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**DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION (*GUO ZI JIAN*) AND
THE IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY (*TAI XUE*) IN THE NORTHERN SONG (960-
1127) – INTERACTION BETWEEN POLITICS AND EDUCATION IN MIDDLE
PERIOD CHINA**

CHU MING KIN

PhD

LINGNAN UNIVERSITY

2012

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION (*GUO ZI JIAN*) AND
THE IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY (*TAI XUE*) IN THE NORTHERN SONG (960-1127)
– INTERACTION BETWEEN POLITICS AND EDUCATION IN MIDDLE PERIOD
CHINA

by
CHU Ming Kin

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History

Lingnan University

2012

ABSTRACT

Directorate of Education (*Guo Zi Jian*) and
the Imperial University (*Tai Xue*) in the Northern Song (960-1127) –
Interaction between politics and education in middle period China

by

CHU Ming Kin

Doctor of Philosophy

The Imperial University played a significant political role in China's imperial past. When established in the ancient Zhou, its mission was predominantly to nurture prospective officials for eventual service in government. This marks the inseparability of education and politics from the very onset of the University's founding. Nevertheless, its diminished success in producing officials under subsequent dynasties caused a comparable diminution in the political significance of the metropolitan school. Not until the Northern Song, founded by the Zhao clan, did signs emerge of a resurrection of sorts.

Three major educational reforms were attempted in the reigns of Renzong, Shenzong, and Huizong (ca. 1040-1126). In each reform, the emperor and the reform proponents envisioned an expanding role of political significance for the Imperial University. This dissertation focuses on the evolution of the metropolitan educational institutions, namely the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University, in the Northern Song. By investigating the record of conduct and extant writings as pertains to the institutional settings of the Imperial University as well as wide range of biographical sources for Northern Song men, mainly staff, students, and graduates of the Imperial University, the author seeks to gain insights into how Song emperors and policy advocates perceived the Imperial University as a political institution, how the staff and teachers at the University performed their assigned roles, and how students and graduates of the Northern Song Imperial University contributed to the political life.

After highlighting the role of the Imperial University in the previous dynasties, reviewing the secondary literatures in connection with education in Song China, as well as illustrating the sources and methodology to be used in the introductory chapter, a comprehensive survey of the development of the metropolitan schools covering the entire Northern Song then follows. This narrative history not only highlights the innovations in the educational institutions *per se*, but also sheds light on a range of political phenomena during various stages in the Northern Song: how aristocracy evolved into meritocracy; how the reformers and conservatives created myths for political sake; how emperor Shenzong strengthened its autocratic rule by way of a comprehensive regulatory framework; how scholar-officials rebuffed in defending the "genealogy of the way"; and how the scholarly vision in recruiting officials through a countrywide school network was realized.

The conclusion contains an analytical discussion of the political role of the Imperial University in late Northern Song: a tool of control and indoctrination, as

well as a channel to select morally upright officials. The central issue is how successful could the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University perform these political functions. Through this study, hopefully a fuller picture of this elitist educational institution during one of its most flourishing periods in Imperial China can be restored. It is also envisioned that the political impact could be re-emphasized in future studies of political institutions, a perspective which has often been ignored in recent Chinese and Western scholarships where social history is dominant.

DECLARATION

I declare that this is an original work based primarily on my own research, and I warrant that all citations of previous research, published or unpublished, have been acknowledged.

SIGNED

(CHU Ming Kin)
2 April 2012

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL OF THESIS

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION (*GUO ZI JIAN*) AND
THE IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY (*TAI XUE*)
IN THE NORTHERN SONG (960–1127) – INTERACTION BETWEEN
POLITICS AND EDUCATION IN MIDDLE PERIOD CHINA

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Dr Grace Ai-ling CHOU

Approved for the Senate:

SIGNED

Prof Jesús SEADE

Chairman, Postgraduate Studies Committee

Date

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- BMTJ* Chen Dao 陳道 (15th century), Huang Zhongzhao 黃仲昭 (1435-1508) zuan xiu; Fujian Sheng di fang zhi bian zuan wei yuan hui jiu zhi zheng li zu 福建省地方誌編纂委員會舊志整理組, Fujian Sheng tu shu guan te cang bu 福建省圖書館特藏部 zheng li, *Ba Min Tong Zhi* 八閩通誌 (Fuzhou: Fujian Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1990).
- CBJSBM* Yang Zhongliang 楊仲良 (13th century) zhuan; Li Zhiliang 李之亮 jiao dian, *Huang Song Tong Jian Chang Bian Ji Shi Ben Mo* 皇宋通鑑長編紀事本末 (Ha'erbin: Heilongjiang ren min chu ban she, 2006).
- CBSB* Huang Yizhou 黃以周 (1828-1899) deng ji zhu; Gu Jichen 顧吉辰 dian jiao, *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian Chang Bian Shi Bu* (*CBSB*) 續資治通鑑長編拾補 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2004)
- CHC* Twitchett, Denis C. and Fairbank, John K., *et al* (ed.), *Cambridge History of China*, Volume 1-15 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978-2009).
- CLJ* Shi Jie 石介 (1005-1045) zhu; Chen Zhi'e 陳植鐸 dian jiao, *Cu Lai Shi Xian Sheng Wen Ji* 徂徠石先生文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1984).
- CSJCXB* *Cong Shu Ji Cheng Xin Bian* 叢書集成新編 (Taipei: Xin wen feng chu ban gong si, 1985).
- CXQJ* Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012-1067) zhuan; Chen Qingyuan 陳慶元, Ou Mingjun 歐明俊, Chen Yiting 陳貽庭 jiao zhu, *Cai Xiang Quan Ji* 蔡襄全集 (Fuzhou: Fujian ren min chu ban she, 1999).
- DDSL* Wang Cheng 王稱 (12th century) zhuan; Sun Yancheng 孫言誠, Cui Guoguang 崔國光 dian jiao, *Dong Du Shi Lüe* 東都事略 (Jinan: Qi Lu shu she, 2000).
- DFZCKJB* Wang Xiaobo 王曉波 deng dian jiao, *Song Yuan Zhen Xi Di Fang Zhi Cong Kan. Jia Bian* 宋元珍稀地方志叢刊. 甲編 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2007).
- DFZCKYB* Li Yongxian 李勇先, Wang Huihao 王會豪, Zhou Bin 周斌 deng dian jiao, *Song Yuan Zhen Xi Di Fang Zhi Cong Kan. Yi Bian* 宋元珍稀地方志叢刊. 乙編 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2009).

- ECJ* Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085); Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107) zhu, *Er Cheng Ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981).
- FRJ* Hu Yin 胡寅 (1098-1156) zhuan; Rong Zhaozu 容肇祖 dian jiao, *Fei Ran Ji* 斐然集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1993).
- FZYQJ* Fan Zhong Yan 范仲淹 (989-1052), *Fan Zhong Yan Quan Ji* 范仲淹全集 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2002).
- GMBY* Chen Jun 陳均 (1174-1244) bian; Xu Peizao 許沛藻 [et al.] dian jiao, *Huang Chao Bian Nian Gang Mu Bei Yao* 皇朝編年綱目備要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2006).
- HHS* Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445) zhuan, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1965).
- HS* Ban Gu 班固 (32-92) zhuan; Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581-645) zhu., *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1962).
- JKYL* Wang Zao 汪藻 (1079-1154) zhu; Wang Zhiyong 王智勇 jian zhu, *Jing Kang Yao Lu Jian Zhu* 靖康要錄箋注 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2008).
- JS* Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (578-648) zhuan, *Jin Shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974).
- JTS* Liu Xu 劉昫 (887-946) deng zhuan, *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1975).
- LDMCZY* Huang Huai 黃淮 (1367-1449), Yang Shiqi 楊士奇 (1365-1444) bian, *Li Dai Ming Chen Zou Yi* 歷代名臣奏議 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1989).
- LGJ* Li Gou 李覲 (1009-1059) zhu; Wang Guoxuan 王國軒 jiao dian, *Li Gou Ji* 李覲集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981).
- NQS* Xiao Zixian 蕭子顯 (489-537) zhuan, *Nan Qi Shu* 南齊書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1972).
- OYXQJ* Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) zhuan, Li Yi'an 李逸安 dian xiao, *Ou Yang Xiu Quan Ji* 歐陽修全集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2001).
- QSBJ* Zhu Yian 朱易安 deng zhu bian, *Quan Song Bi Ji* 全宋筆記 (Zhengzhou: Da xiang chu ban she, 2003-).
- QSKS* Zhang Ruyu 章如愚 (1196 *Jinshi*) zhuan, *Qun Shu Kao Suo* 羣書考索 (Beijing: Shu Mu Wen Xian Chu Ban She, 1992).

- QSS* Beijing da xue gu wen xian yan jiu suo 北京大學古文獻研究所
bian; Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮 [et al.] zhu bian, *Quan Song Shi* 全宋
詩 (Beijing: Beijing da xue chu ban she, 1991-1998).
- QSW* Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊, Liu Lin 劉琳 zhu bian, *Quan Song Wen*
全宋文 (Shanghai: Shanghai ci shu chu ban she; Hefei Shi: Anhui
jiao yu chu ban she, 2006), 360 Volumes.
- QYW* Li Xiusheng 李修生 bian, *Quan Yuan Wen* 全元文 (Nanjing:
Jiangsu gu ji zhu ban she, 1998-2004).
- RBCDFZ* *Ri Ben Cang Zhong Guo Han Jian Di Fang Zhi Cong Kan* 日本藏
中國罕見地方志叢 (Beijing: Shu mu wen xian chu ban she, 1991)
- SB* Hervouet, Yves, A *Sung Bibliography* (Hong Kong: Chinese
University Press, 1978).
- SCBMHB* Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126-1207) zhuan, *San Chao Bei Meng Hui*
Bian 三朝北盟會編 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1987).
- SCGY* Li Zhi 李埴 (1161-1238) zhuan, *Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao*
皇宋十朝綱要 (Taipei: Wen Hai Chu Ban She, 1967).
- SCZCZY* Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚 (1140-1196) bian; Beijing da xue Zhongguo
zhong gu shi yan jiu zhong xin 北京大學中國中古史研究中心 jiao
dian zheng li, *Song Chao Zhu Chen Zou Yi* 宋朝諸臣奏議
(Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1999).
- SDZJCK* Beijing tu shu guan chu ban she yin shi 北京圖書館出版社影印室
ji, *Song Dai Zhuan Ji Zi Liao Cong Kan* 宋代傳記資料叢刊
(Beijing: Beijing tu shu guan chu ban she, 2006).
- SDZLJ* *Song Da Zhao Ling Ji* 宋大詔令集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju,
1962).
- SHY* Xu Song 徐松 (1781-1848), *Song Hui Yao Ji Gao* 宋會要輯稿
(Peking: Guo li Beiping tu shu guan, 1936).
- SJ* Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca. 86 B.C.E.) zhuan, *Shi Ji* 史記
(Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1959).
- SKCMCS* *Si Ku Quan Shu Cun Mu Cong Shu. Shi Bu* 四庫全書存目叢書. 史
部 (Jinan: Qi Lu shu she, 1996).
- SKQS* *Si Ku Quan Shu* 四庫全書.

- SKSLXB* Xin wen feng chu ban gong si bian ji bu 新文豐出版公司編輯部, *Shi Ke Shi Liao Xin Bian Di Yi Ji* 石刻史料新編第1輯 (Taipei: Xin wen feng chu ban gu fen you xian gong si, 1982).
- SS* Tuotuo 脫脫 (1313-1355) deng zhuan, *Song Shi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1977).
- SSJSBM* Chen Bangzhan 陳邦瞻 (?-1623) zhuan, *Song Shi Ji Shi Ben Mo* 宋史紀事本末 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1977).
- SSQW* Yi ming 佚名 zhuan; Li Zhiliang 李之亮 jiao dian, *Song Shi Quan Wen* 宋史全文 (Ha'erbin: Heilongjiang ren min chu ban she, 2005).
- SSWJ* Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) zhuan, Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 dian jiao, *Su Shi Wen Ji* 蘇軾文集 (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1986).
- SSYJJ* Song shi yan jiu hui 宋史研究會 bian, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Ji* 宋史研究集 (Taipei: Zhonghua cong shu wei yuan hui, 1958-).
- SWGWJ* Su Song 蘇頌 (1020-1101) zhu; Wang Tongce 王同策, Guan Chengxue 管成學, Yan Zhongqi 顏中其 deng dian jiao, *Su Wei Gong Wen Ji: Fu Wei Gong Tan Xun* 蘇魏公文集：附魏公譚訓 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1988).
- SWJ* Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137-1181) bian, Qi Zhiping 齊治平 dian jiao, *Song Wen Jian* 宋文鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shu Ju, 1992).
- SYFZCK* Zhong hua shu ju bian ji bu 中華書局編輯部 bian, *Song Yuan Fang Zhi Cong Kan* 宋元方志叢刊 (Beijing : Zhonghua shu ju, 1990).
- SYXA* Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) yuan zhu; Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755) bu xiu; Chen Jinsheng 陳金生, Liang Yunhua 梁運華 dian jiao, *Song Yuan Xue An* 宋元學案 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1986).
- SYZJFZ* Zhejiang Sheng di fang zhi bian zuan wei yuan hui 浙江省地方誌編纂委員會 bian, *Song Yuan Zhejiang Fang Zhi Ji Cheng* 宋元浙江方志集成 (Hangzhou: Hangzhou chu ban she, 2009).
- TD* Du You 杜佑 (735-812) zhuan, *Tong Dian* 通典 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1988).
- TPZJTL* Peng Baichuan 彭百川 (12th century) zhuan, *Tai Ping Zhi Ji Tong Lei* 太平治蹟統類 (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling gu ji ke yin she, 1986).

- TYGDFZ* *Tian Yi Ge Cang Ming Dai Fang Zhi Xuan Kan* 天一閣藏明代方志選刊 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji shu dian, 1981-1982).
- WJGWJJZ* Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086) zhuan; Li Zhiliang 李之亮 jian zhu, *Wang Jing Gong Wen Ji Jian Zhu* 王荊公文集箋注 (Chengdu Shi: Ba Shu shu she, 2005).
- WXTK* Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 (1254-1323) zhuan, *Wen Xian Tong Kao* 文獻通考 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1986).
- XAWXZ* Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 (ca. 1445-1500) ji zhuan; He Qingshan 何慶善, Yu Shi 于石 dian jiao; Yi Ming 易名 shen ding, *Xin An Wen Xian Zhi* 新安文獻志 (Hefei: Huang Shan shu she, 2004).
- XCB* Li Tao 李燾 (1115-1184), *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian Chang Bian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1979-).
- XNYL* Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166-1243) zhuan, *Jian Yan Yi Lai Xi Nian Yao Lu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1956).
- XXSKQS* *Xu Xiu Si Ku Quan Shu* 續修四庫全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1995-2002).
- XZZTJ* Bi Yuan 畢沅 (1730-1797) bian zhu, "Biao dian Xu zi zhi tong jian xiao zu" 標點續資治通鑑小組 jiao dian, *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian* 續資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1957).
- YH* Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296) zhuan, *Yu hai* 玉海 (Nanjing: Jiangsu gu ji chu ban she; Shanghai: Shanghai shu dian, 1987).
- YLDD* Xie Jin 解縉 (1369-1415) deng zuan xiu; Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝 (1335-1419) deng jian xiu, *Yong Le Da Dian* 永樂大典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1986).
- ZFPJ* Zhang Fangping 張方平 (1007-1091) zhuan; Zheng Han 鄭涵 dian jiao, *Zhang Fang Ping Ji* 張方平集 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou gu ji chu ban she, 2000).
- ZSJ* Liu Zhi 劉摯 (1030-1097) zhuan; Pei Rucheng 裴汝誠, Chen Xiaoping 陳曉平 dian jiao, *Zhong Su Ji : Fu Ji Yi Deng* 忠肅集：附輯佚等 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2002).
- ZZQS* Zhu Jieren 朱傑人, Yan Zuozhi 嚴佐之, Liu Yongxiang 劉永翔 zhu bian, *Zhu Zi Quan Shu* 朱子全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she; Hefei Shi: Anhui jiao yu chu ban she, 2002).

ZZTJ

Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) bian zhu; Hu Sanxing 胡三省 (1230-1302) yin zhu; "Biao dian Zi zhi tong jian xiao zu" jiao dian, *Zi Zhi Tong Jian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1956).

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I am solely responsible for all mistakes and misinterpretations in this dissertation.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Northern Song (960-1127) was established in 960 by Zhao Kuangyin 趙匡胤, or Taizu (927-976, r.960-976), after overturning the Later Zhou (951-960), the last of the Five Dynasties (907-960) to govern North China. The predominant task of the Song founder was to facilitate governance, so that the Song would not become the “sixth dynasty”. After unifying the entirety of China proper, a residual challenge involved reclaiming sovereignty over the sixteen northern prefectures ceded to the Khitan Liao (907-1125) during the Later Jin (936-946), lands that included modern Beijing. The initial unity of the land was attained under the second ruler Taizong (939-997, r.976-997), but the struggle to regain the northeast borderlands continued through later reigns of the Northern Song. Even worse, apart from the ongoing threat of the Khitan, the Song empire was encircled by two other powerful and intractable “alien regimes”, namely the Tangut Xi Xia (1032-1227) to the northwest and the Jurchen Jin (1115-1234) who succeeded the Khitan in the northeast. Disturbances along the Song border would start in the mid-Northern Song and persist until its fall.

These external threats, combined with other internal political problems such as fiscal constraints, administrative inefficiency and factional politics, proved disastrous for the empire. Nevertheless the Northern Song managed to survive for more than one and a half centuries. So what forces contributed to such stability? The writings of Benjamin Elman provide one hint: “education in imperial China was simply one of several tools in the repertoire of the state to maintain public order and political efficacy”.¹ Is this true for government education in the Northern Song? How

¹ Benjamin A. Elman, “Political, Social, and Cultural Reproduction via Civil Service Examinations in Late Imperial China”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 50 No. 1, (Feb., 1991), pp.12.

did politics and education interact with each other? This dissertation tries to answer these questions by comprehensively investigating the development of the Directorate of Education (*Guo Zi Jian*) and the Imperial University (*Tai Xue*) for the Northern Song – a time of political turbulence as well as daring experimentation in educational reform. But we must first see how the premiere educational institution of the Song period, the Imperial University, had evolved prior to the Song dynasty, with an aim to understand how education interplayed with politics in historic ways.

Creation of the Imperial University

Learning is the foundation for all gentlemen who wish to transform the people and nurture customs. As jade needs polishing to become beautiful, human beings need learning to understand the Way. Hence the ancient Sage King prioritized education in establishing the state and governing the people.² 君子如欲化民成俗，其必由學乎！玉不琢，不成器；人不學，不知道。是故古之王者，建國君民，教學為先。

The above quotation explains the importance of educational institutions in transforming the people and shaping customs. The Xia and Shang dynasties (ca. 1766-1050 B.C.E.) inherited the educational institutions of the Three Kings.³ A surviving oracle-bone of the Shang reports daily divination for weather conditions for the return home of the school's aristocratic youth.⁴ This offers evidence of the existence of schools. And according to an exegesis to the Confucian Classic *Book of Rites* (*Li Ji* 禮記), we understand that two levels of schools existed:

² Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) Zhu, Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648) Shu, *Li Ji Zhu Shu* 禮記註疏 (Si Ku Quan Shu edition), Juan 36, "Xue Ji" 學記, 2a. The text was translated with reference to James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China - the texts of Confucianism Part IV* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), pp.82.

³ TD, Juan 53, pp.1459-1460.

⁴ Yang Kuan 楊寬, "Wo Guo Gu Dai Dai Xue De Te Dian Ji Qi Qi yuan" 我國古代大學的特點及其起源 in Yang Kuan zhu, *Gu Shi Xin Tan* 古史新探 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1965), pp.197. For details of University education in the pre-Zhou times, refer to Xiong Mingan 熊明安 bian zhu, *Zhong Guo Gao Deng Jiao Yu Shi* 中國高等教育史 (Chongqing: Chongqing chu ban she, 1983), pp.8-11.

The “Son of Heaven” ordered the inauguration of teaching, so schools were established. The lower level was erected to the left and south of the palace, while the superior level was built in the suburbs... According to Shang regulations, the two schools had different names to reflect different standards.⁵ 天子命之教，然後爲學。小學在公宮南之左，大學在郊...殷之制，尊卑學異名。

During the Western Zhou (ca.1050-771 B.C.E.), the educational system was further expanded. Three types of learning institutions emerged: *shu* 塾, *xiang* 庠 and *xu* 序 for county, rural, and urban areas respectively. In addition, Schools (*Xue* 學) were established in both the capital, where the Son of Heaven resided, and the feudal kingdoms, located away from the capital.⁶ This School in the capital was comprised of five campuses. The central campus, surrounded by water, was known as *Biyong* 辟雍, while the southern, northern, eastern and western campus were known as *Chengjun* 成均, *Shangxiang* 上庠, *Dongxu* 東序, and *Guzong* 瞽宗 respectively. Each campus had its own teaching functions, where learning in music, politics and rites correspondingly took place in the southern, northern and western campuses, while the eastern campus focused on military training, mainly archery. The school curriculum at different campuses also related to the cycle of four seasons.⁷ Normally the heir-apparent and other sons of the throne, as well as talented youth promoted from the villages, studied at these four campuses.⁸

The remaining central campus *Biyong*, also known as *Taixue* 太學, commonly translated as Imperial School or Imperial University; the latter translation can also

⁵ Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁 (1178-1237) zhuan, *Li Ji Yao Yi* 禮記要義 (SBCK edition), Juan 5b “Wang Zhi Xia” 王制下, “Yan Zhou Da Xiao Xue” 殷周大小學.

⁶ Wei Liaoweng, *Li Ji Yao Yi*, Juan 18 Xue Zhi 學制, “Gu Zhe Li Xue Zhi Zhi Ru Xue Zhi Xu” 古者立學之制入學之序 and “Jia Shu Dang Xiang Shu Xu Guo Xue Zhi Zhi” 家塾黨庠術序國學之制. For translation of the text, see Jame Legge, *The Sacred Books of China - the texts of Confucianism Part IV* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), pp.83.

⁷ Wang Yuzhi 王與之 (12th century) zhuan, *Zhou Li Ding Yi* 周禮訂義 (Si Ku Quan Shu edition), Juan 38, 2a-b; TD, Juan 53, pp.1460. See also Ryochi Kano 狩野良知 (1875-1908), *Zhi Na Jiao Yu Shi Lu* 支那教育史略 (Tokyo, 1891), Juan 1, 15a.

⁸ Wei Liaoweng, *Li Ji Yao Yi*, Juan 18 Xue Zhi 學制, “Jia Shu Dang Xiang Shu Xu Guo Xue Zhi Zhi”.

refer to all educational institutions in the capital.⁹ *Biyong*, the place where the Son of Heaven studied, housed numerous retired officials whom the Son of Heaven treated as father or brother to manifest the virtues of filial piety and fraternal devotion.¹⁰ Learning rites and music at the *Biyong* as well, the Son of Heaven could thereby project civility for all people to emulate.¹¹ And the prestigious title *Biyong*, or *Taixue*, was frequently used to represent the entire metropolitan School system of the Western Zhou.

Apart from educational functions, the Imperial University was also the venue for feudal kings to pay tribute to the Son of Heaven. The inseparability of politics and education was also reflected in the dual roles of government officials and school teachers.¹² The village libation (*Xiang Yin Jiu* 鄉飲酒) ceremony hosted by the Son of Heaven, where the feudal lords and aristocrats took part, was also held on the University campus. The aristocratic youths could learn the spirit of respecting elderly people and honoring martial arts through imitation of the Son of Heaven. They participated in the archery contests during the libation ceremony as well. Other than rituals, the Son of Heaven and other high officials would also discuss on policy matters in this event.¹³ Such activities at the Imperial University exemplified the glory and harmony of the Zhou dynasty, a meaning embedded in the two characters *bi* and *yong*.¹⁴

In short, we understand that the schools in the Western Zhou, located in or near the capital where the Son of Heaven resided, were erected mainly for the

⁹ WXTK, *Juan* 40, pp.385.

¹⁰ Wang Yuzhi, *Zhou Li Ding Yi*, *Juan* 38, 2a-b.

¹¹ Qin Huitian (1702-1764) 秦蕙田 zhuan, *Wu Li Tong Kao* 五禮通考 (SKQS edition), *Juan* 176, 25a-b.

¹² Xiong Mingan, *Zhong Guo Gao Deng Jiao Yu Shi*, pp.14-15.

¹³ See also Thomas H.C. Lee, *Education in traditional China: a history* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp.42; Xiong Mingan, *Zhong Guo Gao Deng Jiao Yu Shi*, pp.15-16.

¹⁴ Wei Liaoweng, *Li Ji Yao Yi*, *Juan* 5b Wang Zhi Xia, “Yan Zhou Da Xiao Xue”.

education of the Son of Heaven, the aristocrats and the exceptionally talented villagers. Their aristocratic nature can be seen through the education provided, which covered such daily activities as rites, music, politics and archery.¹⁵ The first three activities were aimed at state governance, while the inclusion of archery reflects concern with the defense of the Kingdom. This politically related education was monopolized by the government, which possessed and controlled all the books, documents, regulations, ritual procedures, and musical instruments that were essential to students' learning. In general, students would be admitted to the schools when they were young, and then receive official appointment only after completing their studies around 40 years of age. After decades of learning, these students were well-trained in terms of both moral conduct and administrative capabilities and hence could fruitfully accomplish the missions assigned to them.¹⁶ In this light, the connection between government education and politics was obvious. Since all officials before receiving appointment, and even the Son of Heaven before enthronement, were trained in the Imperial University, its political importance was overarching.

It is worth noting that the above account of education in antiquity is basically retrieved from the Confucian Classics *Book of Rites* and *Institutes of Zhou*. Even though both works are ascribed to the Duke of Zhou, much of the former are likely "compiled and edited in early Western Han by Han court specialists" while the latter "cannot date to a time much before Han."¹⁷ Instead of treating these textual records as historical truth, we may consider them as the ideal political order and settings perceived by Western Han scholars. This historical conjecture of the Western Zhou school system by Western Han scholars became the ideal for later dynasties to emulate.

¹⁵ Hu Meiqi 胡美琦, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi* 中國教育史 (Taipei: San min shu ju, 1978), pp.7.

¹⁶ *TD*, *Juan* 13, pp.308.

¹⁷ Michael Nylan, *The five "confucian" classics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp.175.

However in Eastern Zhou (ca.770-256 B.C.E.) times, especially during the periods of the Spring and Autumn (722-481 B.C.E.) and Warring states (403-221 B.C.E.), rites and music eroded. Feudal order began to collapse and the mandate of the Son of Heaven faded. The weakening central government could no longer support the capital Academy. Without a single intellectual authority, independently educated and low-ranked aristocrats could freely propose their own ways to counter the situation. Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) was the most prominent among them. With his own distinctive thoughts on politics, rites, and self-actualization, Confucius attracted around 3,000 disciples even without a permanent base to conduct formal classes,¹⁸ according to the prominent Han historian Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca.145-ca. 86 B.C.E.). Others such as Mencius (ca. 372-289 B.C.E.), Shang Yang 商鞅 (ca. 390-338 B.C.E.), Han Fei 韓非 (281-233 B.C.E.), and Xun Kuang 荀況 (313-238 B.C.E.) each had their own views on ideal governance and tried to persuade feudal lords of the warring states to adopt their own school of thought. Apart from political persuasion, they also engaged in teaching, which allowed them to spread their school of thought far and wide. Nevertheless, without a powerful central government, none of the schools dominated the intellectual arena. And competition among the hundred schools of thought continued until unification under the Qin Empire (221-206 B.C.E.).

