

HIEA 137: WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CHINESE HISTORY

Spring Quarter, 2012

Time: TuTh 3:30 – 4:50 PM

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appointment

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Introduction

This course introduces women and children in Chinese history and society from the earliest times through the Qing dynasty (1644 --1911 CE). We will emphasize the Han (206 BCE – 220 CE) through the Song (960 – 1279 CE) dynasties. The place of women and children in the family, literature, religion, government, work, material culture, and daily life will serve as organizing themes for our investigation of this large topic over a long period. We will stress social and historical context, continuity and change, conflict and resolution, comparison and contrast. Since institutions and ideas from earlier times have had a deep effect on life in China today, we will use contemporary examples to show changing interpretations of older traditions.

The framework of our class will be both chronological and thematic. Our approach will be interdisciplinary, combining history and social sciences, written texts and material culture. Women's Studies or Critical Gender Studies is a new field, with many theoretical and factual problems still unsolved. After mostly ignoring women and children for centuries, scholars have started to include them in the narrative of Chinese history. Studying women's and children's history objectively and analytically is challenging because we all bring strong opinions, both individual and cultural, about gender and child-raising, to the table. We must constantly remind ourselves of this fact. We need to be prepared to question old stereotypes as well as examine our own biases. Another challenge is that we are seeking to locate women's and children's history in sources not necessarily intended to reveal it. Consequently, we use materials from a variety of sources, both textual and visual. Textual sources include historical, philosophical, religious, and literary writings; visual materials include archaeological discoveries, art, material culture, and film.

We will analyze how women and children are represented in pre-modern Chinese primary sources. One of your main tasks this quarter is to read both primary and secondary sources critically, analyzing arguments in terms of meaning, reliability, evidence, and historical

value. Primary sources, including material objects as well as texts, tell us what the people we are studying thought was true and important. Secondary sources provide structure, theories, and general background. You will have the opportunity to sharpen your writing skills, with an emphasis on clear and convincing writing. Class discussions and presentations will give you practice in oral communication and collaboration. My goal is for you to become active historians and social scientists, problem solvers rather than passive recipients of data. After taking this course, you should recognize the presence and importance of women and children in Chinese history and culture, and be familiar with images and roles of women and children specific to China.

Requirements

There are no prerequisites. A basic understanding of Chinese history is assumed. If you are unfamiliar with Chinese history, you might like to read a general text like Jacques Gernet's *A History of Chinese Civilization*; Ebrey, Walthall, and Palais, *Pre-Modern Asia to 1800: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*; Harold M. Tanner's *China: A History, Volume I*; or Conrad Schirokauer's *A Brief History of Chinese and Japanese Civilizations*.

Students are expected to come to class with the reading for that day finished, to participate in discussions, and to complete all the required assignments. You must complete all required assignments to pass the course. The first assignment is to bring something connected to women and/or children in China to share with the class; this assignment is not graded. It is worth ten points that I will add to your total before I calculate your grade at the end of the quarter. We will schedule this throughout the quarter so that a few students will present at the beginning of each class. There will be one in-class midterm including short identifications and two essay questions; it will last one hour and twenty minutes and be worth thirty percent (30%) of your grade. There will be a project or paper due on the last day of class, worth thirty-five percent (35%) of your grade. You will need to clear your paper or project with me by the beginning of the fifth week. You can submit an informal proposal and I will return it to you by the next class. Your proposal must contain, at a minimum, your name, your topic, and three academic sources you will use in your research. You may do the class project with another classmate or classmates. There will be a take-home final exam, consisting of two or three essay questions, worth thirty-five percent (35%). We will hand out the final on the last day of class, and it will be due on or before our official final examination date. No assignments will be accepted by email. Do not plagiarize. If you do, you will fail the assignment and possibly the course and I will be required to report you to the academic ethics office.

There will be a course Webct where I will post the syllabus, Powerpoint slides from class, and other useful materials. I will try to post the Powerpoint slides before class so you can use them when you take notes if you would like to.

