

Using the CBDB for the study of women and gender? Some of the pitfalls

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When Robert Hartwell began his vast project of compiling biographical data for what would become the CBDB, women were not his priority, in fact, they were barely on his radar. That is not surprising; his interest was in financial and economic policy, in socio-economic change and the public institutions that could reveal that change, and in the members of the bureaucratic elite who served in those institutions. He used primarily official biographies and private funerary inscriptions to create data records and only secondarily included information on women, initially in the ‘notes’ section of their husbands. But he was also interested in marriage alliances and in migration patterns, and gradually, while Robert Hartwell and his wife, Marianne Carlson Hartwell, worked on the project, further data on women was included, and women were included as separate entries.

Of course there are important issues to be raised involving women, not least because marriage alliances established either at the capital or within the local environment have featured heavily in discussions of the transformations that took place in Chinese society and economy between 750 and 1550, also known as ‘the localist turn’.¹ Hartwell’s own work, and later Robert Hymes’ work, presented the shift from marriage alliances forged among a small number of elite families over wide distances and involving the capital to marriages from within localities as important evidence of the localist turn that characterized these transformations. Hartwell, Hymes and others who have worked on these subjects have surveyed vast amounts of

¹ Hartwell, ‘Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations’, 365.

texts, but theoretically, the records in the CBDB provide the scholar of Song social history with far more data.

It has been my aim in preparing this paper to interrogate the CBDB data that involves women. Ideally, I would have tested specific hypotheses from the secondary literature by using the database, but the tables with records for women are not mature enough yet to do this accurately. My aim has, thus, been more general: to explore what the database can tell us about women, and to highlight some of the pitfalls of such research. I have only in very few instances supplemented the CBDB data with information from elsewhere. The next step in terms of research would be, of course, to follow these preliminary investigations up by using a wide array of different sources outside the database. My point, however, was to see what the database alone can yield in terms of biographical research, to test the accuracy of conclusions drawn from the database alone, and to consider whether the CBDB can be used for research without further background knowledge of the specific areas or individuals involved.

Association data on women

The problem for anyone wishing to use the CBDB to study women and gender relations during this period of history remains that women were included on the whole only as daughters and wives, rather than as persons in their own right. The associations that characterize the database, for example, only include a small number of women. We have association data for about 160 women, amounting to a total of 188 relationships (out of the total of 19,961 records in the associations table).² Of those 188, only six concern associations between women, and all of those involve serving empresses and other women in the imperial family as lady-in-waiting or

² I mean here the associations to be found for women. If one combines these with the men's associations with women, the total would be higher.

friend. The vast majority of the associations of women (73%) are coded '43' (i.e. 'an epitaph written by'). The 'epitaph written by' and 'epitaph written for' are, as anyone using the database will have noticed, by far the most common associations in the database as a whole.³ One might expect that men wrote epitaphs for men as well as for women, but here we learn that one woman also wrote an epitaph!⁴ (There is, however, no evidence in the database to confirm this rather exceptional occurrence, so in all likelihood this is an error?)

There are other relationships usually associated with men but here ascribed to women, such as 'coalition leader' (8), 'recommended by' (14), 'purged' (30), 'disciple of' (36), 'new policies dissenter' (74), 'ordered the execution of' (181) or 'travelled with' (277). A closer look reveals that a number of these refer to imperial consorts, such as Yang Huang taihou 楊皇太后 (984–1036), who succeeded Empress Liu (r. 1022-1033) in 1032/3 and was regarded 'coalition leader' of a group of high civil servants,⁵ Guo Huanghou 郭皇后 who 'was opposed by' Yan Wenying 閻文應 and Lü Yijian 呂夷簡, Yang Huanghou 楊皇后, who 'opposed' Han Tuozou 韓侂胄, and Gao Huanghou 高皇后, Yingzong's (r. 1064–1067) empress, who 'supported' Sima Guang and 'opposed the new policies'.⁶ The woman who 'ordered the execution of' was the Tang Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705). In other words,

³ Of the 19,961 entries in the 'assoc_data' table, 6,469 entries (32%) involve the exchange of an epitaph. None of the other types of relationships come anywhere close to this, the next highest being the exchange of sacrificial prayers, which amounts to 1,531 entries (7.6%).

⁴ This is the epitaph Chao Shi 巢氏 (1145–1231) supposedly wrote for Yuan Fu 袁甫 (10296). Her father is Chao Shaochun (16056) and her husband Jiang Lin 江璘 (16058).

⁵ These include Fan Yong 范雍; Xia Song 夏竦; Yan Shu 晏殊; Zhao Ji(2) 趙積; Qian Weiyan 錢惟演; Zhang Qi(2) 張耆; Chen Yaozuo 陳堯佐.

⁶ Although this category, coded 74, is included as a social relationship, no individual associate ('assoc_id') is given.

these are figures from high politics, whose lives and ‘associations’ do not immediately provide useful material for prosopographical analysis.⁷

Another exceptional figure is Zhu Bailianhua 朱白蓮花, a lute player who came to the attention of the emperor (Taizong r. 976–998?) through the mediation of the eunuch Pei Yu 裴愈 (*fl* late 10th century). Wang Yingying 王英英 appears both as ‘disciple of’ the literary scholar Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012–67) and as ‘having her painting or calligraphy praised by’ Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002–60). Finally there is Yang Ji (9) 楊基, who is listed as ‘staff member’ of the Ming founder’s rival Zhang Shicheng 張士誠 (1321–1367) and as ‘travelling with’ Zhou Di 周砥, and as author of texts exchanged with two further men. It quickly becomes clear that a mistake is at play here, and in fact, of course, Yang Ji turns out to be erroneously listed as a woman. There are tantalising glimpses of fascinating stories here. The CBDB alone cannot help here, however, and a search through conventional sources would be necessary to understand their circumstances fully.

The group of women for whom we know they had important enough social relationships for them to be entered into the database is, thus, small but highly placed, and characterized by an element of randomness. Were the size of this group to be extended, would one then be able to ask meaningful research questions? Could we draw any conclusions about this group of women as a whole? One might ask, for example, if having notable social relationships gave these women any particular advantages, whether they were mostly based at the capital, or whether these social relationships involved long distances or mostly local connections.

