

IMPERIAL CHINA

HIST/CAPS 1740 /ASIAN 1174 • Spring 2016 •

Lectures: MW 2:30-3:20 • TBA

Sections Th 2:30-3:20, 3:35-4:25 • TBA

Instructor:

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Teaching Assistant:

TBA

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This course explores the history of imperial China between the 3rd century B.C.E. and the 16th century C.E. with a focus on the following questions: How did imperial Chinese states go about politically unifying diverse peoples over vast spaces? How did imperial Chinese approaches to governance and to relations with the outer world compare with strategies employed by other historical empires? How did those approaches change over time? How did major socio-cultural formations — including literary canons; religious and familial lineages; marketing networks; and popular book and theatrical cultures — grow and take root, and what were the broader ramifications of those developments? How did such basic configurations of human difference as Chinese (civilized)-barbarian identity, high-low status, and male-female gender operate and change over time?

Course Goals and Methods: • Develop new ways of thinking about the dynamics of historical change comparatively, with a focus on China's imperial period. • Acquire and refine skills in historical analysis, focusing on the critical interpretation of sources and their use in developing and substantiating arguments. • Learn content and skills simultaneously through processes of active reading and listening, articulate oral and written expression, creative group brainstorming, and rigorous argument-building.

Code of Conduct:

All classroom behavior should be characterized by civility, attentiveness, and respect. This includes not using electronic devices during class time, even computers for note-taking. If you think you qualify for an exception, see the instructor.

All coursework should be performed with integrity. Plagiarism or cheating will result in hearings, a report to the dean's office, and an F. In class we will discuss what plagiarism and cheating are and how to avoid them, but you should also make sure that you understand the issues. See <<http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>>.

Requirements

Participation	15%
Includes attendance at all scheduled classes, participation in lectures and sections, group discussions, and presentations. Bring the assigned primary source readings to section, and be prepared to discuss them. Preparation includes thinking about the study questions. If you cannot attend class because of illness or for other pressing reasons, let your section instructor know, if possible in advance. If you miss a class, be sure to get copies of notes from a classmate and check Blackboard for the posting of lecture outlines and suggested readings. Students can miss one unexcused section without penalty.	
Pop Quizzes (4)	10%
Short answer quizzes given at the end of lecture. Questions will concern understanding of lecture content; it will help to take good notes during lecture and to do the week's readings in advance. We will discuss and experiment with note-taking strategies in class. Lowest quiz grade will be dropped.	
Short Writing Exercises[†]	10%
Plagiarism quiz plus two one- to two-paragraph exercises (due weeks 2, 5, 7)	
Short Research/Critical Analysis Reports	15%
2 pages each (due weeks 9, 11) [†]	
Short Essay[†]	10%
3-5 pages (due week 13)	
Final In-class Examination	20%
(short answers, May XX)	
Final Essay[†]	20%
(5-7 pages, due May XX)	



[†] **Essays:** See Blackboard for resources on writing and citing sources, and for information on grading. Write all essays using standard college essay formatting: one-inch margins, 12-point serifed font (like Times, not like Helvetica), double line spacing, and proper citations. Penalty-free extensions will be granted if requested by the evening before they are due. When requesting extensions, or if ill as soon as you are able, give your section instructor a reasonable extension deadline, usually of one or two days. Late penalties will be 1/3 grade (e.g., A- → A-/B+)/day.

Communications:

Blackboard: Assignments, Recommended Additional Readings, and other information will be posted on Blackboard. If you were not automatically enrolled in the site through pre-registration, contact your section instructor to enroll you.

Email: You will receive course announcements by email through Blackboard and therefore through your Cornell email account. Be sure to check your Cornell email regularly.


Key to Readings:

Course Reader

book (**CC** or **Early Chinese Empires**)

Internet site linked directly from the Blackboard page for that week

Available at Uris Reserve and Cornell Bookstore:

Course Reader for “Imperial China”

CC: *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2nd. Revised and Expanded edition, Ebrey, Patricia, ed. New York: The Free Press, 1993, 2009. [Also available as eBook.]

Lewis, Mark Edward. *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007. [Also available as eBook.]


1. Introduction: Asia and China in Space, Time, and Imagination

XXX

Today it is hard to imagine the Eurasian continent other than as divided between “Europe” and “Asia,” and to imagine “East Asia” other than as consisting of the nations of China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. In political division and in ethno-cultural imagination, however, Eurasia was not always divided in these ways. How did these divisions come about? What are the implications of the historicity of Chinese (and other) polities and identities?

PART I: EMPIRE-BUILDING
2. Unification and Centralization

XXX

The Qin and Han regimes succeeded in unifying and centrally administering territories of far greater extent than any previous polity in the East Asian region. In what ways did geographic conditions, received traditions of governance, and specific patterns of inter-polity relations influence Qin and Han strategies? What were their major institutional innovations and legacies?