Required Texts (available at the University Bookstore Books)

They should also be available on reserve at Geisel Library

Robin Wang, *Images of Women in Chinese Thought and Culture*, Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003.
ISBN: 0-87220-651-3

Bret Hinsch, *Women in Early Imperial China*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. ISBN: 0-7425-1872-8

Anne Behnke Kinney, *Representations of Childhood and Youth in Early China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. ISBN: 9- 780804 - 747318

Suzanne E. Cahill, *Divine Traces of the Daoist Sisterhood*. Magdalena, New Mexico: Three Pines Press, 2006. ISBN: 9 - 781931- 483049

N. Harry Rothschild, *Wu Zhao: China's Only Woman Emperor*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-321-39426 -2

Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Inner Quarters*. Berkeley: UC Press, 1993. ISBN: 0-520-08158-7

Susan Mann, *Talented Women of the Zhang Family*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2007.
ISBN: 978-0-520-25090-1

TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week One Starting Out

April 3 I. Introduction to Course:
Aims, Issues, Definitions, Requirements
Assignment: Buy your books; first reading assignment due Thursday
Video “Small Happiness”

April 5 II. Women in Ancient China
Reading: Wang, Parts One and Two (pages 1-135)

Week Two III. Women in Han China (206 BCE – 220 CE)

April 10 A. Context, Cultural Constructions of Gender, Kinship, Wealth and Work, and Law

Reading: Hinsch, Introduction and Chapters 1 - 4
Session on topic selection, research, and writing tips for paper or project

April 12 B. Government, Learning, Ritual, and Cosmology
Reading: Hinsch, Chapters 5 – 8 and Conclusion

Week Three

April 17 C. Primary Sources for the Han
Reading: Wang, Part Three

IV. Children in Han China

April 19 A. The Discovery of Childhood, the Precocious Child, the Aristocratic Child, and Infant Abandonment

Reading: Kinney, Introduction and Chapters 1 – 4.

Week Four

April 24 B. Girl Children and the Magical Manipulation of Childhood
Readings: Kinney, Chapters 5 and 6 and Conclusion

April 26 **V. Women in Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties China (220 – 589 CE)**

A. Overview, Historical Context. Primary Sources

Reading: Wang, Part Four

Week Five

VI. Women in Tang China (618- 907 CE)

May 1 **A. Social Context**

Readings: Wang, Part Five (Except sections on Song women)

Your paper or project proposal is due. The bare minimum of information required is: the name or names of person or people doing the project, the topic, and three academic sources (books or journal articles) per person as your preliminary bibliography. This will be returned on May 3 with my comments.

May 3 **Midterm:** bring blue books. Midterm covers readings, lectures, and supplementary materials through May 1

Week Six **B. China's Only Woman Emperor: Wu Zhao**

May 8 **B. 1. Context, Early to Middle Career**

Reading: Rothschild, Preface and Chapters 1 – 6

May 10 **B. 2. Late Career, Zhou Dynasty, and Deployment of the Three Teachings**

Reading: Rothschild, Chapters 7 – 12 and Notes on The Sources

Week Seven **C. Women and Daoism in Tang China**

May 15 **1. Goddesses, Ancestresses, and Deities of the Grotto Heavens**

Reading: Cahill, Introduction and Parts 1, 2, and 3

May 17 **2. Biographies of Tang Daoist Woman Saints**

Reading: Cahill, Part 4 and Conclusion

Week Eight VII. Women and Marriage in Song China (970 – 1279 CE)

May 22 A. Separating the Sexes, Marriage, Matchmaking, Rituals, Dowries, Inner Helpers, and Woman’s Work

Reading: Wang, Part Five (sections on Song women only) Ebrey, Introduction and Chapters 1 – 7

May 24 B. Marital Relations, Motherhood, Widowhood, Second Marriages, Concubines, Women Continuing the Family, Unspoken Matters, and Conclusions

Reading: Ebrey, Chapters 8 – 15

VIII Women in Qing (1644 – 1911)

Week Nine A. The Woman of One Family in Qing China (1644 – 1911)

May 29 1. Geographical Setting and the *Guixiu* Tang yaoqing

Reading: Mann, Prologue and Chapters 1 and 2

May 31 2. The Poet Zhang Qieying and the Governess Wang Caipin

Reading: Mann, Chapters 3 and 4 and Epilogue

Week Ten IX. Women and History in Modern Chinese Film

June 5 A. The Case of Wu Zhao

DVD “Detective Dee and the Mystery of the Phantom Flame”

