



**THE TEACHING COMPANY**

SHOPPING CART   YOUR ACCOUNT   GIFT CERTIFICATES   LIBRARIES   HELP

1-800-TEACH-12 (1-800-832-2412)

---

HOME   COURSES   PROFESSORS   OUR GUARANTEE   ABOUT US   FAQ   ON SALE

SEARCH:  Go

---


**BROWSE COURSES BY SUBJECT:**

- BUSINESS & ECONOMICS
- FINE ARTS & MUSIC
- HISTORY - ANCIENT & MEDIEVAL
- HISTORY - MODERN
- LITERATURE & ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- PHILOSOPHY & INTELLECTUAL HISTORY
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE & MATHEMATICS
- SOCIAL SCIENCES

"Pure intellectual stimulation that can be popped into the [video or audio player] anytime."

—Harvard Magazine

[READ OTHER TESTIMONIALS >](#)



## From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History

(36 lectures, 30 minutes/lecture)  
Course No. 8320

Taught by **Kenneth J. Hammond**  
New Mexico State University  
Ph.D., Harvard University

**I**n a world growing increasingly smaller, China still seems a faraway and exotic land, with secrets and mysteries of ages past, its history and intentions veiled from most Westerners.

Yet behind that veil lies one of the most amazing civilizations the world has ever known.

For most of its 5,000-year existence, China has been the largest, most populous, wealthiest, and mightiest nation on Earth. And for us as Westerners, it is essential to understand where China has been in order to anticipate its future. This course answers this need by delivering a comprehensive political and historical overview of one of the most fascinating and complex countries in world history.

**A Civilization so Advanced ...**

- China had a theory of social contract, the "Mandate of Heaven," in place by 1500 B.C.E., 3,000 years before Western philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke.
- It had seen the rule of three classical dynasties before 200 B.C.E.
- It developed agriculture and writing independently of outside influence.
- In Confucius and Laozi—among others—it had philosophers of the Axial Age as influential as were Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle in ancient Greece.
- While the Roman Empire was at its zenith, China's Han dynasty ruled over an empire superior in almost every measurable way, including technological advancement.

**... Its Wonders Were Thought to Be Lies**

The veil that hides China's extraordinary past from many of us today is far from a new one. When Marco Polo wrote of the wonders he had seen over his 20 years in China, most of his fellow Venetians could not accept his descriptions of a civilization that rivaled their own. They contemptuously referred to the book he wrote about his adventures as "The Millions"—the number of lies they believed marched across its pages. Those Venetians had chosen to turn away from a precious opportunity to glimpse China's wonders and better understand the world.

Every lecture of From Yao to Mao: 5000 Years of Chinese History may seem like a journey across a virgin landscape, for the ground it covers has been largely unexplored in the history courses most of us in the West have taken.

You learn about:

- The powerful dynasties that ruled China for centuries
- The philosophical and religious foundations—particularly Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism—that have influenced every iteration of Chinese thought
- The larger-than-life personalities, from both inside and outside its borders, of those who

**COURSE FORMATS** SALE [About Sale Prices >](#)

DVD	\$374.95 <del>\$99.95</del>	<a href="#">ADD TO CART</a>
AUDIO CD	\$269.95 <del>\$69.95</del>	<a href="#">ADD TO CART</a>
AUDIO DOWNLOAD	\$199.95 <del>\$49.95</del>	<a href="#">ADD TO CART</a>

[FAQ on Downloads >](#)   [Test Download Formats >](#)

Should I Buy Audio or Video?

The DVD version of this course contains hundreds of on-screen maps, pictures, and text. Professor Hammond always keeps audio listeners in mind, making this course a good choice in any format.

### Course Lecture Titles

1. Geography and Archaeology
2. The First Dynasties
3. The Zhou Conquest
4. Fragmentation and Social Change
5. Confucianism and Daoism
6. The Hundred Schools
7. The Early Han Dynasty
8. Later Han and the Three Kingdoms
9. Buddhism
10. Northern and Southern Dynasties
11. Sui Reunification and the Rise of the Tang
12. The Early Tang Dynasty
13. Han Yu and the Late Tang
14. Five Dynasties and the Song Founding

15. Intellectual Ferment in the 11th Century
16. Art and the Way
17. Conquest States in the North
18. Economy and Society in Southern Song
19. Zhu Xi and Neo-Confucianism
20. The Rise of the Mongols
21. The Yuan Dynasty
22. The Rise of the Ming
23. The Ming Golden Age
24. Gridlock and Crisis
25. The Rise of the Manchus
26. Kangxi to Qianlong
27. The Coming of the West
28. Threats from Within and Without
29. The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom
30. Efforts at Reform
31. The Fall of the Empire
32. The New Culture Movement and May 4th
33. The Chinese Communists, 1921–1937
34. War and Revolution
35. China Under Mao
36. China and the World in a New Century

have shaped China's history.