The Legalist school had evolved in the area originally occupied by the former Jin Kingdom (584-376 B.C.E.) (modern Henan) and contributed significantly to the success of the Qin, which elevated it on the intellectual stage. The destructive “burning of the books” policy advocated by the Chief Councilor Li Si 李斯 (ca. 280-208 B.C.E.) unintentionally led to the elimination of many works of other schools,

¹⁸ *SJ, Juan* 47, pp.1938. These 3,000 students of Confucius, I believe, roughly refer to the total number of students that Confucius had taught throughout his lifetime.

thereby reinforcing the dominance of Legalism.¹⁹ However, a constructive set of educational policies were never fully implemented in the Qin, partly due to its short span of 15 years. Nor did the situation improve after the accession of Gaozu (256-195 B.C.E., r. 202-195 B.C.E.) to the Han throne in 202 B.C.E.. Although the official, Lu Jia 陸賈 (ca. 216-172 B.C.E.), had twice petitioned Gaozu on the importance of education to the social order,²⁰ no groundbreaking educational policy emerged. Neither did new policies come under Wendi (203-157 B.C.E., r. 180-157 B.C.E.) and Jingdi (188-141 B.C.E., r. 157-141 B.C.E.), since the state needed to recover, both economically and politically, from the conflicts within the Imperial clan.

Nevertheless, the importance of education on political governance ultimately caught the attention of Wudi (156-87 B.C.E., r. 141-87 B.C.E.), who in 141 B.C.E. ordered the nomination of talented and upright people from across the country. Moreover, Wudi also ordered his officials to submit proposals on the art of ruling from the historic to recent times.²¹ And the Confucian Scholar Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.E.), a specialist of the *Gongyang* commentaries of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, submitted the following response:

I am told that when the Sage King ruled the world, [aristocratic] youths were taught at schools and trained for official positions when they grew up. ...Those who want worthies without nurturing literati are similar to men dreaming of literary elegance without refining their skills. Indisputably, the greatest mechanism for nurturing literati rests

¹⁹ Derk Bodde, "The state and empire of Ch'in", in *CHC*, Vol.1, pp.73. See also *SJ*, *Juan* 6, pp.254-255. The plan was initiated by Li Si as a counter measure to the proposal of Chunyu Yue 淳于越 (ca. 3 century B.C.E.), an Erudite who "referred to ancient practices and rejected the contemporary settings" 以古非今 and suggested re-dividing the empire into vassal kingdoms with reference to the three ancient sage Kings. As a Legalist disciple who preferred *Fa Hou Wang* 法後王 (learning from the recent King) instead of *Fa Xian Wang* 法先王 (imitating the deeds of the ancient Sage King), Li Si not only rejected such proposal under this particular circumstance, but requested to burn the books of those schools that advocate ancient practices in order to avoid recurrence. This incident could also be interpreted as the conflict between the Legalist school originated from the previous Jin Kingdom, and the Confucian school originated from the previous Qi and Lu Kingdoms (modern Shandong).

²⁰ Lu Jia 陸賈 (ca.216-ca.172 B.C.E.) zhuan, *Xin Yu* 新語 (*Si Ku Quan Shu* edition), *Juan Xia*, "Dao Ji Di Yi" 道基第一, 2b-3a and "Zhi De Di Ba" 至德第八, 4b.

²¹ *ZZTJ*, *Juan* 17, pp.549.

with the Imperial University, as the source for talent and the origin of educational transformation....Hence I wish the Emperor will establish the Imperial University and assign good teachers so as to nurture literati across the country. Their genuine abilities, demonstrated through frequent examinations and questions, would allow a pool of talent to soon become available.²² 臣聞聖王之治天下也，少則習之學，長則材諸位...夫不素養士而欲求賢，譬猶不琢玉而求文采也。故養士之大者，莫大庠太學；太學者，賢士之所關也，教化之本原也...臣願陛下興太學，置明師，以養天下之士，數考問以盡其材，則英俊宜可得矣。

In this proposal, Dong confirms the vital function of the Imperial University – to nurture and cultivate the literate (*Yang Shi* 養士) as prospective officials. Apart from his educational proposal, Dong noted that people with diverse opinions might cause frequent changes in policies and become an obstacle to the emperor's rule, writing:

All not trained in the 'six arts' or the ways of Confucius should be eliminated. They should be prevented from advancement and their heresies uprooted, for only then can norms be unified, standards become clear, and the people know what to follow.²³ 臣愚以為諸不在六藝之科、孔子之術者，皆絕其道，勿使並進，邪辟之說滅息，然後統紀可一而法度可明，民知所從矣！

Wudi, pleased with Dong's proposal, gradually implemented it as policy.²⁴ In 140 B.C.E., at the request of the Chief Councilor Wei Wan 衛綰 (?-131 B.C.E.), Wudi summarily struck from the nomination list all followers of the philosophies of Shen Buhai 申不害 (?-337 B.C.E.), Shang Yang, Han Fei, Su Qin 蘇秦 (?-284 B.C.E.), and Zhang Yi 張儀 (?-310 B.C.E.).²⁵ Four years later in 136 B.C.E., Wudi appointed scholars who specialized in the Five Confucian Classics as court Erudites.²⁶ Originally, the title “Erudite” was confined to respected scholars of the *Ji Xia* 稷下

²² *HS, Juan 56*, pp.2510-2512.

²³ *ZZTJ, Juan 17*, pp.555-556; *HS, Juan 56*, pp.2510-2512.

²⁴ A brief discussion on why Wudi favoured Dong Zhongshu's proposal could be found in Robert P Kramers, “The development of the Confucian schools”, in *CHC*, Vol.1, pp.755-756.

²⁵ *HS, Juan 6*, pp.156.

²⁶ *HS, Juan 6*, pp.159.

school, an advanced academy in the Qi state during the Warring States period. Later under the Qin dynasty, the title was given to people who “possessed a thorough understanding of both ancient and modern times.”²⁷ 掌通古今 By then, these positions were not exclusively for Confucian scholars, a situation that changed under Wudi of Han, who appointed scholars of the Five Confucian Classics as Erudites.²⁸ Hence, as noted by Ban Gu 班固 (32-92), within a few years of Wudi’s succession, Confucianism had been elevated above the Hundred Schools to dominate the intellectual arena.²⁹ This would have been unthinkable under Empress Dowager Dou (205-135 B.C.E.), an adherent of Daoism and Legalism.³⁰ Nevertheless, it was the first time in Chinese history that the state had officially sanctioned the works of a particular school.

The monopoly of Confucianism was further consolidated after 124B.C.E., when educational duties were assigned to the Erudites. Heretofore, as advisors to the emperor on historical, learning and ritual matters, the Erudites usually engaged in teaching privately without state recognition.³¹ However during a meeting where officials deliberated the means by which to counter the declining moral standards of the masses, Chief Councilor Gongsun Hong 公孫弘 (200-121 B.C.E.) proposed the assignment of Erudites to mentor some 50 disciples in order to advance civility and talent. Those eligible to be disciples of the Erudites had to exceed 18 years and evince a tidy appearance. Besides, they had to demonstrate a passion for learning, a solemn demeanor, as well as obedience and respect toward others. Verification by local officials and the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*Tai Chang Si* 太常寺) was required before the nominees were formally accepted as disciples. As disciples of the Erudites,

²⁷ *SJ*, Juan 6, pp.237.

²⁸ Thomas H.C. Lee, *Education in traditional China*, pp.46-47; Hu Meiqi, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi*, pp.138-141, 180-182.

²⁹ *HS*, Juan 6, pp.212.

³⁰ *SJ*, Juan 61, pp.3117.

³¹ *WXTK*, Juan 46, pp.430.

they were exempted from taxes and military service.³² Such exemption might reflect the Western Han Court's intention to recruit talent from across the country, not solely the aristocratic class,³³ based on the records of Er Kuan 兒寬 (?-103B.C.E.) and Kuang Heng 匡衡 (ca. 1 century B.C.E.). Both men of commoner background became disciples of the Erudites, according to the official *History of the Former Han Dynasty* (*Han Shu* 漢書).³⁴ To facilitate the recruitment of talented commoners with limited financial means, the government even covered a candidate's traveling costs to the capital.³⁵ Although the Court permitted talented men of humble background to become disciples of the Erudites and even become a majority within the student population, officials and bureaucrats still denigrated them for their class background.³⁶

Upon completion of one year of study and passing an examination on 2 or more classics, these disciples could be appointed to official positions based on the results attained. Hence literary scholars trained in Confucian classics gradually came to infiltrate the government,³⁷ which stood in stark contrast with the aristocratic dominance of the Zhou Court. One of the side effects of this phenomenon was the surge of the value of Confucian classicism, as reflected in a common saying then in the Zhou and Lu areas (modern Shandong) - "it is better to leave a Confucian classic for a son's inheritance than a pot of gold".³⁸ 遺子黃金滿籝，不如一經 The Imperial University was at the heart of recruiting officials and moral men in the Han dynasty.³⁹

³² *HS*, *Juan* 6, pp.172; *SJ*, *Juan* 61, pp.3119. See also Ban Gu zhuan, translated with annotations by Homer H. Dubs, *The history of the former Han dynasty* (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1938-1948), Vol.II, pp.346-347.

³³ Liu Liangqun 劉良群, "Liang Han Tai Xue Shu Lun" 兩漢太學述論, *Journal of Jiangxi Normal University (Philosophy And Social Sciences Edition)*, Vol.29 No.3 (Sept.1996), pp.63.

³⁴ *HS*, *Juan* 58, pp.2628 and *Juan* 81, pp.3331.

³⁵ *HS*, *Juan* 64b, pp.2814.

³⁶ Liu Liangqun, "Liang Han Tai Xue Shu Lun", pp.63.

³⁷ *SJ*, *Juan* 121, pp.3119-3120. Homer H. Dubs, *The history of the former Han dynasty*, Vol.II, pp.24.

³⁸ *HS*, *Juan* 73, pp.3107.

³⁹ The routes of recruiting officials in Han dynasties were summarized by Cai Yong (133-192) in his memorial to Emperor Lingdi (156-189, r.168-189). See Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445) zhuan, *Hou Han shu* (HHS) 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1965), *Juan* 60b, pp.1996.

The year 124 B.C.E., when Wudi assigned disciples to the Erudites, is commonly considered the year that the Imperial University began. But some historians doubt the existence of a campus for students at that time.⁴⁰ This is the position of the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368) historian Ma Tuanlin 馬端臨 (1254-1323) in his highly authoritative *General Investigation on Important Writings* (*Wen Xian Tong Kao* 文獻通考):

The assignment of disciples to the Erudites represents Wudi's order for the Erudites to teach, to identify students familiar with the Confucian six arts, and to promote them, nothing more. No facilities were built for them to live in.⁴¹ 武帝置博士弟子員，不過令其授學，而擇其通藝者擢用之，未嘗築宮以居之也。

A 20th century scholar Chen Dongyuan 陳東原 held a similar view. He argued that Wudi did not build a campus for the teaching of students. Otherwise, a century later, Liu Xiang 劉向 (ca. 77-6 B.C.E.) would hardly have requested the erection of a school in the reign of Chengdi (51-7 B.C.E., r. 33-7 B.C.E.).⁴² Chen considers the campus of the Imperial University in Wudi's time as perhaps merely a Hall of Enlightenment (*Mingtang* 明堂).⁴³ This understanding emanates from the interchangeability of the ancient Zhou terms Hall of Enlightenment, Imperial University and *Biyong* in Han times, as illustrated by a Eastern Han (25-220) scholar Cai Yong 蔡邕(133-192).⁴⁴ In any case, irrespective of the existence of a campus, it is certain that the Imperial University as educational institution was established in 124B.C.E. with the aims of nurturing talent and recruiting officials.

⁴⁰ The main arguments of this school could be found in Qin Yanshi 秦彥士, "Han Dai Tai Xue De Kao Zheng Yu Pi Pan" 漢代太學的考證與批判, *Journal of Sichuan Normal University (Philosophy And Social Sciences Edition)*, Vol.24 No.2 (Apr. 1997), pp.97-100.

⁴¹ WXTK, *Juan* 40, pp.383.

⁴² The proposal of Liu Xiang to Chengdi regarding the building of the campus could be referred to *HS*, *Juan* 22, pp.1033-1034.

⁴³ Chen Dongyuan 陳東原, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi* 中國教育史 (Taipei: Taiwan Shang Wu Yin Shu Guan, 1936), pp.44-45.

⁴⁴ Cai Yong, *Cai Zhong Lang Ji* 蔡中郎集 (*Si Ku Quan Shu* edition), *Juan* 3, "Ming Tang Yue Ling Lun" 明堂月令論, 6a-7a.

The plan to erect a formal university campus was ultimately realized after Wang Mang 王莽 (45 B.C.E.- 23, r. 9-23) became the Chief Council or under Pingdi (9B.C.E.-5, r.1B.C.E.-5). In A.D.4, Wang Mang submitted a plan to build ten thousand houses for students in the capital, Changan 長安; he also proposed Hall of Enlightenment, *Biyong* and Spiritual Tower (*Lingtai* 靈臺) as prospective sites. Other grandiose educational development plans were also implemented, such as the inclusion of a work on Music among the Confucian classics and the appointment of five more Erudites for each classic. Moreover, Wang Mang summoned to the palace over a thousand people with expertise in one of the following fields: Confucian classics, astronomy, divination and prognostication, musical instruments, military strategy and ancient scripts, or those with extraordinary abilities. These people were ordered to elaborate and record their knowledge on such matters so as to rectify erroneous and divisive conventions.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Wang Mang increased admission quotas at the Imperial University to accommodate the sons of aristocratic officials. Among the university students, 100 were recruited as officials after examination.⁴⁶ These educational plans, together with the construction of buildings to honor the Ancient Zhou, historians argue, reflects Wang Mang's desire to solicit support from the Erudites and students in the Imperial University on the eve of his usurpation of the Han dynasty. Later, such acts served to legitimize his New Dynasty, inaugurated in AD9.

The Imperial University continued to flourish even after the demise of Wang Mang. Despite the destruction of the university campus at the Former Han capital of Changan, the founder of the Eastern Han – Guangwudi (6 B.C.E.- 57, r. 25-57) rebuilt the university campus in the suburbs of the new capital of Loyang 洛陽, which was

⁴⁵ *HS*, *Juan* 99a, pp.4069; *ZZTJ*, *Juan* 36, pp.1146-1147. See also Homer H. Dubs, *The history of the former Han dynasty*, Vol. III, pp.191-194.

⁴⁶ *HS*, *Juan* 88, pp.3596.

completed in the year 29.⁴⁷ As a student at the Imperial University under Wang Mang, Guangwudi recognized the importance of education and had his son Mingdi (28-75, r.57-75) and grandson Zhangdi (58-88, r.75-88) study under Confucian scholars specializing in the classic *Book of Documents*.⁴⁸ During the Eastern Han, the student population also increased tremendously. With an initial 50 students under Wudi, the population once reached 3,000 under Chengdi in the Western Han.⁴⁹ The number of students reportedly surged to 30,000 by the reign of Shundi (115-144, r.125-144),⁵⁰ a century-and-a-half into its existence; the aristocratic portion of the student population also increased to gradually eclipse commoners.⁵¹ At the same time, student involvement in politics increased. Huandi (132-168, r.147-168), for example, once solicited the advice of university students on financial policy.⁵² In addition, between the years 150 and 165, students demonstrated at least twice over eunuch slanders against upright officials.⁵³ This close connection between university students and reputable officials is vividly depicted by Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) in the *Comprehensive mirror to aid in government* (*Zi Zhi Tong Jian* 資治通鑑):

There were around 30,000 university students. Among the student leaders were Guo Tai 郭泰⁵⁴ and Jia Biao 賈彪, of Ying Chuan 潁

⁴⁷ *HHS, Juan 1a*, pp.40.

⁴⁸ Qian Mu 錢穆 zhu, *Guo Shi Da Gang* 國史大綱 (Beijing: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1996), pp.169-170.

⁴⁹ *HS, Juan 88*, pp.3596.

⁵⁰ *HHS, Juan 79a*, pp.2547. I suspect whether this figure of 30,000 students represents the historical reality, since it is quite inconceivable that the capital of the Eastern Han, Luoyang, could host as many as 30,000 students by the 2nd century.

⁵¹ During the Shun Di (125-144) era, an official Zuo Xiong requested to summon the Confucian Scholars who were famous within the Han territory to become erudites and let those offspring of the officials to become students. See *HHS, Juan 61*, pp.2020. During the Zhidi's (145-146) reign, it was ordered that senior officials, even the Grand General, had to send their sons to study at the Imperial University. See *HHS, Juan 6*, pp.281. These records reflected an increase of the aristocratic proportion in the student population.

⁵² *HHS, Juan 57*, pp.1845.

⁵³ *HHS, Juan 47*, pp.3408 and *Juan 55*, pp.3540.

⁵⁴ Guo Tai later on became one of the best educators in the late Eastern Han. See Hu Meiqi zhu, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi* (Taipei: San min shu ju, 1978), pp.191-194. And he was critically acclaimed by historian that "even Mencius and Mo Di 墨翟 did not far exceed his achievement". Quoted from Qian Mu 錢穆, "Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Zhi Du Yu Jiao Yu Si Xiang" 中國教育制度與教育思想, in Qian Mu 錢穆 zhu, *Guo Shi Xin Lun* 國史新論 (Beijing: Sheng huo, du shu, xin zhi san lian shu dian, 2001), pp.247.

川. The two students, along with the officials Li Ying 李膺 (?-168), Chen Fan 陳蕃 (90-168), and Wang Xiang 王暢 were given to mutual flattery. Thus, a saying emerged at the University, “Li Yuanli (Ying) is the role model for all the world. Chen Zhongju (Fan) is upright and unafraid of coercion. Wang Xumou(Xiang) exemplifies the country’s best in elegance.” This trend of praising people even extended beyond the university campus. As the officials from eminent clans were afraid of being negatively appraised, they converged on the campus gates (to watch their fame grow).⁵⁵ 太學諸生三萬餘人，郭泰及潁川賈彪為其冠，與李膺、陳蕃、王暢更相褒重。學中語曰：“天下模楷，李元禮；不畏強禦，陳仲舉；天下俊秀，王叔茂。”於是中外承風，競以臧否相尚，自公卿以下，莫不畏其貶議，屣履到門。

This trend of inflated jargon known as pure discussion (*Qing Yi* 清議) pervaded the literati-official class. But in fact the activity involved more than mere discussion, since lives were often at stake, as reflected in Li Ying’s handling of 2 criminal cases that involved notorious people.⁵⁶

The situation changed dramatically in 168, when Lingdi (156-189, r.168-189) acceded to the throne. At first, lots of acclaimed officials, including Li Ying, were restored. Dou Wu 竇武 (?-168) and his coalition of upright officials plotted to wipe out eunuchs with excessive power at the court. However owing to a premature leak about their cabal, the eunuchs responded preemptively. By controlling the young emperor, Lingdi, the eunuchs accused Dou Wu of usurping the throne and assassinated him by imperial order. Other upright literati-officials and university students who collaborated with Dou Wu, including Chen Fan and Li Ying, were arrested and tortured to death in jail. This was known as the second “calamities emanating from bans on factions” (*Dang Gu Zhi Huo* 黨錮之禍) of the Eastern Han.⁵⁷ After this political purge, the eunuchs continued to dominate the court for the entire reign of Lingdi. Only after the death of Lingdi, with the assistance of another imperial relative,

⁵⁵ ZZTJ, Juan 55. pp.1788.

⁵⁶ For a fuller account of how Li Ying handled the case, see his biography in HHS, Juan 67, pp.2191-2197.

⁵⁷ ZZTJ, Juan 56.

He Jin 何進 (135-189), was the problem of eunuchs solved. Being haunted by the continuous rivalries between the court eunuchs and the alliance of literati-scholars and university students, the university could no longer continue to thrive in the late Eastern Han.⁵⁸

It is worth mentioning that, despite the unprecedented size of the Imperial University in the Eastern Han, its political influence did not match the Western Zhou. Eastern Han University was merely forum for commenting on officials and politics and failed in its primary function to supply the government with officials. Since some of its top students completed their studies at an advanced age, they were unsuitable for appointment.⁵⁹ Another reason for this was the corrupted recruitment mechanism in late Eastern Han, where nominations were based on relationships with the nominating officials instead of talent and abilities.⁶⁰ Despite its decline, the Imperial University made a remarkable contribution to education in the Eastern Han, since two of its graduates Guo Tai and Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) ultimately became prominent educators.⁶¹

Post-Han evolution of the metropolitan schools

The fall of Han did not improve matters. Since frequent warfare occurred during the subsequent Three Kingdoms (220-280), much of the resources of the three states were devoted to the military and allocations for education were severely

⁵⁸ B.J. Mansvelt Beck, "The fall of Han", in *CHC*, Vol.1, pp.326-330 gave a brief account of the excessive power held by the eunuchs in the Eastern Han court and its destructive consequence that ultimately led to the fall of the empire. The negative impact of frequent warfare on education was mentioned by an official in a memorial to the last emperor of the Han – Xiandi (181-234, r.189-220), which mentioned the facts of the Erudites' failure to carry out proper educational duties and a small number of students in the Imperial University. See *TD*, *Juan* 53, pp.1463-1464.

⁵⁹ *TD*, *Juan* 53, pp.1463.

⁶⁰ *TD*, *Juan* 13, pp.318.

⁶¹ Hu Meiqi, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi*, pp.191-196.

curtailed. The early decades of a newly resuscitated Imperial School in the Wei Kingdom (220-266) saw little progress in terms of development:⁶²

The Imperial School was reopened in the first year of Huangchu (220) with a few hundred students. From the Taihe reign until the middle of the Qinglong era (227-230), a highly eventful period for both external and internal affairs, people were thinking of escape and relief. As a result, people sought learning opportunities at the Imperial School without any genuine motive to learn, and the student population surging to a thousand. But in general the Erudites then were inattentive, making them inappropriate to teach students. Moreover, since students came to escape mandatory state service rather than seek knowledge, they learned nothing the whole year.⁶³ 太學始開，有弟子數百人。至太和、青龍中，中外多事，人懷避就。雖性非解學，多求詣太學。太學諸生有千數，而諸博士率皆粗疏，無以教弟子。弟子本亦避役，竟無能習學，冬來春去，歲歲如是。

In 272, under a unified Western Jin (266-316), only a few thousand students were enrolled in the Imperial School. After some indecent students were revealed to Wudi (236-290, r.266-290), the court ordered that all candidates be scrutinized and only the truly deserving continue to receive education at the university.⁶⁴ A few years later, in 276, to further facilitate the learning of aristocratic students, the court inaugurated the School of National Youth (*Guo Zi Xue* 國子學) as a counterpart to the Imperial University, a name emanating from the *Institutes of Zhou*.⁶⁵ The bureaucratic structure of the School was further institutionalized two years later and admission criteria promulgated in 293, under Huidi (259-306, r.290-306). The regulations permitted only sons and grandsons of officials in the fifth rank or above to attend the School of National Youth. Subsequently, commoners and aristocrats could be clearly distinguished by virtue of the school they attended, the Imperial School for

⁶² This was mentioned in a memorial of a Wei official during the reign of King Qi Cao Fang. See Shen Yue 沈約 (441-513) zhuan, *Song Shu* 宋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974), *Juan* 14, pp.356.

⁶³ Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297) zhuan, *San Guo Zhi* (SGZ) 三國志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1959), *Juan* 13, pp.420-421.

⁶⁴ Xiao Zixian 蕭子顯 (489-537) zhuan, *Nan Qi Shu* (NQS) 南齊書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1972), *Juan* 9, pp.145 and *Song Shu*, *Juan* 14, pp.356.

⁶⁵ Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (578-648) zhuan, *Jin Shu* (JS) 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974), *Juan* 3, pp.66 and Shen Yue, *Song Shu*, *Juan* 14, pp.356.

commoners and the School of National Youth for aristocrats.⁶⁶

Ironically, despite the desire of Jin emperors to nurture aristocratic youth, the ongoing preferences within the political system that favored aristocrats and a cultural system influx discouraged people from studying at government schools. With regard to the former, government positions were almost guaranteed for sons of ranking officials under the recruitment system known as *Nine Grades of the Morally Upright* (*Jiu Pin Zhong Zheng Zhi* 九品中正制),⁶⁷ causing most aristocratic youth to shy away from government education. For students of commoner background, government education was unappealing due to the ongoing monopoly of official posts by aristocratic families.

In addition, chaotic political conditions also demoralized the literati and decreased their faith in government. The fall of the Han aggravated the contempt of the intellectuals towards aristocratic officials who pretended to be upright but were thoroughly corrupt in practice. Hence instead of pursuing public service to the state, as Confucianism advocated, the intellectuals favored the novelty of Buddhism or the “mysterious learning” of Daoism (*Xuan Xue* 玄學), which focused on private learning, material indulgence, and political aloofness.⁶⁸ The evolution of pure discussion (*Qing Yi* 清議) in the Eastern Han into pure talk (*Qing Tan* 清談) of the Wei Jin period offers evidence of this radical change in intellectual climate.⁶⁹ A curriculum at the government schools that still focused on the Confucian classics failed to keep up with

⁶⁶ *NQS*, Juan 9, pp.145; *JS*, Juan 24, pp.736.

⁶⁷ The situation of aristocratic dominance under the *Jiu Pin Zhong Zheng Zhi* was summarized by a Jin official Liu Yi 劉毅 as “those who received top grades were never commoners; and those received low grades were never from prominent clans” 上品無寒門，下品無勢族 in his memorial to the Wudi of Jin. See *JS*, Juan 45, pp.1273.

⁶⁸ Chen Shou, *San Guo Zhi*, Juan 16, pp.502. “Students nowadays despised Confucianism and deemed it as profligate and impractical.” 今之學者...競以儒家為迂闊，不周世用. See also *WXTK*, Juan 41, pp.390.

⁶⁹ Qian Mu, *Guo Shi Da Gang*, pp.177-179.

scholarly trends.⁷⁰ It is therefore not hard to understand why only a minority of students were passionate to study at government schools.

Even worse, invasions by five different non-Han confederacies forced the Jin Court to move southward and resettle in Jianye 建業, modern Nanjing. Since then China was divided into the Northern and Southern dynasties. In the South, after the demise of Eastern Jin (317-420), four dynasties ruled in less than two centuries: the Song (420-479), Qi (479-502), Liang (502-557), and Chen (557-589). The situation in the North was hardly better owing to countless military confrontations among a dozen rival regimes. Although unification was attained in 439 under the Northern Wei dynasty (386-534) by the Xianbei 鮮卑 people, the capital of the dynasty frequently shifted. In 494, the capital relocated from Pingcheng 平城, current Datong, to Luoyang under the reign of Xiaowendi (467-499, r.471-499). Four decades later, the Wei empire was split in two to form the Eastern Wei (534-550) and Western Wei (535-556), with capitals at Ye 鄴 and Changan respectively. Such unstable political environments across China definitely figured negatively in the development of the Imperial University. In addition, the eminent aristocratic clans continued to monopolize most of the government positions in the north and south, meaning a limited political function for the Imperial University as a route to recruit officials. Therefore the Imperial University had diversified its curricula and introduced political advisory functions as a strategy to assert Confucian governance,⁷¹ but to little avail.

The establishment of the Sui dynasty (581-618) in 581 ushered in a new era in educational development. The first emperor, Wendi (541-604, r.581-604), initiated a series of reforms relating to education in order to expand the pool of talented officials

⁷⁰ Thomas H.C. Lee, *Education in traditional China*, pp.57-58.

