

Perspectives on Gender in Chinese Philosophy

YHU 2332/Philosophy
Semester 2, AY 2022-23
Tuesdays and Fridays, 14:30-16:00

Instructor: Christine Abigail L. Tan

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Fridays (Please make an appointment in advance via:

<https://calendly.com/christine-tan-office-hours/consultation>)

Course Rationale:

This course will examine the different philosophical conceptions of gender and women in the history of Chinese Philosophy. We will think through the natures of gender and sexuality via varying Chinese intellectual traditions, from Confucianism and Daoism to Buddhism and Marxism. Discussions will oscillate between how the woman and/or gender is perceived in some of the primary classical texts of Chinese Philosophy, philosophical texts written by women for women, as well as contemporary works which use Chinese philosophical methodologies to think through and re-think notions of gender and femininity. By the course's end, students are expected to have acquired a critical awareness of the diversity and links between perspectives of Chinese thinkers on gender and women.

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand key thinkers in the history of Chinese philosophy in relation to the concept of gender
- Articulate and analyse the issues of gender and sexuality in the context of Chinese intellectual history
- Reflect on the notions of gender, sexuality, and feminism in Chinese philosophy against the backdrop of contemporary philosophical and political discourse on gender and feminism

Assessments:

- **Analytical essays** (~700 words each; **30%** of your final grade)

These are two close-reading essays about one of the texts we have read each. Your task for these two essays is to analyse certain argument/s from the text (using textual evidence) and provide a valid and sound interpretation. More specific instructions and guide prompts will be posted on Canvas at least two weeks before the due dates.

These are **due 13 February and 13 March, respectively**

- **Discussion posts** (*maximum* 300 words each; **15%** of your final grade)

These posts present an opportunity to guide your reading, and for you to begin to organize your thoughts through writing. I do not expect these posts to be well-polished and structured; you will expand on your posts during seminar, and potentially in an essay. I will post prompts in the 'Discussion' tab in Canvas every week, but you must choose only **FIVE** specific ones to respond to.

These are **due every Mondays** prior to the week's seminars.

- **Final Paper** (2500 words; **40%** of your final grade)

Your final essay is your term paper, which is the culmination of what you have learned during the course. This is a formal research paper, so you are expected to critically engage with ideas discussed during the course, as well as evaluate them, in order to make your own thesis and defend it with textual and logical support.

This is **due 30 April, 2023**

- **Seminar participation (15% of your final grade)**

As this is a small seminar course, your full participation is expected. However, do ensure that your engagements are informed, prepared, and respectful. Do also note that being able to listen to, as well as meaningfully respond to, what others are saying is an important part of participating in a conversation.

Required Reading Materials:

Pang-White, Ann A., ed. 2016. *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Chinese Philosophy and Gender*. London, England: Bloomsbury Academic. **[CPG]**
 Wang, Robin. 2003. *Images of Women in Chinese Thought & Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Hackett Publishing. **[IWCT]**

Course Structure/Schedule:

Week	Required readings T – F	Assessments due	
Women in Shang and Zhou Classics			
1 Mon, 9 Jan - Fri, 13 Jan	<i>Book of Changes</i> (IWCT, 25-45)	“The Yijing, Gender, and the Ethics of Nature” by Eric S. Nelson and Liu Yang (CPG 267-288)	DP 1: N/A
Confucianism and Gender			
2 Mon, 16 Jan - Fri, 20 Jan	<i>Mencius</i> (IWCT, 102-108) ; Man, E.K.W. (2000), Contemporary Feminist Body Theories and Mencius’s Ideas of Body and Mind. <i>Journal of Chinese Philosophy</i> , 27: 155- 169. https://doi.org/10.1111/0301-8121.00010	<i>Xunzi</i> (IWCT, 113-118); “Moral Reasoning: The Female Way and the Xunzian Way” by Ellie Hua Wang (141-157)	DP 2: 16 Jan
3 Mon, 23 Jan - Fri, 27 Jan	CNY (no classes)	1. <i>Lessons for Women by Ban Zhao</i> (IWCT, 177-188) 2. Rošker, J. S. (2020). Ban Zhao and the question of female philosophy in China. <i>Asian and African Studies</i> , 29(2), 239–260. https://repozitorij.uni- lj.si/IzpisGradiva.php?lang =eng&id=124701	DP 3: N/A
4 Mon, 30 Jan - Fri, 3 Feb	1. <i>The Analects for Women</i> by Song Ruoxin and Song Ruozhao (IWCT, 327-340) 2. Woo, T.T L. (2009), Emotions and Self- Cultivation in Nü Lunyu (Woman's Analects). <i>Journal of</i>	<i>The Book of Filial Piety for Women (nuxiaojing)</i> (IWCT, 372-390)	DP 4: 29 Jan

