

Study Guide for RAT #3: Late Medieval China

(corresponding to IAR, chapters 15 [176-81], 18 [208-12], 20, 11 [121-25], & 22; bold print = assigned for RAT; consult also maps [p.132, 204, 239] & timeline [p.264])

Topics, Readings, & Terms	Important Details	Related Primary Sources
<p>1. The Chinese Social World (IAR, 176-81)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">look for:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Middle Kingdom"</p>	<p>(a) geography, population & agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulty of agriculture needed to sustain large population concentrated in easter regions led to large-scale irrigation & flood-control projects at an early date. • ruling classes of complex governmental institutions preoccupied primarily with defining a standard culture (esp. political philosophy & ethics) that could bind together diverse groups & regions • "Middle Kingdom" (=Zhongguo) <p>(b) respect for family & elders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heads of household (tracing origins to a founding ancestor) given supreme authority, with women theoretically inferior but in practice often holding considerable domestic power. • marriage conceived of primarily as business deals between families, with the resulting family unit owning property jointly. 	<p>Optional:</p> <p><i>Zhuangzi</i> [excerpt] (IAR 373-74)</p>
<p>2. Chinese Assimilation of Gautama Buddha's Teaching (IAR, 109-13, 121-25, 249-56)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">look for:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">sutra Tiantai bodhisattva shunyata</p>	<p>(a) early signs (3rd BCE-6th CE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first clues from Qin & Han Dynasties (3rd BCE-2nd CE), probably transmitted by land via "Silk Road" trade as well as by sea. • first clear records of a Buddhist community during emperor Ming (58-75 CE) and translation of Buddha's sayings in 166 CE. • numerous translations of Buddhist sources by foreign monks after fall of Han (3rd-6th CE), inspiring some monks to travel to India for texts. <p>(b) systematizing sutras</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • movements deriving directly from Indian institutions & sources, as well as those radically transforming them, both short-lived. • Tiantai school <p style="margin-top: 20px;">• bodhisattva & voidness (shunyata) in Tiantai</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">• Huayan school (6th-9th CE) proposed a different arrangement of the Buddha's teachings, with the words of the <i>Flower Garland</i> ("Flower Garland") <i>Sutra</i> being given the highest place.</p>	<p>Required:</p> <p>"Medieval Chinese Buddhist Art " (on-line PPT)</p> <p>Optional:</p> <p><i>Lotus & Gandhavyuha Sutras</i> [excerpts] (IAR, 380-83)</p>

<p>3. Neo-Confucian Philosophy & Ritual (IAR, 208-12, 227-36)</p> <p>look for:</p> <p>Confucius jen qi & li</p>	<p>(a) master Kung Qiu (551-479 BCE) = “Kung-fu-tze,” “Confucius”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human-heartedness (jen) • five classics: poetry, music , history, divination & ritual • discerning the will of Tien (<i>tienming</i>) <p>(b) subsequent transformations & revivals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • late Han Dynasty (2nd BCE) followers made Confucian classics, as well as Confucius’s own sayings & the writings of his famous 4th & 3rd CE disciples, required study for the civil service examination; built temples in his honor; & adapted popular cosmology to harmonize with his ideas. • vigorous Confucian attacks on Buddhist movements in the 8th CE, stressing that Confucian thought could address just as well key metaphysical issues re: nature & the heavenly order. • qi & li in 11th CE thought. • synthesis of all these trends by Zhu Xi (1130-1200) eventually declared official in 1313, with very few subsequent critiques. 	<p>Required:</p> <p>"Shrines to Former Local Worthies" (RAP, 405-17)</p> <p>Optional:</p> <p><i>Analects</i> , book 7 (IAR, 374-76)</p> <p>&/OR</p> <p><i>Xun Zi</i> [excerpts] (IAR, 376-79)</p>
<p>4. Daily Ritual in Pure Land & Chan Buddhist Communities (IAR, 257-63)</p> <p>look for:</p> <p>Amitabha Chan Tang</p>	<p>(a) Pure Land traditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amitabha Buddha’s pure land • popular & monastic devotion, developed primarily in China, focused on remembering Amitabha’s promise by reciting a simple mantra (<i>kouchen g nianfo</i>) in his honor: “I rely on the name of Amitabha.” <p>(b) Chan Buddhists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodhidharma & <i>dhyana</i> (“concentration”) • the simplicity of nirvana & Buddha -potential in each individual. 	<p>Required:</p> <p>"Daily Life in the Assembly" (RAP, 252-69)</p> <p>Optional:</p> <p><i>Pure Land Sutra</i> (short version) (http://web.mit.edu/stclair/www/smaller.html)</p>