⁷ I understand this to mean the analysis of quantitative evidence to understand the social and economic circumstances of groups of people.

The sample as it stands yields some (unreliable) answers. We only have the age at death for roughly 67% of all women included in the database, but on that basis, their median age at death appears to be 60; the median age at death for the women whose associations we know is slightly higher at 62. (Whether that suggests a better quality of life is a separate matter of course.) The women whose associations we know are by no means all based at the capital, although the percentage of capital-based women (with known associations) is higher during the Tang than during the Song.⁸ Of the associations of women, it turns out that the majority (61%) involves people with different addresses.⁹ One can break that information down further: of all the epitaphs written for women (and included in the database), for example, 95 (i.e. 70%) are written by men with an address that differs from the epitaph ‘recipient’. For that figure to be meaningful, however, and to be able to make some claim about associations that were forged either locally or with the capital as center of gravity, far more information would be needed, including some indication of the distance between the two addresses and the location of writer and recipient at the time of writing.¹⁰

Clearly, the database could yield important information about the ways in which social relationships affected women’s lives and about the ways in which women featured in the creation and development of social relationships. There is a potential here for interesting analysis, which suggests the inclusion of more data on women would be worthwhile, but in order to accommodate such searches and queries, the data would have to be fleshed out with more information about women’s lives

⁸ We have association data in combination with place information for 132 women. They break down into the following numbers per dynasty: Han dynasty (1); Tang (15); Song (92); Jin (1); Yuan (22); Ming (1). The percentages of those women with a capital as their ‘basic affiliation’ are as follows: Han (0%), Tang (27%), Song (17%); Jin (0%), Yuan (0%), Ming (0%).

⁹ The figure is based on the ‘c_addr_id’ codes in the ‘biog_addr’ table. Since distinct ID numbers are allocated to places that refer to the same geographical space but in a different administrative configuration, the number is undoubtedly too high. See also below for further discussion of this issue.

¹⁰ One could, for example, make a distinction between ‘different place’ within the same prefecture, or ‘different place’ within the same province. One should also take into account the information provided by the different place-association types, such as ‘basic affiliation’ and ‘migration to’.

themselves (such as data on marital age and number of children borne), and on when and where exactly the associations occurred.

Kinship data on women

In terms of kinship data of women in the database, one has a far better chance of finding out about an individual's wife's father than about his wife.¹¹ We can find 1737 instances of a woman's kinship relationship through the database, but they refer almost without exception to male relatives.¹² Kinship connections between women, consequently, are completely invisible here, making some of the research on gender and women's networks that has transformed our understanding of later periods impossible, at least on the basis of the CBDB. These 1737 kin relations of women include 46 different types of kinship relationships, but the numbers for most of those are smaller than 10, and therefore not conducive for meaningful statistical analysis.

Only the following are given in numbers over ten:

- grandfather (23 women)
- father (702 women)
- husband (803 women)
- son (69 women)
- grandson (19 women)

Can we do anything with this information? Who are, for example, these 23 women whose grandfathers can be traced? One might imagine that these women came from families with several generations of servants in the imperial bureaucracy, located mostly in and around the capital. Indeed, the data shows that most of these women continued to live where their grandfathers had lived, suggesting not just political

¹¹ In the entire CBDB, the wives of only 578 individuals (W) are listed, as opposed to 3,777 fathers of wives (WF), excluding fathers of second and subsequent wives. There are 628 daughters included (D), but 2,974 husbands of daughters (DH).

¹² As far as I can tell, a female to female kinship relationship has only been entered for five women.

stability but high status and connections with the central government.¹³ The grandfathers lived mostly between 909 and 1095, with one twelfth-century figure included. Only six of these had ‘Kaifeng’ as their basic affiliation. We have ‘entry’ data for 14 of the grandfathers:

examination or school: degree granted by grace	1
examination: <i>jinsi</i> (general)	7
honorific title based on merit of relative	1
imperial summons	1
military merits: military service or distinction in battle	1
<i>yin</i> privilege: general	1
recommendation	2

And we have the following ‘status’ data:¹⁴

office	8
military	9
office: finance	8
clerical staff	1
office:state council	5
gentry	2

For a further 11 grandfathers we know their official postings, and they include Commissioners of Military Affairs, Fiscal Attendants, Chancellors, Grand Councilors and Secretaries–General of the Secretariat. On the basis of these tables, then, the members of the social group we are trying to understand are women who descended largely (in 61% of the cases) from grandfathers who entered the civil service at a high level and served in high positions. Probably this tells us more about the background of the women included in the database and the database itself than about Northern Song women, but at least it provides us with a starting point for further research.

One might wish to explore further the female kin of the men in the database, and ask, for example, how many men had mothers from a different area than where they lived themselves. Here, too, data is thin: for 75 men we can find out who their

¹³ For the 23 grandfather-granddaughter relationships, we have the address details of 21, and 18 of those granddaughters (86%) shared their address with their grandfathers.

¹⁴ These numbers are distorted because some of the grandfathers have more than one status designation.

mothers were¹⁵ but we can only compare the ‘basic affiliation’ of sons and their mothers for 39 records.¹⁶ Of those records, just less than half (18 records or 46%) indicate a different address ID. This yields the following table (based on a query that compared the address ID of sons and mothers):

