

*The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past*. Edited by Thomas H. C. Lee. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2004. Pp. xxxii + 486. \$49.00.

A collection of twelve papers from a 1997 conference on Sung historiography, *The New and the Multiple* is required reading for middle-period specialists. This volume demonstrates the virtues of engaging North American, European, and Asian scholars in a sustained dialogue on a long-neglected topic in English-language scholarship. Many of these essays advance our scholarly understanding of Sung historical thinking and writing. Much of this new research encourages a broader rethinking of Chinese conceptions of historicity, and of the representational and interpretative strategies of Chinese historiography more generally.

In his introduction to the volume, Thomas H. C. Lee succeeds in finding a set of overarching themes that can unite these twelve essays on overlapping subjects. Lee's central argument is that both newness and multiplicity were the two salient characteristics of Sung imaginings of the past. He begins with the claim that the "proliferation of genres of historical writing . . . is undoubtedly the single most evident feature of Sung historiography" (p. viii). Thanks to the spread of printing technology, members of the *shih* 士 élite produced, circulated, and consumed such new genres as privately-compiled histories, memorabilia literature, encyclopaedic histories, local histories, and *Tao-hsüeh* 道學 meta-histories. During this boom in historiography, writers and readers availed themselves of this "broadened spectrum of historical sources" to embrace a more complex understanding of past events and experience (p. xii). The ideal of "comprehensiveness" (*t'ung* 通) spurred historians to understand the causality of human events as an interconnected totality, and the distinctions between universal moral principles and particular acts of agency.

Lee asserts that during the Sung, "the rise of many new perspectives that represented a decisive departure from the past" both broadened and deepened historical consciousness (p. xxviii). He argues that Sung historians generally accepted that human experience was not uniform over time. Long-term processes of phenomenological change made the present categorically different from the past, and made history an imperfect reflection of the timeless moral Way or *tao*. However, Lee does not substantiate his claim that a "sense of anachronism," a concept that emerged from early modern European humanism, properly describes this Sung sense of the past as a "place" that was categorically different from the present (p. xi). I certainly agree with Lee that certain Sung intellectuals — especially Cheng Ch'iao 鄭樵 (1104–1162), discussed in both Lee's and Achim Mittag's papers in this volume — questioned the validity of received wisdom by historicizing classical texts themselves. But I would take exception to Lee's teleological argument that this sense of scepticism represented the emergence of "incipient rationality" or "common sense," both of which are cultural constructions drawn from Western historical experience and social science.

Drawing on the examples of Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), Ssu-ma Kuang 司馬光 (1019–1086), and Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130–1200), Lee defends his claim that Sung historical consciousness was characterized by a "Neo-Confucian preoccupation with the unity between narrative and moral purpose in history" (p. xii). In other words, a search for underlying moral forces had impelled historians to attempt to understand causation and causality. I generally agree with his assertion that Sung historians understood that a supra-historical Way was always at work, but that some also recognized that these "moral forces

alone did not determine the course of history,” which was often beyond human control (p. xviii). But Lee’s overly broad use of the term “Neo-Confucian” (*Tao-hsüeh*) to describe the worldview of the Sung scholarly élite elides the intellectual and religious diversity of the period, and blurs the distinction between this Southern Sung intellectual movement in particular and Sung historical scholarship in general.

While it accomplishes the difficult task of finding common threads in these twelve essays, Lee’s introduction could have benefited from a more specific discussion of Chinese paradigms of historiography. By more precisely defining the basic terms of analysis in his introduction, Lee could have enhanced the conceptual clarity of this volume. In his article on local gazetteers, James Hargett defines what Sung intellectuals meant by the word *shih* 史, and the volume’s introduction could have answered the following questions in greater detail. First, how did Sung intellectuals define the terms “history” and “historiography,” and what were its linguistic rules and intellectual conventions? Next, how did Sung historians define the disciplinary and generic boundaries of this scholarly pursuit in particular? Finally, how did this branch of scholarship (or field of discourse) differ from pre- and post-Sung conceptions of historiography?

