

COURSE GUIDEBOOK



# From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

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Part I



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5000 Years of Chinese History Part I

From Yao to Mao:

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Dr. Hammond joined the faculty of New Mexico State University in 1994 and has taught there since that time. In 2000, he became department head in history. He teaches courses in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history and in East Asian gender history. He has also been active in developing Asian Studies at New Mexico State and in establishing exchange programs between NMSU and schools in China and Korea.

Dr. Hammond's research focuses on the cultural and intellectual history of China in the late imperial era, from the 10<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, especially the history of the Ming dynasty, from 1368 to 1644. He has published articles and translations on Chinese gardens, as well as essays on the 16<sup>th</sup>-century scholar-official Wang Shizhen. Dr. Hammond also edited *The Human Tradition in Premodern China*, a biographical reader for undergraduate students.

In 1999, he received an American Council of Learned Societies research grant to spend five months at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. In 2002–2003, he was an Affiliated Fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies at Leiden, the Netherlands. In June 2003, he organized and chaired an international conference on Chinese cultural history in Leiden.

Dr. Hammond is past president of the Society for Ming Studies and has served on the Board of Directors of the Southwest Association for Asian Studies.

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## From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

### Scope:

The 36 lectures in this course explore the history and culture of China, spanning a vast temporal and spatial domain and developing several themes to help understand this ancient and complex society. We will proceed in an essentially chronological passage through the unfolding of China's political and cultural evolution, with particular attention to important ideas and individuals and the roles they have played in shaping both China's historical past and its dynamic present.

Chinese civilization originated in the confluence of several regional Neolithic cultures nearly 5,000 years ago. Emerging from the mythological Era of Sage Emperors, such as Yao and Shun, China's historical record begins with the Shang dynasty around 1500 B.C.E. We will follow the growth of China from a small kingdom on the North China Plain to a major empire extending from the Siberian frontier to the jungles of Southeast Asia, from the Pacific coast to the Central Asian deserts.

One of our main themes will be the evolution of social and political elites and the mechanisms by which they acquired and asserted their power as rulers of China. Closely linked to this is the history of political thought in China, from shamanistic roots in prehistory through the Axial Age of Confucius and Laozi and the long process of crafting and adapting the Imperial Order over the past two millennia and more.

We will also be concerned with the ways in which the Chinese have thought and written about themselves and the world around them. Cosmological ideas about the nature of the universe, the metaphysical insights of Buddhism and religious Daoism, and the perennial mysticism of popular religion have blended and interacted throughout Chinese history in ways which have yielded both the beauties of art and the horrors of religious conflict.

Throughout these lectures, we will consider China's history as it relates to the world beyond China. For more than 2,000 years, China has been linked to the global economy, and traders and travelers have brought both the riches of the empire and tales of its splendor to the West. We will trace the increasingly close relations between China and the West from the age of the Mongol conquests in the 13<sup>th</sup> century through the rise of European imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and into the present age of China's reemergence as a great world economic and political power.

By engaging with the history of China over the last five millennia, we will become familiar with one of the world's greatest civilizations and, arguably, its most persistent. Far from the popular image of China as a stagnant, unchanging

relic of a once glorious past, we will see China as a living culture that has flourished and declined, revived and returned to greatness several times over thousands of years. We will come to understand some of the key features that allowed China's political order to remain stable for more than 2,000 years and that continue to shape this country at the opening of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

# Lecture One

## Geography and Archaeology

**Scope:** This lecture will set the stage for the developments to follow. We will begin with a consideration of the physical environment of East Asia and the specific sites in which Chinese civilization emerged: the mountains, coastline, and river valleys that defined the heartland of Chinese culture and remain the core of China today. We will also examine the prehistoric background of Chinese culture as it took form through the Neolithic era, with particular emphasis on the rise of settled agricultural societies and the multiple regional cultures that converged into the mainstream of China's historical identity.

### Outline

- I. Before beginning to deal with the course of China's history, I want to take a few moments to suggest some general themes and concepts that will be part of this course and that will help us bring some coherence to the vast domain of China's past.
  - A. We will be concerned with how the Chinese have organized their society and government.
    1. How have social elites developed and evolved over time?
    2. What have been the bases for power, and for the legitimation of power, through different periods?
    3. How have the Chinese thought about their own society, and how have they seen the world around them?
  - B. We will consider the relationship between China and the outside world.
    1. First of all, this is a matter of Chinese civilization and the peoples living around China, often seen by the Chinese as "barbarians."
    2. We will also consider how China has been involved in larger regional and global systems of trade and communication.
    3. In later lectures, we will look at how influences from outside China have reshaped both the realities of life for modern Chinese and the ways in which China sees itself.
  - C. We will explore the connections between economic and social life and the worlds of art, literature, and philosophy.
    1. Cultural life and political life have always been closely linked in China, and we will see how these linkages have changed over time.
    2. We will investigate the question of whether developments in China parallel those in other parts of the world, and if so, how and why that may be.

- D. China is, on the one hand, a unique civilization that sometimes seems to have taken a developmental path quite distinct from the West, yet in other ways, the Chinese experience can be seen as a set of alternative responses to common challenges and problems faced by people everywhere.
- II. In embarking on our exploration of Chinese history, let's begin by establishing just where and what China was and is.
- A. China is located in East Asia and is defined by several significant geographic features.
- B. On the east is the Pacific Ocean.
- C. To the south lie the tropical lands of Southeast Asia.
- D. The heartland of China is bounded on the west by mountains, from the border with Burma to the Tibetan plateau, and by the Gobi Desert.
- E. To the north lie the grasslands of Mongolia and the rugged forests and mountains of Manchuria and Siberia.
- III. The core region of Chinese civilization is called *China proper*.
- A. Four important areas can be defined within China proper.
1. In the north is the North China Plain.
  2. In the south is a region of low hills and wet valleys.
  3. In the southwest is the Sichuan Basin, ringed by mountains and accessible mainly via the gorges of the Yangzi River.
  4. In the northwest is a dry plateau.
- B. Two major rivers flow from west to east.
1. The Yellow River rises in Tibet and forms a long loop called the Ordos before flowing across the North China Plain to the sea by the Shandong peninsula.
  2. The Yangzi River also originates in Tibet, flows through Sichuan and across central China, to reach the Pacific near modern-day Shanghai.
- IV. As China has expanded historically, peripheral areas have become part of its territory.
- A. Chinese farmers have moved south and southwest into the highlands of what is now Guizhou and Yunnan.
- B. Tibet has been linked to China since at least the 7<sup>th</sup> century.
- C. Chinese power has extended into Central Asia along the overland trade route known as the Silk Road.
- D. The Mongolian steppe has been a frontier zone that has sometimes been incorporated into the empire.

- E. The woodlands of Manchuria, in the northeast of modern China, have become part of the country only in the last four centuries.

V. China's population has evolved in complex ways.

- A. The earliest people to call themselves Chinese lived on the North China Plain.
  - 1. The earliest "states" included numerous tribal groups who defined themselves in contrast to the surrounding "barbarians."
  - 2. One key element in this self-definition was the possession of a system of writing.
- B. As Chinese civilization expanded, neighboring peoples were either displaced or assimilated.
  - 1. Chinese farmers moving south drove indigenous peoples out of the region or forced them to move from fertile river valleys to more marginal highlands.
  - 2. Some non-Chinese peoples continued to live in proximity to the much larger Chinese population, retaining distinctive cultures.
- C. Today, the main ethnic group is called the *Han* and accounts for 95 percent of China's population.
  - 1. The name derives from the Han dynasty, which we will learn about later.
  - 2. The other 5 percent of China's population is composed of 54 "national minorities."

VI. Let's return to the origins of Chinese civilization.

- A. The archaeological record tells us a good deal about the ancestors of modern man in China.
  - 1. The earliest human ancestors included Peking Man, whose fossil remains are dated to around 500,000 B.C.E.
  - 2. Other hominid fossils have been found in southwest China and in the Yellow River valley in the northwest.
  - 3. Modern *homo sapiens* remains appear in China about 40,000 years ago.
  - 4. A series of cultures developed increasingly more sophisticated stone tools.
  - 5. The key to the rise of more complex cultures, leading to historical Chinese civilization, was the domestication of rice around 10,000 B.C.E. in what is now Jiangxi province.
  - 6. By about 6,000–7,000 years ago, larger regional cultures began to emerge, setting the stage for the growth of true Chinese civilization.



7. The Neolithic, or New Stone Age, was a period of rapid development for regional cultures in China.
- B.** Neolithic cultures were characterized by the use of pottery and the creation of settled farming communities.
1. Between 7,000 and 6,000 years ago, the Yangshao and Longshan cultures grew in northern China, distinguished by their particular forms of pottery.
  2. Other pottery styles marked the Liangzhu culture, which flourished further south, in the eastern Yangzi valley.
  3. The expansion of agricultural production yielded increasing surpluses, which allowed for the development of new social elites, often associated with shamanic cults.
  4. Somewhere around 5,000 years ago, people in both north China and in Sichuan began to mine and smelt copper, tin, and other metals and to cast bronze objects.
  5. The first evidence of territorially extensive, politically complex society is associated with what the Chinese traditionally believed to be the Xia dynasty, centered near the confluence of the Yellow and Wei Rivers, a little more than 4,000 years ago.
  6. We will follow the development of the Xia, and the emergence of historical Chinese civilization, in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 30–73.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Kwang-chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. How can we understand the relationship between the prehistoric populations of what is now China and the present-day Chinese people?
2. Why was the domestication of rice significant to the emergence of true Chinese civilization?

## Lecture Two

### The First Dynasties

**Scope:** Neolithic village cultures began to consolidate into larger geographic and political units over the period from about 7,000 to 5,000 years ago. By 4,000 years ago (2000 B.C.E.), the first of the Bronze Age cultures that can be seen as directly ancestral to historical Chinese civilization had taken shape along the Yellow River in what are now Henan, Hebei, and Shanxi provinces. Later Chinese refer back to the first “dynasty” as the Xia, which was succeeded about 1500 B.C.E. by the Shang or Yin dynasty. The Xia provides the first indication of a highly stratified society with a ruling elite dominating a population of farming villages. A bronze industry was developed, which the Shang raised to much greater heights of technical and aesthetic achievement. This bronze industry, along with military forces and the royal ritual cult, became the defining features of early Chinese society.

#### Outline

- I. The Neolithic Transition brought China to a new stage of development.
  - A. The starting point for this was the emergence of agricultural societies.
    1. In China, this took place about 12,000 years ago.
    2. Evidence of the first domestication of rice has been found in Jiangxi province in central China.
  - B. By 4,000 years ago, a new phase of historical development began.
    1. The archaeological record begins to be supplemented with textual traditions.
    2. The emergence of a bronze industry reflects the more complex organization of society.
  - C. The Xia used elaborate sets of bronze ritual objects in what appears to have been ancestral worship by a “royal” family.
    1. One clan seems to have established primacy over all others.
    2. The shamanistic worship of the clan’s totem seems to have been transformed into a more general worship of the royal ancestors.
- II. The Shang dynasty succeeded the Xia around 1500 B.C.E.
  - A. The Shang left an extensive historical record in the form of “oracle bones” and bronze inscriptions.
    1. Oracle bones were the shoulder blades of cattle or the plastrons of turtles.

2. These were inscribed with divination questions to be asked of the ancestors on behalf of the kings.
  3. Official “diviners” who could read and write the early forms of Chinese characters interpreted cracks in the bones or shells to reveal the answers of the ancestors.
  4. Archives of oracle bones were maintained, recording the questions, answers and outcomes of divinations, which have been excavated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, yielding a vast amount of information about the Shang period.
- B.** The Shang political order was centered on a line of kings, hence the use of the term *dynasty*.
1. Because life expectancy was so short, barely 30 years, the kingship passed not from father to son, but from older to younger brother within a generation, then to the oldest son in the next generation.
  2. The kings ruled from a capital city, but the capital was moved nine times in the course of the dynasty’s perhaps six centuries of rule.
  3. The kings used military force to maintain their power and dominated surrounding peoples who were not related to them but were incorporated in a kind of federal system.
  4. They also used a public cult of ancestor worship to bolster their legitimacy.
  5. The use of bronze ritual objects in offering sacrifices to the ancestors was central to this cult.
  6. The operation of the sophisticated metallurgical industry that produced these elaborately cast bronzes was sustained by the taxation of agriculture, thus creating the first state bureaucracy in China.
- C.** Tensions in the Shang realm led to unrest by the 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.
1. Subordinate peoples resented the extraction of agricultural surplus by the Shang kings.
  2. Peoples not subordinate to the Shang raided on the margins of Shang territory.
  3. Ambitious leaders sought to enhance their own power and overthrow the Shang, as we will see in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 74–291.

**Supplemental Reading:**

David N. Keightley, *The Ancestral Landscape*.

## Questions to Consider:

1. Why was ancestor worship so important to the Shang rulers?
2. Why did the Shang keep written records of the divinations they performed?

## Lecture Three

### The Zhou Conquest

**Scope:** The Shang state flourished for several centuries, expanding its territory by conquering neighboring peoples. By the 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., one of these, the Zhou people, led a coalition of subordinate groups to overthrow the Shang. The Zhou then created a new dynasty and, in the process, elaborated critical concepts for China's political culture over the next 3,000 years. The justification for the Zhou rebellion and the founding of a new dynasty was the Mandate of Heaven. The Zhou also began to build a new kind of political order and expanded the territory under their control far beyond what the Shang had held. The very success of the early Zhou state created the conditions that led to its fragmentation in the early 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. and to the period of chaos and warfare that followed.

#### Outline

- I. We have both mythological and archaeological accounts of early China.
  - A. As our modern understanding of the rise of Chinese civilization has developed, it has tended to confirm traditional mythological accounts.
  - B. China did not have a creation myth like those of the West.
  - C. The Sage Kings of High Antiquity, such as Yao and Shun, served as models of virtuous rule and founders of many cultural practices.
    1. Yao passed the throne to Shun, who was not his son, because Shun was the best qualified morally.
    2. This contrasts with the normal practice of Chinese states, which was to pass power down through families, and highlights the centrality of moral values in China's political culture.
    3. This moralistic aspect is key in the story of the rise of the Zhou.
- II. The rise of the Zhou people took place over several generations.
  - A. The Zhou lived on the western periphery of the Shang realm. Their early history saw them adopt agriculture, revert to hunting and gathering, and adopt farming again, perhaps reflecting their marginal environmental niche on the periphery of the agricultural zone.
  - B. According to their traditions, their leader developed a plan to unite other peoples under their banner to rise up against the Shang kings.
    1. This plan was formed by a man named Tai.
    2. Over the next three generations, the Zhou people moved closer to the center of Shang power and built alliances with other disaffected peoples.

- C. Under a man later known as King Wen, the Zhou planned their final rebellion around 1050 B.C.E.
  - D. Under Wen's son, King Wu, the Zhou led a military coalition in an attack on the Shang capital at Anyang, most likely in 1045 B.C.E.
    - 1. At the outset of the campaign, King Wu gave a speech calling for the overthrow of the Shang as unjust and corrupt rulers who abused their power.
    - 2. According to ancient texts in the *Classic of Documents*, the battle was so fierce that the blood in the streets of the capital was deep enough to float blocks of wood.
    - 3. At the time of the Conquest, King Wu was, in fact, a young boy, and real power was in the hands of his uncle, the Duke of Zhou.
- III. After the Conquest, the Zhou elaborated the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven to validate their overthrow of the Shang.
- A. The Mandate of Heaven said that Heaven, which is the guiding power in the universe, had originally given the right to rule to the Shang kings, but when they became cruel and oppressive, they lost the Mandate, and it passed to the Zhou leaders.
    - 1. The worship of Heaven, *Tian* in Chinese, was the central religious belief of the Zhou.
    - 2. *Tian* was not a divinity, but more of an operating system, which structured the way the world should function.
    - 3. This was a shift from the primacy of ancestor worship by the Shang, but the Zhou, too, observed a royal ancestral cult.
    - 4. Ancestor worship remained part of Chinese culture and became widespread even among ordinary farming families in later centuries.
  - B. The Zhou used the Mandate of Heaven to explain the rise of the Shang over the earlier Xia, as well.
    - 1. The Mandate of Heaven became the basic rationale for political change in later Chinese political culture.
    - 2. It was a system that validated success.
- IV. The Zhou established a new, permanent capital and created a new form of political order.
- A. The Zhou built a new city at what is now Xian, on the Wei River.
    - 1. The city was based on the model of a basically square capital, which went back to the Xia.
    - 2. The Zhou commitment to a permanent capital was a change from the Shang practice of shifting the capital every few decades.

3. The physical layout of the Zhou capital became the prototype for later Chinese capital cities.
  4. It embodied the cosmological order in its orientation to the cardinal directions and its incorporation of ritual sites associated with the annual cycle.
- B.** As Zhou rule flourished, the territory under their control expanded rapidly.
1. Zhou power was extended to the south, into the Yangzi River valley.
  2. Zhou power was also extended to the north and southeast, beyond the limits of the former Shang domain.
- C.** Growth in both territorial extent and in the size of the population led to administrative innovations.
1. The Zhou kings could not manage all their lands from the capital.
  2. They began to appoint local administrators, often from the royal family, but as time went by, more and more military leaders or other non-royal administrators were named.
  3. Over time, these local leaders began to pass their positions on to their sons.
  4. Relations of loyalty to the Zhou kings began to weaken as generations passed.
- D.** The success of the early Zhou state created the conditions for its fragmentation, which we will consider in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 292–350.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Cho-yun Hsu and Katheryn M. Linduff, *Western Chou Civilization*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why did the Zhou feel they had to justify their overthrow of the Shang?
2. How did the change from the Shang royal ancestral cult to the Zhou worship of Heaven affect the nature of political legitimacy?

## Lecture Four

### Fragmentation and Social Change

**Scope:** Beginning in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., local strongmen, originally appointed as representatives of the Zhou kings, began to arrogate to themselves the powers and titles of the royal court. The Zhou state waited too long to try to counter this and found its power slipping away as new “hegemons” arose in various parts of the empire. Small states proliferated and fought among themselves, ushering in a centuries-long age of warfare and chronic social and economic instability. Known as the Warring States period, the crises of this age led many Chinese to question the basic foundations of their society and to search for answers to the problems facing them. A new social strata of educated, professional administrators grew up at the many “royal” courts, known as the *shi*, and from the ranks of this class emerged many of the thinkers who shaped the great philosophical systems of Confucianism, Daoism, and the Hundred Schools.

#### Outline

- I. By the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., the Zhou order began to fragment.
  - A. The forces that led to fragmentation were, in part, a result of the success of the early Zhou rulers.
    1. Overall, the Zhou was the longest lasting of China’s historical dynasties.
    2. The Zhou faced the challenge of administering a large empire, which they expanded far beyond what the Shang had ruled.
    3. They added territory in the Yangzi River valley and along the southeast coast.
    4. The peace and prosperity they maintained allowed the population to grow, as well.
  - B. As their empire grew, the Zhou kings had to delegate more power to local strongmen.
    1. As time passed, these local power holders began to resist the demands for revenue from the royal court.
    2. They adopted royal rituals and clothing and began to defy the power of the Zhou kings.
  - C. Because of military unrest on the northwestern frontier, the Zhou kings could not suppress their former subordinates.
    1. A new people known as the Qin began to build their power in the former homeland of the Zhou.



2. The Zhou were forced to move their capital east, to the site of present-day Luoyang.
- II. Through the next few centuries, the number of small states steadily increased.
- A. This period is known as the Spring and Autumn period.
    1. The name comes from the Spring and Autumn Annals, which were records kept in the state of Lu, one of the most important of the many small kingdoms of this period, whose rulers claimed descent from the Duke of Zhou.
    2. Confucius, who we will talk about more in the next lecture, was traditionally said to have been the editor of the Spring and Autumn Annals.
  - B. As time went by, some local rulers began to covet the wealth or territory of their neighbors.
    1. Warfare became endemic across China as states fought over resources or population centers.
    2. Some strongmen began to emerge and build alliances with other states.
    3. These rising powers became known as *ba*, or “hegemons,” meaning men who had power but did not have legitimate authority, which remained with the Zhou kings.
    4. A new class of administrative specialists, known as the *shi*, developed at the new local courts, becoming a professional political elite serving the growing number of small states.
  - C. By about the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., the process of fragmentation began to reverse itself, as stronger states conquered and absorbed weaker ones.
    1. This period became known, appropriately enough, as the Warring States period.
    2. As some states became stronger, they competed for the best and brightest talents among the ranks of the *shi*.
    3. At the same time, many *shi* began to ask why China had fallen into such a prolonged period of instability and chaos.
    4. Local rulers developed new ways to increase their revenues and transformed the system of land ownership from one based on rewards to military leaders to one granting land to administrators as compensation for their services.
    5. In time, this led to the emergence of a market in land and to the beginnings of an agrarian-based national economy.
  - D. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E. became a critical period in China’s history, as many schools of thought sought to address the problems facing the people. We will turn to these matters in the next two lectures.

### Essential Reading:

Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 545–650.

### Supplemental Reading:

Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*.

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Zhou kings appoint men from outside the royal family to administer territories far from the capital?
2. Why didn't the Zhou kings order local officials to follow proper ritual forms in the performance of their duties?

## Lecture Five

### Confucianism and Daoism

**Scope:** This lecture will explore the basic concepts and texts of Confucian and Daoist thought, which developed as a response to the crises of the Zhou order in the Warring States period. Confucianism is an essentially positivist approach to the world that seeks to understand the ways in which people can live together in social communities. Human relationships and a system of ritual are central to Confucius's concept of a well-ordered society, and learning is the mechanism for maintaining that order. Daoism is, by contrast, a radically skeptical system, which doubts that knowledge is reliable and views all human action that is based on lofty ideals and theories as dangerous. The Daoist thinkers Laozi and Zhuangzi advocated a naturalistic, *laissez-faire* approach to life, which asserted, "by doing nothing, nothing is left undone."

#### Outline

- I. From the late 6<sup>th</sup> through the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E., several important thinkers appeared in China.
  - A. Two of the most important schools of thought in Chinese history originated with the ideas of Confucius and Laozi, who were contemporaries.
    1. Not much is known about either of these men in terms of hard facts.
    2. Both seem to have been members of the class of *shi*, the professional administrative elite.
    3. Both men had later followers who further developed their ideas, most notably, Mencius for Confucius and Zhuangzi for Laozi.
  - B. There were many other schools of thought at this time, some of which we will consider in the next lecture.
- II. Confucianism is the school of thought deriving from the ideas of Confucius and Mencius.
  - A. Confucius spent much of his life trying to become a major political advisor to one of the rulers of the many small states in China.
    1. He was from the state of Lu, in what is now Shandong province.
    2. He held a series of minor posts in Lu and other states around the region but was never able to become the main advisor to a ruler.
    3. He eventually gave up on serving in office and devoted his time to teaching.

4. Most of what we know about him and his ideas comes from records written down later by his students in a book called *Lunyu*, or *The Analects*.
- B.** The key to the teachings of Confucius is the idea of relationships between people.
1. Confucius believed that people could live together peacefully by recognizing their roles in networks of relationships.
  2. The family was seen as a microcosm of how relationships linked people together.
  3. Confucius used a model of Five Great Relationships to suggest how society might work.
  4. The Five Great Relationships are those between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brother, and friend and friend.
  5. Each of these involved both hierarchy and reciprocity.
  6. In each pair, one role was superior and one, inferior; one role led and the other followed.
  7. Yet each involved mutual obligations and responsibilities.
  8. Failure to properly fulfill one's role could lead to the abrogation of the relationship.
- C.** Ritual was the mechanism for facilitating these relationships.
1. By following proper ritual behavior, each person would fulfill his or her role in society.
  2. Any individual might be in a variety of roles at the same time, being both a father and a son, both a subject of the ruler and a master in the family.
  3. It was the adoption by local strongmen of improper rituals, not suited to their true roles, that had undermined the functioning of the Zhou regime in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.
  4. Thus, Confucius came to advocate the "rectification of names" and the "return to the rites."
- D.** The "gentleman" is the ideal figure for Confucius.
1. The gentleman understands the workings of relationships.
  2. He observes proper ritual.
  3. He engages in learning both to develop his personal moral character and to gain knowledge that is useful in serving others.
  4. He seeks to promote "the Way" (*Dao*) of living appropriate to a well-ordered society through both personal example and service in government.
- E.** Mencius further developed the original ideas of Confucius.

1. Mencius lived about a century and half after Confucius.
  2. He emphasized the mutual responsibilities of all the Great Relationships.
  3. He developed a new version of the Mandate of Heaven that used Confucian values to explain the bestowal and withdrawal of the Mandate and the right of the people to overthrow an unjust ruler.
- III. Daoism was almost the polar opposite of Confucianism, while sharing some important basic concepts.
- A. Laozi is seen as the founder of Daoism.
1. Laozi lived around the same time as Confucius, but even less is known about his life.
  2. Zhuangzi, like Mencius, lived later than Laozi and built on the ideas of his predecessor.
  3. A book simply called *Laozi* contains the basic ideas of Daoism.
  4. Chinese myths say that after he finished his work in China, Laozi left and traveled to India, where he became the Buddha.
- B. Where Confucianism is positivist, Daoism is skeptical.
1. Laozi and Zhuangzi question the ability of people to truly know things.
  2. For Daoists, all knowledge is partial and provisional.
  3. By basing actions on such knowledge, people tend to make things worse rather than improve things.
  4. The best way to live is to seek harmony with the natural flow of events, the *Dao*.
  5. This doctrine of “doing nothing” became the fundamental teaching of philosophical Daoism.
  6. For Laozi, the ideal life was in a small village, where all one’s simple needs were met, and though one could hear the dogs and roosters of neighboring hamlets, one never chose to go there.
- IV. Confucianism and Daoism were perhaps the most important schools of thought to arise in the Warring States period, but they were not the only ones, and we will turn our attention to some others in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Frederick W. Mote, *Intellectual Foundations of China*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Benjamin Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China*.

Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the shared assumptions of Confucianism and Daoism?
2. How can Confucianism be seen as an ideology of the *shi* class, and can Daoism also be seen in this way?

## Lecture Six

### The Hundred Schools

**Scope:** Although Confucianism and Daoism can be seen as the most enduring schools of thought to develop during the Warring States period, they were only part of a rich field of philosophical activity. In this lecture, we will consider the range of other ideas put forward by Chinese thinkers during the so-called Axial Age. Perhaps the most important beliefs were those of the Legalists, who took an approach to social and political order that was fundamentally at odds with both Confucian and Daoist ideas. Legalism was closely linked to the state of Qin, one of the warring states; indeed, by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E., Qin had succeeded in destroying all the warring states and creating the first unified Chinese empire. Although lasting only 14 years, the Qin laid the institutional foundations for much of later imperial government.

#### Outline

- I. Chinese thinkers developed many different answers to questions about life and the nature of things.
  - A. Chinese have traditionally referred to this period of intellectual ferment as the time of the Hundred Schools.
    1. The kinds of concerns dealt with by different schools varied.
    2. Some were concerned with questions of knowledge and language and disputed such matters as whether a white horse was essentially “white” or “horse.”
    3. Others, such as the strategist Sunzi, were concerned with military affairs.
    4. Still others explored cosmology and speculative metaphysics.
    5. Two schools stand out in hindsight as having been of particular interest: the followers of Mozi and the Legalists.
  - B. Mozi and his followers propounded a doctrine of “universal love” and pursued a strategy of defensive warfare.
    1. The doctrine of universal love was, in part, a refutation of Confucian ideas about the priority of family relations, which Mozi saw as subverting the equality of all in society.
    2. Mozi believed that individuals should treat each other as they would wish to be treated, a teaching quite similar to the “golden rule” in Judeo-Christian thought.
    3. The Moists developed expertise in defensive warfare in an effort to end the chronic conflicts of the age by making aggression unproductive.

4. Moist technical advisors would offer their services to rulers of states under threat from powerful neighbors.
5. Although Moism flourished during the Warring States period, once the age of warfare came to an end, these doctrines receded in importance.

C. Legalism was a system that proved to be quite effective in gaining power but was problematic for establishing a stable political order.

1. The doctrines of Legalism originated in the practical political operations of the state of Qin, one of the warring states.
2. The prime minister of Qin in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. was Shang Yang, who set out the basic ideas of Legalism.
3. The central principle of Legalism was the use of rewards and punishments to produce conformity to the rule of clear and well-developed laws.
4. The law was to be applied uniformly and strictly, to high and low, so that everyone understood their duties and knew the penalties for failing to fulfill them.
5. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E., the philosopher Han Fei developed an intellectual rationale for Legalism, arguing that human nature was essentially blank and that people needed careful guidance by strong rulers to live in an orderly way.

II. The Qin state, with Legalism as its ideology, succeeded in ending the Warring States era.

A. Under successive kings, Qin grew in military strength and expanded its territory in northwest China.

B. In the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E., a new king began the final campaigns to eliminate other states.

1. The Qin defeated their rivals one by one, sometimes forming an alliance with smaller states to eliminate a larger one, then turning against their former allies.
2. By 221 B.C.E., the last of the other states, the southern kingdom of Chu, fell to Qin power.
3. The king of Qin now assumed the title by which he is best known in history, Qinshihuangdi, meaning the "First Emperor."
4. His tomb, near the modern city of Xian, is the site of the famous terracotta warriors.

C. The Qin dynasty, as this first unified empire was known, laid the basis for an enduring imperial order but lasted only 14 years.

1. The Qin created a unified administrative system, eliminating many local systems of weights and measures, cart axle width, coinage, and so on.



2. Qinshihuangdi sought to standardize not only material things but the way people thought, as well.
3. In 214 B.C.E., he launched the infamous “burning of books and burying of scholars” to eliminate what he saw as unorthodox ideas.
4. The taxes and labor levies imposed by the Qin led to great resentment and unrest.
5. When Qinshihuangdi died in 210 B.C.E., his son could not maintain the dynasty, which collapsed just three years later.
6. In the aftermath of the Qin collapse, various forces contended for power. We will take up that story in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Burton Watson, trans., *Mo Tzu: Basic Writings*.

———, trans., *Han Fei Tzu: Basic Writings*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Sima Qian, *The Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. The Qin state grew and flourished for several centuries; why did it finally collapse so suddenly?
2. What was the basis for public morality under the ideas of Legalism?

## Lecture Seven

### The Early Han Dynasty

**Scope:** The Qin dynasty was overthrown in 207 B.C.E. After a civil war, a new dynasty, named the Han, was founded by Liu Bang, a low-ranking official who rose to power through personal genius and extreme good fortune. The dynasty he founded lasted more than 400 years, and its name became one of the standard terms used to refer to the Chinese people. This lecture covers the establishment of the dynasty and its development through the reign of the emperor Wudi from 141–87 B.C.E. During this period, the structure of the imperial state was solidified, and the ideological framework of official Confucianism was constructed from the blending of Confucian, Daoist, and Legalist elements. Cosmological thought also went through a period of renewed development in the work of Dong Zhongshu.

#### Outline

- I. The fall of the Qin dynasty in 207 B.C.E. was followed by five years of civil war.
  - A. Two main contenders emerged in the struggle for power.
    1. Xiang Yu was a former general from the fallen state of Chu, the last of the warring states to be eliminated by Qin.
    2. Liu Bang was a minor local official who formed a rebel band after failing to fulfill his mission to transport prisoners to a Qin jail.
  - B. Both men joined the movement to overthrow the Qin but then fell into conflict over who should lead a new dynasty.
  - C. Xiang Yu nearly destroyed Liu Bang's forces in 204 B.C.E., but Liu regrouped and, in 202 B.C.E., succeeded in defeating Xiang Yu.
- II. Liu Bang founded a new dynasty, which he called the Han after the name of his native district.
  - A. Liu Bang established his capital near the present-day city of Xian.
    1. New palaces were built in the ruins of the former Qin city.
    2. The location of the capital reflected Liu's power base in the northwest.
  - B. Liu then set about creating a new system of government throughout the empire.
    1. The empire was divided into two major areas.
    2. The western half was ruled directly by Liu through a system of local administration, with officials appointed by the emperor.

3. In the eastern part of the country, power was held by military strongmen who had been followers of Liu Bang and were granted, basically, feudal power by him.
  4. Over time, the descendants of these local strongmen began to manifest separatist behavior, threatening the coherence of the Han order, just as local power had fragmented under the Zhou.
- C. A series of challenges faced the Han in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E.
1. In the 180s B.C.E., the family of the empress, named Lu, gained great power at court and almost usurped the throne before being suppressed in 180.
  2. Between 180 and 141 B.C.E., the emperors Wendi and Jingdi moved to curtail the power of the eastern strongmen.
  3. In 154 B.C.E., there was a revolt by local power holders in the east, which was put down by the imperial army.
  4. The eastern provinces were then incorporated into the regular imperial administration, with officials appointed by the emperor.

**III.** In 141 B.C.E., a new emperor, Wudi, came to the throne.

**A.** Wudi ruled until 87 B.C.E.

1. He oversaw what is sometimes called the Han Synthesis.
2. This was a weaving together of elements of Confucian, Daoist, and Legalist thought into a new Imperial Confucian ideology, which became the orthodox doctrine of the Chinese state.
3. Legalism was seen as an effective administrative system, but its harshness under the Qin had led to their downfall.
4. Confucianism provided a sense of moral guidance and restraint on the ruler, who could be overthrown based on Mencius's interpretation of the Mandate of Heaven.
5. Daoism and other cosmological doctrines provided a larger framework for understanding the nature of the world in which men lived.
6. The philosopher Dong Zhongshu developed a theory of "correlative cosmology" to explain how natural phenomena were omens of political change.

**B.** Wudi also developed a strong administrative machinery.

1. He pursued military campaigns to expand China's territory, adding parts of Korea and Vietnam and pushing Chinese power into Central Asia.
2. He set up government monopolies in certain critical commodities, such as salt, alcohol, and iron.

3. He also promoted the recruitment of a highly educated administrative elite, a new version of the *shi*.

#### IV. After Wudi's death in 87 B.C.E., the Han entered a period of stagnation.

- A. A great debate was held about Wudi's economic policies.
  1. Known as the "Debate on Salt and Iron," it pitted the advocates of a strong central state against those favoring more autonomy for local elites.
  2. In the end, later emperors abandoned many of Wudi's more assertive policies.
- B. A succession of lesser emperors presided over the Han until 9 C.E.
  1. The court became more concerned with extravagant social life than with administration.
  2. Powerful families sought to manipulate the throne through marriage alliances.
  3. Revenues declined, and military affairs were neglected.
  4. Finally, in 7 C.E., the main line of inheritance failed, as the emperor Zhengdi died without an heir.
- C. From 9–23 C.E., Wang Mang usurped the throne and declared his own dynasty.
  1. This short-lived regime attempted to reform the empire but fell after Wang died.
  2. The Liu family regained power and launched the Later Han, which we will examine in the next lecture.

#### Essential Reading:

Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume I: *The Ch'in and Han Empires*, 103–221.

#### Supplemental Reading:

William Theodore deBary and Irene Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Volume I, 360–362.

Aihe Wang, *Cosmology and Political Culture in Early China*.

#### Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Han retain Qin institutions while repudiating the ideas of Legalism?
2. Why would some elements in the Han political elite be opposed to Wudi's activist style of government?

## Lecture Eight

### Later Han and the Three Kingdoms

**Scope:** After a brief disruption of dynastic succession by the usurper Wang Mang from 9–23 C.E., the Later, or Eastern, Han dynasty continued to rule China. By the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century of the common era, however, internal problems combining institutional weaknesses, changes in the social and economic order, and turmoil in religious and spiritual life led to the collapse of the Han government. The empire was divided into three large states, and one of the more romantic periods in Chinese history, known as the Three Kingdoms, followed, from 220–265 C.E. This was a period of great military leaders and clever strategists and has provided stories and heroes for Chinese literature ever since. We will consider some of these figures and how they have been portrayed in poetry and drama.

#### Outline

- I. The restored Han dynasty ruled China from 23–220 C.E.
  - A. The Han dynasty as a whole was a period of transition and development in Chinese society and economic life.
    1. We have already discussed the creation of an imperial ideology through the synthesis of Confucianism, Legalism, and Daoism.
    2. Changes in the system of land ownership also took place.
  - B. The Liu family regained the throne and reestablished control of the empire after Wang Mang's death.
    1. For the next century and a half, the empire was stable, and both the economy and the population expanded.
    2. Continuing trends that had begun during the Early Han, the social and political elite became increasingly based in the ownership of land, and the military nature of the pre-Han ruling classes faded away.
    3. Cultural sophistication and literary skill were seen as markers of elite status and as qualifications for service in government.
  - C. Within the imperial system, however, rival groups sought to increase their power and wealth.
    1. Great landed families intermarried with the Liu house and tried to manipulate the imperial succession.
    2. Military leaders used their power to intimidate weaker emperors.

3. Eunuchs, in theory merely menial servants in the imperial household, built up great power through their control of the inner chambers where emperors lived.
- II.** By late in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the dynasty began to face serious problems.
- A.** The power of landed families had led to greater exploitation of the mass of ordinary farmers.
    1. As peasants were impoverished, they turned to mystical cults to seek comfort.
    2. Some of these became focal points for rebellions against the power of the wealthy landowners.
  - B.** The military suppression of these rebellions gave new power to the generals.
    1. Military strongmen assumed control of large parts of the empire.
    2. The power of the eunuchs was destroyed by the military, but in the process, the dynasty was further weakened.
    3. By the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century, Han power was largely a hollow shell.
- III.** The Han collapsed in the early years of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, ushering in a period of division known as the Three Kingdoms, from 220–265 C.E.
- A.** Regional strongmen sought to protect their own power and fought amongst themselves.
    1. Generals, such as Cao Cao, the adopted son of a eunuch, carved out domains under their personal control while still technically honoring the Han emperor.
    2. In the southwest, a collateral line of the Liu family seized power.
  - B.** In 220, the last Han emperor was deposed and the empire split apart.
    1. Cao Cao's son, Cao Pei, founded the kingdom of Wei.
    2. Liu Bei, from a minor branch of the imperial family, set up the kingdom of Shu Han in what is now Sichuan.
    3. Another general, Sun Wu, formed the state of Wu in southeast China.
- IV.** The Three Kingdoms period was a time of romance and adventure.
- A.** The rivalry between the kingdoms and their rulers led to constant warfare.
    1. Strategy and clever intrigues were characteristic of this period.
    2. Great generals, such as Zhuge Liang, were known for outwitting their enemies, rather than for mere brute force.
    3. The exploits of these kings and generals became the stuff of legend and provided the plots and characters for plays, poems, and stories throughout later history.

4. In one story, Zhuge Liang tricks his enemies into re-supplying him with arrows by fooling them into firing on boats manned by straw dummies.
  5. In another instance, Zhuge Liang, without his main army, deceives his attackers by playing chess on the city wall while leaving the gates of the city open and undefended.
- B.** Eventually, a coup overthrew the Cao family in the kingdom of Wei, and a new leader briefly reunified the empire.
1. The Sima family seized power in 265 and held the empire together until 304.
  2. Invasions of non-Chinese peoples from the northwest led to a new age of disorder and division, which we will discuss in Lecture Ten.
  3. First, however, we will pause to examine the arrival of Buddhism in China during the later Han and the impact it had on China's culture.

**Essential Reading:**

Moss Roberts, trans., *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Howard L. Goodman, *Ts'ao P'i Transcendent*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why did emperors allow eunuchs or royal in-laws to gain so much power at court?
2. Why is there such an emphasis on the use of clever stratagems in the history of the Three Kingdoms period?

## Lecture Nine

### Buddhism

**Scope:** While the Han dynasty was sliding toward collapse, a new religion was making its presence felt in China. Buddhism came from India around the 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E. At first largely a matter of novelty and court patronage, Buddhism's message of transcendence became increasingly popular as life became more difficult for large numbers of people with the decline of the Han. In this lecture, we will explore the basic concepts of Buddhism, its origins in India, and later transmission to China.

### Outline

- I. Buddhism originated in India around the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.
  - A. This period is sometimes known as the Axial Age.
    1. Around this same time, major philosophical figures lived in several parts of the world.
    2. It was the age of Confucius and Laozi in China.
    3. This was the age of the great Greek philosophers, including Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.
    4. In India, this was the period when the Buddha developed his ideas.
  - B. The founder of Buddhism is known by several names.
    1. He was a prince in one of the many royal families living in what is now northern India and southern Nepal.
    2. His given name was Siddhartha, and he was also called Gautama.
    3. He is sometimes known as Sakyamuni, which means "the light of the Sakya family."
  - C. Siddhartha was raised in relative luxury but turned to a life of spiritual questing.
    1. Many stories recount his initial awakening.
    2. In one, he overhears the wailing of a funeral procession and learns about death and suffering in this way.
    3. In another, as a young prince, he is given a beautiful princess bride, but when he sees her drooling in her sleep, he realizes there is imperfection in the world.
    4. He left his family home and went into the world to seek answers to his spiritual questions.
  - D. The Buddha attained enlightenment and embarked on a path of teaching.



1. He studied with hermits and other spiritual masters, but none of them satisfied his mind.
2. One day when he was at a park near modern Varanasi, he sat under a Bodhi tree and had a sudden enlightenment.
3. He then set out to share the insights he had achieved and developed a corps of devotees who traveled with him.
4. After a number of years, he announced that it was time for him to leave this material world.
5. In some accounts, he ascended bodily into the heavens, while in others, he shed his physical body and attained pure spiritual liberation.
6. After his departure from this world, his followers became his interpreters, giving rise to various schools of Buddhism.

## II. The teachings of the Buddha are fairly simple and straightforward.

### A. The key to his enlightenment is the realization of the nature of suffering.

1. Suffering is part of the normal life of people.
2. Suffering arises from our attachment to things.
3. If we wish to be free of suffering, we must liberate ourselves from our attachments.
4. There is a way to do this through meditation and renunciation.
5. These are the Four Noble Truths.

### B. Buddhism denies the permanence of phenomena.

1. All things arise and pass away; everything has a beginning and an end.
2. The appearance of permanence in things is an illusion, sometimes called *maya*.
3. This does not mean, as is sometimes said, that nothing is real, merely that no reality is permanent.
4. Because all things pass away, attachment to them can yield only suffering.
5. Therefore, the way to free oneself from suffering is to realize and accept the impermanence of all things, including oneself.

## III. Buddhism developed in India over the next several centuries.

### A. Two major schools of Buddhism took form.

1. The first was Theravada, which was concerned with individual liberation.
2. Theravada emphasized meditation and withdrawal from the world.
3. Communities of Theravada monks formed the first monasteries.

4. The second school, which developed around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E., is called Mahayana, which means "Great Vehicle."
  5. It is concerned not only with individual salvation but with the spiritual liberation of all sentient beings.
  6. The Bodhisattva, an enlightened spiritual being who chooses to remain in the phenomenal world to aid others, was the ideal of the Mahayana path.
- B.** Buddhism spread across northern India and to parts of Southeast Asia.
1. The Indian king Asoka became a patron of Buddhism, staging great debates among masters from different religions.
  2. Theravada Buddhism took root in Sri Lanka and in what is now Burma and Thailand and moved to the Indonesian archipelago.
  3. Mahayana Buddhism spread to the northwest and, eventually, to Central Asia and China.

**IV.** Around the beginning of the Common Era, Buddhism first appeared in China.

- A.** Buddhist monks traveled along overland routes from northwest India to Central Asia. The trade routes of the Silk Road provided the main avenues for these sojourners.
- B.** Sometime in the 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E., the first monastery was set up in China, near the Later Han capital at Luoyang.
1. Han emperors wished to appear as patrons of all spiritual paths.
  2. Buddhist monks became teachers at the imperial court, though without the same high status as Confucian scholars.
- C.** As the Han dynasty faltered and life became more difficult, many ordinary people began to embrace Buddhism.
1. The Buddhist emphasis on suffering and the impermanence of things offered hope in times of trouble.
  2. Buddhism moved beyond the realm of elite patronage and became a more popular religion.
  3. At the same time, Buddhism was becoming the common religion of non-Chinese peoples living in Central Asia.
  4. At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, these peoples began to move in to China in large numbers, launching a period of instability and cultural change, which we will turn to in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Arthur F. Wright, *Buddhism in Chinese History*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

**Questions to Consider:**

1. How did Buddhism differ fundamentally from the traditional indigenous thought systems of China?
2. Coming from India, what obstacles might Buddhism have faced in finding a place in Chinese culture?

## Lecture Ten

### Northern and Southern Dynasties

**Scope:** At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E., great migrations were triggered in Central Asia by forces not yet fully understood. In China, this resulted in the influx of several waves of proto-Turkic invaders, who overran large tracts of northwest and northern China in the course of the next century and a half. They brought with them a more militant form of Buddhism and established conquest states in the very heartland of China's ancient culture. Over time, they intermarried with local Chinese and were culturally transformed by interaction with China, while also reshaping Chinese society in the north. Meanwhile south of the Yangzi River valley, a series of dynasties ruled over the remnants of the Han and Three Kingdoms states, preserving a "purer" form of Chinese culture in the face of the "barbarian" invasions of the north and the streams of refugees fleeing south.

#### Outline

- I. Around the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E., something triggered major population shifts in Central Asia.
  - A. It is not clear what caused these movements, but their effects were felt from East Asia to Europe.
    1. At the western end of the Eurasian landmass, these movements led to the so-called barbarian invasions that resulted in the fall of Rome.
    2. In China, proto-Turkic-speaking peoples moved into northwestern China, displacing earlier non-Chinese peoples, such as the Xiongnu, who in turn, moved in a large arc westward across Siberia and into Eastern Europe, to enter Western history as the Huns.
  - B. The new arrivals in China overran much of the old heartland of Chinese civilization in what is now Shanxi, Shaanxi, and Henan provinces.
  - C. They established themselves as overlords and set up new states with themselves as the ruling elite and the Chinese farmers as their subjects.
- II. The Northern Dynasties were strongly Buddhist and developed a distinct culture blending Chinese and Central Asian elements.
  - A. Over the next three centuries, China was basically divided between areas north of the Yangzi River and those south of it, with non-Chinese dynasties in the north and Chinese dynasties ruling in the south.

1. The main state in the north was the Wei dynasty, founded by the Toba Turks.
  2. The Wei first had its capital near the modern city of Datong in northern Shanxi.
  3. At the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Wei capital moved south to the old Han city of Luoyang, near the Yellow River in Henan.
  4. Near each of these cities, the Wei built large cave-temple complexes, with massive Buddhist sculptures, to display their power and demonstrate their patronage to Buddhism.
- B.** As time went by, the Turkic-speaking elite began to intermarry with the Chinese population, and a process of cultural convergence took place.
1. The leading Chinese families were eager to marry into the conquering elite to protect their interests and secure their land holdings.
  2. The process of intermarriage led to the growth of a population of blended ancestry, which came to provide a large proportion of military and civil officials.
  3. As these blended families became more important in the northern regimes, cultural differences between the invaders and the Chinese began to diminish.
  4. Turkic groups began to speak Chinese, which was used in government documents, and even adopted Chinese names for themselves.
  5. Chinese elite families adopted some Turkic cultural practices, as well.
  6. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the northern states came to resemble classic Chinese dynasties in many ways, but with a Sino-Turkic elite as rulers.
- III.** In the south meanwhile, a series of smaller dynasties sought to maintain a “pure” Chinese culture.
- A.** Many of these dynasties were based in Nanjing.
1. Southern states had to absorb many refugees from the north, often from the northern elite, who brought their households with them.
  2. The threat from non-Chinese invaders and the presence of refugee outsiders led to a sense of cultural insecurity in the south.
  3. As a result, southern culture sought to be “pure” and to show off its superiority to the “barbarian” influences in the north.
  4. This led to a great age in prose writing and the development of calligraphy as an art form.
  5. Wang Xizhi became the first great calligrapher, and his style became a model for later eras.

6. Around the same time, Gu Kaizhi became the first painter in Chinese history whose name as an artist has come down to us.
- B.** Southern Dynasties also patronized Buddhism and adapted it to Chinese usage.
1. Monasteries grew in many cities across the south.
  2. Many Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese.
  3. New schools of Buddhism, adapting the teachings to Chinese culture, began to develop, such as Tiantai and Chan, later known as Zen in Japan.
- C.** Throughout the period of division, the dream of a unified empire remained alive.
1. The fragmentation of China after the Han roughly paralleled the collapse of Rome.
  2. Later states preserved the cultural and political ideals of the Han era, and the goal of reunification was quite persistent, if elusive.
  3. By the later 6<sup>th</sup> century, however, conditions developed that set the stage for a new period of imperial unity.
  4. Population movements ceased in the north, and a process of cultural convergence had diminished the distance between northern and southern regimes.
  5. The shared presence of Buddhism also contributed to the potential for reunification.
  6. By the 580s, a new strongman in the north began to restore imperial unity; we will follow that story in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Scott Pearce, Audrey Shapiro, and Patricia Ebrey, eds., *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200–600*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Albert Dien, ed., *State and Society in Early Medieval China*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why was the image of a unified empire so enduring?
2. Why would elite Chinese families in the north have wished to intermarry with the “barbarian” invaders?

## Lecture Eleven

### Sui Reunification and the Rise of the Tang

**Scope:** By the late 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Turkic peoples who had moved into China from Central Asia had adopted many Chinese customs, including Chinese names, and had adapted their political systems to Chinese bureaucratic models. In the 580s, a general of mixed ancestry named Yang Jian overthrew his local ruler, and began to build a new dynastic state, which soon reunified China both north and south of the Yangzi. Known as the Sui dynasty, this state lasted through the rule of only two emperors, but it laid the foundations for a return to large imperial states, which remained the norm for the rest of China's imperial history. This contrasts starkly with the history of the post-Roman West, where Charlemagne's efforts to reunify a large empire ultimately ended in failure. In 618, the Sui fell and was succeeded by the Tang, which became one of China's greatest dynasties and lasted until the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Outline

- I. In 581, a general named Yang Jian seized power in one of the Northern Dynasties.
  - A. Yang was from one of the prominent Sino-Turkic families of the northwest.
    1. His family had intermarried with the Chinese and with other mixed clans, including the Dugu or the Yuwen, who ruled various minor dynasties.
    2. Yang led his army in rebellion and overthrew the emperor of the Northern Zhou state.
    3. He proclaimed a new dynasty, which he called the Sui.
  - B. Yang set about reunifying China through a combination of military and civil methods.
    1. He conquered other states in the north to build his power base.
    2. He sent his son, Yang Guang, to be viceroy in the important city of Yangzhou, in the region known as Jiangnan, near the mouth of the Yangzi River.
    3. He used patronage of Buddhism to build links to prominent families in the Southern Dynasties.
    4. He had Yang Guang marry a princess from one of the Southern royal houses.
    5. By 589, Yang Jian had succeeded in bringing all of China proper under his rule.

**II.** The Sui built a strongly integrated state but did not become a long-lasting dynasty.

**A.** Yang Jian undertook four main initiatives in developing his new dynastic order.

1. He promulgated a new legal code, in 500 articles, providing a coherent body of law and administration throughout the empire.
2. He adopted the so-called “well-field” system of land tenure, in which land was apportioned by the state every few years to prevent the accumulation of great estates in the hands of powerful families that might challenge imperial power.
3. There were enough exemptions and loopholes, however, to protect the existing landed elite.
4. Yang Jian also established a system of agricultural colonies on the Inner Asian frontier to handle military defense on a self-sustaining basis.
5. He established a system of public granaries to store grain during periods of plenty, which could then be released into the market at times of scarcity both to prevent famine and to keep prices under control.

