Forum for China Studies at Uppsala University

Seminar

December 11th, 2015, 9:15-12.00

Venue: room 7-0043, campus Engelska parken

Gender and Ethnicity in China

China has undergone huge social and economic changes during the last 35-40 years, changes that have influenced people’s lives immensely, in some ways to the better, in some for the worse. There are also significant differences between Han-Chinese areas and minority areas. In this seminar we want to give a picture of how the concepts and questions concerning gender and ethnicity have been influenced due to the societal changes and how they are dealt with and discussed in today’s China.

Speakers

Ildikó Bellér-Hann, Associate Professor, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen

Cecilia Milwertz, Senior Researcher, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen

Marina Thorborg, Professor in Economic History, Institute of Development and International Cooperation, Södertörn University

Moderator: Helena Löthman, Lecturer in Chinese, Uppsala University

Programme

9:15-9:30 Introduction by Helena Löthman
9:30-10:00 Ildikó Bellér-Hann
10:00-10:35 Cecilia Milwertz (including presentation of Sino-Nordic Gender Studies Network)
10:35-10:50 Coffee break
10:50-11:20 Marina Thorborg
11:12-12:00 Discussion

During the break Queer/Tongzhi China (Elisabeth L. Engebretsen, William F. Schroeder and Hongwei Bao, eds), NIAS Press, 2015, will be for sale.
Abstracts

Ildikó Bellér-Hann
Based on my own research in southern and eastern Xinjiang as well as the available secondary literature, I shall start by giving a historical overview of Uyghur women’s position in Xinjiang, moving from an introduction to pre-socialist ideals of gender relations, to the major transformations under socialism followed by changes in the post-reform period. Focusing on selected aspects of women’s lives such as reproduction, production, education and veiling, I will point to the possibilities and limitations of Uyghur women’s choices against the backdrop of patriarchal structures shaped and influenced by local tradition, religion, as well as state policies.

Cecilia Milwertz
“Feminist organizing - from women’s NGOs to street activism”
I will talk about organizing to address gender issues rather than about gender issues as such, while I will also include some reflections on the gender issues that activists address. I will talk about the first women’s NGOs established in the late 1980 and early 1990s and focus on activism against the issue of violence against women and compare NGO activity over the past 20-25 years with some of the more recent radical street performance activities carried out by a younger generation of feminist activists.

Link to Sino-Nordic Gender Studies Network http://nias.ku.dk/fudan/sino-nordic-gender-studies-network

Marina Thorborg
I will focus on official policy on women from minority groups, especially Uighur and Tibetan. How official policy during some periods have particularly promoted them as role models, while during other periods they have suffered double discrimination for exactly the same reasons they were promoted in the first place, by being both women and minority. I will also dwell on how some expressions of Han-nationalism have worsened the policy on minorities, such as policy on religious expressions, for example during the last Ramadan.

Marina Thorborg has recently published Kvinnor i Kina: pirater, järnflickor och finanslejon, Atlantis, 2014

Contact person: Joakim Enwall, Professor of Chinese and Director of the Forum for China Studies at Uppsala University, joakim.enwall@lingfil.uu.se