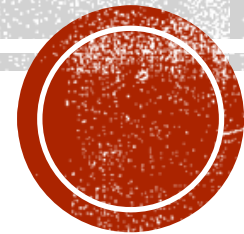


WOMEN OF MING CHINA

Hu Ying

UC Irvine



MY TOPICS FOR TODAY

- 1) **The Ming Dynasty**
- 2) **Women's friendship**
- 3) **Women healers**



TIMELINE: MIDDLE TO LATE IMPERIAL ERAS

- 618-907 Tang
- 907-1279 Song
- 1206-1368 Yuan
- **1368-1644 Ming**
(1461-1554 Tan Yunxian)
- 1644-1911 Qing



The Ming's Ruling Area Map

Land under the rule of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 AD)



www.chinahighlights.com

Shuntianfu (Beijing)

Yellow River

MING

Yingtianfu (Nanjing)

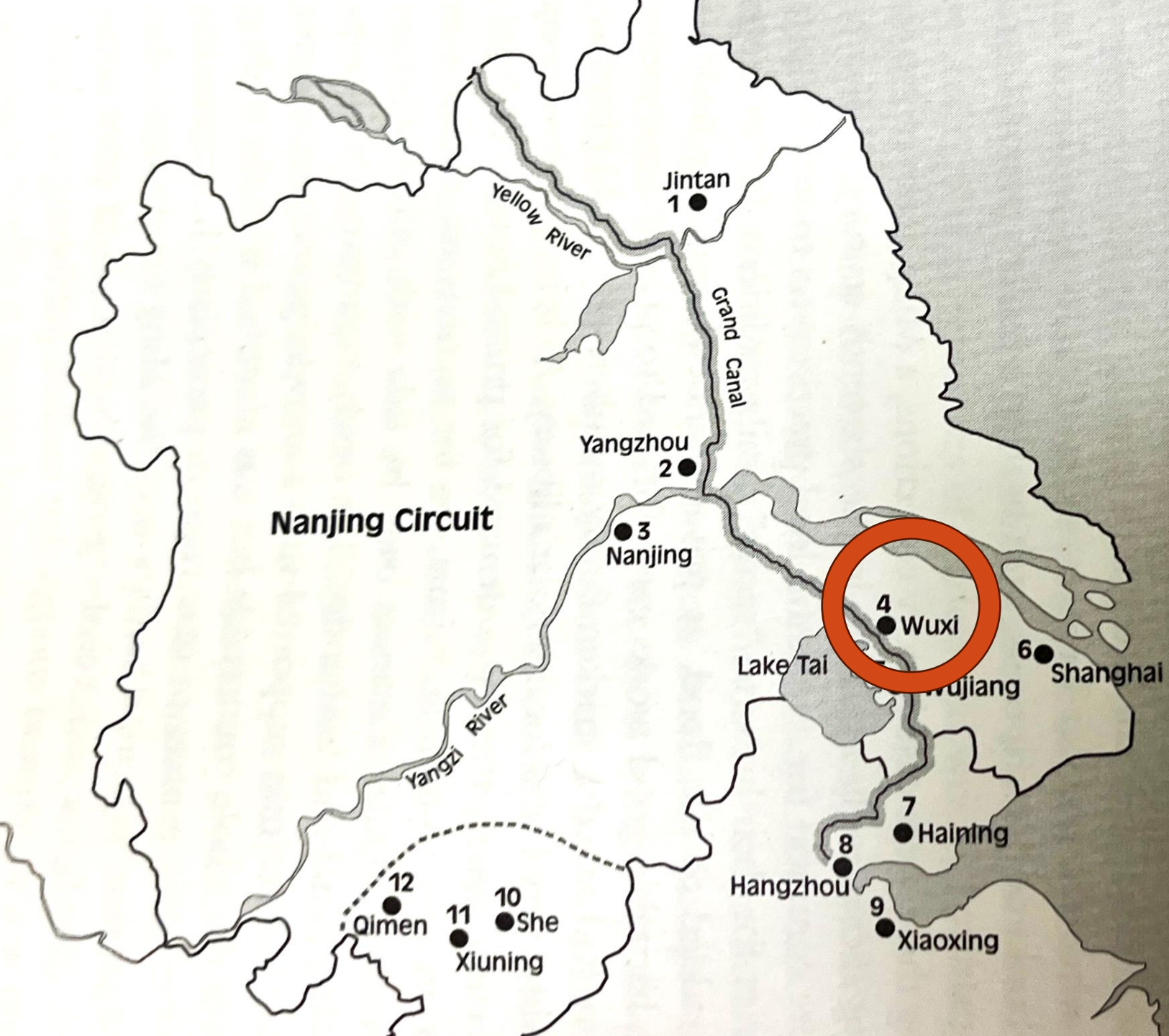
Chentianfu (Zhongxiang)

