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*Confucian Exegetics in Ancient and Early Medieval China: Towards a Historical Typology of Confucian Commentary*

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*Early Childhood Education in China: A comparative approach to values and citizenship education in public and private kindergartens in Shanghai*

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Agøy, Erling Hagen Cao

*Historical Climate Change in the Jiāngnán Region in the Late Míng and Early Qīng periods (1600-1700): Perceptions, Effects and Adaptation*

University of Oslo, February 2021

Abstract:

The Jiāngnán region of Eastern China saw a turn to colder climate from about 1600 to 1720. This dissertation approaches this topic from three perspectives: how the climate change was perceived, its historical effects and the efforts to counter it.

Climate events were seen as caused by various supernatural forces. Differences existed between what were seen as the causes of climate events in general (Heaven, qì and the Five Phases) and in specific cases (mythological creatures). Mostly climate events were not explained. Moral meteorology (human actions causing the weather) was theoretically accepted, though it was rarely referred to in concrete cases. Correlative thinking (connections between events in human society and in nature) caused climate events to be presented as omens for happenings in society, but they were rarely interpreted as omens in practice; though individual differences were present. On the other hand, there existed a tradition among the farmers of reading phenological signs to predict the weather. However, there were few indications that people had an awareness of climate change, even if they had a keen sense of climate history.

Deteriorating climate conditions increased the seriousness of rebellions. The fall and recovery in population was also related to climatic conditions. Also the economy was mostly negatively affected, including agriculture and industrial production, while many saw their lives changed and sometimes threatened by the weather conditions. Anti-disaster measures involved all levels of local society, and included both bureaucratic tax exemptions and local measures to provide food. Such efforts were gradually specialised over time, and they functioned best when all levels of society worked together. But the means taken included both the practical, the faith-based and the desperate. Some of them, together with how many thought the weather could be predicted, highlight an adaptation to life during climatically unstable times.

Bonch-Osmolovskaya, Olga

*Confucian Exegetics in Ancient and Early Medieval China: Towards a Historical Typology of Confucian Commentary*

St. Petersburg State University, June 2021

<https://disser.spbu.ru/zashchita-uchenoj-stepeni-spbgu/428-bonch-osmolovskaya-olga-andreevna.html>

Abstract:

This thesis is an attempt to systematically analyze Confucian commentary heritage in the historical and cultural context of the development of Confucian exegetical thought and Chinese traditional culture. The present thesis contains a source study of the peculiarities of the genesis and historical development of the main types of Confucian commentary, as well as key trends and principles of the dynamic development of Confucian exegesis in the Early Imperial and Early Medieval China. Based on source analysis and synchronous comparison of commentarial works, the thesis developed a historical typology of the forms of Confucian commentary. In the present thesis, by diachronic analysis of the process of the historical development of Confucian exegetical thought, its conceptual and terminological apparatus as well as the historical and cultural context of its existence, a periodization of the history of Confucian exegetical thought was developed. Several commentarial works, the historical context of their creation and biographical details about the compilers are systematically introduced.

Canale, Massimiliano

*Desiderio e frustrazione nella lirica dei Song settentrionali*

[Desire and Frustration in the Song Lyric of the Northern Song]

University of Naples “L’Orientale”, October 2021

Abstract:

This research aims to provide a rereading of the *ci* 詞 song lyric of the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127) as a way of complementing the traditional narrative summarized in the motto “the song lyric expresses feelings” (*ci yan qing* 詞言情). I seek to achieve this goal by shedding light on a widespread inclination shown by many lyricists to voice tensions between subjective desire and objective reality, thus emphasizing the importance of contrasts between divergent values in their poetics. These critical speculations shall be placed within the cultural context of stigma existing at that time around a genre which originated from interactions with courtesans, raising the issue of the difficult interplay of ethics and aesthetics. My work focuses on three representative authors of the period, Yan Shu 晏殊 (991–1055), his son Yan Jidao 晏幾道 (1038?–1110?), and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072). I first concentrate on the conflict between orthodox morality and individual freedom often emerging in the song lyric production by eleventh-century literati. In order to do so, I will explore some contradictions between the austere public image which was generally expected from members of the Confucian elite and the world of private pleasures where their lyrics were produced, touching on such matters as the problem of the reputation of the song lyric, the defamatory potential of erotic songs and other factors that possibly led conservatives to condemn this form as immoral. I then turn my attention to the analysis of the three authors’ collections, emphasizing the central role played therein by representations of tensions between human will and social or natural necessity. On this basis, I intend to offer a reconsideration of our lyricists’ work as one mostly concerned not just with desire at large but more specifically with the aspect of its frustration, as it appears from the predominance of compositions expressing dissatisfaction in its various forms—usually romantic or existential. In sum, I propose a re-evaluation of the song lyric as a means for lamenting the unavailability of pleasure and portraying the complexity of people’s relationships with society, nature and, ultimately, reality.

Christ, Stefan

*Geschichte, Politik und Gesellschaft im Mogu des Wei Yuan (1794–1857)*

[History, Politics, and Society in Wei Yuan's (1794-1857) *Mogu*]

Universität Hamburg, October 2021

Abstract:

This dissertation presents the first complete and annotated translation of the *Mogu* (“Silent Notes”) into a European language. The author Wei Yuan is usually presented as an important thinker of a China on the edge of modernity, who especially influenced the later 19th century reformers. Thus the 30 chapters created from reading notes between roughly 1820 and 1855 that make up the *Mogu* not only provide a better understanding of Wei's own themes, arguments, and concepts, but are also an important source for Chinese intellectual history.

My analysis of the *Mogu* is guided by a complex understanding of modernity, derived from relevant theories in conceptual history and sociology. This enables me to come to a clearer understanding of the supposedly “modern” aspects of Wei's thinking. In particular, aspects of social differentiation, the roles of temporality and history, as well as the conceptions of knowledge, society, and politics are brought into focus.

The results show Wei as a thinker who, particularly in the first part of the *Mogu*, paints the picture of a hierarchically structured, meaningful order centred around heaven and the good “nature” of humans it ensures. At the same time, however, Wei's eye for dynamic change, historic contingencies, and functional logics continually erodes this order, which is particularly evident in the second part of the *Mogu*.

In this second part, Wei not only provides arguments for the necessity of specialised empirical knowledge in contrast to the absolute knowledge of the “sage,” but also develops an understanding of the realm of politics based in large parts on functional interrelations, which carry him far away from the premises of the meaningful order. Thus, the centre stage is taken by “ability” instead of “virtue,” while the emperor seemingly loses his special position as a mediator between heaven and earth. A further decentration takes place in the role of morality, which is relegated to serve as a means of self-discipline for functionaries. Wei's arguments on the economy underline the important role that the logics of functional differentiation play in parts of the *Mogu* – and it is precisely these logics that relate it to modernity.

