

## Introduction

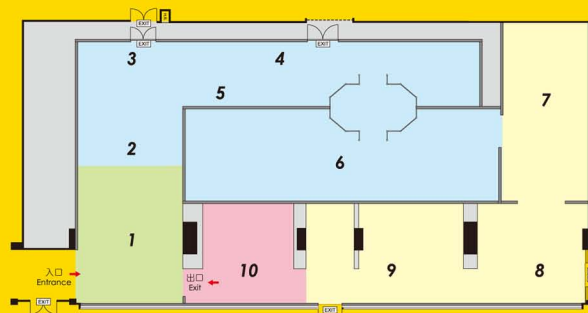
The Chinese imperial examination was a pioneering system that combined education with recruitment for the state bureaucracy. Upholding the principles of free participation, public examination, open competition and selection on merit, the system provided the masses with access to social mobility. The system was considered an innovation when compared with the hereditary succession practiced by the European contemporaries in feudal times. The system inspired the Asian neighbours such as Japan, Korea and Vietnam in the recruitment of the state bureaucracy.

Throughout the history of 1,300 years, the imperial examination system produced over 700 *zhuangyuan* (principal graduates of the palace examination), 110,000 graduates with *jinsi* degrees, several millions graduates with *juren* degrees and countless students securing the membership of *xiuca* status. Ever since the Sui and Tang dynasties, the imperial examination system gave rise to a new class of literati, among them were prominent government officials, philosophers, art masters who excelled themselves at different levels of the imperial examination system.

Showcasing over 100 sets of artefacts selected from the collection of the Shanghai Jiading Museum and solicited from local sources, the exhibition takes us back to the Qing dynasty to revisit the imperial examination system, its development, demise and legacy. Also featured in the exhibition is a series of interactive educational displays which give us a better understanding of how the system shaped the Chinese society and culture over a period of 1,300 years.



## 展覽平面圖 Exhibition Layout Plan



- |                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. 學而優則仕 Appointment on Merit  | 6. 考場面面觀 Examination at a Glimpse |
| 2. 入學須知 The Apprentice         | 7. 金榜題名時 The Glory                |
| 3. 文舉—萬卷書與萬里路 The Odyssey      | 8. 科舉與社會文化 The Blessings          |
| 4. 生員資格 The Studentship        | 9. 晉身官場 The Officialdom           |
| 5. 武舉—技勇與文墨兼重 By Might and Wit | 10. 科舉制度的終結 The Demise            |

主辦	康樂及文化事務署 上海市嘉定博物館
籌劃	香港歷史博物館
地點	香港歷史博物館專題展覽廳 九龍尖沙咀漆咸道南 100 號
開放時間	星期一及星期三至六：上午十時至下午六時 星期日及公眾假期：上午十時至下午七時 逢星期二休館（公眾假期除外） 聖誕前夕及農曆新年除夕提前於下午五時休館 農曆新年年初一及初二休館
入場費	港幣 10 元 / 7 元 / 5 元（逢星期三免費入場） 博物館入場證及過票持有人免費入場
Jointly presented by	Leisure and Cultural Services Department Shanghai Jiading Museum
Organized by	Hong Kong Museum of History
Venue	Special Exhibition Gallery, Hong Kong Museum of History 100 Chatham Road South, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon
Opening Hours	Mondays & Wednesdays to Saturdays : 10 am – 6 pm Sundays & Public Holidays : 10 am – 7 pm Closed on Tuesdays (except public holidays) Closed at 5 pm on Christmas Eve and Chinese New Year's Eve Closed on the first two days of the Chinese New Year
Admission Fees	HK\$10 / \$7 / \$5 (Free admission on Wednesdays) Free admission for Museum Pass and Weekly Pass holders

☎ 2724 9042    🌐 <http://hk.history.museum>



# 開科 取士

清代科舉展

Knowledge · Power  
The Imperial Examination System of the Qing Dynasty  
9.11.2011 – 6.2.2012



## 展覽簡介

科舉制度採用分科取士的模式，特點為自由報名、公開考試、平等競爭、擇優取仕。這些公平的原則，打破了高門大族對朝廷職位的壟斷，為平民百姓提供一個透過讀書而入仕的台階。與世界其他地區同時期的任官制度——例如歐洲封建時代的世襲制相比較，科舉制度確實是具開創性的設計。中國的鄰邦，例如日本、韓國、越南等，均曾參照科舉建立選拔人才的制度。

