01:165:476 Women in Pre-modern China

Sessions: Tuesday/Friday 11:30 am-12:50 pm  
Classroom: SC 121  
Instructor: Rachel Zhang  
Email: rjz31@rutgers.edu  
Office hours: Th 12:30-2:30 pm  
Office: SC 341

Course Description and Goals:

The course investigates the origins, changes, and continuation of female archetypes (real or mythical, e.g., primordial ancestress, female immortal, sagacious mother, chaste wife, and femme fatale) in texts written by men or by women themselves in pre-modern China. Students are expected to exercise their analytical skills in analyzing issues concerning women, and moreover to discern how women perceived their gender and responded to how their gender was perceived, as well as how they negotiated, and sometimes subverted, what was expected of them by adapting these archetypes.

Grade Distribution:

1. Attendance and Participation 10%  
2. Classroom Presentation and Leading Discussion 20%  
3. Weekly Analysis of Primary Sources 40%  
4. Term Paper 30%

Course Materials:

All course materials are available for download at the course website on Sakai. Students must bring to the class a copy of the assigned reading.

Useful Websites:

Traditions of exemplary women (http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/xwomen/)  
The Red Brush (http://digital.wustl.edu/r/red/index.html)

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance and Participation: Class attendance is mandatory. Any student who misses more than TWO classes will automatically fail this part of the course. Use the Absence Self-Reporting system (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. Class participation means more than attendance. It also includes:  
   1) timely completion of reading assignments;  
   2) active participation in discussions;  
   3) observation of class decorum (i.e., arrive on time and silence your cell phone).
2. Classroom Presentation and Leading Discussion: Each student is expected to make several presentations throughout the semester. A presentation should be an oral response to the reading assignment including primary and secondary materials. Through the preparation and delivery of these presentations, students can practice their skills in: accurately summarizing the reading materials, identifying major cultural and political values for and biases against women in pre-modern China, and furthermore in theorizing about the society and social environment that had produced these values and biases. A presenter also needs to form questions to elicit other students’ responses to the reading materials. Everyone is required to come prepared for discussion whether or not s/he is presenting.

3. Written Assignments: All written assignments will be evaluated based on the presentation of the material, the level of critical interpretation/reflection, and clear and logical development of the argument and thesis.

1) Weekly Analysis of Primary Sources (WAPS): WAPS should consist of a close reading of one of the assigned primary sources for the coming week. A primary source could be a text or an object. It is a relic of time produced by people who are now long dead. You should treat each primary source as a time capsule that preserves a piece of history. A good WAPS should achieve the following:
   • Provide A brief summary of the content and context
   • Identify the authorial intent and the targeted audience
   • Identify the author’s argument and evaluate its effectiveness
   • Deduce the cultural/political/religious/social bias and values of the author and the intended audience
   • Theorize about what the community that produced it was like
   • Relate this document to the other documents you have read in this course

Each WAPS must be between 200 and 300 words, typed, double-spaced, and include a title. Each student must submit one WAPS per week. The ten highest grades will be used when calculating the course grade.

2) Term Paper: Students are expected to complete ONE term paper in this course. The paper will be an analytical essay centering on a question drawn from the assigned readings. These papers aim to help students become critical readers and to practice their skills in analyzing issues related to women in pre-modern China. Students must directly engage with the sources (primary and secondary) and use them to support their arguments. Each paper will be between 1500 and 1800 words in length, typed, double-spaced, numbered, include a title, and have proper attribution and citation of sources throughout. An abstract and outline of the paper are due on November 5, 2019.

