

HIST 410/510: Chinese Cities - as seen in Historical Sources

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CON

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Zoom office hours: T 13:00-15:00

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CRN 17960/1

MW 14:00-15:20

WELCOME TO CHINESE CITIES IN HISTORICAL SOURCES!

Course description

For most of human history, China has been home to the largest cities in the world. This course explores the historical, literary, and visual evidence for these urban areas, from pre-historic settlements to 21st-century megacities.

We will study the economic, political, and social fortunes of Chinese cities along with poems, paintings, and novels in order to investigate a series of questions central to the study of urban history and culture, including: What is a city? What roles did commerce, politics, and religion play in the formation of urban communities? What is the relationship between idealized images of the city and lived urban experiences? What is the difference between pre-modern and modern cities?

Materials will primarily focus on capital cities, including Chang'an, Kaifeng, and Beijing, with reference to other urban areas and regions. By the end of the term, participants will have a solid grasp of China's urban history and gained skills in evaluating and comparing different kinds of evidence.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO ACHIEVE IN THIS COURSE

Successful completion of the course should result in:

- **Knowledge of the geographical setting of selected cities in China and the historical conditions that shaped advantages and challenges of these localities.**
- **A sense of the historical dynamics – military, political, intellectual, social – that made the selected cities into regional focal points.**
- **Acquaintance with some of the literary and visual legacies of urban spaces.**
- **A sense of how to understand how such legacies formed memory and nostalgia of urban centers.**
- **Enhancing your writing skills and confidence in articulating your thoughtful assessment of material in writing and in oral presentations.**

COURSE POLICIES

Readings

All readings, unless otherwise noted, will be available online on the course Canvas site.

****PLEASE ALWAYS BRING A COPY OF THE READINGS TO CLASS****

NB: This syllabus is subject to change and revision as we work through the term. I'll notify you of any changes with plenty of time in advance.

Participation

This course is an advanced seminar. However, there are no explicit prerequisites to take this course, nor do I necessarily assume that participants have significant knowledge of Chinese history, literature, or material culture.

At the same time, because it is an advanced seminar, and a somewhat experimental one at that, I will focus not on tracing a tidy narrative, but on critically analyzing a range of primary and secondary materials.

Lectures, usually given in the beginning of our session, will help put the readings in their historical and cultural contexts. A substantial section of class time will then be devoted to discussion...the success of which depends upon your preparation.

Come to class having read the assigned materials from a curious and critical perspective, and be ready to offer your questions, ideas, and responses (see course requirements below).

Requirements

1. Attend class, having read assigned materials beforehand.

While I will present lectures, substantial class time will be devoted to discussion of course readings (see item 2 below). As a result, class attendance and preparation of materials in advance are essential. Repeated absences will negatively affect your grade.

2. Participate in class discussion.

Critical discussion of the readings is a central activity of this class. As mentioned there will be lectures on a regular basis which support the discussions. In order to be successful in this class, you must come prepared and ready to contribute.

3. Maintain a journal about the readings.

Please refer to the module describing the journal.

4. Complete four response papers (about 1.5 pages, no longer than 2 pages).

Please refer to the module describing the response papers.

5. Complete two presentations on the readings.

I will ask you to sign up for these presentations by the beginning of the second week of the term.

Requirements for graduate students

1. Same as #1 and #2 above
2. Complete two response papers (about 1.5 pages, no longer than 2 pages).
3. Complete one presentation, and give a semi-formal response to all other presentations.
4. Complete two book reviews.

****CONSULT WITH ME EARLY AND OFTEN ABOUT YOUR ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION IN CLASS****

UNIVERSITY and DEPARTMENT POLICIES

LEARNING ACCOMMODATION, ACCESSIBILITY and BASIC NEEDS

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Life at college can be complicated. Students may feel overwhelmed or stressed, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, you don't need to handle them on your own--there's help and support on campus.

As your instructor it is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know that help is available: University Health Services help students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. You will find information related to address COVID-19 issues on a separate module of our course website.

If you need general resources on coping with stress or want to talk with another student who has been in the same place as you, visit the specially trained Peer Wellness Advocates of the Duck Nest. The DuckNest has a physical location in the EMU on the ground floor, but due to social distancing has made programs available for streaming and on-demand. Please check their site - they add programming weekly! You can find out more at health.uoregon.edu/ducknest.

