

Feb. 24, 2004

QUESTIONS ON WOLF, *HOUSE OF LIM*

1. How does the patrilineal Chinese family differ from that of contemporary middle-class America?
2. Contrast the role of religion in the Lim family with that of families in the U.S.
3. What are the sources of strains that occur between fathers and sons in rural Taiwanese families?
4. What are the economic functions of families like the Lims?
5. The Lims represented an ideal for rural Taiwanese families that was by no means the statistical norm. What was this ideal and why was it so difficult to achieve?
6. Discuss the position of women within families like the Lims. What alternatives were there for rural Taiwanese women at the time, if any?
7. In what ways were the changes being experienced by all of Taiwan having an impact on the Lim family during the time of Margery Wolf's research?
8. What sorts of power do fathers have in these kinds of families? Mothers? Children?
9. Describe relations between brothers, as illustrated by the Lims. What factors contributed towards amicable relations? Towards conflict?
10. How does the rural Taiwanese family differ from modern-day America with respect to functions of the larger kin group—the larger “family”?
11. What in this book confirmed your stereotype of rural Chinese families? What surprised you?
12. What in this book made you rethink relationships within your own family?
13. Contrast rural Taiwan and present-day America with respect to values people hold about family—what the family is supposed to do, how people should behave within families.
14. Contrast family honor as depicted in this book with your notions of family honor.
15. Discuss ancestor worship and loyalty and obedience to parents as illustrated in the U.S. and in Taiwan.