

cambridge history of chinese literature

Cambridge History of Chinese Literature: A Journey Through Time and Texts

cambridge history of chinese literature serves as an invaluable gateway into one of the world's richest and most enduring literary traditions. For anyone curious about the evolution of Chinese storytelling, poetry, drama, and prose, this monumental work offers a scholarly yet accessible exploration that traces the intricate tapestry of Chinese writing from its earliest origins to the modern era. Whether you are a student, a researcher, or simply a literature enthusiast, understanding the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature can illuminate the cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts that have shaped Chinese literature over millennia.

Understanding the Scope of the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature is not just a simple anthology or a chronological list of famous works. Instead, it is a comprehensive academic series that presents a deep dive into the historical development of Chinese literature, highlighting key genres, influential authors, and shifting literary movements. It covers a vast period—from ancient classical texts like the **Shijing** (Book of Songs) and early philosophical writings, through the flourishing poetry of the Tang dynasty, to the complex novels of the Ming and Qing periods, and into contemporary literary forms.

One of the standout features of this history is its interdisciplinary approach. It doesn't treat literature as isolated art but rather places it within the broader social, political, and cultural changes that influenced its creation and reception. This method enriches readers' understanding by showing how Chinese literature reflects and shapes the identity and values of its people across time.

The Multi-Volume Structure and Editorial Excellence

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature is typically presented in multiple volumes, each focusing on different historical periods or thematic elements. Each volume is edited by leading scholars in Chinese literary studies, ensuring authoritative and up-to-date research. The editorial teams bring together essays by experts who specialize in various genres like poetry, prose, drama, and fiction, as well as studies on vernacular literature and minority voices.

This structure allows readers to explore not only the canonical masterpieces but also lesser-known texts and marginalized narratives, offering a more inclusive picture of the literary landscape. The essays often include detailed analyses of language, style, and symbolism, making the work a treasure trove for anyone

interested in literary criticism or comparative literature.

Exploring Key Periods in Chinese Literary History Through the Cambridge Lens

To appreciate the richness of Chinese literature, it helps to look at how the Cambridge History presents its evolution across different dynasties and cultural epochs.

Ancient Foundations: From Oracle Bones to Confucian Classics

The journey begins with the earliest recorded literature, including inscriptions on oracle bones and bronze vessels, which provide insight into the spiritual and ritual life of ancient China. The Cambridge History explores how these early texts laid the groundwork for later philosophical and poetic traditions. Confucian classics like the *Analects* and *Mencius* are examined not only as ethical treatises but also as literary works that influenced narrative and didactic forms for centuries.

The Flourishing of Poetry in the Tang Dynasty

No discussion of Chinese literature is complete without the Tang dynasty, often considered the golden age of Chinese poetry. Through the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature, readers gain a nuanced understanding of poets like Li Bai, Du Fu, and Wang Wei, whose works capture the beauty, philosophy, and political turmoil of their times. The volume on this period delves into the formal innovations and thematic diversity that characterize Tang poetry, highlighting its impact on subsequent generations of writers.

Prose and Fiction from the Song to Qing Dynasties

Chinese prose evolved significantly during the Song dynasty, with the rise of essays, historical writings, and vernacular storytelling. The Cambridge History thoroughly investigates this shift, emphasizing the growing importance of prose in everyday life and its role in shaping public discourse. Moving into the Ming and Qing dynasties, the series pays close attention to the development of the Chinese novel, spotlighting classics like *Journey to the West*, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, and *Water Margin*. These works offer rich narratives filled with social critique, philosophical insight, and cultural detail, and their analysis in the Cambridge History provides readers with a deeper appreciation of their complexity and enduring relevance.

Why the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature Matters Today

In a world increasingly interested in global perspectives, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature stands out by bridging linguistic and cultural gaps. It introduces international audiences to literary traditions that are often underrepresented or misunderstood in Western academia. By contextualizing Chinese literature within its historical and social frameworks, it fosters cross-cultural dialogue and enriches comparative literary studies.

