

HIGR 217A China before Buddhism Fall, 2009

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Introduction

This colloquium introduces the first millennium of Chinese history, as the first part of the minor field in pre-modern history, so you can teach this part of history to undergraduates, and be literate in the references to the classics and early history that underlay political and personal discourse through the whole imperial period and later. Some questions and approaches in the material may enrich your thinking about your own research.

Our major topics include political and religious developments, and the creation, use, and re-use of the texts that form the basis of Chinese tradition. Readings include both primary and secondary materials. Some texts will require close reading, some only a more cursory survey; I will instruct you about the next week's approach each week in class and/or on the WebCT site for the course. All of our assigned readings are shared, but I expect you to poke around in the library and find other translations, other secondary works, or references in more recent times to what we are reading, and bring them in to share with the class. We will try to balance discussion at a scholarly level, which welcomes complexities and unanswered questions, with consideration of how to teach the material to undergraduates, who often do not.

Books ordered at the campus bookstoreWm. Theodore de Bary, et al., eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. 1 (2nd edition!)Michael Nylan, *The Five "Confucian" Classics*Arthur Waley, trans. *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry*Edward Slingerland, trans., *Confucius, Analects: with Selections from Traditional Commentaries*Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writing of Sima Qian*Mu-chu Poo, *In Search of Personal Welfare*Mark Edward Lewis, *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han*Mark Edward Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China***Requirements**

1. Active, informed participation in every class session is required, and each member of the colloquium will lead discussion twice.
2. If you are not familiar with the basic outlines of Chinese history through the fall of Latter Han, please read the appropriate chapters in the textbook of your choice.
3. In weeks II-VIII, each week, describe in detail and/or outline how you would teach this material. (Include the Week I material in the Week II assignment.) What points would you make with it? Which specific primary sources would you assign, and how would you use them in lecture and discussion? What light do they throw on the larger issues of the period? Include the readings you would assign, discussion questions or strategies, essay prompts, and examination questions.
4. Each week (II-IX) also write a paragraph (or more) considering the relation of the readings to your own intellectual and research interests. You can use this as a way into

your orals list (see below).

5. In Week IX, based on your lesson plans, hand in a syllabus for an undergraduate course (meaning you can assume no background) of 12 weeks, with 3 hour-meetings or 2 hour-and-20 minute-meetings a week. A final version of this will be due Dec 8.
6. In Week X, hand in a list of about 30 primary and secondary readings, with those for our class as a base, but supplemented according to your interests, for your Spring oral exam. Meet with me finals week about this, and have a final version by early next quarter.

Class Schedule

We will work in English translation, but you are of course welcome to read the originals too, bring them in, and raise questions for discussion. I may give extra handouts.

I: Sept 29: Introduction:

Sources, chapter 1.

II: Oct 6: *The Book of Odes*

Michael Nylan, *The Five "Confucian" Classics*, introduction and chapter 2

Arthur Waley, trans. *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry*. (You may also wish to look at James Legge, trans. with original text and commentary, *The She King, or the Book of Poetry*, at Ezra Pound's translation, etc.)

Martin Kern, "The *Odes* in Excavated Manuscripts," ONLY pp. 175-184, in Kern, ed., *Text and Ritual in Early China*.

Edward L. Shaughnessy, "From Liturgy to Literature: The Ritual Contexts of the Earliest Poems in the *Book of Poetry*," in his *Before Confucius: Studies in the Creation of the Chinese Classics*, pp. 165-196.

III: Oct 13: *Shu jing* or *Shang shu*

Michael Nylan, *The Five "Confucian" Classics*, chapter 3

Sources, pp. 24-37

Read through, and choose one or more documents to read carefully and talk about: James Legge, trans. with original text and commentary, *The Shoo King, or the Book of Historical Documents*.

This is available in print, but without the Chinese, from www.kessinger.net. Please xerox the docs you choose so that we can talk about them in class (5 copies total).

IV: Oct 20: Ritual

Michael Nylan, *The Five "Confucian" Classics*, chapter 4

Sources, pp. 329-344

Martin Kern, ed. *Text and Ritual in Early China*, "Introduction;"

Michael Nylan, "Toward an Archaeology of Writing: Text, Ritual, and the Culture of Public Display in the Classical Period (475 B.C.E. – 220 C.E.)," pp. 3-49;

Lothar von Falkenhausen, "The E Jun Qi Metal Tallies: Inscribed Texts and Ritual Contexts," pp. 79-103-123;

K.E. Brashier, "Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Stelae," pp. 249-284.

