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# 近代史研究



Modern Chinese  
History Studies

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# 近代史研究

Modern Chinese History Studies

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# Modern Chinese History Studies

No. 4, 2020

## **“Constructing the National Spirit” : A Study on Zeng Kunhua’s *History of China***

..... *Li Xiaoqian*(4)

*History of China* (Zhongguo lishi) compiled and translated by Zeng Kunhua is a product of the new historiography in the early twentieth century. In terms of style and contents, this book borrowed many materials from textbooks on the Chinese history and East Asian history in Meiji Japan. With a Han-centered nationalist theme, it profoundly influenced the reform of the national history in the decade before the 1911 Revolution, and became a role model for similar historical works in the aspects such as new historiography, new terms used in history, and pictures used in history. Zeng Kunhua was the first one who integrated Huangdi’s story of moving the East in the narrative of the Chinese history and drew Huangdi’s portrait, so he was a pioneer of the Huangdi fever in the early twentieth century. Zeng’s book reflected the social, political, and historical trends of its time; therefore, it was not only a historical work, but also a textbook for political education. However, the book per se did not contribute much new knowledge; instead, it only shared the intellectual resources of that era, so it ended up as an outdated work.

## **“Knowing the New” and “Recovering the Old” : A New Interpretation of Dong Kang’s Later Thoughts on the Legislation Reform** .....

*Liu Zhouqi*(23)

After the 1911 Revolution, Dong Kang’s thoughts on legislation had changed. He reflected on the legislation reform in the late Qing and gradually formed a more mature approach of “knowing the new” and “recovering the old”. With this approach, he distinguished the special Chinese characteristics and the universal trend of the world and brought out his own opinion about the legislation reform of the criminal law and civil law for Republican China in the 1920s—1940s. He reckoned that the criminal law based on the universal trend of the world should also stress on the Chinese ritual tradition and the real social needs, and the first three parts of the civil law could follow the global trend but the revision of the parts on relatives and inheritance should emphasize social identities and social customs. Dong expected this approach would reduce the conflicts between law and social reality. Dong thought that “recovering the old” was based on “knowing the new”, in other words, the recovered rites, together with laws, were the means of governance. On the one hand, Dong Kang’s approach was in accordance with the social trend of cultural conservatism and the legal professionals’ collective reflection. On the other hand, among the many legal experts’ reflections on the legislation reform, Dong’s ideas such as recovering the native rational institutions and reforming the laws to fit the social and cultural reality were straightforward and unambiguous in particular.

## **An Analysis of the Controversy about Establishing the Position of Xinjiang Governor-General and the Governance of Xinjiang in the Late Qing** .....

*Zhang Cheng*(38)

In the New Policy Reform of the late Qing, Ili General Changgeng proposed to establish the position of Xinjiang Governor-General and his proposal led to the controversy among the political elites about the governance of the northwestern frontier. Changgeng had conflicts with the Grand Councilors and local officials when he promoted his agenda. Along with the multiple rounds of discussions, their controversy gradually moved into more profound levels. The topics of their discussions included the institution of personnel, the perception of the frontiers, and the mode of governance. Eventually, the Qing court decided to continue the old system in Xinjiang but rearranged the power structure there, and these policies resulted in the change of the Shaanxi-Gansu Governor-General. The controversy about establishing the position of the Xinjiang Governor-General in the late years of the Guangxu Reign also had impact on the Northwestern society in the Xuantong Reign and influenced the governance of Xinjiang continuously.

## **Merchants, Trade and the Frontier : Research on Han Merchants in the Mongolian Kulun Region in the Late Qing** .....

*Liu Yuewu*(51)

In order to protect the livelihood of the Mongolian banners, the Qing court used to ban Han merchants from China

Proper to do business in the Mongolian region. However, to deal with the new situation of the military operations in the Northwest and the establishment of local government in the Mongolian area, the Qing court permitted Han merchants with license to do business in the Mongolian region. In Outer Mongol, the Han merchants formed two major groups, the West Gang focusing on wholesale and loans and the Jing Gang focusing on retails, and constructed a trade network centered in Kulun and connecting the Mongolian region and China Proper. The Han merchants' trade activities in the Kulun area experienced a downward trajectory in the late Qing. The Han merchants in Outer Mongol played an indispensable role in maintaining the Qing rule in the Mongolian region, promoting the trade between Kulun and China Proper, and even developing commerce along the Silk Road between Europe and Asia, but from the perspective of frontier governance, the Qing policies to manage merchants in the Mongolian region also had significant weakness.

**The Role of the Nationalist Government of China in the Founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Its Early Activities** ..... *Cheng Zhaoyun*(65)

**A Historical Study on the Dalian Free Port in the Period of Japanese Colonial Rule**  
..... *Shi Shantao*(83)

**Mao Zedong's Use and Development of Historical Materialism around the Founding of the People's Republic of China** ..... *Jin Minqing*(99)

**"Looking for Proletariats": A Social Survey Conducted by the May Fourth Intellectuals**  
..... *Xiong Qiuliang*(111)

**The Preservation and Abolition of the Civil Service Examination and the Social Mobility of Rural Society in Modern Jiangnan** ..... *Li Fagen*(120)

The Civil Service Examination was one of the most important institutions in the Chinese history. It is regarded essential to promote social mobility, expand the foundation of the ruling class and maintain the social stability. Therefore, it is a common thought that the abolition of the Civil Service Examination blocked the social mobility in rural areas and it was one of the major reasons, together with the urbanization of the elite class, for the decline of culture, economy, and education in the rural society and the profound social crises in rural China in the first half of the twentieth century. However, in the Jiangnan area, because of the unbalance between the quota for degree holders of the Civil Service Examination and the level of economy and education, the gentry-landlord class had started the process of urbanization since the mid-Ming Dynasty and led to the increasingly widening of the gap between the urban and rural lives. After the mid-Qing period, degree holders almost all came from cities and towns. The abolition of the Civil Service Examination freed people in Jiangnan from the institutional yoke, so that the unique advantages for industrialization in this region in the modern transition could promote the social mobility in rural Jiangnan significantly. Thus, the Jiangnan story provides an alternative interpretation different from the general view about how the abolition of the Civil Service Examination impacted rural society.

**An Analysis of John Dewey's Lectures on "Political Philosophy" in the May Fourth Period**  
..... *Peng Shanshan*(138)

**The Reasons for the Appointment of Returned Cadets from Japan in Military Training Bureau of the Late Qing: Also a Discussion about the Relationship between Cadets and the Beiyang Clique** ..... *Peng Hechao*(153)

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