders, a veritable boom of biographies—mostly autobiographies—filled the large array of large and small periodicals, some of them even, like the Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh (Biographical Literature), had been launched particularly to provide this type of literature. As literature and human documents these writings are of great value, but they constitute, above all, an immensely valuable source of information for the historian interested in modern China. Unfortunately, locating a particular item in this mass of

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information has been a difficult task, and it is for this reason that the present book has been compiled, namely as an effective finding list to biographical information.

It is to be welcomed particularly also for the reason that Chinese periodical indexing in general, for the period concerned, is confusing and cumbersome. It is true that we have had the Ch’i–k’an lun-wen so-yin (Chinese Periodical Index) of the National War College (ceased publication after its April 1972 issue), and we still have the Chung-wen ch’i–k’an lun-wen fen-lei so-yin (Classified Index to Chinese Periodicals) of the National Taiwan University Library (its vol. 9, published May 1974, indexed 162 periodicals up to the end of 1972), also the more extensive Chung-hua min-kuo ch’i–k’an lun-wen so-yin (Index to Chinese Periodicals) of the National Central Library (monthly, and indexing 535 periodicals in its January 1975 issue). In addition, for newspaper articles, there is also the Chung-wen pao-chih lun-wen fen-lei so-yin (Classified Index to Chinese Newspapers) of the National Chengchi University. All these indexes have biographical sections, some even chronologically subdivided, but they are not cumulated and search in them is very time consuming. Only for newspaper articles, there is a cumulative index, but only for the period 1938–1949, see No. 9 of the series to which the book presently under review belongs as No. 12. We may also mention in this context the special indexes for history articles in Chinese periodicals compiled by P.K. Yu and others (see T.H. Tsien’s review in HJAS, v. 33 (1973), pp. 291–294).

The present index will contribute much to alleviate the situation. It indexes 53 periodicals, including all worthwhile Taiwan periodicals, over the whole period of their existence, additionally also one older Shanghai magazine, the Tung-fang tsa-chih (The Eastern Miscellany), for which an index of sorts exists in the Tung-fang tsa-chih tsung-mu, which merely copied tables of contents; one older Nanking magazine, the Kuo-shih-kuan kuan-k’an (Journal of the Bureau of National History) (1947–1949); one Singapore periodical, the Nan-yang hsüeh-pao (Journal of Nanyang University); and two Hongkong periodicals,
the Min-ch'i p'ing-lun (The Democratic Critic) and the Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao (New Asia Journal). The non-Taiwanese periodicals do not change the character of the index as basically an index to Taiwan periodicals. Being basically a "Taiwan index," we well understand that nationalist sentiment will have precluded consideration of material felt obnoxious from a nationalist Chinese standpoint. We are therefore not to look for material on Wang Ching-wei or Ch'en Kung-po, or on some one in Communist China, although we find Ts'ao Ju-lin, Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Chang Kuo-t'ao included, to mention at least a few "controversial" personalities.

Understanding these limitations, we will still find this index a most welcome and useful reference book. The bulk of its text is made up of the actual index, arranged by names of persons described, arranged by stroke count, with an additional register of the authors of these articles. Of great interest too is the appended listing of monographic biographies, in the appendices 1 and 2. On spot-checking a fair amount of entries, I found only one of the Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh articles not indexed, namely Huang Pao-shih, "Wo ti chia," in Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh, 12:5 (1968), pp. 51-54. This suggests that there might be other omissions, but presumably dictated by the need for selectivity due to the bulk of the material. The editors would perhaps have been well advised to reduce the bulk by lumping together series on one subject, e.g. pp. 244-246 on Ch'i Ju-shan, and by omitting repetitions, as e.g. all the four pseudonyms of Ts'ai Yüan-p'ei for each of his entries on pp. 272-274.

In general this index will rank high among biographical aids for the early Republican era and particularly as an index to such magazines as the Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh, Ch'ang-liu, I-wen-chih, and similar noteworthy Taiwan periodicals. We can only hope the good work will see a successor in due course.