Read through, and choose one section to read carefully and think about (bring copies):

James Legge, trans., *Li Ki: Book of Rites*

John Steele, trans. *Yili, The I-Li: Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial*

V: Oct 27: The *Book of Changes (Yijing)* and the *Chunqiu*

Michael Nylan, *The Five “Confucian” Classics*, chapters 5-7

Look at some of the many translations of the *Yijing* in the library.

Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Marriage, Divorce and Revolution: Reading Between the Lines of the *Book of Changes*,” in his *Before Confucius: Studies in the Creation of the Chinese Classics.*, pp. 13-30.

For comparison: Charles MacKay, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, chapter on Fortune-Telling (pp. 281-303)

Read through and choose one section for focus: James Legge, trans., *The Ch’un Ts’ew*

Ditto: Burton Watson, trans., *The Tso chuan: Selections from China’s Oldest Narrative History*

VI: Nov 3: Confucius and Laozi

Sources, chapters 3 & 5

Slingerland, trans. *Analects*

Laozi – look at a few *many* translations of the *Dao De Jing*

John E. Wills, “Confucius,” in *Mountain of Fame*

VII: Nov 10: The Hundred Schools

Sources, chapters 4, 6, 7

D. C. Lau, trans., *Mencius*

Shaberg, “Playing at Critique: Indirect Remonstrance and the Formation of *Shi* Identity,” in Martin Kern, ed. *Text and Ritual in Early China*, pp. 194-225.

For ref: Burton Watson, trans: *Xunzi: Basic Writings*; *Mo Tzu: BW*; *Chuang Tzu: BW*; *Han Feizi*

VIII: Nov 17: History in the Han

Sources, chapters 8, 12

Sima Qian, *Records of the Historian* (Burton Watson translation, read some selections)

Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writing of Sima Qian*

IX: Nov 24: Daily Life

Poo Mu-chou, *In Search of Personal Welfare*

Mark Edward Lewis, *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han*

Sources, chapter 11

X: Dec 1: Mystery Book

Mark Edward Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China*

Sources, chapters 9, 10

Questions to think about in designing your course.

1. What is the main theme or themes of your course? This will relate to your own interests, to your sense of what aspects of history are determinative, and to what you think students will be interested in.
2. Besides themes, are there other ways to give the course coherence? For instance, you

might start or end each lecture, or each time period, with a story or biography of a representative figure, or provide some other kind of consistent structure.

3. For each lecture, what is your thesis? Or what are the 3 (one hour) to 5 (11/2 hour) points you want to make? It is possible to create a sentence by sentence narrative of a whole course. In planning, use full sentences instead of bullet points: state an idea, not a topic.
4. What is best done in lecture and what in discussion? You may want to cover some easy material in lecture and harder things in discussion, but sometimes vice versa.
5. Design exam questions that address EVERY major point you make; then you can combine or choose. Not now, but eventually, you will have to think about what kind of answers you will accept and how you will evaluate them. This, again, is a choice that depends on your sense of your own interest and abilities, not on some abstractly 'best' method.

Textbooks to consider: pick one of these (or another you find) for your syllabus and give the relevant pp. on it. I'd like a short explanation of why you chose whichever you chose.

Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*

Valerie Hansen, *The Open Empire: A History of China to 1600*

Conrad Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Chinese Civilization*,

Patricia Ebrey, *China* (Cambridge Illustrated History)

Harold Tanner, *China: A History*

John Fairbank et al., *East Asia*

Primary Source Collections include:

Victor Mair, ed., *The Columbia Anthology of Chinese Literature* or the *Shorter* version

Wm. de Bary et al., eds. *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, two editions

John Minford and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds., *Classical Chinese Literature: an Anthology of Translations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Laurence G. Thompson, *The Chinese Way in Religion*

Donald Lopez, *Religions of China in Practice*

Patricia Ebrey, *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook* (2 editions)

Dun J. Li, *The Essence of Chinese Civilization*

Mark Csikszentmihalyi, *Readings in Han Chinese Thought*

Additional possible readings posted on WebCT