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Research Articles

A New Understanding of the Legal System in the Last Years of the Western Han Dynasty: A Case Study of the Official Record of the Zhang Xun Embezzlement Case Xu Shihong(4)

Two wooden tablets unearthed from J3 in Tuzishan, Yiyang, Hunan, recording the judgment in the case of embezzlement by Zhang Xun in the second year of the Han Emperor Ping (2 CE), provide rich information on the legal system toward the end of the Western Han dynasty. Here, the word *ju* (鞠) refers not only to the procedure for identifying the facts of a crime, but also to all the proceedings in a legal case. Unlike the Qin and early Han dynasties, this period had the grade of over 250 units of money for bribery, embezzlement and pilferage. The requirement that convicted criminals “dress according to law” indicates that prison attire was laid down by law. Twice the amount embezzled could be recovered from the perpetrator, and his household members were likewise liable for making good. Criminals sentenced to *kunqian chengdan* (髡钳城旦, having their heads shaved, wearing a cangue, and being engaged on public works) were to be sent to hard labor by the Minister of Works. The term *juejian* (爵减, reduced punishments for officials) found on the wooden slips means avoidance of punishment in the existing historical sources. The case came under the jurisdiction of Yiyang County. The term *lun jue yan* (论决言, reporting the final decision) meant reporting the outcome of the trial to the prefectural government, but did not necessarily imply a procedural review.

Accounts of the Wanli Korean Campaign in the Official *Ming History* Compiled under the Qing

Sun Weiguo(21)

Compilation of the official *Ming History* (*Ming Shi*) by imperial officials took more than 90 years. In different stages of the project, Wan Sitong's *Ming Shi Gao* (*Draft Ming History*), Wang Hongxu's work with the same name and Zhang Tingyu's imperial edition of the *Ming History* constitute the most important versions of Ming history. Wan Sitong gave considerable attention to the biographies of participants in the Wanli era Korean campaign; Wang Hongxu gave them scant notice; and Zhang Tingyu repudiated and obliterated them. In the latter's *Ming History*, “Imperial Annals of Emperor Shenzong” (*Shenzong Benji*) sets the tone for the negation of the Korean campaign. Those of the campaign's generals who gained a biography in the history did so either because of family connections or because they were involved in the Bozhou campaign or the Liaodong incident; almost none was admitted to the history on the strength of participation in the Korean campaign. The section on Korea gives a negative evaluation of the relevant figures and the campaign, rejecting and belittling them. The reasons for this were twofold. One was the influence of the history's source material: since Yang Gao had to be held responsible for the defeat in the battle of Sa'erhu, the compilers of the *Veritable Record of the Ming Emperor Shenzong* (*Ming Shenzong Shilu*) accepted Ding Yingtai's version of events and rejected the military feats of Yang Gao and the Ming army in Korea. The other arose from immediate political needs. Because the forces that participated in the eastern expedition to Korea subsequently became opponents of the later Jin dynasty in Liaodong, they had to be given a negative appraisal in order to foster Qing legitimacy. These factors determined the attitude of the Qing dynasty's official *Ming History* to the Wanli Korean campaign.

“Was Control of the Yellow River Undertaken to Protect Water Transport?”: An Analysis of the Political Implications of Yellow River Conservancy in the Qing Dynasty Jia Guojing(38)

The Qing dynasty gave a high priority to controlling the Yellow River, not only expending

large sums on it but also appointing a Yellow River governor, setting up a specific office, and establishing institutions, exhibiting an unprecedented intensity of intervention. Previous research has tended to believe that the main reason for this was that since the Qing had taken over the Ming system, it saw Yellow River conservancy as a measure for supporting water transport. However, the facts show that a lot more was involved. It is undeniable that if, at times when river transport was a priority, the political center was in the north and the economic center was in the south, the protection of water transport was a major mission for river conservancy, let alone the frequent flooding of the Yellow River in the early years of the Qing dynasty. At the same time, however, under the unstable and complicated situation, the Qing emperor also included the governance of the river into the strategic project of constructing the legitimacy of the regime. The activities of disaster relief, protection of the people's livelihood, worship at the tomb of Yu the Great, continuing the previous ruling traditions, bestowing on honors on river gods, and exploring the Yellow River's source were all based on this important consideration. In the mid-Qing period, despite multiple serious problems including difficulties in the Yellow River control and selection of officials, the Qing emperors still actively explored "managing the River" (*shi he*). Other considerations besides "protecting water transport", were the inertia of tradition and observation of the ancestral family rules. As one of the most ambitious Qing projects, the governance of the Yellow River was not only a water conservancy project but also a national political project of great importance, highlighting the political and cultural traditions of the Qing dynasty.

