Chinese Renaissance, 1000-1400

The oldest enduring civilization in the world, China’s long history has often been interpreted as a sign of its fundamental stagnation. The German philosopher Hegel, for example, once described China as “the empire of duration.” But the very fact that the Chinese empire continued to prosper for such a long period shows that its history underwent a series of significant transformations to adjust to the change of time. One of the most important of all is what scholars call the Tang-Song transition, which has been thought to be the beginning of its “early modern” era. The period witnesses the end of medieval aristocracy, the restructuring of imperial power vis-à-vis bureaucracy and society, and the growth of vernacular culture. Woodblock printing, sailor’s compass, and gunpowder were invented in China during this period. The commercialization of the economy and the urbanization of society that took place in this period were unprecedented not only in China but also in the rest of the world. Moreover, against the prevalent Buddhist and Daoist philosophies, a new, radical reinterpretation of the Confucian classics appeared and eventually established itself as a new state orthodoxy that lasted for 700 years until the early 20th century. In this class, we explore social, cultural, and intellectual changes of this important period in Chinese history.

This course is designed as a 300-level history course. Through the course, students are expected to read about 120 to 150 pages a week and to develop a skill of thinking through primary sources and of evaluating the quality of scholarly works.

Instructor: Sukhee Lee; sukhlee@rci.rutgers.edu Email is a best way of contacting me outside the class. Use your Rutgers email account when you write to me. And please do not forget to start your subject line with “(Chinese Renaissance)” so that I can recognize that it is from one of you.
Office: Van Dyck 002E (College Avenue Campus);
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Books to be purchased
Frederick Mote, *Imperial China 900-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000). Used paper back edition is available at online bookstores such as Amazon from around $11.00.
These books have been also ordered at Rutgers University bookstore.
All other readings will be uploaded at Sakai course site as pdf file.

Grading
Class attendance and participation 15%
(attendance 5% and participation 10%)
FIVE response papers based on primary source analysis 10%
THREE Quizzes 15%
TWO Papers
One Book review (should be double-spaced, typed, and 4-5 page long) 20%
One paper reconstructing a Song dynasty Family (3-4 page) 15%
Final exam 25%

On academic integrity
Plagiarized paper or cheating in exams will result in, at least, “F” for the assignment. In addition, the cases will be reported to the university administration for sanctions. Please take this warning seriously. As for the Rutgers policies on academic integrity, see http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Other Class Policies
*Lecture and section attendance is your most basic responsibility. I will take attendance at every lecture and section. Unexcused absences, when they exceed twice, will affect your final grade. (e.g. 3 times, -10% from your “class attendance and participation”; 4 times, -20%; ...) If you are absent from more than one third of the entire classes and sections, you will automatically get “F.”
*Please turn off your cell phones as a courtesy to others.
*Late paper will be penalized by subtracting FIVE points for every day past the due date for the first FIVE days. No paper will be accepted after FIVE days past the due. Famous lines such as “I am pretty sure that I emailed that to you the other day” or “I certainly uploaded it on Sakai in time, but somehow can’t find it there now” will do no good unless you show me “hard evidence” of such claims (e.g. a print of your original sent mail showing the time of its sending).
*Under any circumstances, do NOT submit a “corrupt” file. It won’t be counted as proper submission.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1  Issues and Perspective
Introduction: Problematizing Middle Period Chinese History
Reading

Week 2  Basic Narrative of Song-Yuan History
A Sea Change from Tang to Song in a Nutshell
Reading
1. Peter Bol, Neo-Confucianism in History (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), Chapter 1 “The New World of the Eleventh Century: 750 and 1050 Compared.”

Political History of Northern Song
Reading
1. Mote, Imperial China, 92-118

Week 3  Conquest Dynasties
Political History of Southern Song
Reading
1. Mote, Imperial China, 289-322

Khitan Liao and Jurchen Jin
Reading

Week 4  “Medieval Economic Revolution” in China: Commerce and Urbanization

The World Empire of the Mongols

Reading
1. Mote, 444-73.

Commerce and Urbanization

Reading
1. Mote, 351-54, 359-64, and 367-68.

Week 5  Reform and Its Critics

Wang Anshi and His Vision

Reading
1. Mote, 135-43.

Anti-Reform and Polemical Politics

Reading

Primary texts: Wang Anshi, “Memorial of a Myriad Words” (translated by H.R. Williamson); de Bary, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 617-18.

Week 6  Examinations and Orthodoxy

Discussion Section I on Wang Anshi and Sima Guang

Civil Service Examination: How It Worked

Reading

Primary texts: de Bary, 737-42.

Week 7  Examinations and Orthodoxy (Cont.)

The Impact of the Examinations: State Orthodoxy and Literati Culture

Reading
1. Mote, 131-35.
Primary texts: Wu Jingzi (=Wu Ching-tzu), *The Scholars*, translated by Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, 33-90.

**Discussion Section II on the Examinations**

**Week 8**  
**Law and Order: Ideal and Practices**

Reading  

Litigation, Administrator’s Manuals, and Forensic Medicine  
**Book review due**

Primary texts: Selections from *The Enlightened Judgments: Ch’ing-ming chi The Song Dynasty Collection* (Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1999)

**Week 9**  
**The Family and Women**

Discussion Section III on “Law and Order.”

Transformation of the Chinese Family  

Reading  
1. Mote, 368-70.  


**Week 10**  
**The Family and Women (Cont.)**

Women in the Family and Society  

Reading  
2. Beverly Bossler, "A Daughter is a Daughter All Her Life": Affinal Relations and Women's Networks in Song and Late Imperial China," *Late Imperial China* 21.1 (June, 2000): 77-106.  


**Discussion Section IV on the Family and Women**

**Week 11**  
**Intellectual and Social Movement of Neo-Confucianism**

Neo-Confucianism in Political and Intellectual Context  

Reading  
1. Mote, 144-49.

Primary texts: de Bary, 689-97.

Zhu Xi and a New Sense of Ordering the World  

Reading

**Primary texts**: de Bary, 697-714, 742-54.

**Week 12**

**Discussion Section V on Neo-Confucianism**

Things that Kill and Things that Heal

**Reading**

**Week 13**

**Technology and Medicine; Art and Literature**

Prose, Poetry, and Painting

**Reading**

**Primary texts**: Su Shi, “Rhapsody on Red Cliff,” translated by Ronald Egan (*Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi*, 222-223); “On Analogies for the Sun” (Egan, 54-55); “Letter to Zhang Lei,” (Egan, 63-64); “Eight Poems on the East Slope,” translated by Alice Cheang

Thanksgiving holiday  **NO CLASS**

**Week 14**

**Discussion Section VI on Su Shi et al.**

New Forms of Local Religion

**Reading**
1. Mote, 156-64 and 497-502.

**Week 15**

The Yuan-Ming Transition

**Reading**
1. Mote, 517-66.

**Primary texts**: de Bary, 780-86 and 788-93.

Dec. 14 Wrap-up

**December 22**  **FINAL EXAM**  **4:00-7:00 PM**