However, there is no complete break with the meaningful order, as Wei's understanding of history makes clear. Although it can be shown that he tries to locate his present in the structures of historical change, he does not understand these structures as laws of history itself but derives them from the eternal order of heaven and the constitution of human nature. He observes individual steps of progress and demands to break free from the shackles of the past, but his arguments do not condense into a modern concept of progress.

Despite his many re-evaluations of important concepts and arguments, Wei was in many regards a traditional scholar committed to the Confucian classics. The relevance of his thought as shown by the *Mogu* does not lie in any major breakthrough but in the many small departures and decentrations in which the breaking points of the old order become visible.

Crowe, Anca

*Early Childhood Education in China: A comparative approach to values and citizenship education in public and private kindergartens in Shanghai*

King's College London, November 2021

[https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/early-childhood-education-in-china\(e6c6f236-67a7-4103-86c6-5d76f07ed4b0\).html](https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/early-childhood-education-in-china(e6c6f236-67a7-4103-86c6-5d76f07ed4b0).html)

Abstract:

This dissertation looks at how the interplay between local and global forces has been shaping early childhood education (ECE) in China since the 2010 Education Reform, how and why the dominant discourse has become increasingly keen on promoting values and citizenship education after the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress, and whether its strategy has been effective in disseminating the core socialist values in public and private kindergartens. My focus is on analysing the dissemination and internalisation of moral education (labelled 'values and citizenship education') and the mainstream North American narratives of Halloween and Christmas in five public and private kindergartens in Shanghai, observed during the academic year 2017-2018. The analysis looks at the relationship between culture, values, and power within a thematic spatiality framework, where I apply a Centre-Periphery lens to position Beijing at the Centre (Space1), public kindergartens on the Space-in-Between (Space2), and private kindergartens on the Periphery (Space3) of the homogenising dominant discourse promoting moral education (*deyu* 德育). Moreover, I use the concepts of sovereign power and Foucauldian disciplinary power to understand the complex power dynamics shaping five elite preschools in Shanghai and the extent to which socialist morality has been successfully inculcated.

I rely on a multitude of data sources, from direct observation of festival celebrations in preschools, interviews with ECE officials, experts, and kindergarten staff and parent questionnaires to key ECE legislation and kindergarten social media accounts and curricula. To assess the power dynamics between local forces promoting the 'cultivation of socialist builders' and global ones I tackled the kindergartens' Spring Festival and China's National Day narratives, on one hand, and Christmas and Halloween-related ones, on the other, as well as looked at the attitudes and behaviour of a multitude of actors, from local education officials to preschool principals, teachers, parents and children.

My findings indicate that, starting with the 2010 Education Reform but gaining more impetus after the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress, Space1, working through local education bureaus and local CCP branches, has increased its efforts of nationalising kindergarten education. The Centre thus aims for ECE curricula to contain a moral education core and disseminate a discourse that would ensure the Party's survival through the nurturing of new generations of loyal citizens, sharing the same vision of 'Chineseness.' Based on the narratives promoted on their social media posts, both elite public kindergartens and private bilingual English-Mandarin ones are conforming with this directive. I also showed that Space2 is shaped by both sovereign and disciplinary power and that both staff and parents behave as 'obedient bodies' (Foucault 1991), fully aligned with the official rhetoric's push for moral education. In Space3 the parents and native English teachers are resisting and negotiating with the Centre, retaining the agency to influence educational content by disseminating American narratives of Halloween and Christmas in the classroom, but exercise self-censorship in public, for example by aligning with the patriotic dominant discourse on social media.



Dalen, Kristin

*Chinese Views on Welfare – Social Policy and Political Support*

University of Bergen, June 2021

<https://www.uib.no/en/sampol/145558/trial-lecture-and-public-defence-kristin-dalen>

Abstract:

Remarkable long-term economic performance has long been a pillar of legitimacy in China. However, although most Chinese experienced better living conditions than at any previous point in the country's history and were optimistic about their future prospects at the beginning of the 21st century, the negative side-effects of economic growth, such as widening socio-economic inequality and unequal life chances raised serious concerns among elites, academics and government officials. Perceptions of social injustice and an uneven and unfair developmental policy were considered serious threats to popular legitimacy, and the focus of development widened from unbridled economic growth to include the greater well-being of the majority of the population. Important welfare schemes were reformed and expanded to include population groups previously left without access or entitlement to basic social security, such as health insurance and pensions. Enabled by generous fiscal budgets and clear political goals, the administration of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao (2003–13) established a new Chinese welfare system in an effort to establish social stability and popular legitimacy. This dissertation explores through analytical tools and empirical evidence how social policy outcomes can be associated with political support. It examines the salience of performance in popular support of government at central and local levels, and whether politically relevant attitudes among Chinese citizens changed in ways favourable to upholding social stability and popular legitimacy during the 'golden age' of the expansion of Chinese social policy. Empirical analysis in this study are based on three nationally representative perception surveys implemented in 2004 (N=3640), 2009 (N=2968) and 2014 (N=2507), providing new, comprehensive data, enabling in-depth study of developments and long-term trends.

The research shows that social-policy outcomes and socio-economic performance are important aspects in people's evaluations of both central and local governments in China. A preference for government provision of social services increased substantially across the population during the period of Chinese social-policy expansion. This was particularly true among population groups that previously experienced low coverage in basic welfare schemes, such as rural populations and rural-to-urban migrants. A principal finding is that traditional divides in Chinese society, such as urban-rural household registration (*hukou*), gradually lost strength as predictors of welfare attitudes over the ten-year period covered by my analysis. From being the strongest predictor of attitudes in 2004, hukou-status no longer significantly predicted such attitudes in 2014. The weakening of traditional social divides as predictors of attitudes may indicate that China is moving away from a fragmented society with traditional Chinese characteristics towards a society where attitudinal patterns are structured along social cleavages based on interests and ideas.

The findings presented in this dissertation imply that the implementation of a broader and more inclusive welfare system may contribute to popular political support and legitimacy of government though mitigating the negative side-effects of economic growth, traditionally seen as a principal component of performance legitimacy. The research contributes to literature within the emerging field of Chinese welfare attitude studies and to more established research on political support and legitimacy.

Dang, Xiayin

*The Use of the Sublime, the Rise of the Self: Discursive Practice of Zhang Chengzhi's "Sublime Writing"*

University of Freiburg, July 2021

<https://d-nb.info/124291000X/34>

Abstract:

This dissertation examines the contemporary Chinese Muslim writer Zhang Chengzhi's writing cosmos of the sublime. The sublime, for Zhang, progresses concomitantly with aesthetic taste and literary style as writing practice, living style as daily practice, and individual/collective identity in practices inside and outside of text. In other words, the dissertation discusses the production of meanings and uses of the term "sublime". In order to clarify the discourse of the sublime, I examine texts by Zhang, paratexts about Zhang and context related to disputes of the sublime. Such an admixture is significant for investigating the rich and varied range of meanings of the sublime. Especially, the two-dimensional conceptualization (the static sublime and the practical sublime) provides a new approach to Zhang's textual practice. Likewise, the dissertation traces how the sublime has been interpreted (sublime, de-sublime or anti-sublime) in their discursive strategies by contemporary Chinese writers and intellectuals since the foundation of People's Republic of China. This review provides a vital way of viewing the similarities and differences between Zhang and his peers, and of exploring how Zhang's identity is constructed both by himself and within such a context. Additionally, the dissertation deals with interactions and tension between author and reader both inside and outside of text with influences of media. The coherence and divergence between the author, his readership and the media, make the meaning-production of the sublime much clearer.