Early Chinese Empires: “Introduction,” “The Geography of Empire,” “A State Organized for War,” 1-50.

3. Rulership and Succession

XXX

What were the Qin and Han innovations to the roles of the ruler, and to the ideologies of rulership? What were the contradictions inherent in the new model of “emperor” (*huangdi*)? How did contemporary writings, such as the *Huainanzi* and those of Dong Zhongshu, frame the issues? What were the points of disagreement and common ground? In what ways did they tie their visions of rulership to greater cosmological and moral order(s)?

Key concepts: emperor (*huangdi*), non-active (*wuwei*), potency/virtue/power (*de*)

Early Chinese Empires: “Paradoxes of Empire,” 51-74.

CC: “The Metal Bound Box,” 6-7.

Note the tension in this account between the heredity and merit principles of ruler legitimacy and succession, as embodied in “mandates” from and communication with two sources of

divine authority. The Zhou dynasty justified its conquest of the Shang of the last Shang ruler having been so tyrannical and lacking in virtue that Heaven shifted its Mandate to the Zhou. All later regimes laid claim to conquest of the previous dynasty and to continued right to rule on the basis holding the Mandate of Heaven. Loss of Mandate could be signaled by anomalies in weather such as those described in “Metal Bound Box.”

📖 LIU An, *The Huainanzi: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China*, John S. Major, et. al., trans., (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), Passages 9.1-9.5 (pp. 295-300).

Liu An was the first and last King of Huainan, one of the fiefdoms granted to members of the imperial Liu family early in the Han. The *Huainanzi* as we have it today is an edited and abridged version of works which Liu An commissioned from scholars and adepts whom he had gathered at his court. In 122 B.C.E. Liu was accused of sedition. His entire family executed, his property confiscated, and his realm abolished, he committed suicide.¹

📖 “Guidelines for Han Rulers,” selections by Dong Zhongshu, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1: *From Earliest Times to 1600*, William Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds., (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 284-301.

4. Governance

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In the primary source readings for this week we see arguments about how government institutions and administration should operate. How did Han writers frame the issues? What were the points of disagreement and of common ground?

Key concepts: bureaucracy, office, law, punishment, rites/ritual, transformation through teaching/education/instruction).

📖 **Early Chinese Empires:** “Law,” 227-252.

📖 **CC:** “Penal Servitude in Qin Law,” 51-53.

📖 Mark Csikszentmihalyi, “Law and Punishment,” *Readings in Han Chinese Thought*, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006), 23-47.

📖 TJ Hinrichs, “Transformation through Teaching.”

📖 *Huainanzi*, Passages 9.6-9.9, 9.14-9.19, 9.23 (300-303, 307-314, 320-321).

📖 Brian E. McKnight and James T. C. Liu, trans., “Encouragement of a Filial Son and Punishment of an Unfilial Son,” *The Enlightened Judgments Ch’ing-Ming Chi: The Sung Dynasty Collection*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 371-372.

This translation is from a collection of local officials’ legal case records that was compiled in 1261 in Fujian. Such collections, usually of exemplary decisions on difficult cases, circulated since at least the tenth century as a resource for officials. Note that the transliterations are in Wade Giles rather than pinyin.

5. Politics of Writing & Culture

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In what ways did Han rulers and officials use writing and culture as an instrument of power, and how did they see its efficacy? In what ways did different types of writing produce different

¹ See Lewis, *Early Chinese Empires*, 20; Major, *The Huainanzi*, 7-13.

approaches to the nature of empire? How did Sima Qian view his own historical writing in relation to his own life as a political actor? How did Dong Zhongshu theorize the efficacy of writing?

📖 **Early Chinese Empires:** “Literature,” 206-226.

📖 “Si-ma Qian (ca. 145-ca. 85 B.C.),” Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), 135-144.

📖 Selections modified by TJ Hinrichs from: SIMA Qian, “The Five Emperors, Basic Annals 1,” *The Grand Scribe's Records, Volume I: The Basic Annals of Pre-Han China by Su-ma Ch'ien* [Sima Qian], William H. Nienhauser, et. al., trans., (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 1-19.

📖 Dong Zhongshu selections continued, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1, 302-310.

6. Inner-Outer & Politics of Difference

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What were the major models by which the Han courts and Han writers framed and dealt with difference among the diverse populations within and around the Han territories? What were the various models by which the Han and later regimes structured relations between their own and other polities? What influenced strategic choices among alternative models of difference and of inter-polity relations?

📖 **Early Chinese Empires:** “The Outer World,” 128-154.

📖 Wang Yuan-kang, “Explaining the Tribute System: Power, Confucianism, and War in Medieval East Asia,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 13. 2 (May-August 2013):207-232.