在一千三百多年的科舉考試中，共產生了七百名狀元、十一萬名進士、數百萬名舉人，至於秀才則不計其數。隋唐以來，傑出政治家、思想家、藝術家，大都出自狀元、進士和舉人，可見科舉在中國歷史上佔極重要地位。

是次展覽以清代科舉考試為主線，透過約一百件（組）來自上海市嘉定博物館，以及從本地徵集所得的相關文物，輔以互動教育環節，介紹科舉考試制度的內容及沿革，剖析科舉制度沒落原因及其對中國社會文化的影響，讓觀眾認識科舉制度實施的情況，領會這制度所包含的文化內涵。

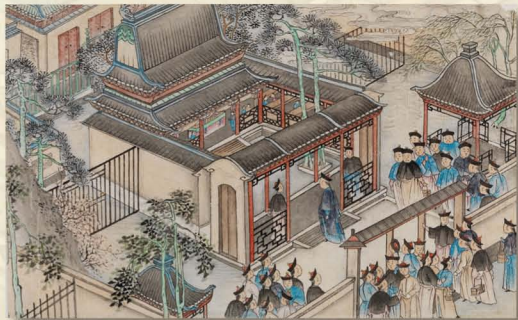


# 1 學而優則仕

## Appointment on Merit

自隋煬帝於公元六零五年設科取士，推行科舉制度。自此朝廷便定期舉行公開考試，按學科選拔賢能，繼而授予官職，以協助君主治理國家。科舉制度把教育、考試和官僚選拔制度合而為一，能夠把中央朝廷與地方社會緊密地連繫起來。

The Chinese imperial examination system dates back to the Sui dynasty in AD 605. Emperor Yang introduced the system to recruit state officials. Ever since, the imperial court regularly held public examinations on different subjects to select individuals with talents to whom government positions were offered. Combining education, examination and recruitment systems, the imperial examinations were considered an effective means to consolidate the imperial rule.



待試圖  
In procession to the examination hall

# 2 入學須知

## The Apprentice

明清時期，孩童約在六、七歲時便會入學，富戶會延聘博學先生在家執教，而各地鄉鎮則於宗祠、寺院或民宅設置學館或書室，為族人子弟提供啟蒙教育。這些民間興辦的學館內，聚集不同年齡的幼童一同上課；老師會因應個別孩童的程度而因材施教。

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, children began their formal education at the age of six or seven. For rich families, tutors were hired for home schooling. Other village children would attend schools at their ancestral halls, temples and village houses. The elementary education was privately run at local level. Classes were taught to children of all ages in accordance with their individual abilities.



《經藝淵海》  
A Compilation of  
Eight-legged Essays



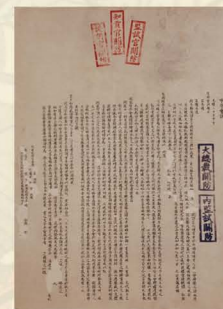
《幼學瓊林》  
Tales from the Children's  
Knowledge Treasury

# 3 文學——萬卷書與萬里路

## The Odyssey

科舉考試流程大致可分為地方考試和京師考試，唐代武則天於載初元年（公元六八九年）創立殿試，自始形成「解試」、「省試」和「殿試」三級考試制，並為後代所沿襲。元、明、清各朝，則改為「童試」、「鄉試」、「會試」和「殿試」。

The Chinese imperial examinations comprised a series of local examinations and a central examination. The palace examination was formally introduced in AD 689 during the Tang dynasty. The examination system was then institutionalised at three levels - provincial, metropolitan and palace; such structure was adopted ever since. During the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, the system was further developed into preliminary, provincial, metropolitan and palace levels.



1894年恩科會試題目（複製品）  
Examination paper of the  
grace examination of  
metropolitan level, 1894.  
(Replica)



殿試圖  
The palace examination



考籃  
Examination  
basket

# 4 生員資格

## The Studentship

「童生」成功完成縣、府、院三級童試便成為「生員」，俗稱「秀才」。各生員獲入學資格後，可到官辦的府、州、縣學讀書。入學後經地方學政選拔便可參加鄉試、層層遞上。成績卓越的生員，可獲選為「貢生」，為秀才與舉人之間的特殊階級，屬正途出身，可榮升為國子監學生。

According to the imperial examination system, candidates were required to take and pass examinations at different levels to obtain qualifications to officialdom. Candidates, upon passing the three tests at the preliminary examination, earned the status of xiucai and secured the admission to state colleges. Only students of state colleges would be nominated by local officials to take the provincial examination or to attend the Imperial Academy.