Moreover, the Cambridge History is a crucial resource for translators and educators, offering detailed background information that enhances the accuracy and sensitivity of literary interpretation. For students learning classical Chinese or exploring modern Chinese literature, it provides a roadmap that anchors their studies in historical depth.

Insights for Modern Readers and Researchers

Engaging with the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature not only broadens knowledge but also sharpens critical reading skills. The detailed discussions on literary forms—such as shi poetry, ci lyric, and zaju drama—equip readers to recognize genre conventions and innovations. Furthermore, understanding the historical contexts behind literary works allows one to appreciate the subtle ways authors responded to political upheavals, philosophical shifts, and cultural transformations.

For researchers, the Cambridge History offers extensive bibliographies and references that open pathways to further study. It is particularly useful for those interested in thematic research, such as gender roles in literature, the influence of Buddhism and Daoism, or the interplay between oral and written traditions.

Diving Deeper: How to Make the Most of the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature

Given its scholarly density, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature can feel overwhelming to newcomers. Here are some tips to navigate and benefit from this rich resource:

- **Start with a specific era or genre:** Choose a volume or chapter that aligns with your interest, whether it's Tang poetry or Ming fiction. This focused approach helps build foundational knowledge before tackling broader themes.

- **Take notes on key historical events:** Keeping track of the political and cultural background enhances your understanding of why certain literary trends emerged.
- **Use the bibliographies:** Follow up on recommended readings to deepen your exploration and discover primary texts or critical essays.
- **Compare translations:** Reading multiple translations of the same poem or story can reveal different interpretive angles and enrich your appreciation.
- **Engage with online lectures or discussions:** Many universities and literary organizations offer supplemental content related to Chinese literature that complements the Cambridge History.

By approaching the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature as both a reference and a narrative journey, readers can witness the vibrant evolution of Chinese literary art and its continuing influence on global culture.

Whether you are intrigued by the lyrical beauty of ancient poetry, the intricate plots of classical novels, or the vibrant voices of modern writers, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature invites you to explore a literary heritage that continues to inspire and captivate across centuries. Its careful scholarship, rich contextualization, and wide-ranging coverage make it an indispensable companion for anyone eager to understand the heart and soul of Chinese literary expression.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature?

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature is a comprehensive, multi-volume scholarly work that provides an authoritative overview of Chinese literary history from ancient times to the modern era, published by Cambridge University Press.

Who are the editors of the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature?

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature is edited by prominent scholars such as Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen, among others, who are experts in Chinese literary studies.

What time periods does the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature

cover?

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature covers a wide range of periods, including classical, medieval, and modern Chinese literature, tracing developments from earliest recorded texts to contemporary works.

How does the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature contribute to understanding Chinese culture?

By providing detailed analyses of literary texts, authors, and historical contexts, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature offers deep insights into Chinese culture, philosophy, social values, and historical changes reflected through literature.

Where can I access or purchase the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature?

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature can be accessed through academic libraries, purchased via Cambridge University Press's official website, or found on major book retailers like Amazon and other online bookstores.

Additional Resources

Cambridge History of Chinese Literature: An Authoritative Exploration of a Millennial-Old Tradition

cambridge history of chinese literature stands as a landmark scholarly work that meticulously charts the vast and intricate evolution of Chinese literary traditions. This expansive multi-volume series, published by Cambridge University Press, aims to provide an unparalleled academic investigation into one of the world's oldest continuous literary cultures. Through a comprehensive, chronological, and thematic analysis, it offers critical insights into the historical trajectories, cultural contexts, and aesthetic developments that have shaped Chinese literature from antiquity to the modern era.

Unpacking the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature is not merely a compilation of literary histories; it is a rigorous academic endeavor that integrates philological expertise, literary criticism, and cultural history. Edited by eminent scholars in the field, the volumes collectively represent a collaboration of international sinologists, historians, and literary analysts. The project's ambition is to fill longstanding gaps in Western scholarship on Chinese literature by presenting a nuanced and contextualized narrative that foregrounds indigenous perspectives alongside global literary developments.

