Middle Imperial China: The Great Song Transition

I. Course description

The transformation of Chinese civilization during the "Song renaissance" (960-1279) is our major concern for the spring semester. China mentally realigned itself, first because it had to acknowledge other players in the world such as the powerful nomad states along its own northern borders and second because those nomads would occupy the northern half of China during what is called the "Southern Song" (1127-1279). Buddhism, a foreign religion though it had been introduced to China many centuries before the Song period, flourished alongside the indigenous popular pantheon. Furthermore, China underwent internal changes such as the emergence of a vibrant urban culture. Self-representation changed in tandem with the rise of a new social stratum, the shidafu, and the literati culture it produced. The change rippled into the fine arts as well.

We will study the new contexts of Chinese civilization through travel essays, cartography, and reports and journals of diplomatic envoys. Tiantai Buddhism, Chan Buddhism and indigenous popular religion will be examined through their primary texts. We will hear about the changes in culture via storytelling and dramatic texts, and via Song cityscape paintings. Our study of new incarnations of Confucian teachings, xinglixue, or the "Learning of the nature and principle," and daoxue, or the "Learning of the Way," examines sophistication of philosophical discourse and China’s second-most famous scholar, Zhu Xi, and his creation of a new Confucian canon. In literature, we will study Song shi- and ci-poetry. Shi-poetry showed expanded topics and the mindset of the new literati class. Ci-poetry transformed the very notion of poetics. In art, we will analyze monumental landscape painting, printed illustrations, and Song aesthetic theory. The Qin/Han unification may have laid the basic foundation of China, but many have argued that the Song gave modern China its distinctive cultural heritage.

II. Course requirements

A. Attending all lectures (which also means keeping 10:00-10:50 a.m. open on Wednesdays and Fridays for additional lectures or activities). All lectures meet in Library 41, which between the IMC and the VRC in the basement of the Library.

B. Reading and pondering all assigned readings before each conference begins. This will include weekly submission of reading responses, discussion questions, poetic analyses, visual exploratories, and the like, assigned by your conference leader.

C. Attending all conferences, including regular, active and substantive conference participation.

D. Three short (5-7 pages) analytical papers; deadlines and format will be set by your own conference leader.

E. One group project; format, goals and deadlines set by individual conference leaders.
III. Faculty

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexei Ditter</td>
<td>Conference leader</td>
<td>E 114</td>
<td>x 7348</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas Fix</td>
<td>Conference leader &amp; Chair</td>
<td>E 423</td>
<td>x 7422</td>
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<td>Jing Jiang</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>E 428</td>
<td>x 7376</td>
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<td>Hyong Rhew</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>E 112</td>
<td>x 7392</td>
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<td>Michelle Wang</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Lib 323</td>
<td>x 7730</td>
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IV. Texts available for purchase in the book store


*The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch.* Translated from the Chinese of Tsung-pao. John R. McRae, trans. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2000. Note: This is also available online from Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (http://www.bdkamerica.org)


V. Weekly course schedule:

Note: Starred items below are *optional* readings.

**Week One: Song-Liao relations**

Lecture: Wednesday, 4 September, 10:00-10:50 am: Douglas Fix

Major dates in Song relations with the Liao & Jin states. **Course moodle**


Tackett, Nicholas. "Diplomacy and cosmopolitan socialability.” *The origins of the Chinese nation: Song China and the forging of an East Asian world order.* Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. 31-73. **Course moodle & Reserves DS751.3 T33 2017**

Lou, Yue (1137-1213). "A diary of my journey to the north." Stephen West, trans. **Course moodle or url:** [http://xirugu.com/Lou_Yue.html](http://xirugu.com/Lou_Yue.html)


**Course Reference Maps** There is a separate section on the **Course moodle** that contains maps for use during the entire semester. Please do make use of that resource.

