Late Imperial China, 900-1800, AD
History 508-340

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Course description:
This is an upper division survey course of Chinese history from the 10th to the 1800. In surveying the history of the six dynasties which span between 900 and 1800, we will trace the major historical changes and continuities in politics, cultural life, and inter-ethnic relations of late imperial China. As the non-Han steppe nations such as the Khitans, the Jurchens, the Mongols, and the Manchu dominated this period of Chinese history and culture, their roles in the formation of the culture and society of what we now call imperial China will be emphasized. We will look at how these steppe nations interacted with the sedentary farming communities in China and how their interaction in turn came to shape their rule and the cultural, political, and intellectual life in China during this period. As we do so, we challenge the “Han-centric” notion of Chinese history by examining “China” as a historical construct whose meanings shifted during this period.

We will pay particular attention to the life of the literati, women, and religious practitioners of this period. We explore how the Confucian literati, women, and various religious practitioners fared under the various dynasties, and examine their respective roles and influences at different times and places during this period of great social and political change and upheaval.

Last, we will also explore the development of material culture and technology during the late imperial period. We will examine the material life and the technology that supported that everyday life in traditional China by looking at what and how the Chinese produced, traded and consumed daily necessities and other commodities. Our purpose is to explore the relationship between the conceptual and the material, commerce and cosmology, between ideas and goods in traditional China, and understand how traditional Chinese cosmology and cultural values impacted the way Chinese material goods, technologies, and way of life evolved over time.

As we explore the social, economic and cultural development of China’s late imperium, we will ponder the question of how our own modern world came to be the way it is now. By looking closely at various historically contingent events and developments of this period before the modern age, we also challenge the Eurocentric view of modernity as an inevitable experience specific to the West.

The goal of this course is to acquaint you with basic knowledge about the cultures, peoples, and historical processes that have shaped the history of China.

The course will be conducted primarily through lectures, reading and writing assignments, in-class discussion and reports and video presentations.

Textbooks and reading materials:
5) Additional Reading materials (available for $ 1)

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Course Requirements:
1) Attendance and participation in class are mandatory. Your attendance and participation actually account for a portion of your grade. Absences from lectures and classroom discussion will affect your comprehension of the course materials and hamper your performance in both exams and writing assignments.
2) Complete your reading assignments before coming to class. Your reading assignments constitute a major part of the course activities. They are vital to your comprehension of the lectures and the in-class discussion.
3) If you have learning disabilities or conditions that require special assistance, please let me know in private and with proper documentation as early as you can so that I can make appropriate arrangements to ensure your progress in this class. I also encourage all of you to come and see me during my office hours or at an appointed time to discuss your concerns, interests or inputs that are related to the course.
4) Do check your Rutgers eden email accounts daily. All course-related changes involving scheduling or assignments will be emailed to you.

Grading:
- Participation/discussion: 15%
- 3 Tests: 40% (10%, 15% and 15%)
- Paper: 20%
- Final: 25%

Policies on make-up exams and assignments:
No make-up exams are allowed except for documented or certified medical emergencies, or family and personal crises. When these emergencies arise, please notify me within 24 hours from the time they occur by phone or email, and followed up with proper documentation from your physician and/or your dean. All make-ups shall be arranged after the final exams.

Late submissions are subject to grade reduction at one full grade per calendar day (C+ becomes C, and so on). It does not pay to be late.

Weekly Schedule (Check your eden email account for changes)
**Week 1:** Course Introduction:
9/6:  Chronology, Geography and overview of late imperial China
     Assignment: Robert Marks, chapters: Introduction and chapter 1.

**Week 2:** Modern World and Chinese Late Imperial History
9/10: Lecture/Discussion: What are Marks’ main ideas? What does he mean by the “rise of the West” thesis? What is the history of the thesis as the explanatory model for modernity? What does he mean by Eurocentrism, historical contingency, and coincidence?
Assignment: Read: Mote: Chapters 1 and 2 for next week.

9/13: The Sino-Centric World Order in East Asia: China Around 10th Century: Historical Background and Geography
The Breakdown of the Confucian World Order: Five Dynasties and the Emergence of the Steppe Nations
Assignment: Mote: Chapters 2/3

Week 3: Liao Civilization, Society and Women
9/17: Liao Acculturation and Patterns of Governance.
Assignments: Reading packet: Herbert Franke, sections on Khitan women, Mote, 4
9/20: Test 1//Khitan Society, Religion and Women

Week 4: Creating the Northern Song State
9/24: Khitan Society, Religion, and Women
Assignment: Mote: chapters 5.
9/27: Zhao Kuangyin and the founding of the Song: Restoring the Confucian Rule
Assignment: Mote: chapters 6/7

Week 5: Economy, Religion and Women of the Northern Song
10/1: Emergence of the Literati Class and the Song Culture
Assignment: Pat Ebrey, The Inner Quarters discussion due in a week.
Term Paper proposal draft due)
Assignment: Mote: chapters 9
10/4: Discussion: Ebrey on Song Women, Economy and Family Life
Assignment: Mote: 10.

Week 6: The Rise of the Jin (Jurchen)
10/8: Arguda and the rise of the Jurchen Nation
Assignment: Mote, chapter 12
10/11: The Jin (Jurchen) Innovations in Governing China

Week 7: The Southern Song and Chinese Survival
10/15: Test 2//Jurchen society/religion
Assignment: Mote: chapter 13/14
10/18: Re-establishing Chinese rule in the south: State and Society of the Southern Song
Assignment: Mote 15

Week 8: China among Equals: New Ritualized Interstate Relationship
10/22: Social and Intellectual Change: Neo-Confucianism
Assignment: Mote: chapter 16.
10/25: Chinese-Steppe Cultural and Political Interactions
Assignment: Mote: chapters 17/18, Frank Herbert, “Women under the Conquest Dynasties.”
Week 9  China under the Mongols
10/29: Genghis Khan and the Rise of the Mongol Empires
   Assignment: Mote: chapters 19/20
11/1:  Khubilai Khan and His Yuan State and Society
   Assignment: Mote: chapter, 20, and Reading Packet: Frank Herbert: Women under
   Conquest Dynasties.

Week 10: Women and Religions under the Yuan Empire
11/5: Women and religion during the late Yuan
   Assignment: Mote: chapters 21/22
11/8: Disintegration of the Yuan Empire and the Restoration of the Chinese Rule
   Assignment: Mote: chapter 23/24/25.

Week 11: Ming State and Society
11/12: The Founding of the Ming and the New Patterns of the Ming Rulership
   Assignment: Mote: chapter 26/27/28
11/15: Ming Society, and religion
   Assignment: Dorothy Ko: Teachers of the Inner Chambers due
   *First Draft of the term paper due

Week 12: Women in Ming Society and Culture
11/19: TEST 3/Discussion on Ko’s book: late Ming culture and women
   Assignment: Mote, chapters 29/30/31
11/20: *(Sub for 11/22): TBD: Ming court politics, and decline
   Assignment: Mote: chapters 32/33

11/22-25: Thanksgiving Recess

Week 13: Decline of the Ming and the Rise of the Qing Dynasty
11/26: No lecture: Work on your term paper
11/29: Nurhaci and the founding of the Qing Empire
   Assignment: Mote: chapter 34

Week 14: China in the 18th Century
12/3: Manchu Patterns of Government: Innovations and continuities
   Assignments: Mote: chapters: chapters 34/35
12/6: Qing State, society, and culture of the Qing

Week 15: Reading/Review Week
12/11: Course Review and Final Papers due
12/13: Reading days

Week 16: Final Exam Week
12/14: Final exam: 4:00 PM