**B.** Yang Jian was succeeded by his son, Yang Guang.

1. Yang Guang continued his father’s efforts to build a strong state.
2. He launched military campaigns against Korea and in the northwest, to push new non-Chinese groups, such as the Uighurs, away from the border.
3. He undertook the construction of the Grand Canal to move grain from the prosperous southeast to the less wealthy northwest, where the capital remained.
4. The combination of military campaigning and major construction projects led to unrest among the population, which was subjected to both heavy taxes and labor conscription.

**III.** In 617, a new dynasty arose that proved to be one of China’s greatest, the Tang.

**A.** The Tang was founded by Li Yuan and his son, Li Shimin.

1. Rumors and mystical prophecies that someone named Li would take over the throne had led to the purging of several men by that name.
2. Li Yuan was commandant of a garrison at Taiyuan.
3. His son, Li Shimin, convinced him that it was best to rebel and seize power rather than wait to be destroyed by the Sui ruler.
4. In 617, Li Yuan and his son led their army south, defeated the Sui, and proclaimed a new dynasty.



- B.** The Tang dynasty consolidated its position over the next 10 years.
1. Between 617 and 621, Li Yuan and his son defeated several other groups that were also trying to seize dynastic power.
  2. The Shaolin Monastery provided special fighting monks to serve as a bodyguard for Li Shimin, and they became famous for their prowess in martial arts.
  3. In 626, Li Yuan abdicated the throne and his son, Li Shimin, became emperor.
  4. With Li Shimin's ascendance, the Tang was firmly in place.
  5. We will follow the history of this great age in the next two lectures.

**Essential Reading:**

Arthur F. Wright, *The Sui Dynasty*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Victor Cunrui Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Yang Jian used a combination of military force and diplomacy to reunite the empire. Why was he able to achieve this when none of his predecessors had?
2. Why did the Shaolin monks rally to the cause of Li Shimin, and how could Buddhist monks justify involvement in politics and warfare?

## Lecture Twelve

### The Early Tang Dynasty

**Scope:** Tang rule was established by the father-and-son team of Li Yuan and Li Shimin. The early Tang also saw the only period in Chinese history when the imperial throne was occupied by a woman ruling in her own name. Wu Zetian deposed her nephew in 690 and ruled as empress until 705. She has remained a controversial figure in later Chinese historical writing, largely because it has almost all been written by men. In the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Emperor Xuanzong presided over a long period of economic growth and cultural flourishing. But at mid-century, the dynasty was nearly brought to an end by a great rebellion, led by a general named An Lushan and sparked, in part, by rumors of An's illicit relationship with the emperor's favorite concubine, Yang Guifei.

#### Outline

- I. The Tang dynasty consolidated its rule and expanded its territory through the 7<sup>th</sup> century.
  - A. After taking over from his father in 626, Li Shimin held the throne until 649.
    1. Li Shimin proved to be an energetic and competent ruler.
    2. He regularized the administrative system of six ministries that the Sui had initiated and set up a separate bureaucracy to administer the imperial household.
    3. He pursued a series of successful military campaigns that added or regained territory in Korea and Vietnam and extended Tang power far into Central Asia along the Silk Road.
    4. His capital, called Chang'an and located at the modern site of Xian, had a population of two million people and was the largest city in the world.
  - B. As the Tang stabilized, economic and demographic growth was quick.
    1. International trade brought many exotic goods to the capital markets.
    2. Peace and security in the empire led to increasing agricultural production.
    3. The population expanded both through new territorial acquisitions and through natural growth.
    4. The social order, which had evolved in an aristocratic direction during the Northern and Southern Dynasties, was codified and regulated by the imperial government, using official registers to maintain the genealogical records of the great families.

5. These great families dominated court politics and provided the men who filled government offices.

**II.** In 690, the dowager empress Wu Zetian took the throne.

- A.** No woman had ever ruled in her own right.
  1. Some empresses and their families had been quite powerful behind the scenes.
  2. Wu Zetian proclaimed her own dynasty, called the Zhou, but this has not been recognized in later official histories.
- B.** Although Confucian scholars have seen her as evil, Wu Zetian seems to have been a reasonably good ruler.
  1. Her 15 years on the throne were peaceful and prosperous for the country.
  2. She consciously worked to undermine the dominance of the great families from the northwest and, in the process, opened the government to fresh talent by recruiting men from other parts of the country.
  3. She was a patron of Buddhism and seems to have allowed certain monks to strongly influence her decisions.
  4. After she abdicated in 705, male Confucian historians have almost unanimously denounced her, not so much on the basis of what she actually did as on the grounds that it was simply not proper for a woman to rule.

**III.** The restored Tang dynasty entered its greatest age in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

- A.** The emperor Xuanzong, who reigned from 713–756, presided over an age of prosperity and cultural dynamism.
  1. The economy continued to flourish, and international trade grew even more extensive.
  2. Chang'an became an entrepôt for merchants and travelers from the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia, and the Inner Asian steppes.
  3. Buddhist monasteries became centers of art and philosophy and grew in wealth and influence.
- B.** These years were also a great age for Chinese poetry.
  1. Some of the greatest poets in Chinese history lived and wrote at this time.
  2. Li Bo, Du Fu, and Meng Haoran were only three of the many poets who served at court or in the Tang government.

- C. As the years passed, however, Xuanzong withdrew from daily oversight of the government and became more involved with mystical religion and with his favorite concubine, Yang Guifei.
1. In addition to his patronage of Buddhism, Xuanzong was fascinated with mystical Daoism and the quest for immortality.
  2. As he withdrew into the Inner Palace, he delegated more and more daily power to various officials, who competed among themselves for imperial favor.
  3. The emperor had many women in his household, but he became especially devoted to Yang Guifei, literally, “Yang the Precious Concubine.”
  4. Yang shared the emperor’s daily life in the palace and seems to have influenced him in state affairs, as well.
- IV. At the century’s midpoint, a great rebellion threatened to bring the dynasty down.
- A. The man who led the rebellion was An Lushan.
1. An Lushan was a Uighur, from Central Asia.
  2. The Tang had adopted a policy of employing non-Chinese military leaders for border defense.
  3. An Lushan led the garrison at what is now Beijing.
  4. He was a favorite of the emperor, but his enemies at court whispered that he was having illicit relations with Yang Guifei.
  5. When the emperor ordered him to come to the capital, An Lushan brought his army with him, and this move was seen as rebellion.
- B. The An Lushan rebellion lasted from 755 to 763.
1. The rebels drove the emperor from the capital; he fled to Sichuan.
  2. In 756, Xuanzong abdicated in favor of his son.
  3. An Lushan died during the rebellion, and his son took over leadership.
  4. Eventually, the Tang dynasty was able to overcome the rebels but at the cost of giving away much of its power to military strongmen in the south and southeast.
  5. The dynasty never fully recovered, but it did survive for another century and a half, which we will turn to in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the T’ang*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Sally Hovey Wriggins, *Xuanzang: A Buddhist Pilgrim on the Silk Road*.

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why were traditional historians so hostile to the reign of Wu Zetian? Is there anything inherent in Confucian ideas that would bias them against her?
2. The Tang dynasty has been seen by later Chinese as one of the most glorious periods in their history. It was also, perhaps, the most cosmopolitan period in China before the modern age. How might this perception of the past be a factor in China's self-image today?

## Timeline

- c. 500,000 B.C.E. .... Peking Man hominid fossils
- c. 10,000 B.C.E. .... Domestication of rice in Jiangxi
- c. 4600 B.C.E. .... Neolithic village cultures in northern China
- c. 2100 B.C.E. .... Xia “dynasty” in Yellow River valley
- c. 1500 B.C.E. .... Shang state on North China Plain
- 1045 B.C.E. .... Zhou Conquest
- 722–481 B.C.E. .... Spring and Autumn period
- 480–221 B.C.E. .... Warring States period
- 207 B.C.E. .... Fall of Qin dynasty
- 202 B.C.E.–220 C.E. .... Han dynasty
- 141–87 B.C.E. .... Reign of Wudi
- 81 B.C.E. .... Debate on Salt and Iron
- 9–23 C.E. .... Usurpation of Wang Mang
- c. 100 C.E. .... First Buddhist temple in China
- 182 C.E. .... Yellow Turban uprising
- 220–280 .... Three Kingdoms period
- c. 310 .... Turkic migrations into northern China begin
- 581–618 .... Sui dynasty
- 618–906 .... Tang dynasty
- 684–705 .... Reign of Empress Wu Zetian
- 713–756 .... Reign of Xuanzong
- 755–763 .... An Lushan rebellion
- 768–824 .... Han Yu
- 845 .... Official suppression of Buddhism
- 907–960 .... Five Dynasties period
- 907–1125 .... Liao dynasty of the Khitan people
- 960–1127 .... Northern Song dynasty
- 1126–1234 .... Jin dynasty of the Jurchen people

1127–1279 .....	Southern Song dynasty
1130–1200 .....	Zhu Xi
1206 .....	Mongol <i>quriltai</i> elects Temujin as Great Khan
1260–1368 .....	Mongol Yuan dynasty
1272–1290 .....	Marco Polo in China
1313 .....	Mongols restore Confucian examinations
1340s.....	Great plague in Yangzi River valley
1368–1644 .....	Ming dynasty
1402 .....	Zhu Di usurps the throne
1405–1435 .....	Ming voyages of exploration
1572–1620 .....	Reign of Wanli emperor
c. 1580 .....	“Single Whip” tax reforms
1626 .....	Nurhaci inaugurates Manchu language use
1636 .....	Qing dynasty proclaimed by Manchus
1644 .....	Fall of Ming dynasty and Manchu invasion
1661–1722 .....	Reign of Kangxi
1673–1681 .....	Rebellion of the Wu Sangui
1712 .....	Kangxi’s tax edict
1723–1735 .....	Reign of Yongzheng
1736–1795 .....	Reign of Qianlong
1793 .....	British trade mission to China
1813 .....	Secret society rebellion against Qing
1839–1842 .....	Opium War
1850–1864 .....	Taiping Rebellion
1864–1895 .....	Self-Strengthening Movement
1894–1895 .....	Sino-Japanese War
1898 .....	100 Days Reforms
1899–1900 .....	Boxer Rebellion
1905 .....	Confucian examinations abolished

October 11, 1911 .....	Wuhan mutiny sets off revolution
February 12, 1912 .....	Abdication of last emperor
February 15, 1912 .....	Yuan Shikai becomes president
1916 .....	Yuan Shikai tries to become emperor
May 4, 1919 .....	Student demonstration in Beijing
July 1921 .....	Founding of Chinese Communist Party
1922–1927 .....	First United Front of Communists and Nationalists
1926 .....	Northern Expedition of Chiang Kaishek
April 1927 .....	Split between CCP and GMD
1929–1934 .....	Jiangxi period of Chinese Communists
September 18, 1931 .....	Japanese invade Manchuria
October 1934–October 1935.....	Long March
December 1936 .....	Xian incident: Chiang “arrested”
1937–1945 .....	Second United Front
July 7, 1937.....	Marco Polo Bridge incident: Japanese invasion
1945 .....	End of war with Japan
1945–1949 .....	Civil war between Communists and Nationalists
1948 .....	Nationalists massacre Taiwanese
1949 .....	Nationalists withdraw to Taiwan
October 1, 1949 .....	Mao proclaims People’s Republic of China
1949–1952 .....	Land reform
1950 .....	Marriage law
1958–1959 .....	Great Leap Forward
August 1959.....	Lushan Plenum: Peng Dehuai purged, Mao retreats from daily leadership
1962 .....	Socialist Education Movement
1966–1969 .....	Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution
1976 .....	Death of Mao Zedong



- 1978–1994 ..... Leadership of Deng Xiaoping
- 1989 ..... Tiananmen student movement, suppressed  
June 4
- 1999 ..... China and the United States agree on WTO  
membership

## Glossary

**Boxers:** Mystical peasant movement originating in Shandong province in the late 1890s. Members believed that they were immune to Western weapons because of special chants and talismans. Opposed to Christian missionaries and the power of the Western nations over China.

**Chohong system:** System developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to regulate and control trade with Western merchants. Trade was restricted to the port of Canton (Guangzhou) in the far south. Western traders had to work with Chinese brokers and could not trade directly with Chinese merchants.

**Confucianism:** Based on the teaching of Confucius and Mencius, this became the official ideology of the imperial state from the Han dynasty on. Confucian doctrine emphasized social relationships, ritual, and learning.

**Dao:** Literally, a path or road and, by extension, “the Way.” The ideal of a well-ordered society, whether by human design or by natural pattern. Also used in Buddhism to signify the spiritual path.

**Daoism:** The philosophy based on the teachings of Laozi and Zhuangzi, emphasizing skeptical views about knowledge and action and promoting harmony with natural order. Later became a more religious movement with a strong mystical dimension focused on the quest for immortality.

**Daoxue:** Literally, the “Learning of the Way.” The metaphysical interpretation of Confucianism that developed during the Song dynasty and was given its mature form by Zhu Xi.

**Dynasty:** A period of time during which a single family controlled the throne and the succession of rulership.

**Gang of Four:** Radical followers of Mao Zedong in the 1970s who pushed an anti-bureaucratic vision for the Chinese Communist Party. Led by Mao’s wife, Jiang Qing, it also included Yao Wenyuan, Zhang Chunqiao, and Wang Hongwen.

**Great Leap Forward:** Mass mobilization campaign in 1958–1959 aiming to dramatically increase China’s agricultural and industrial output. The People’s Communes were the main organizational form, in which tens of thousands of farming households were joined into single accounting and decision-making units. The Great Leap collapsed when misreporting of harvests led to over-consumption of grain; faulty planning and bad weather also greatly reduced yields and led to widespread food shortages.

**Guwen:** Literally, “old-style writing.” A literary reform movement in the later Tang dynasty, largely led by Han Yu (768–824). It was part of a revival of Confucian values and a critical reevaluation of the place of Buddhism in China.

**Land reform:** The seizure and redistribution of land between 1948 and 1952 designed to eliminate the old system of land tenure, in which a small elite held much of the land while many farming families had none at all. Land was distributed to all peasants, male and female. These actions combined to break the power of the landlord class over rural society and created the basis for expanding agricultural production.

**Legalism:** A philosophical system closely associated with the state of Qin during the Warring States period. Legalism was based on a system of rewards and punishments. Laws and regulations were established by the state, and anyone who violated them, whether high official or lowly peasant, would be punished equally.

**Li (“pattern/principle”):** A fundamental concept in Neo-Confucian thought. By observing natural patterns, one can discern the underlying principles of the operation of the universe. Good or proper actions are those that are in harmony with natural patterns, while evil consists in transgressing or violating them.

**Li (“ritual”):** Ritual is the system of gestures and roles that structures and facilitates social interactions. It can be as simple as bowing or shaking hands when meeting someone or as elaborate as an imperial sacrifice or the recognition of successful examination candidates, involving thousands of participants in complex performances.

**Literati:** The educated elite, from which came the officials who staffed the imperial bureaucracy. Membership in the literati was based on educational accomplishment, but because this required certain economic resources to achieve, the literati tended to be an economic elite, as well.

**Long March:** The epic journey of the Chinese Communist Party and the Red Army from Jiangxi in the southeast to Shaanxi in the northwest between October 1934 and October 1935. Of the 115,000 people who set out, only about 15,000 survived the journey. They were regarded as heroes of the revolution ever after.

**Mandate of Heaven:** The central concept of legitimacy in the traditional political culture. Heaven, which is something like an organic operating system, bestows the Mandate on a particular individual and his descendants, as long as they rule in the general interests of society. If the rulers become cruel and abusive, Heaven will withdraw the Mandate, the dynasty will be overthrown, and a new dynasty will be established by whoever receives the Mandate.

**May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement:** Student demonstrations in Beijing in 1919 to protest the perceived betrayal of China by the Versailles Peace Conference after World War I, which allowed Japan to keep the former German territorial concessions in Shandong. The movement spread to anti-Japanese boycotts and strikes across China and helped galvanize a new age of revolutionary activity.

**Moism:** The teachings of the Warring States thinker Mozi. Mozi emphasized a doctrine of “universal love,” in contrast to what he saw as the family-centered

teachings of Confucius. Mozi also sought to render the aggressive warfare of the Warring States period unprofitable by developing and sharing techniques of defense.

**Neo-Confucianism:** The English term generally used for the ideas of *Daoxue*. In English, the emphasis is on the new and innovative aspects of *Daoxue*, while the Chinese have seen it as a more retrospective doctrine, in line with traditional Confucian concepts of reverence for the past.

**New Culture Movement:** Cultural movement of the 1910s and 1920s that rejected the “dead weight” of traditional culture, especially Confucianism and the imperial state. Its members promoted the use of vernacular language in writing and began the process of simplifying the writing of Chinese characters.

**Quriltai:** The grand assembly of the Mongol tribes that could elect a Great Khan. It did not meet regularly but could be convened by anyone with sufficient following among the Mongols. Temujin convened a *quriltai* in 1206, at which he had himself proclaimed Chinggis Khan, which means “Oceanic Ruler.”

**Shi:** The administrative elite that emerged during the Zhou dynasty. Initially made up of men appointed to work at the many local courts, the *shi* changed over time into a landholding semi-aristocratic elite during Han-Tang times and into the educationally based elite of the late imperial age from the Song on.

**Single Whip reforms:** A set of changes to the fiscal and revenue policies of the Ming dynasty in the 1580s. The main result was that taxes were paid in silver rather than in grain or cloth, as had been the case. This benefited the commercially advanced coastal and riverine provinces but set the stage for problems in the arid northwest and the rugged hills of the southwest.

**Spring and Autumn period:** The period, from the mid-8<sup>th</sup> through the early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E., when the central authority of the Zhou kings began to decline. Named for the historical records of the state of Lu, which were later believed to have been edited by Confucius.

**Taiping:** Literally, “Great Peace,” this term is also shorthand for the Taiping Tianguo, or the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace. This was the rebel state created by Hong Xiuquan between 1850 and 1864, which controlled much of central and south China and ruled over, perhaps, 100 million people.

**Warring States period:** A prolonged period of chronic warfare and insecurity from the 5<sup>th</sup> through the late 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C.E. Stronger states slowly conquered weaker ones until only a few remained in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Finally, the state of Qin defeated the last of its rivals, destroying the southern kingdom of Chu in 221 B.C.E.

## Biographical Notes

**Abaoji** (r. 907–926): Founder of the Liao dynasty of the Khitan people on the northern frontier of China following the collapse of the Tang dynasty.

**An Lushan** (d. 757): Turkic military commander for the Tang army garrison at modern Beijing. He was a favorite of the emperor Xuanzong but came under suspicion of an illicit relationship with the emperor's favorite concubine, Yang Guifei. Led a major rebellion in 755.

**Cao Cao** (155–220): Late Han general whose military genius became legendary. Father of Cao Pei, who founded the Kingdom of Wei at the beginning of the Three Kingdoms period.

**Chen Duxiu** (1879–1942): Intellectual leader of the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement and early advocate of Marxism. Helped found the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, though he did not attend the First Congress in Shanghai.

**Cheng Hao/Cheng Yi** (1032–1085/1033–1107): Brothers who were early advocates of the ideas that developed into *Daoxue* Neo-Confucianism in the Song dynasty.

**Chiang Kaishek** (1888–1975): Military leader and strongman of the Guomindang Nationalist Party from 1926 until his death. Strongly anti-Communist, he directed Nationalist forces primarily against the CCP, rather than the Japanese who invaded China in the 1930s. After defeat in the civil war, he led the Nationalist regime on Taiwan.

**Cixi** (1835–1908): Consort of emperor Xianfeng in the 1850s, she was the mother of the Tongzhi emperor (r. 1860–1872) and, later, as Empress Dowager, was the power behind the throne in the last decades of Manchu rule.

**Confucius** (551–479 B.C.E.): Political thinker in the Warring States period whose ideas about human relations, ritual, and learning came to be the core ideology of the imperial state.

**Deng Xiaoping** (1904–1997): Joined the Communist Party as a student in France in the 1920s. Later returned to China and took part in the Long March. Rose to a leading position in the 1950s, then was purged during the Cultural Revolution. Returned to power in 1978 and became supreme leader, guiding the reforms of the 1980s.

**Dong Zhongshu** (2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E.): Political and cosmological thinker during the reign of Wudi. His ideas about connections between natural phenomena and human actions influenced concepts of legitimacy and succession for the imperial state.

**Duke of Zhou** (11<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.): Uncle and chief advisor of King Wu at the time of the founding of the Zhou dynasty. He became the model of the sage advisor, the ideal for the later *shi* administrative elite.

**Fan Kuan** (active c. 1023–1031): Landscape painter during the Northern Song dynasty. His depictions of massive mountains with tiny human figures in marginal positions typified the changing view of man and nature in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

**Gu Kaizhi** (c. 345–c. 406): First identifiable painter in China. Several paintings attributed to him survive but most are probably slightly later copies.

**Guangxu** (1871–1908): Next-to-last emperor of the Qing. Dominated by his great aunt, the Empress Dowager Cixi, he began to rule in his own right in the mid-1890s. His support for reform in the summer of 1898 led to his house arrest in September. He died in 1908 on the eve of Cixi's death, leading to speculation that he was poisoned.

**Han Fei** (d. 233 B.C.E.): Philosopher of the state of Qin. He developed a sophisticated rationale for the Legalist doctrines of rewards and punishments. Han Fei argued that human nature was a blank slate and that, by use of rewards and punishments, people could be shaped to be obedient citizens.

**Han Yu** (768–824): Scholar and official in the late Tang dynasty who promoted a Confucian revival through his advocacy of *guwen*, or “ancient-style,” prose writing. He criticized what he saw as the baleful influence of Buddhism on Chinese culture and called for a return to the values of the early Han dynasty.

**Hong Xiuquan** (1813–1864): Founder and leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. He was a failed examination candidate from Guangdong province who had visions that he believed to be a revelation that he was the younger brother of Jesus Christ. His movement almost toppled the Qing dynasty, and its suppression cost some 20 million lives.

**Hu Yaobang** (1915–1989): Communist Party official who rose to be general secretary during the reform period of the 1980s. His death in April 1989 triggered the student movement that culminated in military suppression in June.

**Jiang Qing** (1914–1999): Wife of Mao Zedong. During the Cultural Revolution, she was responsible for the reform of performing arts. She became the leader of the so-called Gang of Four, who sought to promote a radical vision of egalitarian revolution.

**Jiang Zemin** (1926– ): Communist Party official and former mayor of Shanghai who became general secretary after the suppression of the Tiananmen student movement in June 1989. He restored order and returned to the path of reform and openness to the outside world inaugurated by Deng Xiaoping.

**Kang Youwei** (1858–1927): Confucian reformer who was one of the leaders of the 100 Days Reforms of 1898. He later became a conservative advocate of a constitutional monarchy.

**Kangxi** (1654–1722): Second emperor of the Qing dynasty. He presided over the suppression of the rebellion of Wu Sangui and launched campaigns to bring the Mongol tribes of Xinjiang into the Qing Empire. His tax edict of 1712 fixed the fiscal system of the dynasty “in perpetuity.”

**Khubilai** (1214–1294): Grandson of Temujin and first emperor of the Mongol Yuan dynasty in China. He completed the conquest of the Song and established the Mongol capital at Dadu, present-day Beijing.

**Laoshi** (6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.): Semi-legendary philosopher of the Warring States period whose ideas became the foundation for Daoism. He rejected the positivism of Confucian thought and encouraged a skeptical approach to knowledge and action; he also advocated seeking harmony with nature.

**Li Dazhao** (1889–1927): Educator and radical thinker during the May 4<sup>th</sup> period. One of the founders of the Communist Party. Killed during the split with Chiang Kaishek in 1927.

**Li Shimin** (597–649): Second emperor of the Tang dynasty. He encouraged his father, Li Yuan, to rebel against the Sui dynasty and found a new order, then succeeded his father in 626.

**Li Zicheng** (1606–1645): Leader of a peasant rebellion against the Ming in Shanxi in the early 1640s, he succeeded in capturing Beijing in April 1644. He established a short-lived dynasty of his own but was chased out of the capital by Wu Sangui and the Mongols in early June.

**Liang Qichao** (1873–1929): Reformer and writer. He was active with Kang Youwei in the 1898 Reforms and, later, became a publisher of radical newspapers in Shanghai and Japan.

**Lin Biao** (1908–1971): Communist military leader and later minister of defense. He became Mao’s designated successor in 1969 but, shortly thereafter, was killed in an apparent split within the radical leadership. He is reported to have attempted to assassinate Mao before fleeing in an airplane, which was shot down over Mongolia.

**Lin Zexu** (1785–1850): Qing official who was put in charge of opium suppression in Guangzhou in 1838. His strong efforts to eliminate the drug trade led the British to launch the Opium War (1839–1842).

**Liu Bang** (247–195 B.C.E.): Petty official of the Qin state who rebelled and raised an army that allowed him to establish a new dynasty, the Han, in 202 B.C.E. Reigned as first emperor until his death.

**Liu Bei** (162–223 C.E.): Descendant in a minor line of the Han imperial family, he founded the state of Shu Han in 220 at the beginning of the Three Kingdoms period.

**Liu Shaoqi** (1898–1969): Communist Party leader and president of the People's Republic in the 1950s and early 1960s. He became the chief focus of opposition to Mao and was denounced as a “capitalist roader” in the Cultural Revolution, when he was purged from office and imprisoned. Died of cancer while still under arrest.

