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Essays

National Governance Perspectives on Epidemics and Medical Responses (4)

Editor's Note: The history of disease is an important field of historical research. The prevention, control, and treatment of infectious disease epidemics are unavoidable issues which comprehensively reveal a nation's governance capability. The global public health crisis triggered by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) presents both a monumental test of every nation's governance capability and an unprecedented challenge for human beings. For this reason, we have invited three scholars to discuss epidemics and medical responses in history from the perspective of national governance. Their discussions draw on events from ancient Chinese history, modern Chinese history, and world history, respectively. In this sense, the authors explore the future through an investigation of the past.

Special Topic Research

Reinterpreting the "Ying Yi" Bronzeware Inscription and Re-examining Its Nature: Additional Considerations on Why Mu Niu Was Punished Chao Fulin(31)

Most scholars regard the "Ying Yi", an important Yi language inscription of the late Western Zhou Dynasty, as the record of a judicial judgment. Although it involves a lawsuit, this inscription is not actually a legal judgment. Instead, it is an official Western Zhou Dynasty reprimand of a subordinate, Mu Niu, based on a previous lawsuit. Mu Niu's severe punishment was not unreasonable, as he violated the "rites" that members of the lower class subordinates were required to observe. This inscription is extremely important for understanding the development of legal concepts and the relationship between etiquette and law during the late Western Zhou Dynasty.

The Establishment of Governmental System in Ethnic Regions from the View of Shubang in Qin Period Zou Shuijie(44)

Shubang was an administrative organization established for governing ethnic minorities within the borders of the Qin Period. Before the unification, it was characterized by both central and regional administration, managing both ethnic states and local regions Dao inhabited by ethnic minorities. After the unification, it became local organs equal to Neishi (administrations governing territory near the capital) and commanderies, mainly governing Qin counties and ethnic minority regions in the Longxi area. Before the unification, the chiefs controlled their tribes in accordance with prior methods of governance. While after the unification, the titles were replaced by barbarians and barbarian leaders. After 214 BC, all minorities within the Qin territory were administrated by designated Dao officials. This basically achieved the unique administrative system of commanderies and counties. Initially, ethnic minorities in Dao could be exempted from compulsory service for lower taxes. However, they were later recruited as garrison soldiers, which were the services of registered households. Therefore, all minorities in the territory were gradually registered as households.

“Main Clans” and Regional Identity in the Ming Dynasty Towns of Jiangnan: A Case Study of Changshu County Yang Xi(65)

Since the middle of the 15th century, the developmental center of Jiangnan (south of the Yangtze River) has shifted to the Gaoxiang area, accelerating regional urbanization and bringing about “main clan towns”. With the changes of the local social power structure from imperial examination-oriented to wealth-oriented, some main clans successfully transitioned into the gentry class, preserving their dominant position in the power structure. At the same time, they maintained intimate relationships with the towns. Their concern for local defense and related behaviors affected and reflected the self-identity of the towns. In the late Ming Dynasty, main clans’ stereotypes affected the daily

administrative management of prefectures and counties, and even impacted traditional organizational structures at the grassroots level for a time. This shows that the relationship between the administrative structure and dominant clans in the region had a profound influence on the regional social and historical process.

The Commemorations of the May Fourth Movement and Underlying Thought during the Early Period of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Huo Xinbin(88)

Initially based on individuals' independent participation, the commemorations of the May Fourth Movement during the early period of the CPC were gradually implemented through organizational planning. Before the founding of the CPC, the early communists, including Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Yun Daiying, Mao Zedong, Qu Qiubai and Tan Pingshan, vigorously promoted the commemorations of the May Fourth Movement and offered new interpretations to inspire mass mobilization. Shortly after the founding of the CPC, the political situation deteriorated and the demands for revolution became more acute. In addition to their promotion of the commemorative discourse of "going to the people" and "overthrowing the warlords", the CPC members also called on people to put slogans into practice by means of mobilizing students to engage in national salvation campaigns with the help of the Socialist Youth League. In cooperation with the Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party) during the period of the National Revolution, The CPC further enriched the commemorative discourse of the May Fourth Movement and actively propagated the "National Movement" and the "People's Movement", initiating a popular revolutionary mobilization. The evolution of the early CPC's May Fourth Movement commemorative discourse and the formation of the commemorative system established the basic paradigm for later interpretations of the May Fourth Movement. It not only embodies the CPC's recognition and exploration of the aims, leadership, and themes of the revolution, but also reflects the CPC's shift from intellectual advocacy group to a mass movement-based political party.