📖 **CC:** “The World Beyond China,” “The Debate on Salt and Iron,” 54-56, 60-63.

📖 TJ Hinrichs, “Excerpts on Barbarians”

7. An Inner Asian Perspective

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What is the point of periodization, and why do historians contest it? What perspectives do standard periodization frameworks for Chinese history put at the center. For example, what do terms such as “dynastic,” “ancient,” “imperial,” “medieval,” and “early modern” periods suggest?

In what ways were Inner Asian peoples integral to imperial Chinese history? Di Cosmo critiques previous theories of Inner Asian political dynamics: what were earlier theories, and on what bases does Di Cosmo critique them? Do you find Di Cosmo’s framework compelling? Why or why not?

Note: Monday, October 6, we will have a session on library research with Virginia Cole. Bring your laptops!

📖 Chart: “Standard Periodization for Chinese History”

📖 Nicola Di Cosmo, “State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History,” *Journal of World History* 10.1 (Spring 1999): 1-40.

PART II: NON-STATE SOCIAL FORMATIONS

8. Early Religious Movements and “Daoism”

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What were the social dynamics by which trans-local magico-religious movements, traditions, and organizations emerged in the Warring States and Han periods? On what basis did such disparate figures, groups, and their writings come to be lumped together retrospectively as “Teachings of the Dao,” in contradistinction to “Teachings of Buddha” and “Teachings of Classicists/Traditionalists/Confucians.” What produced this kind of generic categorizing, and why would it persist through time, so that even scholars today tend to speak of “Daoism” as though it were a singular entity? In what ways did “Teachings” continue to interact with local cults and traditions over time?

☞ **Early Chinese Empires:** “Religion,” 178-205.

📖 TJ Hinrichs, “A Late Han Adept,” *Chinese Medicine and Healing: An Illustrated History*, TJ Hinrichs and Linda Barnes, eds., (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 53-55.

📖 Wu Hung, “Mapping Early Taoist Art: The Visual Culture of Wudoumi Dao,” *Taoism and the Arts of China*, Stephen Little and Shawn Eichman, eds., (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2000), 77-93.

☞ **CC:** “Local Cults,” “Uprisings,” “Ge Hong’s Autobiography,” 80-85, 91-96.

📖 Peter Nickerson, “Abridged Codes of Master Lu for the Daoist Community,” *Religions of China in Practice*, 347-359.

📖 Paul R. Katz, “Plague God Cults,” *Chinese Medicine and Healing*, 119-121.

9. Evangelism and Competition

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In what ways did Daoist and Buddhist practices come into conflict with each other, and with other (family, community, state) forms of social relations? What strategies did Buddhists and Daoists use to displace local cults and “shamans,” and to compete for converts and patronage?

📖 Mark Lewis, “Daoism and Buddhism,” *China between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 196-220.

☞ **CC:** “Buddhist Doctrines and Practices,” 97-104.

📖 TJ Hinrichs, “Shamans and Adepts: Overview of Basic Issues with Primary Source Translations”

📖 “The Introduction of Buddhism,” “Miracles of Guanyin,” *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1, 415-429, 531-536.

10. Examinations & the Rise of the Literati-Gentry

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What were the major innovations to the civil service examination system and its role in official recruitment between the Tang and Qing periods? What were the ramifications of changes to the examination system for status structures and for social mobility?

Key concepts: *shi* (pronounced “sure”), *shidafu* (pron. “sure-dah-foo”), meritocracy

- 📖 Peter K. Bol, “The New World of the Eleventh Century: 750 and 1050 compared” — “Social Change,” *Neo-Confucianism in History*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), 30-42.
- 📖 Benjamin A. Elman, “A Society in Motion: The Unexpected Consequences of Meritocracy in Late Imperial China, 1400-1900,” in *The East Asian Challenge for Democracy: Political Meritocracy in Comparative Perspective*, Daniel A. Bell and Chenyang Li, eds., (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 203-231.
- 📖 **CC**: “The Examination System,” “A Scholar-Painter’s Diary,” 128-131, 199-201.
- 📖 Robert Foster, trans., “Su Shi, ‘Parable of the Sun,’” *Hawai’i Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture*, Victor Mair, et. al., eds., (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), 388-389.
- 📖 Alister David Inglis, “The Candle and the Flower Lyric of the Small Pavilion,” “Zhang Zhu’s Dream,” *Hong Mai’s Record of the Listener and Its Song Dynasty Context*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 10-11, 95-96.

These two selections are translations of pieces recorded by Hong Mai (1123-1202) in his *Record of the Listener (Yijianzhi)*, a vast collection of anecdotes from his own personal history (as in the first case) and told to him by friends and correspondents (as in the second case). The *Record*, which became extremely popular, was something of a life work for Hong; he published it in a series of installments between 1161 and 1198. Most of the anecdotes have to do with encounters with occult forces and beings, or with mundane but in some way strange or unusual events.