⁷¹ Thomas H.C. Lee, *Education in traditional China*, pp.61-67.

to assist in governance. The independence of the Temple of National Youth (*Guo Zi Si* 國子寺) from the Court of Imperial Sacrifices would symbolize the separation of education from rites and the increased importance of education among national policies. Besides, in the early reign of Wendi, scholars were invited from around the country to the capital, the emperor soliciting advice and offering generous rewards. Buttressed by the countrywide establishment of schools in the capital and rural areas, Confucianism appeared to be reclaiming some glory since its peak in the Han and Wei.⁷² Abolition of the “nine grades for the morally upright” in official recruitment in 582, followed by the adoption of the Advanced Scholar (*Jin Shi* 進士) degree examination during Yangdi’s reign (569-618, r.604-618), an examination that emphasized the literary ability of the candidates, suggested a genuine reform in the drive to hire talented people.⁷³ But the Sui emperors eventually doubted the effectiveness of government schools to nurture talent, causing the Imperial University again to wane in the remaining years of Sui rule.⁷⁴

The succeeding Tang dynasty (618-907), in spite of establishing the empire by military force, favored Confucianism and recognized the importance of education. In 619, Gaozu (566-635, r.618-626) arranged for sons and grandsons of officials to study at government schools. The School of National Youth accepted sons of officials with the rank of 3 or above, the Imperial University accepted sons of officials with the rank of 5 or above, and the School of the Four Gates (*Si Men Xue* 四門學) accepted sons of officials with the rank of 7 or above. The School of National Youth had a student population of 72, the Imperial University 140 and the School of the Four

⁷² Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580-643), Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 (583-666) *deng zhuan*, *Sui Shu* 隋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1959), *Juan* 75, pp.1706.

⁷³ Sizuo Sogabe 曾我部靜雄, translated by Gao Mingshi 高明士, “Zhong Guo De Xuan Ju, Gong Ju Yu Ke Ju” 中國的選舉、貢舉與科舉, in *Da Lu Za Zhi Shi Xue Cong Shu ; Di 4 Ji, Di 1 Ce* 大陸雜誌史學叢書 ; 第4輯, 第1冊 (Taipei: Da lu za zhi she, 1975), pp.33.

⁷⁴ Wei Zheng, Linghu Defen, *Sui Shu*, *Juan* 2, pp.32 and *Juan* 2, pp. 46-47.

Gates 130.⁷⁵ And the Confucian classics remained the core curriculum at these three schools.⁷⁶

Under the glorious reign of Taizong (599-649, r.626-649), educational institutions and Confucian orthodoxy were restored some of the splendor of Han times. After increasing the student quotas and enlarging the campuses of the three schools, Taizong erected three additional specialist schools for calligraphy, mathematics, and law under the direction of the Directorate of Education (*Guo Zi Jian* 國子監) in the capital.⁷⁷ The total student body rose to 3,260. In addition, inheriting the civil service examination system of the Sui, the metropolitan schools became the training ground for students to prepare for the examination. With the help of the Confucian scholar Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648), the *Official interpretation of the Five Classics* 五經正義 became the standard for government schools and the examination system, which surely reassured proponents of Confucianism. During the golden age, Confucian scholars from the four corners gathered at the Tang capital. Even the Kings of nearby states like Korea, Tibet and Xinjiang sent their sons and youth to study in the Chinese capital. As a result, the universities amassed a total of over 8,000 students and Confucianism flourished at unprecedented levels.⁷⁸

However without adequate support from successors to Taizong, the metropolitan schools gradually declined, as depicted by Chen Ziang 陳子昂 (661-702)

⁷⁵ Liu Xu 劉昫 (887-946) *deng zhuan*, *Jiu Tang Shu* (JTS) 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1975), Juan 189a, pp.4940.

⁷⁶ For detailed accounts of Tang education, see Liu Boji 劉伯驥, *Tang Dai Zheng Jiao Shi* 唐代政教史 (Taipei: Taiwan Zhonghua shu ju, 1974), pp.113-330; Gao Mingshi 高明士, *Tang Dai Dong Ya Jiao Yu Quan De Xing Cheng : Dong Ya Shi Jie Xing Cheng Shi De Yi Ce Mian* 唐代東亞教育圈的形成：東亞世界形成史的一側面 (Taipei: Guo li bian yi guan Zhonghua cong shu bian shen wei yuan hui, 1984); and Taga Akigorō 多賀秋五郎, *Tōdai kyōikushi no kenkyū : Nihon gakkō kyōiku no genryū* 唐代教育史の研究：日本學校教育の源流 (Tōkyō: Fumaidō Shoten, 1953). The last work has been translated into English. See Taga Akigoro; summary translation by P.A. Herbert, *The history of education in Tang China* (Osaka: Osaka University, 1985).

⁷⁷ Wang Bu 王溥 (922-982), *Tang Hui Yao* 唐會要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1957), Juan 35, pp.633 and JTS, Juan 44, pp.1163.

⁷⁸ JTS, Juan 189a, pp.4941.

in a memorial to Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705, r.690-705):

The Imperial University has lain in ruins for a long time. The campus and classrooms are almost devoid of a student presence. And I seldom heard University students studying such Confucian classics as the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Music*.⁷⁹ 國家大學之廢積，歲月久矣。學堂荒穢，畧無人蹤。詩書禮樂，罕聞習者。

The rising importance of the Advanced Scholar degree in the civil service examination partly explains the decline in the metropolitan schools. Despite its creation in the Sui dynasty, the Advanced Scholar degree began to dominate recruitment only in the reign of Wu Zetian, who desired to recruit a group of literary supporters to facilitate her governance after usurping the Tang Court. And this elevated importance of the civil service examination system, which continued to thrive as the dominant recruitment mechanism of later dynasties, is interpreted by Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 as a strategy to counter the eminent clans in Guan 關 and Long 隴 (modern Sha'an Xi and Gan su), then loyal to the Tang.⁸⁰

The auxiliary role of the Imperial University in the civil service examination system in the Tang could also be attributed to the diminished role of university students in the Tang recruitment system. In the Han, university graduates could receive official appointment after passing a school examination without competing with other candidates. However students in the Tang Imperial University were only exempted from the Prefectural examination. And they were still required to sit for the higher level departmental examination together with nominees from various prefectures and counties. Those successful candidates would then be further examined by the Ministry of Personnel before receiving official appointment. This comparison

⁷⁹ Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (962-1025), Yang Yi 楊億 (974-1020) deng zhuan, *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1960), *Juan* 604, pp.4940.

⁸⁰ Chen Yinke zhu, *Tang Dai Zheng Zhi Shi Shu Lun Gao* 唐代政治史述論稿 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1982), pp.18-21.

obviously showed the auxiliary role of the Imperial University in the Tang civil service examination system. Even more discouraging to the Tang university students was their rare chances of success in the civil service examination, since among the hundred newly conferred Advanced Scholar and Classical understanding (*Ming Jing* 明經) degree holders in the year 729, only 10 to 20 were from the Directorate of Education. With a student population of 3,000, the success rate was just 0.6%! The effectiveness of the Imperial University in nurturing talent and supplying officials was definitely far from desirable in this regard, particularly after taking into account the financial and human resources the Tang Court had devoted to its development.⁸¹ This example shows how limited a role of the Imperial University played in the state recruitment mechanism of the mid-Tang. The political impact of university graduates was predictably marginal.

The An Lushan 安祿山 (703-757) rebellion in 753 would further destabilize the political and social orders of the Tang dynasty, while limiting financial resources of the central government. Government schools in the capital therefore languished, as reflected in an edict in 766:

Since the government urgently needed to deal with the chaos created by the barbarian forces, it set up an Imperial University with just a few students without properly carrying out its educational functions. Places once full of recitational murmurings are now quiet. Classrooms have not been tidied up for a long time. Alas! It is hard to imagine how schools in the capital could reach this stage!⁸² 頃以戎狄多虞，急於經略，太學空設，諸生蓋寡。絃誦之地，寂寥無聲，函丈之間，殆將不掃，上庠及此，甚用閔焉。

⁸¹ Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (962-1025) *deng zhuan*, *Song Ben Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 宋本冊府元龜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1989), *Juan* 604, pp.1856. For a thorough study on the Tang civil service examination system, see Wu Zongguo 吳宗國 zhu, *Tang Dai Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu* 唐代科舉制度研究 (Shenyang: Liaoning da xue chu ban she, 1997). See also Feng Xiaolin 馮小林 zhu, *Zhongguo Sui Tang Wu Dai Jiao Yu Shi* 中國隋唐五代教育史 (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she, 1994), Ch.3, pp.118-160 for a brief narrative.

⁸² *JTS*, *Juan* 11, pp.281.

The poor condition of the metropolitan schools failed to improve in the early ninth century, where only a hundred students enrolled in the year 803.⁸³ This might partly be owing to the apathy of the aristocratic youth towards studying in the government schools, as mentioned in a memorial by Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), then Professor of the School of the Four Gates, “those sons and grandsons of ranking officials are ashamed of studying at the Imperial University, so ordinary workers and merchants filled the school campus.”⁸⁴ 公卿子孫，恥遊太學，工商凡冗，或處上庠

In 807, with the student quota for the six metropolitan schools in Changan fixed to around 500,⁸⁵ conditions were hardly comparable to the glorious days of Taizong. The main reason for this was the power shift from the court in the capital to military governors in the locales. Schools came to be built by military governors at the local level instead. Despite the fading influence of the metropolitan schools, the Directorate of Education managed to survive after the collapse of the Tang dynasty in 907. During this period of disunity, Emperor Mingzong (867-933, r.926-933) of the Later Tang (923-936) even tried to restore the learning custom at the metropolitan schools. Through scrapping the privilege of duty exemption of Directorate students in 928 as well as requiring them to pay 2,000 cash upon admissions and an additional 1,000 cash after they got an examination degree in 930,⁸⁶ Mingzong envisioned to get rid of those students who merely exploited the school privileges but were not genuine in learning. Even though the effectiveness of these policies is doubtful, Mingzong’s vision in cultivating a civil culture through education should be well acknowledged.

Buddhist penetration into the Chinese intellectual arena since the Northern

⁸³ Liu Boji, *Tang Dai Zheng Jiao Shi*, pp.116.

⁸⁴ Han Yu, “Qing Fu Guo Zi Jian Sheng Tu Zhuang” 請復國子監生徒狀, in Han Yu 韓愈 zhuan; Ma Qichang 馬其昶 jiao zhu, Ma Maoyuan 馬茂元 zheng li, *Han Changli Wen Ji Jiao Zhu* 韓昌黎文集校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1986), *Juan* 8, pp.589.

⁸⁵ WXTK, *Juan* 41, pp.393.

⁸⁶ Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982), *Wu Dai Hui Yao* 五代會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1978), *Juan* 16, pp.275.

and Southern Dynasties proved influential to the educational sector, which partly explains the evolution of Temple school education (*Miao Xue* 廟學) in Tang government schools.⁸⁷ Hence in Tang times, government education surrounding the Confucian temple existed as a counterpart to private education in Buddhist monasteries, which “engaged in some kind of external education, at the grass-roots level, probably as the result of a fusion between the semimonastic postulants’ training and the local community schools.”⁸⁸ Nevertheless, most of the local government schools could not survive the Tang collapse and another age of disunity and warfare. In addition, the destruction of Buddhist temples and statues in the Later Zhou reign of Shizong (921-959, r.954-959) proved detrimental to private learning as well.⁸⁹

After understanding the conventional connection between government education and politics in pre-Song times, we now focus on conditions in the Northern Song. Could past experiences shed light on the Northern Song experiment? In an era famed for the rise of emperor’s autocracy,⁹⁰ how did the Northern Song emperors

⁸⁷ The evolution of *Miao Xue* and its impact on the educational system in post-Tang China and other East Asian regions are thoroughly discussed in Gao Mingshi 高明士 zhu, *Dong Ya Jiao Yu Quan Xing Cheng Shi Lun* 東亞教育圈形成史論 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2003). See also Thomas H.C. Lee, *Education in traditional China*, pp.70.

⁸⁸ Erick Zurcher, “Buddhism and Education in T’ang Times”, in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (ed.), *Neo-confucian education: the formative stage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp.56. Other characteristics of Buddhist education during the late Tang period were also illustrated in this article. See also Yan Gengwang 嚴耕望, “Tang Ren Si Ye Shan Lin Si yuan zhi feng shang”, 唐人習業山林寺院之風尚, in Yan Gengwang zhu, *Tang Shi Yan Jiu Cong Gao* 唐史研究叢稿 (Hong Kong: Xin Ya yan jiu suo, 1971), pp.367-424.

⁸⁹ Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) zhu, *Xin Wu Dai Shi* 新五代史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974), *Juan* 12, pp.125-126, see also Richard L. Davis (translated with an introduction), *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp.115.

⁹⁰ Japanese historian Naitō Torajirō argued as early as 1922 that the rise of emperor’s autocracy is one of the prominent features in the period of Tang-Song transition. See Naitō Torajirō, “Gai Gua Di Tang Song Shi Dai Guan” 概括的唐宋時代觀, in Liu Junwen 劉俊文 zhu bian, Huang Yuese 黃約瑟 (tra.), *Ri Ben Xue Zhe Yan Jiu Zhong Guo Shi Lun Zhu Xuan Yi* 日本學者研究中國史論著選譯 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1992), Vol.1, pp.10-18. Naitō’s hypothesis was further elaborated by his student Ichisada Miyazaki 宮崎市定. See Ichisada Miyazaki, “Dong Yang Di Jin Shi” 東洋的近世, in Liu Junwen zhu bian, Huang Yuese (tra.), *Ri Ben Xue Zhe Yan Jiu Zhong Guo Shi Lun Zhu Xuan Yi*, Vol.1, pp.153-241. For a brief discussion on the features in the Tang-Song transition, see Lau Nap Yin (Liu Liyan) 柳立言, “He Wei Tang Song Bian Ge” 何謂“唐宋變革”, *Zhong Hua Wen Shi Lun Song* 中華文史論叢, Vol.81 (2006), pp.130. Chinese scholar Qian Mu held similar view regarding the over-centralization of power in the Song period, which facilitated later growth of despotism. See Qian Mu, *Guo Shi Da Gang*, pp.525-527. See also F.W. Mote, “The Growth of Chinese despotism - A critique of Wittfogel’s theory of Oriental Despotism as applied to China”, *Oriens Extremus*, Vol.8 No.1

make use of education to serve their political visions with reference to historic practices at the University? The term autocracy refers to “a system of government by one person with absolute power.”⁹¹ Should we put this definition of autocracy into the Song context, it includes a wide variety of pragmatic government institutions or individual administrators such as Empresses regencies, Council-Secretary, Councilors, and even the examiners overseeing the civil service examinations. Deriving the authority from the throne, the functioning of these institutions and individuals realizes the power of Song emperors. Although this autocratic system symbolically and even theoretically elevates the power of Song emperors, we should not confuse it with the term “despotism”, which denotes an emperor “who exercises absolute power, especially in a cruel or oppressive way.”⁹² Apart from the relationship between education and autocracy, I would also like to focus on the effectiveness of the elitist educational institution. Traditionally embracing the function of Confucian education, nurturance of scholars, as well as moral perfection of people,⁹³ what role did the Imperial University play in realizing the imperial visions? Other than illustrating how politics affected education, I also want to investigate how education influenced politics. How effective could the Imperial University perform its political mission while advancing Song governance? Before addressing these questions, I will discuss on the primary sources that will be utilized in this research as well as the secondary scholarships that are relevant to the subject matter.

(1961), pp.8-17 for a brief discussion on the growth of despotism in the Song period in English.

⁹¹ *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th edition (revised) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp.88.

⁹² *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th edition (revised), pp.389.

⁹³ These are the key features of government education in traditional China highlighted by Gao Mingshi. See Gao Mingshi 高明士 zhu, *Zhong Guo Chuan Tong Zheng Zhi Yu Jiao Yu* 中國傳統政治與教育 (Taipei: Wen jin chu ban she, 2003), pp.121-127.

Primary Sources

For any research concerning the Song dynasty, the official history is a critical source. The longest of the dynastic histories (496 *Juans*), it contains lots of details. But its long length partly explains the poor editing of this work (repetitiveness and internal contradictions), which leaves much room for historians to interpret. And chapters on the “Selection of officials” (*Xuanju* 選舉) and “Officials” (*Zhiguan* 職官) in the official *History of the Song Dynasty* (*Song Shi* 宋史 (SS)), which details the recruitment mechanism and the institutional structure of the Song, are particularly useful for studies of educational institutions.⁹⁴ Our understanding of these chapters of the SS is enhanced by supplements of contemporary scholars.⁹⁵

Other than the SS, the *WXTK* and the *Song Hui Yao* 宋會要 (*SHY*) are highly reliable sources on the educational institutions in the Northern Song. The former was finished as early as 1307, author Ma Tuanlin having lived in the Song-Yuan transition. Ma tried to attain a comprehensive understanding of historical evolution through study of government institutions from Pre-Qin times to the Ningzong (1168-1224, r.1194-1224) era of the Southern Song. For more in-depth study of institutions in the Song, the *SHY* was another important source that must be relied on. The Important Documents (*Hui Yao* 會要) of the Song Court was mainly a collection of memorials submitted to the emperor, taken from Daily Records, Veritable Records, as well as government documents of the Six Ministries and of the Circuit Intendants, classified into different rubrics similar to the *Wu Dai Hui Yao* 五代會要 (Important Documents of the Five Dynasties Period). The compilation of *Song Hui Yao* began in the reign of

⁹⁴ Tuotuo 脫脫 (1313-1355) deng zhuan, *Song Shi* (SS) 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1977).

⁹⁵ Deng Guangming, “Song Shi Zhi Guan Zhi Kao Zheng” 《宋史職官志》考正, in Deng Guangming, *Deng Guangming Quan Ji* 鄧廣銘全集 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiao yu chu ban she, 2005), Vol.9, pp.18-225; He Zongli 何忠禮 zhu, *Song shi xuan ju zhi bu zheng* 宋史選舉志補正 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang gu ji chu ban she, 1992) and Gong Yanming 龔延明 zhu, *Song shi zhi guan zhi bu zheng* 宋史職官志補正 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang gu ji chu ban she, 1992).

Renzong (1010-1063, r.1022-1063) of the Northern Song and runs through Lizong (1205-1264, r.1224-1264) of the Southern Song (1127-1279); compiled by the Important Documents Bureau (*Hui Yao Suo* 會要所), it aimed to formulate a set of guidelines for bureaucratic practice. Till the end of the Song, a total of 11 *Hui Yao* were finished, the last of which was entitled *Important Documents of the Thirteen reigns* (*Shi San Chao Hui Yao* 十三朝會要) and compiled by the famous historian Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166-1243). Owing to the confidentiality of its content, the work was prohibited from reproduction.⁹⁶ An unforeseeable misfortune of the work occurred after the Southern Song collapse in 1276, when the majority of the *Hui Yao* was destroyed during the Mongol conquest. Only the work by Li Xinchuan, circulated in the Sichuan area, managed to be transmitted till the Ming (1368-1644) times when the encyclopedic compilation of the *Yong Le Da Dian* 永樂大典 took place during the reign of Chengzu (1360-1424, r.1403-1424). Being incorporated into the *YLDD*, the originals of Li Xinchuan's work gradually disappeared in the mid-Ming. And the only surviving *Hui Yao* of the Song was kept in the *Yong Le Da Dian*. In 1809, a Qing (1644-1911) scholar Xu Song 徐松 (1781-1848) was assigned to compile the *Essays of the whole Tang* (*Quan Tang Wen* 全唐文) under imperial instruction, during which Xu used his leisure to make a copy of the *Hui Yao*. This extracted manuscript known as the *Draft of documents pertaining to matters of state in the Song Dynasty* (*Song Hui Yao Ji Gao* 宋會要輯稿), comprised of 200 books and classified into 21 rubrics, was published firstly by the Library of Beiping in 1936 and reprinted by the Zhonghua Bookstore in 1957.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Xu Song 徐松 (1781-1848) ji, *Song Hui Yao Ji Gao* (*SHY*) 宋會要輯稿 (Beiping: Guo li Beiping tu shu guan, 1936), *Xingfa* 刑法, 2/38a. "The dynastic Essential Documents, National Histories, and Veritable Records should not be printed or transcribed. Infringers were to receive two years' imprisonment, and informers would be rewarded with 100 *kuan*." 本朝會要、實錄，不得雕印。違者徒二年，告者賞緡錢十萬。 See also Chan Hok-lam, *Control of publishing in China: past and present* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1983), pp.7-8.

⁹⁷ A brief description on the work *SHY* could be found in Yves Hervouet, *A Sung Bibliography* (*SB*) (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1978), pp.177-178. For a detailed discussion on the compilation, circulation, and published edition of the work, refer to Wang Yunhai 王雲海, *Song Hui Yao Ji Gao Yan Jiu* 宋會要輯稿研究 (Kaifeng Shi: Henan shi da xue bao bian ji bu, 1984) and *Song Hui*

The publication of *SHY* was inseparable to research on Song institutional histories. Although the work was compiled in the Qing, it could be considered as a primary source, since its contents are mainly unedited memorials submitted to Song emperors and imperial edicts. Detailed records regarding educational policies and institutions are scattered around sections of “Honor for the Confucians” (*Chongru* 崇儒), “Officials” and “Selection of Officials”, which somehow reveals that government education, Confucianism and official recruitment are interconnected. Despite its resourcefulness, the voluminous *SHY* has not been widely used by modern scholars of Song educational history. This will be further elaborated in the following section regarding secondary sources.

Apart from the two works specifically focusing on institutions, should scholars need to make reference to other major incidents in the Northern Song, the chronological history – the *Collected data for a continuation of the Comprehensive mirror to aid in government* (*Xu Zi zhi tong jian chang bian* (*XCB*) 續資治通鑑長編) – serves as the best reference.⁹⁸ Aiming to imitate Sima Guang’s masterpiece *Zi Zhi Tong Jian*, which covers the political history from the ancient period till the Five Dynasties, the Southern Song historian Li Tao 李燾 (1115-1184) recorded in detail the major political events from Taizu to Qinzong (1100-1161, r.1125-1127) of the Northern Song in his work *XCB*. Through 40 years of hard work, Li Tao had solicited historical sources ranging from government documents to private records to compile the work, with additional comments and annotations added should there be inconsistencies among various records. Such careful examination of sources made the

Yao Ji Gao Kao Jiao : Fu Song Hui Yao Ji Gao Pian Mu Suo Yin 宋會要輯稿考校：附宋會要輯稿篇目索引 (Shanghai : Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1986), Chen Zhichao 陳智超, *Jie kai “Song hui yao” zhi mi* 解開《宋會要》之謎 (Beijing: She hui ke xue wen xian chu ban she, 1995).

⁹⁸ Li Tao 李燾 (1115-1184), *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian Chang Bian* (*XCB*) 續資治通鑑長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1979-).

XCB an extremely reliable and authoritative history of the Northern Song period.⁹⁹ Unfortunately most parts covering the reformists' dominating eras – 1068-1070 under Shenzong (1048-1085, r.1067-1085), 1094-1098 under Zhezong (1076-1100, r.1085-1100), and the whole Huizong (1082-1135, r.1100-1125) and Qinzong period – were not transmitted beyond the Yuan dynasty. The current 520-zhuan edition of the *XCB* stops before Huizong. For researchers focusing on the reform eras, two supplementary sources that evolved from the *XCB* are particularly useful – the *Supplementing collected data for a continuation of the Comprehensive mirror to aid in government* (*Xu Zi zhi tong jian chang bian shi bu* (CBSB) 續資治通鑑長編拾補) and the *Topical history from the collected data for a continuation of the Comprehensive mirror to aid in government* (*Huang Song tong jian chang bian ji shi ben mo* (JSBM) 皇宋通鑑長編紀事本末). The former was a reconstruction of the lost section of the *XCB* compiled by the Qing scholars Huang I zhou 黃以周 (1828-1899) and Qin Xianye 秦緬業 (1813-1883), while the latter was arranged topically by a Southern Song historian Yang Zhongliang 楊仲良 (1241-1271) based on the *XCB*.¹⁰⁰ The significance of these two works lies in their coverage of the Huizong eras when reform policies in various areas such as education, social welfare and health were carried out.

Other than the detailed *XCB*, the *Chronological History of the Ten Reigns of*

⁹⁹ The careful selection of sources in the *XCB* was explained by Li Tao in his submission of his masterpiece to the emperor: “Should two different accounts on the same event exist, I would select the most promising one with reference to the sample set by the sages in order to obtain the truth.” 事或傳于兩說，惟折諸聖，逼得其真。Quoted from WXTK, *Juan* 193, 34b. See also James H. Zimmerman, “Sung History and Chinese Historiography” *Sung Studies Newsletter*, No.2 (Oct., 1970), pp.4-9. For studies relating to the compilation of the *XCB* and its historical value, see Sudō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之, “Minami sō no sumomo tō to zoku shi osamu toori kan chouhen no seiritsu” 南宋の李燾と續資治通鑑長編の成立, in Sudō Yoshiyuki cho, *Sōdaishi kenkyū* 宋代史研究 (Tōkyō: Tōyō Bunko, 1969), pp.469-512; Pei Rucheng 裴汝誠, Xu Peizao 許沛藻 zhu, *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian Chang Bian Kao Lue* 續資治通鑑長編考略 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1985); and SB, pp.72-75.

¹⁰⁰ Yang Zhongliang 楊仲良 zhuan; Li Zhiliang 李之亮 jiao dian, *Huang Song Tong Jian Chang Bian Ji Shi Ben Mo* (CBJSBM) 皇宋通鑑長編紀事本末 (Ha'erbin: Heilongjiang ren min chu ban she, 2006) and Huang Yizhou 黃以周 (1828-1899) deng ji zhu; Gu Jichen 顧吉辰 dian jiao, *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian Chang Bian Shi Bu* (CBSB) 續資治通鑑長編拾補 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2004). See also SB, pp.85-86.

Imperial Song (Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao 皇宋十朝綱要),¹⁰¹ the *Record of various items pertaining to politics of the Tai Ping period (Tai Ping Zhi Ji Tong Lei 太平治迹統類)*,¹⁰² as well as the *Outline and Detail of Northern Song History (Huang Chao Bian Nian Gang Mu Bei Yao 皇朝編年綱目備要)* are also reliable sources for a quicker and easier understanding on major political events in the Northern Song period.¹⁰³ The first one was compiled by Li Zhi (1161-1238), son of Li Tao, chronologically covering the major events during the reigns of all nine emperors of Northern Song plus Gaozong (1107-1187, r.1127-1162) of Southern Song. Another major contribution of this work was its inclusion of materials ignored by the *CBSB*.¹⁰⁴ Based on the works of Li Tao and Li Zhi, a Southern Song University student Chen Jun 陳均 (1174-1244) compiled the second work for examination preparation.¹⁰⁵ Although this work might be biased as the author envisioned illustrating pre-established moral values in the outline of events,¹⁰⁶ it is still valuable in a way that it preserved records of the Huizong period which are no longer extant in the current edition of Li Tao's comprehensive chronological history. The last one was arranged topically around events and institutions of the Northern Song by another

¹⁰¹ Li Zhi (1161-1238) zhuan, *Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao (SCGY) 皇宋十朝綱要* (Taipei: Wen Hai Chu Ban She, 1967).

¹⁰² Peng Baichuan 彭百川 zhuan, *Tai Ping Zhi Ji Tong Lei (TPZJTL) 太平治蹟統類* (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling gu ji ke yin she, 1986).

¹⁰³ Chen Jun 陳均 (1174-1244) bian ; Xu Peizao 許沛藻 [et al.] dian jiao, *Huang Chao Bian Nian Gang Mu Bei Yao (GMBY) 皇朝編年綱目備要* (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2006).