One of the defining characteristics of the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature is its commitment to chronological breadth and thematic depth. The coverage spans from early oral traditions, classical poetry, and philosophical texts to vernacular fiction, drama, and contemporary literary movements. This extensive scope allows readers and researchers to trace continuity and transformation across dynasties, reflecting political shifts, social upheavals, and evolving aesthetic norms.

Historical Scope and Structure

The series is typically divided into multiple volumes, each dedicated to distinct historical periods or literary genres:

- **Ancient and Classical Literature:** Explores foundational texts such as the "Shijing" (Book of Songs), Confucian classics, and Daoist writings, examining their influence on later literary forms.
- **Medieval and Imperial Era:** Delves into Tang poetry, Song ci lyricism, and the rise of prose narratives, highlighting how literature interacted with imperial patronage and bureaucratic culture.
- **Late Imperial to Republican Period:** Focuses on the flourishing of vernacular literature, drama, and print culture, particularly during the Ming and Qing dynasties.
- **Modern and Contemporary Literature:** Analyzes the impact of Western literary forms, political ideologies, and globalization on 20th and 21st-century Chinese writing.

This chronological segmentation provides a framework that facilitates both focused study and comparative analysis, enabling users of the series to contextualize literary works within broader historical and cultural milieus.

Scholarly Contributions and Methodology

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature employs a multidisciplinary methodology that combines textual analysis, historical research, and literary theory. Contributors engage with primary sources in classical Chinese, vernacular dialects, and modern standard Chinese, enhancing the accessibility and authenticity of the scholarship. Moreover, the series incorporates archaeological findings, manuscript studies, and reception histories, offering a holistic approach that transcends traditional literary history.

Significantly, the editorial stance emphasizes the interconnectedness of literature with philosophy, religion, politics, and society. Essays often explore how Confucian ethics, Buddhist thought, or Daoist aesthetics

inform literary production. Likewise, the influence of imperial examinations, censorship, and patronage systems on authorship and genre development is critically examined. This integrative perspective enriches the understanding of Chinese literature as a living cultural phenomenon rather than a static canon.

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature in Comparison

When compared with other literary historiographies, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature distinguishes itself through its comprehensive scope and scholarly rigor. Unlike earlier compendia that may have focused narrowly on classical poetry or modern fiction, this series bridges temporal and thematic divides. Its international editorial team also ensures diverse analytical lenses, including postcolonial theory, gender studies, and comparative literature frameworks, which are sometimes underrepresented in traditional Sinology.

In contrast to some regional or language-specific histories, the Cambridge History incorporates extensive cross-cultural perspectives, situating Chinese literature within East Asian literary networks and global literary currents. This comparative approach enhances its relevance for scholars interested in transnational literary dynamics and intercultural exchanges.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature lie in its authoritative scholarship, exhaustive coverage, and methodological sophistication. It serves as an indispensable reference for academics, graduate students, and libraries worldwide. The rich bibliographies and critical essays facilitate further research and pedagogical use.

However, the series' density and academic orientation can pose challenges for non-specialist readers. The extensive use of classical Chinese terminology and the depth of critical discourse require a certain level of prior knowledge or scholarly background. Additionally, while the volumes strive for inclusivity, some critics note that emerging digital humanities approaches and contemporary popular culture phenomena receive comparatively less attention.

Impact and Reception in the Academic Community

Since its publication, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature has been widely recognized as a seminal contribution to the field of Chinese studies. It has catalyzed new research agendas and prompted reassessments of canonical texts and overlooked genres alike. University curricula have integrated the series into courses on Chinese literature, history, and comparative literature.

The series' influence extends beyond academia; translators, literary critics, and cultural mediators have drawn upon its insights to enhance the global appreciation of Chinese literary heritage. By offering a meticulously researched and context-rich foundation, the Cambridge History supports efforts to diversify literary canons and promote intercultural dialogue.