Yangtze River



-  Land under the rule of the Ming Dynasty
-  Capital (modern-day name)
-  Major city (modern-day name)
-  China's modern-day border





- Where the famous doctors were



2 KEY FEATURES OF THE MING

Piety

family

childrearing

Urbanity

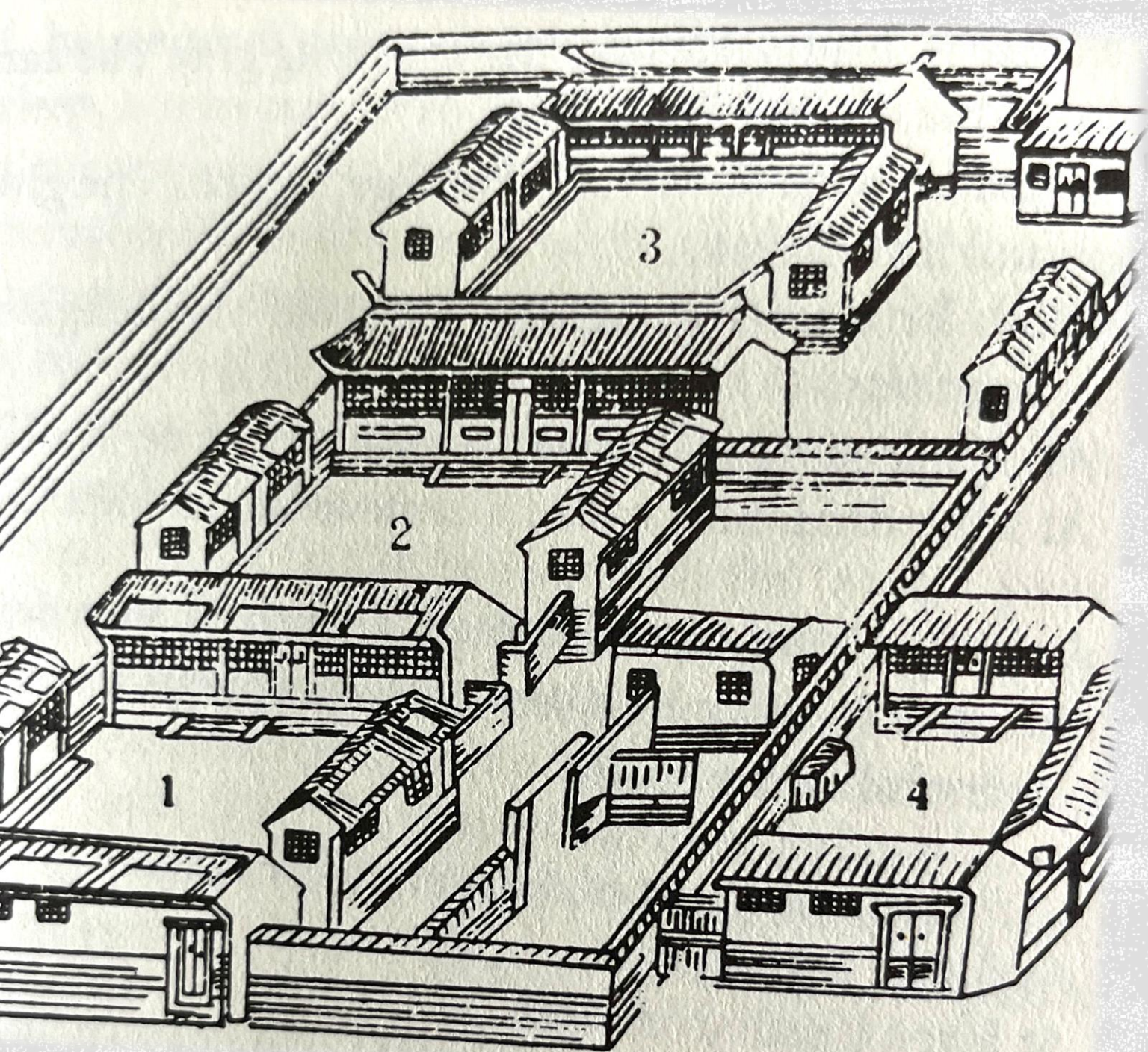
Employment

Publication

Friendship

Entertainment





“A GOOD WOMAN”

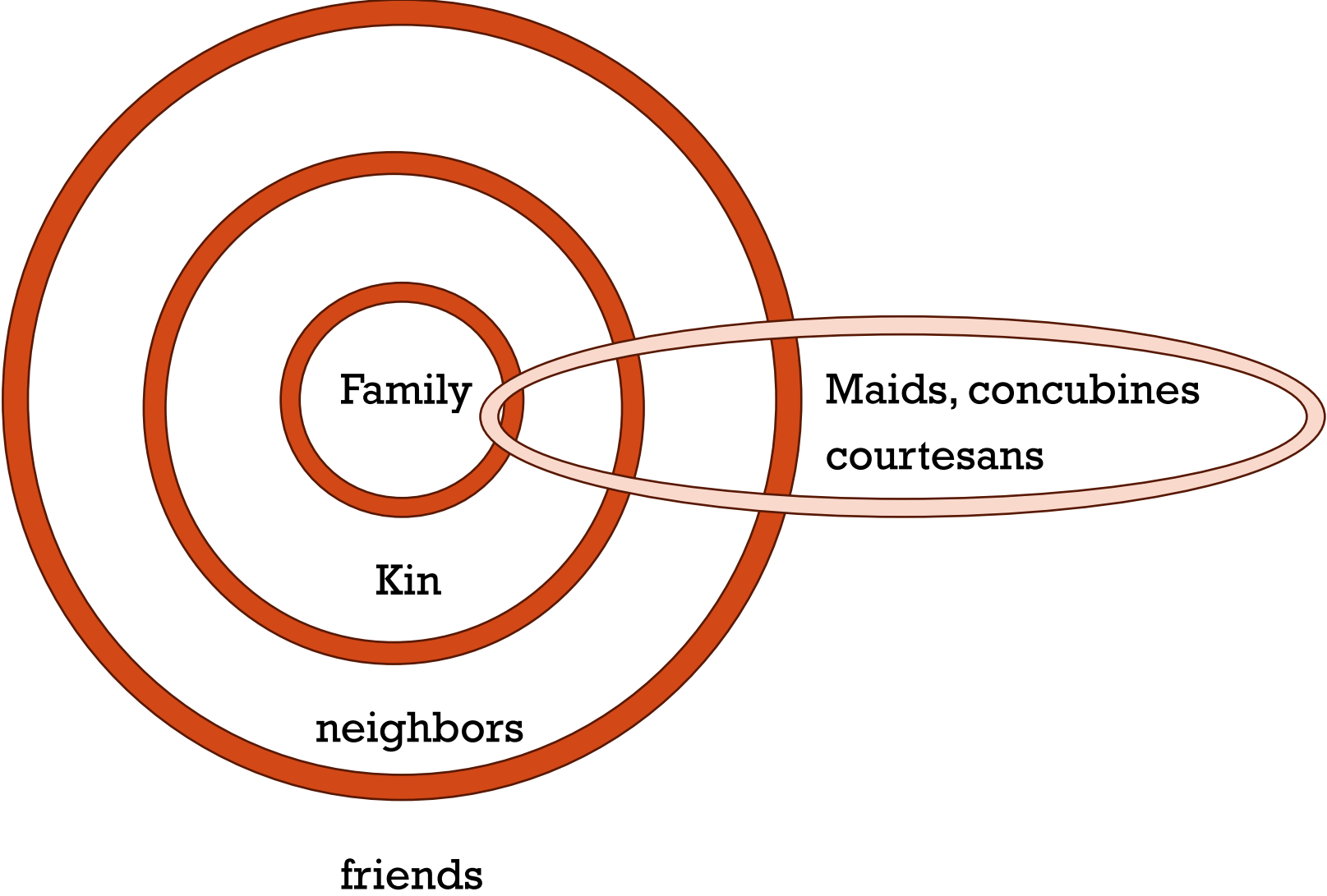
- Inside
- Three followings
(father, husband, son)
- Four virtues
(chastity, words, work, comportment)





WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP







WOMEN'S WORK

Weaver,
embroider

Merchants

Teachers

Healer and
midwives

Courtesans

Nuns

Writers/artists



CHINESE MEDICINE



- Yin-Yang cosmology
- Theory of the 5 elements
- Depletion and excess
- Holistic and targeted



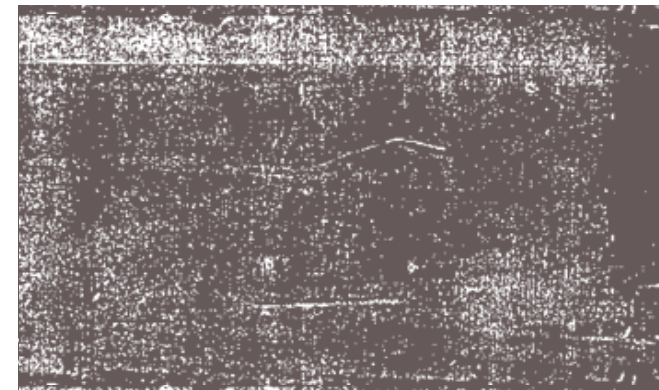
THERAPIES IN *LADY TAN*

- Healing herbs
- Variolation
- Acupuncture
- Moxibustion



PHYSICIANS

- Hereditary healers
- Literati doctors



头条@医易同源话岐黄





4 EXAMINATIONS

- **Looking**
- **Smelling**
- **Asking**
- **pulse-taking**

HERBALIST MIDWIFE





CHILD-BIRTH AND MIDWIFERY





**“DON’T EVER INVITE IN, FOR ANY REASON,
THE 3 AUNTIES AND 6 GRANNIES.”**





“I've had no old man since I've been thirty-six. He left me with a little boy, but no way to earn a living. So I set to work to ply the matchmaker's art of persuasion with people. After that, I made some clothes to sell to people in their homes, and then I was a midwife giving a squeeze to the middle to receive the little one. Also, I managed to play Madame Ma and make some introductions. I can do acupuncture and cure the sick as well, and also I can do certain handiwork.”

~ Granny Wang

from *Plum in a Golden Vase* (16th c)



Song of the Midwife

Here I am, Mistress Cai the midwife
My pair of feet both quick and light
My fancy gown of green and red
A stylish chignon astride my head
Flashing my bracelets filigree
Waving my kerchief of yellow moiré
Arriving, I deftly pocket the red-flower tip
Sitting down, I am ready to take charge of the
ship.
Ladies fine of mansions noble—
Yea, princesses of palace regal –

I teach them willy-nilly the basic things a woman
knows
I make them disrobe and strip off their clothes
For broadsided births I wield my knife dandily
For doleful labor I massage her most handily
As for placenta or cord just never you mind
Breaking them off, I use hands to untwine.
If they live we'll celebrate and I'll collect my fee
If they die you can bet you've seen the last of me.

~ Mistress Cai, *Plum in a Golden Vase*





Dangerous

- Indispensable knowledge
- Mobility
- independence

after 13th century

- OBG side-lined in medical lit.
- distance between male healer and female patients

LADY TAN IS *NOT* A GRANNIE!



LIFE CRISIS



SPECIAL DESTINY

life-threatening illness

miraculous recovery

supernatural visitation and blessing



DR. TAN'S DIAGNOSIS

- Overwork
- Gestational damage
- Repressed anger
- Overwhelming grief



A Flourishing Yin

GENDER IN CHINA'S
MEDICAL HISTORY, 960-1665

CHARLOTTE FURTH



THANK YOU!