王安石	Basic Affiliation	Linchuan	撫州	江南西路	吳太夫人	Basic Affiliation	金谿	撫州	江南西路
王拱辰	Basic Affiliation	Xianping	開封府	京畿路	李郡君	Burial Address	尉氏	開封府	宋朝
朱熹	Basic Affiliation	Chong`an	建州	福建路	祝氏	Basic Affiliation	歙縣	歙州	江南東路
王綱	Basic Affiliation	Nancheng	建武軍	江南西路	曾德克	Basic Affiliation	南豐	建武軍	江南西路
王巖叟	Basic Affiliation	Qingping	大名府	河北東路	趙氏	Basic Affiliation	聊城	博州	河北東路
趙桓	Basic Affiliation	Kaifeng	開封府	京畿路	王氏	Basic Affiliation	開封府	京畿路	宋朝
趙構	Former Address	Kaifeng	開封府	京畿路	韋皇后	Basic Affiliation	錢塘	杭州	浙西路
趙構	Former Address	Kaifeng	開封府	京畿路	韋皇后	Moved to	錢塘	杭州	浙西路
趙構	Basic Affiliation	Qiantang	杭州	浙西路	韋皇后	Former Address	開封	開封府	京畿路
趙構	Moved to	Qiantang	杭州	浙西路	韋皇后	Former Address	開封	開封府	京畿路
趙惇	Basic Affiliation	Qiantang	杭州	浙西路	郭皇后	Former Address	開封	開封府	京畿路
王縉	Basic Affiliation	Nancheng	建武軍	江南西路	曾德克	Basic Affiliation	南豐	建武軍	江南西路
王炎午	Basic Affiliation	Anfu Zhou	安福州	吉安路	劉氏	Basic Affiliation	安福	吉州	江南西路
王義山	Basic Affiliation	Fengcheng	洪州	江南西路	聶維清	Basic Affiliation	清江	臨江軍	江南西路
王義端	Basic Affiliation	Fengcheng	洪州	江南西路	聶維清	Basic Affiliation	清江	臨江軍	江南西路
王濱叟	Basic Affiliation	Qingping	大名府	河北東路	趙氏	Basic Affiliation	聊城	博州	河北東路
王堯叟	Basic Affiliation	Qingping	大名府	河北東路	趙氏	Basic Affiliation	聊城	博州	河北東路
王復	Basic Affiliation	Changxi	福州	福建路	阮氏	Basic Affiliation	平陽	桂陽監	荊湖南路

¹⁵ More errors appear here: Zeng Shi 曾氏 (39903) and Qiu Shi 仇氏 (38126) both appear as ‘mother’ but not as female. 39000 has a mother, but that mother is not listed as female, nor does she have an ID#.

¹⁶ This is because in the ‘biog_addr_data’ table, it is possible to leave the Address ID field blank (i.e. it is not a required field). Where that field is left blank, probably because we do not have their address details, no records are returned in the query. Presumably this is an ‘Access’ issue that can be avoided in other front-end formats. It would be preferable to be able to see these records with a ‘0’ value.

The problems are immediately obvious. Again, we find more exceptional figures than ‘ordinary’ women; we find places marked as ‘different’ because they have different ID numbers even though they refer to the same geographical place; and we find places that only differ in county, but not in prefecture. Most complicated, however, is the duplication caused by the different types of addresses listed. In this case one could, of course, only use the ‘Basic Affiliation’, which eliminates a further four records. But when looking at geo-referenced data for women in the database as a whole, that significantly reduces the size of the sample. Clearly, far more analysis is possible here, but a number of problems need to be addressed before such searches would yield reliable prosopographical data for the women in the database.

Collective biography

It might, despite these obvious shortcomings, be possible to attempt to write a collective biography of women hailing from a single area. Again, the database immediately presents problems: to write a collective biography and support one’s claims with a certain amount of statistical evidence, one needs good coverage, and comparable information on all the women in the sample, while we often only have details for a tiny fraction of the women in a certain area. For Jizhou 吉州, for example, an area I have worked on before, we have data for 885 individuals, of whom only 15 are women, while the Jizhou population as a whole counted, according to Robert Hartwell, around 22,400 households in 742, and 251,200 households in 1542.¹⁷ Although I hesitate to use the term ‘collective biography’ because of the sparsity of the data in relation to the population and the problematic nature of that

¹⁷ Hartwell, ‘Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations’, 396. For data from Jizhou, less than 2% pertains to women, a slightly lower average than for other areas. Of all the entries in the ‘biog.main’ table, 2.6% are women. That percentage is more or less the same for individual prefectures (2% for Fuzhou 撫州, 2.2% for Mingzhou, 2.6% for Wuzhou, 2.4% for Mingzhou, 2.6% for Suzhou, 2.2% for Chengdu. Only Kaifeng is slightly higher, with 5.1%).

data, it might be instructive to take the data in the CBDB at present at face value, and see what kind of information can be gleaned about the women listed as hailing from Jizhou.¹⁸

The women from Jizhou in the CBDB

The sample from Jizhou includes 15 women. They were born, in so far as the database includes their dates of birth, between 981 and 1241, and they lived for an average of 66 years.¹⁹ The majority of the women lived during the Southern Song; ten of the fifteen women are twelfth-century women.²⁰ Six of the women hailed from Luling 廬陵, the prefectural seat of Jizhou. The other nine hailed from Jishui 吉水, Anfu 安福, Taihe 泰和 and Yongxin 永新, all of which border Luling. There are no women listed in the database from Wan'an 萬安, Longquan 龍泉, or Yongfeng 永豐, the three counties that do not share a boundary with Luling. We only know the marital age for six of the women, and amongst them, the average age at marriage was 18. We can only guess at the number of children from the data about their husbands (and only where the husbands' children were entered into the database, usually without any clarification of the mother), but for the 11 women for whom we can make this guess, the average is three children. Everything else we can find out from the database about these women comes from the data about their husbands and fathers.

¹⁸ Another problem with this kind of geo-referenced data is the limited information the address provides for women. It usually does not clarify more than that their fathers hailed from Jizhou; data about where they married, where their husbands came from or where they spent most of their lives has to be gleaned from the data about their husbands. Sometimes details are provided in the 'notes' section about their husbands.

¹⁹ The average is distorted by one individual who is said to have lived for 106 years: Peng Tairuren 彭太孺人 (ID: 5240). The median age is 61.5.

²⁰ Two of them died before 1126; three died after the fall of the region to the Mongols.

