

NEWS AND NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deng Guangming Academic Prize Foundation announces the Third Biennial Competition

The Deng Guangming Academic Prize Foundation is now accepting submissions for the third biennial prize, to be awarded in August of 2004. Scholars of Liao, Song, Xia, and Jin history, born after January 1, 1954, are invited apply by submitting works published or publicly presented between June 2001 and December 2003. We also welcome nominations by senior specialists. Submissions will be accepted from July 1, 2003 to July, 1, 2004. Those interested in applying or making a nomination should contact the Secretariat of the Chinese Society for Research in Song History 中国宋史研究会秘书处 at: Hebei University Center for Song History, Hezuo lu #88, Baoding City, Hebei, 071002, Attn: Li Huarui (河北省保定市, 合作路 88 号, 河北大学宋史研究中心, 邮编: 07002, 联系人: 李华瑞).

Society for Song-Yuan Studies Website:

<www.songyuan.org>

Please visit our newly-registered official Society for Song-Yuan Studies website, www.songyuan.org. There you will find links to web resources for Song studies, news of the field, subscription information and directions for article submission for the *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, as well as an extremely useful macro program for converting Big5 text to Unicode. The website is still under construction, and we welcome your suggestions for links or other features you would like to see. Please send questions or suggestions to our webmaster, Professor Michael Fuller (mafuller@uci.edu).

Journal of Song Yuan Studies Announces New Editors

The *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* is delighted to announce that, beginning with volume 34 (2004), Professor Hugh Clark of Ursinus College will be taking over the position of Editor of the *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*. We are also delighted to welcome Professor Valerie Hansen of Yale University as the new Book Review Editor. Please send article submissions directly to Professor Clark at Department of History, Ursinus College, Collegetown, PA 19246-1000. If you are interested in reviewing a book for the *Journal*, please contact Professor Hansen at Department of History, Yale University, PO Box 208324, Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520-8324.

P H . D . D I S S E R T A T I O N A B S T R A C T S

“Organizing Authority: Office, Rank, and Status in Tang China.”

Ta-Ko Chen, Harvard University, 2003.

This dissertation studies the organization of the Tang government and the two components in its ranking systems: substantive office and titular office. The role and function of the Tang titular ranking system, critical to our understanding of Tang society, is largely neglected in existing scholarship. Premised on the Weberian concept of bureaucracy, the dissertation analyzes the role of titular rank and its interaction with substantive rank in the functional context of Tang bureaucracy.

Chapter 1 examines the idea of government from the Han to the Tang, and demonstrates that in the Tang conception, government was to be rationally organized with functional goals. The next two chapters analyze the organization of substantive offices in the Tang central and local governments, demonstrating that two principles—administrative functionality and imperial centrality—underscored the hierarchy of Tang substantive ranking system. Chapter 4 discusses the titular ranking system, where relation between titular rank and social status is illustrated. It shows that titular rank, while initially determined by an individual’s family background, was linked to one’s performance in substantive office, and thus functionally integrated into the bureaucracy. The concluding chapter argues that it was through the titular ranking system, whereby social status was translated into mechanical measurements, that the

Tang state was able to thoroughly incorporate an independent social force into its bureaucratic framework. Thus, the titular office system represents the Tang response to an historical quandary, namely, how to re-establish a centralized authority after the devolution of political power and the resultant rise of great clans in medieval China. The implication of the titular office system is that the dynamics of the interaction between titular and substantive offices during the Tang fundamentally modified the conception of social status and imperial power for the next millennium in China.

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“A House in Darkness: The Politics of History and the Language of Politics in the Late Northern Song, 1068–1104.”

Ari Daniel Levine, Columbia University, 2002.

During the late Northern Song dynasty, an escalating factional conflict bitterly divided the imperial court between reformists and their anti-reform opponents. From the introduction of the New Policies in 1068 to the partisan proscriptions of 1102–4, a series of alternating coalitional regimes waged a battle for control of state policy and bureaucratic appointments. Throughout the conflict, political theorists and practitioners employed distinctive vocabularies to delineate the legitimate boundaries of the political community, as did official historians long after the fact.

In the first half of this study, I reveal the extent to which revisionist historiography has distorted the documentary record of Northern Song politics. In Chapter 2, I reveal how the official historiography of the factional conflict was severely compromised by Northern and Southern Song court politics. Official historiography—the *Veritable Records* (*shilu*) and *State Histories* (*guoshi*) of the Shenzong, Zhezong and Huizong reigns—provided a retroactive means of upholding or denying the political legitimacy of a ministerial regime. These official histories articulated a political and ideological agenda, since their compilers incorporated source materials that suited their interpretation of history and excluded those which did not.

In Chapter 3, I investigate the textual history of a major historical record of the factional conflict. The “Traacherous Minister” biographies (*jianchen liezhuan*) of the *Song History* (*Song shi*), the official dynastic history of the Song, evince an even stronger bias against the reform faction than did the

Veritable Records and *State Histories*. In compiling these biographies, the court historiographers of the Yuan dynasty worked by reproducing and assembling fragments of foundational texts to intensify their condemnatory portrayal of the leaders of the reform faction. They constructed a narrative representation of the factional conflict that suppressed political and ideological ambiguity, creating a rogues' gallery for posterity.

