China's Commercial Revolution
1. historical overview
2. population shifts, cities and commerce
3. Neo-Confucianism and the Civil Service Exams
4. Chinese Literati
Early Imperial Period
ca. 200 BCE-600 CE

Sui dynasty 隋  581-618 BCE

Middle Imperial Period
ca. 600-1400 CE

Tang dynasty 唐  618-907 CE

Five Dynasties 五代  907-960 CE

Song dynasty 宋  960 - 1279 CE

Late Imperial Period
ca. 1400-1900 CE

Yuan dynasty 元  1279 - 1368 CE
Song dynasty
960 - 1279 CE

Kaifeng
Northern Song
----1127 CE----
Southern Song

Jurchen invasion

Jin Dynasty
1115–1234

Hangzhou
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Population density, 2 CE
Population density, 742 CE
Population density, ca. 10th c.
Champa rice
Population of China, 2 -1500 CE
Jiangnan region

Hangzhou Bay

Yangzhou

Nanjing

Wuhu

Lake Tai

Hangzhou

Grand Canal

Chang (Yangtze)

Ningbo

Shanghai

Hangzhou Bay
Grand Canal

Kaifeng

Hangzhou

Tanguts

Xixia

Liao

Khitans

Koryo

Northern Song

Yellow River

Bo Hai

Qingzhou

Jinling

Yi Jiantian

Yangzhou

Jianling

Jiangning

Shouchun

Kaifeng

Kaifeng

Tongchuan

Chengdu

Kuizhou

Tanzhou

Fuzhou

Guangzhou (Canton)

Hainan

South China Sea

Yellow Sea

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Early paper money used in China
ca. 13th c.
New Design for an Astronomical Clock Tower

Su Song (1020-1101)
Song-dynasty cargo ships with stern-mounted rudders

Guo Zhongshu (c. 910–977) *Traveling on the River in Clearing Snow* (detail) Ink on silk; early Song Dynasty, ca. 10th c.
Woodblock print manuscript
ca. 1095
Diagram of a royal city from ancient ritual texts
Kaifeng
N. Song capital
Spring Festival along the River, Zhang Zeduan, 12th c. handscroll
1, 2 = Alternative courses of Yellow River after 1194
Gu Hongzhong, *The Night Revels of Han Xizai* (detail)
Song dynasty (960-1279)
footbinding
*Lady Playing Go*, pigment on silk, h. 63 cm, 8th century, Tang. Astana cemetery, Turfan, Xinjiang.
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Neo-Confucianism

$\text{daoxue 道學} \ (\text{Learning of the Way})$

$\text{lixue 理學} \ (\text{Learning of Principle})$
matter-energy

qi 氣

principle, pattern

li 理

nature

xing 性

humaneness (or benevolence)

ren 仁
INTERNAL

“preserving the mind”
cun xin 存心

EXTERNAL

“investigation of things”
gewu 格物

“reverential attention”
jing 敬
Zhu Xi
1130–1200
Civil Service Examination System

*keju kaoshi* 科舉考試
Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty
Han Wudi 漢武帝
r. 140-87 BCE

Erudites of the Five Classics

Imperial University
Civil Service Examination System

3 levels of exam degrees:

• County, *xiu cai* 秀才 (flowering talent)
• Prefectural, *ju ren* 舉人 (recommended person)
• Capital, *jin shi* 進士 (presented scholar)
Provincial examination site
Guangzhou, 19th century
Replica of examination cells
Ming dynasty exam candidates viewing posted exam results attributed to Qiu Ying 仇英 (1494–1552).
Four Books

si shu 四書
Five Classics

Classic of Documents
Classic of Poetry
Classic of Changes
Record of Ritual
Spring and Autumn Annals

Four Books

Analects
Mencius
Great Learning
Doctrine of the Mean
Family Ritual

Zhu Xi
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literati

shi 士 or shidaifu 士大夫
corporate kin groups
clan
lineage

- Father
  - Eldest (1)
  - Second (2)
  - Younger (3)
  - Youngest (4)
antiquity

gu 古
wen
pattern
writing, literature, culture
cultural refinement
civil (vs. martial)
To the Charms of Nian nu: Meditation on the Past at Red Cliff
By Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101)

Eastward goes the great river,
Its waves have swept away
A thousand years of gallant men.
And they say
that west of the ancient castle here
is that Red cliff of Zhou Yu and the
Three Kingdoms.

A rocky tangle pierces sky,
leaping waves smash the shore,
surging snow in a thousand drifts.
Like a painting, these rivers and hills
where once so many bold men were.

I envision Zhou Yu back then,
just wedded to the younger Qiao,

his manly manner striking.
With black turban and feather fan
laughing in conversation
as embers flew from mast and prow
and the smoke was sinking away.

The spirit roams that long-ago land—
you will laugh at this sentimental me,
hair streaked with white before my time.
Yet this human world is like a dream
and I pour out my wine cup as offering
into the river's moonbeams.

(Owen, An Anthology of Chinese Literature, 577–78)
Wu Yuanzhi (active late 12th c.). *Su Dongpo Visiting the Red Cliff.* Handscroll, ink on paper, h. 50.8 cm. Before 1228. National Palace Museum, Taipei.
Su Shi (aka Su Dongpo) sitting in boat composing the poem *Red Cliff*. Detail from Wu Yuanzhi (active late 12th c.) *Su Dongpo Visiting the Red Cliff.*