Follow the Chicago Manual of Style for citing sources.
(http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).
Semester Schedule

The schedule is subject to change.
✓ = primary sources

Week 1:
Tue 9/3       Course Introduction
Fri 9/6       The Primordial Goddess–Nü Kua
• “Nü Kua Mends the Sky,” Chinese Mythology, 69-72 ✓
• “Nü Kua,” Chinese Mythology, 163-5 ✓
• “Nü Kua Marries Her Brother in the First Marriage,” Chinese Mythology, 203-4 ✓
• Hall and Ames, “Sexism, With Chinese Characteristics” the Sage and The Second Sex, 75-95

Week 2:
Tue 9/10      The Ladies of the Xiang River and Their Reincarnation
• “The Hsiang Queens” in Chinese Mythology, 167-9 ✓
• “The Lady of the Xiang River” in the Songs of the South ✓
• 1.1 “The Two Consorts of Youyu,” in the Exemplary Women of Early China ✓

Fri 9/13      Women, Sericulture and Other Work
• “Ts’an Ts’ung Encourages Sericulture,” Chinese Mythology, 61-3 ✓
• “Old Poem—‘I climbed the hill to pick deerweed’,” An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 262 ✓

Week 3:
Tue 9/17      Women in Early Confucianism
• Ch. 6: “Analects of Confucius,” Images of Women ✓
• Ch. 13: “Mencius,” Images of Women ✓
• Ch. 15: “Xunzi,” Images of Women ✓
• Goldin, “The View of Women in Early Confucianism,” The Sage and The Second Sex, 133-161 (Optional)

Fri 9/20      Correlative Thinking
• Ch. 7: “Daodejing,” Images of Women ✓
• Ch. 23: “Luxuriant Gems of The Spring and Autumn,” Images of Women ✓

Week 4:
Tue 9/24 Mothers of Dynastic Founders & Sages
• 1.2 “Jiang Yuan, Mother of Qi,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓
• 1.3 “Jiandi, Mother of Xie,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓
• 1.4 “Tushan, Mother of Qi,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓
• 1.6 “The Three Matriarchs of the House of Zhou,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓
• 1.9 “Jing Jiang of the Ji Lineage of Lu,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓
• 1.10 “The Mother of Zifa of Chu,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓
• 1.11 “The Mother of Meng Ke of Zou,” the *Exemplary Women* ✓

Fri 9/27 Tragic Love (I)–Love Triangle

Week 5:
Tue 10/1 Wives & Marriages
• “Anonymous Old Poem (Attributed to Su Wu),” *An Anthology of Chinese Lit*, 251-2 ✓
• Ch. 29: “A New Account of Tales of The World,” *Images of Women* ✓
• Ch. 31: “Family Instructions to The Yan Clan,” *Images of Women* ✓
• Choo, “Tang Xuan” in *Tales from Tang Dynasty China*, 76-85 ✓

Fri 10/4 Daoism Goddesses and Female Immortals
• “The Queen Mother of the West,” *Chinese Mythology*, 171-5 ✓
• Cahill, *Divine Traces of The Daoist Sisterhood*, Ch. 1: “The Queen Mother of The West” ✓
• Allen, "Yang Jingzhen," *Tales from Tang Dynasty China*, 118-124 ✓

Week 6:
Tue 10/8 Tragic Love (II)–Forced Separation
• “Draught Ox and Weaver Maid,” *Chinese Mythology*, 165-7 ✓
• “Nineteen Old Poem X—‘Faraway lies that star, the Oxherd,’” *An Anthology of Chinese Lit*, 257 ✓
• Qin Guan, “Gods on the Magpie Bridge,” An Anthology of Chinese Lit, 257-8✓

Fri 10/11 Buddhist Female Deities
• Ch. 35: “The Sutra of The Teaching Of Vimalakirti,” Images of Women ✓
• Ch. 36: “The Story of The Dragon King’s Daughter,” Images of Women ✓
• Ch. 37: “Guanyin Chapter of the Lotus Sutra,” Images of Women ✓

Week 7:
Tue 10/15 Women Who Practiced Religion
• Tsai, Trans, Lives Of Buddhist Nuns, Introduction, 1-12✓
• Tsai, Trans, Lives Of Buddhist Nuns, Ch. 2 “The Chin Dynasty,” 17-35✓
• Cahill, “Smell Good and Get a Job” Presence and Presentation, 171-186 [focus on the primary sources]✓

