YENNA WU—“FLESH FOR HEALING:
EXPLORING THE MULTIFACETED DIMENSIONS OF GEGU LIAOQIN
割股療親 THROUGH A CHINESE CASE AND A KOREAN COUNTERPART”

Gegu liaoqin 割股療親 literally means to cut a piece of flesh from one’s thigh in order to cure a seriously ailing parent or relative. I will discuss the sociocultural dimensions of this practice, its controversy in the context of Confucian discourse on filial piety, and its connection with Buddhist discourse on bodily sacrifice. While focusing on the literary representations of a fourteenth-century Chinese girl’s filial self-mutilation, I will also explore the significance in a comparable case from early fifteenth-century Korea.

Dr. Yenna Wu is Professor of Chinese at the University of California, Riverside. Her numerous publications include The Chinese Virago (1995), The Lioness Roars (1995), Ameliorative Satire (1999), Chinese the Easy Way (co-authored, 1999), The Great Wall of Confinement (co-authored, 2004), Remolding and Resistance (co-edited, 2006), Me and China (co-authored, 2008), Human Rights, Suffering, and Aesthetics (co-edited, 2011), and Li Ang’s Visionary Challenges to Gender, Sex, and Politics (edited, 2014).