

10: THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN CHINESE STATE (9/96r): Tutorial

1. The Medieval and Early Modern Chinese state was “hollowed out” in the sense that
 - a. it could only pretend to universality.
 - b. it could never conquer Korea or Japan.
 - c. it could permanently conquer Korea.
 - d. its cultural influence range shrank.
 - e. it fell behind its daughter cultures.

a: *But it had to make the pretense so as to retain its legitimacy. It could conquer Korea, earlier, but could not do so during the 2nd stage of high civilization. It never conquered Japan, though its cultural influence even over Japan deepened and it would not fall behind Japan until the fully modern era.*
2. The Tang emperors ruled over Zone A
 - a. all through the life of the dynasty.
 - b. only during the dynasty’s last half.
 - c. through China’s power alone.
 - d. mostly as “Sons of Heaven.”
 - e. sometimes as “Heavenly Qaghans.”

e: *if that was what it took. They preferred to rule as Chinese Sons of Heaven, but their partly Zone A ancestry allowed them to keep their dignity even as Heavenly Qaghans.*
3. The period after the 750s
 - a. was a time of triumph for Tang.
 - b. saw continued influx of new ideas.
 - c. saw China exporting the chair.
 - d. imported Persian-style coal-mining.
 - e. witnessed China’s economic regression.

b: *Imported new ideas and military power bore an inverse relationship to each other. China imported the chair, but exported the use of coal. Some at the time thought the economy was regressing, but it was actually mutating into an early industrial form.*
4. A multistate system tends to limit the power of any one state that is temporarily in the ascendancy.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.

a: *This reflects the tendency of such states to play balance of power interstate politics.*
5. The Chinese universal state reached its maximum in degree of effective claim to universality under which dynasty?
 - a. The Sui Dynasty.
 - b. The Tang Dynasty.
 - c. The Khitans’ Liao Dynasty.
 - d. The Mongols’ Yuan Dynasty.
 - e. The Ming Dynasty.

d: *The Mongols claimed true universality, but early on they had to divide their stake in greater Eurasia into several parts.*
6. By late Ming times, China’s intercivizational trade
 - a. still mostly came via Zone A.
 - b. was exclusively in Chinese hands.
 - c. was largely in South Asian hands.
 - d. was in Persian and Arab hands.
 - e. was being taken over by Europeans.

e: *The Zone A peoples made a modest living in land route foreign trade which had not grown much. The real growth was via the sea route, and by late Ming times, Europeans were pushing aside Chinese, South Asian and West Asian merchants or reducing them to a subordinate role.*
7. The long-term trend in size for the Chinese universal state of the second stage of high civilization was for it to first grow, then shrink back and finally grow part way back to its early size.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.

a: *Size was becoming less important than complexity for all the second stage high civilizations.*
8. Sui and then early Tang had ruling classes dominated by
 - a. an old, established aristocracy.
 - b. a newly legitimized aristocracy.
 - c. a newly dignified meritocracy.
 - d. a mixed aristocracy and meritocracy.
 - e. an aristocracy linked to a plutocracy.

a: *that went back to the middle years of Western Han. This old aristocracy gradually meritized itself but always kept potential plutocrats at arm’s length.*
9. The meritocratic segment of Song’s ruling class rose to dominance at home at a time when China was surrounded by a veritable sea of barbarism.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.

b: *That’s what Song’s meritocrats claimed was the case, but in fact these supposed “barbarians” of Liao and W. Xia and later Jin were as highly civilized as Song itself and largely in Chinese terms.*
10. The Song meritocrats were able to displace the vestigial Tang aristocracy
 - a. after meritocratic staff replaced aristocratic line personnel.
 - b. long after Song’s founding.
 - c. because of the Mongol conquest.
 - d. after Jin conquered B1-2.
 - e. never.

a: *This was done by Song’s founder and his chief of staff brother between 960 and 1000. The meritocratic principle achieved moral dominance well before any of the later Zone A conquests of Song territory.*
11. During Song times, the meritocratic state was ____ the early industrial market.
 - a. a bit weaker than
 - b. much stronger than
 - c. weaker than
 - d. much weaker than
 - e. unable to interact with

c: *though it retained considerable strength within its own sphere.*
12. The Confucian historians have tended to believe that at least late Ming was going through something resembling a crisis of civilization because
 - a. rulers mistreated Confucian officials.
 - b. meritocratic factions multiplied.
 - c. barbarians later conquered Ming.
 - d. of reasons “a,” “b” and “c.”
 - e. of reasons “a” and “b,” but not “c.”

