History 11B: History of China: 1000-2000

Neo-Confucianism (con’t) & Family & Gender in the Song and Yuan

Key Terms and Names 1/22

Song Dynasty 宋: 960 – 1279
Northern Song 北宋: 960 - 1127 (capital at Kaifeng 开封)
Southern Song 南宋: 1127 - 1279 (capital at Hangzhou 杭州)

Jin Dynasty 金: 1115 - 1234; also known as the Jurchen peoples; hostile neighbor state located to the north and northeast of the Liao; Song aligns with the Jin to defeat the Liao, only to later lose the northern half of Song China to the Jin.

Yuan Dynasty 元: 1234 - 1368; formed by the Mongols; the Southern Song align with the Mongols to defeat the Jin; after defeating the Jin Dynasty in the north, the Mongols begin to fight with the Southern Song. In 1279 they succeed in defeating the Southern Song and setting up a new dynasty for a now-unified China.

Neo-Confucian philosophy, known in Chinese as "lixue 理学 (or the "Study of Principle") or 道學 "daoxue" (the "Study of the Way")

Li 理 - principle, the natural patterns occurring in all things. Qi 氣 - the vital energy, ether, force or material substance that makes up the things of this world.

“The investigation of things” (gewu 格物): the path to self-cultivation according to Zhu Xi's formulation was via the study of the patterns or principles in all things, and this entailed “the investigation of things.” Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017-1073): the first in a line of Confucian revivalists in the Northern Song; appropriates Daoist metaphysical concepts to the Confucian project of social and ethical concerns.

Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077): a key formulator of neo-Confucian cosmology and ethical precepts; uncle to the Cheng brothers (see below) and the teacher of Sima Guang (see sheet for lecture 5.1).

Cheng Hao 程顥 (1031-1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1032-1107): brothers; two of the most influential neo-Confucian thinkers of the Northern Song.

Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200): the most influential neo-Confucian philosopher; synthesizes the metaphysical theories of the Northern Song Confucian thinkers; writes commentaries for the Four Books, which later become the basic texts of study for the examination system.

The Four Books: The Analects, The Mencius, The Great Learning, and The Doctrine of the Mean. The last two of these are based on chapters taken from the Book of Rites (Li ji 禮記), and were compiled ca. 100 BC. Together, the Four Books, along with the Five Classics, become the basic canon of Confucian thought and learning. Zhu Xi's commentaries on the Four Books become the standard editions used to study for the imperial civil service examinations starting in the Yuan dynasty.

Family rituals (Jia li 家禮): ritual handbook compiled by Zhu Xi to instruct elite families in proper protocol for conducting basic family rites: cappings, weddings, funerals, sacrifices to the ancestors. Becomes one of the most influential texts during late imperial times.

Khubilai Khan (1215-94), grandson of Chinggis Khan; becomes the Khan of the Great Khanate in 1260; establishes the Yuan Dynasty in China; this reunifies the north and the south; considered more Sinified and not as ruthless as his grandfather.
Levirate – a kind of marriage in which a woman marries the younger brother or junior relative of her husband after his death. This was common practice among the steppe peoples, including the Jurchen Jin and the Mongols.