

# Princeton University

Honors Faculty Members  
Receiving Emeritus Status



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# Susan Naquin



Susan Naquin, professor of history and East Asian studies, retires from the Princeton faculty after twenty years of distinguished service. She is an eminent historian of late imperial China, and her scholarship has set a new standard of analytical rigor and methodological originality for her field.

After completing her undergraduate studies at Stanford University in 1966, Sue spent a year in Taiwan studying Chinese. She received her Ph.D. from Yale University in 1974. She taught at the University of Pennsylvania for seventeen years before coming to Princeton in 1993.

Sue was among the first historians from abroad to conduct research in the Qing archives, both in Taipei and Beijing. Her first book, *Millenarian Rebellion in China: The Eight Trigrams Uprising of 1813* (1976), made masterful use of interrogations of captured rebels to tell the story of a group of millenarians, who coordinated uprisings in three provinces and launched a daring attack on the imperial palace. More than thirty years after its original publication, it remains a classic and a must-read for aspiring historians of China. *Shantung Rebellion: The Wang Lun Uprising of 1774* (1981) continued the investigation of popular rebellion, with the absorbing history of a charismatic leader and his communities of followers in North China. *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900* (2000) was a magisterial exploration of religious institutions and material culture in the capital city. With unparalleled depth of empirical research and analysis, she showed how Peking and its temples facilitated the vibrant cultural, religious, and economic life of Ming and Qing China. With Evelyn Rawski, she also coauthored *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century* (1987), and with Chün-fang Yü, *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China* (1992), an important conference volume.

The many honors that Sue has received in her career include the Award for Scholarly Distinction from the American Historical

Association, and fellowships from the Fulbright-Hays Program, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and the American Council of Learned Societies. As editorial board member of several major journals, she has been an active contributor to the field.

At Princeton, Sue served as chair of the East Asian studies department from 2001 to 2005, and as acting chair in 2007-08. She has been instrumental in fostering the study of East Asia across the University, advising students from many different departments. Sue's directness, generosity, and skepticism of received wisdom are legendary on campus. The long queue of students regularly waiting outside her office to seek her counsel testifies to an abiding commitment to teaching and mentoring. In weekly writing workshops, Sue has helped several generations of graduate students improve their prose and arguments. For her exceptional devotion to graduate teaching, she received the Graduate Mentoring Award in 2009. She has been a valued colleague, to whom all turn for advice, knowing that "Sue is usually right." Those who have benefitted from her searching criticisms and unwavering support are too many to enumerate. In her next act as professor emerita, we are fortunate to know that we can continue to rely on her as the fount of sensible advice and model for scholarship.