**Mao Zedong** (1893–1976): One of the founders of the Communist Party, he became an advocate of the “peasant strategy” in the late 1920s. Became chairman of the Party in 1935 and remained its chief leader until his death.

**Marco Polo** (1254–1324): Venetian traveler who visited China from c. 1275–1290. He served as an official under Khubilai and left a rich memoir of his travels, which was criticized in Europe as wildly exaggerated.

**Mencius** (372–289 B.C.E.): Philosopher and interpreter of Confucius. Mencius emphasized the reciprocal nature of social relationships, especially the right of people to overthrow unjust rulers. He also stressed the natural division of society into those who labor with their backs and those who work with their minds.

**Mozi** (late 5<sup>th</sup>–early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E.): Warring States period thinker who advocated “universal love” and promoted defensive warfare to make aggression unprofitable.

**Nurhaci** (1559–1626): Creator of the Manchus. He sought to revive the former Jin dynasty of the Jurchen people and overthrow the Ming dynasty.

**Ouyang Xiu** (1007–1072): Scholar and official of the Northern Song, he was a representative figure of the “literary gentlemen,” who advocated clear prose writing and traditional Confucian values.

**Peng Dehuai** (1898–1974): Military leader and veteran of the Long March. He led Chinese forces in the Korean War and served as minister of defense in the 1950s. Purged in 1959 for criticizing Mao over the Great Leap Forward.

**Puyi** (1905–1967): Last emperor of the Qing. He was put on the throne in 1908 at the age of three. Abdicated in 1912. He was later puppet emperor of Manchuguo under the Japanese from 1934–1945.

**Qianlong** (1711–1799): Fourth emperor of the Qing, he reigned for 60 years, from 1736–1795. Retired in order not to exceed the reign of his grandfather, Kangxi. Qianlong's reign was, in some ways, the high point of the Qing era.

**Qinshihuangdi** (259–210 B.C.E.): King of the state of Qin at the end of the Warring States, he proclaimed himself First Emperor in 221 B.C.E., when Qin's last rival was defeated. His mausoleum near Xian contains the famous terra cotta warriors.



**Shun** (c. 2200 B.C.E.): Legendary sage king of antiquity. Named to succeed Emperor Yao, who set aside his own son in favor of Shun's moral uprightness.

**Siddhartha** (6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.): Indian prince who founded Buddhism. He rejected the material luxury of his life and sought to understand the origins of suffering and how to transcend it.

**Sima Guang** (1019–1086): Statecraft thinker of the Northern Song. Critic of the reforms of Wang Anshi, he promoted a view of government that emphasized the role of the literati as sage advisors to the emperor.

**Su Shi** (1037–1101): Scholar, official, and literary theorist. Follower of Ouyang Xiu, he promoted the assimilation of classical literary models as a basis for one's own spontaneous expression.

**Sun Quan** (181–252): Three Kingdoms ruler of the southeastern state of Wu.

**Sun Yatsen** (1866–1925): Nationalist revolutionary leader and founder of the Guomindang, the Nationalist Party. Developed the three People's Principles of nationalism, democracy, and socialism.

**Sunzi** (6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.): Military strategist of the Warring States period. His doctrines of deception and careful preparation became fundamental to Chinese military thinking.

**Temujin** (c. 1162–1227): Leader of the Mongols in their great age of expansion. Became Chinggis Khan, or Oceanic Ruler, in 1206.

**Wang Anshi** (1021–1086): Statecraft thinker and political leader. Presided over the reform effort known as the New Policies in the 1070s. Advocated a stronger role for the central government and restriction of the powers of local elites.

**Wang Mang** (33 B.C.E.–23 C.E.): An official at the Han court, he seized power in 9 C.E. and proclaimed his own dynasty, the Xin. He instituted various reforms, but following his death in 23 C.E., the Liu family reclaimed the throne.

**Wang Yangming** (1472–1528): Philosopher and official who developed new interpretations of Confucian ideas about knowledge and action. Believed that everyone has an "innate knowledge of the good" and that there was a necessary link between knowing and acting. His ideas have been seen as a Chinese version of individualism and humanism.

**King Wen** (d. c. 1045 B.C.E.): Last leader of the Zhou people before their overthrow of the Shang. He guided the consolidation of the alliance of subordinate peoples that brought the dynasty to an end.

**King Wu** (d. c. 1039 B.C.E.): King of the Zhou at the time of the Conquest, he was largely guided by his uncle, the Duke of Zhou.

**Wu Sangui** (d. 1678): Chinese general who allowed the Manchus to cross the Great Wall in 1644. He was given a large territory to govern in south China but rebelled in 1673 in the last serious challenge to the new dynasty.

**Wu Zetian** (625–705): Concubine in the harem of Li Shimin, she became empress consort of the next emperor and mother of yet another emperor. In 690, she set aside the Li family and assumed the throne for herself, becoming the only woman ever to rule China in her own name. She abdicated in 705, and the Li family regained the throne and restored the Tang dynasty.

**Wudi** (r. 142–87 B.C.E.): Dynamic emperor of the Han dynasty, he pursued an activist policy for the state in economic and social life; launched military campaigns to expand the empire; and promoted the synthesis of Confucian, Daoist, and Legalist thought that became the imperial orthodoxy.

**Xiang Yu** (233–202 B.C.E.): Military leader of the former state of Chu, he joined the rebellion against Qin in 207 B.C.E. and soon became one of the major contenders to found a new dynasty. He was defeated by Liu Bang in 202.

**Xuanzong** (r. 713–756): Emperor of the Tang, he presided over a long period of growth and stability. Over time, however, he withdrew from active participation in court life and devoted himself to his favorite concubine, Yang Guifei. His jealousy was exploited by officials and led to the rebellion of An Lushan.

**Yang Guifei** (d. 756): Daughter of an official, she became a consort of the emperor Xuanzong. They became so close that she influenced his decisions on government. Jealous officials alleged an illicit relationship with An Lushan, which led to his rebellion. Yang Guifei was strangled and left by the roadside as the emperor's entourage fled the capital in 756.

**Yang Jian** (540–605): General who overthrew his emperor and established his own dynasty, the Sui, in 581. He ruled as emperor until his death and was succeeded by his son, Yang Guang.

**Yao** (c. 2300 B.C.E.): Legendary sage ruler of antiquity. He set aside his own son to appoint Shun as his successor because of his sterling moral qualities.

**Yongzheng** (1677–1735): Third emperor of the Qing. His attempts to reform the finances of the state were thwarted by both local officials and elites.

**Yuan Shikai** (1859–1916): Military leader of the late Qing. He commanded the modernized Beiyang Army in northern China. In 1898, he supported the suppression of the reformers. In 1911, he negotiated the abdication of the emperor and secured the presidency of the new Republic for himself. After an abortive attempt to assume the throne in 1916, he fled Beijing and died shortly thereafter.

**Zeng Guofan** (1811–1872): Military leader and provincial-level official who led the Hunan army against the Taipings in the 1860s. He played a leading role in the early Self-Strengthening Movement.

**Zhang Juzheng** (d. 1582): Chief grand secretary for the young Wanli emperor, he supervised much of the Single Whip tax reforms. His attempt to carry out an empire-wide survey of landholdings to revise the tax registers was resisted by local literati elites.

**Zhang Xueliang** (1898–2001): Warlord in northwestern China who placed Chiang Kaishek under house arrest in December 1936 to coerce him into forming a new alliance with the Communists to resist Japanese aggression. After the negotiations concluded and Chiang was released, he placed Zhang under arrest; Zhang was held by the Nationalists until 1996.

**Zhu Di** (1360–1424): Third emperor of the Ming dynasty. Fourth son of Zhu Yuanzhang, Zhu Di resented the naming of his nephew as emperor in 1398 and soon rebelled. He captured Nanjing in 1402 and took the throne for himself.

**Zhu Xi** (1130–1200): Philosopher who brought together ideas about natural patterns and principles and the nature of moral values to synthesize the school of *Daoxue*, the “Learning of the Way.” His interpretations of the Confucian classics became the standard for the imperial examination system from the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century on.

**Zhu Yuanzhang** (1328–1398): Founding emperor of the Ming dynasty. He rose from being an impoverished orphan to become leader of the Red Turbans rebel movement at the end of the Yuan. In 1368, he defeated the last Mongol forces and established his new regime. His paranoia about the literati led him to launch repeated purges of his officials, claiming tens of thousands of victims.

**Zhuangzi** (late 4<sup>th</sup>–early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C.E.): Philosopher who developed and interpreted the teachings of Laozi. He emphasized the relativity to knowledge and the ideas of uselessness and emptiness.

**Zhuge Liang** (181–234): General known for his clever stratagems during the Three Kingdoms period. He was an advisor to Liu Bei, ruler of the Shu Han kingdom in modern Sichuan.



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Part II



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5000 Years of Chinese History Part II

From Yao to Mao:

## **Kenneth J. Hammond, Ph.D.**

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In 1999, he received an American Council of Learned Societies research grant to spend five months at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. In 2002–2003, he was an Affiliated Fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies at Leiden, the Netherlands. In June 2003, he organized and chaired an international conference on Chinese cultural history in Leiden.

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## From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

### Scope:

The 36 lectures in this course explore the history and culture of China, spanning a vast temporal and spatial domain and developing several themes to help understand this ancient and complex society. We will proceed in an essentially chronological passage through the unfolding of China's political and cultural evolution, with particular attention to important ideas and individuals and the roles they have played in shaping both China's historical past and its dynamic present.

Chinese civilization originated in the confluence of several regional Neolithic cultures nearly 5,000 years ago. Emerging from the mythological Era of Sage Emperors, such as Yao and Shun, China's historical record begins with the Shang dynasty around 1500 B.C.E. We will follow the growth of China from a small kingdom on the North China Plain to a major empire extending from the Siberian frontier to the jungles of Southeast Asia, from the Pacific coast to the Central Asian deserts.

One of our main themes will be the evolution of social and political elites and the mechanisms by which they acquired and asserted their power as rulers of China. Closely linked to this is the history of political thought in China, from shamanistic roots in prehistory through the Axial Age of Confucius and Laozi and the long process of crafting and adapting the Imperial Order over the past two millennia and more.

We will also be concerned with the ways in which the Chinese have thought and written about themselves and the world around them. Cosmological ideas about the nature of the universe, the metaphysical insights of Buddhism and religious Daoism, and the perennial mysticism of popular religion have blended and interacted throughout Chinese history in ways which have yielded both the beauties of art and the horrors of religious conflict.

Throughout these lectures, we will consider China's history as it relates to the world beyond China. For more than 2,000 years, China has been linked to the global economy, and traders and travelers have brought both the riches of the empire and tales of its splendor to the West. We will trace the increasingly close relations between China and the West from the age of the Mongol conquests in the 13<sup>th</sup> century through the rise of European imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and into the present age of China's reemergence as a great world economic and political power.

By engaging with the history of China over the last five millennia, we will become familiar with one of the world's greatest civilizations and, arguably, its most persistent. Far from the popular image of China as a stagnant, unchanging

relic of a once glorious past, we will see China as a living culture that has flourished and declined, revived and returned to greatness several times over thousands of years. We will come to understand some of the key features that allowed China's political order to remain stable for more than 2,000 years and that continue to shape this country at the opening of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Lecture Thirteen

### Han Yu and the Late Tang

**Scope:** The An Lushan rebellion shook the Tang to its foundation, but the dynasty survived and remained in power for another century and a half. At the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup>, a new intellectual movement of Confucian thinkers and writers, perhaps represented best by the scholar Han Yu, began to call for a return to the ideals of good government and good writing that had characterized the first century of the Han dynasty a thousand years earlier. Blaming many of China's troubles on the baleful influences of Buddhism and religious Daoism, Han Yu and others called for a kind of cultural renaissance. Their ideas did not immediately yield fruit but set the stage for the great cultural and intellectual changes of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, which we will consider later.

#### Outline

- I. In the aftermath of the An Lushan rebellion, the Tang dynasty found its position weakened.
  - A. The emperors had to make deals with military leaders to ensure their support.
    1. The rebellion mainly affected the northern and central provinces.
    2. Generals in the south and southwest of the empire forced the emperor to agree to allow them to retain much of the tax revenues from their regions, thus reducing the fiscal resources for the central government.
    3. Local strongmen began to dominate the provinces, and the imperial court directly ruled only the area immediately surrounding the capital.
  - B. Buddhist monasteries also became a major concern for the rulers.
    1. Buddhism remained quite popular, and monks were often advisors at court.
    2. The great monasteries built up large holdings of land donated by pious, or clever, donors, all of which was exempt from taxation.
    3. This also led to a decrease in revenues for the state.
- II. At the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup>, a cultural and political movement began to revive Confucian values and reduce the power and influence of Buddhism.
  - A. One of the chief figures in this movement was a man named Han Yu.
    1. Han Yu lived from 768 to 824.

2. He represented a newly emerging kind of scholar-official.
  3. He was not from the established aristocratic families that had long dominated the court.
  4. He entered government service through the examination system, rather than through personal recommendation; this career pattern would become much more common later, in the Song dynasty.
- B.** Han Yu developed a literary and political theory called *guwen*, meaning “old-style” writing.
1. He advocated simple, straightforward expository prose, in the style common during the early Han dynasty.
  2. He argued that the flowery literature that had become dominant in China undermined clear thinking and promoted false values.
  3. In such texts as his famous essay “The Origin of the Way,” he blamed Buddhism, and to some extent religious Daoism, for the problems of China’s cultural and political life.
  4. In another essay, “On the Bone of the Buddha,” he opposed plans for the emperor to pay homage to a Buddhist relic on display in the capital.
  5. He believed that a return to basic Confucian values of humanity and compassion would restore China to greatness.
- III.** The *guwen* movement pushed for political reform and a revival of the imperial state.
- A.** Han Yu and other like-minded junior officials wrote essays and memorials seeking to promote their views.
1. In some limited ways, they acted like a political faction within the government.
  2. Many of them, including Han Yu, were criticized and punished for their views.
  3. Han Yu was exiled to the south for several years but returned to the capital.
  4. The activities of this group set a standard for later Confucians in standing up for their beliefs.
  5. Although they did not succeed in becoming the dominant group, the *guwen* thinkers set the stage for major cultural and intellectual developments in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and afterwards, as we will see in later lectures.
- B.** In 845, a purge of Buddhism greatly reduced the power of monasteries.
1. This was, in part, a response to the critique of Buddhism set forth by the *guwen* school.
  2. Most monasteries were closed down, and monks and nuns were ordered to return to lay life.

3. This suppression lasted only a few years, and Buddhist monasteries resumed their activities from the 850s onward, but they never held as much land, or as much power, as they had previously.
4. By late in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Tang began to face serious problems again, and it entered a period of rapid decline, which ushered in an age of great changes in China; we turn to this period in the next lecture.

### Essential Reading:

Charles Hartman, *Han Yu and the T'ang Search for Unity*.

### Supplemental Reading:

Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society*.

Jo-shui Chen, *Liu Tsung-yuan and Intellectual Change in T'ang China, 773–819*.

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why would a particular style of writing have been seen as important in itself, rather than as merely secondary to the message contained in a literary work?
2. For Han Yu and like-minded scholar officials, criticizing the shortcomings of the emperor was a moral duty. This often resulted in exile or execution. Why would individuals have risked such punishments by speaking out?

## Lecture Fourteen

### Five Dynasties and the Song Founding

**Scope:** By the late 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Tang dynasty was weakened by corruption, the diffusion of military power, and the power conflicts of great aristocratic families. In 907, the last Tang ruler was deposed, and the empire fell into a half century of fragmentation and chronic warfare. A series of regional states rose and fell in rapid succession until, in 960, two brothers established a new dynasty called the Song. These men, Zhao Kuangyin and Zhao Kuangyi, defeated various rivals and consolidated their power over the next decade, establishing a new order that would rule China until the Mongol conquest in the later 13<sup>th</sup> century. They faced a political challenge in bringing the prolonged period of military rule after the fall of the Tang to an end and resolved the problems facing them through institutional and social innovations that fundamentally reshaped the later imperial state.

#### Outline

- I. The Tang dynasty fell apart at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.
  - A. A combination of internal stresses tore the empire apart.
    1. Military strongmen clashed among themselves over dominance at court.
    2. Eunuchs gained increasing power over the day-to-day operations of the central government.
    3. Great aristocratic families schemed against each other for influence over the emperors.
    4. In the 880s, a civil war between rival military leaders caused major economic damage.
    5. Peasant rebellions against exploitation by desperate landlords broke out with increasing frequency and violence.
    6. Finally, the armies entered the capital and massacred the eunuchs, imposing military oversight on the last Tang emperors.
  - B. At the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Tang was deposed, and China fell into more than 50 years of division and warfare.
    1. This period is called the Five Dynasties, after the main states that handed power down through five decades.
    2. Many other minor kingdoms rose and fell during this time, as well.
    3. Power was held by whoever could muster adequate force to seize it.

4. Society and the economy were subject to severe stress and disruption.
- II.** In 960, this age of instability was brought to an end with the establishment of the Song dynasty.
- A.** The Zhao brothers, Kuangyin and Kuangyi, seized power in one of the Five Dynasties states and were successful in unifying the empire.
    1. Their seizure of power was essentially like all the others that had taken place over the previous 53 years.
    2. They faced a basic problem, which was how to ensure that some other general would not do to them what they had done to their emperor.
    3. They reunified China through a series of military campaigns and, by 970, controlled the entire empire.
  - B.** The Zhao brothers solved their problem with innovative policies and careful political maneuvering.
    1. The old aristocratic order, which had supported dynastic government from the Han through the Tang, had largely been destroyed in the chaos of the fall of the Tang and 50 years of chronic warfare.
    2. The Zhao brothers used a new method to recruit men of talent to serve in their administration, the Confucian examination system.
    3. Exams had been used since the Han as a minor adjunct to the main system of recruitment by recommendation.
    4. Now, the Song dynasty made the exams the mainstream of government recruitment, though other ways of entering the bureaucracy, such as the “shadow privilege” given to the sons or grandsons of officials who were already serving, also remained.
- III.** The examinations became central to the political culture of Song and later imperial China.
- A.** The examinations took place on a local and national level.
    1. At first, it was a two-level system, which later developed a middle, provincial level.
    2. Candidates sat for examinations to test their knowledge of the Confucian classical texts and their ability to write classical Chinese.
    3. Specific criteria for evaluation shifted from time to time, often involving great political controversy.
    4. Men who passed at the local level could sit for the higher exams.



5. Women, merchants and their sons, and men from small “outcast” groups were barred from the examinations, but all farmers, artisans, and members of already established elite families could take part.
- B.** The examinations created a focus for elite cultural life.
1. What John Chafee has called “examination culture” became the mainstream of the intellectual and cultural life of China’s elite.
  2. Confucianism regained its central role as the official ideology of the imperial state, with Buddhism relegated to a safely non-political status.
  3. The literate gentlemen who dominated China’s political culture were known as the *shi*, the same term used for the administrative elite in ancient times.
  4. The *shi* encompassed a range of views and interpretations about the meaning of Confucian teachings and the nature of society and the world.
  5. Debates and discussions about these issues led to the rise of diverse schools of thought and, sometimes, to political rivalries between groups of *shi* both in and out of government office.
  6. The 11<sup>th</sup> century became an age of great intellectual ferment for China, as diverse schools of thought emerged and contended for preeminence. We will explore this development in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

John W. Chafee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Ichisada Miyazaki, *China’s Examination Hell*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. How might the military strongmen who made themselves rulers of the many small states during the Five Dynasties justify their seizures of power?
2. Why would the generals holding positions of power under the early Song dynasty have yielded to the civil authority of the new examination system officials?

## Lecture Fifteen

### Intellectual Ferment in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century

**Scope:** Perhaps the most critical development in the early Song dynasty was the expansion of the imperial civil service examination system.

Examinations based on the Confucian classical texts had been used as part of the process of recruiting men into government service since the Han period, but in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Song revived the use of exams and made them central to their personnel function. Examinations became the most significant mechanism for identifying men of talent and for placing officials in the highest positions in the imperial bureaucracy. This gave intellectual issues renewed importance in elite circles, and the 11<sup>th</sup> century became a great age of debate and discussion about literature, philosophy, government, and art. We will examine several key figures in this process and explore the great controversies that shaped the period.

#### Outline

- I. As the examination system developed, the class of literary gentlemen, the *shi*, became the dominant elite in government and society.
  - A. The men who passed at least one level of the examinations formed the core of this elite.
    1. In the course of a regular three-year examination cycle, tens of thousands of men would sit for tests on the local level, but only a few hundred would eventually pass at the highest level and become *jinshi*, or “presented gentlemen.”
    2. Even passing only the lowest level, though, brought great prestige and exemption from certain taxes and legal obligations, for example, exemption from corporal punishment or the *corvée* labor tax.
  - B. The examination culture included also men who never passed even the lowest exams but had immersed themselves in the literary tradition by studying for the exams.
    1. Some men sat repeatedly for the entry-level exams without ever passing.
    2. Many men who failed to pass the exams still became teachers or secretaries for officials.
    3. The educated strata in Song Chinese society extended to perhaps five percent of the population.

- II. The examination culture gave rise to great debates over the nature of social and cosmic order and the proper role of the gentleman in the world.
- A. Three main streams of thought can be perceived among the literati (*shi*) in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.
1. Two of these centered on the concept of *wen*, or literary culture.
  2. These can be thought of as the “literary gentlemen” (*wenren*) and the “statecraft” thinkers (*jingshi*).
  3. The other main group was more concerned with cosmological thought.
- B. The *wenren* and *jingshi* thinkers shared a faith in the literary textual tradition as the repository of human experience and as the place to look for moral values.
1. The literary gentlemen are represented by such figures as Ouyang Xiu (1007–1072) and Su Shi (1037–1101).
  2. These men looked to the writings of the past for inspiration and for insight into how gentlemen of the past had acted in various circumstances.
  3. What was most important for these men was good writing, in the tradition of Han Yu in the Tang.
  4. The statecraft thinkers also looked to the writings of the past but with a more utilitarian intent.
  5. They saw the past as a kind of inventory of experience or, perhaps, a toolbox, from which precedents and examples could be drawn on which to base actions in the present.
  6. Wang Anshi and Sima Guang were both exponents of *jingshi*, though they were bitter political enemies.
  7. Wang promoted an ambitious program of government reform to strengthen the central state, while Sima advocated greater autonomy for the local elites, meaning in practice, the landowning *shi* families across the empire.
- C. The cosmological thinkers saw human society in a broader cosmic context.
1. Central to their thinking was the concept of *li*, meaning naturally occurring patterns, in contrast to the idea of *wen*, which referred to patterns produced by human action, such as writing or painting.
  2. They sought to apprehend the underlying patterns in nature and human society and to derive moral values or principles from a direct understanding of the natural order, rather than on the basis of historical experience.
  3. Such men as Shao Yong and Zhang Zai and, especially the brothers Cheng Yi and Cheng Hao, represent the cosmological thinkers.

4. They emphasized the place of human activity within a cosmic system, and for them, moral values were, in effect, natural laws.
- III. As we will see in a later lecture, new challenges were emerging that would threaten the survival of the Song in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century.
- A. On the northern frontier, non-Chinese peoples were expanding their power.
  - B. Before we discuss these challenges, we will consider some of the cultural manifestations of the new ideas we have been discussing, in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Robert P. Hymes and Conrad Schirokauer, eds., *Ordering the World*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. If the literary cultural past was the repository for practical knowledge and moral values, what was the role of the *shi* as bearers of that heritage?
2. Why was there such a strong link between moral discourse and political factionalism?

## Lecture Sixteen

### Art and the Way

**Scope:** The Northern Song dynasty was also a great age of change in art. In this lecture, we will look back to the development of painting and calligraphy in earlier times and consider the emergence of landscape painting and the rise of art historical discourse in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The changes taking place in painting reflected new ideas about the place of man in the universe, and these in turn, became manifest in the new philosophical trend of *Daoxue*, or the “Learning of the Way,” which would soon become the official version of Confucianism approved by the imperial state.

#### Outline

- I. Painting and calligraphy had a long history in China before the Song.
  - A. The earliest images of people or objects go back to Neolithic pottery decoration. Animal totems and geometric designs predominated.
  - B. By the Han dynasty, tomb decoration became important.
    1. Wall paintings and painted fabrics have been found with images of people and animals, both naturalistic and fantastic.
    2. There was also a desire to illustrate ideas of the afterlife.
  - C. During the period from Han through Tang, painting took on new forms and styles, and calligraphy developed as a graphic art form.
    1. With the invention of paper and less expensive techniques for silk production, paintings became cheaper to produce and more affordable to own.
    2. Paintings as illustrations of moral tales or popular stories, such as Gu Kaizhi's *Admonitions of the River Spirit*, grew more common.
    3. In the Southern Dynasties, during the period of cultural anxiety related to the presence of Turkic-dominated states in northern China, calligraphy developed as a significant art form.
    4. Calligraphy emphasized the structural beauty of Chinese writing and posited a link between the aesthetic values of writing characters and the moral qualities of the writer.
  - D. Throughout these periods, painting and calligraphy were seen as essentially narrative and didactic, as illustrative art forms.