**Week Two: Tiantai Buddhism**

**Lecture:** Monday, 9 September, 10:00-10:50 am: Douglas Fix


* Lotus Sutra frontpieces: [http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/5992/lightbox](http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/5992/lightbox)


**Week Three: Song dynasty shi-poetry**

**Lecture:** Monday, 16 September 10, 10:00-10:50 am: Hyong Rhew


"Selected *shi*-poems of seven Song poets" -- Mei Yaochen (梅堯臣, 1002-1060), Ouyang Xiu (歐陽修, 1007-1072), Wang Anshi (王安石, 1021-1086), Su Shi (蘇軾, 1037-1011), Huang Tingjian (黃庭堅, 1045-1105), Yang Wanli (楊萬里, 1127-1206), Lu You (陸游, 1125-1209). Hyong Rhew, et al., trans. **Course moodle**

Week Four: Monumental landscapes

Lecture: Monday, 23 September, 10:00-10:50 am: Michelle Wang

Image gallery: http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/9995/lightbox


Week Five: Chan Buddhism

Lecture: Monday, 30 September, 10:00-10:50 am: Prof. Benjamin Brose (University of Michigan)


*The Blue Cliff record: Translated from the Chinese* Pi yen. Thomas and J.C. Cleary, eds. Boulder: Shambhala, 2005. Pp. 1-17 (only the first two cases). **Course moodle** & **Reserves:** BQ 9289 Y823 Y83 2005, 1 copy


**Week Six: Song cities, cityscapes, and capital journals.**

**Lecture:** Monday, 7 October, 10:00-10:50 am: Michelle Wang

Image archive: The Qingming shanghe tu handscroll:  
http://academic.reed.edu/chinese/qingming/scroll/. Note: Login and password will be provided by your conference leader.


Preface to "The attractions of the capital" [from Ducheng jisheng]. Moule, A.C. "'The wonders of the capital' roughly translated." *New China Review* 3, i (1921): 12-17. **Course moodle**


* Maps of Chang'an, Kaifeng, and Lin'an. **Course moodle**

Week Seven: 'Day Trip' Essays and Travel Diaries

Lecture: Monday, 14 October, 10:00-10:50 am: Douglas Fix


Week Eight: Song ci-poetry

Lecture: 28 October, 10:00-10:50 am: Hyong Rhew

'Song ci-poetry selections.' Hyong Rhew, trans. Selections: Individual section instructors will assign ci-poems from male poets. Course moodle


Li, Qingzhao. The works of Li Qingzhao. Ronald Egan, trans. Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2019. Selections: 3.1 南歌子 (94-5); 3.3 漁家傲 (98-9); 3.4 如夢令 (100-01); 3.12 鳳凰臺上憶吹簫 (110-13); 3.13 一剪梅 (114-5); 3.18 憶王孫 (122-3); 3.19 臨江仙 (124-5); 3.20 醉華陰 (126-7); 3.22 訴衷情 (128-9); 3.30 聲聲慢 (142-5); 3.31 永遇樂 (144-7); 3.32 憶秦娥 (146-9); 3.33 添字醜奴兒 (148-9); 3.36 蠟燭花 (154-5); 3.42 武陵春 (162-3); 3.62 減字木蘭花 (192-3). Course moodle & Reserves: PL2682 A2 2019


Week Nine: Literati aesthetics

Lecture: Monday, 4 November, 10:00-10:50 am: Michelle Wang

Image gallery: Image gallery: http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/9980/lightbox


Wang, Shen. Misty river, layered peaks. Handscroll. Ink and color on silk. ca. 1100 45.2 x 166 cm. Shanghai Museum.


Mi, Youren. Cloudy mountains. 1130. Handscroll. Ink and color on silk. 43.4 x 194.3 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art.


**Week Ten: Book and print culture**

**Lecture:** Monday, 11 November, 10:00-10:50 am: Alexei Ditter

**Image gallery #1:** [http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/6003/lightbox](http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/6003/lightbox)


**Image gallery #2, Lotus Sutra frontpieces:** [http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/5992/lightbox](http://rdc.reed.edu/workspace/5992/lightbox)


Week Eleven: Reading and Sageliness

Lecture: Monday, 18 November, 10:00-10:50 am: Hyong Rhew


Long Week Twelve: Performance literature

Lecture: Monday, 25 November, 10:00-10:50 am: Jing Jiang


Suzhou Pingtan (excerpt): Story of the Western Wing. Video. Course moodle & url: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V31qJ3W0QOs


**Long Week Thirteen: Song tales**

Lecture: Wednesday, 4 December, 10:00-10:50 am: Alexei Ditter


**Presentation of Group Projects: Date & Time TBA**