In the past decade, North American sinologists have begun to engage the “constructedness” (for lack of a better word) of the Chinese historiographic tradition in both the classical and modern periods. For example, David Schaberg has explored the narrative patterns and rhetorical functions of the *Tso-chuan* 左傳 and *Kuo-yü* 國語, and Paul Cohen and Prasenjit Duara have been interrogating modern Chinese reinventions of the “traditional” past.<sup>1</sup> North American sinologists have been addressing the larger theoretical issues of historiography as an intellectual enterprise and as a field of knowledge, and many of the essays in the volume actively engage these questions. This book represents a huge leap forward in the study of Sung historiography, and contributes to this larger discussion. Lee’s introduction to *The New and the Multiple* could have connected developments in Sung scholarship with recent developments the larger field of Chinese history and historiography.

Each of these articles deserves to be reviewed individually, and I will point out how their authors have contributed to the overall aims of the volume. An exceptionally lucid assessment of Ssu-ma Kuang’s *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* (*Tzu-chih t’ung-chien* 資治通鑑), Xiao-bin Ji’s article explicates the historical foundations of this eminent scholar-statesman’s political thought. In “Mirror for Government,” Ji supplements and builds upon the author’s recent intellectual biography of Ssu-ma.<sup>2</sup> In a well-chosen selection of readings from the *Mirror*, Ji does a superb job of demonstrating the core

<sup>1</sup> David Schaberg, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002); Paul Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> Xiao-bin Ji, *Politics and Conservatism in Northern Song China: The Career and Thought of Sima Guang* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2005).

conservative principle that motivated Ssu-ma to write this narrative history: the beliefs that time-tested political institutions were the best guarantee of “peace and stability of the empire” (p. 2). In Ssu-ma Kuang’s view, a ruler’s chief responsibility was to properly select the right ministers for the right jobs, rather than to tinker with pre-existing institutions. He uses concrete examples from the *Mirror* to effectively refute Anthony Sariti’s interpretation that Ssu-ma was a promoter of “bureaucratic absolutism,”<sup>3</sup> and to defend the counter-argument that for Ssu-ma, “the ruler’s delegation of authority is a way to increase, rather than decrease, the ruler’s effective control over his government” (p. 10). Elegant and succinct, Ji’s essay is the clearest summation of Ssu-ma Kuang’s philosophy of history available in English, and a welcome contribution to the field.

In an intellectually ambitious and wide-ranging essay, Kojima Tsuyoshi wrestles with the big questions of history and historiography, using Sung historiography as an example of how historically-specific worldviews shape individual perceptions of past. He uses four Sung biographies of the Han-dynasty official Chia I 賈誼 (201–169 B.C.) to illustrate this “Rashomon effect,” in which individual viewpoints shaped the historical perceptions of Ssu-ma Kuang, Su Shih 蘇軾 (1036–1101), Chu Hsi, and Chen Te-hsiu 真德秀 (1178–1235). Writing more than a millennium after the fact, each Sung historical thinker used a different genre of prose to selectively highlight different aspects of Chia’s biography, interpreting raw materials from Pan Ku’s 班固 standard biography in the *Former Han History* (*Han shu* 漢書) while building their own interpretative frameworks from these older textual fragments. Kojima’s essay illustrates how Sung historians were actively engaged in the reinvention of the past, using biographical narratives of Chia I as part of a much larger project to revise and reconfigure the intellectual history of Confucianism to prioritize the efficacy of ritual over laws.

Hoyt Tillman approaches similar conceptual issues from another angle in his article “Textual Liberties and Restraints.” He engages in a painstaking reconstruction of the working methods of Ssu-ma Kuang, producing a textual archeology of Ssu-ma’s narrative of the Three Dynasties minister Chu-ko Liang 諸葛亮 (181–234) in the *Comprehensive Mirror*. Step by step, Tillman demonstrates how Ssu-ma pieced together a single linear narrative of the period from the highly fragmented presentation in annalistic-biographical *Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms* (*San-kuo chih* 三國志). After several overly detailed case studies and comparisons between the two texts, he persuasively argues that Ssu-ma Kuang deliberately constructed “a positive model of Chu-ko Liang both as a competent Confucian general and as a practical Confucian administrator of just laws and punishments” (p. 88). This article points to a larger trend in Northern and Southern Sung thought, a retroactive redefinition and reinvention of the “Confucian” tradition as a bounded field of knowledge.<sup>4</sup> In the article’s conclusion, Tillman hypothesizes that Ssu-ma’s historiographic strategies were motivated by a broader political agenda to enhance Sung dynastic legitimacy