Future Directions and Continuing Scholarship

Ongoing scholarship inspired by the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature continues to explore underrepresented voices, such as women writers, ethnic minorities, and diasporic authors. Additionally, digital archives and computational analysis tools are increasingly being employed to complement traditional literary historiography, promising fresh perspectives on textual transmission and readership patterns.

The Cambridge History series itself may evolve to incorporate supplementary volumes or digital companion resources, addressing emerging trends and methodological innovations. Such developments will likely enhance its accessibility and relevance for a broader audience, including independent scholars and general readers interested in Chinese culture.

In sum, the Cambridge History of Chinese Literature remains a touchstone for understanding China's literary past and present. Its comprehensive and nuanced treatment fosters a deeper appreciation of how literature both reflects and shapes the complexities of Chinese civilization across centuries.

Cambridge History Of Chinese Literature

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recurrent, systematic features, outcomes of the way that language and literature are at once the products of major change and its agents. Cohen tracks these features from ancient times to the present, distinguishing five main overlapping stages. Within that framework, he shows that European literatures ongoing internal and external relationships are most visible at the level of form rather than of thematic statement or mimetic representation. European literature emerges from world literature before the birth of Europe -- during antiquity, whose Classical languages are the heirs to the complex heritage of Afro-Eurasia. This legacy is later transmitted by Latin to the various vernaculars. The uniqueness of the process lies in the gradual displacement of the learned language by the vernacular, long dominated by Romance literatures. That development subsequently informs the second crucial differentiating dimension of European literature: the multicontinental expansion of its languages and characteristic genres, especially the novel, beginning in the Renaissance. This expansion ultimately results in the reintegration of European literature into world literature and thus in the creation of today's global literary system. The distinctiveness of European literature is to be found in these interrelated trajectories.

cambridge history of chinese literature: A Cultural History of Modern Chinese Literature Fuhui Wu, Dewei Wang, 2020 Since it focuses on the development of modern Chinese literature, it shall be open-ended and ever extending, and nobody has the right to put an end to it. Written as a single-volume literary history, and with illustrations added, the space is quite limited. And since scholars have already expanded the literary history of this period into a much broader one, the author must find some key points that may best represent each period. In this book, he consciously cut down narratives about authors and tried not to cover all their literary works, but give a detailed analysis of typical representative works, in which process the lack and neglect of some major authors and works are unavoidable. Maybe this is a writing method worth trying, and this book may provide both positive and negative experience for future scholars who try to write ever more concise and focused literary histories--

cambridge history of chinese literature: Historical Dictionary of Medieval China Victor Cunrui Xiong, 2017-04-06 The crucial period of Chinese history, 168-979, falls naturally into contrasting phases. The first phase, also known as that of 'early medieval China,' is an age of political decentralization. Following the breakup of the Han empire, China was plunged into civil war and fragmentation and stayed divided for nearly four centuries. The second phase started in 589, during the Sui dynasty, when China was once again brought under a single government. Under the Sui, the bureaucracy was revitalized, the military strengthened, and the taxation system reformed. The fall of the Sui in 618 gave way to the even stronger Tang dynasty, which represents an apogee of traditional Chinese civilization. Inheriting all the great institutions developed under the Sui, the Tang made great achievements in poetry, painting, music, and architecture. The An Lushan rebellion, which also took place during Tang rule, brought about far-reaching changes in the socioeconomic, political, and military arenas. What transpired in the second half of the Tang and the ensuing Five Dynasties provided the foundation for the next age of late imperial China. This second edition of Historical Dictionary of Medieval China contains a chronology, an introduction, and an extensive bibliography. The dictionary section has over 1000 cross-referenced entries on historical figure. It expands on existing thematic entries, and adds a number of new ones with substantial content, including those on nobility, art, architecture, archaeology, economy, agriculture, money, population, cities, literature, historiography, military, religion, Persia, India, Japan, Korea, Arabs, and Byzantium, among others. This book is an excellent access point for students, researchers, and anyone wanting to know more about medieval China.