June 7 Finish “Detective Dee”

Student presentations

Paper or project due

Final Exam handed out

June 11 Final Exam due in Prof Cahill’s office by 6 PM

Paper or Project Guidelines

The point of this assignment is to let you investigate in a little more depth a subject that interests you. You may choose almost anything that fits within the subject matter of our course. You may do a group project. Some possible types of paper or project include:

1. Research paper with a very narrow focus
2. Fieldwork, survey, or site report
3. Art history or archaeology paper
4. Art project, installation, or model
5. Drama or music
6. Fiction or poetry
7. Fake primary sources: historical documents of any kind
8. Game/game analysis
9. Literature or film criticism
10. Class presentation or demonstration
11. Analysis of Chinese texts by or about women
12. Propose something else

The paper or project will be judged on five points: **topic, research, effort, analysis, and the quality of the final product**. Prof Cahill must approve your topic. At least three academic sources are required. Academic sources include books published by university presses or other reputable presses, articles from academic journals, and online versions of such books and articles. Some online sites are also suitable. Wikipedia is not an academic source, although you may use it to lead you to appropriate sources. You will need to use the library. If you write a paper, it should be about 10 pages long (double-spaced). A group paper or project would need to be proportionately longer. You may use any standard format for footnotes and bibliography. Papers and projects may not be submitted by e-mail. (You are turning them in on the last day of classes; the chance for loss or bad transmission is too great.)

Workshop on paper topic selection for individual or group projects and research papers

You need to find a topic, find sources, do your research, and produce your final product in a very short time. We want to make your planning easy and the process and requirements clear.

Strategies:

Write a short paper, about ten pages long.

Start planning and doing tasks now.

First: Pick a general area of interest to you within which you will find your specific topic.

The most important question to start with is: What interests you that is related to this course and can realistically be done in ten weeks? Pick something you think is compelling, perhaps related to your major or to a personal interest or hobby. You have to live with it.

Skim through rest of texts assigned for the course for topics: something we study late in the quarter may interest you the most.

Start your research and identify resources. Seeing what is available will help you eliminate impossible topics and narrow your topic. Use the bibliographies at the back of your textbooks, Geisel Library's computerized search engines, Google books, and Jstor.

Next: Pick a very specific and limited topic within your area of interest. Narrow it down further. Examples would be one person or type of person, one Chinese primary source or type of source, one controversy, or one work of art. Be concise and clear in your presentation.

Make sure it is related to women in Chinese history. Your topic may include something contemporary. (Examples: presentations of the subject in modern movies, novels, art, or video games)

Decide if you want to do an individual or group project. This depends on your learning style and personality. Groups create community and can share resources: you can get more results for your time and work. But they require careful planning, and some people just work better alone.

Next: Get to work. As you go, narrow your topic down even more. We want quality rather than quantity and specificity rather than general coverage. No summaries! Only give the background

necessary for understanding your topic. Keep quotes at a minimum. Continue looking for more resources. Your final paper should convince us with a clear argument supported by relevant evidence. Do not tell us everything you found, just what is necessary to make your case.

Have your topic and at least one book and two articles identified and located before you turn in your proposal. One book and two articles will provide grounding in the field and tell you what people have said about the subject. When you turn in your topic, that material plus any other resources, questions, and progress you have found or made are what you may hand in.

The proposal does not need to be formal. It should include your name, your general topic, the specific question or issue you want to tackle, and a minimum of three academic sources.

Read, write, revise.

Ask a question about your topic. Make sure your question is narrow and specific, not broad and general. Once you answer your question, write it down; that's your thesis. You need a thesis to have a good argument. The thesis belongs in the first paragraph of your paper.

Give yourself time. Keep revising and rewriting. Edit for good English usage, word choice, logical argument, and wordiness.

Be critical of evidence and sources. If you are not sure a source is reliable, ask us.

Have another student or friend read your paper if possible. That will help you see what is unclear or unconvincing. You may also come show us pieces of unfinished work for feedback.

Your final product should include analysis and tell us your own conclusions on the subject. We do not want a summary of the sources, but original critical thinking about the subject, backed up with evidence from the sources.

History = telling a story (a narrative) and making an argument or interpretation; make it good and clear.

Give context; but give only background information that's important for your topic.