The sublime counteracts the materialism and consumerism in post-Mao society as some critics note; as such, it reflects how writers and intellectuals—taking Zhang as a typical example in this dissertation—deal with an identity crisis within the context of globalization and marginalization of the ethnic minorities and Jahryyia. Therefore, the dissertation proposes four functions of the sublime: Sublime as nostalgia: a psychological response to the disillusionment of utopia in the new era of post-revolution; Sublime as quasi-propaganda: literary response to the marginalization of Jahriyya Muslims; Sublime as distinction: aesthetic, rhetorical and moral response to the condition of consumerist culture; Anti-/De-sublime as anti-essentialism: deconstructive strategic response to the essentialist perception of the sublime. The dissertation thus sheds new light on Zhang's writing of the sublime with the larger aim of showing how the sublime is used to construct a self by means of self-discovery, contradiction, alienation, and self-transcendence as response to the crisis of identity and meaning.

Gu, Shuangshuang

*La traduzione del Liaozhai zhiyi di Ludovico Nicola di Giura*

[Ludovico di Giura's translation of *Liaozhai zhiyi*]

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, August 2021

<http://dspace.unive.it/handle/10579/20588>

Abstract:

Ludovico di Giura's translation of the *Liaozhai zhiyi* in Italian, published in 1955, has been the first and the most complete translation in Western languages. Ludovico di Giura arrived in China as a military doctor and a diplomat at the Italian legation of Beijing in 1900 and remained in China for almost three decades. His first Italian translation of 99 stories from the *Liaozhai zhiyi* was published in 1926. In the following years he also published translations from the *Lunyu* and *Honglongmeng*, and of Chinese poetry.

This dissertation is the first study of Ludovico di Giura's translation of the *Liaozhai zhiyi*. Adopting the methodology of translation studies, and especially Holmes' "Product-oriented DTS" and Bassnett and Lefevere's "Cultural Translation Theory", it investigates the genesis of the integral translation of the *Liaozhai zhiyi* in Italian language and of the translation's strategies adopted by Di Giura in his work, with special reference to the notion of "functional equivalence".

Guan, Zexu

*Selling beauty in Digital China: Gender, Platform, and Economy*

Leiden University, November, 2021

<https://scholarlypublications.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/3239040>

Abstract:

The last two decades have witnessed a drastic change of how Chinese women see cosmetics in everyday life, and beauty blogs play an important role to accelerate the process of change. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, applying makeup was often associated with moral corruption; however, wearing makeup became a taken-for-granted lifestyle for Chinese women at the end of the 2010s, especially in the digital space of beauty blogs. This dissertation focuses on the flourishing of beauty blogs and takes it as a key case to understand China's societal restructuring and women's role in the restructuring.

This research problematizes the rapid growth of beauty blogs, investigating how this process has been shaped and accelerated in the broader context of China's social transformation. It collects data from four-year online participant observation, in-depth interviews with 38 informants, three field trips to beauty expos in China, and secondary literature.

Based on the empirical data, this research offers an integral analysis frame, including dimensions of gender norms, platformized cultural production, and the political economy of the cosmetic industry. From the perspective of gender norms, beauty blogs inherited discourses of consumerist feminism and neoliberalism, which became increasingly influential in the reform era. By emphasizing the effect of "aesthetic labor", beauty bloggers encouraged women to monitor their bodies and perform proper femininities, boosting the return of binary gender norms and deepening the aesthetic gap between diverse classes. From the perspective of platform evolution, the proliferation of beauty blogs was a crucial step of platform expansion. For social media platforms, beauty bloggers became an essential channel to keep female users and big data. In social media's campaigns, beauty bloggers were branded as self-made entrepreneurs who can harvest overnight fame and fortune through voluntary content production, mobilizing more users to produce content and data. From the perspective of political economy, the prevalence of beauty blogs is not a China-only phenomenon. The global popularity of beauty accounts on diverse social media comes from the fact that the cosmetic industry spends considerable marketing fees on beauty accounts worldwide, making a material foundation for the increase of beauty blogs. The global marketing of the cosmetic industry does not cancel local characteristics of Chinese beauty blogs. In China's specific commercial environment, where distribution networks of beauty products were poorly and unevenly developed, e-commerce platforms like Alibaba and JD rushed into the beauty race and crazily promoted the retailing of beauty products through beauty blogs. Behind Chinese beauty blogs is the explosion of the beauty market in the past two decades.

This research reveals that beauty is a social institution nurtured by diverse actors under capitalism. As an embodiment of gender norms, beauty is sold by entrepreneurial beauty bloggers; as a mechanism of cultural production, it is promoted by social media platforms; as a business model, it is advocated by cosmetic brands and e-commerce platforms. This research concentrates on small things like lipsticks and eyeshadows, but it rejects consumption of such things as personal choices or individual lifestyles. Ultimately, the rise of beauty blogging tells stories of China's economic and societal restructuring through new media and Chinese women being unlikely to stay away from beauty in the capitalism-led "beautiful" environment.

Lee, Wang-han

*Le décor urbain en Chine moderne (1901-1937) : l'expérimentation des expressions plastiques et l'expérience des modernités visuelles*

[The Street Furniture in Modern China (1901-1937): Experiment of Plastic Expressions and Experiences of Visual Modernities]

École des hautes études en sciences sociales, December 2021

<https://www.theses.fr/2021EHES0117>

Abstract:

This dissertation aims to explore a new genre of product installed in urban space from the late imperial China: the street furniture. Which means the objects located in the city that have an aesthetic meaning or function, such as the monument, the street light or the signage. These objects constitute a considerable aspect of modern life for the Chinese and change their perception about urban space, but have been ignored in Chinese history for a long time.

This research is actually based on two main approaches, one historical and the other aesthetic. The first emphasizes the significance of the modern era in Chinese history, particularly the period between 1901 and 1937. During this period, the most important mission for the Chinese was to seek modernization of the state. This trend has brought immense influence to Chinese society, including street furniture. Therefore, it is logical and necessary to take modernization and its influence on the street furniture as our first point of analysis.

Subsequently, this approach brings us to our second argument: the plastic and aesthetic expression of street furniture. Despite the fact that most street furnitures are not created for aesthetic reason, they stimulate people's sense, especially the visual perception, and provoke their sense of beauty to a certain extent. In this regard, a point of view based on research in art and aesthetics becomes significant in this dissertation.

