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

M 2-4:50 HSS 5086 Dr. S. Schneewind
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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
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
→ 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.