Sell us on the project: why is it important?

WRITING TIPS: Common Mistakes to Avoid

In general I will not grade for style, although I will correct grammatical and other mistakes on your papers. However, if you make mistakes on the usage tips listed here, I will take off points. You can always come to me or the reader for help in improving your writing, or go to OASIS.

1. Never use single quotes ('like this') except for a quotation within a quotation. Example: The teacher said: "Billy says 'uh' too often." Especially do not use them to emphasize a term or suggest that you are using it ironically. That is too informal for a paper.
2. Never use contractions, such as "don't," in a paper except when quoting someone's speech. By the way, "it's" = "it is," while "its" means "belonging to it." Examples: "It's a boy!"; *Civilization and Its Discontents*
3. Avoid forms of the verb "to be" and passive verbs whenever possible. They bore the reader, and allow you to speak indirectly and wiggle out of taking responsibility for what you write.
4. Avoid useless modifiers, especially "very." Avoid wordiness in general. Both weaken the impact of your writing.
5. Avoid repetition.
6. Put foreign words and book titles in italics.
Examples: *wenren* 文人; *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Shishuo xinyu*.
7. Translate Chinese terms and titles in your text. Example: *wenren* (literatus or literary gentleman); *Shishuoxinyu*, "A New Account of Tales of the World." Use the translation after the first mention of the term. After that, stick to either the Chinese term or the translation; do not repeat both each time the term comes up.
8. Give dates the first time (and only the first time) you mention a person or historical period.
9. Do not use direct quotations from your texts and sources unless absolutely necessary: your own words are always better, and show that you have grasped what the author meant. Use footnotes instead. An example of a permissible quote would be one from a primary source that you are interpreting.

10. The correct usage is: “He is the person who,” not “he is the person that...”
11. Put periods and commas inside quotation marks. Example: “She vowed to kill her sister.”
12. When making lists, put commas after each item in the list, up to the “and” or “or.”
Examples: “She bought guns, poisons, and a whip.” “He might stab, shoot, or beat her.”
13. You may use the first person in your text. Example: “I argue that...”
14. The proper usage is “based on,” not “based off of.” (The latter comes from the world of computer gaming, not academic writing.)
15. If you discuss a piece of art or architecture, provide a picture, and give the date.
16. If you choose to include them, provide Chinese characters the first time and only the first time you mention the name or term.
17. You may use any standard system of citation, but be consistent. Use one of our texts as a model if you do not know any system of citation.
18. Do not cite Wikipedia or any other non-academic online source. If you do, your grade on the project will be lowered. If you are uncertain about whether a source is permissible, ask us.
19. Do not use the term “Confucian” unless you define exactly what you mean.
20. Do not use the construction “It was...that” E.g. “It was under the emperor Kangxi that the Manchu elite first embraced traditional Han Chinese fashions.”
21. Pick one Romanization system and stick to it.
22. Make sure subjects agree with verbs and pronouns with their referents.

DYNASTIC CHART

B.C.E.

Xia	ca. 2100-1600
Shang	ca. 1600-1028
Zhou	ca. 1027-256
Western Zhou	ca. 1027-771
Eastern Zhou	ca. 770-256
Spring and Autumn	722-468
Warring States	403-221
Qin	221-207
Han	206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.
Former Han	206 B.C.E-8 C.E.

C.E.

Xin	9-25
Latter Han	25-220
Three Kingdoms	220-265
Wei	220-265
Shu	221-263
Wu	222-280
Jin	265-420
Western Jin	265-317
Eastern Jin	317-420
Six Dynasties	420-589
SOUTHERN	
Liu Song	420-479
Southern Qi	470-502
Southern Liang	502-557
Southern Chen	557-589
NORTHERN	
Northern Wei	386-534
Eastern Wei	534-550
Western Wei	535-577
Northern Qi	550-577
Northern Zhou	557-581

Sui	581-618
Tang	618-907
Zhou	690-705
Five Dynasties	907-960
Liao	916-1125
Song	960-1279
Northern Song	960-1126
Southern Song	1127- 1279
Jin (Jurchen)	1115-1234
Yuan (Mongols)	1260-1368
Ming	1368-1644
Qing	1644-1911
Republic (Taiwan)	1911-
People's Republic	1949-