

HIEA 164/264: LATE IMPERIAL CHINESE CULTURE AND SOCIETY:
THE MING DYNASTY (1368-1644)

M 2-4:50

HSS 5086

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Readings: Coursepack available from University Readers.

Sarah Schneewind, *A Tale of Two Melons: Emperor and Subject in Ming China*

Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness: The Ming Emperor Yongle*

David Robinson, *Bandits, Eunuchs and the Son of Heaven*

Victoria Cass, *Dangerous Women: Warriors, Grannies, and Geishas of the Ming*

*Kenneth Hammond, *Pepper Mountain: the Life, Death, and Posthumous Career of Yang Jisheng*

Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China*

Gordon Harvey, *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students*

Optional: F. W. Mote, *Imperial China, 900-1800*, Ming sections

Requirements: ** The syllabus is subject to change. **

- Attendance and active, informed class participation, based on reading notes, 30%.
- Weekly e-post (one paragraph) after class discussion, by 10 pm Wednesday, 20%
- Final paper, 15 – 20 pages, and assignments leading up to it, 50%
- Check WebCT frequently.
- Let me know *immediately* about any problems with the readings, attendance, etc.

Discussion: Read the assignment with care, take notes, and bring the reading and your notes to class (I may collect them occasionally). Your notes will vary depending on the reading. As a general guideline, for primary sources you should note sentence by sentence the meaning of the source and the questions it raises: read the primary sources intensively. For secondary sources, include 1. the main points the author is making 2. how the author uses primary sources and 3. questions the readings raise and points of interest to you. Note connections among readings.

E-posts: Post *on time* one paragraph on what you learned from class discussion, what questions were not answered, further thoughts on topics discussed, etc. Show that you have thought further about our discussion of the reading, especially in connection with earlier class material. If another student has already said what you wanted to say, respond to or extend his or her comment. If you post early, join in again at the end to read what everyone else said.

WebCT: WebCT will have the e-posts, other resources including details on the paper assignment, and announcements. Check in frequently, and certainly before you start doing the week's reading.

Final paper: Select (in consultation with me) a primary source or two from the Ming period, in English translation. You will do an intensive reading of your text, and research in reference and secondary materials to contextualize and explicate the text. There will be lead-up assignments, I will introduce you to the reference works you need, and you will meet with me regularly. We may discuss papers in class.

Week One (Jan. 5): Introduction

Zhu Yuanzhang, "In Praise of Auspicious Melons" (handout)

Week Two (Jan. 12): A Story, and an Overview of Ming Society

Sarah Schneewind, *A Tale of Two Melons: Emperor and Subject in Ming China*

Patricia Ebrey, *China: A Social, Cultural, and Political History*, pp. 158-190 (coursepack)

Optional: Mote, chapters 21-22

→ Consider what primary source you might be interested in.

Week Three (Jan. 19): The Yongle Reign – Primary Sources

Zhu Yuanzhang, “The August Ming Ancestral Instruction” (coursepack)

Empress Xu, “Instructions for the Inner Quarters” (coursepack)

→ One paragraph description of final paper primary source due.

Week Four (Jan. 26): The Yongle Reign – Secondary Source

Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness: The Ming Emperor Yongle*

Optional: Mote, chapters 23-24

→ Hand in some initial reading notes on your primary source.

Week Five (Feb 2): Mid-Ming Banditry and Rebellion – Primary Source

Xie Fen, “An Account of a Mirror for the Future,” transl. David Robinson (coursepack)

Gordon Harvey, *Writing With Sources*

→ Close reading notes of primary source due, with research questions.

Week Six (Feb 9): Mid-Ming Banditry and Rebellion – Secondary Source

David Robinson, *Bandits, Eunuchs and the Son of Heaven: Rebellion and the Economy of Violence in Mid-Ming China*

Optional: Mote, chapter 25

→ Answers to research questions due.

Week Seven (Feb 16): Guest professor, Weijing Lu

Feng Menglong, “Ren Gui the Filial Son with a Fiery Disposition Becomes a God” (coursepack)

Victoria Cass, *Dangerous Women: Warriors, Grannies, and Geishas of the Ming*

Week Eight (Feb. 23): Autocracy and Moral Autonomy – Primary Sources

Yang Jisheng. “Final Instructions” (coursepack)

Other readings to be handed out.

Optional: Mote, chapters 26-28

Week Nine (March 2): Autocracy and Moral Autonomy – Secondary Source

Kenneth Hammond, *Pepper Mountain: the Life, Death, and Posthumous Career of Yang Jisheng*

→ Draft due, combining close reading with research.

Week Ten (March 9): From Beginning to End

Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*

Optional: Mote, chapters 29-30

→ Second draft due.

Final paper due March 19th. Hand in all your earlier written assignments with the final version.