- II. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, new ideas about painting and the representation of the world began to develop.
- A. Central to this was a reevaluation of the place of human activity in the universe.
    - 1. Painting and calligraphy had been seen as part of the overall realm of *wen* and had basically served to illustrate literary concepts.
    - 2. New ideas about *li*, the inherent patterns in things, caused some people to see the world in different ways.
    - 3. Northern Song landscape painting began to present human life as merely one element in a much larger natural or cosmic order.
    - 4. Monumental landscape paintings, such as Fan Kuan's *Travelers in the Mountains*, emphasized the massive physical structure of the land and placed tiny human figures in peripheral settings.
    - 5. Fan's painting reveals the natural patterns of the landscape and situates human activity in a clearly subordinate role.
    - 6. Basic compositional elements include the distant mass of mountains, more detail in the foreground, and the winding path (in Chinese, the same word, *Dao*, means "the Way") along which the travelers pass.
  - B. Landscape painting became the mainstream of Chinese graphic art.
    - 1. In the Northern Song, down to the 1120s, monumental landscape dominated, though genre paintings of daily life at court and bird-and-flower painting were also significant.
    - 2. In the Southern Song, landscapes became somewhat smaller in scale and more concerned with misty views of distant peaks, perhaps reflecting a nostalgia for the lost territories of northern China, which we will discuss in the next lecture.
    - 3. In both styles, the place of human beings is clearly subordinate to, although part of, a larger order.
- III. The concept of *li* became central to the emergence of the Learning of the Way (*Daoxue*).
- A. As we saw in the discussion of 11<sup>th</sup>-century thought, the cosmological thinkers emphasized *li* and the idea of natural principles as the basis for moral order.
    - 1. The "good" was thought of as that which was in harmony with natural principle, and that which deviated from this was evil.
    - 2. Although this kind of philosophy emphasized seeking values in the inherent patterns of nature, it did not entirely turn away from the heritage of Confucian learning.
  - B. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, *Daoxue* ideas were developed and consolidated and became a powerful force in Chinese intellectual culture.

1. The changes in intellectual and cultural life, however, need to be seen in the context of other changes taking place in the economy and in political life.
2. We will examine the ideas of Zhu Xi, the preeminent *Daoxue* thinker of the Southern Song, in a later lecture.
3. First, we need to consider the impact of non-Chinese invaders during the course of the Song and the dynamic development of economic forces in the 11<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, which we will look at in the next two lectures.

**Essential Reading:**

Wen Fong, ed., *Beyond Representation*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Amey McNair, *The Upright Brush*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Painting had been considered a craft, which was largely practiced by artisans at court until the Song dynasty. What was the connection between the changes in artistic theory and practice and the transformation of the social-political elite in the early Song?
2. Why were painting and calligraphy thought to reveal a man's character more clearly than his words?

## Lecture Seventeen

### Conquest States in the North

**Scope:** The collapse of the Tang at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century not only led to a period of division and conflict within China but also created opportunities for the rise of non-Chinese powers along the northern frontier. The Khitan people established the Liao dynasty in 907 and carried on a tense relationship with the Chinese over the next two centuries. As the Song state consolidated its power over most of China, the Liao retained control of the Sixteen Prefectures in the area near modern Beijing. The Liao became a state ruled by a non-Chinese elite but using Chinese bureaucratic systems to administer part of its territory. In the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, another northern people, the Jurchen, began to assert their power and, in an alliance with the Chinese, overthrew the Liao. They then went on to invade and conquer much of northern China, which they ruled under the Jin dynasty until the Mongols defeated them in 1234.

#### Outline

- I. The collapse of Tang power created the conditions for non-Chinese states to arise along the former frontier of the empire.
  - A. All along the arc from Tibet to Manchuria, local peoples set up their own states.
    1. The Tibetan empire, which had challenged Tang power in Central Asia in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, continued to control the high plateau.
    2. A Uighur empire spread across the deserts and oases of the Tarim Basin.
    3. Mongol tribes were the notable exception to this period of political development but would soon surpass their neighbors.
    4. In the northeast, the Khitan were the first people to create a strong state.
  - B. The Khitan lived in the mountains and forests of what is now southern Manchuria.
    1. In 907, they set up an independent state, which they called the Liao dynasty.
    2. The first Liao leader, Abaoji, spent two decades campaigning against rival groups and against the Chinese just south of the Great Wall to build an extensive territory for his empire.



3. The Liao state was able to seize and hold the so-called Sixteen Prefectures, a strip of land south of the Great Wall with a dense population of Chinese farmers.
- II.** With the rise of the Song in China, the Liao and the Chinese developed a tense but viable relationship.
- A.** The Chinese launched major military campaigns against the Liao in 1004 and 1044.
    1. In each case, the goal was the recovery of the Sixteen Prefectures.
    2. The Liao defeated Chinese forces and negotiated treaties with the Song.
    3. These treaties compelled the Chinese to recognize the legitimacy of the Liao state and to pay annual subsidies of silk and silver to the Khitan rulers.
    4. After the second war, the subsidies were doubled, and the Chinese refrained from further efforts to overthrow Khitan power south of the Great Wall.
  - B.** The Khitan developed a system of dual administration to deal with their ethnically mixed population.
    1. Although the Sixteen Prefectures formed only a small portion of the territory of the empire, the Chinese were almost 70 percent of the population.
    2. The Khitan retained many old tribal traditions in their lands beyond the Great Wall but used Chinese administrative techniques and the Chinese language in the Sixteen Prefectures.
    3. As time passed, the Khitan elite became increasingly assimilated to Chinese culture, and the traditional warrior ethos weakened.
- III.** The Chinese sought ways to weaken the Liao and, around the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, found an ally in the Jurchen people.
- A.** The Jurchen lived in the far north of Manchuria.
    1. Some Jurchen lived in Liao territory and were subjects of the Khitan emperors, while others lived beyond the Liao frontier.
    2. The so-called “raw” Jurchen, those not under Liao rule, allied with the Chinese to overthrow the Khitan.
    3. In 1125, they swept the Liao state away.
    4. But they did not stop there and continued to invade northern China.
  - B.** The Jurchen captured much of northern China and ended the period known as the Northern Song.
    1. In 1127, they captured Kaifeng, the Song capital.
    2. They carried the Song emperor and many of the royal family away into captivity.

3. The remnants of the court had to flee south and fought for several years to survive.
  4. By 1135, the Song had basically given up hope of regaining the north, and a new capital at Hangzhou became the center of the Southern Song.
- IV. The Jurchen founded the Jin dynasty, which lasted until 1234.
- A. Like the Liao, the Jin had a mixed population.
    1. The proportion of Chinese to Jurchen was even higher than in the Khitan Liao, with the Chinese accounting for more than 90 percent of the total.
    2. The Jin state, too, was a dual administration, but the Chinese dimension soon became dominant.
  - B. Although relations were always tense, the border between Jin and Song was more stable than the Song-Liao frontier had been.
    1. After the campaigns of the 1120s and 1130s, the military situation settled down.
    2. While the “recovery of the north” remained a powerful idea in political rhetoric and literati art, no real efforts were made to reconquer territory.
  - C. The Jin empire was essentially Chinese in its society and culture.
    1. The farming population was largely unaffected by the conquerors.
    2. Jin literary culture continued many of the trends of the Northern Song, preserving, however, the leading role of the *wenren*, while *Daoxue* became increasingly important in the South.
    3. During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Southern Song underwent great economic development, which had serious implications for politics and culture; we will take up this topic in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Morris Rossabi, ed., *China among Equals*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Stephen H. West, eds., *China under Jurchen Rule*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. The Chinese had always thought of themselves as the center of civilization. How did they deal with having to accept the Khitan and Jurchen as equal partners in treaties?
2. Why did the Khitan and Jurchen elites adopt Chinese surnames and other cultural practices, even as they tried to maintain their original cultural identities?

## Lecture Eighteen

### Economy and Society in Southern Song

**Scope:** After the loss of north China to the Jurchen in 1127, the Song court moved to the city of Hangzhou. The Southern Song survived until the Mongol conquest of the 1270s. During this century and a half, there was tremendous growth and development in China's economy, with a significant expansion in domestic and international, particularly maritime, trade, and with important technological innovations that enhanced production in both agriculture and industry. The great ceramic center at Jingdezhen became one of the first true industrial cities in history, with massive production lines and warehouses. A merchant class began to expand and compete for social status with the more traditional literati elite, which was based on agricultural wealth. Consumer goods proliferated as networks of specialized production and long-distance trade created a more truly national market.

#### Outline

- I. The Southern Song stabilized by the mid-1130s with a new capital at Hangzhou.
  - A. The Song now controlled about half the territory of China proper, with the border between Song and Jin running about midway between the Yellow and Yangzi Rivers.
    1. Since at least the middle Tang, China's center of population had been shifting to the south.
    2. In the Southern Song period, about 60 percent of Chinese lived in Song territory.
    3. The geography of the south, which featured more hills and valleys than the broad North China Plain, gave rise to greater local diversity in language dialects and cultural practices.
    4. Local elites were stronger in the south and played greater roles in local society, with somewhat less of a focus on national, empire-wide affairs.
  - B. In conjunction with the growth of the examination culture and overall population growth, elite society evolved in several ways.
    1. Literati families came to intermarry in much more local contexts than had previously been the case.
    2. Local elites took on a number of quasi-governmental functions, such as infrastructure maintenance and public security.
    3. Local private academies became important in the educational sphere.

- II. Development of the commercial economy was rapid and generated new tensions in Chinese society.**
- A. The more fragmented geography of the south encouraged local specialization in production, and this, in turn, fostered the growth of long-distance trade.**
    - 1. In agriculture, some regions became the grain production centers, while others began to specialize in tea or in the supply of mulberry leaves for the silk industry.
    - 2. Textile production, especially silk and cotton, began to be concentrated in the Jiangnan region, near the mouth of the Yangzi.
    - 3. At the city of Jingdezhen in Jiangxi province, great imperial kilns were built, and this became one of the first true industrial cities in the world.
    - 4. Tens of thousands of workers lived in Jingdezhen, where the ceramic factories ran around the clock and great warehouses served a network of distribution that covered the empire and extended overseas.
  - B. Song imperial policy encouraged not only the growth of Jingdezhen but economic development in general.**
    - 1. The state expanded coinage to increase the money supply and allowed Chinese coins to circulate across East Asia, becoming an international currency in Korea and Japan, as well.
    - 2. The Song also experimented with the use of paper money and began to develop other instruments of exchange, not unlike the early development of banking in Flanders and northern Italy around the same time.
- III. A class of wealthy merchants grew in size, generating new social stresses.**
- A. In the traditional Confucian social ideology, merchants were the bottom rank of society.**
    - 1. There was a four-rank hierarchy of social classes.
    - 2. The literati, the *shi*, were at the top, because they managed the affairs of society through good government.
    - 3. Peasant farmers came next, because they produced the food for everyone.
    - 4. Artisans were next, because they made useful goods.
    - 5. Merchants were at the bottom, because they did not produce anything themselves but merely made profits from the labors of others; in effect, they were social parasites.
  - B. Now, however, merchants were numerous enough and wealthy enough to compete with the literati for prestige.**

1. Merchant families built elaborate mansions, wore fine clothes, collected books and art, and donated money to public charities.
  2. Merchants and their sons and grandsons, however, remained barred from participation in the imperial examinations.
- C. In the West, this kind of tension gave rise to the growth of bourgeois society, but not in China.
1. Although there were tensions and, at times, antagonisms between literati and merchant interests, there was also convergence.
  2. Many literati families, especially in the wealthy Jiangnan region, became silent partners in commercial ventures, investing profits from their landholdings in pawnshops or textile production along with merchants.
  3. Merchant families remained excluded from the examination system, but they could purchase honorary titles from the government and, thus, shared in a system of public prestige with the literati.
  4. Merchant families also gained honors through patronage for religious or cultural activities in local communities.
  5. The growth of the commercial economy and the social evolution it engendered were disrupted by the Mongol conquest.
  6. Before we take up that story, however, we need to consider the full development of *Daoxue* Neo-Confucianism in the work of Zhu Xi, which we will examine in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Shiba Yoshinobu, *Commerce and Society in Sung China*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Valerie Hansen, *Changing Gods in Medieval China, 1127–1276*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. The Southern Song was geographically the smallest of the major Chinese dynasties, yet its influence through international trade was quite extensive. How might the economic changes taking place in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries have affected the self-image of educated Chinese?
2. A corollary of the economic expansion of the Southern Song was greater ease of travel for more Chinese, which is reflected in the growth of travel writing. How might this be related to the changes in painting discussed in Lecture Sixteen?

## Lecture Nineteen

### Zhu Xi and Neo-Confucianism

**Scope:** In this lecture, we will return to the developments taking place in thought and deal with one of the greatest figures in Chinese intellectual history, Zhu Xi (1130–1200). In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Zhu Xi brought together many elements from the debates of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and forged what is sometimes called the *Neo-Confucian synthesis*. Basically, this was a shift in the way moral values were conceived. Rather than being based on the accumulated historical experience of human society, Zhu Xi's view of moral values was based in a cosmic order. He emphasized the concepts of *li* ("pattern" or "principle") and *dao* ("the Way"), or the proper order of things. His teaching is known in Chinese as *Daoxue*, the "Learning of the Way." *Daoxue*, especially in the form of Zhu Xi's commentaries on the Confucian classical texts, became the only officially accepted interpretation of the ideas and concepts at the heart of the examination system.

#### Outline

- I. Zhu Xi was arguably the most significant intellectual figure in China since Han Yu.
  - A. In some ways analogous to the role of Thomas Aquinas in Western intellectual history, Zhu Xi was both an innovator and an advocate of a return to antiquity.
    1. Zhu Xi felt that much of the interpretive commentarial tradition that had grown up in Confucianism had obscured the original teachings.
    2. His main argument was that one should seek to understand the inherent patterns in nature and derive an understanding of the principles of morality from them.
    3. He argued that this was, in fact, what the sages of antiquity had done and that the gentleman should seek to emulate their models, rather than simply read texts.
    4. Nonetheless, he advocated a clear program of Confucian study and produced critical commentaries of his own on the classical texts.
  - B. Zhu Xi's ideas emphasized the need for self-cultivation by the gentleman.
    1. It was the duty of the gentleman to learn from antiquity and to observe the world around him.
    2. Zhu Xi used the phrase *gewu*, which means the "investigation of things," to describe this process.

3. By developing his own sense of knowledge and morality, the gentleman prepared himself to serve in government or to lead in private life.
- II. Among the texts he emphasized, one called *The Great Learning* was perhaps most important.
- A. *The Great Learning (Daxue)* was an ancient text, originally part of a larger book on ritual.
    1. Zhu Xi selected this passage, and another known as the *Doctrine of the Mean*, from the *Liji*, or *Record of Rites*.
    2. He made these two texts freestanding works in their own right.
    3. Along with the *Analects* of Confucius and the book of Mencius, they became known as the Four Books and were the central texts of Confucian learning from then on.
  - B. *The Great Learning* describes the connections between public life and individual moral cultivation.
    1. It begins with the efforts of the ancients to seek a well-ordered world.
    2. It moves from the realm of the state, to the family, to the individual, and to the internal consciousness of the individual.
    3. The key to everything is *gewu*, the “investigation of things,” which can yield a perception and understanding of *li*, the patterns and principles of the universe.
    4. Once these are grasped, an individual can rectify his own thought and behavior, can bring order to his family, can govern his own state, and in the end, the whole world will come to be properly ordered.
- III. The concepts of *li* and *qi* are central to Zhu Xi’s thought.
- A. *Li* is a natural pattern or principle.
  - B. *Qi* is the substance that gives physical existence to the patterns of *li*.
    1. *Li* and *qi* are, in essence, inseparable.
    2. *Qi* can be “muddy” or “clear.”
    3. The clearer it is, the more fully the *li*, the natural pattern, is made manifest and the more it is in harmony with the Way.
- IV. Zhu Xi’s teachings, known as *Daoxue*, are often called Neo-Confucianism.
- A. In accord with Chinese culture, Zhu Xi presented himself as one who returned to the wisdom of antiquity.
    1. He based his ideas on the authority of classical texts.
    2. He argued that he wanted to revive the Way of the Sages, not create something new.

**B.** Yet his ideas were, in many ways, innovative.

1. His metaphysical interpretation of the source of moral values was a sharp break with the established Confucian discourse.
2. His willingness to edit and revise the inherited classical canon was radical.
3. His emphasis on moral self-cultivation put a new emphasis on the role of the individual and has been seen, in some ways, in harmony with the developing commercial economy of the Song.
4. As with economic development, however, the course of intellectual change was severely disrupted by the trauma and drama of the Mongol conquests, the story of which we will take up in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Donald J. Munro, *Images of Human Nature*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Daniel K. Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Zhu Xi's synthesis of Neo-Confucianism took place in a context of economic, political, and social instability and flux. Why might his metaphysical interpretation of Confucianism have found a particularly receptive audience in such a context?
2. What does Zhu Xi's reconfiguration of the classical canon suggest about his view of writing, in contrast, perhaps, to that of Han Yu?



## Lecture Twenty

### The Rise of the Mongols

**Scope:** While China under the Song was prospering economically and undergoing a great age of art and philosophy, a nomadic people in the grasslands beyond the Great Wall began to build a new steppe empire and would soon launch the greatest age of conquest yet seen by mankind. The leader of this process was a man named Temujin, who would come to be known as Chinggis Khan, more commonly rendered as Genghis Khan. This lecture recounts the story of Temujin's rise to power over the Mongols and their dramatic conquest of much of Eurasia in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The empire Temujin built by the time of his death in 1227 extended from north China to Persia. His sons would extend it even further, from Korea to the Ukraine and from Syria to Vietnam.

#### Outline

- I. Temujin forged the scattered tribes of the Mongols into a major power at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.
  - A. Temujin was the son of a minor chieftain.
    1. His father was murdered when Temujin was still a young man.
    2. The Mongol tribes at that time were scattered and disorganized, without a strong leader.
    3. Temujin and his family had to hide out in a remote part of the grasslands.
    4. He conceived the ambition not only to avenge his father but to unite the tribes into a great fighting force.
  - B. In the 1180s and 1190s, Temujin built up his power base.
    1. At the age of 16, he returned from his family's exile and claimed a bride who had been promised him when he was a little boy.
    2. He used family connections and his own courage and charisma to build an initial set of alliances with tribal leaders.
    3. In 1190, he was made *khan*, or "chief," of one of the tribal groups.
    4. Several other young men, most notably one named Jamukha, were also rising in prominence at this time.
    5. By around 1200, Temujin began to aim to unite all the tribes, but this caused fear and anxiety among some elders.
    6. In 1204, he was deserted by many of his allies, and his hopes seemed to be crushed.
  - C. Temujin seized supreme power in 1206.

1. He inflicted a stunning defeat on his enemies, attacking them while they were drunk in celebration of the supposed collapse of his power.
  2. He called a great assembly of the tribes, a *quriltai*, in 1206, at which he was elected Chinggis Khan, the ruler of all Mongols.
- II. Once he achieved unity for the Mongols, he led them into a new age of conquest and expansion.
- A. Power and prestige among the Mongols was based on an economy of animal husbandry, supplemented by the spoils of raiding.
    1. A leader had to share out the loot from his military raids with his followers.
    2. Once the Mongols were unified under a single leader, they needed a new source of booty and turned to their non-Mongol neighbors.
  - B. The Mongols began to attack neighboring states and the rich trade routes of Central Asia.
    1. The Xi Xia empire, which lay south of Mongolia and west of the Jin state in northern China, was their first target.
    2. The Mongols also launched attacks against the city-states along the Silk Road, such as Hami, Kashgar, and Samarkand.
  - C. The Mongols developed their own special military style.
    1. They relied on fear and intimidation for much of their effectiveness.
    2. They were great horsemen and could cover great distances with unbelievable speed; thus, they often took their intended victims completely by surprise.
    3. When they besieged a city, they issued a basic ultimatum: Surrender and live or resist and die.
    4. They incorporated the defeated armies of their enemies into their own forces, treating them well and, in the process, greatly expanding their military capability.
- III. In 1227, Temujin died and was succeeded by his son Ögedei, but later, the empire was divided among his grandsons.
- A. Temujin had led his forces on the conquest of much of northern China, Central Asia, and into Persia.
    1. On his death, the Mongol armies returned to their homeland to elect a new leader.
    2. In 1229, they chose Ögedei, who ruled until 1241.
    3. The Mongols renewed their campaigns of conquests, extending them into Russia and Eastern Europe, further into the Middle East, and over greater stretches of north China and Korea.

4. After Ögedei's death, the Mongols could not settle on a new leader, and rival groups fought among themselves.
  5. Eventually, the empire was divided among four of Temujin's grandsons.
- B.** Each of Temujin's grandsons took control of a separate khanate.
1. Batu Khan took over Russia and the Ukraine, giving rise to the Cossacks.
  2. Hulegu controlled Persia, and his descendants, known as the Ilkhan, would later conquer much of India, where they became known as the Mughals.
  3. The line of Chagadai ruled over Central Asia, where the greatest of the later Mongols, Tamerlane, would arise in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
  4. Finally, Khubilai Khan became ruler over the Mongol conquests in East Asia and would complete the conquest of Song China in 1279.
- C.** The Mongol Age of Conquest was unprecedented and gave rise to some unusual events.
1. Travelers could go from the eastern Mediterranean all the way to the Pacific in relative safety, under Mongol rule.
  2. When the Mongols invading Persia and the Middle East encountered the Crusades, there was a brief hope among the Europeans for an alliance.
  3. This was based on the myth of Prester John, who was believed to be a Christian ruler of a great empire in Central Asia.
  4. There were, in fact, followers of a form of Christianity known as Nestorianism among the ranks of the Mongols.
  5. We will turn to the story of Mongol rule in China in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

J. J. Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Paul Ratchnevsky, *Genghis Khan: His Life and Legacy*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. The Mongols were often ruthless in their treatment of conquered cities and countries. Why would people have continued to resist them?
2. The power of the Mongol armies came to seem almost unstoppable, yet when the reigning khan died, all warfare ceased as the commanding generals had to return to Mongolia for the great assembly to choose the new leader(s). What does this suggest about the nature of the Mongol polity?

## Lecture Twenty-One

### The Yuan Dynasty

**Scope:** Khubilai, a grandson of Chinggis, became Great Khan in 1260 and completed the conquest of China in 1279. He ruled as emperor of the Yuan, or “Eternal,” dynasty until his death in 1296. This lecture covers the establishment of the Yuan state and the nature of Mongol rule in China, the situation of the Chinese literati elite under Mongol domination, and the changes in China’s economy and culture brought about by the Mongol conquest. The visit of Marco Polo to China during Khubilai’s reign provides some special insights into this dramatic era.

#### Outline

- I. Khubilai Khan came to power in 1260 when the vast territories conquered by the Mongols up to then were divided among the grandsons of Chinggis.
  - A. Khubilai’s khanate included the old homeland of the Mongols.
    1. The former Jin domain in northern China had been subdued in 1234.
    2. Mongol forces had also established control over Korea.
  - B. The Mongols debated how to incorporate China into their empire.
    1. Before Khubilai’s reign, some Mongols had advocated killing off the 60 million Chinese in north China to convert their farms into pasture for Mongol ponies.
    2. The former Jin official Yelu Quzai managed to convince them that taxing the peasants as a sustainable source of income was preferable.
- II. Khubilai completed the conquest of China and made himself emperor of the Yuan dynasty.
  - A. A series of military campaigns through the 1260s and 1270s led to the final fall of Hangzhou and the end of the Song in 1279.
    1. The Mongols had to adapt their usual methods of warfare to deal with the densely populated and geographically challenging situation in southern China.
    2. They moved troops from Persia to help with urban warfare.
    3. They learned to fight on the rivers and lakes of the south, developing a navy for the first time.
  - B. To demonstrate his victory over the Song, Khubilai proclaimed himself emperor and adopted the dynastic name of Yuan, meaning “Eternal” or “Everlasting.”
    1. This was part of an overall pattern of adapting to local political traditions across the territories conquered by the Mongols.

2. Khubilai set up his capital at the site of modern Beijing and called it Dadu, meaning “Great Capital.”
3. Not all the Mongol leadership supported these actions, and some refused to settle in China, returning to their old nomadic lifestyle in the Mongolian grasslands.

### III. The Yuan dynasty developed a unique system of rule in China.

- A. The Mongols did not trust the Chinese literati elite.
  1. They resented the surprising toughness of the Chinese resistance.
  2. They also were unable to read and understand classical Chinese and, thus, felt uneasy about their ability to know what the literati were up to.
- B. The Mongols employed people from outside China in the imperial administration.
  1. These people were called the *semu ren*, which means “people with colored eyes,” because many of them came from Persia or Russia and had blue eyes.
  2. The *semu ren* were put into place in provincial and local government offices, where they had authority over the literati officials.
  3. Nonetheless, the challenges of administering so vast and populous an empire meant that the Mongols had to rely on the literati to a significant extent.
- C. As time went by, the literati both resisted and overcame Mongol discrimination.
  1. Literati gentlemen withdrew from public life in large numbers, devoting themselves to cultural pursuits.
  2. New styles of literati painting and new schools of calligraphy developed during this time as gentlemen sought to demonstrate their sophistication in contrast to the “barbarian” conquerors.
  3. Popular theater developed during this time, as well, with plays often written by literati using subtle historical and literary allusions to encode anti-Mongol messages.

### IV. The Venetian Marco Polo visited China during Khubilai’s reign, and his stories of the fabulous East have provided a window on this place and time.

- A. Marco Polo traveled to China from Venice in 1272.
  1. He journeyed with his father and uncle, who had both been to China earlier.
  2. This was a great age for travel and trade overland across the Eurasian landmass, because the Mongols controlled the roads from the eastern Mediterranean all the way to the Pacific.
  3. Not only the Polo family, but other traders and representatives of the church, went to China in these years.
- B. Marco Polo stayed in China for nearly 20 years.