清光緒各省選拔同年明經通譜  
Nomination list of the Imperial  
Academy during the reign of  
Guangxu

清末探花商衍鎰照片（右）  
Portrait of Shang Yanliu (right),  
the top graduate of the last palace  
examination in the Qing dynasty



拔貢恭報（複製品）  
Announcement of admission  
to the Imperial Academy  
(Replica)



# 5

## 武舉——技勇與文墨兼重

By Might and Wit

武舉始於唐朝武則天長安二年（公元七零二年）置武學，設武科選拔軍事人才，惟歷朝對武舉重視程度不一，歷史上武舉只進行過約五百次。明孝宗弘治十七年（公元一五零四年），武舉三年一試成為定制。清代武舉設於順治年間，至光緒二十七年（公元一九零一年）始廢除，前後歷時共二百五十六年。除測試兵器技巧外，考生還需要提筆答卷，默寫武經。



Photos supplied by the Hong Kong Museum of Art

清代武科考試  
A scene of the military examination  
in the Qing dynasty

The imperial military examination was introduced in AD 702 by Empress Wu of the Tang dynasty to select talents for military posts. Military examinations were not adopted consistently in different dynasties; only some 500 rounds were held throughout the history of China. Military examinations became regular again in AD 1504 of the Ming dynasty when they were held triennially. The practice continued throughout the Qing dynasty for 256 years, from Emperor Shunzhi till Emperor Guangxu (AD 1901). Apart from mastering martial arts, candidates were also required to take written tests on military classics.



關刀  
Long-handled broadsword

捷報  
Announcement of admission  
to the government school

# 6

## 考場面面觀

Examination at a Glimpse

學子經年寒窗苦讀，希望在科場取得佳績。然而每屆科舉報考者數以萬計，中式名額卻有限，為求金榜題名，部分考生不惜以夾帶及賄買等方法作弊。雖然當局處處嚴防，但仍有不少人以身試法，故此清朝的科場案屢見不鮮。

The imperial examinations was a highly competitive endeavour which required both effort and luck. For every round of examination, only a selected few were awarded top honours among tens of thousands of candidates. While many would endure decades of hardship to study in solitude, others were tempted to take shortcuts to success by cheating – a variety of tools and tricks were developed, and bribery acts got caught frequently. In times, preemptive measures against cheating were devised by the authorities.



戶部執照  
Receipt issued by the  
Board of Revenue



試帖詩  
Shitie poem

# 7

## 金榜題名時

The Glory

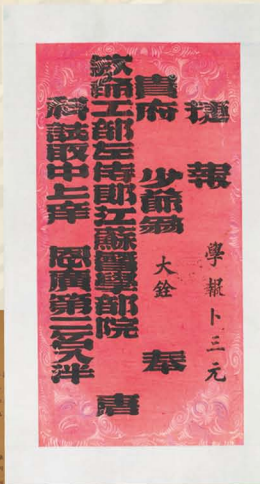
科舉考試中式者的名單會寫成榜文，張貼於試場外牆身上。鄉試中式者稱為「舉人」，已具備做官資格。會試中式者稱為「貢士」，再經殿試訂定名次，並分三甲：一甲三位依次稱為「狀元」、「榜眼」及「探花」，統稱「進士及第」；二甲則統稱為「進士出身」；三甲亦獲賞「同進士出身」。

The glorious moments came with the announcement of the examination results. Names of the graduates were listed on a scroll and posted outside the examination hall. *Juren*, graduates who passed the provincial examinations, were qualified for appointment to government posts. *Gongshi*, graduates who passed the metropolitan examinations, would be recommended to sit the palace examination of which graduates were further divided into three classes by their results – the top three candidates were bestowed with honorary titles of *zhuangyuan*, *bangyan* and *tanhua* respectively; graduates in the second and third classes earned their own specific degrees and titles.