d: *With no aristocracy to buffer them from meritocrats, the Ming emperors were tempted to behave badly toward meritocrats. The conquering “barbarians” were civilized Manchu descendants of the Ruzhen founders of the Jin Dynasty.*
13. The characteristic vice of an aristocracy is ____; of a meritocracy ____ of a plutocracy _____.
 - a. emulation, envy, jealousy
 - b. envy, jealousy, emulation
 - c. jealousy, envy, emulation
 - d. envy, emulation, jealousy
 - e. jealousy, emulation, envy

c: *The aristocrat is jealous of his own privileges; the meritocrat envies the prerogatives of others, especially other meritocrats; the plutocrat uses his wealth to emulate his betters. The latter may not even be a vice. (Is it a vice to “keep up with the Joneses” if the Joneses only use their goods to do good?)*
14. Healthy factionalism is ____; factionalism during a crisis of civilization is _____. Ming and recent American factionalism tends to have been _____.
 - a. issue-driven, issue-driven; issue-driven
 - b. issue-free, issue-free, issue-driven
 - c. issue-driven, issue-free; issue-free
 - d. issue-free, issue-driven, issue-driven
 - e. issue-free, issue-driven, issue-free

c: *The most pressing issue at such a time is the pure competition for offices that have become scarce relative to the supply of meritocrats. However no one dares acknowledge that issue.*
15. Ming’s foreign policy started out open and expansive, turned isolationist during the middle period, and reopened to the world during its last few generations.
 - a. True.
 - b. False.

a: *Meritocratic envy of overseas merchants potentially turning into plutocrats fueled mid-Ming isolation. Need for the tax revenue foreign trade generated forced official reopening in late Ming times.*
16. The Ming emperors ____ the Censorate.
 - a. became puppets of
 - b. eventually had to weaken
 - c. invented the supervisory function of
 - d. retained officials for life within
 - e. used only eunuchs in

b: *by limiting service in it to twelve years. The emperors gutted the Censorate to avoid becoming its puppets. The supervisory/co-ordinate function went back to ancient Qin.*

The eunuch secretariat took over some of the Censorate's snitching functions.