cambridge history of chinese literature: Literary History in and beyond China, 2024-09-09 Literary History in and beyond China: Reading Text and World explores the idea of literary history across the long span of the Chinese tradition. Although much scholarship on Chinese literature may be characterized as doing the work of literary history, there has been little theoretical engagement with received literary historical categories and assumptions, with how literary historical judgments are formed, and with what it means to do literary history in the first place. The present collection of

essays addresses these questions from perspectives emerging both from within the tradition and from without, examining the anthological histories that shape the concept of a particular genre, the interpretive positions that impel our aesthetic judgments, the conceptual categories that determine how literary history is framed, and the history of literary historiography itself. As such, the essays collectively consider what it means to think through the framework of literary history, what literary history affords or omits, and what needs to be theorized in terms of literary history's constraints and possibilities.

cambridge history of chinese literature: Geschichte des modernen China Klaus Mühlhahn, 2021-05-13 CHINAS WEG IN DIE MODERNE - KLAUS MÜHLHAHNS UMFASSENDE DARSTELLUNG Selbst elementare Kenntnisse der Geschichte Chinas sind hierzulande noch immer Mangelware. Klaus Mühlhahn beschreibt in seiner umfassenden Darstellung, wie sehr das Land auf seinem Weg von der gedemütigten Halbkolonie zur globalen Supermacht unserer Tage von der eigenen Vergangenheit geprägt wurde. Denn Chinas holpriger Weg in die Moderne ist nicht nur als eine Aufholjagd gegenüber dem Westen zu verstehen, sondern als ein großes Ringen um eine eigenständige chinesische Moderne. Wer Chinas phänomenalen Aufstieg, seine Widersprüche und Gegensätze begreifen will, der kommt an diesem grundlegenden Werk nicht vorbei. Chinas Geschichte seit dem späten 17. Jahrhundert ist durchzogen von Krisen, Reformen, Revolutionen und Kriegen. Zugleich aber hat das Land stets eine hohe Widerstandsfähigkeit und Beharrlichkeit bewiesen. Selbst im Jahrhundert der Erniedrigung, als europäische Kolonialmächte das Sagen hatten, konnte es eine halbsouveräne Stellung behaupten. Klaus Mühlhahn schildert in seinem großen Buch auf dem neuesten Stand der Forschung Chinas Geschichte von der Qing- Dynastie bis zu Xi Jinping und nimmt dabei von der Politik über die Gesellschaft bis zur Wirtschaft und Umwelt alle Felder detailliert in den Blick. Der Schlüssel seiner Interpretation sind die chinesischen Institutionen, die seit Konfuzius über alle Regime und Machthaber hinweg auf die jeweiligen Umstände reagiert und sie zugleich mit ihrem enormen Reichtum an Ideen und Modellen bis in die heutige Gegenwart mitgestaltet haben. 100 Jahre Kommunistische Partei Chinas am 23. Juli 2021 Das neue Standardwerk zur modernen Geschichte Chinas Von der gedemütigten Halbkolonie zur globalen Supermacht – Chinas Weg in die Moderne

cambridge history of chinese literature: Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan Gunter Schubert, 2024-12-31 This fully revised 2nd edition of the Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan provides a comprehensive overview of both contemporary Taiwan and the Taiwan studies field. Written by an international team of Taiwan experts, the Handbook includes major topics in Taiwanese history, domestic politics, political economy, society, culture, and international relations. Each chapter summarises the major findings in the field and highlights long-term trends, recent observations, and potential future developments in Taiwan, revealing its long journey from a frontier island to a highly industrialised country struggling for international recognition. Up-to-date, interdisciplinary, and academically rigorous, the Handbook offers the reader an accessible and fascinating insight into contemporary Taiwan and will be of interest to students, academics, and policymakers with an interest in all things Taiwan.

cambridge history of chinese literature: *Lives and Deaths of Werther* Johannes Kaminski, 2023-12-21 An investigation of how interpretations, translations, and literary adaptations of Goethe's novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* have left their mark on the original text. Kaminski situates the text's legacy among Italian, French, Chinese, and Japanese writers, and explores the dynamics of world literature.

