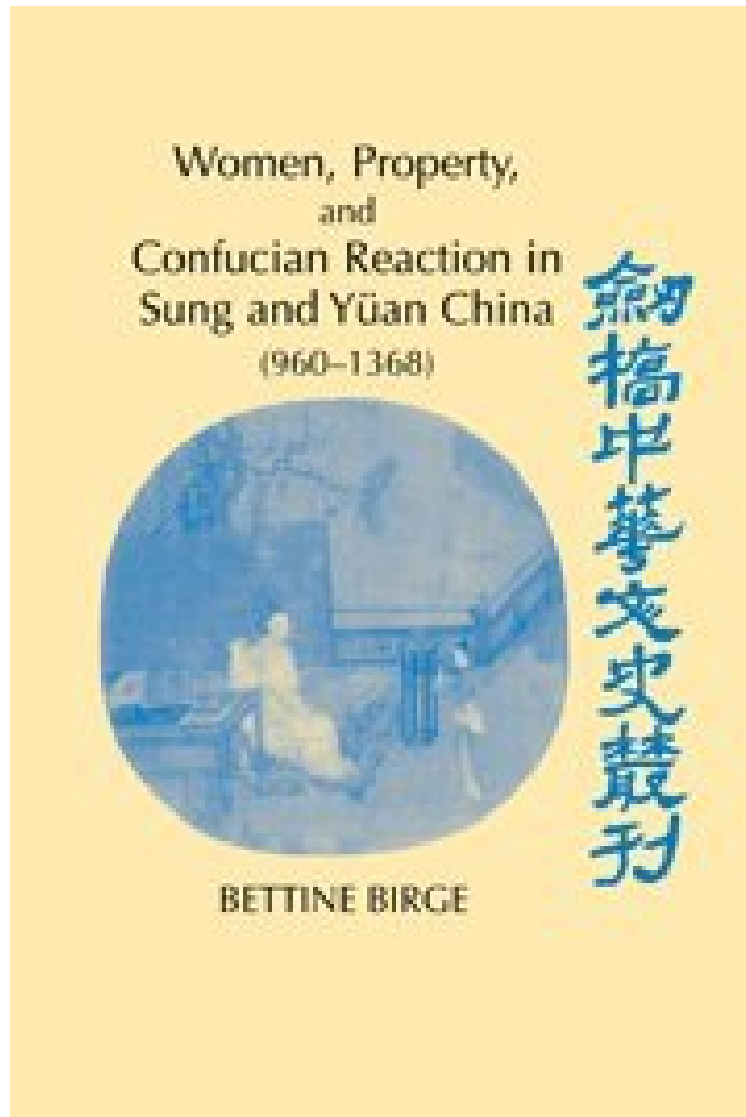


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## Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction in Sung and Yan China (960-1368) (Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature and Institutions)

*Professor Bettine Birge*

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This book dispels many myths of what Chinese traditions were, or are. Looking at court cases from Southern China during the Mongol Yuan Dynasty, Birge finds that the Mongols did indeed have a lasting impact on the Chinese. The areas that had gone through most change was the state patronage of Neo Confucianism, marriage practices and female inheritance law. All of these aspects influenced each other, contributing to a widow's continual residence in her deceased husband's household, and the eventual cult of widow chastity.

This book argues that the Mongol invasion of China in the thirteenth century precipitated a lasting transformation of marriage and property laws that deprived women of their property rights and reduced their legal and economic autonomy. It describes how indigenous social change combined with foreign invasion and cultural confrontation to bring laws more into line with the goals of the radical Confucian philosophers, who wished to curtail women's financial and personal autonomy. This book provides a reevaluation of the Mongol invasion and its influence on Chinese law and society, and presents a new look at the changing position of women in premodern China.

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