The Main Difference between Late Qing Sino-Foreign Treaty Relationships and Tributary Relationships Li Yumin(53)

In the late Qing, Sino-foreign treaty and tributary relationships between China and foreign countries reflected international orders that were different in kind. The tributary relationship had shaped the idea of "common rule of all under heaven" (*tianxia gongzhu*) centered on China, but in a sense it was an illusory construct whose name did not reflect reality, whereas the treaty relationship, based on the idea of national sovereignty and the principles of international law, was a modified and unbalanced international norm. The former aimed at establishing a self-defense framework that used tributary relationships to "make the barbarians form a defensive wall" (*shouzai siyi*); the latter was keen to secure actual rights and interests, especially economic interests. The inequality of the former was mainly reflected in forms of intercourse that absorbed Sino-foreign relations into the ritual of the sole authority, the Celestial Empire (*tianchao*); the latter exercised "quasi-rule" over China, which in actuality meant undermining its sovereignty. The former practiced the morality of the kingly way, of "non-rule" and "recognizing the weak"; the latter exhibited to the full the hegemonic way of "military force" and "oppressing the weak". The connotations and characteristics of the two different types of international order have their own complex elements and factors.

The "Historical Facts" and "Narratives" of Sun Yat-sen's 1924 Journey to the North: Public Opinion in the Mainstream Press Yang Rui(71)

Sun Yat-sen's 1924 trip to the north was important for the reorganization of national political arrangements and for the rebuilding of Sun's own political image. If we go back to that historical era, we find that the facts themselves and the original intentions of Sun's journey to North China, while partially consistent with the observations and interpretations of southern and northern political factions and with public opinion as reflected in the press, were mostly characterized by distortion and misdirection. Once they had been reshaped by different political factions and newspaper opinion, "historical facts" that should have been unambiguously defined became puzzling "narratives" that confounded the true and the false. Sifting through the relevant

historical sources and, as much as possible, making this event the fulcrum for ordering the relevant historical occurrences enables us to actively seek the logic behind the conversion of “historical facts” into “narratives” and to trace back “narratives” so as to restore “historical facts.” The quest for the intrinsic relationship between the two can stand as an effective key to reading Sun Yat-sen’s original intentions and the domestic and foreign political interaction and evolution of North and South. This paper reveals the intricate interlocking factual connections that different political factions reconstructed around the new political system, together with their internal and external influences.

The Dispute between Japanese Colonial Cliques over Policies for the Currency Standard in Northeast China (1906-1933)

Yan Hongzhong and Xu Chen(88)

Japan’s prewar colonial penetration and economic aggression in northeast China was accompanied by monetary and financial struggles and rivalry. From the time when the Japanese colonial forces entered the Northeast, currency policy was torn between adoption of the gold or the silver standard. The perennial disputes and confrontation among Japanese cliques on this issue meant that the Japanese government hesitated over the Northeast currency policy for a long time. After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan had initially planned to use the Yokohama Specie Bank’s silver-backed notes to gain a dominant position in Northeast currency, but this was resisted by the Kanto Government and the Manchurian Railway Company. Japan’s strategy then changed to promoting the gold standard through the Bank of Korea’s gold-backed note issue, which it tried to impose on the Dalian Exchange, but this policy also failed. When, around the time of the establishment of the puppet Manchukuo regime, the dispute on the currency standard was revived, the silver standard retained the upper hand. The paper currency of the puppet Manchukuo Central Bank was still silver-based and unredeemable. It was only after the signing of the Japan-Manchukuo Exchange Equivalence Agreement that the bank’s note issue formally abandoned the silver standard and was incorporated into the yen monetary system. With the outbreak of the total war of Japanese aggression against China, a series of puppet government-issued “Lianyin notes,” “Mengjiang notes” and “Central Reserve Bank notes” came out in rapid succession, in yet another instance of the Japanese yen’s riding roughshod over China’s financial system.