cambridge history of chinese literature: *Reading Du Fu* Xiaofei Tian, 2020-06-23 This is the first collection of essays in English, contributed by well-known experts of Chinese literature as well as scholars of a younger generation, dedicated to the poetry of Du Fu, commonly regarded as the greatest Chinese poet. These essays are engaged in historically nuanced close reading of Du Fu's poems, both canonical and less known, from new angles and in various contexts, and discuss a series of critical issues, including the local and the imperial; the body politic and the individual body; poetry and geography; perspectives on the complicated relation of religion and literature;

materiality and contemporary reception of Du Fu; poetry and visual art; and tradition and modernity. Many of the poems discussed in this book were written in the backwater town of Kuizhou, far from Du Fu's earlier residence in the capital city Chang'an, at a time when the Tang dynasty was going through devastating social and political disturbances. The authors contend that Du Fu's isolation from the elite literary establishments allowed him to become a pioneer who introduced a new order to the Chinese poetic discourse. However, his attention to details in everyday reality, his preoccupation with domestic life and the larger issues embroiled in it, his humor, and his ability to surprise tend to be obscured by the clichéd image of the "poet sage" and "poet historian"—an image this collection of essays successfully complicates. "The scholarship that went into this collection of essays is extremely solid and fills an important gap in the study of China's greatest poet Du Fu. The convincing and compelling collection of articles from distinguished scholars rereads Du Fu from fresh and different perspectives and informs the reader about the amazing power of intertextuality." —Kang-I Sun Chang, Yale University "This rich and multilayered collection of essays about Du Fu, all written by major scholars, presents research of the highest quality and originality that succeeds most impressively in enriching and deepening our knowledge and appreciation of this great poet. This volume has the potential to engender a new stage of Du Fu studies." —Antje Richter, University of Colorado, Boulder

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cambridge history of chinese literature: Papier Alexander Monroe, 2015-10-12 Die faszinierende Kulturgeschichte des Papiers Ob Bibel, Gemälde, Kaffeebecher, Toilettenpapier, Pamphlet oder Bestseller, sie alle wären ohne Papier nicht denkbar. Seit vor ungefähr 2000 Jahren im China der Han-Dynastie die Erfolgsstory des Papiers begann, wurde es zum herausragenden Übermittler für Wissen, Ideen und Information – billig, leicht zu transportieren, für jeden erreichbar. Doch geht diese einzigartige Geschichte der Verbreitung von Gedanken, Überzeugungen und Erkenntnissen mit der Digitalisierung zu Ende? Ist das Zeitalter des Papiers vorbei? Alexander Monroe folgt den Spuren des Papiers von Asien nach Europa, wo es erst im 13. Jahrhundert ankommt und die Basis schafft für Aufklärung, Veränderung, Bildung. Milliarden Leser halten heute bedrucktes Papier in der Hand, und in vielen Regionen der Erde ist es immer noch das machtvollste Informationsmedium, trotz Radio, Fernsehen, und digitalen Medien.

cambridge history of chinese literature: Global Science Fiction Gary Westfahl, 2025-06-18 Science fiction represents a diverse community of writers and readers that spans the entire world. This collection provides a global tour of the genre, with essays about Latin American, European, African, Arabic, Indian, Japanese, and Chinese science fiction providing insights about how writers around the world have explored and reinvigorated the genre. Essays by prominent critics from five continents inform about particular cultures and analyze representative texts by authors such as Tobias S. Buckell, Lourenço Mutarelli, Stanislaw Lem, Masande Ntshanga, Tawfiq Al-Hakim, Anil Menon, and Cixin Liu. The contributing scholars examine how national experiences have shaped

these narratives, which often differ strikingly from Anglo-American science fiction. An introductory survey of foreign-language science fiction in the United States endeavors to explain why so many of these texts have remained unknown to Anglophone readers. An extensive bibliography lists numerous resources for further study of science fiction from various parts of the world.