University Counseling Services (UCS) has a team of dedicated staff members to support you with your concerns, many of whom can provide identity-based support. All clinical services are free and confidential. Find out more at counseling.uoregon.edu or by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (346-3216, 164 Oregon Hall) for support.

This UO webpage includes resources for food, housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, technology, finances, and legal support:
<https://blogs.uoregon.edu/basicneeds/food/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY and PLAGIARISM

Presenting someone else's work as your own is considered plagiarism. This course has a zero tolerance for plagiarism from any sources: print, web, your previous work for other classes, or work by classmates. Cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct (<https://dos.uoregon.edu/conduct>). Please read the policies for plagiarism at the University of Oregon: [http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/Links to an external site.](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site)

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. Any student caught turning in plagiarized material will automatically get an "F" for that assignment (and an "F" given for plagiarism cannot be dropped from your final grade). For details about academic misconduct and how it is handled at the University of Oregon, please consult the following page from the Office of the Dean of Students website:

<http://dos.uoregon.edu/academic-misconduct> [Links to an external site.](#)

COMPUTERS, TABLETS, and CELL PHONES

We meet in class to learn together. Too often, our electronic and digital telecommunication devices detract from that goal, since they provide an almost irresistible temptation to check e-mail, send a text message, scan social media feeds, etc. If some of us are paying attention to Snapchat, and not to class discussion, then everybody in the class suffers.

At the same time, many of us take notes on computers or tablets, so an outright ban on all electronic devices might put some students at a disadvantage. With these thoughts in mind, and above all out of respect for your classmates and instructors, please observe the following rules:

- **NO cell phone use.** Cell phones should be put away and turned OFF as soon as you enter the classroom.
- **NO use of the Internet in class.** No exceptions.

GRADE POLICIES OF THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT:

A+: Work of unusual distinction. Rarely awarded.

A: Work that distinguishes itself by the excellence of its grasp of the material and the precision and insight of its argument. Well executed and reasonably free of errors.

B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment and demonstrates command of the material, but does not achieve the level of excellence that characterizes work of A quality.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect, demonstrating a basic misunderstanding of the material and/or disregards for the assigned question.

GRADING

Undergraduate students

**Participation: 15%; Journal: 10%; Response papers: 40% (10% for each);
Presentations: 35% (first
presentation: 15%; second presentation: 20%)**

Graduate students

**Participation: 10%; Response papers: 20% (10% for each); Presentation and
presentation responses: 30%; Book reviews: 40% (20% each)**

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Introduction

09/27: Introductions

09/29: The problem of “the city” and pre-historic urban sites in China

Questions for discussion: How do we define a city? How have scholars characterized the “Chinese” city?

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Louis Mumford, “What is a City?” *Architectural Record* 82 (November 1937);
- b. F. W. Mote, “A Millennium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow,” *Rice University Studies* 59.4 (1973), 35-65.

WEEK 2: The Ideal of the City

10/04: Model Cities and Capitals

Questions for discussion: What were the ideals behind urban development in pre-modern China and how do they relate to the archaeological evidence?

Read before class:

All students:

a. Arthur Wright, “The Cosmology of the Chinese City”, in William Skinner (ed.), *The City in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press 1977, 33-73;

b. Roderick Campbell, “Toward a Networks and Boundaries Approach to Early Complex Polities: The Late Shang Case,” in *Current Anthropology* 50.6 (Dec 2009), 821-48;
undergraduates read ONLY pages 825-39;

c. Two poems from the *Classic of Poetry (Shijing)*: #237 “Spreading” (Mian 緜), #261 “Grand is the Han” (Han Yi 韓奕), translated by Arthur Waley

Graduate students: Read the entire article by Campbell

10/06: cont. Model Cities and Capitals

WEEK 3: Chang’an, Part 1: An Ideal Capital?

10/11: The capital site

Questions for discussion: Why was Chang’an built in its present location? Is there a relationship between its site and ideals of urban construction? How was the city managed?

Read before class:

All students:

a. *Shiji*: “Account of Liu Jing” (*Liu jing liezhuan* 劉敬列傳), Chapter 99 of *Shiji*, translated by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): 235-46;

b. Tang Xiaofeng, “The Evolution of Urban Form in Western Han Chang’an”, in Michael Nylan and Griet Vankeerberghen (eds), *Chang’an 26 BCE: An Augustan Age in China*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015, 55-74.

Graduate students: Michael Nylan, “Supplying the Capital with Food and Water”, in *Chang’an 26 BCE: An Augustan Age in China*, 99-130.