「兄弟聯魁」功名牌  
Plaque with inscription  
"Honours Shared by Brothers"



大金榜（複製品）  
The Grand Golden List  
(Replica)



# 榜

光緒三十年五月二十五日

天承運  
奉  
皇帝制曰光緒三十年  
五月二十一日策試  
天下貢士譚延闓等  
二百七十二名第一甲  
賜進士及第第二甲  
賜進士出身第三甲  
賜同進士出身故茲  
誥示



# 8

## 科舉與社會文化

### The Blessings

科舉制度歷史悠久，影響深遠，滲透到社會生活的各個層面。上至富家大戶，下至一般草根階層，都希望族內子弟能夠一朝高中，取得入仕的機會。這種期望科舉報捷的社會心理，從民間的日用品、建築裝飾，甚至消閒娛樂活動方面，皆可得到反映。為了求得功名，士子在寒窗苦讀之餘，亦會參予祭祀文昌、魁星等活動，晚清的畫報內，就有不少篇章諷刺考生迷信鬼神，為求高中，到處尋求吉兆的社會現象。

The imperial examination system, after centuries of developments, became a collective mentality in the Chinese society. The dream of rising from rags to riches by education and examination was shared by many. The desire for success motivated the candidates, united families and clans. The presence of the system and its values were felt everywhere in household items, architectural decorations and leisure activities. Candidates would resort to patron deities for strength and support. Stories of their agonies and frustrations were vividly featured in the illustrated news emerged in the late Qing period.



「打馬遊街」花板  
Carved board featuring  
a parade through the streets



五子登科繡品立軸  
A piece of embroidered scroll  
featuring the repeated success in  
imperial examinations



「魁星點斗」木雕插屏  
Wood carved sculpture  
featuring the patron deity  
of examination



新科狀元報喜圖木刻花板  
Wood crafting featuring the  
parade of a principal graduate



陞官博戲圖  
Board game  
"Promoting Officials"

一品文官仙鶴補子 (複製品)  
Crane badge of a civil official  
of the first rank (Replica)

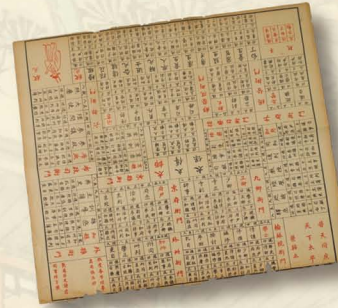
# 9

## 晉身官場

### The Officialdom

清代殿試中式一甲三名進士及第後，會授以翰林院編修，進行深造，培育為國家精英。清代官制文武百官分成九品，按品秩各官獲授歲俸，並賜「補子」，文禽武獸，配以朝冠、朝服、禮服及蟒袍等，以示尊貴。

In Qing dynasty, graduates who passed the palace examinations with the first class merit were rewarded with appointments in the Hanlin Academy for further study to become top officials. Government officials were divided into nine ranks matched with respective salaries and benefits. Rank badges were bestowed to officials to be worn on top of the robes to signify their status - embroidered birds for civilian ranks and embroidered mammals for military ranks. The official attire was completed with court gown and hat.



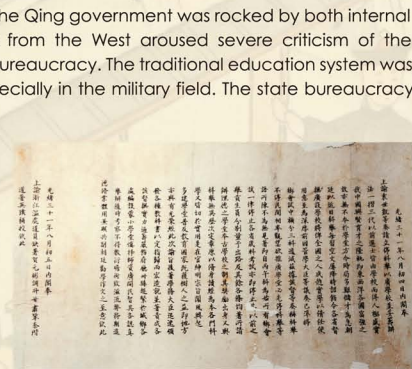
# 10

## 科舉制度的終結

### The Demise

自十九世紀中葉，清政府飽受內憂外患困擾，面對西方文明的衝擊，科舉出身的各級官僚備受嚴峻考驗。傳統教育制度不能提供軍事工業所需的人才，加上清代中葉以來，濫開捐例，以致仕途壅滯，削弱了科舉選士任官的功能。一八九五年中日甲午戰爭慘敗，簽訂《馬關條約》，舉國激憤。一八九八年「百日維新」期間，曾一度廢除八股文，但變法以失敗告終。直至光緒三十一年（公元一九零五年），清政府發布上諭廢除科舉，科舉制度正式告終。

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the Qing government was rocked by both internal turmoil and foreign aggression. Influences from the West aroused severe criticism of the imperial examination system and the state bureaucracy. The traditional education system was failing to meet challenges of the times, especially in the military field. The state bureaucracy had been furthered corrupted by the sale of official titles. China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War and its signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 sparked off territory-wide anger. The Hundred Days Reform in 1898 had drastic changes to reform the examination system. In 1905, an imperial decree was announced to abolish all provincial and metropolitan examinations, which finally brought the imperial examination system to an end.



停科舉上諭 (複製品)  
Imperial decree on the abolition of  
the imperial examinations (Replica)



1916年畢業證書  
Certificate of graduation,  
1916.