We can, for example, try to learn something of their ‘status’ by comparing their fathers’ and husbands’ status.²¹ Again, the data is far from complete; we only know the status of twelve of the fathers. The status designation assigned to them in the database includes the following: literatus (*shidafu* 士大夫) 5; local gentry (*difang shiren* 地方士人) 2; hermit (*yinju* 隱居) 2; ‘literatus or author’ 1; farmer (*nongmin* 農民) 1; local magnate (*fuhao* 富豪) 1. Without further context, this is rather meaningless. The ‘literatus’, the ‘local gentry’, the ‘hermit’ and the ‘literatus or author’ could all refer to more or less educated men with local standing who did not serve in government. Those categories, in their turn, could easily overlap with those designated as ‘local magnate’ and ‘farmer’. The same situation appears in the ‘status’ of the husbands: of the 14 whose ‘status’ has been entered, 13 fall in the catch-all category of ‘literatus’, although they are given three different designations. A small number of these have more than one designation (one is down as farmer as well as literatus, another is down as literatus as well as military official (*wu guan* 武官), a third is both literatus (*shidafu*) and student (*taixuesheng*). Only one of this group of men is listed in the database as having held an official post: Liu Junjun’s husband served in the finance administration (*caizheng guanyuan* 財政官員).²²

The comparison of fathers and husbands also doesn’t yield anything very insightful. One ‘hermit’s daughter’ married a member of the local gentry, the other a literatus; one farmer’s daughter married a member of the local gentry; the wife of the

²¹ Although ‘status’ information is included as one of the tables in the database, and I have worked with it here, the data is highly problematic, as will become obvious.

²² Liu Junjun’s husband is Wang Zhi (3) 王贇(994–1069). From Hartwell’s notes, we know that Wang Zhi’s father, Wang Chongwen, held office in Jizhou and settled there. The notes also state: “None of his wife’s [i.e. Liu Junjun] three immediate patrilineal ancestors held office, but were normally considered to be members of a great lineage (*daxing*).” From *Zhongguo lidai renming dacidian*, we further learn that Wang Zhi passed his *jinshi* examination in 1019, and had an illustrious career, which included service as Attendant Censor (*shiyushi* 侍御史), in the Remonstrance Bureau (*Jianyuan* 諫院) and the Court of the National Granaries (*sinong si* 司农寺), as edict attendant in the Hall of Heavenly Manifestations 天章閣待制, and ended as vice-minister in the Ministry of Revenue 戶部侍郎.

financial administrator was the daughter of a member of the local gentry. On the whole, the women seem to have married men largely in the same status categories as their fathers. When the numbers are so small and the categories as imprecise as these, however, we cannot really make any attempt at drawing conclusions about the social and economic background of this group of women.

The group of women also seems to have been stable rather than migratory. The daughters are all given the same 'address' as their fathers, and six of the women married a husband from their own county. A further five married from within the same prefecture, so the majority married locally. The three of whom we know they married men from outside the prefecture, Zhuang Furen 莊夫人, Zhou Furen 周夫人, and Shang Shi 尚氏 (also listed as Shang Yiren 尚宜人) all hailed themselves from Luling. Zhuang married Sun Xi 孫錫 (991-1068), who hailed from Yangzi 揚子 in Jian'an 建安軍 in Eastern Huainan circuit 淮南東路. Zhou Furen married Shang Dashen 尚大伸 (1117-1178), who was born in Anyang 安陽 in Western Hebei circuit 河北西路.²³ Their daughter, Shang Shi, married Tian Xiang 田橡, a man from Nankang 南康 in Nan'an 南安軍 in Western Jiangnan circuit 江南西路.

So what can the database tell us about these three men? Sun Xi passed his *jinshi* examination in 1024 at the age of 34, but the database reveals nothing about further posts held subsequently. We only learn that Wang Anshi 王安石 and Liu Ban 劉攽 wrote epitaphs for him. Beyond that, the database only lists Sun's kin, including several wives and their fathers. From *Zhongguo lidai renming dacidian*, we can add more detail about his career: Sun started as county governor in Hangzhou, went on to

²³ See the Hartwell notes: "Zhou Bida, WJ, 34.6a-9a, 36.7a-9a (wife, born Zhou, who married him at age 16 and died in 1166 at age 47). Zhou Bida's uncle, Lijian(2) [12131], brought Dashen (his wife's nephew) south at the beginning of the Southern Song since they were members of the same kindred group (yinjia). CBD, 2, 1410-1."

serve on the staff of the Directorate of Education, then became judge in Kaifeng prefecture, was promoted to deputy minister at the Ministry of Punishments and Superintendent in Huainan. His final post was Director of the Bureau of Honours. Clearly, Sun Xi was a man with a career at the capital and undoubtedly a network of connections at the capital, but none of these appear in the database, and it is hard to establish how the marriage with the nineteen year old girl from Luling fits in. In fact, a closer look reveals an error. Two women are listed as Sun Xi's first wife: Zhuang furen (5191) and Zhuang Shi (11792). Zhuang furen is listed as hailing from Luling, Zhuang Shi from Jiangdu 江都. The information about the women is attributed to the same source: Liu Ban, WJ, 39.6a-8a, so presumably this in fact the same person. Most likely, we have to conclude that the entry for Zhuang Furen (5191) is wrong, and Sun Xi must have married Zhuang Shi (11792), a girl from Jiangdu 江都, just a few miles downstream along the Yangzi in Yangzhou 揚州.

Zhou Furen (1120–1166), who married Anyang man Shang Dashen when she was 16, is listed as 'from Luling'. Her father was Zhou Lijian 周利建, who had married Wang Furen (1102-1138) from Jishui when she was 17. The famous Zhou Bida 周必大(1126-1204) was her younger brother. The database offers little information about Shang Dashen, and *Zhongguo lidai renming dacidian* only adds that Shang gained his entry because of *yin* privilege. He briefly served as recorder in the Western Office of the Court of the Imperial Clan, and as assistant in Wuchang 武昌 commandery, but repeated conflicts with his superiors put an end to his career, and Shang devoted himself to learning and teaching.

Shang Dashen and Zhou Furen stayed in Jizhou, but their daughter Shang Yiren, born in Luling in 1138, also married a non-Jizhou man, namely Tian Xiang

from Nankang. We know hardly anything about Tian Xiang, but his father was Tian Ruao 田如鼇, a *jinsshi* of 1124 who served as investigating censor and later as assistant transport commissioner.²⁴ His son, Tian Xiang, held the prestige title ‘Gentleman for Court Audiences’ and served as governor in Tingzhou 汀州 (Fujian).

