

Chinese Intellectual History: An Introduction

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China has one of the longest records of history of any civilization but is little understood in the West. If China seems a puzzling bewilderment, this course will help to cut through the foggy haze and provide a solid framework for future engagement and understanding. The course serves as an introduction to China's long history through key intellectual transitions that have shaped Chinese traditions and had a foundational impact throughout East Asia. It provides a comprehensive overview of key intellectual figures and moments spanning China's intellectual history, introducing the major traditions of Classical and Neo-Confucianism, Daoism (Taoism), Legalism, and Buddhism.

Course materials include primary source readings that span premodern Chinese intellectual history, starting with the classical period (roughly contemporary with Greece and Rome) culminating in the Han dynasty (ca. 200 BCE – ca. 200 CE). It includes the introduction of Buddhist thought in China (circa 1st century CE) and its subsequent development through the Tang dynasty (618-907). It covers the Song dynasty (960-1278) Chinese renaissance and the creation of an East Asian “modernity.” It concludes with the two streams of Neo-Confucianism that were the pillars of Chinese and East Asian thought until the end of the imperial period (late 19th/early 20th centuries).

Readings: No textbook is necessary; readings for each week will be provided in links to pdf documents, as indicated on the course outline.

Course syllabus

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Date	Topic
10/2	<p>Introduction: Making Sense of China's Long History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Major Historical/Intellectual Epochs<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Classical Period2. Buddhist Age3. Neo-Classical (Neo-Confucian) Ageb. Chinese Influence throughout East Asia<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Confucian East Asia2. Buddhist East Asia3. Neo-Confucian East Asiac. Classical Period<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Hundred Schools of Thought and Warring States period2. Three Ways of thought in Ancient China<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Confucianismb. Daoismc. Legalism

	<p>Readings: Wm. Theodore de Bary, <i>East Asian Civilizations: A Dialogue in Five Stages</i> (on D2L); read especially chaps. 1 (Classical Legacy), 2 (Buddhist Age), and 3 (Neo-Confucian Stage) (D2L).</p>
10/9	<p>Foundations of Classical Chinese Thought I: Confucianism Confucius (Kongzi) Readings: excerpts from Confucius' <i>Analects</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/confucius_analects.pdf; http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/confucius_humaneness.pdf; http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/confucius_teacher.pdf; http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/confucius_govt.pdf)</p>
10/16	<p>Foundations of Classical Chinese Thought I: Confucianism (continued) Mencius (Mengzi) Readings: excerpts from <i>Book of Mencius</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/mencius_human_nature.pdf) Xunzi (Hsun-tzu) Readings: excerpts from <i>Xunzi</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/xunzi_human_nature.pdf; http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/xunzi_rites.pdf)</p>
10/23	<p>Foundations of Classical Chinese Thought II: Daoism (Taoism) Laozi (Lao-tzu) Readings: excerpts from <i>Laozi: Daode jing</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/laozi_daodejing.pdf; http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/laozi_govt.pdf) Zhuangzi (Chuang-tzu) Readings: excerpts from <i>Zhuangzi</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/zhuangzi_caring_for_life.pdf)</p>
10/30	<p>Foundations of Classical Chinese Thought III: Legalism Han Feizi (Hanfei-tzu) Readings: excerpts from <i>Hanfeizi</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/hanfei_five_vermin.pdf) Lord Shang & Li Si Readings: excerpts from <i>Book of Lord Shang</i> and <i>Li Si</i> http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/book_of_lord_shang.pdf), http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/lisi_legalist_memorials.pdf)</p>
11/6	<p>Buddhist Transformations I: Indian Buddhism Comes to China Mahayana Buddhist Orientations: Two Pillars of Wisdom & Compassion Perfection of Wisdom Heart Sutra Lotus Sutra Readings: <i>Heart Sutra</i> (on D2L) and excerpts from <i>Lotus Sutra</i> (on D2L; and http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/lotus_sutra_great_vehicle.pdf)</p>

11/13	<p>Buddhist Transformations II: Buddhism Becomes Chinese</p> <p>Chan (Zen) Buddhism <i>Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch</i> <i>Record of Linji</i> Yongming Yanshou Readings: excerpts from the <i>Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch</i> (http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/huineng_platform_sutra.pdf), <i>Record of Linji</i> (on D2L), Yongming Yanshou's <i>Records of the Source Mirror</i> (on D2L)</p>
11/20	<p>The Song Dynasty Chinese Renaissance: The Creation of an East Asian “Modernity”</p> <p>Early Song Intellectual Milieu Han Yu, “Memorial on the Bone of the Buddha” Zanning, <i>Topical Compendium of the Buddhist Order</i> Yang Yi, <i>Preface to the Transmission of the Lamp</i> Readings: excerpts from Han Yu's <i>Memorial on the Bone of the Buddha</i> (http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/hanyu_bone_of_buddha.pdf), Zanning's <i>Topical Compendium of the Buddhist Order</i> (from https://terebeess.hu/zen/mesterek/admini.pdf), and Yang Yi's <i>Preface to the Transmission of the Lamp</i> (https://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-MAG/mag631078.pdf)</p>
12/4	<p>Neo-Confucian Orthodoxies I: Zhu Xi Readings: excerpts from the writings of Zhu Xi (http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/zhuxi_learning.pdf, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/zhuxi_nature.pdf)</p>
12/11	<p>Neo-Confucian Orthodoxies II: Lu Jiuyuan & Wang Yangming Readings: excerpts from the writings of Lu Jiuyuan and Wang Yangming ((http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/lu_jiuyuan_mind.pdf, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/wang_yangming_knowing_acting.pdf http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/wang_yangming_mind_principle.pdf)</p>