Imperium Sine Fine: The Transition of Territorial Concept in the Early Roman Empire Wang Zhongxiao(110)

The massive Roman territorial expansion lasted for over centuries from the mid-Republican era to the early first century AD. During the reign of Augustus, the notion of the world for Roman intellectual elites was characterized by its inclusiveness and boundlessness. Despite the multiple meanings of the term “boundary” in Roman sources, the Roman Empire in the early period lacked clear and fixed physical borders, which is well conveyed by Virgil’s famous claim “the empire without the limit”. This fact reflects the relatively loose relationship between power and territory in the rise of Roman hegemony. From the late first century to the mid second century, the Roman frontier witnessed a remarkable development. The empire became more cohesive, and the contours of its territory became increasingly legible. These changes in turn were reflected in the works of contemporary Roman writers. However, the Virgilian notion of “the empire without the limit” still remained robust at least until the third to fourth century AD.

Restoration of the Roman Empire: The Political Development of Early Medieval Europe Li Longguo(127)

The investigation of the etymology of the term “Holy Roman Empire”, has long and often focused on “sacrum Romanorum imperium” but ignored the “sacra respublica” popular during the early Middle Ages. The latter term originated in the ancient Rome and still prevailed among the Byzantine emperors, who consciously identified their empire as the Holy Roman Empire. In 800, Charlemagne restored the Roman Empire by updating his title from ‘patricius Romanorum’ to ‘imperator Romanorum’. From the perspective of the relationship between Eastern and Western Europe, the restoration was a conscious imitation of the eastern Holy Roman Empire, while the popes functioned as a medium of transformation. To some extent, the political history of the early medieval Europe may be considered as the evolution of the ancient Roman Empire into the Holy Roman Empire.

More importantly, Eastern and Western Europe, developing independently but interacting with each other, had a shared and growing tendency towards the sacralization of politics in the Early Middle Ages.

Academic Review

What is Jiangnan?: Its Space and Discourse from the Perspective of Ecological History

Xia Mingfang(148)

Chinese economic historians have observed different relationships between the Jiangnan region and the rest of the nation since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). In the major debate occurring in the 1950s about the seeds of capitalism in China, Jiangnan was generally regarded as a model for China's economic development. Since the reform and opening up, along with the "regional shift" in China's historical research, it has been widely recognized that Jiangnan's developmental path differed from that of other regions. The point of view that "Jiangnan is not China" has gradually replaced the earlier one that "Jiangnan is China." Therefore, the PRC historians shall not evade these questions: how to critically analyze those two polarized statements? And how to dialectically investigate the relationship between Jiangnan, other regions, and even the entire nation with regards to economic development? It is necessary to move beyond the established framework of "the internal history" of Jiangnan, i.e., examining Jiangnan's history within Jiangnan. Instead, the perspective of ecological history which values the interactions between humans and nature, will contextualize Jiangnan's history within a broader spatial and temporal network, or, in other words, within a layered and interwoven "mountain-sea ecosystem." From this perspective, the gradually shrinking process of Jiangnan's geographic space over the time could be seen as the consequence of a process of "Jiangnanization" and "de-Jiangnanization" of China's economy. Thus, it is possible to construct a multi-dimensional "New Jiangnan History" which attends to "the linkages between the internal and the external", "the combination between the upper

and the lower”, “the connectivity between the ancient and the present”, “the interaction between China and the West”, “the correspondence between nature and humans”, and “the completeness in material and spirit”.

The Rise and Development of Historical Studies of American Political Culture in the United States Li Jianming(172)

Borrowing the concept of “political culture” from political science, drawing nourishment from anthropology, sociology, and other related disciplines, and inspired by social history, cultural history, transnational history, and other academic trends, American historians gradually transformed the field of political history and developed historical research on political culture with corresponding methodologies. Particularly, they explicitly defined the position and significance of culture and psychology in the political world. Thus, historians incorporated irrational factors into political history and enhanced their senses and skills of contextualism. Moreover, they explored interpretive approaches along with causation models. On this basis, American political historians probed elite political culture, mass political culture, and political subcultures, and discovered new research topics by integrating new cultural history, transnational history, and emotional history. The strengths and weaknesses of historical studies of American political culture in the United States may provide inspirations for Chinese scholars to rethink and promote historical research on political culture in China.

Reading Notes of History

Analysis of the Number of Households in the Early Song Dynasty Gu Hongyi(206)

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