What the database seems to tell us about the women in the Zhou family suggests that they were local women who married men from outside. Interestingly, we have the paper by Fang Chengfeng, which is based largely on Zhou Bida’s literary writings rather than on the database. If we, by way of test, compare the insights provided by Fang Chengfeng with the data based purely on the database, a rather different picture emerges. Fang includes the following people in his discussion, with some of the geographical affiliations from Fang’s paper in brackets:

First generation:

- Zhou Shen 周詵, appointed to a post in Luling in 1125
- Madam Zhang, wife of Zhou Shen (died in Ganzhou)
- Wang Liang 王靚, Zhou Lijian(2)’s father-in-law, maternal grandfather of Zhou Bida (born in Anyang, Xiangzhou, prefect of Pingjiang Fu 平江府, grave in Changzhou)
- Madam Song 宋氏, wife of Wang Liang

Second generation:

- Zhou Shen’s sons:
 - Zhou Lijian(1) 周利見 (held office in Xiazhou 峽州, Sichuan, Guangdong, Ganzhou, Chenzhou)
 - Zhou Lijian(2) 周利建, father of Zhou Bida (Kaifeng 開封府, spent time in Pingjiang, and Southern Jinghu circuit 荆湖南路)
 - Gentleman of Jingjiang Fu 靜江府君 (served in Anfu, Jizhou and in Anren, Hengzhou)
- Madam Wang (wife of Zhou Lijian(2) and mother of Zhou Bida), temporarily buried at Xinzhou 信州, reburied in Luling)

Third generation:

- Shang Dashen 尚大伸, husband of Zhou Bida’s elder sister (寧都縣, 贛州, buried in Luling)
- Zhou Bida (Pingjiang Fu 平江府, Guancheng 管城, and Luling)
- Zhou Biqiang 周必彊 (reburied in Luling)

²⁴ Note also Hartwell’s comments: “See wife’s funerary inscription in Zhou Bida, WJ, 76.10b-12a (born Shang, died in 1195 a age 58) for identification as son of Ruao [1616] and passim. for interesting information on way this marriage was contracted. CBD, 1, 460.”

The database does not reveal any of the complexities of these migratory movements. In the table below, the place associations for each of the same based on the database have been included:

	name	FCF's listed places	CBDB listed places	type of affiliation
first generation	周詵	廬陵	n.a.	
	Madam Zhang	贛州	n.a.	
	王靚	相州, 平江府, 常州	Jishui, Jizhou	Basic Affiliation
	宋氏	常州	n.a.	
second generation	周利見	峽州, 四川, 廣東, 贛州, 辰州	Luling, Jizhou	Basic Affiliation
	周利建	開封府, 平江, 荆湖南路	Luling, Jizhou	Basic Affiliation
	靜江府君	吉州, 衡州	n.a.	
	王氏	信州, 廬陵	Jishui, Jizhou	Basic Affiliation
third generation	尚大伸	蜀, 江南, 寧都縣, 贛州	Anyang, Xiangzhou Luling, Jizhou	former address Basic Affiliation
	周必大	平江府, 管城, 廬陵	Luling, Jizhou	Basic Affiliation
	周必彊	廬陵	Luling, Jizhou	Basic Affiliation

The pitfalls of the database are clearly revealed here: what looks like a kinship group firmly established in Jizhou for three generations in the database, turns out to be a highly unsettled group at best seeking to find some affiliation in Jizhou, but as Fang demonstrates, only succeeding to achieve this in death (and burial). The database is not entirely silent on the migration patterns of the Zhou and Wang families, but the information is provided in Hartwell's notes. In this case, the information is attached to the entry on Wang Liang, who is in fact entered as Wang Jing (3) 王靚 (ID#12121). Hartwell constructs a genealogy for the Wangs that begins with Wang Ba in Taiyuan, splits into two branches that both move to Anyang county (Xiangzhou), and both end up in Jizhou. This final move Hartwell describes as follows: "Both Anyang Wang(2) moved to Jizhou to join their affinal kin, the Guancheng Zhou, when Zhou(1) Shen [3248], Tongpan of Jizhou, stayed here when stranded at the end of the Northern Song (See Lu You, WJ, 38.6a)." In terms of understanding migration and marriage

alliances, this is crucial information. In this case, that information is clarified extensively by Fang Chengfeng's analysis based on Zhou Bida's *wenji* collection. More importantly, Fang's research reveals how important it is to represent this information as data rather than as 'notes' in the database.

Of this extremely small sample of women from Jizhou, then, only two women married men from outside the prefecture, and all the others married locally. The women from Jizhou in the database seem to have operated in a circle of men for whom service in the capital hardly featured. None of the fathers and husbands of these women had associations with the capital. Instead, the men had local standing, whether that standing depended on their education, their intellectual attainments or their landholdings. That conclusion, for what it is worth, is borne out by my earlier research on Southern Song Jizhou.²⁵ The Southern Song and Yuan men who featured in my analysis of temple inscriptions were often educated men without high office or capital connections. Their focus, or the focus they expressed in their extant writings, was on the Jizhou community, which they sought to shape through their writings about local temples and shrines.

More useful, however, might be a comparison between Jizhou and other localities. I have selected three areas for this brief comparison: Fuzhou 撫州, Mingzhou 明州, and Wuzhou 婺州, not because of their specific relevance or representation in the database, but because these areas overlap with other projects represented at this workshop, making it easier for colleagues to spot the errors.

Women from Fuzhou

²⁵ Anne Gerritsen, *Ji'an Literati and Local in Song-Yuan-Ming China* (Brill, 2007).

The important work on marriage alliances by Robert Hymes used Fuzhou in Jiangxi as example. Unfortunately, the CBDB data for Fuzhou women is extremely thin, making it hard to draw any meaningful conclusions. Only 11 women are listed, for one of whom only very incomplete data has been entered. The total number of individuals from Fuzhou in the database is 456, so the women form a percentage of 2.4 of that total. The eleven women were born between 998 and 1344, with seven living mostly during Northern Song, one during Southern Song and a further two living during the Yuan dynasty. The emphasis for this minute sample is thus slightly different from Jizhou, where the majority were Southern Song women. Most of the women (7 in total) hail from Linchuan 臨川, with a further three from Jinxi 金谿 county, one from Chongren 崇仁, and none from Yihuang 宜黃.