By means of this conceptual framework and methodology appropriate for it, we will have chance to observe the less visible facets hidden in the metanarrative of history, and possibly establish a new approach leading us rethink the aesthetic ideology, the visual culture, and the urban life of modern China.

Lepadat, Carmen

*Not just Postposed Topics. An integrated pragmatic account of the sentence-final slot in Spoken Mandarin Chinese*

Sapienza University of Rome, September 2021

<https://iris.uniroma1.it/handle/11573/1568122>

Abstract:

Topics occurring in sentence-final position have fascinated linguists over the past few decades, and many proposals have been put forth to account for their frequent occurrence in spoken language. Nevertheless, no unified account of the different types of linguistic elements characterizing Mandarin right periphery has been proposed, nor has the interaction between these elements been duly explored.

The present dissertation has a three-fold objective: i) provide a corpus-driven outline of the expressions naturally occurring at the right periphery; ii) identify and describe their pragmatic functions in terms of information structure, discourse organization and interpersonal relationship management; iii) explore their intersection and interaction with other overtly marked dimensions of (inter)subjectivity.

The novelty of this thesis consists in i) the holistic approach to the Mandarin utterance right periphery; ii) the adoption of both theoretical-based and corpus-driven categories to explore the relationship between right-peripheral elements and context-dependent features; iii) the employment of exploratory data analysis and data-manipulation methods recently adopted in cognitive and usage-based linguistics studies (e.g. Tantucci & Wang, 2018) such as conditional inference trees (Tagliamonte & Baayen, 2012). Among the results of this study, the gender-based usage of (subjective) right-peripheral expressions is previously unaccounted for in the literature; others, including the strong bias of the right periphery towards the expression of interpersonal meanings, not necessarily in terms of the inherent semantics of the sentence-final expressions but rather in terms of the functions performed, as well as the illocutional complexity revolving around evaluation, confirm hypotheses from previous literature.

Li, Gang

*The Hui Muslims' Identity Negotiations: A Socio-Legal Investigation into the Relations between the Sharī'a and the Chinese Legal Systems*

Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg & University of Groningen, June 2021

[urn:nbn:de:bvb:29-opus4-170503](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bvb:29-opus4-170503) & <https://doi.org/10.33612/diss.170345681>

Abstract:

This dissertation is a historical investigation into the relations between the Sharī'a and the pre-communist Chinese legal systems, and it asks how these two normative traditions contribute to the construction of the Chinese Hui Muslims' dual-identity of being Muslim and Chinese. It aims to explore what are the possible major causes of the tensions for the Hui Muslims to become Chinese without losing their Muslim identification both in the imperial and modern Chinese socio-legal contexts before 1949. In this regard, the thesis also provides three case studies on Ḥajj, education, and marriage that cover the religious, moral, and legal aspects of the Sharī'a so as to examine how the tensions are presented, negotiated, and tackled by the Hui Muslims since Islam came to China, particularly during the Republican period. As a historical examination of the socio-political process of the construction of the Hui Muslims' dual-identity, the dissertation analyses a range of historical Chinese texts through the insights of hermeneutics, including, but not limited to, imperial Chinese legal documents, classical Chinese Confucian works, and various texts produced by the Hui Muslims themselves. This is also complemented by short-term fieldwork studies in several Muslim communities in the western and southwestern parts of China.

Luhn, Clara

*Von Briefen und Kompilatoren: Zur Einbindung von Texten des Genres shu in Geschichtswerken, im Wen xuan und im Yiwēn lejū*

[Of letters and compilers: On the inclusion of texts of the *shu* genre in historical works, in the *Wen xuan*, and in the *Yiwēn lejū*]

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, February 2021

Abstract:

Who is it that influences how a reader understands a text after its author has passed it on? And how can such influence be determined? My study provides an answer to these questions based on a compilation of 22 short prose texts written between the 1st century BC and the 6th century CE. Under the genre designation *shu* 書, these texts were selected by a group of compilers headed by Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501-531 AD), crown prince of the Liang dynasty, as the best and most valuable epistolary texts that Chinese literature had produced since its beginnings. Their anthology, known today as *Wen xuan* 文選 (Selections of Literature), has passed the letters, along with a variety of texts in other genres, down to the present, reaching audiences in the tens of thousands, perhaps even in the millions, over time.

My analysis is guided by ideas of reception theory, which focusses on readers and their perception of texts. Specifically, it is concerned with the vehicles by which texts are transported over time and those individuals who were responsible for those vehicles.

The three chapters examine three different genres each, in which primary sources such as letters are interpreted and processed by different compilers: Historiographical works, anthologies, and category books (*leishu* 類書). Each chapter begins by introducing the literary genre in question, paying particular attention to the motivations of the individuals who undertook the compilation of the work and the various decisions they took in compiling it. Subsequently, each chapter uses selected examples to examine how the compilers' motivations and their decisions influenced their inclusion of primary texts. The analysis begins with letters in the *Han shu* 漢書 and concludes with letters in the *Yiwēn lejū* 藝文類聚, thus covering epistolary readings from the period of the Later Han Dynasty (25-220 CE) to the early phase of the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE).

The aim of the study is fourfold: It aims, first, to demonstrate how compilers delineated the genre of *shu* for their own purposes, and second, to show how they employed the means typical of their own genre. Third, the case studies shed light on how compilers understood selected epistolary texts. Thus, attention is first given to questions of literary history and genre theory. More broadly, however, the question is one of transmission history. For the compilers did not only record the texts in their historical and collected works as well as, partly unintentionally, their own interpretations of these texts by the way they presented them. Rather, their compilations significantly influenced the reception of the individual texts by later readers. A fourth objective of the study is therefore the question of how surviving source material is to be evaluated in the context of sinological research.

The dissertation has been published in April 2022 as a monograph in the series "Lun Wen - Studien zur Geistesgeschichte und Literatur in China" by Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden (ISBN 978-3-447-11819-4).