¹⁰⁴ *SB*, pp.80. See also Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, "Dui You Guan Tai Ping Zhi Ji Tong Lei Zhu Wen Ti De Kao Cha" 對有關《太平治迹統類》諸問題的新考察, in Deng Guangming zhu, *Deng Guangming Zhi Shi Cong Gao 鄧廣銘治史叢稿* (Beijing: Beijing da xue chu ban she, 1997), pp.347-378.

¹⁰⁵ *SB*, pp.81-82; Xu Peizao 許沛藻, "Huang Chao Bian Nian Gang Mu Bei Yao" 《皇朝編年綱目備要》考略, in Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, Xu Gui 徐規 deng zhu bian, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji : 1984 Nian Nian Hui Bian Kan 宋史研究論文集：一九八四年年會編刊* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang ren min chu ban she, 1987), pp.450-469; and Charles Hartman, "Chen Jun's Outline and Details: Printing and Politics in Thirteenth-Century Pedagogical Histories", in Lucille Chia and Hilde De Weerd (ed.), *Knowledge and text production in an age of print: China, 900-1400* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), pp.273-315. For a study of the author Chen Jun, see Yu Yunguo 虞雲國, "Nan Song Bian Nian Shi Jia Chen Jun Shi Ji Kao" 南宋編年史家陳均事跡考, in Yu Yunguo zhu, *Liang Song Li Shi Wen Hua Cong Gao 兩宋歷史文化叢稿* (Shanghai: Shanghai ren min chu ban she, 2011), pp.332-343.

¹⁰⁶ One of the essential components of the Outline and Detail tradition of historical writing, as argued by Charles Hartman, is to select the "outline" events to illustrate pre-established moral values. See Charles Hartman, "The Reluctant Historian: Sun Ti, Chu Hsi, and the Fall of Northern Sung", *T'oung Pao*, Second Series, Vol. 89, Fasc. 1/3 (2003), pp.147. In this article (pp.100-148), Hartman reveals how Zhu Xi and his followers altered the Song approach of historical writing from the *Comprehensive Mirror (Tong Jian 通鑑)* tradition to the *Outline and Detail (Gang Mu 綱目)* tradition.

Southern Song Sichuan historian Peng Baichuan 彭百川 (12th century). The detailed accounts on the civil service examinations under the reign of Taizu and Taizong are the most valuable part of this work. Yet its major shortfall was that “in places it contains details not to be found in any other book, yet elsewhere the records are too incomplete to be of use for extensive research.”¹⁰⁷ Apart from chronological histories, reference can also be made to encyclopedic works by Southern Song scholars Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296) and Zhang Ruyu 章如愚 (1196 Jinshi). Records in these works were categorized on the basis of the subject matter, with quotes from fragmented Veritable Records (Shi Lu 實錄), Important Documents and the *XCB* which are no longer available elsewhere.¹⁰⁸

After we have explored the major events in the development of the educational institutions in Northern Song based on the above primary sources, we have to understand how Song people, particularly those pursuing careers in education, perceived the relationship between education and politics and how they practiced teaching. Among the Song people, the emperors’ views were of primary importance. These can be found in the imperial edicts, most of which can either be extracted from the *SHY* and the *XCB*, or found in the *Collection of the Grand Edicts of Song* (*Song Da Zhao Ling Ji* 宋大詔令集), which comprises over 3,800 edicts of the Northern

¹⁰⁷ *SB*, pp.86.

¹⁰⁸ Wang Yinglin 王應麟 zhuan, *Yu Hai* (YH) 玉海 (Nanjing: Jiangsu gu ji chu ban she; Shanghai: Shanghai shu dian, 1987); Zhang Ruyu 章如愚 zhuan, *Qun Shu Kao Suo* (QSKS) 羣書考索 (Beijing: Shu Mu Wen Xian Chu Ban She, 1992). For studies regarding the authors and their works, see Wang Deyi 王德毅, “Wang Yinglin Yu Hai Zhi Yan Jiu” 王應麟《玉海》之研究, in Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, Qi Xia 漆俠 zhu bian, *Guo Ji Song Shi Yan Tao Hui Lun Wen Xuan Ji* 國際宋史研討會論文選集 (Baoding: Hebei da xue chu ban she, 1992), pp.255-265; Charles B. Langley, “Wang Yinglin (1223-1296) : a study in the political and intellectual history of the demise of Song” (unpublished PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 1980); Peter K. Bol, “Zhang Ruyu, the Qunshu kaosuo, and Diversity in Intellectual Culture -- Evidence from Dongyang County in Wuzhou”, in Tian Yuqing 田餘慶 bian, *Qing Zhu Deng Guangming Jiao Shou Jiu Shi Hua Dan Lun Wen Ji* 慶祝鄧廣銘教授九十華誕論文集 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997), pp.644-673; Tang Kaijian 湯開建, Chen Wenyuan 陳文源, “Shan Tang Kao Suo Zhong Bao Liu De Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian Chang Bian Yi Wen” 《山堂考索》中保留的《續資治通鑑長編》佚文, in Ji nan da xue Zhongguo wen hua shi ji yan jiu suo 暨南大學中國文化史籍研究所 bian, *Li Shi Wen Xian Yu Chuan Tong Wen Hua Di San Ji* 歷史文獻與傳統文化第三集 (Guangzhou: Guangdong ren min chu ban she, 1993), pp.186-242.

Song emperors.¹⁰⁹ In addition, various Gold and Stone (*Jin Shi* 金石) sources contained precious materials particularly for research on the Huizong period, since some of the education-related edicts issued by Huizong were inscribed on stone to convey a sense of permanency.¹¹⁰

Secondly, the memorials submitted by Song scholar-officials also convey important messages. *The Collected Memorials of Northern Song officials* (*Song Chao Zhu Chen Zou Yi* 宋朝諸臣奏議) compiled by Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚 (1140-1196) and the *Memorials of leading officials in the past* (*Li Dai Ming Chen Zou Yi* 歷代名臣奏議) compiled by a group of scholars led by Yang Shiqi 楊士奇 (1365-1444),¹¹¹ collected the submissions of major officials, while those by the minor ones might be in the *SHY* and the *XCB* or collected writings. Moreover, the *Studies on Various Intellectual Schools in Song and Yuan Times* (*Song Yuan Xue An* (SYXA) 宋元學案) is also worth consulting.¹¹² Although the SYXA was compiled in the Qing period by Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755), it was in fact the earliest comprehensive intellectual history of Song Confucians. By classifying Song Confucians into various schools, Quan chronologically illustrated the evolution of each school through a vivid depiction on the thoughts and biographical details of its masters and followers, although great care is needed in citing the work. As shown by Thomas H. C. Lee, the SYXA had a strong predilection towards neo-Confucianism and hence generally anti-reformist in thrust; preferring the development of private academies over

¹⁰⁹ *Song Da Zhao Ling Ji* (SDZLJ) 宋大詔令集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1962). See also *SB*, pp.117.

¹¹⁰ See Patricia Buckley Ebrey, "Huizong's Stone Inscriptions", in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (ed.), *Emperor Huizong and late Northern Song China : the politics of culture and the culture of politics* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), pp.229-274.

¹¹¹ Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚 (1140-1196) bian; Beijing da xue Zhongguo zhong gu shi yan jiu zhong xin 北京大學中國中古史研究中心 jiao dian zheng li, *Song Chao Zhu Chen Zou Yi* 宋朝諸臣奏議 (SCZCZY) (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1999) and Huang Huai 黃淮 (1367-1449), Yang Shiqi 楊士奇 (1365-1444) bian, *Li Dai Ming Chen Zou Yi* (LDMCZY) 歷代名臣奏議 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1989).

¹¹² Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) yuan zhu; Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755) bu xiu; Chen Jinsheng 陳金生, Liang Yunhua 梁運華 dian jiao, *Song Yuan Xue An* (SYXA) 宋元學案 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1986).

government schools, it proved skeptical of the impact of state schools on individual moral behavior.¹¹³

Lastly, since how people acted in life may determine how they thought, the lives of university teachers, students and graduates must be investigated. In this connection, their own biographies in the official history and other primary sources such as epitaphs (*Muzhiming* 墓誌銘),¹¹⁴ chronological biographies (*Nianpu* 年譜), historical works in private hands,¹¹⁵ as well as local gazetteers¹¹⁶ ...etc. will be cited. The voluminous biographical indexes of Song people by Chang Bide 昌彼得 and Li Guoling 李國玲 are extremely good aids for identifying primary sources.¹¹⁷ An invaluable secondary source that anthologizes key anecdotal sources is the *Collected anecdotes for Song people* (*Song Ren Yi Shi Hui Bian* 宋人軼事彙編), an English

¹¹³ Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education and the examinations in Sung China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1985), pp.32.

¹¹⁴ See Huang Kuanchung 黃寬重, "Song Shi Yan Jiu De Zhong Yao Shi Liao – Yi Da Lu Di Qu Chu Tu Song Ren Mu Zhi Zi Liao Wei Li" 宋史研究的重要史料 - 以大陸地區出土宋人墓誌資料為例, *Xin Shi Xue* 新史學, Vol.9 No.2 (Jun., 1998), pp.143-185 and Angela Schottenhammer, "Characteristics of Song Epitaphs", in Dieter Kuhn (ed.), *Burial in Song China* (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), pp.253-306 for a discussion on the features of Song Epitaphs.

¹¹⁵ Biographies of Northern Song people can also be found in Zeng Gong 曾鞏 *zhuan*, *Long Ping Ji* (LPJ) 隆平集 in Beijing tu shu guan chu ban she yin shi 北京圖書館出版社影印室 *ji*, *Song Dai Zhuan Ji Zi Liao Cong Kan* (SDZJCK) 宋代傳記資料叢刊 (Beijing: Beijing tu shu guan chu ban she, 2006), Vol.13 and Wang Cheng 王稱 *zhuan*; Sun Yancheng 孫言誠, Cui Guoguang 崔國光 *dian jiao*, *Dong Du Shi Lue* (DDSL) 東都事略 (Jinan: Qi Lu shu she, 2000). For studies relating to these two works, their author and historical value, see Chen Shu 陳述 (1911-1992), "Dong Dou Shi Lue Zhuan Ren Wang Shang Cheng Fu Zi" 東都事略撰人王賞稱父子, in Zhong Yang Yan Jiu Yuan Li Shi Yu Yan Yan Jiu Suo Ji Kan 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊, Vol.8 No.1 (Oct 1939), pp.129-138; Cai Chongban 蔡崇榜, "Song Dai Si Chuan Shi Xue Jia Wang Cheng Yu Dong Dou Shi Lue" 宋代四川史學家王稱與《東都事略》, *Journal of Chengdu University (Social Science)*, No.4 (1985), pp.23-29; He Zhongli 何忠禮, "Wang Cheng He Ta De Dong Dou Shi Lue" 王稱和他的《東都事略》, in Chang Shaowen 常紹溫 *zhu bian*, Zhang Qifan 張其凡 *fu zhu bian*; Ji nan da xue Zhongguo wen hua shi ji yan jiu suo 暨南大學中國文化史籍研究所 *bian*, *Chen Lesu Jiao Shou Jiu Shi Dan Chen Ji Nian Wen Ji* 陳樂素教授九十誕辰紀念文集 (Guangzhou: Guangdong ren min chu ban she, 1992), pp.249-268; Shu Renhui 舒仁輝 *zhu*, "Dong Du Shi Lue" Yu "Song Shi" Bi Jiao Yan Jiu 《東都事略》與《宋史》比較研究 (Beijing: Shang wu yin shu guan, 2007); Liang Sile 梁思樂, "Long Ping Ji Shi Liao Yuan Liu Kao" 《隆平集》史料源流考, in Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南, Yang Guo 楊果, Luo Jiaxiang 羅家祥 *zhu bian*, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji* : (2010) 宋史研究論文集 (2010) (Wuhan: Hubei ren min chu ban she, 2011), pp.475-494; Xiong Weihua 熊偉華, "A Study of Long Ping Ji" 《隆平集》研究 (unpublished PhD dissertation, Jinan University, 2008).

¹¹⁶ For a thorough discussion on the innovations of the compilation of Local Gazetteers in the Southern Song, see James M. Hargett, "Song Dynasty Local Gazetteers and Their Place in The History of Difangzhi Writing", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Dec., 1996), pp. 405-442.

¹¹⁷ Chang Bide, *Song ren zhuan ji zi liao suo yin* 宋人傳記資料索引 (Taipei: Ding wen shu ju, 1974) and Li Guoling *bian zuan*, *Song ren zhuan ji zi liao suo yin bu bian* 宋人傳記資料索引補編 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 1994).

translation of which has also been published.¹¹⁸ In English, the 3-volume *Sung Biographies* also gives us brief accounts of the lives and activities of some well-known Song figures.¹¹⁹

In addition to the life and behaviors of these Song people, their records and thoughts, particularly those concerning university and education, are also worth consulting. These personal records and beliefs scattered around their literary compositions, most of which can be found in the recently published voluminous *Essays of the whole Song* (*Quan Song Wen* 全宋文).¹²⁰

Secondary Sources

Various works covering government education and examination in the Song period have appeared in Chinese, Japanese and western languages. Works in Asian languages can generally be classified into three categories: (i) a general survey of Song education; (ii) the civil service examination; and (iii) government schools. Under the first category, there are two different types of work. One group portrayed education in the Song dynasty as part of the general history of education in China,¹²¹ while the other group specifically focuses on the Song period. The study by Tereda Gō

¹¹⁸ Ding Chuanjing 丁傳靖 ji, *Song Ren Yi Shi Hui Bian* (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), For the English translation, see Chu Djang and Jane C. Djang, *A compilation of anecdotes of Sung personalities* (Collegeville, Minn., St. John's University Press, 1989).

¹¹⁹ Herbert Franke (ed), *Sung biographies* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1976), 4 volumes.

¹²⁰ Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊, Liu Lin 劉琳 zhu bian, *Quan Song Wen* (QSW) 全宋文 (Shanghai: Shanghai ci shu chu ban she; Hefei Shi: Anhui jiao yu chu ban she, 2006). This encyclopedic collection of literary works of Song people comprised of 360 volumes.

¹²¹ Since the late Qing, numerous works relating to the general history of education in China have been published, which include Ryochi Kano, *Shina Kyogaku shi ryaku*, Chen Dongyuan, *Zhongguo Jiao Yu Shi*, Chen Qingzhi 陳青之 zhu, *Zhongguo Jiao Yu Shi* 中國教育史 (Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1936), Hu Meiqi, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi*, Mao Lirui 毛禮銳, Qu Junong 瞿菊農, Shao Heting 邵鶴亭 bian, *Zhongguo Gu Dai Jiao Yu Shi* 中國古代教育史 (Beijing: Ren Min Jiao Yu, 1983), Mao Lirui 毛禮銳, Shen Guanqun 沈灌群 zhu bian, *Zhongguo Jiao Yu Tong Shi* 中國教育通史 (Jinan: Shandong jiao yu chu ban she, 1985-1989), 6 volumes, Chen Xuexun 陳學恂 zhu bian, *Zhongguo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu* 中國教育史研究 (Shanghai: Huadong shi fan da xue chu ban she, 1991-2001), 5 volumes, and Sun Peiqing 孫培青 zhu bian, *Zhongguo Jiao Yu Shi* 中國教育史 (Shanghai: Hua dong shi fan da xue chu ban she, 2000).

寺田剛 - *A brief introduction of the history of Song education* (*Sōdai kyōiku shi gaisetsu* 宋代教育史概説), published in 1965, was the first comprehensive study of Song education. It chronologically narrated the major events in Song education from Northern to Southern Song. With reference to various local Gazetteers and inscriptions, Terada vividly depicted the situation of local education, which is one of the most remarkable parts in this book.¹²² A critical flaw of the work, however, as argued by Thomas H.C. Lee, was its lack of usage of the *SHY* and hence the distinction between the School for the Empire's Youth and the Imperial University was unclear.¹²³ As a counterpart to the Japanese book, a Taiwanese scholar Liu Boji 劉伯驥 published his *History of politics and education in the Song Dynasty* (*Song Dai Zheng Jiao Shi* 宋代政教史) in 1971. This two-volume book was divided into three sections. The first part provides an overview of Song politics, economics and society in general, followed by a section on Song education, covering issues such as the organizational structure of the school, the civil service examination, the selection of officials, the life and educational theories of prominent Song educators, as well as the academic and artistic subjects and activities during the Song period. The last section illustrated the influence of Song culture and education to overseas states and its legacy for subsequent dynasties. Despite aiming to cover the history of both politics and education in the Song dynasty as reflected in its ambitious title, this work failed to illustrate how education and politics interacted in the Song dynasty. Nevertheless, the extensive primary sources that this work has referred to, particularly the *SHY*, made it exceptionally valuable among other scholarships in the 1960-70s.

Two similar works emphasizing on Song education were published in 1991 and 1992 by Mainland Chinese scholars Yuan Zheng 袁征 and Miao Chunde 苗春

¹²² Terada Gō 寺田剛 cho, *Sōdai kyōikushi gaisetsu* 宋代教育史概説 (Tōkyō: Hakubunsha, 1965).

¹²³ Thomas H. C. Lee, "Song Chao Jiao Yu Ji Ke Ju San Lun" 宋朝教育及科舉散論 in his *Song Dai Jiao Yu San Lun* 宋代教育散論 (Taipei shi: Dong sheng chu ban shi ye gong si, 1980), pp.112-114.

德 respectively. The two works, bearing the same name *Education in the Song Dynasty* (*Song Dai Jiao Yu* 宋代教育), gave a brief account of various features in connection with Song education, such as educational policies and structures, management of schools, appointment of teachers, and promotion of students. The intellectual trends during the period as well as the intellectual assertion of prominent Song educators were also touched on.¹²⁴ Thomas H.C. Lee also wrote a number of articles in Chinese, providing us with overviews and various research trajectories as pertain to Song education.¹²⁵ These articles were collected in his *Assorted essays on education in the Song Dynasty* (*Song Dai Jiao Yu San Lun* 宋代教育散論), which was also comprised of other articles covering various educational matters such as justice, equality and openness of the civil service examination, the budget for the School of National Youth and Imperial University in the Northern Song, and the policy for the Imperial University during the Shenzong reign.¹²⁶ Another characteristic of Song education was the gradual decline of government education contrasting with the rising importance of private Academies. Studies relating to this include an article by James T.C. Liu 劉子健 and a monograph by Chen Wenyi 陳雯怡.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Liu Boji, *Song Dai Zheng Jiao Shi* (Taipei shi: Taiwan Zhonghua shu ju, 1971), Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu: Zhong Guo Gu Dai Jiao Yu De Li Shi Xing Zhuan She* 宋代教育：中國古代教育的歷史性轉折 (Guangzhou: Guangdong gao deng jiao yu chu ban she, 1991). Miao Chunde, *Song Dai Jiao Yu* 宋代教育 (Kaifeng: Henan da xue chu ban she, 1992). Yuan Zheng also published a number of articles which touch on education and politics in the Northern Song, the grade system in schools as well as local government schools. See Yuan Zheng, “Bei Song De Jiao Yu He Zheng Zhi” 北宋的教育與政治, in *Zhongguo she hui ke xue yuan li shi yan jiu suo Song Liao Jin Yuan shi yan jiu shi* 中國社會科學院歷史研究所宋遼金元史研究室 編, *Song Liao Jin Shi Lun Cong Di Er Ji* 宋遼金史論叢第二輯 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1991), pp.265-288; Yuan Zheng, “The Grade System of Schools in Eleventh-to Thirteenth-Century China”, *Chinese Studies in History*, Vol.25 No.2 (Jan. 1991-1992), pp.17-52; and Yuan Zheng, “Local Government Schools in Sung China: A Reassessment”, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 34 No. 2 (Summer, 1994), pp.193-213.

¹²⁵ These articles include “Song Dai Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu De Ji Ge Fang Xiang” 宋代教育史研究的幾個方向, “Song Dai Jiao Yu Yu Ke Ju De Ji Ge Wen Ti” 宋代教育與科舉的幾個問題 and “Song Chao Jiao Yu Ji Ke Ju San Lun”, in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Song Dai Jiao Yu San Lun* 宋代教育散論 (Taipei shi: Dong sheng chu ban shi ye gong si, 1980).

¹²⁶ Thomas H.C. Lee, “Gong Zheng, Ping Deng Yu Kai Fang” 公正、平等與開放, “Bei Song Guo Zi Jian Yu Tai Xue De Jing Fei” 北宋國子監與太學的經費, and “Song Shenzong Chao Tai Xue Zheng Ce De Liang Ge Jie Duan” 宋神宗朝太學政策的兩個階段, in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Song Dai Jiao Yu San Lun* 宋代教育散論 (Taipei shi: Dong sheng chu ban shi ye gong si, 1980).

¹²⁷ James T. C. Liu, “Lue Lun Song Dai Di Fang Guan Xue He Si Xue De Xiao Zhang” 略論宋代地方官學和私學的消長 in his *Liang Song Shi Yan Jiu Hui Bian* 兩宋史研究彙編 (Taipei Shi: Lian jing chu ban shi ye gong si, 1987), pp.211-228, Chen Wenyi, *You Guan Xue Dao Shu Yuan: Cong Zhi Du Yu*

Regarding the Song civil service examination system, Jin Zhongshu 金中樞 has made significant contributions to this field.¹²⁸ Examining different levels of examination, Jin covered matters relating to the civil service examination such as the candidates, syllabi, procedures, and the institutional setting. Other than the work by Jin Zhongshu, Hou Shaowen 侯紹文 also published his *The institutional history of Tang and Song examination system (Tang Song Kao Shi Zhi Du Shi 唐宋考試制度史)* in 1973.¹²⁹ But the lacking referral to the most important *SHY* marked a critical flaw in his work. Another distinctive work in this field is *Research on the Song civil service examination system (Sōdai kakyo seido kenkyū 宋代科舉制度研究)* by a Japanese scholar Araki Toshikazu 荒木敏一, mainly tackles the institutional history of the Song civil service examination system. Toshikazu also published a number of articles illustrating how the underprivileged poor or handicapped candidates were treated in the examination system.¹³⁰

In the recent decade, various works on the Song civil service examinations have been published by Mainland and Japanese scholars which touch on matters concerning the recruitment of officials through government schools. Zhang Xiqing briefly summarized the differences in recruiting officials through the civil service examinations system and government schools network in a conference article.¹³¹ In

Li Nian De Hu Dong Kan Song Dai Jiao Yu De Yan Bian 由官學到書院：從制度與理念的互動看宋代教育的演變 (Taipei Shi: Lian jing chu ban shi ye gu fen you xian gong si, 2004).

¹²⁸ Jin Zhongshu, “Bei Song Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu” 北宋科舉制度研究, *Xin Ya Xue Bao* 新亞學報, Vol.6 No.1 and 2 (1964), pp.205-281 and 163-242, “Bei Song Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu Xu” 北宋科舉制度研究續, in *Song shi yan jiu hui* 宋史研究會編, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Ji (SSYJJ)* 宋史研究集 (Taipei: Zhonghua cong shu wei yuan hui, 1958-), Vol.13 and 14, pp.61-189 and 53-190, and “Bei Song Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu Zai Xu” 北宋科舉制度研究再續, in *SSYJJ* Vol.15 and 16, pp.125-188 and 1-125.

¹²⁹ Hou Shaowen bian zhu, *Tang Song Kao Shi Zhi Du Shi* 唐宋考試制度史 (Taipei: Taiwan shang wu yin shu guan, 1973).

¹³⁰ Araki Toshikazu, *Sōdai kakyo seido kenkyū* 宋代科舉制度研究 (Kyōto: Kyōto Daigaku Bungakubunai Tōyōshi Kenkyūkai, 1969). See also Yoshio Hasegawa, “Trends in Postwar Japanese Studies in Sung History: A Bibliographical Introduction”, *Acta Asiatica*, Vol. 50 (1986), pp.106. Pages 104-110 of this article also provides a brief description of other Japanese scholarships regarding the studies on the Song civil service examination and school systems.

¹³¹ Zhang Xiqing, “Bei Song De Ke Ju Qu Shi Yu Xue Xiao Xuan Shi” 北宋的科舉取士與學校選士, in *Qi Xia zhu bian, Song shi yan jiu lun wen ji : Guo ji Song shi yan tao hui ji Zhongguo Song shi yan jiu hui di jiu jie nian hui bian kan* 宋史研究論文集：國際宋史研討會暨中國宋史研究會第九屆年

2006, another Mainland scholar Lin Yan 林岩 published a monograph on Northern Song Literature and examinations. In this book, Lin thoroughly discussed the scholar-officials' deliberations on the school recruitment mechanism as well as details of the implementation of the countrywide Three Hall system in the Huizong era.¹³² Another book which touches on the experiment of recruiting officials through government schools is by Wu Zhengqiang, who illustrated the attempt of the Song government in reforming the civil service examinations in Chinese history, which successfully bridge the gap between the ruler and the people since the collapse of the equal field system in mid-Tang through the creation of a gentry class.¹³³ In a recent collection of articles published in 2009 by a Japanese historian Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, thorough discussions could also be found concerning education and examination reforms under Wang Anshi and Cai Jing.¹³⁴

Taiwanese scholar Zhao Tiehan 趙鐵寒 contributed essentially in the third category – the study of Song government schools. Nevertheless, his articles were too concise in terms of the broad areas that Song government schools covered, hence leaving much room for later scholars to further their studies on.¹³⁵ And the monograph by Zhou Yuwen 周愚文 focusing on the Song Prefectural and County Schools is one of the examples that later scholars are trying to supplement in this field.¹³⁶

會編刊 (Baoding: Hebei da xue chu ban she, 2002), pp.183-203.

¹³² Lin Yan 林岩, *Bei Song keju kaoshi yu wenxue* 北宋科舉考試與文學 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006).

¹³³ Wu Zhengqiang 吳錚強 zhu, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua : Jun Tian Zhi Beng Kui Yi Lai De Jun Min Zheng He* 科舉理學化：均田制崩潰以來的君民整合 (Shanghai: Shanghai ci shu chu ban she, 2008).

¹³⁴ Kondō Kazunari cho, *Sōdai Chūgoku kakyō shakai no kenkyū* 宋代中国科举社会の研究 (Tōkyō: Kyūkosho, 2009).

¹³⁵ See Zhao Tiehan, “Song Dai De Xue Xiao Jiao Yu” 宋代的學校教育, “Song Dai De Zhou Xue” 宋代的州學, and “Song Dai De Tai Xue” 宋代的太學, in *SSYJJ* Vol.4, 2 and 1, pp.209-237, 343-362 and 317-356 respectively.

¹³⁶ Zhou Yuwen zhu, *Song Dai De Zhou Xian Xue* 宋代的州縣學 (Taibei Shi: Guo li bian yi guan, 1996).

