

**WOMEN AND FAMILY IN CHINESE HISTORY**  
HIEA 137 Spring 2007

Prof. Weijing Lu  
Peter 103, MWF 11-11:50  
E-mail: [w1lu@ucsd.edu](mailto:w1lu@ucsd.edu)

Office: SSH 3044  
Office Hours: M 4:50-5:50p.m.  
W 12:00-1:00p.m.  
Office phone: 822-0586

This course explores the history of women and the family in China from early ages through the early twentieth century. We will discuss the traditional Chinese kinship and family structure, Confucian gender norms, familial relations, and women's roles and experiences that both shaped and were conditioned by historical changes. We will look to recover women's own voices, which have long been neglected. The course will take roughly a combined chronological and thematic approach, with each week focusing on a major topic. There are no prerequisites, but if you wish to gather more background information of Chinese history, you can consult a general textbook suggested below.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Course Requirements**

Readings for the course consist of primary documents and secondary literature. Other materials include overheads 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 in-class discussions concentrating on the weeks' readings, which will give you opportunities to ask questions, make comments, and exchange ideas with your classmates. Please come see me or email me when you have questions or suggestions related to the course.

**Required Books**

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

Susan Mann. *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century*. (1997)

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

Ida Pruitt. *A Daughter of Han: The Autobiography of A Chinese Working Woman*. (1945)

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 2-3 page reading report 15%. Turn in any Friday from week 2 to week 5. <i>Instructions for this assignment appear at the end of the syllabus.</i>
One 5-6 page paper 25%. DUE May 30, Wednesday. <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 articles, books, internet papers, other students' work etc., 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

- 4/2 Assertions, questions, and approaches
- 4/4 Documentary: *Small Happiness*
- 4/6 Yin-Yang and Inner-outer

### Week 2 Early Female Images

- 4/9 The good and the bad in *Lienü zhuan*
- 4/11 Ban Zhao and *Admonitions for Women*
- 4/13 Mulan: the cross-dressing filial daughter/discussion  
Reader, #2, 3, and 5.

### Week 3 Kinship and the Family

4/16 Kinship and the patrilineal family

4/18 Did woman have property rights?

4/20 Discussion

Reader, #1 and 6.

*Under Confucian Eyes*, 119-132, 71-82.

### Week 4 Marriage

4/23 Meanings of marriage

4/25 Patterns of marriage

4/27 Rituals of Betrothal

Reader, #4.

*The Inner Quarters*, 1-99.

### Week 5 Familial Relations

4/30 Concubines

5/2 Gender roles in the family

5/4 Discussion

*The Inner Quarters*, 114-187, 217-234.

*Under Confucian Eyes*, 71-82, 217-229, 103-117.

### Week 6 Women and Politics

5/7 **Midterm**

5/9 Ruling the empire: Empress Wu

5/11 Lady Yang: A love Tragedy?/Discussion

Reader, #7.

*The Inner Quarters*, 188-216.

### Week 7 The 18<sup>th</sup>- Century Women

5/14 The life course

5/16 Work and Writing

5/18 Discussion

*Precious Records*, 1-120.

*Under Confucian Eyes*, 169-194.

### Week 8 Footbinding and Chastity

5/21 Meanings of footbinding

5/23 Female chastity cult

5/25 To die for a fiancé: The faithful maiden/discussion

Reader, #9.  
*Precious Records*, 143-200.

Week 9 Beyond the Kinship and Domesticity

5/28 No class

5/30 Women and religion

PAPER DUE

6/1 Film clip from *Du Shiniang*

*Under Confucian Eyes*, 1-44, 135-146.

Reader, #8.

Week 10 Women at the turn of the twentieth century

6/4 Courtesan culture/Discussion

6/6 Women in China's modern transformation

6/8 Course wrap-up: Discussion

*Daughter of the Han*, entire.

**Take home final: Due June 11 at 5:00 p.m. Please drop your exam in a marked box in the History Department, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, HSS.**

## WOMEN AND FAMILY IN CHINESE HISTORY

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

You may choose to turn in this assignment any Friday 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.