10/13: Representing Court and Capital

Questions for discussion: How did writers depict Chang’an and other early cities? What ideas and literary conventions guided descriptions of cities?

Read before class:

All students:

a. Ban Gu (32-92 CE), “Two Capitals Rhapsody” (*Liang du fu*), in *Wen hsuan, Selections of Refined Literature*, vol. 1, translated by David Knechtges (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

RESPONSE PAPER 1 DUE

WEEK 4: Chang’an Part 2: Tang Chang’an

10/18: Building and Remembering Chang’an in Tang Times

Questions for discussion: How does Tang Chang’an compare to its Han predecessor? What comparisons did Tang writers make? What was the lived experience of the city? Was Tang Chang’an a “cosmopolitan” city?

Read before class:

All students:

a. Saehyang P. Chung, “Symmetry and Balance in the layout of the Sui-Tang Palace City of Chang’an,” *Artibus Asiae* 56, nos. 1-2 (1996): 5-17;

b. Linda Rui Feng, “The Lure of Chang’an,” Chapter Two of *City of Marvel and Transformation: Chang’an and Narratives of Experience in Tang Dynasty China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015): 44-67.

Graduate students: William Nienhauser, “Chang’an on My Mind: A Reading of Lu Zhaolin’s ‘Chang’an, Thoughts on Antiquity,’” *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 10, no. 1 (April 2010), 63-91.

10/20: Changing Urban Forms from Tang to Song

Questions for discussion: What was the “Tang-Song” transition? How did urban life change during the period?

Read before class:

All students:

Yinong Xu, “The City in its Beginning”, chapter two of *The Chinese City in Space and Time*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000, 29-55; chapter 6: “Courtyard and Public Urban Space”, 166-199.

WEEK 5: New Cities in the Song and Yuan, Part 1

10/25: Kaifeng as Capital and Urban Market; The handscroll *Qingming shanghe tu* 清明上河圖

Questions for discussion:

How did markets and commercialization affect Song cities? What changes did new economic patterns have on urban life and city residents?

Analyze and discuss the *Qingming shanghe tu*, unquestionably the most important and famous pictorial representation of a pre-modern Chinese city.

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Christian de Pee, "Purchase on Power: Imperial Space and Commercial Space in Song-Dynasty Kaifeng, 960-1127," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 52, 4-5 (2009): 760-94.
- b. Stephen H. West, "Recollections of the Northern Song Capital", in Victor Mair et al. (eds.), *Hawai'i Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture*. Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2005.
- c. Carefully review the *Qingming shanghe tu* and other materials assembled on the following websites:
 1. http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/pop/c_scroll.htm (Links to an external site.)
 2. http://www.npm.gov.tw/exh96/orientation/flash_4/index.html (Links to an external site.)

As part of your journal, please take notes and write own questions based on your observations of the scroll. We will view a reproduction in class and discuss questions concerning the genre of cityscapes as well as issues of authenticity.

Graduate students:

- a. Foong Ping, "Ink Landscape in the Imperial City," in *The Efficacious Landscape: On the Authorities of Painting at the Northern Song Court* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 31-73.
- b. On the *Qingming shanghe tu* discussion read:
 1. Valerie Hansen, "The Mystery of the Qingming Scroll and its Subject: The Case Against Kaifeng," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 26 (1996): 183-200;

2. Hsing-yuan Tsao, "Unraveling the Mystery of the Handscroll 'Qingming shang he tu,'" *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 33 (2003): 156-79.

RESPONSE PAPER 2 DUE

WEEK 6: New Cities in the Song and Yuan, Part 2

10/25: Hangzhou

Questions for discussion: Hangzhou is often celebrated as a city of pleasure and refinement. Why? Beyond aesthetic beauty, are there other ways of understanding the city?

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Jacques Gernet, *Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion, 1250-1279*: 22-58.
- b. Christian de Pee, "Nature's Capital: The City as Garden in *The Splendid Scenery of the Capital* (Ducheng jisheng, 1235)", in Joseph Lam, Shuen-fu Lin, Christian de Pee and Martin Powers (eds.), *Senses of the City: Perceptions of Hangzhou and Southern Song China, 1127-1279*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2017, 179-204.

Graduate students: a. Ronald Egan, "Crime, Violence, and Ghosts in the Lin'an Stories in *Yijian zhi*," in *Senses of the City*, 149-78.