For researches on the Imperial University, the focus of this dissertation, a number of works have been published. As early as the Republican period, Sheng Langxi 盛朗西 wrote a long article covering various aspects in connection with the Imperial University. After introducing the campus of the Imperial University at different stages, Sheng followed in the later parts of the article with the students' categories, number, benefits as well as their political activism. Staffing in the Directorate and Government Schools, together with the salary and benefits of the teaching staff, were illustrated sequentially. And the remaining five sections focused on different components of the School of National Youth and Imperial University, including their curriculum, examinations, regulations, budget, as well as their book collection and publication activities respectively. The wide scope of this article, together with its usage of a large number of primary sources (excluding the *SHY*), represents a significant contribution to the study of the Imperial University in Song times.¹³⁷ Apart from the long article by Sheng Langxi, other scholarly works in the Republican period mainly concerned about the political movement of University students in the Song, which partially correlated with the student patriotic movement in 1919. *The movement of the students in the Song Imperial University to save the country* (*Song Dai Tai Xue Sheng Jiu Guo Yun Dong* 宋代太學生救國運動) by Huang Xianfan 黃現璠 is an obvious example of this sort.¹³⁸ As a counterpart, a Japanese article by Ichisada Miyazaki 宮崎市定 around the same period also focused on the life and activities of university students in the Song period.¹³⁹

Another Taiwanese Scholar Wang Jianqiu 王建秋 published the most ambitious work on the topic - *The Song Imperial University and university students*

¹³⁷ Sheng Langxi, "Song Dai Zhi Da Xue Jiao Yu" 宋代之大學教育, *Min Duo Za Zhi* 民鐸雜誌, Vol.7 No.2,3,4&5 (1927), pp.1-30,1-22,1-29 and 1-19.

¹³⁸ Huang Xianfan zhu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Sheng Jiu Guo Yun Dong* (Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1936).

¹³⁹ Ichisada Miyazaki, "Sodai no daigakusei seikatsu" 宋代の太學生生活, in his *Ajia shi kenkyu* (Kyoto: Nakamura, 1962), Vol.1, pp.365-401.

(*Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng* 宋代太學與太學生). Apart from illustrating the institutional settings of the Imperial University such as its campus, examinations, and regulations, Wang vividly depicted the life of university students by drawing upon a huge number of contemporary jottings (*Biji* 筆記) and anecdotes (*Xiaoshuo* 小說). He included aspects such as students' learning, entitlements, activities with friends, patriotic acts, and finally their upright behaviors. Despite failing to use the most important primary source, the *SHY*, Wang's work was by far the most thorough and dependable work in Chinese on the Song Imperial University. In the conclusion, Wang briefly articulated how politics influenced education in terms of curriculum and personnel matters.¹⁴⁰

Other than the above works, other Chinese scholars also produced a number of articles in connection with Song Imperial University. On the basis of his graduate thesis highlighting the learning custom at the University and its relationship with the fortune of the dynasty,¹⁴¹ Zhu Chongsheng 朱重聖 and his mentor Song Xi 宋晞 (1920-2007) focused on the admission procedures for students and the different phases of development of the University.¹⁴² Mainland scholars Zhang Bangwei 張邦瑋 and Zhu Ruixi 朱瑞熙 dealt with the process of transition from the School of National Youth to the Imperial University.¹⁴³ Among these secondary scholarships in Asian languages specifically focusing on the Song Imperial University, most of them

¹⁴⁰ Wang Jianqiu zhu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng* (Taipei: Zhongguo xue shu zhu zuo jiang zhu wei yuan hui, 1965).

¹⁴¹ Zhu Chongsheng 朱重聖, "Song Dai Tai Xue Xue Feng Yu Guo Yun De Guan Xi" 宋代太學學風與國運的關係 (unpublished thesis, Zhong Guo Wen Hua Xue Yuan 中國文化學院, 1971), pp.242-291.

¹⁴² Song Xi 宋晞, "Song Dai Tai Xue De Qu Cai Yu Yang Shi" 宋代太學的取才與養士, in Song Xi, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Cong Di Yi Ji* 宋史研究論叢 第一輯 (Taipei: Hua Gang chu ban you xian gong si, 1979), pp.135-155; Zhu Chongsheng, "Song Dai Tai Xue Fa Zhan De Wu Ge Jie Duan" 宋代太學發展的五個重要階段 and "Song Dai Tai Xue Zhi Qu Shi Ji Ji" 宋代太學之取士及其組織, in *SSYJJ* Vol.8 and 18, pp.445-486 and 211-260.

¹⁴³ Zhang Bangwei and Zhu Ruixi, "Lun Song Dai Guo Zi Xue Xiang Tai Xue Yan Bian" 論宋代國子學向太學演變, in Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, Li Jiaju 酈家駒 deng zhu bian, *Song shi yan jiu lun wen ji: 1982 nian nian hui bian kan* 宋史研究論文集：一九八二年年會編刊 (Zhengzhou shi: Henan ren min chu ban she, 1984), pp.241-271.

were published around 40 years from now, mainly in the 1960s.

In general, most of the scholarship in Asian languages focused on the institutional aspects of Song education. And scholars have convincingly illustrated how Northern politics impacted on education, mainly during the three reforms under Renzong, Shenzong and Huizong respectively. However, apart from discussing the students' political movement, when the Northern Song was imperiled by enemies at home and abroad, scholars have rarely focused on how education influenced politics for most of the Northern Song period.

For works in western languages relating to education in Song China, those by Thomas H. C. Lee and John Chaffee drew the most praise. Lee began research on this topic in the early 1970's, culminating in his doctoral thesis in 1974, entitled "Education in Northern Sung China". The work chronologically illustrates the institutional development of the school and examination system in Northern Song in connection with the three political reforms of Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052), Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086) and Cai Jing 蔡京 (1046-1126). In the final part of the dissertation, he evaluated Northern Song education through modern sociological concepts of impartiality, justice, equal opportunity, and openness to argue that "the chances for a commoner to rise to elite status was too limited for real equalization of chances to be realised."¹⁴⁴ With an abundance of students from well-off families, "schools gradually became subservient to the needs of examination candidates, and played a diminishing role in indoctrinating the masses."¹⁴⁵ Based on his dissertation, Lee published a book in 1985. Bearing the title *Government Education and Examinations in Sung China*, it differs from the dissertation in extending coverage

¹⁴⁴ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1974), pp.178.

¹⁴⁵ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.188.

into the Southern Song period. The book is also arranged topically rather than chronologically.¹⁴⁶ In 2000, Lee published a long book on the history of education in imperial China, which covered a period over 2 millenniums since the ancients till the Ming dynasty and highlighted the significance of Song education comparing with other period.¹⁴⁷

Apart from the work by Thomas Lee, who studied under Arthur Wright at Yale University, John W. Chaffee is another world-known scholar of the examination system in the Song, a student of Edward Kracke at Chicago University. His doctoral thesis in 1979, ambitiously entitled “Education and examinations in Sung society (960-1279)”, paid special attention to the examination and schooling systems in the Song and their social impact. He also provided a chronological survey of the development of schools during the Song period, and elaborated on the thoughts and rationale behind the development of schools. In addition to his qualitative analysis, Chaffee made use of various local historical sources to provide us with “a comprehensive geographical and chronological overview of Sung education”, offering a quantitative dimension to his qualitative analysis.¹⁴⁸ Following this earlier format, Chaffee’s monograph in 1985 - *The thorny gates of learning in Sung China: a social history of examinations*, provided a detailed chronological account of Song examinations with less emphasis on the school system. And the most innovative part of the book, Part III, illustrated the social and cultural role of Song examination with reference to its impact on regional development and elite formation.

¹⁴⁶ Instead of referring to the long monograph, should readers wish to quickly grasp the key features of the development of government education in the Northern Song, they may refer to Thomas H.C. Lee, “Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi”, in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (ed), *Neo-confucian education*, pp.111-120.

¹⁴⁷ Thomas H. C. Lee, *Education in Traditional China*.

¹⁴⁸ John Chaffee, “Education and examinations in Sung society (960-1279)” (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1979), pp.166.

In addition to government schools and examinations, Thomas Lee and John Chaffee also wrote a number of articles in English addressing various aspects in Song education, such as the quota system in the Song civil service examinations, child education, students' life in schools, Academies.¹⁴⁹ Regarding the latter, Linda Walton has also published a monograph regarding its development and evolution in the Southern Song.¹⁵⁰ In addition, other social historians have emphasized social mobility,¹⁵¹ regional development of literati elites,¹⁵² printing technology, and popular literacy, all of which pertains to Song education. Besides, a number of related articles could also be found in an edited volume by John Chaffee and William Theodore de Bary namely *Neo-confucian education - the formative stage*.¹⁵³

Two recent works which are relevant to this study include a monograph by Hilde De Weerdts and a doctoral thesis by Hu Yongguang. De Weerdts illustrated

¹⁴⁹ Thomas H.C. Lee, "The Discovery of Childhood: Children Education in Sung China (960-1279)", in Paul Sigrid (ed.), *Kultur: Begriff und Wort in China und Japan: Symposion des Forschungskreises für Symbolik, Salzburg vom 25-27, Juni 1982* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1984), pp.159-190, Thomas H.C. Lee, "Life in the Schools of Sung China", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol.37 No.1 (Nov., 1977), pp.45-60, Thomas H.C. Lee, "Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi", pp.105-136, John W. Chaffee, "Chu Hsi and the Revival of the White Deer Grotto Academy, 1179-1181 A.D.", *T'oung Pao*, Vol.71 No.1/3 (1985), pp.40-62, and John W. Chaffee, "Chu Hsi in Nan-k'ang: Tao-hsueh and the Politics of Education", in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (ed.), *Neo-confucian education*, pp.414-431.

¹⁵⁰ Linda Walton, *Academies and society in southern Sung China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

¹⁵¹ Ho, Ping-ti, *The ladder of success in Imperial China: aspects of social mobility, 1368-1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962) is a monumental work discussing how the civil service examinations contributes to social mobility in Imperial China, with particular focus on the Ming and Qing Dynasties. For works emphasizing on the Song context, see Chen Yiyan 陳義彥 zhu, *Bei Song Tong Zhi Jie Ceng She Hui Liu Dong Zhi Yan Jiu* 北宋統治階層社會流動之研究 (Taipei: Jia xin shui ni gong si wen hua ji jin hui, 1977). For Scholarships in English language, see Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education* and John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning in Sung China: a social history of examinations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

¹⁵² Rising dominance of local elites since the Southern Song was firstly articulated by Robert M. Hartwell. See his "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750-1550", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol.42 No.2. (Dec., 1982), pp.365-442. This Hartwell thesis has been discussed extensively in Western Scholarships on Song history in the last two decades of the 20th century. See Richard L. Davis, *Court and family in Sung China, 960-1279: bureaucratic success and kinship fortunes for the Shih of Ming-chou* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1986); Robert P. Hymes, *Statesmen and gentlemen: the elite of Fu-Chou, Chiang-Hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and Beverly J. Bossler, *Powerful relations: kinship, status, & the state in Sung China (960-1279)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

¹⁵³ Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (ed.), *Neo-confucian education*.

competitions and negotiations in the operation of schools in view of the conflicting interests among individual parties.¹⁵⁴ Hu Yongguang, a student of John Chaffee at Binghamton University, analyzed the Three Hall system during the Shenzong and Huizong era in detail, covering both the metropolitan and local levels, and discussed on its social significance.¹⁵⁵

To conclude, the two monographs by Thomas Lee and John Chaffee introduced above made excellent use of primary sources, including the most important *SHY*. Both scholars explained the social impact of Song education and school system by using concepts and research methodologies in social sciences. Nevertheless, except for portraying the school system as a subset to the civil service examination system which carried the function of recruiting officials, not much emphasis was put on the impact of Song schools on politics. Thomas Lee drew the following conclusion on the connection between Imperial University and politics with reference to his study of government education and examinations for the Song period:

From the official view point, a University education was not considered to be either significant or important in one's life, and that despite the fact that a good many university students now came with commoners' background, a demand for a University education was unnecessary in both political and intellectual arenas....In short, the University evidently developed into an institution, during the Southern Sung, which served students more socially than academically.¹⁵⁶

This conclusion was based on his belief in the overarching importance of the civil service examination system. He therefore perceived the Imperial University and other local government schools as training grounds for candidates to prepare for the

¹⁵⁴ Hilde De Weerd, *Competition over Content: Negotiating Standards for the Civil Service Examinations in Imperial China (1127-1279)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

¹⁵⁵ Hu Yongguang, "Cultivating Merit: The Three Hall System in Late Northern Song, 1070-1121" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Binghamton University, 2011).

¹⁵⁶ Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.265-266, see also Thomas H. C. Lee, "Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi", pp.105-136.

civil service examination; moreover, the reforms of the Imperial University under Wang Anshi and Cai Jing (1047-1126) were just institutional solutions adopted by Northern Song literati attempting to recruit moral officials, in recognition of the fact that the anonymous civil service examination failed to identify truly moral men. Coincidentally, Chaffee held similar opinions concerning the relationship between government education and the civil service examination:

Government schools were associated with the examinations both through their education, which was geared to the examination curriculum, and through their personnel, who managed much of the examination preparation.¹⁵⁷

Research questions and methodology

But apart from being a subset of the civil service examination system, what other roles did the Imperial University play in connection with Song politics, particularly in Northern Song when the school system flourished? Instead of emphasizing its impact on social mobility as scholars have frequently discussed, is it possible to understand the Imperial University outside the framework of the civil service examination system? It has been argued that education performed the function of moral and political indoctrination for most periods in Imperial China. So how did the Imperial University in the Northern Song assist in indoctrination of the sort? How did the teachers and staff at the University contribute to University life and their impact beyond campus? And most importantly, how effective was the Imperial University, or education as a whole, in carrying out indoctrination? Could it facilitate the governance of Northern Song emperors? These are the central questions that this dissertation will address.

¹⁵⁷ John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.34.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Northern Song Imperial University in fulfilling its political mission and facilitating governance, emphasis is placed on the contributions of its principal constituents – students and graduates. Studies of these two groups must rely heavily on biographical materials. However, among the 231 chapters of biographies in the official history, we can only identify 125 persons who received some form of University education.¹⁵⁸ This limited body of biographical data partly explains why scholars have rarely asked these questions.

To fill this research vacuum, I will make use of biographical records beyond the official history, plus a wide range of sources relating to the development of the Imperial University, including material about the emperors, their policy advocates, and University staff. Imperial edicts and the memorials of policy advocates are especially valuable in understanding the rationale behind the evolution of the Imperial University, its institutional settings and the political missions assigned to it at different times. Secondly, in order to understand the values that the government wanted to inculcate in students, we have to know what sorts of persons the Northern Song government appointed as teachers at the Imperial University -- the rationale behind their appointment as reflected in biographical records and literary sources.

By searching extensively through all available biographical materials, I will try to identify those Northern Song people who received university education. Then, a thorough analysis of their behavior and literary writings should provide some hint of how they contributed to Song governance. Such activities should reflect the learning outcomes of the university. Additionally, we can generalize about the effectiveness of government education in general, and the Imperial University in particular, with reference to facilitating state control of student values.

¹⁵⁸ Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.265.

What is also worth noting is that the Imperial University had traditionally been perceived by officials, most of whom were Confucian, as a High temple of Confucianism -- an ideological authority which commands the respect and obedience of the emperor. Even though Confucianism encountered powerful intellectual rivals such as Daoism and Buddhism after the demise of the Eastern Han dynasty, the creative innovations of the Song scholars helped elevate Confucianism to a newer height. So how did the Imperial University, as the Stronghold of Confucianism, relate to scholar-officials, a powerful group who aspired assisting the emperor to govern society? In an era when scholar-officials dared claiming “Your Majesty does not share the country with the common people; Your Majesty shares it with scholar-officials”¹⁵⁹ 為與士大夫治天下，非與百姓治天下也, what role did they envision and what role did they actually play in the metropolitan schools? Were the emperor’s interests infringed upon when scholar-officials realized their vision?

The relationship between emperors and scholar-officials in the Song period had drawn much attention in recent scholarships,¹⁶⁰ among voluminous scholarships

¹⁵⁹ See XCB, *Juan* 221, pp.5370. The translation is adopted from James T.C. Liu, *China turning inward: intellectual-political changes in the early twelfth century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1988), pp.153. Leading Song thinkers such as Fan Zhongyan, Ouyang Xiu, Wang Anshi, Sima Guang and Cheng Yi also asserted the delegation of emperor’s authority to the scholar-officials to assist in governance. See Robert P. Hymes and Conrad Schirokauer (ed.), *Ordering the world: approaches to state and society in Sung Dynasty China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp.43-44.

¹⁶⁰ As early as the 1940’s, Qian Mu had already discussed on the powers of Song Chief Councilors, which touches on power relationship between emperors and scholar-officials. See Qian Mu 錢穆, “Lun Song Dai Xiang Quan” 論宋代相權, in *SSYJJ*, Vol.1, pp.455-462. Since the 1980’s, Wang Ruilai 王瑞來 had published a number of works relating to this matter. See Wang Ruilai, “Lun Song Dai Xiang Quan” 論宋代相權, *Li Shi Yan Jiu*, No.2 (1985), pp.106-120 and Wang Ruilai, “Lun Song Dai Huang Quan” 論宋代皇權, *Li Shi Yan Jiu*, No.1 (1989), pp.144-160. He further elaborated on this subject, with particular focus on relationship between the emperor and the Councilors in the Zhenzong’s reign, in a monograph in Japanese, which is translated into Chinese in 2010. See Ō Zuirai cho, *Sōdai no kōtei kenryoku to shitaifu seiji* 宋代の皇帝權力と士大夫政治 (Tōkyō: Kyūko Shoin, 2001) and Wang Ruilai zhu, *Zai Xiang Gu Shi: Shi Da Fu Zheng Zhi Xia De Quan Li Chang* 宰相故事：士大夫政治下的权力场 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2010). Wang’s view on the power relationship between emperor and scholar-officials is summarized in a recent conference article. See Wang Rulai, “Zou Xiang Xiang Zheng Hua De Huang Quan” 走向象徵化的皇權, in Zhu Ruixi 朱瑞熙 deng zhu bian, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji* 宋史研究論文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai ren min chu ban she, 2008), pp. 208-231. Other scholarships that relate to the power of the emperors and scholar-officials include Liu Jingzhen 劉靜貞 zhu, *Bei Song Qian Qi Huang Di He Ta Men De Quan Li* 北宋前期皇帝和他們的權

revealing the linkage between those who had the mandate to rule and those who possessed knowledge in Imperial China.¹⁶¹ Historians' passion in this topic owes partly to their belief that such historical experience can shed light on the relationship between the political authority and the intellectuals in China nowadays. This dissertation, in its narrative of the institutional evolution of the Imperial University, aims to offer a fresh look on the subtle linkage between emperors and scholar-officials in the Northern Song period, a subject which has seldom been addressed in educational history. Embracing the new perspective of political space in the study of Song political history,¹⁶² how the Imperial University served as a venue of

力 (Taipei: Dao xiang chu ban she, 1996); Yu Yingshi 余英時 zhu, *Zhu Xi De Li Shi Shi Jie : Song Dai Shi Da Fu Zheng Zhi Wen Hua De Yan Jiu* 朱熹的歷史世界：宋代士大夫政治文化的研究 (Beijing: Shang huo, du shu, xin zhi san lian shu dian, 2004); Zhang Bangwei, "Lun Song Dai De Huang Quan He Xiang Quan" 論宋代的皇權和相權, *Journal of Sichuan Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, Vol.21 No.2 (Apr. 1994), pp.60-68; Cheng Minsheng 程民生, "Lun Song Dai Shi Da Fu Zheng Zhi Dui Huang Quan De Xian Zhi" 論宋代士大夫政治對皇權的限制, *Journal of Henan University (Social Sciences)*, Vol.39 No.3 (May 1999), pp.56-64; and Zhang Qifan, "Analysis of Emperor Running the state Together with Scholars bureaucrat, Preliminary Study on Political Framework in Northern Song" "皇帝與士大夫共治天下"試析 - 北宋政治架構探微, *Journal of Jinan University (Philosophy & Social Science Edition)* 暨南學報(哲學社會科學), Vol.23 No.6 (Nov 2001), pp.114-123. For scholarships in English, see James T.C. Liu, "An Administrative Cycle in Chinese History", *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol.21 No.2 (Feb., 1962), pp.137-152; Peter K. Bol, "Whither the Emperor? Emperor Huizong, the New Policies, and the Tang-Song Transition", *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, No.31 (2001), pp.103-134; and Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Chapter 4, pp.115-152.

¹⁶¹ There are countless scholarships in this field, in both Chinese and English. To quote just a few: Yu Yingshi 余英時, "Dao Tong Yu Zheng Tong Zhi Jian – Zhong Guo Zhi Shi Fen Zi De Yuan Shi Xing Tai" 道統與政統之間—中國知識分子的原始型態, in Yu Yingshi zhu, *Shi Yu Zhong Guo Wen Hua* 士與中國文化 (Shanghai: Shanghai ren min chu ban she 1987), pp.84-112; Yan Buke 閻步克 zhu, *Shi Da Fu Zheng Zhi Yan Sheng Shi Gao* 士大夫政治演生史稿 (Beijing: Beijing da xue chu ban she, 1996); Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and its modern fate : a trilogy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); Julia Ching, "Neo-Confucian Utopian Theories and Political Ethics", *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. 30 (1972-1973), pp.1-56; John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians : aspects of political change in late Yüan China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973); John W. Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy: Professional Elites in the Founding of the Ming Dynasty* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Thomas A. Metzger, *Escape from Predicament: Neo-Confucianism and China's Evolving Political Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Peter Ditmanson, "Contesting Authority: Intellectual Lineages and the Chinese Imperial Court from the 12th to the 15th Centuries" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1999). Huang Chin-hsing (Huang Chin-shing), "The Cultural Politics of Autocracy: The Confucius Temple and Ming Despotism, 1368-1530", in Thomas A. Wilson (ed), *On sacred grounds: culture, society, politics, and the formation of the cult of Confucius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), pp.267-296; and Fu Zhengyuan, *The Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁶² Hirata Shigeki 平田茂樹, "Jie Du Song Dai De Zheng Zhi Kong Jian" 解讀宋代的政治空間, in Pingtian Maoshu zhu; Lin Songtao 林松濤, Zhu Gang 朱剛 deng yi, *Song Dai Zheng Zhi Jie Gou Yan Jiu* 宋代政治結構研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2010), pp.289-333; Hirata Shigeki 平田茂樹, Endō Takatoshi 遠藤隆俊, Oka Motoshi 岡元司 hen, *Sōdai shakai no kūkan to komyunikēshon* 宋代社会の空間とコミュニケーション (Tōkyō: Kyūko Shoin, 2006), Part 1 "Sōdai seiiji no kūkan

competition among political actors will be revealed. It is envisioned that this microscopic analysis revolving the Imperial University can shed light on a larger picture depicting the intriguing and conflicted relationship between emperors and scholar-officials in the Northern Song, and hence on the macroscopic political atmosphere in Chinese history as well as the situation in modern China nowadays.

To focus on the interaction between politics and education in connection with the Imperial University, its continuous evolution should be emphasized.¹⁶³ Nevertheless, scholars usually highlighted the static features during the three educational reforms in the Northern Song under Renzong, Shenzong and Huizong, but slighted the dynamics of such institutional developments, particularly their relationship with the interim periods between the Qingli (1041-1048) and Xining (1068-1077) reforms as well as the Yuanyou (1086-1093) restoration in between Shenzong and Zhezong reforms. This research aims to fill these gaps as well as to illustrate the interests of various political actors underlying the three reforms which have seldom been discussed by the others.

Structure of the dissertation

The primary approach in this study is to analyze the structures and functions

to komyunikēshon” 宋代政治の空間とコミュニケーション, pp.1-127 (for Chinese translation of these works, see Pingtian Maoshu 平田茂樹, Yuanteng Longjun 远藤隆俊, Gang Yuansi 岡元司 bian, *Song Dai She Hui De Kong Jian Yu Jiao Liu* 宋代社會的空間與交流 (Kaifeng: Henan da xue chu ban she, 2008), Part 1 “Song Dai She Hui De Zheng Zhi Yu Jiao Liu” 宋代政治的空間與交流, pp.1-154); and Hirata Shigeki, “Ri Ben Song Dai Zheng Zhi Shi Yan Jiu Shu Ping” 日本宋代政治史研究述評, in Bao Weimin 包偉民 zhu bian, *Song Dai Zhi Du Shi Yan Jiu Bai Nian (1900-2000)* 宋代制度史研究百年(1900-2000) (Beijing: Shang wu yin shu guan, 2004), pp.40-63, see particularly pp.48-49.

¹⁶³ Deng Xiaonan has emphasized the importance of the evolutionary process as well as interaction between institutions in the studies of institutional history. See Deng Xiaonan, “Zou Xiang Huo De Zhi Du Shi – Yi Song Dai Guan Liao Zheng Zhi Zhi Du Shi Yan Jiu Wei Li De Dian Di Si Kao” 走向“活”的制度史—以宋代官僚政治制度史研究為例的點滴思考, in Deng Xiaonan zhu, *Lang Run Xue Shi Cong Gao* 朗潤學史叢稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2010), pp.497-505. See also Hirata Shigeki, “Ri Ben Song Dai Zheng Zhi Shi Yan Jiu Shu Ping” for a review of recent Japanese scholarships which embraced such features.

of the metropolitan educational institutions. This has meant not only describing the organizational evolution of the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University, but also analyzing their “hidden agenda”, the ways in which they actually functioned. In addition to a chronological analysis of these educational developments in the Northern Song, this dissertation aims to show the measure of interplay between politics and education by investigating individuals involved in the process, through which the conflicting relationship between emperors and the scholar-officials will be highlighted. Although the impact of politics on education will be explored, I am principally concerned with how effective government education was in facilitating the political mission of government in the Northern Song, since the former had been widely discussed by scholars.

In the second chapter, the focus is on the establishment of the School of National Youth by Taizu and its evolution during the Taizong, Zhenzong (968-1022, r.997-1022), and early Renzong reigns. Through this analysis, we are going to see how the founder of the Song dynasty deemed the role of education in connection with the existing political environment, and how the educational focus shifted from the aristocratic School of National Youth to an Imperial University composed of mostly commoners (i.e. non-elite upstarts).

The third section will deal with the development of the Imperial University in the middle and late Renzong era. It reveals how opinion power at the metropolitan schools, echoing the rising power of Censors and Policy-critique advisers at that time, burgeoned. With limited government intervention, a relatively liberal academic environment in late Renzong era was formed. Interestingly, scholar-officials in the Song posited diverse, interestingly contradictory, comments on the educational development for this period. So what explains the perception of diversity relative to

the reality?

In the fourth chapter, I follow with changes in the school curriculum and the formation of the “Three Hall” structure of promotion within the Imperial University. By investigating these highly distinctive educational reforms of the Xining and Yuanfeng (1078-1085) era in the 1070s, we hope to understand how these innovative plans were initiated and implemented. What was the role of the emperor and the scholar-officials in this new channel of official recruitment? Is there any difference between the Xining and Yuanfeng educational reforms?

The stress in chapter five is on the development of the University in the post-reform era after the death of Shenzong in 1085 through the reign of Zhezong. The period can be divided into two phases: the first phase was dominated by the regent of the Empress Dowager and the conservative ministers; while the young emperor had resumed his personal rule and continued the reform legacy of his father in the second phase. During the entire period, fervent disputes and conflicts erupted among officials of the two factions, and the political revenge towards the opposition became increasingly violent and brutal.¹⁶⁴ So how did the two parties perceive the role of the Imperial University? How was the Imperial University situated within the subtle relationship between the emperor and the scholar-officials?

The sixth chapter will deal with the ambitious educational reform programmes initiated by Huizong after 1101. The events related to the Imperial University include the erection of the *Biyong*, the campus for students of the University’s Outer Hall. Besides, I will address the extension of the Three Hall

¹⁶⁴ For details, see Ari Daniel Levine, *Divided by a common language: factional conflict in late Northern Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2008).

structure to schools nation-wide, which effectively eliminated the civil service examination system, as well as the adoption of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” scheme as one criteria for the appointment and promotion of officials. Political activism of University students in the midst of Jurchen invasion during the Qinzong era will be highlighted at the end. By investigating these matters, I aim to find out the rationale and motives behind such policy initiatives to show how they interacted with political conditions and pressures of the day.