1. He became, in effect, one of the *semu ren* and was employed by Khubilai both in local government and as a diplomatic envoy.
  2. He served as governor of the former Song capital at Hangzhou.
  3. He escorted Mongol princesses sent as brides to India.
- C. After his return to Europe, Polo's stories of China were widely read but often treated as fantasy.
1. His descriptions of the wealth and power of China were seen as unbelievable. His book came to be known as "The Millions," in reference to the "millions of lies" he was alleged to have told.
  2. Nonetheless, Polo's book inspired great interest in the Far East.
  3. Columbus owned a heavily annotated copy of Polo's book, which contributed to his desire to find a trade route to China.
- V. The Mongols ruled China for less than a century after the fall of the Song.
- A. After Khubilai died in 1296, there was a succession of weak and incompetent emperors.
1. Power at the court fell increasingly into the hands of Chinese advisors (members of the literati).
  2. Across the empire, the literati returned to their dominant role in public life.
  3. This was most clearly shown in 1313, when the imperial examination system, which had been abolished by the Mongols, was reinstated.
- B. In the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a series of disasters struck the empire.
1. The Mongol state was not prepared to cope with powerful challenges.
  2. As we shall see in the next lecture, a combination of natural and human factors led to the collapse of the Mongols and the rise of a new dynasty.

**Essential Reading:**

Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Elizabeth Endicott-West, *Mongolian Rule in China*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Even though the Mongols mistrusted the Chinese literati and had an alternative pool of administrative talent in the *semu ren*, in the end, the literati managed to regain their dominant position in the imperial bureaucracy. Why should this have been the case?
2. It often appears that non-Chinese peoples who conquer China are "assimilated" or, in some way, won over to Chinese civilization. If the

Mongols had wanted to avoid this, how could they have protected their identity?

## Lecture Twenty-Two

### The Rise of the Ming

**Scope:** By the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Mongol power had waned. Without the continued stimulus of conquest, the Mongols lost much of the special role they had played in Asian history. Chinese bureaucratic elites returned to dominance in government and weakened the state through their internal conflicts over power. In the 1340s, the great plague, which caused the Black Death in Europe, also devastated central China. The failures of the Mongol dynasty or the Chinese landed elite to effectively respond to this disaster led to the outbreak of peasant rebellions and the fall of the Yuan. Zhu Yuanzhang rose to power as the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty but nearly wrecked his creation through his paranoid mistrust of the literati official whom he needed to administer his empire. Only in the reign of the third Ming emperor, Zhu Di, did the dynasty become truly stable.

#### Outline

- I. The Yuan dynasty began to collapse in the middle decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.
  - A. The imperial government was paralyzed by internal conflicts.
    1. Mongol nobles at court competed for influence over the emperor.
    2. Chinese literati officials formed rival factions and fought for patronage and prestige.
  - B. A series of disasters caused great suffering among the people.
    1. In the 1340s, a great plague swept through the Yangzi River valley in central China.
    2. This was likely the same wave of infection that appeared in Europe around 1346 and became known there as the Black Death.
    3. In parts of central China, as much as 50 percent of the population died.
    4. This high mortality led to further problems, as failure to maintain the dykes along the river resulted in massive flooding and further disease and devastation.
  - C. Neither the imperial government nor the local literati elites responded effectively to these crises.
    1. The government had no strong leadership to guide action.
    2. Local elites were afraid of disease and hoarded their own grain supplies rather than providing relief.
- II. Large-scale popular rebellions began to break out in the 1350s.
  - A. The center of this activity was the middle and lower Yangzi valley.



1. Local strongmen, often leaders of mystical peasant movements, rose up in several areas along the river.
  2. The Yuan government effectively disappeared, and these rebel groups began to fight among themselves.
- B.** One leader who became prominent was Zhu Yuanzhang.
1. Zhu Yuanzhang was an orphan whose parents had died in the plagues.
  2. He had lived as an itinerant monk, learning about mystical Buddhism and popular religion.
  3. He joined one of the main peasant movements, the Red Turbans.
  4. His military skills and intelligence helped him rise to a position as one of the leadership.
  5. In the early 1360s, he took over as the main leader and changed the goal of the movement to the founding of a new dynasty.
  6. In 1368, he proclaimed the Ming (“Bright”) dynasty and launched a military campaign to drive the Mongols out of China.
- III.** The Ming dynasty came to power as the Mongols withdrew to the grasslands.
- A.** Zhu Yuanzhang captured Dadu without a fight.
1. Mongol forces abandoned the city and crossed the mountains north of Beijing to return to their ancestral home in the grasslands.
  2. Zhu Yuanzhang decided to make his capital at Nanjing, on the Yangzi River, but placed one of his sons, Zhu Di, in command of the former Mongol capital as a defense against their return.
- B.** Zhu Yuanzhang set up a traditional Chinese bureaucratic government.
1. He relied on the literati as his administrative elite.
  2. But his relationship with the literati was strained by his resentment over the selfishness of elite families during the crises of the 1340s–1350s.
  3. As a poorly educated man from a peasant background, he also feared the subtleties and sophistications of literati language and culture.
  4. He established an examination system but suspended it after the first round of exams in 1370.
- C.** Zhu Yuanzhang soon began to manifest a paranoid attitude in his relations with his ministers.
1. He restored the examinations in 1380 but always mistrusted the literary gentlemen.
  2. In 1380, he came to believe that his chief minister was plotting against him and had the minister executed, along with several thousand of his associates and family members.
  3. Zhu Yuanzhang also abolished the office of chief minister and took that role into his own hands.

4. For the rest of his reign, until 1398, he carried out massive purges from time to time and became increasingly obsessed with perceived threats to his power.
- IV. After Zhu Yuanzhang's death, the Ming made a difficult transition to stability.
- A. Zhu Yuanzhang was succeeded by his grandson Zhu Yunwen, known as the Jianwen emperor.
    1. Zhu Yunwen had a much more trusting relationship with the literati.
    2. He reoriented Ming government to a more Confucian model.
  - B. Zhu Di, the prince of Yan, resented being passed over for the succession.
    1. Zhu Di felt that Zhu Yunwen was abandoning the policies of Zhu Yuanzhang.
    2. He decided to seek the throne for himself.
    3. Between 1400 and 1402, there was a series of political maneuvers which increased Zhu Di's power.
    4. In 1402, Zhu Di led his army south and captured Nanjing.
  - C. Zhu Di took the throne and proclaimed himself the Yongle emperor.
    1. He executed leading Confucian officials who refused to recognize his usurpation.
    2. But he continued many of the pro-Confucian policies of his nephew.
    3. He especially increased the power of the Grand Secretariat, which became the most important body in the imperial government.
    4. He moved the capital north to Beijing, which he built up into the great imperial city it remains today.
  - D. Zhu Di launched a great, but short-lived, age of maritime exploration.
    1. Under the leadership of the eunuch admiral Zheng He, huge Chinese fleets made seven voyages of trade and exploration.
    2. They sailed through Southeast Asia, across the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, and down the east coast of Africa at least as far as Mozambique.
    3. These voyages were discontinued a few years after Zhu Di's death in 1424, and the Ming dynasty entered a long middle period of stability and growth, which we will explore in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Edward L. Dreyer, *Early Ming China*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas*.

### Questions to Consider:

1. Zhu Yuanzhang's mistrust of the literati drove him to terrorize and abuse his highest officials. Yet by the end of the reign of the third Ming emperor, the literati had once again assumed effective control of the state. How could any emperor preserve his royal prerogatives in the face of bureaucratic government?
2. If China's fleets of exploration between 1405 and 1435 had gone around the Cape of Good Hope into the Atlantic and, perhaps, continued up the African coast to Europe, how might world history have been different over the last 500 years?

## Lecture Twenty-Three

### The Ming Golden Age

**Scope:** The 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries became a new age of economic growth, far surpassing that of the Song. Art and literature flourished, in part driven by the consumer power of a revived merchant class. Printing expanded and fueled a growth in literacy, which in turn, reinforced the demand for more and cheaper books. This dynamic economy created tensions in society, as commercial wealth gave greater power to non-literati elites, who increasingly challenged their systematic exclusion from participation in government. Merchants were legally barred from taking the Confucian examinations, but that restriction, which had extended to three generations, was reduced to one in the Ming. The great voyages of exploration at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, however, did not lead to a redefinition of China's role in the larger world. After the 1430s, China returned to its traditional security concerns in Inner Asia and left the maritime world to private traders.

#### Outline

- I. The Ming imperial order stabilized in the middle decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
  - A. After the reign of Zhu Di, there were several weak or juvenile emperors who allowed the power of the literati to reemerge.
    1. Zhu Gaozhi reigned for less than a year in 1425.
    2. Zhu Zhanji held the throne from 1426–1435 but was not a dynamic ruler.
    3. Zhu Qizhen was only eight years old when he came to the throne in 1435.
  - B. The Grand Secretariat became the central office of the imperial government.
    1. Three men, all with the surname Yang, served as grand secretaries during this time.
    2. Yang Shiqi was a leading literary figure, as well.
    3. Yang Rong and Yang Pu had become grand secretaries under Zhu Di and continued to guide government policies after his death.
  - C. Eunuchs also began to gain power in the Inner Palace.
    1. Eunuchs had been politically powerful in the Han and Tang periods.
    2. Zhu Yuanzhang had legally excluded them from meddling in government, but Zhu Di had begun to employ them as spies and secret agents.

3. In the 1420s, a school was set up to teach eunuchs to read and to train them in handling imperial documents.
- D.** The mature Ming state saw a balance of power between civil officials and eunuchs.
1. Although the Confucian literati despised eunuchs, they also needed their cooperation in dealing with the emperor, who was often strongly influenced by his Inner Palace eunuch advisors.
  2. Eunuchs, in turn, sought to legitimize themselves outside the palace by patronizing Buddhist monasteries or supporting charitable works.
- II.** While the government settled into a long era of relatively smooth operations, society underwent rapid growth.
- A.** The Ming government set up an efficient system of postal communications using a network of roadways and way stations that fostered trade and promoted market integration.
1. The postal system spanned the entire empire.
  2. Horses were maintained at each station, and lodgings were provided for couriers.
  3. Other travelers, especially merchants, began to use these routes, because the Ming military protected them.
  4. Private businesses, including hostels and stables, grew up alongside the government post stations.
  5. Merchants were also allowed to ship goods on government barges on the Grand Canal if there was room.
- B.** The process of regional economic specialization that had begun in the Song resumed with even greater strength.
1. Improvements in technology fed growth in the textile industry in Jiangnan.
  2. Better overland and riverine trade networks encouraged tea production in Zhejiang and Hunan.
  3. The kilns in Jingdezhen returned to their large-scale operations.
  4. Further developments in financial markets, especially the rise of banking houses in Shanxi, also helped promote economic development.
- C.** International trade was a complex but important field of growth.
1. The Ming government remained officially aloof from maritime trade and often sought to suppress it.
  2. Coastal trade sometimes took the form of pirate raids, causing serious security concerns.
  3. Eventually, a “tally” trade with Japan developed, using matching markers to legitimate the roles of trading partners.
  4. The trade with Japan was especially important as a source of silver, which helped increase the monetization of the Chinese economy.

5. In the later 16<sup>th</sup> century, silver from the new Spanish mines in Latin America began to flow into China via the Manila trade, further accelerating commercialization and monetization.

**D.** Economic growth was matched by population expansion.

1. In 1380, the Ming population was about 155 million.
2. By 1500, it had grown to around 230 million.
3. At the end of the Ming dynasty in the middle 17<sup>th</sup> century, it would rise to nearly 270 million.
4. Despite this large increase in population, economic growth was sufficient to produce rising standards of living for the vast majority of the Chinese.

**III.** The Ming did face some serious challenges.

**A.** The Mongols threatened the northern frontier from time to time.

1. In 1449, Mongol raids provoked a Ming military campaign that ended in disaster, with the emperor being captured and held for ransom.
2. A century later, in 1550, Mongol forces raided within sight of the walls of Beijing, and the question of border security became a major political issue in the 1550s.

**B.** So-called Japanese pirates raided the Jiangnan coastal region.

1. Government attempts to restrict coastal trade drove merchants into outlaw activities.
2. After suppressing the raids militarily, the Ming relaxed their policies and allowed some trade to proceed.
3. Actual maritime trade was always much greater than that officially acknowledged or tolerated by the government.

**C.** By the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, new problems began to emerge.

1. Some were the result of the very success of the dynasty and the rapid growth of the economy.
2. Others resulted from social and political stresses and related cultural and intellectual developments.
3. Still others were the result of changes taking place outside China.
4. We will turn to the late Ming in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

John Dardess, *A Ming Society*.

Kenneth J. Hammond, ed., *The Human Tradition in Premodern China*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why did the Ming government continue to discriminate against merchants in barring their sons from taking the Confucian examinations?
2. The Ming state prohibited most trade with foreigners, yet China was one of the most important participants in the global economy of the 15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Could or should the Ming state have played a more active role in promoting international trade?

## Lecture Twenty-Four

### Gridlock and Crisis

**Scope:** In the later years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, China began to develop new problems, based in part on the very success of the Ming dynasty. Economic growth had led to social tensions and had helped set the stage for the emergence of new philosophical movements emphasizing individual moral responsibility. Wang Yangming and his followers spread a new interpretation of Confucianism that stressed each individual's "innate knowledge of the good." Meanwhile, China's role in the global economy led to the influx of massive amounts of silver from the New World, which further fueled commercial growth. Efforts to rationalize imperial fiscal administration led to tax reforms that favored the more developed parts of the empire but exacerbated problems in remote regions. Political conflicts also hamstrung the state's ability to deal with deepening problems. In the first decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ming sank into a terminal decline.

#### Outline

- I. The reign of the Wanli emperor, Zhu Yijun (r. 1572–1620), was a time of deepening crisis for the Ming.
  - A. Zhu Yijun's reign began well, but problems began to emerge in the 1580s.
    1. The emperor's main advisor was the chief grand secretary Zhang Juzheng.
    2. Zhang sought to strengthen the power and efficiency of the monarchy.
    3. He pursued policies designed to reform the revenue system and restrain the excesses of local officials and private literati interests.
    4. He also sought to streamline the tax system in light of the growing commercialization of the economy, having taxes paid in cash rather than in grain or cloth.
  - B. There was resistance to some of Zhang's reforms, and others led to unanticipated consequences.
    1. Landowning families who were well connected to the ranks of officials sought to frustrate government efforts to reform the tax system.
    2. The "Single Whip" reforms, which converted tax payments to cash, benefited parts of the empire, such as Jiangnan or the southeast coast, that were highly commercialized and had a good deal of silver in circulation.



3. Other areas, such as the dry highlands of the northwest or the rugged hills of Guizhou and Guangxi, where the commercial economy was less developed, were hurt by the need to pay taxes in silver.
  4. Zhang Juzheng fell from power in the early 1580s, and the Wanli emperor increasingly came into conflict with leading Confucian officials.
- II.** New ideas about integrity and individualism contributed to a moralization of political life that led to a gridlock in government.
- A.** These ideas originated with the philosopher and official Wang Yangming in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.
1. Wang, the last of the great Confucian thinkers in imperial history, emphasized the idea that all individuals, not only members of the literati elite, have an “innate knowledge of the Good.”
  2. Among his followers, some gave his ideas a radical interpretation, which called for individual moral responsibility and placed one’s personal conscience at the center of one’s moral universe.
  3. Popular movements involving merchants, artisans, and farmers grew up with these ideas as their ideology, sometimes defying official authority and establishing utopian communities.
- B.** In the ranks of the literati, Wang’s ideas led to a moralization of political discourse.
1. Toward the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, debates and controversies at court tended to be framed not as issues for compromise and pragmatism but as black-and-white moral issues.
  2. Officials at court criticized the emperor on moral grounds, especially over his desire to replace his empress with a new favorite consort and to name a new heir to the throne.
  3. Aspiring officials and examination candidates criticized the court officials as a power-hungry in-group.
  4. In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, such groups as the Donglin (“Eastern Forest”) Academy came to act almost like political parties in pursuit of their moral programs, treating their political rivals as agents of evil rather than simply gentlemen with differing ideas. The basis for their criticism was that the emperor refused to cooperate with court officials, thus proving that they must be corrupt.
- C.** As economic and social crises deepened, the Ming government was unable to mount effective responses.
1. The economy continued to expand, and new inflows of silver from Latin America via Manila only accelerated the process.
  2. The gap between the developing coast and Yangzi valley with the poorer interior grew greater, and the burden of silver taxation

began to depress the livelihood of farmers in many parts of the empire.

3. Social stresses also grew as merchants competed for prestige with traditional literati elites in a growing culture of consumerism.
4. The political system was mired in moral rhetoric and factional conflict, and leaders paid little attention to the developing problems.
5. Meanwhile, beyond the Great Wall in the northeast, a new power was rising among the descendants of the Jurchen and their neighbors, which would become known as the Manchus and whose story we will explore in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Ray Huang, *1587: A Year of No Significance*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Yang Ye, *Vignettes from the Late Ming*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. The late Ming was a period of great social anxiety about status, about values, and about power. In some ways, it was also a period of great freedom and individualism. What might be the relationship between these phenomena?
2. The power of the landowning elite to thwart the reforms of Zhang Juzheng suggests a contradiction between the role of the literati as agents of the imperial state and as protectors of their own economic class interests. How could China have resolved this contradiction?

# COURSE GUIDEBOOK



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COURSE GUIDEBOOK



# From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

Professor Kenneth J. Hammond  
*New Mexico State University*

Part III



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5000 Years of Chinese History Part III

From Yao to Mao:

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Associate Professor of History, New Mexico State University

Ken Hammond was born and raised in Ohio and received his B.A. from Kent State University in History and Political Science. In the early 1980s, he studied and worked in Beijing, China, then entered Harvard University for graduate study in 1987. He received his A.M. in East Asian Regional Studies in 1989 and a Ph.D. in History and East Asian Languages in 1994.

Dr. Hammond joined the faculty of New Mexico State University in 1994 and has taught there since that time. In 2000, he became department head in history. He teaches courses in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history and in East Asian gender history. He has also been active in developing Asian Studies at New Mexico State and in establishing exchange programs between NMSU and schools in China and Korea.

Dr. Hammond's research focuses on the cultural and intellectual history of China in the late imperial era, from the 10<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, especially the history of the Ming dynasty, from 1368 to 1644. He has published articles and translations on Chinese gardens, as well as essays on the 16<sup>th</sup>-century scholar-official Wang Shizhen. Dr. Hammond also edited *The Human Tradition in Premodern China*, a biographical reader for undergraduate students.

In 1999, he received an American Council of Learned Societies research grant to spend five months at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. In 2002–2003, he was an Affiliated Fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies at Leiden, the Netherlands. In June 2003, he organized and chaired an international conference on Chinese cultural history in Leiden.

Dr. Hammond is past president of the Society for Ming Studies and has served on the Board of Directors of the Southwest Association for Asian Studies.

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## From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

### Scope:

The 36 lectures in this course explore the history and culture of China, spanning a vast temporal and spatial domain and developing several themes to help understand this ancient and complex society. We will proceed in an essentially chronological passage through the unfolding of China's political and cultural evolution, with particular attention to important ideas and individuals and the roles they have played in shaping both China's historical past and its dynamic present.

Chinese civilization originated in the confluence of several regional Neolithic cultures nearly 5,000 years ago. Emerging from the mythological Era of Sage Emperors, such as Yao and Shun, China's historical record begins with the Shang dynasty around 1500 B.C.E. We will follow the growth of China from a small kingdom on the North China Plain to a major empire extending from the Siberian frontier to the jungles of Southeast Asia, from the Pacific coast to the Central Asian deserts.

One of our main themes will be the evolution of social and political elites and the mechanisms by which they acquired and asserted their power as rulers of China. Closely linked to this is the history of political thought in China, from shamanistic roots in prehistory through the Axial Age of Confucius and Laozi and the long process of crafting and adapting the Imperial Order over the past two millennia and more.

We will also be concerned with the ways in which the Chinese have thought and written about themselves and the world around them. Cosmological ideas about the nature of the universe, the metaphysical insights of Buddhism and religious Daoism, and the perennial mysticism of popular religion have blended and interacted throughout Chinese history in ways which have yielded both the beauties of art and the horrors of religious conflict.

Throughout these lectures, we will consider China's history as it relates to the world beyond China. For more than 2,000 years, China has been linked to the global economy, and traders and travelers have brought both the riches of the empire and tales of its splendor to the West. We will trace the increasingly close relations between China and the West from the age of the Mongol conquests in the 13<sup>th</sup> century through the rise of European imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and into the present age of China's reemergence as a great world economic and political power.

By engaging with the history of China over the last five millennia, we will become familiar with one of the world's greatest civilizations and, arguably, its most persistent. Far from the popular image of China as a stagnant, unchanging

relic of a once glorious past, we will see China as a living culture that has flourished and declined, revived and returned to greatness several times over thousands of years. We will come to understand some of the key features that allowed China's political order to remain stable for more than 2,000 years and that continue to shape this country at the opening of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## Lecture Twenty-Five

### The Rise of the Manchus

**Scope:** The late 16<sup>th</sup> century once again saw a small group of people on China's northern frontier begin to build their power and prepare to challenge China militarily. Nurhaci was a Jurchen, a descendant of the people who had ruled north China in the 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. He built a multi-ethnic alliance he named the *Manchus* and led them to dominance in the area that is today called Manchuria. Under his son and grandsons, the Manchus launched a campaign to overthrow the Ming and conquer China. As China faced internal rebellion in the early 1640s, the Manchus seized the moment and were able to gain control of Beijing in June 1644. After further campaigns in central and southern China, their Qing dynasty consolidated its rule over China proper and went on to expand the empire in Inner Asia.

#### Outline

- I. The Manchus were a creation of Nurhaci in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.
  - A. Nurhaci was Jurchen who dreamed of reviving the Jin dynasty.
    1. Born in 1559, he conceived the ambition of uniting the peoples of the northeast and challenging China's dominance.
    2. He first gained leadership over the Jurchen in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.
    3. He then created a new "super-ethnic" group by allying with neighboring groups.
  - B. Nurhaci forged a shared identity for these people and shared his vision of expansion with them.
    1. In the first quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the name *Manchu* was invented, perhaps based on the Buddhist figure Manjusri.
    2. A written script for Manchu was created.
    3. A putative history of the Manchus was developed and began to be written down.
    4. Links were established with other peoples on the northern frontier of China, especially the Mongols to the west.
- II. From 1626, the Manchus began to challenge the Ming for power.
  - A. A revived Jin dynasty was proclaimed in 1626.
    1. This was meant to signal the Manchus' imperial ambitions.
    2. They established a capital city at Mukden, modern Shenyang, based on the design of Beijing.
    3. In 1635, the Manchu language was made the official court language.

- B. The Qing dynasty was established in 1636.
    - 1. The new name recognized the fact that the Manchus were more than successors to the Jurchen.
    - 2. *Qing* means pure and symbolized the Manchu ambition to cleanse China of what they claimed was the decadent corruption of Ming rule.
  - C. Military campaigns against the Ming began in the late 1630s.
    - 1. The siege of Jinzhou in 1641 was a major victory for the Manchus.
    - 2. Some defeated Ming generals brought their troops over to the Manchu side.
    - 3. By early 1644, the Manchus controlled all the territory outside the Great Wall to China's northeast.
- III. In 1644, the Ming faced twin crises that toppled the dynasty.
- A. The internal woes that had plagued China since the Wanli era led to massive rebellions.
    - 1. Fiscal problems and factional conflicts weakened the government and impeded its ability to deal with floods and bad harvests.
    - 2. By the time a new emperor came to the throne in 1628 and began reforms, it was too little, too late.
    - 3. Peasant rebellions broke out in the northwest and southwest.
  - B. By the early 1640s, the rebels threatened the survival of the dynasty.
    - 1. The biggest force was led by Li Zicheng in Shanxi province west of the capital.
    - 2. In the spring of 1644, Li led his forces in an attack on Beijing and, in April, was able to enter the city.
    - 3. The last Ming emperor hanged himself, and remnants of the court fled south to Nanjing.
    - 4. Li Zicheng proclaimed his own dynasty and set out to create a new government.
  - C. The Manchus took advantage of this chaos in China to effect their own conquest.
    - 1. A Chinese general named Wu Sangui was guarding the pass in the Great Wall where the wall reaches the ocean.
    - 2. He was worried about the situation in Beijing, perhaps because his mistress was there and he thought she might be forced to become a concubine of Li Zicheng.
    - 3. Wu allowed the Manchus through the Wall to aid in chasing the rebels out of Beijing.
    - 4. After Li's army was destroyed, the Manchus refused to depart and, instead, announced that their Qing dynasty would now rule China.
- IV. The Qing conquered all of China over the next 20 years.
- A. Most of the fighting took place between 1644 and 1646.

1. The greatest resistance came in the Jiangnan region.
  2. The siege of Yangzhou and the massacre of its citizens after their surrender was a message to all not to resist too long.
  3. The Ming court fled south, and the last Ming prince was eventually captured and executed in 1660.
- B.** Some resistance continued until the 1680s.
1. Ming loyalists withdrew to Taiwan and created a fortified retreat there.
  2. Coastal raiders and pirates allied with the Ming exiles.
  3. Finally, in 1683, the last of the challengers to Qing power was suppressed.
  4. The new dynasty entered on a great age of expansion and prosperity, which we will examine in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Frederick Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why did Nurhaci feel the need to include other ethnic groups in his quest for a new power to challenge China? Why did he not simply seek to revive the Jurchen and restore the Jin dynasty?
2. Why would Chinese commanders have gone over to the Manchu side rather than remain loyal to the Ming dynasty?

## Lecture Twenty-Six

### Kangxi to Qianlong

**Scope:** From 1661 to 1795, China was ruled by just three emperors; Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong. Kangxi and Qianlong each occupied the throne for 60 years, giving this period almost unparalleled stability. It was largely an age of peace and prosperity for China, though warfare continued on Inner Asian frontiers almost throughout these reigns. Chinese people, whether members of the educated elite or simple farmers, had to adjust to life under the Manchus, who imposed some of their own particular cultural practices on their new subjects. The requirement to wear the *queue*, the long braid characteristic of Manchu warriors, was imposed on pain of death as a sign of China's submission. Yet during the long *Pax Sinica* of the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, a Manchu-Chinese symbiosis developed that provided a strong and durable basis for the dynasty and allowed Chinese scholars and officials to make major political and cultural advances.

