New Series:
The Intimate and the Public in Asian and Global Perspectives

Series Editor: Emiko Ochiai, Kyoto University

For more information please visit brill.com/ipap

Since the 1970s, the world has been facing fundamental social change at both the macro-level, such as the impact of globalization and the restructuring of the welfare state, and at the micro-level with issues relating to family and individual lives. It is increasingly accepted that the type of welfare regime heavily influences people’s decision to marry or to have children as well as the relationship between genders. Likewise, the transnational migration of care-workers impacts on the way of life and quality of life of the elderly in the growing number of aged societies around the world as well as on the workers’ own families back in their home countries. This series linking family research, social policy and migration studies, sets out to shed light at many levels and in a wide variety of contexts on this key twenty-first century issue that could be termed a “reconstruction of the intimate and the public” from an interdisciplinary and global perspective. There is a special focus on Asia where dynamic social changes are resulting in unsustainable societies with extremely low fertility; yet it is such countries that are witnessing the rise in marriage migration to fill the gender gap caused by a skewed sex ratio at birth. Also addressed are issues arising from the alleged convergence of European welfare retrenchment on the one hand, and on the other, the Asian struggle to establish basic welfare state structures at a time of state budget cuts thereby posing the fundamental question regarding the nature of sustainable welfare provision.

Ryōsai Kenbo
The Educational Ideal of ‘Good Wife, Wise Mother’ in Modern Japan

Koyama Shizuko, Kyoto University

• November 2012
• ISBN 978 90 04 23061 3
• Hardback (approx. 208 pp.)
• List price EUR 65.- / US$ 90.-
• The Intimate and the Public in Asian and Global Perspectives, 1

The famous ryōsai kenbo, or ‘good wife, wise mother’ role of women was not, after all, a traditional Confucian view but a modern construct. In fact, its first appearance in Japan, as Koyama Shizuko points out, was in the latter half of the nineteenth century – due principally to the influence of European ideas about women. Girls at the time were proud to fulfill their new role of contributing to not just the family but to the formation of the state. Koyama’s discovery has transformed how we see modern women’s history in Japan and the similar discoveries that have followed regarding Chinese ‘wise wife, good mother’ and Korean ‘wise mother, good wife.’ Previous studies have interpreted ryōsai kenbo thought, which was widely recognized in nationally-sanctioned educational standards, as a ‘backward’, ‘feudal’ or even ‘reactionary’ view of women, and therefore peculiar to girls’ and women’s education in prewar Japan. As a result, ryōsai kenbo thought was seen to be completely distinct from postwar views of women in Japan and Western Europe that have also emphasized the role of women as wives and mothers. Here, however, ryōsai kenbo thought is examined as a mode of thought inseparable from such issues as the formation of the modern citizen-state and the formation of the ‘modern family.’ Instead of reducing it to a specific, pre-World War II Japanese ideal of womanhood, Koyama argues that ryōsai kenbo thought is, in fact, a modern mode of thought related to, and having much in common with, views of the qualities desirable in a woman both in postwar Japanese society, as well as in modern Western nations and beyond.
Images of Familial Intimacy in Eastern and Western Art

Edited by Toshiharu Nakamura, Kyoto University

Images of Familial Intimacy in Eastern and Western Art offers a comparative art and socio-historical analysis of selected images of familial intimacy in Asia and Europe from the pre-modern era to the present day based on an examination of the value systems and expectations obtained at the time in the regions in which the works were created. A wide variety of images are discussed ranging from family portraits and depictions of the home to sliding wall panels of the Edo period, to familial images made after the Korean War of 1950-53, providing the reader with a rare insight into the evolution East and West of the cultural norms and customs impacting on the family and personal space.