The penultimate chapter provides an analytical discussion of the political role of the Imperial University in late Northern Song. The central issue is how successful could the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University perform its political functions? In the conclusion, I will generalize about the politicization of education under the Northern Song context with reference to the development of the Imperial University and the roles and behaviors of the individuals concerned. I will also explore whether the Northern Song experience has any relevance to contemporary society.

Chapter 2

FROM ARISTOCRACY TO MERITOCRACY

Metropolitan Schools in the early Song

The focus in this chapter is on the establishment of the Directorate of Education (*Guo Zi Jian*) by Taizu and its evolution during the Taizong, Zhenzong, and early Renzong reigns. Through the analysis, we are going to see how the early Song emperors and scholar-officials deemed the role of government education in connection with the existing political environment: a tool to assert emperor's autocracy, an institution to promote orthodoxy, and a shortcut for their offspring to enter officialdom. The shift of educational focus from the Directorate School for Upper Elites to an Imperial University composed of Lower Elites and commoners also reveals how the latter's demand on education was gradually acknowledged by the Song court during this period, marking the transition from aristocracy to meritocracy. To begin with, the institutional settings of the metropolitan schools and the civil service examinations are briefly illustrated.

The establishment of the Directorate of Education under Song Taizu

In 955, during the reign of Shizong of Later Zhou, the *Guo Zi Jian* that supervised and coordinated the institutions of higher education was established.¹ It was located in the *Puli* Buddhist Monastery, which was built during the Tianfu (936-943) era of Later Jin.² When Taizu founded the Song Dynasty by displacing the Later Zhou in 960, he decided to enlarge and renovate the same campus of the *Guo Zi Jian* of the Later Zhou. Cui Song 崔頌 (919-968), a scholar-official who excelled at

¹ YH, *Juan* 112, "Jian Long Zeng Xiu Guo Zi Jian" 建隆增修國子監, 28b. See also Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp. 58.

² Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.68.

classics, histories, ceremonial rites and *belles lettres*, was designated to oversee the renovation of the school campus.³ In subsequent years, Taizu visited the *Guo Zi Jian* four times to review campus expansion and the installation of statues of Confucian sages.⁴ Upon completion of renovations in summer 962, Cui Song was selected by Song Taizu to supervise the *Guo Zi Jian*.⁵ The *Guo Zi Jian* of Song times had a dual function: educational administration and student instruction.⁶ For the sake of clarity, the term “Directorate of Education” will be used in describing the administrative role of the *Guo Zi Jian*, while the term “Directorate School” will be used for teaching functions.⁷

As an administrative body, the Directorate of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Rites (*Li Bu* 禮部),⁸ oversaw educational matters for the entire country. It also served as an institution to instruct those “National Youths” (*Guo Zi* 國子), namely sons or male descendents of metropolitan officials ranked 7 or above. The youth were educated in the Confucian Classics and allowed to take the civil service examinations.⁹ Contrary to its Tang predecessor which admitted offspring of officials ranked 3 or above, the Song Directorate School was less aristocratic in nature. In fact it was a hybrid of the three metropolitan schools in the Tang: the Directorate School

³ Cui Song’s knowledge on the meaning of the Confucian Classics and rites, despite his personal favour of Buddhism, could be reflected in his fluent conversations with Taizu on the subject. His writing skill was highly valued by the contemporaries such as Sang Weiha 桑維翰 (898-947), the Councilor of Later Han (947-951), Shizong of Later Zhou and Taizu of Song. For details, refer to the Biography of Cui Song in *SS*, *Juan* 431, pp.12816-12817.

⁴ Lü Zhong 呂中 *zhuan*, *Song Da Shi Ji Jiang Yi* 宋大事記講義 (*SKQS* edition), *Juan* 3 “Xing Tai Xue” 幸太學, 3b.

⁵ *SHY*, *Chongru*, 1/29. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 3, pp.68 and *YH*, *Juan* 112, 29a.

⁶ A Taiwanese Scholar Wu Zhenzhuo 伍振鷺, in his *Zhong Guo Da Xue Jiao Yu Fa Zhan Shi* 中國大學教育發展史 (Taipei: Guo Li Jiao Yu Zi Liao Guan, 1982), pp.120, argued that the *Guo Zi Jian* in the Song Dynasty was merely an educational institution but not an administrative institution. However, in accordance with the depiction in *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3657, “all schools were under the supervision of the *Guo Zi Jian*” 凡學皆隸國子監, meaning that the *Guo Zi Jian* also bore an administrative role and a supervisory function.

⁷ The renaming of the educational institution from *Guo Zi Jian* (Directorate of Education) to *Guo Zi Xue* (Directorate School) in 989 and the reversion five years later implied such dual nature, which also implied that the two terms are interchangeable. See *XCB*, *Juan* 30, pp.678 and *XCB*, *Juan* 35, pp.775.

⁸ *SS*, *Juan* 163, pp.3851.

⁹ *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3657; *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/1.

(*Guo Zi Xue* 國子學), the National School (*Tai Xue* 太學) and the School of the Four Gates (*Si Men Xue* 四門學) in terms of the background of the students.¹⁰ Instead of labeling the Song National Youths as aristocratic youths, I would define them as Higher Elites, contrasting those Lower Elites who were ineligible for admissions to the Directorate School (i.e. youths of officials ranked 8 or below). As a celebration to the commencement of the instruction, Taizu presented fruit and wine to the students in the School.¹¹

Apart from reviving the Directorate of Education to supervise educational matters, the Song Dynasty also inherited the civil service examinations system of the preceding Sui and Tang dynasties, whereby talented people were selected for positions in the civil service.¹² The civil service examinations consisted mainly of four types, namely the tribute examinations (*Gong Ju* 貢舉), decree examinations (*Zhi Ju* 制舉), military examinations (*Wu Ju* 武舉) and children's examinations (*Tong Zi Ju* 童子舉). Among them, the tribute examination, which was held annually from 960 to 973 was most commonly used in recruiting civilian officials. The word implied "the offering of local talent as tribute to the emperor". The tribute examination offered a number of syllabi for the candidates to choose, including the "Advanced Scholar" degree (*Jin Shi* 進士) that mainly tested the literary abilities of candidates, while a wide range of degrees, collectively known as the "various subjects" (*Zhu Ke* 諸科), examined the candidates' knowledge of the Confucian Classics.¹³ Since the mid-Tang, the status of the "Advanced Scholar" degree outweighed the "various subjects"

¹⁰ Gao Mingshi, "Li Hongqi zhu Song Dai Jiao Yu San Lun Ping Jie" 李弘祺著宋代教育散論評介 *Shi Xue Ping Lun* 史學評論, Vol.4 (Jul., 1982), pp.208-209. See also See Zhang Bangwei and Zhu Ruixi, "Lun Song Dai Guo Zi Xue Xiang Tai Xue Yan Bian", pp.221.

¹¹ *SHY, Zhiguan*, 28/1; *SSQW, Juan 1*, pp.27.

¹² *SHY, Xuanju*, 3/1-2.

¹³ A detailed analysis of the "Advanced Scholar" degree and the "various subjects" degree, including the types of questions that were examined under each degree, could be found in the articles by Jin Zhongshu. See Jin Zhongshu, "Bei Song Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu", "Bei Song Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu Xu" and "Bei Song Ke Ju Zhi Du Yan Jiu Zai Xu".

degree.¹⁴ The situation continued into the Song dynasty, as reflected in the preferential treatment received by “Advanced Scholar” candidates during the examination compared to other candidates, a situation vividly depicted by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) and Shen Kuo 沈括 (1031-1095).¹⁵ Nevertheless, all successful candidates in the examinations, irrespective of their ranks or the syllabi they chose,¹⁶ were eligible to become officials.

In general, the launch of the tribute examination was officially promulgated in the third month of the year. Eligible candidates nominated by the counties had to sit on the prefectural examinations in the autumn of the year. Upon passing the prefectural examination, candidates were nominated by prefectural authorities to take the departmental examination. This departmental examination, held by the Ministry of Rites in the capital in the next spring, also admitted candidates nominated by the Directorate School. As such, the organizational structure, the curriculum, and even the admissions schedule of the Directorate School were closely linked to the tribute examination.

When founded, the Directorate School was comprised of three schools, the School of Literature (*Guang Wen Guan* 廣文館), the National School (*Tai Xue* 太學) and the School of Law (*Lü Xue* 律學). The first two schools were mainly responsible for training candidates for the Advanced Scholar degree and the “various subjects” degree respectively, while the latter provided legal training.¹⁷ Once the tribute

¹⁴ WXTK, *Juan* 32, pp.304.

¹⁵ Shen Kuo zhu, *Meng Xi Bi Tan* 夢溪筆談 (Changsha: Yuelu Shu She, 2002), *Juan* 1, “Gu Shi Yi” 故事一, pp.6.

¹⁶ In the civil service examination, successful candidates were usually ranked into five classes. Those in the first two classes were designated as having “passed with distinction” (*Ji Di*); those in the third class “formally qualified” (*Chu Shen*), while those in the fourth and fifth classes merely “passed” (*Tong Chu Shen*). See E. A. Kracke, *Civil service in early Sung China, 960-1067: with particular emphasis on the development of controlled sponsorship to foster administrative responsibility* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp.66-67.

¹⁷ SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3910. The School of Literature was initially established in the Tang Directorate of

examination was officially promulgated, the Directorate School began to admit new students. Since only sons or grandsons of officials ranked Grade 7 or above were eligible for admission, the applicants had to submit details on their family background (*Jia Zhuang* 家狀) to the Directorate for verification. After confirming eligibility, the candidates needed to sit for an admission examination, usually in the 6th month.¹⁸ Once the candidates passed the admission examination, which was inevitable unless they gave ridiculous responses to the questions,¹⁹ they would receive an admission certificate for the School of Literature, the National School, or the School of Law generally in the 7th month.²⁰ After studying for some time, students would be tested by the Directorate before being nominated to take the departmental examination alongside prefectural candidates.²¹ From these initial structural links between the Directorate School and the civil service examinations, the auxiliary status of the former is obvious in the reign of Taizu.

Broader civil and educational programs under Taizu might be interpreted as measures to buttress autocratic rule, a process that was the most prominent feature of the Tang-Song transformation, as China transited from medieval to early modern period – a theory initially proposed by Japanese sinologist Naitō Torajirō 内藤虎次郎

Education for the sake of training the candidates who took the Advanced Scholar degree. See *TD*, *Juan* 27, pp.764-765. The early Song had inherited such practice, as reflected in an entry in the *XCB* which adopted the term “School of Literature” to imply the Directorate of Education regarding its recommendation of Advanced Scholar degree candidates. See *XCB*, *Juan* 19, pp.434. The connection between the Directorate School (*Guo Zi Xue*) and the National School (*Tai Xue*) in the early Song had once been a topic of disputes among scholars. But a consensus had generally been reached since the 1980’s, basically agreeing that the National School, together with the School of Law and the School of Literature, formed the Directorate School in early Song. See Zhang Bangwei and Zhu Ruixi, “Lun Song Dai Guo Zi Xue Xiang Tai Xue Yan Bian”, pp.219-240 and Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, “Sō hatsu no kuni ko kan ta manani tsuite” 宋初の國子監・太學について, in Kondō Kazunari cho, *Sōdai Chūgoku kakyō shakai no kenkyū* 宋代中国科举社会の研究 (Tōkyō: Kyūkosho, 2009), pp.19-41 (For Chinese translation, see Jinteng Yicheng 近藤一成; Zhang Yongjiang 張永江 (tr.), “Song Chu DeGuo Zi Jian” 宋初の國子監, *He Bei Shi Yuan Xue Bao* 河北師院學報, No. 3 (1994), pp.52-54.

¹⁸ *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/5.

¹⁹ Tian Guang 田況 (1003-1061) *zhuan*, *Ru Lin Gong Yi* 儒林公議, *Juan* 1, in *QSBJ*, Ser.1 Vol.5, pp.96.

²⁰ *SHY*, *Chongru*, 1/29. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.103-105.

²¹ For a brief discussion regarding the examinations held at the Directorate for recommendation to the Departmental examination, see Araki Toshikazu, *Sōdai kakyō seido kenkyū*, Chapter 1.7, pp.167-179.

(1866-1934), forerunner of the Kyoto School.²² For example, in 962, when military conquest was still underway and the country largely fractured, Taizu told his close comrades of his intention to require literary education for generals so that they could understand governance apart from warfare.²³ This incident, on the one hand, shows that Taizu acknowledged the importance of civilian values, a point reinforced by another famous aphorism regarding the appointment of literary men (*Du Shu Ren* 讀書人) to the position of Chief Councilor.²⁴ On the other hand, by inculcating Confucian ethics in military men, ethics that emphasized the importance of social order and hierarchy, he could reinforce the supreme authority of the emperor.

The introduction of the palace examination in 973 as the final stage of the civil service examinations also served the interests of imperial autocracy, as noted by the prominent Japanese Sinologist Ichisada Miyasaki.²⁵ Before 973, the Departmental examination was the final test in the examination process, whereby the official designated as Chief Examiner had final say on candidate selection. This allocated some officials to recommend to the Chief Examiner candidates with whom they were personally familiar.²⁶ Other candidates might bribe the Chief Examiner in order to get a higher rank on the examination. In addition, after examination results were released, the successful candidates usually presented expensive gifts to the Chief Examiner as

²² For a brief discussion on the Naito's hypothesis on the periodization of Chinese History, particularly the transformation during the Tang-Song period from medieval to early modern period, see Naitō Torajirō, "Gai Gua Di Tang Song Shi Dai Guan", pp.10-18; Hisayuki Miyakawa, "An Outline of the Naito Hypothesis and Its Effects on Japanese Studies of China", *Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol.14 No. 4 (1955), pp.533-552 and Joshua A. Fogel, *Politics and Sinology: the case of Naito Konan (1866-1934)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984), p.168-182. The latter summarized the Naito's hypothesis as follows: "The major change Naito pointed to with the fall of Tang dynasty was the collapse of aristocratic government in China, and the rise of monarchical autocracy and populism." (pp.170). Ichisada Miyazaki 宮崎市定 further elaborated the Naito's hypothesis, see his "Dong Yang Di Jin Shi", pp.153-241.

²³ *XCB*, Juan 3, pp.62.

²⁴ *XCB*, Juan 7, pp.171.

²⁵ Ichisada Miyazaki, translated by Conrad Schirokauer, *China's examination hell: the civil service examinations of imperial China* (New York: Weatherhill, 1976), pp.116. "The creation of the palace examination as the final examination, given directly under the emperor's personal supervision, ... was a necessary step in the strengthening of imperial autocracy." For similar argument, see also Araki Toshikazu, *Sōdai kakyō seido kenkyū*, pp.332-337.

²⁶ *WXTK*, Juan 30, pp.283.

payoff, professing ties as teacher and disciple. Activities of this sort easily led to the formation of factions among the civil officials, a hidden threat to the emperor. Taizu, aware of this, used an edict in 962 to reassert the primary purpose of the civil service examinations system - to select deserving candidates for service to the state. He also prohibited personal exchanges between examination candidates and the Chief Examiner as well as his relatives.²⁷ Apart from asserting the value of impartiality in the examination as an instrument of public policy, the edict guaranteed the emperor's dominance by breaking bonds between examiners and candidates. In 967, Taizu ordered the Grand Secretariat to re-examine candidates recommended by the Chief Examiner who were offspring of sitting officials.²⁸ This illustrates the rising power of the throne in overseeing the examination process and the declining personal powers of the Chief Examiner. After the adoption of the palace examination, in 973, the emperor assumed direct control over the final selection and ranking of candidates, through which personal bonds with prospective officials could be established. In turn, it "made all those examined by the emperor personally loyal to him as their immediate 'teacher,' thus reinforcing the idea of loyalty to the throne over other loyalties."²⁹ As acknowledged by Taizu, the introduction of the palace examination marked the end of the monopoly of aristocrats over the civil service system,³⁰ a consequence of the diminished power of the Chief Examiner.

Since the primary goal of Taizu was to ensure autocratic rule, the development of educational systems was not his primary interest. It is therefore understandable that the resources allocated to the Directorate of Education were

²⁷ SHY, *Xuanju* 3/2-3.

²⁸ WXTK, *Juan* 30, pp.284.

²⁹ Frederick W. Mote, *Imperial China 900-1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp.127-128.

³⁰ SS, *Juan* 155, pp.3606 and *Juan* 16, pp.336. For scholarships relating to the demise of aristocracy consequential upon the civil service examination, see Sun Guodong 孫國棟, "Tang Song Zhi Ji Men Di She Hui Zhi Xiao Rong" 唐宋之際門第社會之消融, *Xin Ya Xue Bao* 新亞學報, Vol.4 No.1 (1959), pp.211-304; Araki Toshikazu, *Sōdai kakyo seido kenkyū*, pp.275-289.

relatively limited. To oversee the administrative and financial matters of the Directorate, the court appointed a secretary and an accountant with the rank of 8 to assist two Supervisors of official rank. The teachers in the Directorate School were originally called Readers (*Jiang Shu* 講書), the quota for which was not fixed in the early Song. These Readers were theoretically recruited from metropolitan officials or executory rank (*Xuan Ren* 選人), whose main responsibility was to instruct students at the Directorate School in the Confucian Classics. Later in 994, at the request of the Supervisor of the Directorate, Li Zhi 李至 (947-1001), the recruitment criteria were raised so that only the court or capital officials were eligible to fill teaching posts, which were renamed as Lecturers (*Zhi Jiang* 直講).³¹ Other than teaching, these lecturers also played a crucial role in the compilation and collation of classical texts.³²

With regard to student quota at the Directorate School, it was originally not fixed at the outset, but the population normally did not exceed thirty,³³ a population that gradually reached seventy by the year 975.³⁴ Nevertheless, some students appear disinterested in educational programming, as the Directorate memorialized that some students were frequently absent from school. In view of this, Taizu, with reference to

³¹ *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.11305. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 35, pp.775 and Gong Yanming 龔延明, *Song Dai Guan Zhi Ci Dian* 宋代官制辭典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1997), pp.347.

³² A typical example was the collation of the *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons* (*Jing Dian Shi Wen* 經典釋文), a dictionary compiled by an early Tang scholar Lu Deming 陸德明 (556-627) that recorded the pronunciation and meaning of the characters in the Confucian and Daoist Classics. This project was initiated in the Later Zhou, the last of the Five Dynasties, started with an introductory chapter followed by explanations of the *Book of Changes* (*Yi* 易), *Book of Documents* (*Shu* 書), *Institutes of Zhou* (*Zhou Li* 周禮) and *Book of Ceremonies* (*Yi Li* 儀禮), a practice gradually extended to other works. Such collation projects continued into the early Song and involved the personnel of the Directorate. For a recent discussion on how the Northern Song Directorate of Education assisted in collating and compiling classical texts, see Gu Yongxin 顧永新, “Bei Song Guo Zi Jian Jian Ding Qun Jing Kao” 北宋國子監校定群經考, in *Sichuan da xue gu ji zheng li yan jiu suo* 四川大學古籍整理研究所, *Sichuan da xue Song dai wen hua yan jiu zi liao zhong xin bian*, *Song Dai Wen Hua Yan Jiu* 宋代文化研究, Vol.15 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2008), pp.395-415.

³³ *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3657 and Tien Guang, *Ru Lin Gong Yi*, *Juan* 1, in *QSB*, Ser.1 Vol.5, pp.95. *SHY*, *Chongru*, 1/32 recorded that the quota of Directorate students in the early Song was 300. But it is likely that the record in the *SHY* was an error by confusing 30 with 300.

³⁴ *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3657.

the precedent in the Later Zhou,³⁵ ordered that only registered students who were not absent from classes could continue to enjoy the privilege of exemption from the prefectural examination before presentation for the Departmental examination. Such students would have to take the more competitive prefectural examination.³⁶

The reasons for poor attendance and learning custom at the metropolitan school is intriguing. Since registered students at the Directorate School were from families of higher-ranking officials, they could join the civil service *via* the shortcut of “protection privilege” (*yin bu* 蔭補), rather than attend Government Schools or join in the highly competitive examinations.³⁷ Even if they opted to take the civil service examinations, their families would likely prefer hiring private tutors to prepare for the examination.³⁸ Besides government Schools stressed the Confucian Classics,³⁹ but poetry and rhapsody were key to the prestigious “Advanced Scholar” degree. All of these factors contributed to the diminished appeal of government schools to registered students from established families.

Nevertheless, the learning environment and facilities at the Directorate School were highly valued by candidates of humbler background. Since those successful candidates who had passed the Directorate examination continued to study

³⁵ Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982), *Wu Dai Hui Yao* 五代會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1978), Juan 16, pp.276.

³⁶ SS, Juan 157, pp.3657. See also SHY, *Chongru* 1/29.

³⁷ SS, Juan 157, pp.3658. See Zhao Tiehan 趙鐵寒, “Song Dai De Tai Xue”, pp.321. In fact, this was an inheritance of the Tang model, where the government schools and institutions served as the safety net for those aristocratic youth to ensure their qualification for government service. This recruitment channel contributed nearly half of the candidate pool in the Tang dynasty. See Winston Lo, *An introduction to the civil service of Sung China: with emphasis on its personnel administration* (Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 1987), pp.81. For a detailed discussion on the protection privilege in the Song Dynasty, see Winston Lo, *An introduction to the civil service of Sung China*, pp.102-109; Umehara Kaoru 梅原郁 ち, *Sōdai kanryō seido kenkyū* 宋代官僚制度研究 (Kyoto: Dōbōsha, 1985), Chapter 5, “Sōdai no on in seido” 宋代の恩蔭制度, pp.423-500 and You Biao 游彪, *Song Dai Yin Bu Zhi Du Yan Jiu* 宋代蔭補制度研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo she hui ke xue chu ban she, 2001).

³⁸ Chen Xuexun zhu bian, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu: Song Yuan Fen Juan* 中國教育史研究. 宋元分卷 (Shanghai: Huadong shi fan da xue chu ban she, 2000), pp.246.

³⁹ WXTK, Juan 42, pp.395; SS, Juan 157, pp.3660.

in the capital, they could have more time to prepare for the subsequent departmental examination. This was a definite privilege for the Directorate candidates contrasting to those prefectural nominees who needed to travel a long way from their own prefectural origin to Kaifeng. Besides, the Directorate nominees could familiarize themselves with the environment where they would take the next examination as well as build up networks with high officials when they lingered around the capital. Hence lots of Lower Elites and commoners tried to win formal admissions to the Directorate School by bribing officials in the Directorate or deceiving the staff of their family background. Even though this was forbidden, as stipulated by an edict in 972,⁴⁰ these students still attended classes regularly without formal registration at the Directorate School.

In appreciation to these diligent students from less prominent families, Taizu specially approved in 975 a recommendation from the Directorate of Education that these unregistered students, together with those kinsmen of officials who were not residing in rural areas, be allowed to fill the admission quota and register formally at the Directorate School.⁴¹ Such relaxation of the admission criteria for the Directorate School was definitely advantageous to candidates from lesser families, since it was relatively easier for them to become scholar-officials after receiving exemption from the competitive prefectural examinations; the privilege of proceeding directly to the Departmental examinations was previously enjoyed only by descendants of high-ranking officials. Nevertheless, with a limited quota in the Directorate School, only a few candidates from humbler backgrounds likely benefited. Although higher education was barely accessible to commoners, it is a sign that the Song Court was responsive to the educational needs of students of humble background.⁴²

⁴⁰ *XCB, Juan*13, pp.291.

⁴¹ *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3657-3658. See also *SHY, Chongru*, 1/29a.

⁴² The increased demand for education was buttressed by the widespread construction of local

It could be concluded that the Directorate of Education under Taizu inherited most of the institutional structures from the Tang dynasty and the Later Zhou, except the minor difference in admissions requirement. Few new initiatives occurred in educational institutions and activities at Directorate School. “Everything had been created in rough, with scant attention to school education,”⁴³ 凡事草創，學校教育未甚加意, says Southern Song literatus Wang Yong 王泳 (c.a.1227). His comments suggest that educational development was not a primary concern of the Song founder, mainly because the task of territorial unification was still underway.⁴⁴ We also have to bear in mind that such weak educational programming should not infer Taizu’s interest in civilian rule. In fact, education was just a means to assert the supreme authority of the emperor.

The collation of the Confucian Classics and the financing of the Directorate School under Taizong

Unlike the Song founder, succeeding Song emperors increasingly acknowledged the value of civilian rule.⁴⁵ Under the second emperor, Taizong, a

academies in the early Song. These academies, as argued by contemporary historian Yan Gengwang 嚴耕望, perpetuated the Tang scholarly custom of studying at Buddhist monasteries located at scenic and secluded mountain areas. With the support of local prefects, these academies run by individual scholars continued to flourish in the early Song, thereby partially satisfying the commoners’ demand for education. See Yan Gengwang, “Tang Ren Si Ye Shan Lin Si yuan zhi feng shang”, pp.367-424, particularly pp.421. See also Erik Zürcher, “Buddhism and Education in T’ang Times”, pp.19-56, which illustrates how Buddhist temple contributed to elementary education in the Tang.

⁴³ Wang Yong 王泳 zhuan. *Yan Yi Yi Mou Lu* 燕翼詒謀錄 (Beijing: Zhong Hua Shuju, 1981), *Juan* 5, pp.51.

⁴⁴ The Chinese mainland has yet to be unified until the death of Taizu in 976 as Northern Han of the Ten Kingdoms was still lying around, let alone the sixteen prefectures ceded to the Khitan Liao.

⁴⁵ Taizong’s increased reliance on civilian officials at the expense of military officers is the initiation of such trend. After defeating the Northern Han in 979, Taizong raided the Khitan Liao (907-1125), aiming to recover the sixteen prefectures ceded to the Khitan dynasty by Later Jin (936-947) in the Five Dynasties. However, the military campaign ended in disaster for Song armies, owing to a rout at Gaolianghe, where Taizong was wounded by an arrow that nearly killed him. Worsening his military position was another defeat by the Liao in 986, where poor coordination among Song generals was chiefly to blame. After these disgraceful incidents, Taizong lost faith in his military and never took major military action against the Liao again. The Song emperor hence focused on the social and economic recovery of his land and relied on civilian officials, rather than generals to succeed. As the military faded in imperial patronage, civilian officials expanded upon the imperial favour of Taizong. A

dramatic surge occurred in the number of degrees conferred in the civil service examinations: the number of degrees increased almost 6 times!⁴⁶ The widening examination floodgates created an expanding pool of scholar-officials. To fully utilize manpower, integrate southern scholarship into a united empire,⁴⁷ inherit the cultural tradition by succeeding the Han and Tang dynasty,⁴⁸ and demonstrate his respect for ancient knowledge,⁴⁹ Taizong initiated grandiose projects to compile encyclopedic works as well as to collate and print the *Official Commentaries on the Five Classics* (*Wu Jing Zheng Yi* 五經正義).⁵⁰ The latter orthodox Classical Commentaries were compiled by Kong Yingda at the instructions of Taizong of Tang. The imperial order to emend and republish this work might reflect Song Taizong's aspiration to reclaim the glory of the Tang dynasty – an important cultural feat intended to offset the military setback of losing the sixteen prefectures to the Khitan, to demonstrate the superiority of the Song in preserving and transmitting the civilization of the Han Chinese. It also had the additional mission of controlling literary people. Since the new editions of the Classics were adopted by the Directorate School as textbooks --

thorough analysis of the battle against the Liao in 979 can be found in Cheng Guangyu 程光裕 zhu, *Song Taizong Dui Liao Zhan Zheng Kao* 宋太宗對遼戰爭考 (Taipei: Taiwan Shang wu yin shu guan, 1972). See also Song Changlian 宋常廉, "Gao Liang He Zhan Yi Kao Shi" 高粱河戰役考釋, in *Da Lu Za Zhi Shi Xue Cong Shu ; Di 4 Ji, Di 4 Ce* 大陸雜誌史學叢書 ; 第4輯, 第4冊 (Taipei: Da lu za zhi she, 1975), pp.132-142. For an investigation of the wound of Taizong in the 979 battle, see Ho Koon Wan (He Guanhuang) 何冠環, "Song Taizong Jian Ji Xin Kao" 宋太宗箭疾新考, *The Journal of the Institute of Chinese Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong*, Vol.20 (1989), pp.33-58. The intriguing reasons for the defeats of the Song armies in the two battles against the Liao in 979 and 986 could be found in Tsang Sui-lung (Zeng Ruilong) 曾瑞龍 zhu, *Jing Lue You Yan (979-987) : Song Liao Zhan Zheng Jun Shi Zai Nan De Zhan Lue Fen Xi* 經略幽燕(979-987) : 宋遼戰爭軍事災難的戰略分析 (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2003).

