

## WOMEN AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

HIEA 138 Spring 2011

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The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the dramatic transformation of Chinese society and culture brought about by the Chinese revolution. In this course, we will examine this very complicated historical process, focusing on women's experience in it, the engendering of new gender norms, and the changes in social institutions such as the family and marriage. We will be considering throughout the course these central questions: how were women's lives affected by the various political, social, economic, and cultural events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? In what ways did women shape these events? To what extent did the Chinese revolution "liberate" women from "Confucian tradition"?

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**Requirements:** Readings for this course include a memoir, an autobiographical account, a novel, and scholarly work by historians and anthropologists. *It is crucially important that you read the assigned materials in a timely fashion. Please see SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS below for weekly reading assignments.* We will also view film clips and other visual materials. Students are responsible for all materials covered in lecture and discussion. If you miss a class, find another student who can share notes with you.

Attendance at lectures and participation in discussion are required. *The course will be conducted in a combined lecture and discussion format.* Our discussion will focus on course readings and the visual materials viewed in class. Please read carefully the assigned materials prior to each class meeting. Take notes (comments or questions) while reading and bring them to the class to share with your classmates.

### **Required Books (available for purchase at UCSD bookstore, and on reserve in SSH library):**

- Xie Bingying. *A Woman Soldier's Own Story: The Autobiography of Xie Bingying*. Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Yuan-tsung Chen. *The Dragon's Village: An Autobiographical Novel of Revolutionary China*. Pantheon Book, 1980.
- Rae Yang. *Spider Eaters: A Memoir*. University of California Press, 1997.
- Yan Yunxiang. *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949-1999*. Stanford University Press, 2003.

**Additional required reading materials are on electronic reserve in the SSH library.** To view (download and photocopy) the materials on campus, log on to the UCSD library website <http://libraries.ucsd.edu/>, click on "Reserves," and follow the instructions there. If you need to

access the e-reserve materials off campus, you may need to set up a proxy account. Instructions are available at the circulation desk of the SSH library.

**Grading Information:\***

2 quizzes 10%
One 6-7 page paper 25%
<i>Instructions TBA.*</i>
Midterm 20%
Final 35%
<i>Study Guides for the midterm and the final TBA.</i>
Participation 10%

**\*The paper** must be submitted at the beginning of class on the day it is due. It should be typed and double-spaced with font sizes and margins comparable to those in this syllabus. Only hardcopies will be accepted.

Except in cases of documented illness or emergency, no early or late exams or makeup quizzes will be granted. Alternative final exams will not be accommodated in the case of conflicting times with any of your other courses. Late papers without legitimate excuses and instructor’s approval will be penalized. It is your responsibility to inform me immediately about your emergency or illness and submit documentation when you return to class. Arrange your time to meet the deadline. Please take advantage of my office hours to discuss your ideas for and approaches to your paper before you start to write, and see me or email me when you have questions or concerns related to the course.

**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>; for History Department guidelines see <http://historyweb.ucsd.edu/pages/undergraduate/Current/plagiarism.htm>.*

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Week 1 Introduction

3/29 Themes and approaches

3/31 Film: *To Live*

Week 2 Confucian family and gender order

4/5 The patriarchal family and the “Three Followings”

4/7 Were women victims in premodern China?

Reading: *A Woman Soldier’s Own Story*, Volume One

Week 3 Reform and Revolution in late Qing and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century

4/12 New Cultural Movement

4/14 The new woman/**quiz #1**

Reading: *A Woman Soldier's Own Story*, Volume Two

Week 4 Nationalists and the Communists

4/19 Nationalist social policies

4/21 Women of Long March

Reading: Selections from *Choosing Revolution* (on reserve)  
Begin *Dragon's Village*

Week 5 CCP policies of the 1950s

4/26 Communist victory and social reforms

4/28 Women and land reform/**quiz #2**

Reading: Finish *Dragon's Village*

Week 6 Women and socialist construction

5/3 Women in the work force

5/5 **Midterm Exam**

Reading: Begin *Spider Eater*

Week 7 Growing up under the red flag

5/10 The Cultural Revolution

5/12 "Red Guards" and "iron girls"

Reading: Finish *Spider Eater*

Week 8 Economic reform

5/17 "Four Modernizations" and one child policy

5/19 The new era: Opportunities and challenges

**Paper Due**

Reading: Selections from *Personal Voices* (on reserve)

Week 9 Women in the 1990s

5/24 Changing gender roles

5/26 Changes in family and marriage practices

Reading: Begin *Private Life under Socialism*

Week 10 Past and present

5/31 Presentation and debate

6/2 Conclusion

Reading: Finish *Private Life under Socialism*

**Final Exam: Tuesday, June 7, 11:30a.m.-2:30pm**