Were we to attempt to draw any conclusions about the status of the fathers and husbands of these women, we find not only a tiny sample, but gaps within the sample. A table for the women from Fuzhou, using the status categories from the ‘status_codes’ table, might look like this:

father status	husband status
?	士大夫
士大夫	財政官員
士大夫	士大夫
士大夫	literatus or author
?	scholar (chushi, jushi)
?	地方士人
office: education	yinju (or yinde)
?	教師
士大夫	士大夫
?	士大夫

The problems are immediately obvious: here too we have overlapping and rather unspecific categories indicating local positions of various kinds, and not enough data to draw any conclusion about whether the women of Fuzhou married men of a similar status or not.

As for the marriages of these women, these mostly Northern Song women were less ‘local’ in their choices of husbands than their Jizhou counterparts. We have details of ten of the husbands, and five of those have the same ‘address’ as their wives, with one further one of those from Nanfeng 南豐, just across the Fuzhou prefectural border in Jianwu commandery 建武軍 in Jiangxi 江南西路, but the other four hail from further afield, including Yuancheng 元城 (Daming 大名府 prefecture in Hebei 河北東路), Sha Xian 沙縣 (Jianzhou 劍州 in Fujian 福建路), and Guangling 廣陵 (Yangzhou 揚州) and Hailing (Taizhou 泰州), both in Huainan 淮南東路.

Four out of ten (or 40%) women married men from other prefectures than their own. So were these four marriages established along the patterns that Hartwell and Hymes describe, at the capital, part of using an empire-wide network of creating alliances and strategies? For that we need to know more about these partnerships. Can the CBDB help? The first of the men is Guo Shenxi 郭申錫 (998-1074), a *jinshi* of 1030, who served at one stage as Assistant Salt and Iron Commissioner.²⁶ From Hartwell’s notes in ‘biog_main’, we know that Wu Sizhen, who hailed from Chongren, was his third wife and twenty years his junior, and that she raised the six children her two predecessors had borne him. Most of the kin relations of Guo came from Yuancheng, but the database itself provides no answers to questions about when, where and why the third marriage with a Chongren woman was concluded.

²⁶ In the notes, Hartwell writes: “Guo(1) Shenxi [956] He used the jinshi to establish this family (qijia) branch of the lineage. Father-in-law of Cai(1) Ting’s [1661] son, Yi [3859]. XCB, 184.10a, 10b, 186.6b, 187.9a; Liu Zhi, WJ, 11.18a-23a, 14.23a-23b. ... His second wife, born Chen(1), is identified as the younger sister of Liu(2) Zhi’s [8089] mother in this funerary inscription, i.e. the daughter of Chen(1) Xigu(3) [15143]. Born Wu(3) died in 1068 at the age of 51); SHY:ZG, 65.17b; SS, 330.3b. CBD, 3, 2133-4.”

The database tells us even less about Fujianese Zhang Kui 張奎 (*fl.* 1060).²⁷

He married Linchuan woman Wang Wenshu 王文淑 when she was 14 in 1040(?). No entry or post is listed for him, merely his status as *shidafu*. He selected a husband for his daughter from his native Sha Xian, so one presumes his wife moved to Sha Xian with him. But Wang Anshi wrote an epitaph on his behalf, and he, of course, also hailed from Linchuan.

For Zhou Yanxian 周彥先 from Hailing (in Huainan)²⁸ no data is listed about the posts he held, beyond the fact that he entered into the bureaucracy through *yin* privilege. Hartwell's notes provide interesting detail about Zhou's second wife, née Wang, who married him when she was the mature age of 42, bore him one son, and died after six years of marriage at the age of 48.

For Wang Ling 王令 from Guangling (in Yangzhou), the details of his career are not included in the database.²⁹ The database also does not mention that he was born further north in Yuancheng (Hebei). His network data and the addresses listed for the people in his immediate network, however, provide more detail. It includes the following people:

Wang Yi(17)	王乙	Yuancheng	元城	uncle
Wang Shilun	王世倫	Jiangdu	江都	father
Wu Furen(2)	吳夫人	Jinxi	金谿	wife
Wu Fen	吳蕘	Jinxi	金谿	wife's father
Wu Shili	吳師禮	Qiantang	錢塘	daughter's husband
Wang Huaizhong	王懷忠	Kaifeng	開封	WL wrote epitaph for him
Wang Anshi	王安石	Linchuan	臨川	wife's sister's husband
Xu Tianxi	徐天錫	Wujin	武進	WL wrote epitaph for him

If any pattern emerges here, it is one of migration from the North, via the capital and a relationship with Wang Anshi, who married the younger sister of Wang Ling's

²⁷ From Hartwell's notes: Zhang(1) Kui(3) [3150] Wang Anshi, WJ, 99.1021 (wife, born Wang, who married him at age 14 and died in 1080 at age 56). CBD, 3, 2254.

²⁸ Wang Anshi, WJ, 96.993, 100.1034 and CBD, 2, 1481.

²⁹ The data comes from Wang Anshi, WJ, 97.998.

Fuzhou wife, to the temporary capital of the Southern Song, where he selected a husband for his daughter. In other words, it looks very much like a ‘Hartwell Northern Song marriage pattern’. But the data for Fuzhou is really too thin to draw any meaningful conclusions, especially considering the vast data surveyed by Hymes in *Statesmen and Gentlemen*.

Women from Mingzhou 明州

For Mingzhou, we have a slightly bigger sample of women: 24 in total, all born between 1105 and 1290.³⁰ (There are in fact 25 women listed, but ID#5077 汪太夫人 (1110–1204) and ID#35560 汪慧通 (1110–1204) must in fact be the same person, so I have discounted 35560.³¹) Here, like for Jizhou, we have a largely Southern Song sample. The women come overwhelmingly (75%) from Yin county 鄞縣, with only three women each from Cixi 慈溪 and Fenghua 奉化 counties. Their median age was 66.5.