Martins, João

*Mitos Chineses de Origem: Envolvências Filosóficas e Perspetivas Contrastivas*

[Chinese Creation Myths: Philosophical Influences and Comparative Perspectives]

University of Minho, January 2021

<http://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/77238?locale=en>

Abstract:

This thesis proposes an investigation in the scientific area of cultural sciences, since it aims, through an analytical and critical spirit, to understand the diversity of cultural practices and discourse associated with creation myths. This paper, which is divided into five chapters, seeks to deepen the study of mythical narratives, trying to develop a more comprehensive understanding of Chinese worldview while providing a better perspective about the myth itself and its ability to connect with the human psyche. It is a contribution to the strengthening of Portuguese-Chinese relations, since it is, above all, an attempt to investigate the beginnings of civilisations as highly creative and convergent points of the human mind. Here, perhaps, lays the reason that most decisively determined the development of this work: the epistemic relevance of understanding the diversity of practices and the richness of the cultural discourse associated to myths of origin. Taking this possibility into account, it intends to carefully and critically analyse and interpret a selected set of Chinese myths of origin and identify, in their structures, through comparisons with other narratives of the genre, a series of revealing details not only of possible contacts and exchanges between peoples, as well as, and perhaps above all, of remnants of a single human thought. In other words, presenting as a final desideratum the construction of a communicational bridge between China and the West/Portugal in order to break down barriers and promote conscious dialogues between cultures with very specific characteristics, this research will also aim to identify, as a whole, the constant human need for an eternal return to origins. Bearing this in mind, it initially addresses the evolution of the humankind in three main components: culture, language and religion. It then analyses mythical thinking, offering brief reflections on the concept of myth and variation of its understanding throughout history. Acknowledging that human thought has a collective character, almost as if there was a universal grammar of human thought, the paper later presents Girard's theories of mimetic violence and Jung's archetypes as starting points for a deeper interpretation of the reported mythical episodes. Finally, and after a demarcation of the Chinese mythological system, we proceed to comment and analyse them, namely those regarding the genesis of the world, the creation of human beings, the destruction of the world by the flood, the origin of agriculture and the destruction of the world by the sun. The critique of these narratives, through Girard's and Jung's theories, allows us to lay down some points of convergence between Chinese mythical narratives and their Western counterparts. In short, this work seeks to answer the need for a better understanding of structuring aspects of Chinese culture and its influence up to the present, as the myth certainly is, without forgetting the universality that this type of phenomenon shares across the globe.

Moshchenko, Irina

*Трансформация традиционных концептов в творчестве Чжан Айлин (1920-1995)*

[Transformation of Traditional Concepts in the Work of Zhang Ailing (1920-1995)]

Russian Academy of Sciences, November 2021

[http://imli.ru/images/Diss\\_2021\\_Moschenko/Disser.pdf](http://imli.ru/images/Diss_2021_Moschenko/Disser.pdf)

Abstract:

This research presents a study designed to analyse the fictional concepts of “love” and “home-family” in the early works of Zhang Ailing.

1) Fictional concept “love”: The research reveals conceptual binary oppositions which are formed around the core of the concept of love that is: *ai* (爱), *qing* (情) and *lian* (恋). The oppositions are the following: absurdity – conciseness; frivolous/pretense – serious/sincerity; material – spiritual/sacred; isolation – openness; selfishness – generosity; cowardice – courage; overseas – traditional. This ambiguity of the concept is the key to understanding how early works of Zhang Ailing differs from the previous literature tradition, which understands love as a supreme good.

The research shows the transformation of the concept of love in the early work of Zhang Ailing. The writer confronts the tradition, she tries to destroy the romantic-sentimental attitude to love that was formed in Chinese literature in the first decades of the twentieth century. Breaking with the conventional image of “love above all” (恋爱之上), Zhang Ailing begins to build up her own world of love. She starts from the denying of romantic love and attachment, and only then tries to fit love into the social structure, to turn ordinary love into a social value equal to success in work, financial well-being, etc.

2) Fictional concept “home-family”: The core of the “home-family” concept is represented by character *jia* (家), which has two separated meanings: “home”, that is the place where one lives or a household, and “family”, that is relatives, connections, clan, tribe, etc.

The Confucian idea of a patrilineal, hierarchical, patriarchal system, and the family as the basis of the world order were reassessed at the beginning of the 20th century. Participants of the May 4th movement severely criticized the old family system. In the works of “new women” writers Bing Xin and Ding Ling, the new semantic content of the concept “home-family” appears: the image of an ideal home in Bing Xin’s works transforms into Ding Ling’s fictional home of the childhood memories and finally becomes a terrible, hideous home of the fictional world of Zhang Ailing. The original positive characteristics of Bing Xin’s “home-family” concept that is purity (干净), modernity (摩登) and correctness (好人) in Zhang Ailing’s short stories become sterility, mindless copying and lack of sincerity.

Zhang Ailing’s “home-family” concept presents a structure that is skewed to the one side. There is only one binary opposition (“warm” – “cold”) that is represented in the texts. All other meanings of the concept are marked negatively. Even if there is a pair of words that have opposite meanings, they complement each other rather than oppose each other. Combined together, the meanings of the “home-family” concept construct a hopeless, terrifying family image, which consists of obsession, illusory, fixation, instability, disappointment, indifference, moral injury, sacrifice, burden, fatigue, crampedness, emptiness, senseless.

Moskalev, Petr

*Overseas Chinese in the History of Thailand and Vietnam in the 20<sup>th</sup> - Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries*

St. Petersburg State University, June 2021

<https://disser.spbu.ru/zashchita-uchenoj-stepeni-spbgu/464-moskalev-petr-eduardovich.html>

Abstract:

The dissertation is dedicated to the comparative historical analysis of the processes of development of the Chinese immigrant communities in the territories of Vietnam and Thailand from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The problem, with which this research paper deals with is, firstly, to provide an objective and accurate comparative historical description of the specific characteristics of the position of overseas Chinese in Thailand and Vietnam during the outlined historical period. Secondly, to provide an answer to the question - which factors influenced the similarities and differences in the position of overseas Chinese in each of these countries.

Ogrizek, Marko

*Osrednji filozofski pojmi v naukih Itōja Jinsaija: Primerjalna analiza konfucijanske etike*

[The Central Philosophical Concepts in Itō Jinsai's Teachings: A Comparative Analysis of Confucian Ethics]

Univerza v Ljubljani, May 2021

Abstract:

In the dissertation I aim to analyze the central philosophical notions in the teachings of the Edo period Japanese Confucian scholar Itō Jinsai. This research is based upon the following research questions: How does Jinsai approach the selection and study of canonical Confucian texts, and how do his selection and methodological approach influence his interpretations? How do Jinsai's interpretations of central Confucian philosophical concepts compare to certain modern interpretations? In what way can such a comparison be productive for furthering the understanding and development of Confucian ethics?

The dissertation is made up of the following chapters: 1) Introduction; 2) Defining Methodological Frameworks; 3) Itō Jinsai and His Project; 4) Conceptual Analysis; 5) Itō Jinsai's Confucian Ethics; 6) Conclusion.

First I define the two methodological frameworks, upon which I have based my approaches to Jinsai's work. The first is the framework of East Asian Confucianisms, presented by Huang Chun-chieh, while the second is the methodological framework of comparative philosophy. I argue that, though there are certain problems that need to be considered, the two methods together form the best approach to the study of Jinsai's work.

I then observe and study Jinsai's project from different angles. I present Itō Jinsai as *Kogakuha* (The School of Ancient Learning); Jinsai's project as facilitating the dissolution of the Zhu Xi mode of thought; Jinsai's project as a philosophical lexicography; Jinsai as a Kyōto chōnin scholar; Jinsai as a radical Confucian; and Jinsai's project as centered on the practice of virtue.

