

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	CC2C23/CC2C23P
Subject Title	Court and Palace: Power and Intrigue in Imperial China
Credit Value	3
Level	2
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Exclusion subjects for CC2C23: CC2C23P and CC219 Exclusion subjects for CC2C23P: CC2C23 and CC219
Objectives	The subject aims at introducing students to the two core elements in politics, namely power and intrigue, which led to coups, purges and mutinies that marked the darkest side of politics in imperial China. It is widely adapted and made into movies and TV series nowadays that most of these tragedies were in fact taken place inside and outside the palaces and courts of imperial China in the past two thousand years. In this regards, the subject also aims at helping students to know how to distinguish between history and literature of the topics such as court politics and intrigues which they are interesting to know.
Intended Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: (a) know the political implication of the location and architectural design of the court and palace of respective dynasties of imperial China; (b) understand the roles of the various players, including the emperors, the palace women, the imperial-in-laws, the eunuchs, the palace troops and the courtiers, inside and outside the court and the palace; (c) comprehend why and how power struggles and political intrigues were inevitable in imperial China; (d) grasp the wisdom of the statesman and thinkers in imperial China in handling these enduring problems; (e) fulfill the Chinese Writing and Reading Requirements in Chinese session.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Court and Palace: location, architectural design and its political implication 2. Emperor and the Prime Minister: Head of State acted with/against Chief Executive of the state 3. Emperor and the Crown Prince: Succession problem and the root of palace intrigues 4. The Palace Women, Imperial-in-laws and the court Politics 5. Eunuchs in power: Servants who usurped the imperial power 6. Palace Troops: Force that engineered coups and mutinies 7. Courtiers and court politics: Factionalism among the civilian officials

	<p>8. Scholars vs Soldiers: Power struggle between the Courtiers and the Army Commanders</p> <p>9. Causes of seemingly inevitable and enduring power struggle and intrigues: Institutional shortcomings of autocratic rule in Imperial China</p> <p>10. Criticism of the Institution of Emperor: Origin of power struggle and intrigues in imperial China</p> <p>11. Ghosts of court politics in Contemporary China: From Chiang Kai-sek to Mao Zedong</p>																																																						
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p>	<p>Selected video segments of related topics will be shown during lectures to arouse the learning interest of the students. It will be followed by a powerpoint aided presentation for core ideas and key facts of the said topic. For each lecture, students are required to read assigned materials including classical texts and related works of contemporary scholars.</p> <p>To enhance students' self-study abilities, they are required to make an oral presentation on a team basis of assigned topics during tutorials. Consultations are provided by the instructor to help the students to prepare their presentations in particular, and to understand the subject matter in general.</p> <p>Museum visits with relevant themes will be organized during the semester. If resources allow, field study to palaces and government offices crossed the border will be organized, probably during the term-break period, on an optional basis, for students to better understand the subject matters.</p>																																																						
<p>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="5">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> <th>e</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Quizzes</td> <td>30%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Tutorial Presentation</td> <td>20%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Term Paper</td> <td>50%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100 %</td> <td colspan="5"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)					a	b	c	d	e	1. Quizzes	30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								2. Tutorial Presentation	20%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3. Term Paper	50%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								Total	100 %					
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion 	6 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing 	36 Hrs
	Total student study effort	123 Hrs.
Reading List and References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jonathan Spence, <i>Emperor of China: Self-portrait of K'ang Hsi</i>, London: Jonathan Cape, 1974. 2. Silas H. L. Wu, <i>Passage to Power: K'ang-hsi and his heir apparent, 1661-1772</i>, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979. (CR) 吳秀良(著), 張震久等(譯), 《康熙朝儲位鬥爭記實》(北京: 中國社會科學出版社, 1988) 3. 黃仁宇, 《萬曆十五年》, (北京: 中華書局, 1982) 4. 楊聯陞, 《國史探微》(臺北: 聯經出版事業公司, 1983) 5. Beatrice S. Bartlett, <i>Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch'ing China, 1723-1820</i>, Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1991. 6. 李治安等, 《中國古代官僚政治》(北京: 書目文獻出版社, 1993) 7. 徐連達, 《中國皇帝制度》(廣州: 廣東教育出版社, 1996) 8. 杜婉言, 《中國宦官史》(臺北: 文津出版社, 1996) 9. 韋慶遠, 《張居正和明代中後期政局》(廣州: 廣東高等教育出版社, 1999) 10. 馮佐哲, 《清史與戲說影視劇》(北京: 台海出版社, 2004) 11. 周良霄, 《皇帝與皇權》(修訂本)(上海: 上海古籍出版社, 2006) (CR) 12. 朱子彥, 《多維視角下的皇權政治》(上海: 上海人民出版社, 2007) 13. 白鋼, 《中國皇帝》(北京: 社會科學文獻出版社, 2008 修訂本) 14. 韋慶遠(編), 《中國政治制度史》(增訂本), (北京: 中國人民大學出版社, 2005) 15. 衛廣來, 《漢魏晉皇權嬗代》, (太原: 書海出版社, 2002) 16. 田餘慶: 《拓跋史探》(北京: 三聯書店, 2003) 17. 蒙曼, 《唐代前期北衙禁軍制度研究》(北京: 中央民族大學出版社, 2005) 18. 周良霄, 《皇帝與皇權》(修訂本)(上海: 上海古籍出版社, 2006) 19. Patricia Buckley Ebrey(ed.), <i>Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics</i>, Cambridge(Massachusetts): Harvard University Press, 2006. 20. 宋其蕤, 《北魏女主論》(北京: 中國社會科學出版社, 2006) 21. 王守棟, 《唐代宦官政治》(北京: 中國社會科學出版社, 2009) (CR) 22. 金承藝, 《清朝帝位之爭史事考》(北京: 中華書局, 2010) 	