In the second half of the study, I turn from the politics of history to the culture of politics, scrutinizing the political vocabularies employed by both sides in the factional struggle to distinguish themselves from their opponents. In Chapter 4, I examine the historical and intellectual evolution of the term "faction," as it functioned in Northern Song political theory. Manipulating classical hermeneutics and historical criticism, political theorists bifurcated the political community into ethical and unethical political practitioners. Those who formed court factions were condemned as "petty men" (*xiaoren*), while those who refrained from factious political activities were deemed "superior men" (*junzi*). By engaging in a close reading of Northern Song "Essays on Faction" (*pengdang lun*), I demonstrate the intellectual context that influenced theorists' efforts to delineate the boundaries of legitimate politics.

In Chapter 5, I scrutinize the language of Northern Song politics, which created ethical oppositions between political allies and adversaries. By reading a sample of political language drawn from the various phases of the factional conflict, I illustrate that political rhetoric was a shared language, even as political practices escalated in brutality. Factious councilors and remonstrators employed distinctive vocabularies in order to differentiate "petty men" at court from "superior men," one's illegitimate enemies from one's legitimate allies.

Parallel processes of inclusion and exclusion operated on both the historiographic and historical levels of the primary sources of late Northern Song political history. The official historiography of the factional conflict—as well as the conflict's participants—employed similar processes of inclusion and exclusion in order to determine the boundaries of the political community and define political legitimacy. By illuminating the links between the politics of history and the culture of politics, this dissertation provides a new cultural and intellectual perspective on the factional conflict of the late Northern Song.

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“Landscape Experience as Visual Narrative: Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127) Landscape Handscrolls in the Li Cheng-Yan Wengui Tradition.”
Minna Törmä, University of Helsinki, Finland, 2002

This study focuses on two landscape handscrolls: “Luxuriant Forests and Distant Peaks,” in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, attributed to Li Cheng (919–967), and “Pavilions and Mansions by Rivers and Mountains,” in the Osaka Municipal Art Museum, attributed to Yan Wengui (ca. 967–1044). The investigation of the relationship between these scrolls raises two related issues toward a better understanding of the history of the landscape handscroll in the Northern Song period.

First, the Liaoning picture includes a colophon stating that the painting was originally mounted as a small folding screen. It has been argued that we must account for the specific characteristics of handscrolls, i.e., they were intended to be viewed section by section; but landscape screens like the Liaoning picture were clearly intended so that the entire composition should be on view. This habit of changing the format, which was common in China, should be taken into account in the structural analysis of these paintings.

The second issue concerns the functions of these paintings. A small folding screen could be a screen framing a bed or a pillow screen. Both kinds of screens were used in private quarters when resting or sleeping, the original context for *woyou*, “mind-travel” (literally “travelling while lying down”). A landscape handscroll could be used for the same purpose.

The study concludes by considering this relationship between sleep and dreams and the function of landscape paintings as environments for mind-travel. Analysis of the narrative structure of these scrolls in comparison with other Northern Song scrolls shows that in order for a composition to function well in this context, it should be structured so that it absorbs the viewer’s attention and recalls impressions of experienced wanderings.

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“A History of Reading in Late Imperial China, 1000–1800.”
Li Yu, The Ohio State University, 2003.

This dissertation is a historical ethnographic study on the act of reading in late imperial China. Focusing on the practice and representation of reading, I present a mosaic of how reading was conceptualized, perceived, conducted,

and transmitted from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries. My central argument is that reading, or *dushu*, was an indispensable component in the tapestry of cultural life and occupied a unique position in the landscape of social history in late imperial China. Reading is not merely a psychological act of individuals, but also a set of complicated social practices determined and conditioned by social conventions.

The dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the motivation, scope, methodology, and sources of the study. I introduce a dozen different Chinese terms related to the act of reading. Chapter 2 examines theories and practices of how children were taught to read. Focusing on four main pedagogical procedures, namely memorization, vocalization, punctuation, and explication, I argue that the loud chanting of texts and the constant anxiety of reciting were two of the most prominent themes that ran through both the descriptive and prescriptive discourses on the history of reading in late imperial China. Chapter 3 delineates a culture of reading dominated by males through a discussion of key elements of this culture: reading habits, the treatment of books, the hygiene of reading, reading paraphernalia, the elite conceptions of reading, and popular attitudes toward reading. Chapter 4 investigates women's reading, including their road to literacy, and representations of what and how they read. I argue that what caused the growing patriarchal anxiety over women's education during the late imperial period was not the rise in female literacy or the growth of female erudition, but rather the expansion of women's literate practices, particularly writing in the sphere of men. Chapter 5 probes the questions of why and how non-Han peoples learned to read Chinese. I investigate the cases of four different groups: "alien rulers" (Khitans, Jurchens, and Mongols), Jesuits, Chinese Jews, and Koreans. Chapter 6 reflects on the influence of the culture of reading on contemporary Chinese society, offers pedagogical considerations for teaching Chinese as a foreign language, takes issue with some Western paradigms of reading and orality, and provides suggestions for future research.

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