⁴⁶ See also figures quoted in Thomas H. C. Lee, "The Social Significance of the Quota System in Sung Civil Service Examinations", *The Journal of the Institute of Chinese Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong*, Vol.13 (1982), pp.290-291.

⁴⁷ Johannes L. Kurz, "The Politics of Collecting Knowledge: Song Taizong's Compilations Project", *T'oung Pao*, Vol.87 No.4/5 (2001), pp.289-316.

⁴⁸ Peter K. Bol, *"This culture of ours" : intellectual transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp.152.

⁴⁹ See Guo Bogong 郭伯恭 zhu, *Song Si Da Shu Kao* 宋四大書考 (Taipei: Taiwan shang wu yin shu guan, 1967), pp.4, and John Winthrop Haeger, "The Significance of Confusion: The Origins of The Tai-p'ing yü-lan", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol.88 No.3 (Jul.-Sep.1968), pp.407.

⁵⁰ The four well-known encyclopedic works are the *Extensive Records of the Grand Tranquility Reign* (*Tai Ping Guang Ji* 太平廣記) of 978, the *Record of the World during the Grand Tranquility Reign* (*Tai Ping Huan Yu Ji* 太平寰宇記) of 980, the *Finest Flowers of the Preserve of Letters* (*Wen Yuan Ying Hua* 文苑英華) of 982, and the *Imperially Reviewed Encyclopedia of the Grand Tranquility Reign* (*Tai Ping Yu Lan* 太平御覽) of 984.

and likely served as model answers for the civil service examinations -- it means that most literati would gradually assimilate the officially accepted version of the classics. Starting from 988, with the assistance from various Directorate personnel, the entire project, with emendations to existing texts and supplements for omissions, was completed in 999.⁵¹

Apart from refining the newly collated *Official Commentaries of the Five Classics*, the Supervisor of the Directorate, Li Zhi, also proposed to standardize existing interpretations of the remaining seven Confucian Classics for purposes of uniformity, namely the *Gongyang* and *Guliang Commentaries* on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Institutes of Zhou*, the *Book of Ceremonies*, the *Classic of Filial Piety*, the *Analects* of Confucius, and the *Erya dictionary*. These Classics did not have “Official Commentaries” beforehand, so the Song Court is *imprimatur* rivaled the Tang Court’s promulgation of the *Official Commentaries of the Five Classics* in historic import. It could standardize the meaning and interpretation of the classics and thereby ensure a uniform view across the literati-class, which, in turn, buttressed the ruling Zhao family. Once persuaded, Taizong entrusted the task to personnel in the Directorate of Education, which included the eminent Lecturers Sun Shi 孫奭 (962-1033), Cui Yizheng 崔頤正 (922-1000) and Cui Woquan 崔僊佺 (928-1006).⁵² Accomplished in 1001,⁵³ these newly collated texts were then engraved on wooden blocks for printing. Hereafter, knowledge of the Confucian Classics, the source of official ideology, could be disseminated widely, and books published by the Directorate, without scribal errors, could circulate conveniently among the people.

⁵¹ XCB, *Juan* 43, pp.908. See also DDSL, *Juan* 113, pp.979; SS, *Juan* 431, pp.12822 and YH, *Juan* 43, “Duan Gong Jiao Wu Jing Zheng Yi”, 18b.

⁵² SS, *Juan* 266, pp.9177.

⁵³ SS, *Juan* 266, pp.9177. See also YH, *Juan* 43, “Xian Ping Jiao Ding Qi Jing Shu Yi” 咸平校定七經疏義 and *Juan* 41. “Xian Ping Xiao Jing Lun Yun Zheng Yi” 咸平孝經論語正義 and Yao Yingting 姚瀛艇, “Lun Bei Song Chao Ting Dui Qi Jing Shu Yi Di Zheng Li” 論北宋朝廷對七經疏義的整理, *Journal of Henan University*, No.4 (1989), pp.83-86.

This explains the response of Xing Bing 邢昺 (932-1010), then Director of Education, to Zhenzong's enquiry about the number of printing blocks available, when the emperor visited the library at the Directorate School:

At the beginning of the dynasty, the number of printing blocks did not exceed four thousand. Now we possess ten thousand, consisting of the Classics, Histories, and the Official Commentaries. When I undertook Confucian studies in my childhood, few students owned copies of the Classics replete with exegeses, since the books were hand-copied by students for circulation. But nowadays, printing blocks are plentiful, and families of officials and commoners alike can now have their own copies of the Classics. This is truly a fortunate time for Confucians!⁵⁴
國初不及四千，今十餘萬，經史正義皆具。臣少時業儒，觀學徒能具經疏者百無一二，蓋傳寫不給。今板本大備，士庶家皆有之，斯乃儒者逢時之幸也。

The printing of the Confucian Classics and Standard Histories by the Directorate of Education served to promote Confucian culture among the masses while propagating orthodox interpretations of the Classics.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the effectiveness of ideological control through these standardized texts is somehow constrained by the existing examinations settings, in which prominence was given to poetry and literary skills over classical interpretation and knowledge of history. Anyhow, printing of these books became a lucrative business for the education bureau and the metropolitan school. According to an edict in 987, the profits reaped from book sales could be used to cover expenditures of the Directorate, without soliciting the usual approval of the Financial Commission.⁵⁶ The income of the Directorate became even more secure after 998, when prefectures were prohibited from reprinting Confucian Classics already issued by the Directorate.⁵⁷ The rule afforded the Directorate a monopoly on the circulation of its own publications. However the

⁵⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 60, pp.1333 and *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/1.

⁵⁵ Other than printing the Confucian Classics and Standard Histories, the Directorate of Education also published reference books for preparing for the civil service examinations, agricultural tracts, "legal texts", and even obscure medical works. See Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.59-61.

⁵⁶ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/1.

⁵⁷ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/1.

Director of Education, Xing Bing, requested in 1005 that the Directorate return the profit from book sales to the Financial Commission and buttress revenues of the central government – a rather baffling concession.⁵⁸ An edict of 1012 reaffirmed that all the income and expenditure incurred by the selling of the Directorate-printed books were not under the purview of the Directorate of Education.⁵⁹ The Directorate hence turned the government to cover daily operations, a practice that continued until the Renzong era.

Teaching activities in the Directorate under Taizong

Despite sponsoring the collation of the Confucian Classics, and despite visiting the Directorate of Education on two occasions and summoning its teachers to lecture on the Confucian Classics in 988 and 994,⁶⁰ Taizong was less passionate about promoting the teaching activities of the Directorate School. This is seen in his rejection in 990 of a request to enlarge the campus. Taizong expressed concern about the possible destruction of private dwellings should the project proceed.⁶¹ Besides, the shrinking student population of the Directorate School, as inferred by an imperial edict in 984, made it hard to justify the campus enlargement project:

Candidates who are diligent, whose father or elder brother are currently serving as officials, and who do not reside in their place of origin, can be recommended by the Directorate to take the Departmental examination without attending classes at the Directorate School, as long as the staff in the Directorate can vouch for their conduct. But those from families not presently holding office are prohibited from admission.⁶² 太宗太平興國九年 (984) 六月，詔：「國子監所解舉人，自今但負勤苦、有父兄居官食祿，不在本貫

⁵⁸ *XCB*, *Juan* 60, pp.1333.

⁵⁹ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/2. See also Thomas H.C. Lee, “Bei Song Guo Zi Jian Yu Tai Xue De Jing Fei”, pp.76.

⁶⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 29, pp.656-657 and *Juan* 36, pp.801; *SHY*, *Li* 16/3 and *Zhiguan*, 28/1.

⁶¹ *SS*, *Juan* 431, pp.12812, Zhu Chung Sheng, “Song Dai Tai Xue Fa Zhan Di Wu Ge Jie Duan”, pp.446.

⁶² *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/1.

鄉裏居止，監司諳知行止，便可收補發解，不必附監聽讀，即不得收不係食祿之家。」

We understand from this edict that admission requirements for the Directorate School, initially relaxed in 975, became harsher later on, and the elitist nature of the School was reaffirmed, since students with humble background could no longer be admitted. Besides, even registered students were not required to attend classes in order to be nominated. Together, these changes caused a reduction in the student population, which effectively stymied the campus enlargement proposal.

Taizong's disappointment with the conduct and quality of students at the Directorate School offers another explanation for the rejection of Kong Wei's proposal. The most notorious incident involving the misbehavior of students at the Directorate School was a violent attack on the chief examiner, Xie Bi 謝泌 (950-1012). Xie was fastidious about recommending talent and nominated only a few genuinely deserving people over the course of his long career; all rose to Councilor rank, including Chief Councillor Wang Zeng 王曾 (978-1038).⁶³ Hence, when Xie Bi was tapped to examine youth for the Directorate School, he failed many. Those failed candidates then gathered to vent their dissatisfaction and even carried tiles to attack Xie when he left the School. Xie merely went back to his office after noticing their sinister intent and dared not return to the School for a couple of days.⁶⁴ When Taizong heard of this, he expressed his dissatisfaction students' deeds:

Xie Bi's job was to text students, so how dare he make an excessive recommendations? Petty men lacking self-reflection simply turned their anger on the Chief examiner!⁶⁵ 泌職在考校，豈敢濫收？小人不

⁶³ Jiang Shaoyu 江少虞 (12th century) zhuan, *Song Chao Shi Shi Lei Yuan* 宋朝事實類苑 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1981), *Juan* 57, "Zhi Ren Jian Ju" 知人薦舉, pp.753.

⁶⁴ XCB, *Juan* 32, pp.728.

⁶⁵ Shi Wenying 釋文瑩 (11th century) zhuan, *Yu Hu Qing Hua* 玉壺清話, *Juan* 4, in *QSBJ*, Ser.1 Vol.6, pp.118.

自揣分,反怨主司.

The reasons for the student grievances are intriguing. Apart from the possible injustice of Xie Bie's fairness in selection,⁶⁶ an unrealistically high standards for assessment likely also drew the students' ire. Furthermore, as mentioned in a memorial of Yang Huizhi 楊徽之 (922-1000) dating from late 991, "Those good at literary composition had been quickly elevated, but those with expertise in the Confucian Classics had been seldom promoted."⁶⁷ 然擅文章者多超遷,明經業者罕殊用 In this context, it is not hard to understand why students at the Directorate, who focused on the Confucian Classics, held such a dim view of their own career prospects. And the stress on literary abilities over classical knowledge might also explain why students slighted classical studies at the Directorate School, irrespective of efforts by the Song Court to collate the classics.

In the same memorial, Yang Huizhi also pointed out that the country, despite utilizing various means to recruit scholar-officials, had failed to nurture talent in the metropolitan school, particularly in the area of the Confucian Classics. He therefore suggested the hiring of experts in the Five Confucian Classics at the Directorate School in order to improve things:

Since the emperor acceded the throne, the virtue of civilian rule has been propagated. The ruined have been repaired and the fallen erected newly. The voice of Confucian learning reverberates and eremites employed after searching for talent to fill the civil service. The means of selecting literati officials has therefore been fully utilized. Under this mechanism, those good at literary composition were quickly elevated, but those with expertise in the Confucian Classics

⁶⁶ Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.81.

⁶⁷ Yang Huizhi, "Jian Yan Bo Qiu Tong Jing Zhi Shu" 建言博求通經之士疏, in *QSW*, Vol.3, pp.58. In accordance with the records of the *XCB*, this memorial was submitted in 991/11. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 32, pp.724-725 and Su Song 蘇頌 (1020-1101), "Wen Zhuang Yang Gong Shen Dao Bi" 文莊楊公神道碑 in Su Song zhu; Wang Tongce 王同策, Guan Chengxue 管成學, Yan Zhongqi 顏中其 deng dian jiao, *Su Wei Gong Wen Ji: Fu Wei Gong Tan Xun* (SWGJ) 蘇魏公文集 : 附魏公譚訓 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1988), *Juan* 51, pp.767.

were seldom promoted. Since the civil service examinations had yet to become regularized, only those candidates who have performed well on the examination get promoted, while those hardworking and diligent students are neglected. Why is this so? If the learning of teachers cannot be transmitted, how can we keep our ancestral wisdom? Besides, the capital is an area where the four corners of the world converged, and the metropolitan schools are the place to foster primary virtues. Now, the teaching positions in the Five Confucian Classics at the school remain vacant. This is definitely not the way to promote teaching, reward talent, and extend virtue from within to without. I therefore sincerely request that an edict be promulgated to recruit experts in Confucian Classics from across the country. They might be recruited from among the Court officials or elevated from rural areas. The number of teaching positions in the metropolitan schools should also be increased so that scholars can be assigned to teach our youth. Apart from teaching, the lecturers could also be charged with other official duties depending on expertise, and a better salary should be offered in order to reward their excellence. With generous provisions, most virtuous people will be encouraged. In this way, our dynasty might share the distinction of the Han and Tang Dynasties in terms of abundant talent.⁶⁸ 自陛下嗣統鴻圖，闡揚文治，廢墜修舉，儒學響臻，乃至周岩野以聘隱淪，盛科選以來才彥，取士之道，亦已至矣。然擅文章者多超遷，明經業者罕殊用。向非振舉，曷勸專勤？師法不傳，祖述安在？且京師四方之會，太學首善之地。今五經博士，並闕其員，非所以崇教化、獎人材、繇內及外之道也。伏望濬發明詔，博求通經之士，簡之朝著，拔自草萊，增置員數，分教胄子，隨其所業，授以本官，廩稍且優，旌別斯在。淹貫之士，既蒙厚賞，則天下善類知所勸矣，無使唐、漢專稱得人。

Taizong was pleased with Yang's proposal, and later appointed prominent experts in the Confucians Classics such as Sun Shi and Cui Yizheng to be Directorate Lecturers.⁶⁹ But even though more teachers were hired in the Directorate School, there is hardly any evidence on improvement in teaching and learning at the Directorate School. The heavy workload of lecturers in editing and collating the Classics might be accountable for this.

To conclude, as pertains to civilian progress under Taizong, it is noteworthy

⁶⁸ LDMCZY, *Juan* 114/a, pp.1505. See also Yang Huizhi, "Jian Yan Bo Qiu Tong Jing Zhi Shi Shu", in *QSW*, Vol.3, pp.58.

⁶⁹ By the year 994, Sun Shi 孫奭 had already been appointed as the lecturer of the Directorate School. See *XCB*, *Juan* 36, pp.801.

that heavy emphasis was placed on the civil service examinations to fill vacant government positions. However, teaching activities at the metropolitan school could not keep pace with a flourishing examination system. Although the number of candidates passing the civil service examinations increased, the student population at the Directorate School declined, which reflects the emperor's personal preference. For the sake of the long term development of the dynasty, Taizong's predilections were shortsighted, but understandable in the context of the Northern Song. Firstly, despite a large number of unfilled vacancies, the Song Court had indeed a huge reservoir of literati scholars to select from, particularly after conquering the Southern kingdoms of Wu Yue (907-978) and Southern Tang (937-975). To utilize such human resources, Taizong compiled encyclopedic works and Confucian Classics to employ these redundant scholars. The work doubled as a means to win their loyalties. Therefore, there was no urgency to nurture future talent in view of the abundance of literati. Secondly, the country needed to recover economically from the turmoil of the Five Dynasties, while the long-term development of schools required vast resources. The civil service examinations system was simply cheaper.

Dilemma in the early Zhenzong reign

Upon acceding the throne after the disease of Taizong, Zhenzong was ambitious to introduce good governance to the country based on an informed understanding of past precedent. Within one year after his enthronement, he ordered officials to submit proposals regarding the development of the state.⁷⁰ In response to the emperor's edict, an official, Sun He 孫何 (961-1004), proposed a series of measures across five major areas. Among them, owing to existing flaws in the personnel recruitment mechanism, Sun He reiterated the importance of the Directorate

⁷⁰ SS, *Juan* 6, pp.104.

School and the need to uphold its elitist status. In his memorial, he firstly noted the low regard for school education by the literati class: “peripheral areas do not have students, since people across the country prefer the civil service examination. The National School and the School of Literature thus contain people as humble as artisans and merchants.”⁷¹ 外地則絕無學生，神州則悉號鄉貢，下至工商雜類，方遊太學、廣文。The statement illustrates that although the Directorate School had been closed to students of common background since 984,⁷² in reality, people of the proscribed background could still be found on the school campus. These people likely had a negative impact on school discipline, which may explain incidents of violence against the Chief Examiner Xie Bi, as mentioned above.

After citing assorted problems in the existing educational and examination systems, Sun He put forward the following proposal:

For the country to open the civil service to the poor and humble, and at the same time, uphold the fairness of the process, imperial orders are required that re-emphasize Confucian Classics crafts. Candidates of humble background can thereby be nominated in their own prefectures while those from official families are recommended by the Directorate School. The Directorate School would no longer admit commoners under this arrangement, while youths of official families could no longer be recommended by their own prefectures. Those officials who nominate youth of Higher Elites will be in violation of regulations while officers in the Directorate School who admit commoners shall be removed from office. 國家必欲開孤進之路，闢至公之門，莫若再舉令文，復嚴經術，使寒雋之士，由鄉里以升聞，世祿之家，自成均而出仕。太學不得補庶人之子，神州不得貢卿士之門，貴介綺紈，府送者有罪，草莽韋布，濫收者黜官。

Prefectures in peripheral areas, when financially viable, are advised to establish schools based on the old set of regulations, and select renown Confucian erudites and learned scholars as lecturers and teaching assistants. After intensive training, the students can be examined and ultimately recommended by year's end, in accordance with prefectural quotas as stipulated by the new regulations. In the case of some

⁷¹ XCB, *Juan* 42, pp.881.

⁷² SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/1.

extremely gifted candidates or those able to invigorate customs who lie outside of the prefectural school promotion scheme, they should also be recommended if authorities wish.⁷³ 其在外郡或駢繁縣，如富庶者，皆按舊典重立學官，俾選耆儒、碩生為之博士、助教，精加課試，公與薦延。歲終仍依新條，限以人數發解。必有軼羣之異行，拔俗之英才，匪由鄉庠，亦許公議。

This proposal was made in the backdrop of the disruptions in both the Directorate School and the civil service examinations system, and the latter, in particular, had continuously haunted the early Song emperors. Taizong had indeed acknowledged the difficulties in managing the civil service examinations in an edict in 985. He noted that, in view of the increasingly diverse background of the candidates, a problem compounded by the innovative ways by which students cheated, it was hard to identify genuinely deserving candidates during the examination itself.⁷⁴ Besides, candidates were not treated equally, since descendants of ranking official families could easily cultivate personal ties with influential officials, or even bribe examiners at the prefectural level, to secure nomination. This problem was reiterated by Sun He: “Nowadays the examination candidates nominated by the prefectures are nominated by themselves, for all intents and purposes. They present gift to prefectural officials and pay visits to high-ranking officials [to achieve their aims].”⁷⁵ 今士子名為鄉舉，其實自媒，投贄于郡府之門，關節于公卿之第。

To rectify the problem, Sun He proposed that all candidates from official families be required to attend the Directorate School, while the prefectural examinations would be reserved for commoners as channel for recruitment.⁷⁶ However, by excluding students from official families from the prefectural examination, Sun’s radical proposal would have undermined the vested interests of the

⁷³ XCB, *Juan* 42, pp.881-882.

⁷⁴ Qian Ruoshui 錢若水 (960-1003) *deng zhuan*; Yan Yongcheng 燕永成 *dian jiao*, *Song Tai Zong Shi Lu* 宋太宗實錄 (Lanzhou Shi: Gansu ren min chu ban she, 2005), *Juan* 32, pp.65.

⁷⁵ XCB, *Juan* 42, pp.882.

⁷⁶ SS, *Juan* 306, pp.10097-10098.

literati-class. Besides, prohibiting candidates of humble background from attending the Directorate School ignored the reality of heightened demand for education among commoners. As a result, the proposal of Sun He was never adopted.

In the absence of such opinionated students from less prominent families, the campus of the Directorate School remained quiet, as stated in a casual comment on the Directorate School by the literary genius Yang Yi 楊億 (974-1020): “In spite of the existence of the School campus today, the classrooms are tiny and the student population is miniscule.”⁷⁷ 今學舍雖存，殊為湫隘，生徒至寡，僅至陵夷

Yang attributed the withering school campus to the mistaken priorities of the state, “The examination bureau gave preference to candidates nominated by the prefectures, which caused some shame for students at the Directorate School” 貢部以鄉舉為先，諸生以兩館為耻。⁷⁸ This was just like putting the cart before the horse. In order to revitalize education at the metropolitan school, Yang recommended that youths of Higher Elites be required to study at the Directorate School when they reached adulthood. Moreover, priority should be given to students of the Directorate School within the civil service examinations structure so that descendents of high officials might be recruited for study. A surge in the number of students led to proposals to enlarge the school campus, recruit more erudite scholars to fill teaching vacancies, and setting aside land as endowment in order to reduce direct subsidy from the state. Should these measures carried out, Yang Yi predicted that the customs of courtesy and honesty would soon be restored in the manner of the Confucian Sage

⁷⁷ This draft commentary should have been written during the Xian Ping 咸平 (998-1003) and Jing De 景德 (1004-1007) eras of Zhenzong, since it has been incorporated in Yang Yi's literary collection *Wu Yi Xin Ji* 武夷新集, a work that had been compiled by the end of 1007. See Yang Yi, “Dai Ren Zhuang Dui Lun Tai Xue Zhuang” 代人轉對論太學狀, in Yang Yi zhuan, *Wu Yi Xin Ji* (Fuzhou: Fujian ren min chu ban she, 2007), *Juan* 17, pp.269.

⁷⁸ Yang Yi, “Dai Ren Zhuang Dui Lun Tai Xue Zhuang”, pp.269.

Kings, without much government intervention.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, Yang Yi did not realize his grandiose educational plan during his lifetime.

The relaxation in 1005

Apart from a languishing University campus, the loopholes in the civil service examinations continued to haunt Song officials in the early Zhenzong era. Qi Lun 戚綸 (954-1021), son of the renowned educator Qi Tongwen 戚同文 (904-976), summarized the troubles in a memorial of 1005:

This year, the prefectures nominated a total of 3,000 candidates for the “Advanced Scholar” and 10,000 candidates for the “Various Subjects” degrees. However, in responding to questions on the meaning of the Classics, the examinees answered incorrectly as much as 9 or 10 questions. Errors could also be found in their answer scripts...[because of poor preparations]. Some officials hesitated to recommend anyone in order to avoid charges of making unqualified nominations. Recently candidates for the “Advanced Scholar” degree have tended to focus on superficial literary beauty, while neglecting substantive learning. They just copy model essays and poems and carried into the examination hall [in violation of rules]. Hence when questions in the last palace examination were based on texts from the official Classics, the candidates did scarcely identify where they came from.⁸⁰ 今歲諸道進士僅三千人，諸科萬餘人，其中文理純繆，經義十否、九否者甚眾....又慮官吏坐此殿罰，因而避事，全不薦人...近年進士多務澆浮，不敦實學，惟鈔略古今文賦，懷挾入試，昨者廷試以正經命題，多懵所出。

Qi Lun’s memorial illustrates the poor quality of the candidates who recently take the examination. To ameliorate the situation, apart from proposing changes in examination rules, syllabi, and nomination quotas,⁸¹ Qi also stressed the importance of education. The idea might reflect his father’s influence, who as a man operated a private academy and taught students from across the country irrespective of family

⁷⁹ Yang Yi, “Dai Ren Zhuang Dui Lun Tai Xue Zhuang”, pp.269.

⁸⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 60, pp.1351-1352.

⁸¹ For details, refer to *XCB*, *Juan* 60, pp.1351-1352.

background.⁸² Qi Lun himself adopted more lenient admissions requirements for the Directorate School in order to afford candidates better access to education:

For those far from their native places who have long resided in the capital, they should be allowed to sit on the examination in the Directorate of Education. But they still need officials in their prefectural origins to serve as guarantors. After verification of credentials by the Directorate, they can be attached to the Directorate School. On the day of nomination, they could request to sit in the examination.⁸³ 鄉里遐遠，久住京師者，許於國子監取解，仍須本鄉命官委保，判監引驗，乃得附學，發解日奏請差官考試。

Qi Lun's proposal obviously sought to lift the prohibition of 984 and return to the situation in 975, where long-time residents of the capital Kaifeng could attend the Directorate School. Since most of these people were not scions of high officials, it means that the Directorate School was no longer confined to the Upper elites. If adopted, the proposal would allow all candidates, Upper and Lower elites alike, to be better educated before taking higher examinations. Those candidates from non-official families would benefit most from the change, since they could gain access to educational facilities and environments previously beyond their reach.

Qi Lun's proposal caught the emperor's attention as the vehicle for realizing the vision of early Song emperors to recruit talented candidates from humble families. Zhenzong had expressed his own wish "to be absolutely impartial so as to promote the poor but talented" 務在至公，擢寒畯有藝者 and "to open new routes for the poor to advance" 闢四海孤寒之路.⁸⁴ After rigorous review of the matter, scholar-officials of the Hanlin Academy would endorse most of Qi's proposal. They even made an additional proposal "to let the eldest son of serving civilian and military officials to

⁸² A detailed description of Qi Tongwen and his Suiyang Academy would be discussed in the conclusion section of this chapter.

⁸³ *XCB*, *Juan* 60, pp.1352. Also appear in *WXTK*, *Juan* 30, pp.287.

⁸⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 67, pp.1512 and *SHY*, *Xuanju* 3/8b. The early Song emperors' desire to elevate the poor was briefly discussed in Thomas H. C. Lee, "The Social Significance of the Quota System in Sung Civil Service Examinations", pp.288-289.

attend the Directorate School.”⁸⁵ 文武陞朝官嫡親，許附國學 With the consent of Zhenzong, these proposals were later implemented. Due to an estimated expansion in the Directorate School, Zhenzong ordered officials familiar with the Directorate affairs, such as Xing Bing and Sun Shi, to recommend ten scholars to be lecturers of the Directorate School in 1005/11. In order to be eligible for the lectureship, scholars should be erudites in Confucian studies who embody Confucian goodness.⁸⁶

To further the new policy of 1005, which allowed scions of court officials to attend the Directorate School, the Director of Education, Xing Bing, made a recommendation in 1009 designed to better-equip men given official appointments through “protection privilege” (men marginally qualified, for the most part):

I wish that those candidates nominated through ‘protection’ (yin) privilege be required to attend the Directorate School for two years before the assignment of official duties. Upon their completion of studies, the Directorate School would send their graduation certificates to the Ministry of Personnel for further examination before appointment can occur.⁸⁷ 欲望自令[今]補蔭出身人，將來差遣，並須先於國學聽書二年。候滿日，本學牒送審官院，依條試驗，方與差遣。

Embracing the concept, an imperial edict was promulgated that required all candidates above 25 and eligible for office under protection privilege to study at least two years at the Directorate School. Only upon certification by the Directorate of Education and review by the Bureau of Senior Personnel Ratings could these candidates win formal appointment. Should they resist attending classes, the edict stipulated, they had to be examined on special topics in order to qualify.⁸⁸ The target

⁸⁵ XCB, *Juan* 60, pp.1352-1353. See also SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3657-3658.