- 📖 McKnight and Liu, “Examinations,” *The Enlightened Judgments*, 138-141.

See note under Week 4.

- 🌐 Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “A Visual Sourcebook of Chinese Civilization”:
 “Landscape Painting,” <<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/painting/4ptglnds.htm>>;
 “Scholar’s Painting,” <<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/painting/4ptgschl.htm>>. Follow the links on each page. Follow the “Move on to” links at the bottom of each page to explore Northern Song, Southern Song, and Yuan landscape painting.
 Optional: “Court Painting” (Why would the painting styles valued at court differ from those of scholar officials? What was new in garden planning in the Song period?)
 “Origins of Garden Design,” <<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/home/3garhist.htm>>. (Optional: Explore the following section on “Garden Design.”)
- 📖 Wu Ching-Tzu (Wu Jingzi), *The Scholars*, Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, trans., (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1973), 26-39.

11. Family and Social Reproduction

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What historical processes led to the emergence of new forms of family organization in Song-Ming China? How did those new social structures affect strategies of social reproduction and family values? What is the “uterine family,” and how does it relate to family structures, values, and social reproduction?

- 📖 Lewis, “Kinship,” *Early Chinese Empires*, 155-177.

- 📖 Bol, "Society" — "An Alternative for the Family in the Song and Yuan," *Neo-Confucianism in History*, 236-246.
- 📖 CC: "Rules for the Fan Lineage's Charitable Estate," "Ancestral Rites," "Family Instructions," 155-163, 238-244.
- 📖 Francesca Bray, "Machines for Living: Domestic Architecture and the Engineering of the Social Order in Late Imperial China," *Technology, Gender and History in Imperial China Great Transformations Reconsidered*, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 39-55.
- 🌐 Patricia Buckley Ebrey, "A Visual Sourcebook of Chinese Civilization":
"Homes," <<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/home/3homintr.htm>>
Explore "House Architecture" and "Interiors."
- 📖 Margery Wolf, "Uterine Families and the Women's Community," *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), 32-41.

12. Gender & Sexuality

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In what ways did gender roles and constructions of gender and sexuality change in the late imperial period? How did Song-Qing writers frame the bases of gender difference and sexual preference?

- 📖 Martin W. Huang, "Introduction," *Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 1-9.
- 📖 Charlotte Furth, "Blood, Body and Gender: Medical Images of the Female Condition in China 1600-1850," reprinted in *Chinese Femininities/Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, Susan Brownell and Jeff Wasserstrom, eds., (University of California Press 2002), 291-314.
- 📖 CC: "Women and the Problems They Create," "Shi Jin the Nine-Dragoned," "Widows Loyal unto Death," 164-168, 226-237, 253-255.
- 📖 Li Yu, "A Male Mencius's Mother Raises Her Son Properly By Moving House Three Times," *Silent Operas*, Patrick Hanan, trans., (Hong Kong: Research Centre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1990), 99-134.

13. Commercialization & Commodification

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What new social groups and practices did commercialization produce? What were the implications of commercialization for those groups' daily lives?

- 📖 Bol, "The New World of the Eleventh Century: 750 and 1050 compared" — "Commerce and Urbanization," *Neo-Confucianism in History*, 23-29.
- 📖 CC: "Commercial Activities," "What the Weaver Said," "Tenants," "Concubines," 213-225, 245-252.
- 📖 "Selections from the *New Book of Swindles (Dupian xinshu)* by Zhang Yingyu," Bruce Rusk, trans., unpublished manuscript.
- 📖 Dorothy Ko, "Cinderella's Dreams: The Burden and Uses of the Female Body," *Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 187-195, 199-220.

14. Urbanization**XXX**

In lecture we will discuss how patterns of urban planning and development changed between the Tang and the Song, and will outline distinctive patterns of urban-rural market integration that emerged during periods of commercial prosperity. As you read and examine the Qingming Scroll, consider

 **CC**: “The Attractions of the Capital,” 178-185.

 Michael Szonyi, et. al., “Digital East Asian Studies @ Harvard University” — “The Qingming Scroll: Online Module”
 <<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k7403&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup95937>>
 <http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~icgzmod/qingming_student.html>

15. Review, Final Exam, Final Paper**XXX**

The capstone work for this course consists of an in-class (45 minute) final exam and a final essay (5-7 pages). We will distribute final exam questions during Week 13 to give you time to go over them. We recommend that you review your course notes before Monday’s class so that you can bring questions to the review session.

Monday, May **X** lecture time: semester recap and review

Wednesday, May **X** lecture time: in-class examination

Sections Thursday, May **X**: Discuss final essay topics

Dec 10: Final Essay due May **X**