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Sariti, “Monarchy, Bureaucracy, and Absolutism in the Political Thought of Ssu-Ma Kuang,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 32.1, pp. 53–76.

<sup>4</sup> Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1992).

*vis-à-vis* rival border states, and to denounce the New Policies of Wang An-shih 王安石 (1021–1086) as an “un-Confucian” form of statecraft. But these speculations do not detract from his larger argument. Unearthing a wealth of detail, Tillman has documented how traditional Chinese historians could articulate a coherent interpretation of the past through the highly selective inclusion and exclusion of primary source materials, a “scissors-and-paste” process of textual accretion that was in itself a highly creative act.

Chun-chieh Huang’s article, on Chu Hsi’s historical thinking, assembles a wide variety of examples of “argument by historical narrative” from Chu Hsi’s collected writings (p. 107). Huang confirms the conventional wisdom Chu sought universal moral principles within the historical context of the ancient sage-kings (in classical Chinese, *li-i fen-shu* 理一分殊). I certainly agree with Huang’s interpretation that Chu sought a single moral principle, a prime cause, which made itself manifest throughout human history. But Huang pays insufficient attention to the ways in which Chu himself was redeploing ancient and post-classical history in order to fashion a reinvented past that could authorize the exclusivist claims of the *Tao-hsüeh* movement. This article could have done without Huang’s essentialist argument that rigidly dichotomizes Western philosophical argument, which he claims “typically centered on principles, and proceeds axiomatically and logical conclusion,” and Chinese “historical argument,” which he asserts “is oriented to paradigmatic persons, and proceeds via historical narrative, to debate and exhort” (p. 107). No matter how valid Huang’s interpretations of Chu Hsi’s historical thinking might be, they cannot bear the weight of such monolithic overgeneralizations, and Chu Hsi cannot be made to serve as a representative example of Chinese modes of reasoning.

In his masterful essay “Hu Hung as Historian,” Conrad Schirokauer begins by addressing the essential conceptual issue that runs throughout *The New and the Multiple*: that all historical narratives are constructs, and that historians are engaged in the production of a form of knowledge, working within a set of disciplinary boundaries. He cautions that “there is no reason to expect pre-modern Chinese rules and conventions to be the same as ours,” and rightly urges contemporary scholars to embrace the task of “scrutinizing their frameworks” so that we “many clarify, refine, and occasionally enrich our own” (p. 122). Schirokauer dissects the *Great Records of Emperors and Kings* (*Huang-wang ta-chi* 皇王大紀) of Hu Hung 胡宏 (1105–1155) to demonstrate the linkages between Sung historiography in general and the historical consciousness of the emerging *Tao-hsüeh* movement. Relegated to obscurity, Hu’s master narrative demonstrated the workings of the *Tao* and the presence of the supreme Confucian virtue of *jen* 仁 from the beginnings of the world until the fall of the Chou dynasty. Like Ssu-ma Kuang, Hu Hung selected and incorporated a wide range of classical source texts into his comprehensive narrative of civilization, interspersing them with his own commentary and judgments. With great attention to detail, Schirokauer reconstructs the ambiguities and complexities of Hu’s historical worldview, which embraced an ironic awareness that history encoded “moral principles valid for all time” but was “also about things going wrong” (p. 146). Classical history demonstrated that the survival of civilizing institutions required the existence of sages, whose cultivated sense of *jen* enabled them to properly respond to changing situations. While Hu was primarily known for his philosophical works, influenced by the teachings of the Ch’eng brothers and Shao Yung, his *Great Records* demonstrated how Sung historians not only projected their own intellectual

preoccupations back into the past, but were also “seeing the present in terms of the past” (p. 153).