On the Origin of Changes in the Wilson Administration’s China Policy

Ma Jianbiao(106)

With the outbreak of the Revolution of 1911, the powers renewed their alliance in the form of a six-power banking consortium and tied the issue of diplomatic recognition of the Republican government to acceptance of loan by the Chinese government, seizing the opportunity to expand their interests. Squeezed out by the British and Japanese, the United States lost its say in the powers’ “dollar diplomacy” with China. The establishment of the Republic of China sparked the enthusiasm of American Christians for the Christianization of China. American missionaries to China and US political and economic circles worked up public opinion, denouncing the Taft administration’s complicity with the great powers and its opportunistic profiting from Chinese disarray as “un-American” and urging the US government to recognize the Republic of China as early as possible, in attacks used by the Democratic Party to win the next general election. Wilson had close ties with religious circles. As president, he abandoned America’s offensive and defensive alliance with the great powers on the issue of recognition and withdrew from the bank consortium, launching unilateral diplomacy. Republican diplomats acted as go-betweens in rallying the faithful. When the Wilson administration’s China policy encountered obstacles, a “prayer strategy” was launched that called for Christians to pray for the Republic of China, providing them with further inspiration and encouraging the government to recognize the Republic. The Wilson administration once again gained the diplomatic initiative in China, opening up a new pattern in the prewar special relationship of the two countries.

Nuclear Arms, US-Soviet Relations and the Origin of the Cold War Zhao Xuegong(123)

In World War II, the joint development of the atom bomb by the United States and Britain meant that the two shared a monopoly of nuclear weapons. Although the main reason the US launched a nuclear attack on Japan was to reduce its military casualties and shorten the war, this act had a profound impact on US-Soviet relations. The US and the Soviet Union fiercely contested the preservation or abandonment of the nuclear monopoly. The United States, which regarded the atom bomb as an important tool for achieving its political and foreign policy goals, toughened its Soviet policy, while the Soviet Union adopted a tit-for-tat approach and sped up its nuclear program. Despite their political and propaganda needs, both sides expressed support for international control of atomic energy, but in fact the differences in their positions and their refusal to compromise meant that this move ended in failure. Although nuclear weapons were not a Cold War product, they played an important role in the collapse of the alliance among the US, Britain and the Soviet Union and in the development of the Cold War.

Theories and Methods

The Group Portraits and Typological Analysis of German Prosopography (*Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*) within a Digital Humanities Framework Wang Tao(148)

German Prosopography (Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie) is an important reference work for information on German historical figures. Historians tend to focus on its practical value, rarely addressing the content of this large-scale reference set. The use of digital tools to mine prosopographical data reveals hidden information on German historical figures and may even bring up results that disagree with common knowledge, thus aiding our understanding of mainstream German historians' construction of the imagined "German." Large-scale analysis of the social networks reflected in the places of birth and death of these historical figures provides a "mortality map" that clearly shows the spread of major German historical cities from the south to the north. Researchers using a digital humanities framework to explore the information hidden in *German Prosopography* need not only to respect the objectivity of the digital method but also exercise an imagination that crosses historical contexts.

Academic Review

Beyond Cold War History: A New Trend in Research on US Propaganda and the Cold War

Zhai Tao(167)

Early studies of the history of Cold War propaganda basically saw US propaganda of the time as a Cold War product that originated in and served the Cold War. With the advent of the 21st century, there has been a tendency for research to "go beyond Cold War history," as scholars try to explore the origins of Cold War propaganda in the pre-Cold War era and look at factors that lie outside Cold War logic and historical mechanisms. They believe that whether it be Cold War propaganda ideas, measures and media or institution building and work ethic, or even historical role and status, such propaganda contains a great many pre-Cold War elements and a logic that differs from that of Cold War politics. Therefore, research should start from an overall perspective on the 20th century. This trend reflects the return of the "longue durée" in historical research and a renewed approach to the study of foreign propaganda.

Historical Note

The Statutory Frequency and Duration of *Seyi* (Special Services and Corvée Labor) in the Early Tang Dynasty Wu Shuguo(178)

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