10/27: Yuan Dadu [=Beijing]

Questions for discussion:

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Stephen H. West, "Body and Imagination in Urban Gardens of Song and Yuan," in Michael Conan (ed.), *Gardens and Imagination: Cultural History and Agency* (Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture, Harvard University Press, 2008), 41-64;
- b. Michael Marmé, "'Heaven on Earth: The Rise of Suzhou, 1127-1550'", in Linda Cooke Johnson, *Cities of Jiangnan in Late Imperial China* (Albany, NY: SUNY Series in Chinese Local Studies, 1993), 17-45.

WEEK 7: Cities in Late Imperial China

11/01: Late Imperial Cities

Questions for discussion: How did the political, social, and economic changes of late imperial times affect Chinese cities? In addition to discussing the assigned readings, we will look at a Ming handscroll showing the Lantern Festival in Nanjing.

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Frederic Mote, “The Transformation of Nanking, 1350-1400”, in William Skinner (ed.), *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977): 101-54;
- b. Linda Cooke Johnson, *Cities of Jiangnan in Late Imperial China* (Albany, NY: SUNY Series in Chinese Local Studies, 1993), (Chapter on Shanghai) *Shanghai: An Emerging Jiangnan Port, 1683-1840*: 151-80.

11/03: Suzhou - City of Silk and Gardens /Urban Gardens of the Literati

Questions for discussion:

Read before class:

All students: Zongwei Li, *The Classical Gardens of Suzhou* (New York: Better Link Press, 2006). selections

WEEK 8: Beijing as Imperial Capital

11/08: Establishing and Organizing the City

Questions for discussion: Why did Beijing serve as an imperial capital for more than five hundred years? What was life like in Beijing during Ming and Qing times?

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Susan Naquin, *Peking. Temples and City Life, 1400-1900*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 388-449;
- b. Lillian M. Li et al., “The Forbidden City and the Qing Emperors”; “Daily Life in the Inner and Outer Cities”, in *Beijing: From Imperial Capital to Olympic City*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2007, 41-95.

Graduate students: Naquin, *Peking*, 451-498.

11/10: Chengde- Past and Present

Questions for discussion:

Read before class:

All students:

Chapters 1,4,5 &13 in

Ruth W. Dunnell, Mark C. Elliott, Philippe Foret, and James A. Millward (eds.), *New Qing Imperial History : The Making of Inner Asian Empire at Qing Chengde.*

online access

RESPONSE PAPER 3 DUE

WEEK 9: The Modern City in China I

11/15: Public Space and Resources in Modern Beijing

Questions for discussion: What role did urban spaces play in the political life of modern Beijing? What resources are required to maintain Beijing's development?

Read before class:

All students:

a. Wu Hung, "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," in *Remaking Beijing. Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 2005): 15-50.

11/15: The Chinese City Re-Imagined

Questions for discussion: How have Beijing and other modern Chinese cities changed in recent years? How have political conflicts and economic transformations affected contemporary city life?

Read before class:

All students:

Jun Wang, "Preservation versus Demolition", chapter one in *Beijing Record: A Physical and Political History of Planning Modern Beijing*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, 2011, 2-37

WEEK 10: Contemporary Cities

11/22: Shanshui City Projects: The Beijing Olympic City Forest Park

Read before class:

All students:

Documentation by Landscape Architect, Prof. Hu Jie, Tsinghua University
https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/Business_Quarterly/0810-Beijing%20Olympic%20Forest%20Park-Hu%20Jie-2.pdf

11/24: Mega-City Region Development

Read before class:

All students:

- a. Anthony G.O. Yeh, George C.S. Lin and Fiona F. Yang, "Introduction and overview: Emerging mega-city regions in China".
- b. Jiang Xu, Calvin King Lam Chung and Mengmeng Zhang, "Governing mega-city regions in China: one region, many systems"
- c. Chaolin Gu, Le Li and Ian G. Cook, "The planning of restructuring of Beijing - Tianjin- Hebei mega-region".

11/29: Ghost Cities of China

Read before class:

All students:

Chapters 1-3 of Wade Shephard, Ghost Cities of China. online access:
<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/lib/uoregon/reader.action?docID=2011540>

12/01: Mega-City Guangzhou-Hong Kong

Questions for discussion:

Read before class:

All students:

Xun Li, Shali Zhang and Jinmiao Zhou, "Examining the future development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area from the perspective of a mega-city region".

<https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/191160/assignments/syllabus>