I analyze the central philosophical notions of Jinsai's teachings, as they are presented in his most influential works, especially his most systematic and critical work, the *Gomō jigū*. I analyze the following notions in greater detail: the Way of Heaven, the Decree of Heaven, the Way, structural coherence, virtue, humanness, appropriateness, ritual propriety and wisdom, the heart-mind, suchness or humanness, the heart-mind of the four sprouts, feelings, loyalty and trustworthiness, loyalty and reciprocity, sincerity, learning and the expedient.

I discuss the main characteristics of Jinsai's ethical teachings system. I show that while he might not have managed a proper return to the teachings of Confucius and Mencius, some of his solutions are specific and original. In his dedication to a vitalistic view of the universe and the everyday ethical life of the people, he at every turn emphasizes the living meaningful relationality and opposes the language and practices of quietism, which he saw in the teachings of Buddhism and Daoism.

In the conclusion I sum up the answers to my research questions. I show that Jinsai followed a radical ethical vision, presented by Confucius and Mencius, and did so in answer to the circumstances of his life and the intellectual currents of his time. In doing so he developed his relationality-based ethical teachings that can be constructively compared to modern interpretations of Confucian ethics. Such comparisons seem both productive and relevant to the present-day study of Confucian ethics.

Péronnet, Amandine

*Le temple Pushou 普寿寺 et le projet « Trois-Plus-Un ». Nonnes et modes de production du bouddhisme contemporain en Chine continentale*

[Pushou temple 普寿寺 and the “Three-Plus-One” project. Nuns and their production of contemporary Buddhism in mainland China]

Università degli Studi di Perugia & Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales, March 2021

<https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-03295955>

Abstract:

Chinese Buddhism entered a “revival” era since the 1980s, an era that brings changes to religious life, distancing itself from the past in a modernizing attempt, while maintaining a deep connection to tradition. Pushou temple (普寿寺), which opened in 1991 on mount Wutai in China, is caught in the middle of these metamorphosis processes. This model temple, the largest institution for Buddhist nuns in mainland China, also hosts an institute for Buddhist studies. It chose to specialize in areas such as monastic discipline, education, and philanthropy, and in doing so launched the “Three-Plus-One” project in 2006 in cooperation with Dacheng temple (大乘寺), the Bodhi Love Association (菩提爱心协会), and the Qingtai retirement home (清泰安养园). According to Rurui (如瑞), who designed the project and is currently the abbess of Pushou temple and head of the Institute for Buddhist studies, these three aspects are essential to monasticism, since cultivation is at the base of saṅgha education, education is an insurance on the future, and philanthropy a “skilful means”. Making these features coexist can be seen as a strategy devised by Pushou temple to “produce” Buddhism according to the expectations of the monastic and lay communities, society, and the state. From an ethnographic perspective, this research examines how Buddhism is redefined within this particular temple of nuns, and aims at better understanding the movements of contemporary institutional Buddhism in the context of mainland China.

Qiao, Jiyan

*Human Nature and Governance – Soulcraft and Statecraft in Eleventh Century China*

Leiden University, September 2021

<https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3209222>

Abstract:

This dissertation contributes to the reinvention of Chinese political history with a comprehensive account of Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021-1086) political theory, touching also upon its practice, arguing that it was centered on transforming human nature with statist values against the mid-eleventh century humanist mainstream.

Intellectual historical studies of Wang Anshi over the past three decades have been focused on how he envisioned the relationship between government and society. Aiming to go beyond this, this study focuses on the “what” in Wang’s learning, i.e., his writings on *daode* 道德 and *xingming* 性命 (literally, the way and its power, nature and destiny), most concentratedly found in volumes 63-70 of *Collected Writings of Mr. Linchuan* 臨川先生文集. Regarding this body of work in Wang’s oeuvre, scholars like Yu Yingshi take them as being about moral self-cultivation in the Confucian tradition. Through close analysis of key concepts in context and differentiating rhetorical strategies from what was meant, I argue in chapter 2 that Wang’s discussions of human nature were integral to his political thought on governance and that what he advanced as the gist of his learning was an anti-humanist soulcraft centered on using statist values to transform self-regarding humans into subjects who would unreflectively think in the interest of the state. It was cultivationist rather than self-cultivationist, as Wang designed a full procedure to firmly establish these values – otherwise foreign to humans in his view – into people’s hearts through externally imposed behavioral regulations.

To see how this was so, I reconstructed the context against which Wang developed this theory in chapter 1: the humanist statecraft newly emerging in the aftermath of An Lushan rebellion (755-63) – literati self-governance that was first theorized by Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) in “Tracing the Way” (*yuan dao* 原道), and became the mainstream during the Jiayou and Zhiping periods (1056-1067), thanks mainly to Ouyang Xiu’s 歐陽修 (1007-1072) leadership in the ancient prose movement. Troubled by the moral individualism and value pluralism inherent in the practice of writing ancient prose, Wang worked out his statecraft so as to restore the lost moral unity in the world.

After a contextualized reconstruction of Wang’s political theory in the first two chapters, I turn to discussing its implementation in chapter 3. Taking the reform as mainly about the economic policies carried out during Shenzong’s reign, most scholars think it had failed. The central topic of Wang’s famous myriad-word letter to Renzong that later became his reform blueprint was, however, using government school education to make the kind of humans useful to the state. Given the severely declined imperial authority Shenzong inherited from the previous two reigns, to put this grand design into practice, it had to proceed step by step, including most importantly neutralizing anti-reformers, whose effective opposition lasted through the early twelfth century, even taking back control of the government between 1085 and 1093. It was only after 1104, when they had been made unable to obstruct the central government’s agenda through blacklisting that this education as governance was able to be carried out across the state, as can be seen from the exponential growth in student numbers and the widespread building of schools.

In chapter 4, I seek to enrich our understanding of the discussions in the preceding chapters by presenting the discovery of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), one of Wang’s foremost critics, on the nature of Wang Anshi’s

statecraft that was made around the turn of the twelfth century. Using material from Su that has not been discussed in English, this is also to address anew the relationship between Wang Anshi and his main theoretical source Mencius. This relationship has been studied by many scholars, including Li Huarui, who in a recent book chapter argues that Mencius' political thought on humane governance guided the reform Wang architected. In chapter 2, I have begun proposing an alternative explanation based on Wang's own writings on human nature. Here, closely studying Su Shi's engagements with Mencius in his classical commentary project that was designed to oppose Wang Anshi's statecraft, I hope to show how Mencius, with his insight into human nature, provided the most important theoretical foundations for Wang's soulcraft.

In the Conclusion, I summarize main findings in the four chapters while situating Wang Anshi in the history of Chinese political thought, arguing that his soulcraft as statecraft went one step further than that of the so-called Legalists, who although similarly pursuing greater state power did not work on changing human nature.