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cambridge history of chinese literature: The Politics of Higher Education Chu Ming-kin, 2020-01-02 The Politics of Higher Education: The Imperial University in Northern Song China uses the history of the Imperial University of the Northern Song to show the limits of the Song emperors' powers. At the time, the university played an increasingly dominant role in selecting government officials. This role somehow curtailed the authority of the Song emperors, who did not possess absolute power and, more often than not, found their actions to be constrained by the institution. The nomination mechanism left room for political maneuvering and stakeholders—from emperors to scholar-officials—tried to influence the process. Hence, power struggles among successive emperors trying to assert their imperial authority ensued. Demands for greater autonomy by officials were, for example, unceasing. Chu Ming-kin shows that the road to autocracy was anything but linear. In fact, during the Northern Song dynasty, competition and compromises over diverse agendas constantly altered the political landscape. "The scholarship of this book is exceptionally sound. Chu's command of both primary and secondary sources is breathtaking in its scope. This will be the standard treatment of Northern Song higher education for many years to come. The pages that describe how the university functioned as a cynical vehicle to facilitate upper class entry into the jinshi system are fascinating and an important contribution to the larger scholarship on Song culture." —Charles Hartman, University at Albany, State University of New York "This work highlights in arresting detail a heretofore neglected area of higher education under the Northern Song, the Directorate of Higher Education, with particular focus on student activism at the peak of the institution's political clout. There is nothing comparable either in China or the Western World. The book is ambitious in the use of sources, while nuanced in interpreting them. In sum, it is a work of rare erudition, particularly for a young scholar." —Richard L. Davis, National Taiwan University

cambridge history of chinese literature: Western Literature in China and the Translation of a Nation S. Qi, 2012-03-12 This book studies the reception history of Western literature in China from the 1840s to the present. Qi explores the socio-historical contexts and the contours of how Western literature was introduced, mostly through translation and assesses its transformative impact in the cultural, literary as well as sociopolitical life of modern China.

cambridge history of chinese literature: Approaches to Teaching The Plum in the Golden Vase (The Golden Lotus) Andrew Schonebaum, 2022-07-22 Offers techniques for teaching the Ming Dynasty novel Jin Ping Mei (The Plum in the Golden Vase) in undergraduate and graduate classrooms, including considerations of translation, Buddhism, Chinese religion, gender, sexual relations, domestic abuse, involuntary servitude, politics, legal culture, games, obscenity, material culture, genre, intertextuality, and reception history.

cambridge history of chinese literature: Documentation and Argument in Early China Dirk Meyer, 2021-07-05 This study uncovers the traditions behind the formative Classic Shàngshū (Venerated Documents). It is the first to establish these traditions—"Shū" (Documents)—as a historically evolving practice of thought-production. By focusing on the literary form of the argument, it interprets the "Shū" as fluid text material that embodies the ever-changing cultural capital of projected conceptual communities. By showing how these communities actualised the "Shū" according to their changing visions of history and evolving group interests, the study establishes that by the Warring States period (ca. 453-221 BC) the "Shū" had become a literary genre employed by diverse groups to legitimize their own arguments. Through forms of textual

performance, the “Shū” gave even peripheral communities the means to participate in political discourse by conferring their ideas with ancient authority. Analysing this dynamic environment of socio-political and philosophical change, this study speaks to the Early China field, as well as to those interested in meaning production and foundational text formation more widely.

cambridge history of chinese literature: *Early Medieval China* Wendy Swartz, Robert Ford Campany, Yang Lu, Jessey Choo, 2014-03-11 This innovative sourcebook builds a dynamic understanding of China's early medieval period (220–589) through an original selection and arrangement of literary, historical, religious, and critical texts. A tumultuous and formative era, these centuries saw the longest stretch of political fragmentation in China's imperial history, resulting in new ethnic configurations, the rise of powerful clans, and a pervasive divide between north and south. Deploying thematic categories, the editors sketch the period in a novel way for students and, by featuring many texts translated into English for the first time, recast the era for specialists. Thematic topics include regional definitions and tensions, governing mechanisms and social reality, ideas of self and other, relations with the unseen world, everyday life, and cultural concepts. Within each section, the editors and translators introduce the selected texts and provide critical commentary on their historical significance, along with suggestions for further reading and research.

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