Fri 10/18 Women Instructing Women
• “Ban Zhao,” in The Red Brush, 17-42✓
• Ch. 46: “The Book of Filial Piety,” Images of Women✓
• Ch. 54: “Classic For Girls,” Images of Women✓
• Lee, "Inventing familial agency from powerlessness: Ban Zhao's lessons for women." Western Journal of Communication 73. 1 (2009): 47-66

Week 8:
Tue 10/22 Women Advisors
• “The Yellow Emperor Questions the Dark Lady on the Art of War,” in Chinese Mythology, 137✓
• Cahill, Divine Traces of The Daoist Sisterhood, Ch. 2: “The Mysterious Woman of the Nine Heavens” ✓
• “Shangguan Wan’er” in The Red Brush, 61-72✓
• Rothschild, "'Her Influence Great, Her Merit beyond Measure': A translation and initial investigation of the epitaph of Shangguan Wan'er" Studies in Chinese Religions 1.2 (2015): 131-148

Fri 10/25 Women Between Worlds
• Allen, "Shengtu Cheng," in Tales from Tang Dynasty China, 97-101✓
• Shen, “Ren’s Story,” An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 518-526✓
Week 9:
Tue 10/29  The Jilted Women
• “Slandered Virtue: Concubine Ban,”  The Red Brush, 77-82✓
• “Displaced by A Rival: Concubine Plum,”  The Red Brush, 100-107✓
• “Hou Xiao-yu’s Story,”  An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 531-540✓
• “The Story of Yingying,”  An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 540-553✓

Fri 11/1  The Evil Queen
• Sima Qian,  Shiji 9: “The Basic Annals of Empress Lü” ✓

Week 10:
Tue 11/5  The One Woman Who Ruled Them All: Empress Wu Zetian
• Wills,  Mountain Of Fame, Ch. 9: “Empress Wu,” 127-148
• Rothschild,  Wu Zhao, Ch. 1: "What's in a Name" and Ch. 2: “Historical Preconditions for The Ascent of a Woman Emperor,” 1-16

Fri 11/8  Women Knight-errants and Female Warriors
• Fang, “The Women in the Carriage,” Tales from Tang Dynasty China, 31-4✓
• Fang, “Pan Jiangjun,” Tales from Tang Dynasty China, 62-67✓
• Ch. 32: “The Ballad of Mulan,” Images of Women✓

Week 11:
Tue 11/12  Women Among Barbarians
• “Abducted and Ransomed: Cai Yan,”  The Red Brush, 112-119✓

Fri 11/15  Poetesses & Courtesans
• "Poet and Traitor: Li Ye," The Red Brush, 176-182✓
• "Courtesan and Collator: Xue Tao" The Red Brush, 182-189✓
• "Concubine, Daoist Nun, and Murderer: Yu Yuanji" The Red Brush, 189-196 ✓

Week 12:
Tue 11/19  Scholar and Courtesans
• “The Story of Miss Li,” Images of Women, 401-414✓
• “Du Tenth Sinks the Jewel Box in Anger,” An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 835-856✓

Fri 11/22  Femme Fatales
• Bo Ju-yi, “Song of Lasting Pain,” An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 442-7

Week 13:

Tue 11/26  Mothers & Sons
• Ch. 38: “The Blood Tray Sutra,” Images of Women, pp. 291-293
• "The Yü-lan-p'en Sūtra"

Fri 11/29 Thanksgiving Break

Week 14:
Tue 12/3  Women in Traditional Chinese Theater (I)
• Qian Ma, “Injustice to Dou E,” Women in Traditional Chinese Theater, 45-88

Fri 12/6  Women in Traditional Chinese Theater (II)
• Birch, trans., The Peony Pavilion, Scene 10, 11, 12, pp. 42-62

Week 15:
Tue 12/10 Wrap up
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