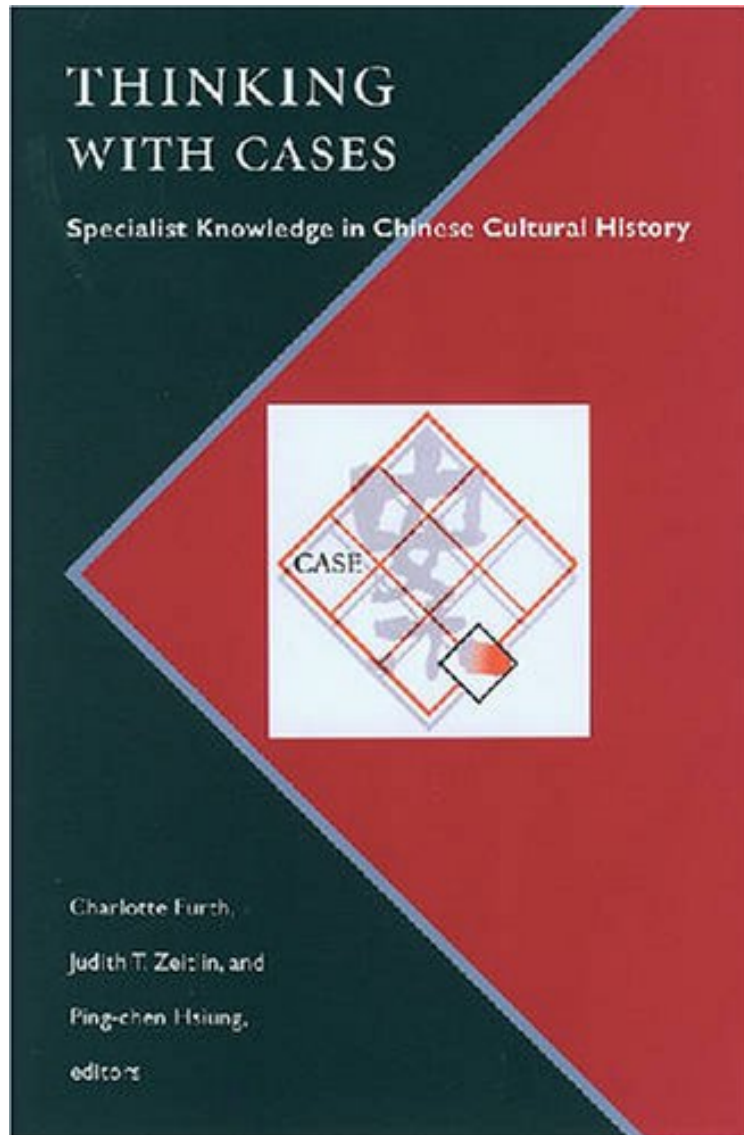


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history is tough. One of the largest differences between conventional thinking and ancient (both Chinese and non-) is the use of case studies and examples rather than clinical trials. Prior to the mid-19th century, the use of statistics was virtually unknown in the world. Knowledge was gleaned from the experiences of masters in their respective fields. This book clears up some of the cultural reasoning behind such methods and offers insight into how we can learn from what would be considered an outmoded technique.

Case studies fascinate because they link individual instances to general patterns and knowledge to action without denying the priority of individual situations over the generalizations derived from them. In this volume, an international group of senior scholars comes together to consider the use of cases to produce empirical knowledge in premodern China. They trace the process by which the project of thinking with cases acquired a systematic and public character in the ninth century CE and after. Premodern Chinese experts on medicine and law circulated printed case collections to demonstrate efficacy or claim validity for their judgments. They were joined by authors of religious and philosophical texts. The rhetorical strategies and forms of argument used by all of these writers were allied with historical narratives, exemplary biographies, and case examples composed as aids to imperial statecraft. The innovative and productive explorations gathered here present a coherent set of interlocking arguments that will be of interest to comparativists as well as specialists on premodern East Asia. For China scholars, they examine the interaction of different fields of learning in the late imperial period, the relationship of evidential reasoning and literary forms, and the philosophical frameworks that linked knowledge to experience and action. For comparativists, the essays bring China into a global conversation about the methodologies of the human sciences. Contributors: Chu Honglam, Charlotte Furth, Hsiung Ping-chen, Jiang Yonglin, Yasuhiko Karasawa, Robert Sharf, Pierre-tienne Will, Wu Yanhong, Judith T. Zeitlin.

[This] book is a China historian's dream, and would be an ideal textbook for a graduate course on the rich array of themes and sources for the history of late-imperial China.-- "Journal of Chinese Studies (Fall 2008)" [This] book is a China historians dream, and would be an ideal textbook for a graduate course on the rich array of themes and sources for the history of late-imperial China. (Journal of Chinese Studies (Fall 2008)) About the Author Judith T. Zeitlin is the William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations and the Committee on Theater and Performance Studies at the University of Chicago. She is the author of *Performing Images: Opera in Chinese Visual Culture* (2014) and *Thinking with Cases: Specialist Knowledge in Chinese Cultural History* (2007), as well as other writings.