17. Ming's foreign policy meritocrats eventually made one fatal error: they missed the rise of the
- Qidan
 - Ruzhen
 - Manchus
 - Uighurs
 - Koreans
- c: They were too busy worrying about a possible return to China by the Mongols, who were preoccupied in building a pastoral-nomad second stage high civilization in Mongolia. The power of the Qidan and Uighurs had long since faded. The Manchus were descendants of the Ruzhen of Song times. The Koreans were an obedient tributary.*
18. The Ming meritocrats preferred getting jobs from the conquering Manchu aristocrats to sharing power with Chinese overseas merchant plutocrats in a small Southern Ming state.
- True.
 - False.
- a: They felt it legitimate to envy plutocrats, but not even the conquest kind of aristocrats.*
19. From Six Dynasties times up through late Tang, the dominant Chinese vision of Heaven was
- Confucianism.
 - Buddhism.
 - Daoism.
 - a hybrid of Confucianism and Daoism
 - an equal mixture of all three visions.
- b: The Confucian and Daoist visions had lost their clout by mid-Han times.*
20. A more or less equal balance was worked out between the Buddhist and Confucian visions of Heaven by the
- mid-8th century during Tang.
 - 10th century during Five Dynasties.
 - late 10th century during Northern Song.
 - the 12th century during Southern Song.
 - the 16th century during mid-Ming.
- d: The balanced synthesis was the work of the great Neo-Confucian Zhu Xi. It served as the re-presentation of Heaven until the end of the imperial era.*
21. The male literacy rate in the densely settled and commercialized eastern regions from Song through Ming and Qing times reached the level characteristic of early industrial economies elsewhere, ____.
- 10 percent.
 - 30 percent.
 - 50 percent.
 - 60 percent.
 - 90 percent.
- c: The female rate was only 10 percent. Note that I considered this and the early industrial revolution a sign of potential transcendence of crisis of civilization rather than a sign of crisis.*
22. The *shuyuan* of Ming China resembled
- our Kennedy School of Government.
 - 19th century German state universities.
 - 19th century U.S. small colleges.
 - "a," "b" and "c."
 - "a" and "b." but not "c."
- e: Those small colleges lacked links to the central government, and did not, like the first two, serve as refuges for out-of-power meritocratic factions. Note that I considered the presence of state-financed meritocratic schools a sign of crisis of civilization.*
23. The people sometimes labeled "tenant-serfs" by Western economic historians became ever more numerous during early modern and modern times in China.
- True.
 - False.
- b: They became ever less numerous (and never seem to have constituted an overtly state-recognized class under a single label). Servile labor could not easily be used for the skilled work required by early industrial age specialized agriculture.*
24. As for the status of women during early modern times,
- only ruling class women had bound feet
 - meritocratic family women's status was maintained.
 - ruling class women's status fell.
 - Manchu women also had bound feet.
 - Chinese could take Manchu wives.
- c: probably because (unlike women from meritocratic families) townswomen still had real work to do in the early industrial marketplace. Manchu women were forbidden to bind their feet perhaps in part to render them unattractive to Chinese men. Manchus could take Chinese concubines, but Chinese could not dally with Manchu ladies.*
25. The voyages of Zheng He early in the 15th century, the circumstances of their ending and why they were never renewed demonstrate that China was ____ 15th century Europe.
- still ahead of
 - giving up on political competition with
 - politically handicapped compared to
 - "a" and "c," but not "b."
 - "a," "b" and "c."
- e: China's ships were, and for another two centuries remained, bigger and more robust than Europe's, but Ming's sub-continent-dominating central government saw its interests most closely engaged by Zone A's supposed Mongol threat rather than by Zone C's "Japanese pirates." Even the arrival of the Europeans did not tempt the Chinese government back into overseas imperialism.*
26. Foreign trade sometimes helps move a civilization toward crisis, but may also bring in the new vision of Heaven required to surmount that crisis.
- True.
 - False.
- a: Of course it may not do the latter, but it did during the crisis of the first stage of high civilization, and shows signs of doing so again during the current planet-wide crisis of the second stage.*
27. The silver that allowed the markets of Ming China to reject the depreciated paper currency issued by the government mostly came from
- Japan and the New World
 - Western Asia
 - China's own mines.
 - Europe's silver mines.
 - the silver mines of Malaysia.
- a: West Asia had been shipping silver to China for over a millennium but never in enough volume to equilibrate the silver:gold exchange prices of the two regions. China produced little silver. Europe's silver production was dwarfed by the silver from the New World, which Europeans hastened to exchange for Chinese goods. Japan was beginning to export significant amounts of silver during Ming, but Malaysia did not. Later on, the Malay Peninsula was a big source of tin.*
28. As in the Eastern Mediterranean region, the commercial town appeared in China well before the sacred administrative city.
- True.
 - False.
- b: The commercial town shows up during antiquity in the Eastern Mediterranean, but probably not before the sacred administrative city there. In China, the sacred city shows up with the beginnings of early civilization, and the commercial town not until after the fall of Han.*
29. China's early industrial age hub and spoke transportation pattern allowed the Chinese economy to continue to substitute labor for capital goods for a rather longer time than northwestern Europe did, thereby delaying the onset of full industrialization.
- True.
 - False.
- a: though in the time scale of a broad survey course like this, the lag may not look very significant. Still, that may have delayed China's emergence from crisis of civilization.*
30. The governmental canal managers of Ming and Qing times
- slowly gave up on double locks.
 - substituted labor for capital.
 - demonstrated the market's decadence.
 - "a" and "b," but not "c."
 - "a," "b" and "c."
- d: The canals were built and were supposed to be maintained by the state, which preferred their use to transport tax grain over use of the coastal sea route which it could not so easily control or derive bribes from. Private merchants were reconciled to using the canals because they merely paid the marginal costs of operating them. If left to their own devices, they might well have preferred the coastal route. The government, however, was*

*unwilling to build a high seas fleet to protect
the coastal route.*