Exactly one quarter (25%, 6 of 24) of the Mingzhou women married men from outside the prefecture (2 from Wuzhou 婺州, 1 from Jianzhou 建州, 2 from Yuezhou 越州, and 1 from Shaowu 邵武軍). Can the database help us find out when, where and how these marriages were arranged? There is, according to Hartwell’s notes, a certain amount of doubt about Pan Jingxian’s 潘景憲 (*js* 1163) address. Although he may have been born in Wuzhou, and married a woman from Mingzhou, he seems to have settled in Chuzhou.³² His network connections are spread over several

³⁰ Three of the women have no specific birth and death dates, and a further two have incomplete dates.

³¹ This emerges in the kinship tables, when it turns out these two women have the same father and the same husband, and have identical dates.

³² Hartwell writes: “Pan(1) Jingxian [3690] Zhejiang TZ, 125.26a; Zhu Xi, WJ, 93.10b-12b; Lu Zuqian, 8.193-194 (His second wife born Zhu, who married him at age 27 and died in 1179 at age 34). Zhenjiang TZ, 125.27b has him also listed as a Chuzhou, Songyang resident and his son Zihou [14753]

prefectures, but they are all kin relations, and they are all located in adjoining prefectures within Zhedong circuit. Similarly, Shi Wen 石文 (index date 1122) from Xinchang in neighbouring Yuezhou 越州 is difficult to locate precisely. This is the extent of his network:

Lou Ju(3)	樓瑀	WF	鄞縣	明州	浙東路
Shi Jixiao	石積小	F	潮陽	潮州	廣南東路
Shi Zijian	石子建	S	潮陽	潮州	廣南東路
Lou Shi	樓氏	W	鄞縣	明州	浙東路

It is a network of few people, located in part in Mingzhou (his wife and her father) and in part in Chaozhou. Li Youzhi 李友直 (1134–1199; *js* 1175) also hailed from Yuyao in Yuezhou,³³ but his wife and her father came from Mingzhou. Li Youzhi’s own father and the four sons he and his wife raised, however, all remained in Yuezhou. These two examples suggests a close relationship between the two prefectures in terms of the exchange of marriage partners, a hypothesis that cannot be confirmed conclusively by the database as it stands.

Two men from Fujian chose wives from Mingzhou. They were Ren Xiancheng 任賢臣 and Liu Zihui 劉子翬, who lost his father at the age of 30 and spent the remainder of his life a ‘private scholar’.³⁴ Ren Xianchen’s sons and six grandsons all remained based in Shaowu 邵武 (Fujian), suggesting a lasting affiliation there, while his father Ren Boyu 任伯雨 (1047-1119, *js*. 1082) hailed from Ruyang 汝陽 in the border region of Caizhou 蔡州. Ren Boyu’s own father came from Meishan 眉州 in Yizhou circuit 益州路, and his three sons settled in Shaowu, in

is listed in Zhejiang TZ as only a Chuzhou, Songyang resident. I am therefore assuming that Jingxian's residence in Songyang is anachronistic, but that Zihou (who is listed as a son of his mother, but not father in their respective funerary inscriptions) moved back to Chuzhou, possibly to be an heir of one of Haoqian's [3691] sons. CBD, 5, 3646.”

³³ Hartwell: “Li(2) Youzhi [18104] Lou Yue, WJ, 104.15b-20b; Sun Yingshi, WJ, 12.14b-16b (wife, born Shi(5), who married him at age 19 and died in 1197 at age 49). CBD, 2, 953 errs in identifying wife as wife of Youren [19864]. CBD, 2, 954.”

³⁴ This is based on information provided in Hartwell’s notes.

Xiuzhou 秀州 in Zhexi circuit 浙西路, and in Meizhou. It is possible that the database could yield more information about the marriage patterns of these individual women from Mingzhou who married men from outside. More likely, however, is that here too only a wider search through textual documents could confirm the impression made by the basic statistic that 75% percent of the largely Southern Song Mingzhou women married locally.

With a sample of 24 women, one can make some attempt at understanding shifts in status.³⁵

財政官員	富豪, 士大夫	central to local
士大夫	富豪, 士大夫	same
士大夫	士大夫	same
富豪, literatus or author	did not attempt exams	same
n/a	士大夫	n/a
財政官員	士大夫	central to local
士大夫	士大夫	same
財政官員	士大夫, yinju (or yinde)	central to local
士大夫	地方士人	same
士大夫	士大夫	same
n/a	富豪, 士大夫	n/a
士大夫	士大夫, yinju (or yinde)	same
士大夫	士大夫	same
士大夫	士大夫	same
布衣	富豪	same
士大夫	富豪, yinju (or yinde)	same
n/a	literatus or author	n/a
富豪, 士大夫	財政官員	local to central
地方士人	literatus or author	same
士大夫	士大夫	same
n/a	died before office	n/a
富豪, 士大夫	n/a	n/a

In the majority of the cases, the fathers are listed as *shidafu* 士大夫 or as local magnates 富豪, or as ‘literatus or author’, and the men their daughters married have a similar status designation (13 of 22, or roughly 60%). In only one case is the father listed as a local gentleman of some sort, while his daughter’s husband has an official

³⁵ Only 22 are listed here: in two cases, no data is available for father or husband.

post at the capital.³⁶ In five cases, the fathers are listed as either serving in the finance office or state council, while their daughters married men whose status is given as *shidafu* or local magnates or hermit. The evidence, such as it is, suggests that these largely Southern Song women of Mingzhou married mostly local men of a status similar to their fathers.

Women in the database from Wuzhou 婺州

There are in total twenty women listed in the CBDB with ‘Wuzhou’ as their address. Closer inspection, however, reveals that the same woman is listed twice, so the total is actually 19.³⁷ The majority of those women lived during the Southern Song,³⁸ and just less than half of them came from Jinhua, with the rest spread over the other Wuzhou counties.³⁹ The median lifespan of these women was 70 years, and on average, they married when they were 20. On the basis of the husbands’ children, there are a median of 3 children associated with these families.⁴⁰

The women married almost without exception locally: the majority of the women (11 of 19) married a man from the same county within Wuzhou; a further four married men from other Wuzhou counties (i.e. 79% married within the same prefecture). The other four married men from other prefectures. Two of them, both

³⁶ Lou Yi 樓昇 is listed as 富豪 and as 士大夫; his daughter married Wang Zhengyi 王正己, who held a post in the finance office (財政官員).