Renninger, Philipp

*Theoriebasierte Rechtsvergleichung – Vergleichungsbasierte Rechtstheorie. Am Beispiel des chinesischen und deutschsprachigen Öffentlichen Rechts unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Sinomarxismus und Xi-Jinping-Denkens*

[Theory-Based Comparative Law – Comparison-Based Legal Theory: By the Example of China and the German-Speaking World with a Special Focus on Sino-Marxism and Xi-Jinping-Thought]

University of Freiburg & University of Lucerne, August 2021

<https://freidok.uni-freiburg.de/data/221328>

Abstract:

My dissertation suggests a new method of comparative legal studies: “theory-based comparative law”. Its innovative impetus lies in using middle-range theories as the tertium comparationis when comparing the law of different countries. These theories should expose a middle degree of abstraction and complexity (i.e., be neither too abstract nor too concrete) as well as a sufficient level of interculturality and interdisciplinarity (i.e., be applicable in various cultural-geographic and disciplinary contexts). Moreover, my dissertation develops a new methodology: “comparison-based legal theory”.

My dissertation elaborates both the former concrete working technique and the latter general methods theory by the example of Mainland China in comparison to German-speaking Europe (particularly Germany and Switzerland), focusing on comparative public law. The following parts are especially relevant for China scholars:

Chapter A outlines the categorization of law and legal studies in Chinese academia. I highlight the internal division of legal studies into different subdisciplines (such as comparative law or legal theory) and fields (like public or private law) as well as its external differentiation from other disciplines (e.g., political science).

Chapter B explains the pitfalls of Sinocentrism and Self-orientalization, which some authors claim to be successful counterstrategies or necessary reactions to Eurocentrism and Orientalism.

Chapter C deep-dives into Sinomarxist legal theory and especially its newest element, “Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of/by Law”. I demonstrate that despite claiming a new era and suggesting some new concepts, Xi still follows the four basic pillar of juristic Sinomarxism: the subordination of the law under practice, actuality, politics, and the Communist Party.

Chapter D provides an overview of different notions of “theory” in Chinese legal discourse, ranging from ideology and grand theory to concrete doctrines.

Chapter E argues that among all those different types of theories, comparative lawyers should only use middle-range theories as their analytical basis. I mention numerous examples of middle-range theories develop inside of China or for the analysis of China. Theories that are of interest to comparative law might stem from ancient Chinese legal and political thought (e.g., Han Fei’s legalist theory of three action modes fa, shi, and shu or the Confucianist theory of five relationships), from China-related political science (e.g., Jae Ho Chung’s theory of Chinese local units’ three function), or from other social sciences and humanities.



Chapter F shows that my new method of theory-based comparative law is compatible with the traditional and prevailing approaches to comparative law in China. Because Sinomarxist legal studies claim themselves to be normativist and theory-led, they cannot credibly refute my method as “idealistic”, “Western”, “Eurocentric”, “Orientalist”, “liberal”, or “constitutionalist”.

Rossi, Tommaso

*Comparative analysis of Chinese FL didactics: an exploratory study into methodological approaches, teaching strategies and materials between Italy and France*

Università Ca' Foscari & Université Grenoble-Alpes, March 2021

<https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-03277778>

Abstract:

Over the last few decades, Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) has become a prominent component in French and Italian educational contexts. This increasing trend is revealed by the huge number of universities, private institutions and, in recent times, secondary schools having activated CFL courses, probably in response to the growing interest in Asian studies by learners of all ages.

Despite quite extensive research has been conducted across Europe, data on CFL teaching approaches, methodologies and techniques in Italian educational circles are still far from being exhaustive. In the main-frame of this fragmentary scenery, our exploratory study intends to look through the various didactic perspectives to CFL, comparing the Italian and the French regulatory and methodological frameworks. The choice is mainly motivated by social and cultural contiguity of the two countries, the long experimentation conducted on the French side over didactic approaches and tools, and finally, by the typological proximity of learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds with regard to CFL.

Our analysis includes two different levels of education (academic education and secondary education) in the target countries and examines the various factors having impacted on the teaching and learning processes through a comparative approach. In particular the study intends to reveal the social and historical backgrounds which contributed to discipline and standardise CFL in France and Italy, analysing players and relationships involved in teaching-learning processes. Moreover, it aims at exploring the methodological approaches and perspectives developed for CFL teaching, highlighting divergences and analogies.

As for this last point, we first considered the major approaches overtly adopted for L2 teaching over the last century, then focused on those specifically adapted to CFL teaching and learning needs, such as character thresholds (SMIC, Bellassen), character-based model (字本位) and word-based model (词本位), speaking-writing separation/disjunction (Hoa, Allanic), communicative approach, action-oriented approach (Arslangul), unipolar method (Masini) and others.

All these methodological approaches have been analysed from two angles, a theoretical angle supported by psycholinguistic, motivational and acquisitional studies, a second more pragmatic angle which focused on the way reference textbooks (C'est du Chinois; Ni shuo ba; Le chinois...comme en Chine; Méthode d'Initiation à la Langue et à l'Écriture Chinoises; Parliamo Cinese; Parla e scrivi in cinese; Il cinese per gli italiani, etc...) and teaching practice assimilated and integrated these approaches. A great contribution to this last section has been provided by class observation, surveys and questionnaires submitted to learners, and a case study conducted on web tools.

Sidorenko, Andrei

*Chinese Socialist Realism's Value Guidances and Their Rethinking in Contemporary Chinese Fiction*

St. Petersburg State University, September 2021

<https://disser.spbu.ru/zashchita-uchenoj-stepeni-spbgu/447-sidorenko-andrej-yurevich.html>

Abstract:

This study is intended to trace and characterize the rethinking of the value attitudes of socialist realism in the contemporary Chinese literature. Achieving the above goal implies the following tasks: 1) To characterize the theoretical foundations of the structural model of the stadial movement of the axio-sphere of the Chinese literary process in the second half of the 20th century, based on the current developments of leading researchers; 2) To formulate the essence and outline the boundaries of applicability of the term “value guidance”; 3) To give the characteristic of the socialist realist characteristics of the Chinese literature of the period of seventeen years; 4) To show the place of historical and revolutionary themes in the works of Chinese socialist realism; 5) To conduct an analysis of the mechanisms of postulating value attitudes through the comprehension of historical and revolutionary themes in the works of Chinese socialist realism; 6) To describe the concept of “new historical prose” as one of the approaches to combining the works of the late 20th century, touching on historical and revolutionary themes, into a single macrotext; 7) To study the coverage of historical and revolutionary themes in significant works of the late 20th century.

