

## WOMEN AND FAMILY IN CHINESE HISTORY

HIEA 137 Fall 2007

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This course explores the history of women and the family in China through the early twentieth century. We will discuss the traditional Chinese kinship and family structure, familial relations, ideas of female virtue, and women's roles and experiences that were conditioned by and shaped historical changes. We will read women's as well as men's writings to consider the question of how gender norms were propagated and contested at various historical periods. The course will be roughly chronological combined with a thematic approach, with each week focusing on a major topic. There are no prerequisites. If you wish to learn more about background information of Chinese history, you can consult a general textbook (for example, Patricia Buckley Ebrey's *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*).

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### Course Requirements

Readings for the course consist of primary documents and secondary literature. Other materials include slides and films. It is important that you read assigned materials carefully prior to the class meeting (see **SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS** for weekly readings.) There will be regular in-class discussions concentrating on the week's readings, which will give you opportunities to ask questions, make comments, and exchange ideas with your classmates. Please see me or email me when you have questions or suggestions related to the course.

### Required Books (available for purchase at UCSD bookstore):

Patricia B. Ebrey. *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period*. (1993)

Dorothy Ko. *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China*. (1994)

Susan Mann and Yu-yin Cheng eds. *Under Confucian Eyes: Writings on Gender in Chinese History*. (2001)

Xie Bingying. *A Woman Soldier's Own Story: The Autobiography of Xie Bingying*. (2001)

In addition, a Course Reader should be purchased from University Readers. Please visit [www.universityreaders.com/students](http://www.universityreaders.com/students) for online purchase information.

**Grading Information:\***

One 3 page reading report 15%. Turn in any Wednesday from week 2 to week 5. <i>Instructions for this assignment appear at the end of the syllabus.</i>
One 6 page paper 25%. DUE Nov. 26, Monday. <i>Instructions TBA.</i>
Midterm 20%
Take-home final 30% <i>Study Guides for the midterm and the final TBA.</i>
Participation 10%

\*Note except in cases of documented illness or emergency, no early or late exams will be granted, and late papers will be penalized. It is your responsibility to inform the instructor immediately about your emergency or illness.

\*Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with font sizes and margins comparable to those in the course syllabus. They should be submitted at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Arrange your time to meet the deadlines. Please take advantage of my office hours to discuss ideas for and approaches to your papers.

**Academic Honesty**

Your work in this class is expected to be the product of your own efforts. Plagiarism in writing assignments (i.e., copying from articles, books, internet papers, and other students' work, without specifically acknowledging the source) will not be tolerated and will lead to serious consequences. For more information on the UCSD policy on academic dishonesty, visit:

<http://www-Senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14>.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Week 1 Introduction

- 9/28 Assertions, questions, and approaches
- 10/1 Documentary: *Small Happiness*/discussion
- 10/3 Yin-yang and inner-outer  
*Teachers of the Inner Chambers: 1-26.*

Week 2 Early Female Images

- 10/5 The good and the bad in *Lienü zhuan*  
10/8 Ban Zhao and *Admonitions for Women*  
10/10 Mulan: the cross-dressing filial daughter/Discussion  
Reader, #2, 3, 4, 6.

### Week 3 Kinship and the Family

- 10/12 Kinship and the patrilineal family  
10/15 Did woman have property rights?  
10/17 Discussion  
Reader, #1, 7.  
*Under Confucian Eyes*, 118-132.  
*The Inner Quarters*, 1-20, 99-130.

### Week 4 Marriage

- 10/19 Meanings of marriage  
10/22 Patterns of marriage  
10/24 Rituals of betrothal  
Reader, #5.  
*Under Confucian Eyes*, 71-82, 155-167.  
*The Inner Quarters*, 21-98, 188-216.

### Week 5 Familial Relations

- 10/26 Concubines: Raised the Red Lantern/discussion  
10/29 Footbinding  
10/31 Gender roles in the family/discussion  
*Under Confucian Eyes*, 103-117, 149-153, 217-229.  
*The Inner Quarters*, 152-187, 217-234.

### Week 6 Women and Power

- 11/2 **Midterm**  
11/5 Ruling the empire: Empress Wu  
11/7 Lady Yang: a love tragedy?  
Reader, #8.  
*Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, 1-112.

### Week 7 Women in Late Imperial China

- 11/9 The life course  
11/12 No class  
11/14 Writing and socialization  
*Under Confucian Eyes*, 169-194.  
*Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, 115-250.

Week 8 Chastity and Work

11/16 Womanly work and woman's work

11/19 Female chastity cult

11/21 Discussion

Reader: #9.

*Under Confucian Eyes*, 231-237.

*The Inner Quarters*, 131-151.

Week 9 Beyond Domesticity and the Kinship

11/23 No class

11/26 Women in Buddhism and Daoism

**Paper #2 Due**

11/28 Courtesan culture

*Under Confucian Eyes*, 1-44, 135-148.

*Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, 251-293.

Week 10 Women at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

11/30 Women and China's modern transformation

12/3 Rise of new women

12/5 Discussion

*A Woman Soldier's Own Story*, entire.

12/7 Course wrap-up

**Take home final: Due December 11 at 5:00 p.m. Drop your exam in a marked box in the History Department (Fifth floor of the HSS building).**

PAPER ASSIGNMENT #1 APPEARS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

## WOMEN AND FAMILY IN CHINESE HISTORY

### **Instructions for the Reading Report (3 pages)**

*You may choose to turn in this assignment any Wednesday from Week 2 to Week 5, but your report must be on the primary source readings for that week.*

Write a focused, thoughtful reflection on one or more of the primary documents (i.e. the original historical texts, not the authors' prefaces or introductions to these documents) from *Under Confucian Eyes* and the Course Reader, except documents #1 and 9) assigned for the week that you turn in your report. Organize your thoughts on these questions: What does the author attempt to convey? What seems to be the author's main arguments/concerns? What might be the author's intention for writing the document? How does the document(s) inform you of the views/functions of the family and gender roles? In what ways does the document(s) complicate or revise your assertions about the Chinese family and women's lives in traditional China?

Choose the document that most interests you to work with. Read it carefully and think about your argument thoroughly before you write. Cite evidence from the document (or other course readings/lecture when it is appropriate) to support your view. When you cite, indicate the author's name and the page number. For example, (Reader, 22), or (Mann and Cheng, 78).

Organize your discussion and write in clear language. A good report should have a concise statement of thesis at the beginning, logical development of argument in clear paragraphs and supported by evidence through the paper, and a brief conclusion.