Thomas H. C. Lee’s own article, “History, Erudition, and Good Government” fleshes out many of the thematic concerns he has raised in his introduction to the volume. The intellectual production of the encyclopaedist Cheng Ch’iao embodied both newness and multiplicity, for he was obsessed with the “interconnected nature of knowledge” and driven by “a desire to comprehend seemingly disparate knowledge in a systematic way” (pp. 164–65). Lee’s comparisons with modern European encyclopaedism, and notions of erudite knowledge, are instructive ones, even if Sung Chinese *lei-shu* 類書 and Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* were produced within different generic boundaries and knowledge regimes. Lee places Cheng Ch’iao within a broader Sung “intellectual assumption that erudition is the basis of true knowledge” (p. 170). In the twenty topical monographs (*lüeh* 略) of his *Comprehensive Treatises* (*T’ung-chih* 通志), Cheng engaged in the production and classification of disciplines, but insisted upon the underlying unity behind these fragmented and subdivided ways of knowing, reading, and writing. Perhaps the most fascinating thing about Cheng Ch’iao was his sceptical criticism of received classical knowledge. Lee persuasively demonstrates that Cheng problematized the “praise and blame” moralism of ancient historiography, discounted the relevance of omens and portents, and questioned the legitimate succession (*cheng-t’ung* 正統) of dynasties. Believing that “knowledge is historical in nature,” this eccentric encyclopaedist was a salient example of the inclusiveness and broadness of Sung historical learning, and how the discipline of history could potentially subsume all other ways of producing knowledge (p. 189). I hope that this volume encourages one of its readers to write a full-length monograph on Cheng Ch’iao, who is an immensely fascinating figure who pursued a road that was generally not taken in Sung learning.

Achim Mittag’s article brilliantly reveals just how unstable and blurry the disciplinary and generic distinctions between classical and historical learning could be. Through a lucid explication of Sung interpretations of the *Book of Odes* (*Shih-ching* 詩經), Mittag persuasively argues that these commentaries were “historical studies,” even representative of a “process of ‘historicizing the scripture’” (pp. 203–4). With concise examples, he unpacks the intellectual assumptions behind Ou-yang Hsiu’s incisively historicist exegesis of the *Odes* as an accretive text that formed in four layers. Even more intriguing is Mittag’s study of Cheng Ch’iao as a rare example of a “hard” critic of the *Odes* (another was Chu Hsi), which picks up where Lee’s study left off. Cheng rejected the “Prefaces” (*Shih-hsü* 詩序) as a Han-era forgery and even dismissed the Mao School itself as an inferior commentarial tradition that invented an authoritative intellectual genealogy for itself (pp. 212–13). Based on these examples of *Odes* scholarship, Mittag argues that the line between classical and historical scholarship “was rather thin, if it existed at all,” when scholars historicized fundamental texts of the canon (p. 218). Yet, I am not yet convinced by his counterfactual argument that if Cheng’s historical approach to classical exegesis had been more influential, perhaps Sung scholars might have produced similarly iconoclastic breakthroughs as *k’ao-cheng* 考證 scholarship later would in the Ch’ing dynasty. Minor quibbles aside, Mittag’s article is an extremely important one that will provoke a stimulating discussion amongst intellectual historians, for illuminating the artificial distinctions between branches of learning, as well as the limits of the historical imagination.