³⁷ This concerns Zhou Furen (2), 5383 and Zhou Shi (3), 5158. They share reference (Lu Zuqian WJ 7.175), father and husband. For the purposes of the analysis, I have used the data for Zhou Ruren (2) 5383, and deleted Zhou Shi.

³⁸ Four women have Northern Song dates, one lived during the Yuan, and 14 have Southern Song dates.

³⁹ Jinhua: 9; Dongyang: 4; Pujiang: 1; Wuyi: 1; Yiwu: 2; Yongkang 2.

⁴⁰ As pointed out above, it is not really possible to be precise about the children these women gave birth to. One can find sons and daughters via the husbands’ kin, but one cannot be sure that these women are actually their mothers.

Northern Song women, married Hangzhou men;⁴¹ one married a Mingzhou man, and one a Jiangyin man.⁴²

As for the two men listed as Hangzhou men, Yang Ao 楊翱 (976-1042) and Hu Ze 胡則 (963-1039), the database provides no details at all about Yang Ao's career, other than his status as 士大夫 and that he passed the *jinshi* examination.⁴³ The tables also reveal that Yang's wife moved from Jinhua to Qiantang, presumably when she got married, and that of their children all but one remained associated with Qiantang. Presumably, then, Qiantang was not merely a posting but a lasting affiliation.⁴⁴ Hu Ze, on the other hand, is entered in far greater detail. He served as intendant of transport between 1013 and 1015, as fiscal commissioner from 1018 to 1021, left to become accounting counsior 三司使, and did a final stint as fiscal commissioner 转运使 from 1028 to 1029. From his network, we see his associations were far from local:

Wang Tinglao	王庭老	1077	Yucheng	虞城	宋州	京東西路	SDH
Wang Cun	王存	1082	Danyang	丹陽	潤州	浙西路	SDH
Chen Wenyu(2)	陳文諭	959	Jinhua	金華	婺州	江南	WF
Chen Shi	陳氏	1018	Jinhua	金華	婺州	江南	W
Hu Kai	胡楷	1052	Qiantang	錢塘	杭州	浙西路	S1
Hu Xiang	胡湘	1060	Changzhou	長洲	蘇州	浙西路	S2
Su Fan	蘇璠	1006	Jinjiang	晉江	泉州	福建路	DH
Ye Can	葉參	1030	Changzhou	長洲	蘇州	浙西路	DH
Hu Chengshi	胡承師	959	Yongkang	永康	婺州	江南	F
Hu Huai	胡淮	1069	Qiantang	錢塘	杭州	浙西路	S4

Two of his sons remained in Qiantang, but another became affiliated with Changzhou; his granddaughters' husbands came from different places. But it also reveals he

⁴¹ Wu Furen 吳夫人(985-1057) married Yang Ao 楊翱, and Chen Shi 陳氏 (959-1037) married Hu Ze 胡則.

⁴² Qian Shiren 錢碩人(?-1186) married Zhao Cuizhong 趙粹中 from Mingzhou, and Chen Daoyun 陳道蘊(1144-1223) married Wu Hanying 吳漢英 from Jiangyin commandery 江陰軍, located just north of Taihu along the Yangzi, still within the same province.

⁴³ Hartwell's notes further add that the highest position he held was that of *Taichang boshi* 太常博士, 'Erudite of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices', but this post is not entered in the database.

⁴⁴ She is, in fact, listed in the 'LookatNetworks' form as hailing from Qiantang.

married a girl from his father's home in Wuzhou! In fact, closer inspection of the address tables reveals Hu Ze migrated from Wuzhou, and became affiliated with Qiantang. The design of this part of the database, thus, is problematic. The 'basic affiliation' used for the 'LookatNetworks' form hides from views such information that could be crucial in understanding both migration and marriage networks. Somehow, it ought to be possible to capture the information from the 'biog_add_data' table so it can be incorporated into the network information.

In the table below, the first column includes the status designation for the fathers of the women of Wuzhou, the second column the same for their husbands. Again, the vagueness of the terms and the incompleteness of the data makes it rather difficult to determine any change over time, but on the whole the majority of the Wuzhou women seems to have been born into families with local standing rather than empire-wide standing (i.e. men with positions in the central government), and married similarly. Out of 19 cases,⁴⁵ there are only two listed with positions in central government (one in the fiscal administration among the husbands, and one in the state council among the fathers).

father's status	husband's status
地方士人, died before exams	士大夫
community leader	地方士人
n.a.	地方士人
yinju (or yinde), did not seek office	財政官員
儒士	士大夫
n.a.	士大夫
宰執	士大夫
士大夫	士大夫
n.a.	literatus or author
士大夫	地方士人
n.a.	士大夫
地方士人	富豪
n.a.	student
地方士人	處士
n.a.	地方士人
士大夫	n.a.

⁴⁵ For one of the cases, no data were available for father or husband.

n.a.	literatus or author
士大夫	n.a.

Here, too, more analysis could be done to explore the links between the Wuzhou women and their husbands from elsewhere, and to flesh out the data on their status designations, but the overall figures of 79% of women marrying locally, and most women marrying men of a similar status to their fathers seem unlikely to be overturned by those examples without further searches through textual records.

Some concluding thoughts

Clearly, this has been nothing more than a preliminary attempt at using the database for research on Song women. Despite the obvious pitfalls of this ‘research’, it has been an interesting process, and it seems likely to me that more sophisticated studies of women and gender could easily emerge from proper analysis of the database. Let me conclude with a few brief points about the database, perhaps for further discussion.

1) Some important information about women, most notably age at marriage and background information about migration, is at present only available in the ‘notes’, and would ideally be converted to analyzable data. 2) The ‘LookatNetworks’ form can only handle a single individual at present. It might be useful to be able to explore the networks (within 2 nodes) of a group of people, whichever way that ‘group’ was composed. 3) Even within this small study of women, the error level seemed high, especially for women, where only partial names are given. 4) The link between individual and place (‘address’) is problematic, especially where other types of affiliation (such as ‘migrated to’, ‘moved to’ or ‘former address’) have been used without assigning a ‘Basic Affiliation’.