#### Outline

- I. The Kangxi emperor oversaw the stabilization of the dynasty and its early expansion.
  - A. Kangxi came to the throne as a young boy in 1662.
    1. He was not the eldest son of the previous emperor but had survived a bout with smallpox and was seen as the strongest.
    2. His uncle Oboi and a council of regents guided his early years, but in 1667, he took power into his own hands.
    3. He reigned until his death in 1722.
  - B. In the 1670s, he faced the only serious challenge to Qing power until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
    1. Wu Sangui, who had aided the Manchus in their initial conquest and been rewarded with a large grant of territory in southern China, led a rebellion against the Qing.
    2. Other Chinese generals in the south joined him.
    3. It took the Qing eight years to suppress the rising, but the main Chinese armies remained loyal to the dynasty, and the Qing emerged stronger in the end.
  - C. Once peace was restored in China proper, Kangxi turned his attention to Inner Asia.
    1. The main objective was to bring all the Mongol tribes into the empire.
    2. Eastern Mongols had shared in Manchu power from the first.

3. Western Mongol groups resisted incorporation, some fleeing as far as southern Russia.
  4. Kangxi's campaigns did not resolve this problem but did extend Qing power into what is now Xinjiang (New Frontier) province.
- D.** Kangxi also established a new fiscal basis for the empire.
1. In 1712, he issued an edict fixing tax rates on land throughout the empire.
  2. This was based on a survey carried out to determine who actually owned and farmed specific plots of land.
  3. The edict decreed that these tax rates would remain in effect in perpetuity, laying the foundation for later fiscal problems.
- II.** Kangxi died in 1722 and was succeeded by one of his sons, who became the Yongzheng emperor.
- A.** Yongzheng came to the throne in questionable circumstances.
1. The edict naming him emperor was believed by many to have been forged.
  2. He was the 13<sup>th</sup> son of Kangxi, far from first in the normal line of succession.
  3. He imprisoned or exiled several of his brothers.
- B.** Yongzheng set out to reform the finances of the dynasty.
1. Already the adverse effects of the 1712 taxation edict were being felt.
  2. Yongzheng attempted to increase the flow of taxes to the central treasury, while regularizing the financing of local administration.
  3. This move was resisted by an alliance of local elites and officials, who wanted to retain control of revenues and informal income, sometimes seen as corruption, in their own hands.
  4. Eventually, Yongzheng had to abandon his reforms.
- C.** He did, however, succeed in streamlining some aspects of government.
1. He simplified the central policy-making bodies and began the process of creating the Grand Council, which became the main organ in the imperial government.
  2. He also carried out important reforms in domestic policy, such as ending discrimination against certain groups of "inferior" status.
- III.** Yongzheng reigned for 13 years and was succeeded in 1735 by the Qianlong emperor, one of the greatest rulers in Chinese history.
- A.** Qianlong continued the long age of peace and prosperity in the empire.
1. He managed the government and the economy in a pragmatic way, relying on the advice of his Confucian officials but always paying close attention to the day-to-day workings of government.
  2. China's population approached 400 million by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

3. China was the richest country in the world, and Chinese products flowed around the planet in the ever-expanding global economy.
- B.** Qianlong completed the process of bringing the Mongol tribes into the empire.
1. In a series of military campaigns through the 1760s and 1770s, he subdued vast territories in Central Asia.
  2. He pursued a policy of honoring defeated leaders with titles and riches and, thus, won the loyalty of many.
  3. He extended Qing authority into Tibet and pushed the empire's borders to their greatest extent.
- C.** But by the end of his reign, new problems began to develop.
1. Given existing technologies and patterns of land tenure, the growth of China's population began to push against ecological limits.
  2. Standards of living stagnated in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century.
  3. China began to feel new pressures brought on by changes in the outside world.
  4. The rise of an aggressive, expansive system of state-sponsored capitalism in the West began to lead to a conflict between the Atlantic world and East Asia, the background to which we will discuss in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Jonathan Spence, *K'ang-hsi, Emperor of China*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Susan Naquin and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century*.

Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Given the harshness of the conquest, how were the Manchus able to win the support of the Chinese in the middle decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century?
2. The tax edict of 1712 effectively prevented later emperors from adjusting the fiscal system of the dynasty. Why would Kangxi have thought this was a good or reasonable thing to do?

## Lecture Twenty-Seven

### The Coming of the West

**Scope:** Contact between Europe and China goes back to at least the time of the Roman Empire. For much of history, though, such contact was quite tenuous and infrequent. Marco Polo's visit in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the reports of missionaries did little to engender clear knowledge about China in the West. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as Europeans began to explore and participate more fully in the global economy, information began to improve, but contacts remained marginal for both sides. With the Industrial Revolution and the rise of free-trade ideas in the West, a new age opened. For centuries, the economic relationship between Europe and China was based on Europeans buying Chinese goods with silver, much of it originating in the mines of Spanish America. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British, in particular, were eager to open broader trading relations and were desperate to find a commodity other than silver that they could trade for China's superior goods.

#### Outline

- I. East Asia and the Mediterranean world had a long history of trade and contact.
  - A. Overland and maritime links go back at least to the time of Rome.
    1. Roman glass has been found in Chinese tombs.
    2. Chinese silk was traded in markets in Rome.
    3. Chinese records contain reports of representatives of Rome arriving in Chang'an, but these were likely traders rather than true Roman diplomats.
  - B. During the age of Islamic expansion, direct links were cut off, but trade continued.
    1. Christian Europe was isolated by the growth of the realm of Islam.
    2. Goods from East Asia, especially China, were still traded along the Silk Road and through maritime networks stretching from the Pacific through the Indian Ocean.
    3. Arab traders from the Persian Gulf began to arrive in China in increasing numbers in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and established a mosque in Guangzhou around 670.
    4. The Great Mosque in Xian also dates from the 7<sup>th</sup> century and was used by Muslims in the caravan trade.
  - C. In the age of the Mongol conquests, as we have seen, Europeans again traveled directly to China.

1. Representatives of the church sought to contact Christian communities in Inner Asia and founded some congregations in China.
  2. Such traders as the Polos helped move goods and brought some knowledge of East Asia into Europe.
  3. There were even brief hopes for a Christian-Mongol alliance against Islam at the time of the Crusades, based on myths of Prester John's Christian kingdom.
- II.** By the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans had some knowledge of East Asia but would need to embark on the Age of Exploration to learn more.
- A.** The Portuguese began to search for a direct route to the source of valuable spices in what is now Indonesia.
1. They explored the coast of Africa and reached the Indian Ocean, finally arriving in India in 1496.
  2. By 1511, the Portuguese had attacked and seized Malacca, one of the key ports in Southeast Asia.
  3. The Portuguese found that they could not dominate the local trade system and, instead, sought to create a place for themselves to participate in this rich economic life.
  4. The Spanish followed suit, as did the Dutch and the English after 1600.
- B.** Through the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Europeans established a place for themselves but remained merely one group out of many participants in the Asian trade networks.
1. Rivalries between the Europeans further weakened their positions in Asia.
  2. The Dutch came to concentrate on the islands of Southeast Asia and Japan, while the Spanish took over the northern Philippines.
  3. The Portuguese diverted much of their attention to Africa and the New World, and the British came to focus on India.
  4. For all the Europeans, though, China remained a great potential market and source of the highest quality goods.
- III.** Two major changes in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century set the stage for the complete transformation of the global economy.
- A.** The Industrial Revolution took place, primarily in Britain.
1. Although many of the conditions leading to the Industrial Revolution were also present in China and India, in England, the proximity of coal and the availability of new markets and sources for raw materials in America combined to set off a great leap forward.
  2. The English also appropriated technologies from Asian manufacturers that, when combined with new energy sources from coal and steam, yielded significant improvements in production.



- B.** At the same time, Adam Smith's ideas about free trade became the ideology of British capitalism.
1. In his 1776 book *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith argued that governments should refrain from intervention in the economy as much as possible and allow markets to function freely.
  2. This new way of thinking led to the abandonment of the old mercantilist system, which included state-sponsored trading companies, such as the English and Dutch East India companies.
- C.** The combination of an expanding industrial economy, in need of raw materials and markets for its goods, with an assertive free-trade ideology created the conditions for the emergence of Western imperialism, led by the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
1. What was needed was some way to break in to the Chinese domestic market.
  2. In India, the British found their ideal commodity; we will discuss the creation of a new trading order based on opium in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Susan Whitfield, *Life along the Silk Road*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Although products, such as silk and glass, traveled long distances across Eurasia or the Indian Ocean, very few individuals made the journey from Europe to Asia or from Asia to Europe before the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Why was it easier for goods to be transported than for people to travel?
2. China remained a vast continental empire, but Europe was divided into small local states that constantly warred with one another. How might this situation have played a role in the development of relations between the two regions?

## Lecture Twenty-Eight

### Threats from Within and Without

**Scope:** In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, China began to face new challenges, some arising from within its borders and some arriving from the outside world. Domestically, the long era of peace and prosperity that had lasted into the late 18<sup>th</sup> century gave way to one of increasing economic, demographic, and social problems. China's population growth began to put serious stress on the empire's ability to feed itself, and economic problems limited China's capacity for expansion of production. Popular rebellions began to break out as living conditions deteriorated. At the same time, the British began marketing opium in China on a rapidly growing scale, reversing the flow of silver into China and creating a drain of money just when China was in need of greater capital for investment. Efforts by the Qing to stop or regulate the opium trade led to war with Britain in 1839. The Treaty of Nanjing, which ended the war in 1842, not only created de facto legalization of the opium trade but also forced open coastal ports to foreign traders.

#### Outline

- I. At the end of the reign of Qianlong and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, China was at a turning point in its modern history.
  - A. The very success of the Qing state had created conditions that now began to undermine the dynasty.
    1. Population growth, which had been rapid during the long years of peace and prosperity, finally began to push against the available food supply, and little land was left to be brought into cultivation.
    2. Patterns of intensive labor utilization in agriculture had rendered technological improvements unprofitable.
    3. The wealthy elites of literati and merchants sought to protect their economic interests against state taxation and against the demands of the peasantry.
    4. Frustration and resentment began to be manifested in popular rebellions against landlords and local officials.
  - B. The international context was also shifting.
    1. From the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, China had regulated its trade with the West through the Canton trade, also called the *cohong* system.
    2. Trade was permitted only at the port of Canton, or Guangzhou, in the far south, and had to be conducted through state-licensed brokers, known as *hong* merchants.

3. The flow of silver into China continued as Western merchants bought large volumes of tea, silk, ceramics, and many other kinds of valuable commodities.
  4. But the changes in the West, as outlined in the previous lecture, were putting pressure on this system.
  5. In 1792 and again in 1816, the British sent diplomatic missions to seek open trade relations, but in both cases, they were rejected by the Qing.
- II.** As the British consolidated their control of large parts of India, they came into possession of the opium growing regions and found an ideal commodity to change their trading relationship with China.
- A.** Opium had been known in China for a long time.
    1. It was produced in small quantities in the far southwest and had been used as a medicine for centuries.
    2. Non-medicinal use was banned by the Yongzheng emperor in the 1730s.
  - B.** The British destroyed the indigenous cotton industry in Bengal and other parts of India to convert farms to opium production.
    1. They first began trading opium in Southeast Asia and found that it was popular among the Chinese coolie workers there.
    2. Imports into China began in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but only took off after the end of the Napoleonic Wars allowed Britain to refocus its attention on Asia.
    3. From around 1816 to the mid-1830s, the volume of opium shipped into China grew every year.
  - C.** The impact of the opium trade was dramatic.
    1. Millions of Chinese became addicts.
    2. The British demanded silver in payment for opium, and the flow of silver, which had been heavily in China's favor, was rapidly reversed.
    3. By the 1830s, China was losing silver at such a high rate that it began to face serious shortages of capital and prices were subject to dramatic fluctuations.
- III.** The Qing state faced difficult problems in responding to these challenges.
- A.** The government had become bureaucratically rigid.
    1. Efforts to deal with problems creatively were frustrated by established interests.
    2. Revenues were declining, which limited the capacity of the government to fund reforms or maintain infrastructure.
  - B.** Control of the opium trade was opposed by the British.
    1. The Qing repeatedly protested to the British about the evils of opium and its adverse impact on the Chinese economy.
    2. The court called for policy ideas from officials across the empire.

3. Lin Zexu, an experienced official who had been serving in Central Asia, proposed a mix of rehabilitation for addicts and strict prohibition of imports and sales.
  4. Lin was named Imperial Commissioner to eradicate the opium trade.
- C. When China tried to stop the trade, Britain went to war.
1. In 1839, Lin confiscated opium held by British merchants and arrested some leading British traders.
  2. The British argued that the real issue was free trade, and when the Chinese destroyed the opium, the British declared war.
  3. British military superiority inflicted serious defeats on the Chinese.
- IV. The Opium War of 1839–1842 ushered in a new age in China’s relations with the outside world.
- A. In 1842, the Qing were forced to sign the humiliating Treaty of Nanjing; although it never mentioned opium, the treaty had the effect of legalizing the trade.
1. The treaty required the Chinese to open ports along the coast to British and other foreign traders.
  2. The treaty allowed British merchants to trade freely in China, without using the *cohong* brokers.
  3. It ceded Hong Kong island to Britain.
  4. It established the Principle of Extraterritoriality, which decreed that while British citizens were in China, they would be subject to the laws of Britain, not China.
- B. In the wake of China’s defeat, other Western powers also signed treaties.
1. These expanded the rights of foreign powers in China.
  2. They included the “no most favored nation” clause, which ensured that any privilege granted to any one power must be granted to all.
  3. Foreign missionaries were given legal protection to operate in China.
  4. All these provisions opened China to the power of the West and led to severe disruptions of the domestic economy and political order.
  5. In the next lecture, we will turn to one of the stranger results of this situation, the Taiping Rebellion.

**Essential Reading:**

Frederick Wakeman, *Strangers at the Gate*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

James Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Opium was illegal in England, yet Parliament voted to go to war to force China to open its markets. How is this different from the “war on drugs” of the present period?
2. Why were the Chinese so reluctant to open their domestic markets to the outside world?

## Lecture Twenty-Nine

### The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom

**Scope:** The stresses within Chinese society that were growing in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century led some Chinese to search for radical new ways to deal with the world around them. Christian missionaries from the West began to make greater headway in seeking Chinese converts. In this context, one of the more intriguing episodes in Chinese history unfolded. This lecture will trace the course of the Taiping Rebellion, in which a tiny cult begun by Hong Xiuquan, who believed himself to be the younger brother of Jesus Christ, blossomed into a mass movement of tens of millions and nearly brought the Qing dynasty to an end. By the time imperial troops destroyed the last of the Taiping forces in the mid-1860s, some 20 million people had died as a result of war and related disasters. The dynasty survived but never fully recovered from this trauma.

#### Outline

- I. The combination of internal and external problems gave rise in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to a profound challenge to the Qing dynasty.
  - A. In southern China, the negative impact of the opium trade and the results of the ensuing war caused widespread suffering.
    1. By the 1840s, large numbers of people saw their lives disrupted by changing trade patterns and by the corrosive social effects of opium.
    2. The Hakka people, a linguistic and cultural minority, were particularly affected.
    3. Even members of the educated strata felt the tensions in social and economic life.
  - B. Hong Xiuquan was a failed examination candidate who founded a new religious movement.
    1. Hong came from a Hakka village and was trying to lift his family's fortunes through an official career.
    2. He repeatedly took the entry-level exam and failed each time.
    3. He was exposed to Christian missionary tracts during his visits to the examination site in Guangzhou.
    4. During a stress-induced illness following one of his examination attempts, he saw visions that he later interpreted as visits from God and Jesus, who was his older brother.
    5. He conceived the mission of creating a heavenly kingdom in China.
- II. The Taiping Movement grew through the 1840s.
  - A. Hong first formed the Society of God Worshippers.

1. This group formed a kind of rural utopia.
  2. Many of the original members were Hakka, but the movement grew beyond the Hakka community.
  3. Hong had repeated visions and developed his self-centered theology.
- B.** As others joined his movement, Hong's ambitions expanded, and he planned a campaign to overthrow the Qing.
1. Thousands of farmers and artisans flocked to Hong's group.
  2. The Taipings developed an ideology of radical egalitarianism and the communal ownership of land.
  3. They were also extreme sexual puritans, breaking up families and living in single-sex dormitories.
  4. By the end of the decade, they were ready to attack the dynasty.
- III.** In 1850, the Taipings launched a military campaign to overthrow the Qing.
- A.** They set out from Guangdong province and marched north through Hunan to the Yangzi valley.
1. As they fought their way north, they won repeated battles against the weak and demoralized Qing army.
  2. They gained many converts along the way.
  3. When they reached the Yangzi River, they headed east to Nanjing, where they set up their "Heavenly Capital."
- B.** From 1854 to 1864, the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace controlled much of central and southern China, with a population of more than 100 million.
1. Although there were some efforts to conquer the north, the movement seems to have stalled out once it captured Nanjing.
  2. Hong Xiuquan and his fellow leaders settled into palaces in Nanjing and led a rich life of indulgence while their followers lived in poverty and sexual segregation.
  3. The Western powers, which had at first been intrigued with Hong's professed Christianity, decided that he was not sane and declined to support the Taiping.
- III.** The response of the Qing was slow in coming but eventually resulted in the defeat of the Taipings.
- A.** The established Qing military was in disarray.
1. Elite Manchu banner forces had fallen into decadence and neglect.
  2. Chinese units were poorly paid and undisciplined.
  3. The defeats by the British had demoralized the military.
- B.** In the face of early Taiping successes, the Qing turned to local Chinese leaders for help.
1. One such leader was Zeng Guofan, from Hunan.

2. Zeng built up a local defense force, funded from a new tax on trade within Hunan province.
  3. The Hunan Army became an effective fighting force, with the latest weapons and decent pay.
  4. Other local forces developed, and these played the decisive role in ending the Taiping Rebellion.
- C. By 1864, the new provincial armies came together to destroy the Taiping regime.
1. Hong Xiuquan was killed and tens of thousands of Taiping followers were massacred in Nanjing.
  2. The defeat of the Taipings saved the Qing rulers, but the sharing of power with local Chinese leaders changed the political landscape for the rest of the dynasty.
  3. In the wake of defeat by the British and the narrow escape from the Taiping Rebellion, some Chinese leaders began to seek to reform the state, a process we will examine in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Son*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Elizabeth J. Perry, *Rebels and Revolutionaries in North China, 1845–1945*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Hong Xiuquan's claim to be the younger brother of Jesus Christ seems absurd to modern Westerners, yet it appealed to tens of millions of Chinese in the 1840s and 1850s. What might have been attractive in such a vision?
2. The Manchus had conquered China two centuries before the Taiping Rebellion and had lost much of their martial vigor, as indicated by the need to raise new armies from the Chinese provinces, yet Manchu rule persisted until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Why were the Manchus able to survive as an alien elite while earlier conquerors, such as the Mongols or the Jurchen, fell in much less time?



## Lecture Thirty

### Efforts at Reform

**Scope:** The humiliation of the Opium War and the challenge of the Taiping Rebellion left a deep impression on the Qing leadership. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, efforts were undertaken to reform the dynasty and adapt Western ideas and technologies to strengthen China and give it the ability to resist Western domination. Although they achieved some successes, these measures ultimately proved inadequate. China was again defeated militarily in 1894–1895 by the Japanese, whose aggressive adoption of Western ways contrasted strongly with the general conservatism of China. A final wave of reformist activity, with the support of the Guangxu emperor in the summer of 1898, was thwarted by the Empress Dowager Cixi and was followed by the anti-foreign Boxer Rebellion of 1899–1900. Western troops invaded China to suppress the Boxers and again imposed harsh humiliations on the tottering Manchu regime.

#### Outline

- I. In the wake of the Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion, some Chinese and Manchus began to pursue reform.
  - A. Even before the final suppression of the Taipings, there were efforts to revive the Qing.
    1. In the 1860s, during the reign of the young Tongzhi emperor, progressive senior officials sought to restore vitality to the court.
    2. As new leaders, such as Zeng Guofan, emerged in provincial activities, they were offered roles in reform.
  - B. In the 1870s and 1880s, the Self-Strengthening Movement sought to modernize the Qing state and military.
    1. Chinese officials undertook initiatives to develop a modern weapons industry, including building shipyards and arsenals.
    2. A bureau for translating Western books, especially on science and technology, was founded.
    3. The Zongli Yamen, a kind of foreign ministry, was set up to handle relations with the Western powers.
  - C. Despite these efforts, China continued to be treated as an inferior by foreign states.
    1. In 1884, China was defeated by France as the French established their control over Vietnam, a client state of China's.
    2. In 1894–1895, China suffered a severe embarrassment when Japan inflicted a crushing defeat on both land and sea, ending Chinese influence in Korea.

- II.** The defeat of 1895 set off a new, more intense round of reform.
- A.** In the autumn of 1895, examination candidates in Beijing demonstrated in protest over China's weakness.
    - 1. A minor official, Kang Youwei, organized a petition drive to call for government reform.
    - 2. Others, including Liang Qichao, began to write articles advocating political change.
  - B.** In 1898, the Guangxu emperor embraced reform and issued a series of edicts.
    - 1. He called for modernizing the educational system and studying Western, as well as Chinese, topics.
    - 2. He wanted to streamline administration and reduce bureaucracy.
    - 3. He wanted to increase opportunities for people to communicate with the government.
    - 4. He appointed several reformers to high positions.
  - C.** Many senior Manchus feared that reform would weaken their power, and these "100 Days," as they were known, were brought to an abrupt end.
    - 1. The Manchu nobles worried that Chinese officials would move to eliminate their influence and, perhaps, to terminate rule by the Manchu minority.
    - 2. Some Chinese officials also feared reform and allied with the conservative Manchus.
    - 3. The Empress Dowager Cixi resented the autonomy of her nephew, the emperor, and moved to block his changes.
    - 4. In September 1898, she ordered the arrest of eight leading reformers, who were executed shortly thereafter.
    - 5. Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao fled to exile in Japan.
- III.** The thwarting of reform allowed popular anti-foreign feelings to overflow in the Boxer Rebellion.
- A.** The Boxers were members of a martial arts movement with mystical beliefs.
    - 1. Centered in Shandong province, the Boxers were angered by the privileges of foreign missionaries and the favors given to Chinese Christian converts.
    - 2. They also resented the special concessions Germany held at Qingdao.
    - 3. Boxer fighters believed certain talismans would protect them from Western firearms.
    - 4. They thought that divine spirits would come to save China from the "barbarians."
  - B.** In 1899, the Boxers moved out of Shandong and headed toward Beijing.

1. They began to receive official approval.
2. In June, they besieged the Western diplomatic legations in the capital.
3. An international force, led by Russian and Japanese troops, fought its way into Beijing and lifted the siege in August.
4. The Western powers occupied Beijing and imposed a harsh settlement on the Chinese, thus ending the last challenge to Western power under imperial rule.
5. The days of the Qing dynasty were now numbered; we will follow the course of its fall in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Paul A. Cohen and John Schrecker, *Reform in Nineteenth Century China*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power*.

Joseph W. Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. In the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Japanese managed to completely transform their government and military in line with contemporary Western models. Why was reform so difficult in China?
2. Chinese reformers wanted to adopt Western technologies and administrative practices but resisted the embrace of Western values. Was this a reasonable response on their part?

## Lecture Thirty-One

### The Fall of the Empire

**Scope:** The failures of reform efforts gave rise to more radical forces, and agitation for the overthrow of the imperial system grew through the 1890s and the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The revolutionary movement to create a Chinese republic was led by Sun Yatsen and had broad support among educated Chinese who wanted to save their country through modernization. In 1911, a military mutiny led to the collapse of the Qing dynasty, and China appeared to be on the way to a republican system. But corrupt military strongmen soon subverted this process, and by the middle of the 1910s, China descended into a decade of fragmentation, as warlords carved up the former empire into local satrapies.

#### Outline

- I. Shocked by the occupation of Beijing after the Boxer uprising, the Qing made last-minute gestures toward reform, but these efforts were too little and came too late.
  - A. The dynasty developed a plan to modernize its administration and to move toward a constitutional monarchy.
    1. In 1905, the Confucian examination system, which had operated without significant interruption since 1380 and with origins going back more than 2,000 years, was abolished.
    2. Many reforms based on the model of 1898 were put into place.
    3. A blueprint for a transition to a constitutional monarchy was developed, with provincial assemblies to begin meeting by 1916.
  - B. These measures, however, were not enough to restore faith in the Qing among educated, politically engaged Chinese.
    1. Even in the 1890s, some had begun to advocate outright overthrow of the imperial system.
    2. Anti-Manchu sentiment blended with anti-Western nationalism to spark interest in a revolutionary program of modernization.
- II. Sun Yatsen emerged as the principal leader of revolutionary activity.
  - A. Sun was from Guangdong province in the south.
    1. He had been educated in Hawaii and Hong Kong and became a doctor of Western medicine.
    2. In the 1880s, he began to think about radical change for China.
    3. He began to build a movement in the 1890s, aimed not at reform but at ending imperial rule.

- B. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Sun's movement grew into the mainstream of revolutionary activity.
  - 1. He founded the *Tongmeng hui*, the Revolutionary League, to bring together various anti-Qing movements.
  - 2. He traveled extensively in China and around the world, raising money and promoting the ideal of a republican government for China.
  - 3. Several abortive uprisings were organized by the revolutionaries, but all ended in failure.