Smithrosser, Elizabeth

*“Good Wood on Crowdpleasers”: Humour Publications in the Ming Wanli Period*

University of Oxford, December 2021

<https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:6e0a94a1-2481-443e-b846-78894490bb64>

Abstract:

Joke and humour publications are a severely understudied area of the world of late-Ming book culture. Taking imprints from the Wanli reign period (1573–1620) as a starting point, this dissertation undertakes a preliminary investigation into late-Ming humour compilations. It looks at the publication of humour as a historical phenomenon, rather than from a literary standpoint, to see how this group of books fitted into the publishing and intellectual scene of their day. Towards this aim, the dissertation leans mostly upon the paratextual materials of humour publications, such as prefaces, titles and annotations. These were spaces in which compilers and publishers communed with their faceless, anticipated readership, and as such can be used to yield information about how these compilations were viewed on both sides. Experimenting by temporarily putting aside modern notions of the “joke” in favour of contemporaneous terms used by the publications themselves, the dissertation sketches the boundaries around a broader genre of “humour compilations”, thereby reconstructing a genre of publications that were connected in the eyes of Ming publishers and readers, yet has been obscured by subsequent systems of categorisation. It spotlights the ambivalence that surrounded humour as an appropriate topic for publication and explores the measures taken by compilers and publishers to articulate their position and decision to publish such material nonetheless. Chapter 2 sheds light upon how this group of texts identified with and drew upon precedents from previous dynasties while developing its own set of traditions through an in-depth look at the Ming sequels to the Aizi 艾子 (“Master Ai”) tradition of Warring States-themed humour, which originated in the Song period. It also outlines the place of these texts within the overall late imperial reception of the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 (Stratagems of the Warring States). A discussion on the “Dongpo vogue” in late-Ming publishing reveals the omnipresence of Song dynasty literatus Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) in Ming humour publications while simultaneously demonstrating how this group of texts reflected and interacted with the fashions and concerns of the times.

Sokolova, Anna

*State, Bureaucracy, and the Formation of Regional Monastic Communities in Tang Buddhism*

Ghent University, April 2021

<https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/8703596>

Abstract:

This dissertation explores the formation of monastic networks and the rise of monasticism in Tang Dynasty (618–907) provinces, focusing primarily on the traditions of Chan, Vinaya and Esotericism. The dissemination of these traditions is investigated in the context of the unprecedented dispersal of bureaucracy throughout the empire and the changing dynamics of interactions between the administrative and territorial center of the Tang state and the provinces in the second half of the eighth century. The long-standing system of temporary provincial and military appointments, the weakening of central government from the mid-eighth century onwards, purges and demotions due to the rapid rise and fall of rival political factions, and unceasing warfare all contributed to the unprecedented dispersal and circulation of the elite to all corners of the empire. Many of the bureaucrats who relocated to provinces following these various trajectories attempted to ingratiate themselves within their new localities by associating with local Buddhists and lending their support to local monasteries. As a result, state officials emerged as the key patrons, historiographers and biographers of regional monastics in the mid-eighth century China.

This dissertation consists of five case studies that explore the formation of provincial monastic-secular networks in the Tang Dynasty regions that correspond to the present-day provinces of Sichuan, Jiangxi, Henan, Anhui, Shaanxi, and Guangdong. This dissertation delves into a variety of sources concerning these regions such as stelae, *stūpa*, and bell inscriptions, mountain records, anecdotal collections, and local gazetteers that contain a wealth of data on individual monastics and their institutions. Based on these sources, this study demonstrates that state officials supported the formation of Buddhist “schools” and the construction of monastic lineages in these regions that were undertaken by local monks who tended to claim allegiance to certain prominent monastic figures. The increasing interaction between regional monastics and bureaucrats led to the consolidation of regional Buddhist communities, to the further expansion of their interregional and inter-monastic contacts, to the establishment of locally-based monks as new “patriarch” of the respective Buddhist traditions, and to the significant growth of monasticism in regional China.

Wan, Yunlu

*Analysis of Michele Ruggieri's Contribution to the Dicionário Português-Chinês in the Ming Dynasty and the Compiling Features of the Dictionary*

Ca' Foscari University, June 2021

<http://dspace.unive.it/bitstream/handle/10579/20587/956396-1229838.pdf?sequence=2>

Abstract:

When reviewing the history of cultural communication between Europe and China, it can be generally said that European missionaries served as cultural and linguistic ambassadors in China since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Especially the Jesuits which have made great contribution to complete their evangelical mission and at the same time they have to master the Chinese in a short time in the face of many difficulties. First, they must solve the problem of entry permission, thus they made the acquaintance of several Chinese officials and finally received residence in China, during which they encountered so huge gaps between languages and cultures that they could not ignore. After some preliminary attempts, they decided to preach the Christianity in Chinese. Although it was a tough learning process, they succeeded in developing some effective study methods and then applied them into bi-lingual dictionaries editing (such as Portuguese-Chinese, Latin-Chinese, French-Chinese etc.).

Unconsciously their methods and practices have partially influenced the perfection of modern Chinese study in phonetics, word-building and lexical categories. The *Dicionário Português-Chinês* edited by Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci is the object of this research, which aims to investigate how new-word-building methods (especially Chinese loan words and compounds) were applied and how Chinese diversity (oral or written language, Mandarin or dialects, etc) represented in this dictionary. In this paper, all examples are analyzed as data in an integrated system in perspective of lexicography and linguistics, since dictionaries could be utilized as data carriers but also information transmitters. In addition to the statistical analysis, other methodologies such as comparative linguistics (feature-by-feature comparison), diagrammatic representation and dictionary criticism are used as well. Numbers of articles and papers have been published talking about the research value of this dictionary from different aspects such as linguistics, historical research, translation methods etc. However, only a few of them put emphasis on its lexicographical value. A few of them just mentioned some segmented elements of systematic dictionary research but lack in structure reconstructing. In order to study it in depth, after the introduction and the part of historical and linguistic background, the main part of the research will be organized as follows: clarifying lemma selection criteria while editing, analyzing some specific interpretation methods from Portuguese to Chinese (loan words, compounds etc.) of the Dictionary, and then criticizing and evaluating regard to main properties as a bilingual dictionary. It is expected that this dissertation can offer more textual data and inspire further research in the field of lexicography and bi-lingual dictionary research.

Xu, Guanmian

*Pepper to sea cucumbers: Chinese gustatory revolution in global history, 900-1840*

Leiden University, November 2021

<https://scholarlypublications.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/3239180>

Abstract:

In this study, I aim to address a long-standing question in Southeast Asian historiography, namely: Why did two seemingly irrelevant edibles, pepper and sea cucumbers, feature so prominently in Southeast Asian exports to China in the early modern period? I approach this question through an intersection of Chinese cultural history and Asian maritime history. I argue that pepper and sea cucumbers represented two distinct Chinese food cultures, which became important in two different stages. Pepper became a popular hot spice in Chinese cuisine during the Mongol Yuan period, when the Mongol Conquest of China and Persia created a trans-Indian Ocean empire and facilitated the circulation of pepper from South India to China. Sea cucumbers became a coveted sea delicacy in Chinese high cuisine in a much later stage, roughly from the late sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, in association with the expansions of the Manchus, the Dutch, and the British in the areas around the China Seas. Between these two stages, there was a gustatory revolution energised by debates in Chinese medicine from the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Through that revolution, a transformation from the world of pepper to the world of sea cucumbers took place.