



Reconsidering the Power of Chinese Rulers: Reflections in the Wake of 9/11 and the Rise of the Unitary Executive in the U.S.

NOVEMBER 30, 2016

LOCATION:

*UA Poetry Center
Dorothy Rubel Room
Helen S. Schaefer Building,
1508 E. Helen St.*

TIME:

3:30 pm

SUGGESTED PARKING:

Highland Garage



How might America's response to the 9/11 attack on New York City provide us with an additional perspective for understanding the evolution of the emperor's executive power in Chinese history. Many Americans have easily assumed that Chinese have an inherent disposition for "despotic" rulers, in sharp contrast to our dedication to individualism and human rights. Yet, one US response to the crisis of 9/11 has been to greatly enhance the executive power of the presidency and even weaken our tradition of individual rights and freedoms. If we are mindful of our own recent history dealing with the national crisis of terrorism, we might have a new opportunity to explore anew how and why Chinese over the centuries often increased the emperor's executive power -- even though that "default" option in times of crisis had unintended consequences. What might we learn from China's development of executive power in times of national crises that might be of use in our own era in America?



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Hoyt Cleveland Tillman (Ph.D. in History & East Asian Languages, Harvard University, 1976) has been teaching Chinese history at ASU since 1976, and in 2012 moved to ASU's School of International Letters & Cultures, where he is currently Faculty Head of the East and Southeast Asian Section. His primary research focus is the history of Chinese thought, particularly Song to Ming Confucianism. His honors include: the first Alexander von Humboldt Prize awarded in Sinology (2000-01); research affiliate of Peking University's Center for Studies of Ancient Chinese History (since 2004); and Guest Professor of the School for History at Renmin University of China (2011-2016). He has published over a dozen books and a hundred referred articles.