### III. In 1911, the dynasty collapsed suddenly.

- A. The Empress Dowager and the Guangxu emperor had died in 1908.
  - 1. A little boy, Puyi, came to the throne as the last emperor.
  - 2. Conservative Manchu elders slowed down the process of reform.
- B. The modernized military became a focus of revolutionary politics.
  - 1. Qing efforts to build a modern army had unintended consequences: Officers and men wanted political reform as well.
  - 2. Junior officers often joined the Revolutionary Alliance.
- C. A mutiny at Wuhan triggered the collapse of the dynasty.
  - 1. In October 1911, revolutionary soldiers in Wuhan, in central China, feared arrest and seized their garrison.
  - 2. They proclaimed the surrounding province of Hubei independent of the dynasty.
  - 3. Over the next weeks, a dozen other provinces declared independence.
- D. In the winter of 1911–1912, events moved quickly.
  - 1. Sun Yatsen, who had been on a speaking tour in America when the revolution broke out, returned to China at the end of the year.
  - 2. Yuan Shikai, commander of the modern Beiyang Army, negotiated the abdication of the last emperor.
  - 3. In a political deal, Sun yielded the presidency of the new Republic of China to Yuan.
  - 4. A provisional assembly was elected in 1912, with Sun's newly formed *Guomindang*, or Nationalist Party, gaining the most seats.

### IV. Yuan Shikai betrayed the revolution and precipitated an era of warlordism.

- A. Yuan refused to follow the new constitution and tried to hold on to power.
  - 1. He dissolved the assembly when it would not support him.
  - 2. He had a Nationalist leader, Song Jiaoren, assassinated.
  - 3. He even tried to have himself made emperor.
  - 4. These efforts failed as a result of rivalry with other warlords. Yuan died in 1916.

- B.** Local military leaders then carved China into warlord domains and plunged the country into chaos.
1. Warfare between militarists caused economic disruption and great suffering among the people.
  2. China's weakness opened the door to Japan's growing ambitions in China, which we will consider in a later lecture.
  3. As the political world fell apart, many Chinese thinkers and activists were seeking new ways to come to grips with the crises they found around them. We will look at this process in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Marie-Claire Bergere, *Sun Yat-sen*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Joseph W. Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. In abolishing the examination system in 1905, the Qing destroyed the central cultural institution of the literati elite. How did they expect to retain the loyalty of educated Chinese without this?
2. In presenting his revolutionary program in the form of modern nationalism, how might Sun Yatsen have dealt with the problem of Chinese ethnic identity? Could Manchus be Nationalists, too?

## Lecture Thirty-Two

### The New Culture Movement and May 4<sup>th</sup>

**Scope:** Chinese intellectuals and new urban elites completely rejected the traditional imperial system and the Confucian ideology that had been its official orthodoxy. New kinds of ideas were sought that would allow China to regain internal cohesion and develop into a modern country with the kind of power and prestige it had possessed in the past. Nationalism, a belief in science and democracy, anarchism, and other European ideas began to spread, as did the pragmatism of the American thinker John Dewey. At the same time, a profound disillusionment with the practical political actions of the Western powers began to spread. After the Versailles Peace Conference agreed to give Japan control of former German-held territories in China, thousands of students took to the streets of Beijing on May 4, 1919, fighting with the police and burning down the house of the foreign minister. This ferment of ideas and political movements set the stage for the emergence of the Chinese Communist Party.

#### Outline

- I. With the collapse of the last dynasty, many Chinese repudiated the whole imperial tradition.
  - A. The Confucian political culture was seen as a dead weight on Chinese society.
    1. Scholars and writers rejected the use of the classical literary language and, instead, advocated *baihua*, the plain vernacular language of daily speech.
    2. The values of Confucian social relations and ritual were seen as rigid impediments to democratic egalitarianism.
    3. Confucianism was seen as oppressing women and young people and privileging the elite over ordinary workers and farmers.
  - B. The New Culture Movement sought modern alternatives to the Confucian past.
    1. New magazines and literary journals in plain language were published.
    2. Ideas about science, democracy, and various kinds of European philosophies were discussed.
    3. Western thinkers, such as John Dewey, George Bernard Shaw, and Bertrand Russell, visited China and gave public talks about their ideas.
  - C. Other movements were more concerned with organizing workers.

1. Chinese anarchists began to build unions even before the collapse of the Qing.
  2. In the 1910s, anarchists were the largest mass political movement in China.
  3. Ideas about socialism, feminism, and radical egalitarianism were propagated by the anarchists and by socialists and other Chinese students returning from study in Japan.
- II. World War I provided first hope, then frustration for the Chinese.**
- A. During the war, Chinese industry was able to make gains.**
1. As the Western powers were concerned with events in Europe, Chinese businessmen took the opportunity to expand their operations and gain market share both at home and abroad.
  2. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers went to France to replace French workers who had joined the army.
  3. These workers sent home both money and ideas and brought back their experiences of unions, elections, and radical politics.
- B. At the end of the war, Western promises of “self-determination” proved to be hollow rhetoric.**
1. The Allies had justified the war, in part, as a campaign for the “self-determination of peoples.”
  2. At Versailles, however, the victors divided up the spoils of the defeated and made clear their intention to retain their own colonial empires.
  3. In 1915, Japan had delivered to the Chinese government a program, known as “The 21 Demands,” aimed at facilitating Japanese domination of China, which the Chinese refused to accept. After the war, Japan, which had formally been on the Allied side, was allowed to keep the former German concessions it had occupied during the war.
  4. China, which had also been an ally and had sent much real aid to France, was forced to agree to the terms of the treaty.
- III. The May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement broke out as a response to the betrayal at Versailles.**
- A. When news of the decision in Paris reached China, students took to the streets of Beijing.**
1. Several thousand rallied at Tiananmen, where the government ministries stood.
  2. They marched east toward the Western legations but were blocked by police.
  3. They then burned down the home of the foreign minister.
  4. Several students were arrested and many more were beaten by police.
- B. The movement spread beyond Beijing and was embraced by merchants and workers, as well.**



1. Strikes and boycotts against Japanese businesses and goods took place in many Chinese cities.
  2. Eventually, the government had to release arrested students, and the Chinese delegation at Versailles refused to sign the final version of the treaty.
- C. The May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement and the New Culture Movement created a basis for the rise of the Chinese Communist Party.
1. In the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, news about Marxism and Leninism spread in China.
  2. Chinese who had rejected the imperial past and who now felt betrayed by the Western liberal democracies began to turn to communism as a new alternative.
  3. The Chinese Communist Party would come to be the most serious force seeking to transform China. We will follow its early development in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why was language reform so important to the progressive intellectuals of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century?
2. Given that both China and Japan had supported the Allies in the First World War, why did the Versailles Peace Conference agree to allow Japan to retain the former German concessions in China?

## Lecture Thirty-Three

### The Chinese Communists, 1921–1937

**Scope:** The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was founded in Shanghai in 1921. It grew out of discussion groups in Beijing and elsewhere and with the help of advisors from the Soviet Union. In the early 1920s, the Communists and the Nationalists, led by Sun Yatsen, formed an alliance, but after Sun's death in 1925, this collapsed as the new Nationalist leader, Chiang Kaishek, sought to destroy the CCP. In 1927, Chiang launched all-out attacks on Communists and drove the Party out of China's cities. In response, largely influenced by the ideas of Mao Zedong, the Party turned to a peasant strategy, relying on agricultural workers to build the revolution. After a period of experimentation in the early 1930s and following the epic Long March from southeast to northwest China, the CCP established its main base area in Shaanxi province in 1936 and, in 1937, managed to form a new alliance with the Nationalists.

#### Outline

- I. The Chinese Communist Party was founded in Shanghai in 1921 and soon sought an alliance with the Nationalists.
  - A. The Party was established through the actions of Chinese Marxists and Soviet advisors.
    1. Study groups in Beijing and other cities had been meeting since 1919.
    2. Advisors sent by the Communist International in Moscow worked with Chinese Marxists, including Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu.
    3. The First Party Congress was held in July–August 1921 in Shanghai, with a handful of delegates in attendance.
  - B. Realizing that they did not have the strength to lead a revolution right away, the members of the CCP sought an alliance with the Nationalist Guomindang (GMD).
    1. The GMD was still led by Sun Yatsen, who had been impressed with the organizational efficiency of the Bolshevik Party.
    2. Sun was willing to work with the CCP as long as Communists accepted the leading role of the Nationalists.
    3. The First United Front allowed Communists to join the GMD as individuals, and many, such as Mao Zedong, rose to positions of responsibility and influence.
- II. In 1925, Sun Yatsen died, and the CCP-GMD alliance began to crumble.
  - A. Sun was succeeded as leader of the GMD by Chiang Kaishek.

1. Chiang was a military man who had been leader of the GMD military academy at Whampoa, near Guangzhou.
  2. He had studied in the Soviet Union and formed a strong aversion to the Communists.
  3. After Sun's death, Chiang was one of several strong leaders in the GMD.
  4. He used his control of the army to intimidate and outflank his rivals and eventually became supreme leader.
- B.** In 1926, Chiang launched the Northern Expedition to reunite China.
1. The GMD had been in control only of Guangdong province in the far south.
  2. Chiang led GMD forces north and either defeated or bribed local warlords, bringing them into the GMD regime.
  3. In April 1927, he reached Shanghai but allowed local gangsters and secret GMD agents to wipe out the Communists in the city before bringing his army in to take control.
  4. This precipitated a split with the CCP, and a major purge of Communists in all GMD-controlled cities followed.

### III. The CCP had to find a new way to survive.

- A.** For a while, urban Communists and their Soviet advisors tried to carry on as before.
1. The main Party leadership called for uprisings and strikes, but these actions were all failures.
  2. Leadership in the Party changed hands repeatedly.
- B.** In the countryside, a new strategy was evolving, largely led by Mao Zedong.
1. Mao had been director of the GMD's Peasant Bureau.
  2. He believed that "agricultural workers" could be the main force in the revolution.
  3. A rural base area was set up in southern Jiangxi, where Communist policies could be tried out and refined, including early efforts at land reform.
- C.** Chiang Kaishek completed the unification of China and turned his attention to the eradication of the Communists.
1. By the end of the 1920s, the northern warlords had been brought under GMD control, and a new national government was installed in Nanjing.
  2. Chiang saw the CCP as his main enemy, despite Japanese aggression in Manchuria, which was seized in September 1931.
  3. In the early 1930s, Chiang launched repeated campaigns to destroy the CCP bases in Jiangxi.

- IV. The Communists embarked on the Long March to reach northwest China and build a new base of operations.
- A. In the autumn of 1934, it became apparent that Chiang was preparing a final assault on the CCP's base.
    - 1. Communist leaders decided to abandon the Jiangxi Soviet and go to northwest China, where another small base area already existed.
    - 2. In October 1934, 115,000 people set out on foot, leaving a small contingent behind to make a last stand against the GMD.
    - 3. Over the next year, the CCP forces walked across much of southwest and northwest China, crossing mountains, marshes, deep gorges, and barren deserts, reaching Shaanxi province late in 1935.
    - 4. Of the 115,000 who set out on the Long March, only about 15,000 survived, and they became heroes of the revolution, respected even today for the sacrifices they made.
  - B. Once in their new base in Yanan, Mao and the CCP leaders turned to resisting Japanese aggression and to building their movement for a New China, even forming a Second United Front with the GMD in December 1936. We will follow that story in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Lucien Bianco, *Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915–1949*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Harrison Salisbury, *The Long March*.

Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China*.

**Questions to Consider:**

- 1. Why was Chiang Kaishek so obsessed with the Chinese Communists and so willing to ignore the expansionist ambitions of Japan?
- 2. How could Mao Zedong justify his advocacy of a leading role for peasants in the revolution, given the Marxist ideology of the working class as the main force in modern history?

## Lecture Thirty-Four

### War and Revolution

**Scope:** The Second United Front was not really effective, but it did last in some form throughout the war against Japan. Once Japan was defeated, though, civil war followed quickly. Despite massive aid from the United States, the Nationalists were defeated by the Chinese Red Army in 1949, and Chiang's forces withdrew to the island of Taiwan. The Chinese Communists, under Mao's leadership, set about creating a "New China" and launched a program of building socialism. Land reform, a new marriage law, and the nationalization of urban industry were the first steps. The Korean War threatened to disrupt this process, but China managed to prevent an American invasion and to pursue its new policies with aid from the Soviet Union in the 1950s.

#### Outline

- I. In December 1936, the CCP and GMD formed a new United Front.
  - A. GMD General Zhang Xueliang "arrested" Chiang Kaishek and forced him to negotiate with the Communists.
    1. The "Xian Incident," named for the city near which it took place, reflected the frustration of many patriotic Chinese with Chiang's refusal to fight the Japanese.
    2. The CCP agreed to join in a new alliance to resist Japan's aggression in northeast China.
    3. Chiang accepted the agreement, but Zhang Xueliang was kept under arrest until the 1990s.
  - B. The Second United Front lasted through World War II, but was never fully effective.
    1. Japan launched a full-scale invasion of China in July 1937.
    2. The GMD was forced to retreat to Chongqing, in Sichuan, while Japan occupied much of northern and central China.
    3. Japanese atrocities at Nanjing—what came to be known as the Rape of Nanjing—and elsewhere stiffened Chinese resistance.
    4. The CCP led a guerrilla war against the Japanese from bases in Shaanxi.
- II. By 1944, Japan's defeat was seen as inevitable, and both the GMD and CCP began to prepare for the postwar period.
  - A. Chiang hoarded military supplies from the United States in preparation for attacking the CCP once the war with Japan was over.
    1. Frustration with Chiang's attitude led to clashes with his American military advisor, Joseph Stilwell.

2. Chiang knew that the Americans would defeat Japan and didn't want to expend his forces fighting the occupation army.
- B.** The CCP saw the coming end of the war as the chance to extend the revolutionary struggle.
1. Communist activism against the Japanese had greatly expanded support for the revolution among the farmers of north China.
  2. The CCP saw Chiang as hopelessly corrupt.
- C.** When Japan surrendered, there was a period of negotiation, but civil war broke out before long.
1. The United States sent negotiators to try to keep the peace in China, but by the middle of 1946, the confrontation between the CCP and the GMD was beyond control.
  2. The United States aided Chiang's forces and turned over supplies from the defeated Japanese to them.
  3. The Russians gave the CCP some aid from their occupation of Manchuria.
  4. Major fighting took place through 1948, and by early 1949, it was clear that the CCP would win.

### **III.** The People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in 1949.

- A.** The Nationalists withdrew to Taiwan.
1. The Battle of Huai-Hai in November 1948 signaled the end for Chiang's army.
  2. He ordered the withdrawal to Taiwan, after first carrying out a massacre of Taiwanese dissidents.
- B.** On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the establishment of the PRC in Beijing.
1. The new government set about stabilizing China, then launched a program of Socialist transformation.
  2. The foundation of the program was land reform, in which the economic back of the old literati elite was finally broken.
  3. The government also passed a new marriage law, which gave women freedom to marry whom they pleased and to own property.
  4. Urban industry began to be nationalized, and the financial system was brought under government control.
- C.** An alliance with the Soviet Union brought material aid to China, but the Korean War threatened the new regime.
1. Mao signed a treaty of friendship with Moscow in 1950.
  2. Soviet advisors came to China in great numbers to help with building projects and educational reform.
  3. The civil war in Korea threatened to bring American troops into northeast China, but massive Chinese intervention saved the North Koreans and protected China's frontier.

4. The stage was set for the pursuit of Mao's image of a "New China"; we will examine the major steps in that process in the next lecture.

**Essential Reading:**

Jonathan Spence, *Mao Zedong*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*.

Chalmers Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. The Communist Party led the most active resistance to the Japanese occupation, and won widespread support among the peasantry of northern China. Was this a sufficient basis for carrying out its revolutionary program?
2. Chiang Kaishek relied on the United States to win the war with Japan. Did he then expect that the United States would intervene in China's civil war?

## Lecture Thirty-Five

### China under Mao

**Scope:** For a quarter of a century, Mao Zedong was the dominant figure in the People's Republic of China, but his prominence should not mask the underlying tensions and disagreements in the Chinese Communist Party. A series of clashes among Party leaders was reflected in the history of the Great Leap Forward, the Socialist Education Movement, and finally, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. This lecture will tease out the complex interaction of differing groups within the Communist leadership and consider how the economic and political development of China fared through Mao's death in 1976.

#### Outline

- I. From 1949 until his death in 1976, Mao Zedong was the dominant figure in China.
  - A. Mao's vision of a New China was the avowed goal of the government of the People's Republic.
    1. Within the leadership of the CCP, however, there were divergent views of how to pursue the goals of Socialist development.
    2. Debates and disagreements within the Party shaped the history of the PRC and sometimes broke out into public conflicts.
    3. Mao generally was able to win the day but, at times, had to compromise or give up some of his power to gain his objectives.
  - B. In the 1950s, the main area of contention was over agricultural policy.
    1. Following land reform, there was a gradual process of collectivization, which at first, was voluntary and modest in scale.
    2. These early steps were quite successful, and yields rose rapidly, leading to enthusiasm for further collectivization.
    3. By 1956, Mao began to urge an accelerated program, which soon led to the creation of the People's Communes, large-scale units of collective farming.
    4. The Great Leap Forward in 1958 and 1959 was an attempt to mobilize peasant labor to achieve a "take off" in production that could also provide investment for urban industrial growth.
    5. It failed because of bureaucratic over-reporting and exaggerated claims, which triggered excessive consumption and, ultimately, led to food shortages.
- II. The failure of the Great Leap led to the first serious clash within the Party.
  - A. Through the 1950s, the CCP had carried out political campaigns against "rightists" and "anti-Party elements."



1. These campaigns were often used by Party bureaucrats to strike at those who criticized their abuses of public trust.
  2. The Party's popularity suffered somewhat from this, but the overall achievements of the revolution still won wide support.
- B.** With the Great Leap came the first open clash between Party leaders.
1. At a conference of top Party leaders in August 1959, the defense minister, Peng Dehuai, criticized Mao.
  2. Mao counterattacked and was able to have Peng removed from office but had to agree to give up control over the day-to-day management of government affairs.
- C.** Over the next three years, the CCP adopted more moderate tactics, and a "pragmatist" group, led by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, came to have great influence.
1. These leaders emphasized the achievement of concrete economic objectives rather than the integration of politics and the economy.
  2. They moved away from the more highly collectivized aspects of Mao's policies.
- III.** By 1962, Mao began to reassert his leadership.
- A.** In 1962, he advocated a Socialist Education Campaign to give Party leaders a better sense of life among the people.
1. Leaders were to "go down" and experience the realities of village and factory life.
  2. But senior and mid-level Party leaders didn't want to give up their privileged lifestyles, and the campaign was diverted into another "anti-rightist" episode.
- B.** Mao became increasingly frustrated and sought to go outside the Party to appeal to the people directly.
1. In 1966, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was launched by Mao without the support of other Party leaders.
  2. He called on "the masses" to criticize those in the Party taking "the capitalist road" and behaving like a new ruling elite.
  3. The forces unleashed by these actions proved to be more than Mao had anticipated, and after two years of widespread conflict, he began to try to regain Party control.
  4. At the Ninth Congress of the CCP in April 1969, the Cultural Revolution was basically ended, though it was carried on in name until Mao's death.
- IV.** In the years from 1969 to 1976, there was an effective stalemate within the CCP; neither the pragmatists nor the radicals could gain total control.
- A.** The radical forces were centered in the Gang of Four, with Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, as leader.
1. The Gang of Four controlled much of the information and cultural affairs of the country.

2. In 1971, Mao's designated successor, Lin Biao, was denounced as a traitor and accused of having plotted to kill Mao.
- B.** The pragmatists, led by Deng Xiaoping since Liu Shaoqi's death in 1969, were purged from power, in theory, but still controlled much of the technical and bureaucratic aspects of the Party and government.
1. Deng had been sent to labor reform in the late 1960s but, by 1972, was in charge of China's science and technology policy.
  2. Mao seemed to balance the radicals and pragmatists against one another and was unable or unwilling to give full support to either side.
- C.** In 1976, a series of dramatic events signaled the coming of a great change.
1. In January, China's much-loved prime minister, Zhou Enlai, died.
  2. In April, large-scale demonstrations against the Gang of Four took place in Tiananmen Square.
  3. In July, a major earthquake killed nearly 300,000 people in Tangshan, northeast of the capital.
  4. Finally, on September 9, Mao died.
  5. From 1976 on, China had to come to grips with life without Mao, and the post-Mao era soon proved to be one of profound change and dramatic developments.
  6. In the final lecture, we will consider China after Mao and prospects for China and the world at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Essential Reading:**

Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

William Hinton, *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village*.

Hong Yong Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Why were land reform and the marriage law the first priorities for the new government in 1949–1950?
2. Mao believed that the Communist Party was becoming too bureaucratic and alienated from the masses and that it would become a new elite, replacing the old literati. Was he right?

## Lecture Thirty-Six

### China and the World in a New Century

**Scope:** Mao's death in September 1976 was quickly followed by the abandonment of his revolutionary vision and by a reorientation of China's economic and political development. In the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping led China to adopt an aggressive program of modernization and openness to the outside world. Economic changes gave rise to widespread corruption and unequal access to opportunity, with the members of the Party gaining disproportionate wealth and power. The student-led protests of 1989 vented deep social grievances. Yet despite the violence of their suppression, the CCP has retained legitimacy in the eyes of most Chinese because it has continued to deliver a rising standard of living for the vast majority of the people. As China enters the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the World Trade Organization, it is perhaps on the threshold of regaining its traditional place as one of the great powers of the world.

#### Outline

- I. Within two years of Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping reemerged as the top leader in China.
  - A. In October 1976, just a month after Mao died, the members of the Gang of Four were arrested.
    1. A coalition of pragmatists and conservative Party leaders moved to isolate and remove the last of the radical elements.
    2. Mao's designated successor, Hua Guofeng, held on to office, but real power began to flow to Deng.
    3. Military leaders and the technocrats in the state-planning apparatus supported Deng's return to leadership.
    4. In November 1978, Deng was named vice premier, and his control over policy making was assured.
  - B. The political and economic orientation of China changed as Mao's policies were abandoned.
    1. Deng wanted to emphasize technical expertise over political considerations.
    2. He began to dismantle collective ownership in agriculture.
    3. He adopted strong family-planning measures to bring population growth under control.
    4. He expanded opportunities for private economic activity.
    5. China opened its doors to direct foreign investment.

- II.** The 1980s was a great period of development, as China became more engaged with the global economy, but stresses also built up domestically.
- A.** As foreign capital flowed into China, the economy began to grow rapidly.
1. Special Economic Zones were set up to encourage investment.
  2. Market reforms began to be introduced in both agriculture and industry.
  3. Private enterprises grew in number, but Party and government oversight created many opportunities for corruption.
- B.** A new strata of wealthy entrepreneurs began to emerge, often with links to the Party, while many workers in state enterprises saw their incomes stagnate.
1. As some Chinese became wealthier, they began to engage in conspicuous consumption.
  2. Workers in some state sectors, especially in education and professions, did not share in the rising wage scales of private-sector workers.
  3. Public perceptions of growing inequities and corruption began to create social tensions.
- III.** In 1989, student-led protests challenged the leadership of the CCP.
- A.** Protests had taken place throughout the 1980s, especially from 1986 on.
1. Some of these took the form of anti-Japanese demonstrations.
  2. Others more directly criticized the Party leadership.
  3. Some Party leaders, such as Hu Yaobang, quietly supported such protests.
- B.** When Hu died in April 1989, students used his funeral as a forum to launch new protests.
1. The visit of the reformist Russian leader Gorbachev gave protesters access to the global media.
  2. The CCP leadership was taken by surprise by the extent of the demonstrations in Beijing.
  3. Deep divisions in the leadership delayed any effective response, positive or negative.
  4. When Deng Xiaoping finally resolved to suppress the demonstrations, the use of force was unavoidable.
- C.** On June 4, the army regained control of Beijing, but hundreds of people were killed in the process.
1. Most students had given up their occupation of Tiananmen Square.
  2. The majority of people in central Beijing were from out of town and had nowhere else to go.
  3. Fighting in the streets was brief but intense.
  4. Beijing was placed under martial law.

IV. In the years since 1989, the CCP has managed to maintain its legitimacy by delivering rising living standards, but the need for eventual political change cannot be ignored forever.

- A. China is, today, perhaps the most rapidly developing country in the world.
  - 1. The economy continues to grow at exceptionally fast rates.
  - 2. Hundreds of millions of Chinese have seen dramatic improvements in their material conditions of life.
  - 3. But problems have also grown in health care and education, as well as other social services.
  - 4. The Marriage Law of 1950 was a strong effort to equalize the status of men and women in Chinese society. In the era of economic reform, however, the status of women has deteriorated.
  - 5. Crime, while still much less of a problem than in the West, has been growing.
- B. On the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, China is poised for continuing growth and is likely to resume its ancient role as a great world power.
  - 1. Although China has undergone dramatic and often traumatic change in the modern age, it has also retained strong links to its past.
  - 2. In the post-Communist age, many elements of traditional society have begun to reemerge.
  - 3. Even Confucian values are finding new life in today's China.
  - 4. How China will assume its place in the world in the decades ahead remains unclear, but there can be little doubt that it will be a force to be reckoned with.
  - 5. Understanding China's long and complex history is important, not only for its inherent interest, but for each of us as participants in the public life of our country and our world.

**Essential Reading:**

Bruce Gilley, *Tiger on the Brink*.

**Supplemental Reading:**

Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng*.

Jun Jing, *The Temple of Memories*.

**Questions to Consider:**

- 1. How will China's historical experience of the last 200 years shape its relationship with the West in the future?
- 2. Based on China's role in East Asia and the world in the past, is there any reason to anticipate that China will be a militarily expansionist power?

# COURSE GUIDEBOOK



## From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

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