- As you listen to these lectures, you see how China's politics, economics, and art reflect the forces of its past.

### Explore China's Subtleties with an Expert

Few nations have as long and intricate a history as China. To bring alive the subtleties of that history in only 36 lectures requires a teacher intimately familiar with not only his subject, but the needs of listeners who may well be peering for the first time beyond that curtain that has long veiled the mysteries of China—indeed, of all Asia—from the eyes and understanding of Westerners.

Born and raised in Ohio, Professor Kenneth J. Hammond himself made that intellectual and cultural journey. He has lived and worked in Beijing and established exchange programs with schools in China and Korea.

In guiding you through the five millennia of China's history, he has organized his lectures around several major themes:

- The evolution of the social and political elite and how they acquired and asserted their power as rulers
- The history of political thought and the ways the Chinese have organized their society and government from the shamanistic roots of that political thought to the crafting and adapting of the Imperial Order, the rise of Communism, and the introduction of capitalism as China seeks economic growth
- How the Chinese have thought and written about themselves and the world
- The connections between economic and social life and the worlds of art, literature, and philosophy
- The interaction among cosmological ideas, the metaphysical insights of Buddhism and religious Daoism, and the perennial mysticism of popular religion
- China's history as it relates to the world beyond its borders.

### China's Story: From Night Skies Ablaze to Opium

Dr. Hammond's lectures are richly detailed and lead you on compelling forays across many aspects of China's story. From a governing perspective, you'll learn how the short-lived Qin dynasty—with "legalism" as its often brutal ideology of governance—became the first unified empire, laying the basis for an enduring imperial order. And how the implementation of the imperial civil service examination system in the late 10th century gave intellectual issues renewed importance, and made the 11th century flourish with great debate and discussion about literature, philosophy, government, and art. You'll also learn the eye-opening story of how China was betrayed by the Allies at Versailles, precipitating riots in Beijing and helping pave the way for the emergence of the Communist Party.

From an historical point of reference, you'll see how a concubine named Wu Zetian rose to become the first and only empress to rule China. You'll also learn how opium became the commodity that allowed Great Britain to pry open China to the avarice of the West, making millions of Chinese into addicts, inciting the Opium Wars and a profound humiliation for China. You'll also be fascinated by the extraordinary story of a failed examination candidate named Hong Xiuquan, whose certainty that he was Jesus' younger brother drove him to lead a revolution that nearly succeeded in overthrowing the Qing dynasty. And then examine the conquest of China by the Mongols, including a riveting discussion of their culture and tactics.

You'll also explore how select artistic and intellectual events shaped China's history. For example, learn about the great ceramic center at Jingdezhen, which, in the 12th century, became one of the first true industrial cities in world history, its massive production lines setting the night sky ablaze with the glow from their great kilns. You'll be introduced to the Neo-Confucianist teachings of Zhu Xi, one of the great figures in Chinese intellectual history, whose sharply divergent commentaries on classical Confucian texts placed an emphasis on moral self-cultivation and the role of the individual. And finally, you'll visit the golden age of the Ming dynasty, when art and literature flourished amid economic growth and the revival of a great merchant class, including the invention of a postal system that became the foundation of a great trading network.

### China: A Major Player

China continues to reassert itself as a major force. These above samplings can only hint at the fascination of this course and the immensity of its scope. However, the full course offers the history of this vast nation, reminding us that China is no stranger to that stage and, indeed, has more often than not been the most extraordinary player on it.

### Should I Buy Audio or Video?

The DVD version of this course contains hundreds of on-screen maps, pictures, and text. Professor Hammond always keeps audio listeners in mind, making this course a good choice in any format.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Careers](#)

© This site and content copyright 2008 . The Teaching Company, LLC.  
Site contents are also protected by other copyrights and trademarks. All rights reserved.