	<i>Chinese Philosophy</i> , 36: 334-347. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6253.2009.01522.x		
5 Mon, 6 Feb - Fri, 10 Feb	“Would Confucianism allow two Men to Share a peach? Compatibility between ancient Confucianism and homosexuality” by Sin-Yee Chan (CPG, 173-202)	Bai, T. (2021). Confucianism and Same-Sex Marriage. <i>Politics and Religion</i> , 14(1), 132-158. doi:10.1017/S1755048320000139	Analytical Essay 1 due: 13, February DP 5: 6 Feb

Daoism and Gender

6 Mon, 13 Feb - Fri, 17 Feb	1. <i>Dao De Jing</i> (IWCT, 67-72) 2. <i>Zhuangzi</i> (IWCT, 109-112)	Wang, Robin. “Dao Becomes Female A Gendered Reality, Knowledge, and Strategy for Living,” in Garry, A., Khader, S.J., & Stone, A. (Eds.). (2017). <i>The Routledge Companion to Feminist Philosophy</i> . Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315758152	DP 6: 13 Feb
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Sat,
18
Feb -
Sun,
26
Feb

Recess Week

7 Mon, 27 Feb - Fri, 3 Mar	“On the Dao of Ci (Feminine/Female) in the <i>Daodejing</i> ” by Lin Ma (CPG, 229-248);	Wang, Robin. “A Journey of Transformative Living: A Female Daoist Reflection,” in Thorgeirsdottir, S., Hagenruber, R. (Eds.) (2020). <i>Methodological Reflections on Women’s Contribution and Influence in the History of Philosophy. Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences</i> , vol 3. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44421-1_7	DP 7: 27 Feb
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8 Mon, 6 Mar - Fri, 10 Mar	Liu, J. (2022). Daoist Ecofeminism as a New Democracy: An Analysis of Patriarchy in Contemporary China and a Tentative Solution. <i>Hypatia</i> , 37(2), 276-292. doi:10.1017/hyp.2022.14	“Daoism and the LGBT Community” by Susan Scheibler (CPG, 289-304)	Analytical Essay 2 due: 13, March DP 8: 6 Mar
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Buddhism and Beyond

9 Mon, 13 Mar -	Lotus Sutra (IWCT 278-283; 284-290)	“Buddhist Nondualism: Deconstructing Gender and Other Delusions of the Discriminating Mind through	DP 9: 13 Mar
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Fri, 17 Mar		Awareness” by Sandra A. Wawrytko (CPG, 307-330)	
10 Mon, 20 Mar - Fri, 24 Mar	“Non-self, Agency, and Women: Buddhism’s Modern Transformation,” by Ann A. Pang-White (CPG, 331-356)	“Bhikṣuṇī Chao-hwei’s Buddhist-Feminist Social Ethics,” by Hsiao-Lan Hu (CPG, 377-378)	DP 10: 20 Mar
11 Mon, 27 Mar - Fri, 31 Mar	He-Yin Zhen, “On the Question of Women’s Liberation,” in Liu, Lydia H., Rebecca E. Karl, and Dorothy Ko, (eds.) (2013.) <i>The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory</i> . New York, NY: Columbia University Press. 53-71	“Economic Revolution and Women’s Revolution” in Liu, Lydia H., Rebecca E. Karl, and Dorothy Ko, (eds.) 2013. <i>The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory</i> . New York, NY: Columbia. 92-104	DP 11: 27 Mar
12 Mon, 3 Apr - Fri, 7 Apr	Nicola Spakowski; Socialist Feminism in Postsocialist China. <i>positions</i> 1 November 2018; 26 (4): 561–592	Good Friday (no classes)	DP 12: 3 Apr
13 Mon, 10 Apr - Fri, 14 Apr	Liu, Petrus. "Chapter 5. Queer Human Rights in and against the Two Chinas". <i>Queer Marxism in Two Chinas</i> , New York, USA: Duke University Press, 2015, pp. 138-170. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822375081-006	Concluding Remarks / Consultations	DP 13: N/A
Final paper due: 30 April			

Course Policies:

1. **Academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited.** Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic failing grade. Please cite all your sources, whether directly quoted or paraphrased. Do familiarize yourself with Yale-NUS’s policies on academic integrity to know more: <http://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/policies/academic-integrity/>
2. Please notify me in advance if you cannot make it to class. There will be no penalty for **absences**, but keep in mind that this will affect your participation grade. Each class that you do not attend is a class where you miss the opportunity to participate.
3. Please observe the **prescribed deadline for the submission of all your requirements.** Late submissions are accepted with an Assistant Dean’s note; otherwise, it will be docked one step (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) per day. In some extenuating circumstances however, I may grant extensions even without an AD note if requested in advance, and within a reasonable timeframe.

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus at her discretion.