The next four articles examine the newness and multiplicity of distinct genres of historical writing: lineage genealogies (*tsu-p'u* 族譜) and local gazetteers (*ti-fang-chih* 地方志). Hugh Clark's "Reinventing the Genealogy" is an impeccable piece of social history, which examines a wealth of genealogical texts from southern Fu-chien, from the tenth through the thirteenth centuries. He confirms David Johnson's judgment that the social and political disruptions of the late T'ang had led to the collapse of the genealogical tradition as an attempt to sustain an entrenched oligarchy by defining aristocratic status and kinship networks. Clark's article makes a great contribution to recent North American scholarship in Sung social history, by using developments in local society to inform and explain larger shifts in elite orientations from Northern to Southern Sung. Guiding the reader through four examples of early genealogies, Clark concludes that local lineages in the Min-nan 閩南 region began to compile continuous genealogical records in the early eleventh century, "at the very time the genre had fallen out of favor among the traditional elite in the north" (p. 258). He argues that the broader Sung resurgence of genealogical writing began at the local level, when existing Min-nan elite lineages attempted to distinguish themselves from newcomers, which ultimately produced "a new kind of family-based record of the past" (p. 272). These local developments both stimulated and fed into a broader empire-wide revival of genealogical writing among the capital-centered Northern Sung elite. Clark finds that the Southern Sung elite used genealogies to "define common identity at an increasingly local level," as regional lineages fragmented into smaller sub-lineages. By highlighting local sources of cultural innovation, his article uses local genealogies to complicate, and ultimately to strengthen, the Hartwell-Hymes hypothesis that members of the elite shifted from a "nationalist" to a "localist" strategies from Northern to Southern Sung.

Every aspiring scholar of Sung history should read James Hargett's article on "Historiography in Southern Sung Dynasty Local Gazetteers," which provides essential information on this vital genre. He deftly explains the emergence of *fang-chih* as a separate genre of historical writing, whose compilation was governed by three basic standards: comprehensiveness (*po* 博), critical use of sources (*hsiang* 詳), and didacticism (*chiao-hua* 教化). Better yet, Hargett succeeds in embedding the textual history of this sub-genre into the broader Sung resurgence in historical writing. He proceeds to give a guided tour of a representative local gazetteer, the *Ching-ting Chien-k'ang chih* 景定建康志 of 1261, demonstrating how the organizational principles of state histories (*kuo-shih* 國史) were mapped onto local gazetteers, which came to be divided into topical monographs (*chih* 志) and biographies (*lieh-chuan* 列傳). But unlike standard dynastic histories, which contained condemnatory biographies of "nefarious ministers" (*chien-ch'en* 姦臣), local history biographies were "intended to provide positive examples for moral education," and consisted of stereotyped accounts of a locality's model residents (p. 298). The greatest contribution of Hargett's essay is his explanation of the compilation principles of the *Ching-ting Chien-k'ang chih*'s editorial team, who were motivated by the historiographic formula of *po*, *hsiang*, and *chiao-hua*, which he speculates might have been the "essential ingredients" of Sung historiography in general (p. 303). Hargett should be commended for demonstrating the cross-pollination among historical genres, and for venturing a set of overarching principles that motivated Sung historical writing.

Deeply rooted in local gazetteers and lineage genealogies in Chin-hua 金華, Che-

chiang, Peter Bol's article "Local History and Family in Past and Present" dovetails quite well with Clark and Hargett's articles. He sees the first genre as a means of constructing a shared sense of a local past, producing a sense of local community among members of the local elite by including "things that mattered to them in the present" (p. 312). In Bol's view, the emergence of local gazetteers in Chin-hua further confirms the Hartwell-Hymes hypothesis of "the social transformation of official families into local elites" who performed political functions in local society (p. 316). Along similar lines, he finds that Chin-hua elite genealogies were "texts that viewed the lineage in a public context from the perspective of the literati community," creating a shared sense of lineage identity based on a common history of descent (p. 321). Bol persuasively demonstrates that common narratives of kinship served both moral and cultural functions, exhorting family members to behave morally and to participate in a shared tradition. I agree with his conclusions, and would add that Bol's evidence from Chin-hua indicates that this trend towards "localism" was not only a historical phenomenon but a historiographic one, in which members of the local elite presented a vision of "how society ought to be transformed," representing themselves as the natural moral and cultural leaders of local society (p. 338). With a wealth of detail from Chin-hua gazetteers and genealogies, Bol's article explains the representational strategies of local elites who composed histories of localities and lineages, showing how the socio-political agendas of the present shaped the construction of the past.

John Chaffee's article on imperial clan historiography amplifies these concerns, by showing how these texts could "create a consciousness of a historical institution," whose present-day existence was "projected in the past and historicized" (p. 349). He summarizes a vast historical literature on imperial clans in pre-Sung history, from the lineage system of the Chou down to the princely establishments of the Han and T'ang, showing how these kinship communities evolved from dynasty to dynasty. Chaffee conceptualizes Sung discussions of imperial clan history as an evolving discourse, shared by Emperors and their officials, which could justify institutional innovation and expansion. He shows how changing imperial clan practices — especially genealogies that included non-mourning kin — were rooted in a awareness of precedents from earlier imperial history, employing Robert Hartwell's framework that "historical analogism" shaped the Sung literati elite's sense of the past.<sup>5</sup> While this new imperial clan discourse "was not a genre itself," Chaffee argues that it found expression in new genres of historical writing, most notably the genealogical and biographical sections of the *New T'ang History* (*Hsin T'ang-shu* 新唐書) and *Sung History* (*Sung-shih* 宋史). His chapter illustrates how new political discourses could produce new kinds of invented historiographic traditions.

The final article, Chi-chiang Huang's assessment of Buddhist historical thinking, provides a refreshingly broad perspective upon the disciplinary and doctrinal boundaries of Sung historical thought, and qualifies Thomas Lee's characterization of the Sung worldview as "Neo-Confucian." Huang astutely analyzes the first comprehensive history of Buddhism,

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<sup>5</sup> Robert M. Hartwell, "Historical Analogism, Public Policy, and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century China," *American Historical Review* 76.3, pp. 690–727.

the *Lung-hsing Fo-chiao pien-nien t'ung-lun* 隆興佛教編年通論 by the Ch'an monk Tsu-hsiu 祖琇 (fl. 1150–1160). The text bears the influence of Ssu-ma Kuang's *Comprehensive Mirror*, incorporating primary source texts like hagiographies, "lamp histories" and Ch'an sectarian genealogies into a complex narrative of the history of Chinese Buddhism. Tsu-hsiu consciously asserted that the "legitimacy of Buddhism in Chinese society was a historical fact," critiquing the *New T'ang History*'s compilers Sung Ch'i 宋祁 (998–1061) and Ouyang Hsiu for denigrating and erasing the vital presence of Buddhism. Critiquing Confucian historiography for its hostile and condemnatory representations of Buddhist institutions, individuals, and practices, Tsu-hsiu claimed to be writing a "balanced" historical account of the religion. Huang productively mines these inherent contradictions and paradoxes in this Buddhist historian's theory of historiography. Most intriguingly, his article discusses Tsu-hsiu's karmic theory of historical causation, in which those who worked against Buddhism met with retributive justice. Huang's article shows how Buddhist historical thinking, like the so-called "mainstream" of Sung historiography, involved the creation of new modes of historical writing, the construction of perspectival narratives, and the projection of the intellectual concerns of the present back into the past.

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*Chinese Discourses on the Peasant, 1900–1949*. By Xiaorong Han. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005. Pp. xii + 260. \$75.00.

This book intends to reveal Chinese intellectuals' perceptions of rural China, of the Chinese peasantry, and of the intellectuals' relationship with the peasantry during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as how such perceptions were politicized. It intends to be a history of theories rather than a history of movements. It covers not only the works of Communist intellectuals, but also those of the non-Communist and anti-Communist intellectuals. This book has three main chapters.

Chapter 3 discusses the encounters between the intellectuals and the peasants in modern China during the first few decades of the twentieth century. The encounters were made possible by the growth of the modern Chinese intelligentsia and the expansion of the Chinese national movement. The intellectuals were increasingly aware of the peasantry's importance to the rebuilding of the Chinese nation, and they showed strong desire to incorporate the peasants into their nation-rescuing programmes. Such interests in the peasantry grew so fast that there was a tremendous outpouring of writing about them. Peasants became the subjects of political and academic works, heroes of novels, plays, and poems, and figures of paintings.

Various images of the peasants began to emerge from the multitude of works. Although the images were diverse, some constant and common elements can be discerned. Ignorance, innocence, poverty, and powerlessness were the four characteristics of the peasantry that figured prominently in the works of all groups of intellectuals. Despite the intellectuals'