⁸⁶ SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/1.

⁸⁷ SHY, *Chongru*, 1/29.

⁸⁸ SHY, *Chongru*, 1/29 and SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/2. See also E.A. Kracke, *Civil service in early Sung China*, pp.74; You Biao, *Song Dai Yin Bu Zhi Du Yan Jiu*, pp.369-370; Miao Shumei 苗書梅 zhu, *Song Dai Guan Yuan Xuan Ren He Guan Li Zhi Du* 宋代官員選任和管理制度 (Kaifeng: He Nan Da Xue Chu Ban She, 1996), pp.238-239.

of the policy were the Higher Elites, who could enter public service under the protection scheme without passing the rigorous civil service examinations. Through mandatory attendance at the Directorate School, Higher Elites might be better prepared for service to the state.

After becoming the training ground for prospective officials,⁸⁹ the Directorate School would surely grow in student numbers, placing higher demands on teachers. Zhenzong therefore authorized the appointment of more lecturers. And young scholars like Feng Yuan 馮元 (975-1037) and Zheng Jian 鄭戢 (992-1053), both erudite in the Confucian Classics, were appointed in 1013 and 1014 as lecturers.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, as seen later, such optimism about rising numbers of Higher Elites studying at the Directorate School was so much false hope. The policy was never seriously enforced by the Court, so most of Higher Elites continued to ignore the Directorate School.⁹¹ In terms of attitude towards learning, there emerged a stark contrast between the Higher and Lower Elites.

Apart from extending educational opportunities to Lower Elites and commoners for study at the Directorate School, Zhenzong's policies to thwart undeserving civil service nominations had been strictly enforced. Examiners were punished for recommending candidates of low quality. A group of examiners were demoted in 1012 for precisely this reason.⁹² All these measures adopted since 1005 seemed to reap benefits, as Zhenzong acknowledged after the palace examination of

⁸⁹ Song Xi, "Song Dai Tai Xue De Qu Cai Yu Yang Shi", pp.136.

⁹⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 81, pp.1847 and *Juan* 82, pp.1881. See also *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/2.

⁹¹ From the proposal made by Fan Zhongyan, we understand that this policy was never enforced rigidly. For the full text of the proposal, see Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052), "Zou Chong Ding Chen Liao Zou Jian Zi Di Qin En Ze Shi" 奏重定臣僚奏薦子弟親戚恩澤事, in Fan Zhongyan, *Fan Zhong Yan Quan Ji (FZYQJ)* 范仲淹全集 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2002), pp.569-571. See also James T.C. Liu, "An Early Sung Reformer: Fan Chung-yen", in J. K. Fairbank, et. al (ed.), *Chinese Thought and Institution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp.113; E.A. Kracke, *Civil service in early Sung China*, pp.74.

⁹² *XCB*, *Juan* 77, pp.1766.

1014. “The selected candidates in recent years have been exceptional in literary skills, while candidates of humble background have managed to succeed.”⁹³ 近歲舉人，文藝頗精，孤貧得路。

Even more encouraging, the top candidate (*Zhuangyuan* 狀元) for the “Advanced Scholar” degree of 1014, Zhang Guan 張觀 (985-1050), was a nominee of the Directorate of Education.⁹⁴ Zhang also came from a humble family, his father a minor aide to a prefectural official.⁹⁵ Since his father’s position was below the seventh rank, Zhang Guan would never have been admitted to the Directorate School under the old admissions criteria. Ironically, before the success of Zhang Guan on the examinations, the court had once again stiffened the admissions requirement for the Directorate School in 1014/8 - a move that likely limited opportunities for the underprivileged.

Every candidate studying at the Directorate School, except those registered as residents of Kaifeng, needs to find two metropolitan or court officials to serve as guarantors before being permitted to sit on the Directorate School examination. These guarantors need to send a stamped document to the Directorate in evidence thereof.⁹⁶ 國子監學士應子弟在監習業者，除實是開封府外，每人召京朝官二人為保識，然後收試。其保官須具印狀赴監。

The guarantor requirement definitely served as an obstacle for commoners seeking to study at the Directorate School. And it is hard to contemplate why Zhenzong would adopt a measure that effectively impeded the poor. One possible explanation was that numerous court officials initiated and supported this restrictive policy and ultimately won the consent of Zhenzong. Heretofore, the descendents of high officials was the only group with access to the learning facilities and generous

⁹³ *XCB, Juan* 83, pp.1896.

⁹⁴ *XCB, Juan* 83, pp.1896.

⁹⁵ *SS, Juan* 292, pp.9766.

⁹⁶ *SHY, Zhiguan*, 28/2; *XCB, Juan* 83, pp.1894.

examination quotas at the Directorate School. After commoners were granted the same privilege in 1005, the vested interest of established families had been infringed upon. The best illustration of this was the success of a humble Zhang Guan on the examination of 1014 on the heels of nomination by the Directorate of Education. By eliminating commoners from the Directorate School, the descendents of the high officials improved their chances of success at the Directorate examination. This may explain why high officials, for the sake of securing the future success of their offspring, could have proposed a measure to revive the exclusiveness of the Directorate School in a great leap backward for higher education under Song rule.

Directorate School in late Zhenzong's reign

As distinct from the precedent of 984, the new policy seems to have been strictly enforced. From 1014 till the end of Zhenzong's reign in 1022, there is little mention of student learning at the Directorate School or policy debates concerning the Directorate School. The paucity of records during this period might give the impression of stagnation at the metropolitan school, which seems a reasonable assumption. As stated above, Higher Elites were generally not eager to study at the Directorate School, as they had other ways to attain their ultimate aims – the regular examination for which they could prepare at home. The presence of inattentive Higher Elites, coinciding with the elimination of Lower Elites, likely created a nearly empty campus. As the emperor shifted from Confucianism to Daoism and the leadership of the Directorate declined in quality and focus, prospects for the Directorate School only dimmed.

As noted above, as a teenager, Zhenzong was fond of the Confucian Classics, having once shared his joy in learning with Xing Bing. Nevertheless, as an adult, he

grew attracted to Daoism. Although he composed an essay in 1012 titled “A Commentary on Honoring Confucians” (*Chongru Shulun* 崇儒術論), which was later on inscribed on stone in the Directorate School,⁹⁷ this could not obscure the fact of the elder Zhenzong’s preference on Daoism to Confucianism. The humiliating treaty of *Shanyuan* (澶淵), concluded in 1005, was a critical factor: it required the Song to send annual tribute to the Liao, which no longer assumed a subordinate status to the Song.⁹⁸ Zhenzong needed to draw on supernatural powers to buttress his position as the Son of Heaven. And Daoism seemed more malleable than Confucianism in this regard. Another possible explanation is a change in the emperor associated with age. After reigning for more than a decade, Zhenzong might have grown bored as his passion for good governance faded. Therefore, he was easily swayed by Chief Councillor Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (962-1025) to shun Confucian pragmatism and embrace Daoist fantasy.

The most prominent sign of Zhenzong’s growing favor for Daoism was the discovery of a succession of “Heavenly Texts” (*Tian Shu* 天書) beginning in 1008, which historians viewed as an artificial omen to legitimize his rule. Besides, from 1008 onwards, Zhenzong continuously ordered the cataloguing and compilation of the imperial collection of Daoist writing, while patronizing monasteries, shrines, and temples; he even adopted a powerful Daoist divinity as imperial ancestor.⁹⁹ The studies of Zhenzong were also influenced by Daoist thought. In the past, he was fond of Confucian Classics. By the middle of the *Jing De* (景德) era (1004-1007), however, he discussed the Daoist text *Dao De Jing* (道德經) with Directorate Lecturer Cui

⁹⁷ SS, *Juan* 8, pp.152.

⁹⁸ Cheng Guangyu, “Shan Yuan Zhi Meng Yu Tian Shu” 澶淵之盟與天書, in *Da Lu Za Zhi Shi Xue Cong Shu ; Di 2 Ji, Di 2 Ce* (Taipei: Da lu za zhi she, 1967), pp.119-135.

⁹⁹ A summary and the rationale behind Zhenzong’s favour of Daoism was briefly discussed in Suzanne E. Cahill, “Taoism at the Sung Court: The Heavenly Text Affair of 1008” *Bulletin of Sung and Yuan Studies*, Vol.16 (1980), pp.23-44. The Daoist inclined activities mentioned in the main texts could be found in pp.39-40 in the article.

Woquan.¹⁰⁰ Zhenzong's vanishing enthusiasm for Confucianism coincided with diminished favor for the Directorate of Education, the cradle of Confucian teaching.

Another reason for the stagnation at the Directorate School was the poor leadership. Even though a group of prominent and erudite scholars served as lecturers in the Directorate School, including the Cui brothers, Sun Shi and Feng Yuan, the Directorship in the early Song had seldom been filled up by someone both erudite and virtuous. The first Director Cui Song, despite impressing Taizu with his extensive knowledge, was rather self-interested and too aggressive about enriching his cronies, which led to demotion.¹⁰¹ Kong Wei, the Director in the Taizong era, was not favoured by the literati class because he was the self-promoting sort. Nor was he a virtuous scholar, as rumors abounded of embezzling public funds to print books, funds represented as private savings.¹⁰² Another Director Xing Bing, a crony of Zhenzong who had served in the Directorate for more than thirty years, was held in less regard by the literati class. He fawned on Wang Qinruo, an evil minister in the eyes of later historians and Confucian scholars. On one occasion, when Wang Qinruo was assigned as examiner for the civil service examination, he was accused of accepting bribes from a candidate Ren Yi 任懿, a Directorate School student. The case was reported to Zhenzong, who assigned Xing Bing and other officials to the investigation. Despite evidence of Wang's guilt, Xing Bing had the charge of bribery leveled against examiner Hong Zhan 洪湛 (963-1003) instead, an innocent man, which seemed an injustice.¹⁰³ Such unjust treatment of an upright scholar surely ruined the image of Xing Bing and caused colleagues in the metropolitan school to despise him. It is noteworthy that a university student, Guo Sheng 郭盛, refused to cite the exegesis of

¹⁰⁰ *SHY, Li*, 16/3.

¹⁰¹ *SS, Juan* 431, pp.12816.

¹⁰² *DDSL, Juan* 113, pp.978; *SS, Juan* 431, pp.12812.

¹⁰³ Details of this case of injustice could be found in the biographies of Wang Qinruo and Hong Zhan in the *Song Shi*. See *SS, Juan* 283, pp.9559 and *Juan* 441, pp.13057.

Xing Bing on the Nine Classics examination because of his collaboration with Wang Qinruo.¹⁰⁴ In another occasion, Xing Bing proposed returning the profit from the Directorate's book-publishing enterprises to the Financial Commission. Relinquishing such sizable profit was surely resented by colleagues at the Directorate.¹⁰⁵ Despite such flaws of character, Kong Wei and Xing Bing were sufficiently knowledgeable in the Confucian Classics as to deeply impress the emperors and win appointment to the top post of the Education Bureau.

But after the passing of the last cohort of Confucian scholars born before the Song dynasty, among them Xing Bing and the Cui brothers, a new generation of scholars filled the teaching posts. And the veteran Classical expert Sun Shi, having served as Directorate Lecturer for nearly two decades, became an ideal candidate to lead the Education Bureau. He had indeed been appointed as supervisor of the Directorate for a short period around 1013. But Zhenzong continued his indulgence in Daoism and other supernatural matters, despite Sun Shi's repeated protests, caused a disappointed Sun to request assignment to regional positions.¹⁰⁶ Partly because of Sun's sternness and agitation, Zhenzong became skeptical about appointing other Classical experts. The delay in appointing the young and talented Classical scholar Feng Yuan offers clear evidence of such reticence, a matter to be discussed below.

Imperial disillusionment with Confucian experts notwithstanding, the appointment of the School's Director near the end of Zhenzong's reign proved even harder to comprehend. In 1021, Zhenzong ultimately approved a request from the Financial Commissioner Li Shiheng 李士衡 (959-1032) that his son, Li Bidan 李丕

¹⁰⁴ Ding Chuanjing, *Song Ren Yi Shi Hui Bian*, Juan 6, pp.219.

¹⁰⁵ *XCB*, Juan 60, pp.1333.

¹⁰⁶ Sun Shi was assigned to be the prefect of Mizhou around 1013-1015, and then took up another prefectural duties at Heyang and Yanzhou around 1018-1022. See *SS*, Juan 431, pp.12805; *XCB*, Juan 81, pp.1856 and Juan 92, pp.2128.

旦 (1004-1052), be allowed to supervise affairs at the Directorate School.¹⁰⁷ Li Bidan was only 17 years old at the time! How could a teenager possibly lead a School where most of the staff and some students were older than him? Another shocking appointment involved Wang Congyi's 王從益 as head of the Education Bureau. According to historical records, Wang Congyi received the "Advanced Scholar" degree as a posthumous honour, inferring that he had never passed the civil service examinations in life. Without the expected academic credentials, his appointment to the top post most likely came through the protection privilege of his father, the notorious Chief Councillor Wang Qinruo.¹⁰⁸ This ridiculous situation is summarized as follows:

In the past, the Directorate School was led by officials close to the emperor or prominent Confucian scholars. But recently, aristocratic youths with junior qualifications, who merely have experience equivalent to junior financial administrators, have landed the job.¹⁰⁹
國子監舊制皆用近臣及宿儒典領，近歲頗任貴游子弟之初仕者，與管庫資序略均。

Developments of the Directorate School in early Renzong reign

Song Renzong acceded the throne in 1022 after the death of his father Zhenzong. Since Renzong was still a teenager, Empress Dowager Liu (969-1033), the empress of Zhenzong who adopted Renzong as her son, acted as regent.¹¹⁰ Only after 11 years when the Dowager Empress died in 1033 did Renzong resume his personal

¹⁰⁷ SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/2; XCB, *Juan* 97, pp.2247. See also Wang Gui, "Li Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 李君墓誌銘, in QSW, Vol.53, pp.228.

¹⁰⁸ XCB, *Juan* 97, pp.2250.

¹⁰⁹ XCB, *Juan* 99, pp.2304.

¹¹⁰ For English scholarships relating to the regency of Empress Dowager Liu, see John W. Chaffee, "The Rise and Regency of Empress Liu (969-1033)", *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, Vol.31 (2001), pp.1-25; Michael C. McGrath, "The Reigns of Jen-tsung (1022-1063) and Ying-tsung (1063-1067)", in *CHC*, Vol.5 Part 1, pp.279-289. For studies in Chinese, see Liu Jingzhen 劉靜貞, "Cong Huang Hou Gan Zheng Dao Tai Hou She Zheng - Bei Song Zhenzong Zhi Ji Nü Zhu Zheng Zhi Quan Li Shi Tan" 從皇后干政到太后攝政——北宋真宗之際女主政治權力試探, in Guo Ji Song Shi Yan Tao Hui Bi Shu Chu Bian Ji 國際宋史研討會秘書處編輯, *Guo Ji Song Shi Yan Jiu Tao Lun Hui Lun Wen Ji* 國際宋史研究討論會論文集 (Taipei: Chinese Culture University, 1988), pp.579-606.

rule. As a remedy to the problematic appointment of Supervisors to the Directorate of Education in the late Zhenzong era, two morally virtuous and academically brilliant scholars, Sun Shi and Feng Yuan, were assigned as co-supervisors of the Directorate of Education.¹¹¹ Under their supervision, the Directorate School continued to blossom in the first two decades of Renzong's reign, where the gestural support of the emperor as well as the appointment of various talented young scholars as lecturers should be well acknowledged. Just one year after his enthronement, the teenage Renzong visited the Directorate of Education in 1024/8, paying tribute to Confucius and attending a lecture on the *Analects*.¹¹² After the emperor's visit, the morale of teaching officials at the metropolitan schools was motivated, laying the foundation for Song educational development in later years, as Su Song described:

Originally the teaching officials were idled and lay on the mats, and scholars did not follow their master. The emperor then visited the Directorate School, meeting instructors and students with respect. Since then schools education flourished.¹¹³ 始時儒宮倚席，士不宗師，乃臨幸太學，禮見經員，繇是庠序之教興。

Apart from the emperor's gestural support, several imperial edicts were issued between 1026 and 1032, requesting the nomination of deserving candidates to fill vacant teaching posts at the Directorate School.¹¹⁴ This task was entrusted to Sun Shi, Feng Yuan, as well as Circuit Intendant. Major selection criteria included a thorough command of the Classics and adeptness at lecturing. Interestingly, literary ability was not taken into account in the selection and appointment exercise at this point. From the selection criteria for Directorate Lecturers, the prioritizing of the Confucian Classics over training in poetry and rhapsody made sense for an institution

¹¹¹ Song Qi, "Sun Bu Ye Xing Zhuang" 孫僕射行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.25, pp.62. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 99, pp.2304 and *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/2.

¹¹² *XCB*, *Juan* 102, pp.2366.

¹¹³ Su Song 蘇頌, "Ren Zong Huang Di Shi Ce Wen" 仁宗皇帝諡冊文, in *SWGJWJ*, *Juan* 15, pp. 203-204.

¹¹⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 104, pp.2414.

historically inclined toward the classics.

Deserving candidates for the lectureship came to be chosen from the pool of court and capital officials, excluding men with records of demerit.¹¹⁵ Later on, the pool of eligible candidates was further enlarged to include candidates from “Various Subjects” who had passed three or more Departmental examinations on the Classics and possessed the afore-mentioned personal qualities; their names went to the Directorate for consideration.¹¹⁶ As a result, a number of young talents such as Jia Changchao 賈昌朝 (998-1065), Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061), Wang Zhu 王洙 (997-1057) and Guo Zhen 郭稹 (c.a.1000-c.a.1040)...*et cetera* received appointment. Most of these scholars, holders of the Advanced Scholar degree, could also boast illustrious careers and/or high academic achievements of public record. We can fully appreciate how the repute and vision of Supervisors Sun Shi and Feng Yuan contributed to the elevation of these young and talented scholars as lecturers of the Directorate School. In addition to recruiting teachers of the highest quality, the facilities and environment at the Directorate School also improved. In 1031, the court ordered the renovations of the Directorate. Part of the House Honoring the Talented (*Li Xian Zhai* 禮賢宅) was converted to the Directorate to enlarge classrooms. In 1039, the court approved the recommendation of Directorate Supervisor Zheng Jian that a lecture hall and a dressing room be built on Directorate School grounds.¹¹⁷ We

¹¹⁵ Two imperial edicts were issued in 1026 and one was in 1032, respectively “requesting the assistants of the Circuit Intendants to record down and submit the names of those capital and court officials who understood the way of the classics and advanced in lecturing” 詔諸路轉運司所部幕職、令錄京朝官有通經術、長於講說者，以名聞 “asking the Supervisors of the Directorate Sun Shi and Feng Yuan to nominate three to five capital and court officials who were undertaking commission outside the capital, familiar with the meaning of the classics, good at lecturing and without criminal records” 詔判監孫奭、馮元於外任京朝官中同奏舉三、五人，深明經義，長於講說、曆任無(人己)[入己]贓罪者，具名(己)[以]聞。 and “ordering the Circuit Intendants to nominate and name those who had a thorough understanding on the meaning of the Classics to be Lecturer at the Directorate School.” 詔諸路轉運使舉通明經義可為國子監講官者，以名聞 See *XCB, Juan* 104, pp.2414, *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/3b, and *XCB, Juan* 111, pp.2585 respectively. See also *SS, Juan* 9, pp.182. and *SS, Juan* 10, pp.194.

¹¹⁶ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/3b.

¹¹⁷ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/3a-b.

may deduce from this that the learning environment at the Directorate School gradually improved in the 1030s.

The Directorate of Education's nomination quota was also increased in Sun Shi and Feng Yuan's tenure. In 1023/10, the court approved 20 additional quotas for the Directorate of Education.¹¹⁸ The nomination quota increased to 50 by 1029 and 70 by 1041.¹¹⁹ The new quota allowed the Directorate of Education to attract candidates from all over the country, including those peripheral areas such as Sichuan.¹²⁰ Some originally ineligible candidates for admission to the Directorate School even employed fake identities to gain admission – a sign of the school's new stature. However, owing to the examination-oriented mindset of students, the Directorate School was merely perceived as a shortcut to success, rather than a place of learning. The experience of Ouyang Xiu is typical. Ouyang Xiu's father Ouyang Guan 歐陽觀 (952-1010) was a Staff supervisor in an encampment prefecture (Jun Shi Pan Guan 軍事判官) at Taizhou,¹²¹ an official position within the executory rank, when he died in 1010.¹²² Despite living in poverty, Ouyang Xiu's mother still cared for his son's education. Since the credential of Ouyang Guan could not guarantee Ouyang Xiu's admissions to the Directorate School, a school for youths of capital and court officials, Ouyang Xiu

¹¹⁸ XCB, *Juan*.101, pp.2339.

¹¹⁹ XCB, *Juan* 108, pp.2521 and *Juan* 133, pp.3165.

¹²⁰ One of the prominent students from Sichuan is Fan Zhen 范鎮 (1008-1088), who was ranked first in both Directorate and Departmental examinations and later earned the Advanced Scholar degree in 1038. He later became Directorate Lecturer and Hanlin Academician. For his biography, see Sima Guang, "Fan Jing Ren Zhuan" 范景仁傳, in *QSW*, Vol.56, pp.249-251. After Fan Zhen, the Fan family continued to prosper in the Northern and Southern Song. For studies relating to the Fan family during the Song dynasty, see Wang Deyi 王德毅, "Song Dai De Cheng Du Fan Shi Ji Qi Shi Xi" 宋代的成都范氏及其世系, in Tian Yuqing 田餘慶 *bian*, *Qing Zhu Deng Guangming Jiao Shou Jiu Shi Hua Dan Lun Wen Ji* 慶祝鄧廣銘教授九十華誕論文集 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiao yu chu ban she, 1997), pp.280-289 and Hu Zhaoxi 胡昭曦, "Song Dai Shi Xian Yi Ru De Cheng Du Fan Shi Jia Zu" 宋代「世顯以儒」的成都范氏家族, in Hu Zhaoxi *zhu*, *Hu Zhaoxi Song Shi Lun Ji* 胡昭曦宋史論集 (Chongqing: Xi Nan Shi Fan Da Xue Chu Ban She, 1998), pp.286-319.

¹²¹ Han Qi, "Mu Zhi Ming Bing Xu" 墓誌銘〈並序〉, in Ouyang Xiu *zhuan*, Li Yi'an 李逸安 *dian xiao*, *Ou Yang Xiu Quan Ji (OYXQJ)* 歐陽修全集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2001), *Fu Lu Juan* 3 附錄卷三, pp.2704.

¹²² For a discussion on the rank of the post "Staff supervisor in an encampment prefecture", see Gong Yanming, *Song Dai Guan Zhi Ci Dian*, pp.544.

was tutored by his mother in his teenage. He continued to study diligently, preparing for the civil service examinations. After his first failed attempt in the examination in 1027, Ouyang Xiu managed to register at the School of Literature at the Directorate School in 1029 to prepare for the next examination. He succeeded at the Directorate examination later the year, and took the departmental examination in early 1030, where he won first place. Months later, he proceeded to pass the palace examination with distinction to earn the Advanced Scholar degree.¹²³ Thus, educational institutions were often exploited by socially marginal men to circumvent competitive quotas at the departmental level of the civil service examinations.

Apathy toward learning

Notwithstanding gradual improvements in the learning environment at the Directorate School in the 1030's,¹²⁴ apathy toward learning persisted. The erudite Wang Zhu, a former Directorate Lecturer, had vividly depicted the situation:

When the examination schedule was announced, youths from families of officials were allowed to submit their family particulars to the Directorate of Education. Upon evaluating their literacy, the Directorate would issue certificates and admit more than a thousand students to the three schools: the School of Literature, the National School, and the School of Law. These students would then immediately participate in the upcoming autumn examination, where they had arranged Court or Capital officials to serve as guarantors before competing for entry to the Departmental examination. When the examination was over, students all scattered and teachers had nothing to do except recline in their chairs. As such, the school became merely a venue for accommodating out-of-town candidates without guidelines for teaching its youths. Students who regularly attended lectures did not exceed 10 to 20.¹²⁵ 國子監每科場詔下，許品官子弟

¹²³ Han Qi, "Mu Zhi Ming Bing Xu", in *OYXQJ, Fu Lu Juan* 3, pp.2704. See also Ouyang Xiu, "Xie Guo Xue Jie Yuan Qi" 謝國學解元啟, in *OYXQJ, Juan* 95, pp.1427-1429; Hu Ke 胡柯 bian, "Ouyang Xiu Nian Pu" 歐陽修年譜, in *OYXQJ*, pp.2597; and Shao Bowen 邵伯溫 (1057-1134) zhuan, *Shao Shi Wen Jian Lu* 邵氏聞見錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1983), *Juan* 8, pp.80-81.

¹²⁴ See *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/3b.

¹²⁵ *SHY, Chongru*, 1/29a. Similar entries appear in *WXTK, Juan* 42, pp.395, *YH, Juan* 112, 31a, and *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3659.

投保官家狀，量試藝業，給牒充廣文、太學、律學三館學生。多或至千餘人，即隨秋試，召保取解。及科場罷日，則生徒散歸，講官倚席。若此，但為遊士寄應之所，殊無國子肄習之法。居常講筵，無一二十人聽讀者。

The above passage confirms that the number of students at the Directorate School followed a cyclical pattern that closely parallels the examination schedule. In the year of examination, the Directorate School admitted more than a thousand “students” destined to take the Directorate examination without bothering to study at the Directorate School. On non-examination years, only a handful of students attended classes. As a result, the Directorate Lecturers “nothing to do except recline in chairs”, like Wang Zhu in the 1030’s. Similar feelings were also expressed by Song Qi, who served as Lecturer from 1026 to 1032: several of his poems allude to the idle life of Directorate Lecturers and the stunning silence of the School campus.¹²⁶

In fact, this situation had persisted for decades and the school’s poor learning environment went unchanged. Irrespective of the leadership of the Directorate, whether under the experienced Sun Shi and Feng Yuan, or the young and idealistic Fan Zhongyan, Song Xiang and Ye Qingchen 葉清臣 (1000-1049), and regardless of the repute of younger lecturers like Jia Changchao, Wang Zhu, Guo Zhen and Song Qi. Various remedies were proposed. Further to an earlier stipulation in 1009,¹²⁷ Zhang Fangping 張方平 (1007-1091) and Yin Shu 尹洙 (1001-1047) asserted that the Higher Elites who were eligible to enjoy protection privilege be required to study at

¹²⁶ One of these poems titled “Feeling Ashamed Because Students Seldom Come and No Lectures in Months” (Xue She Zhu Sheng Han Zhi, Huo Lei Xun Yi Ji Bu Jiang, Gui Er Cheng Yong 學舍諸生罕至或累旬倚席不講愧而成詠). As explicitly spelt out in the title of the poem, Song Qi, who was likely serving as a Directorate Lecturer at the time of composition, felt ashamed, since students of the Directorate School seldom attended classes and he had sit in the classroom without giving a lecture for several days. He uses elements such as old *wutong* trees, empty halls, and quite courtyards to depict a dull life of Directorate Lecturer. See Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.62. For the poem, see Beijing da xue gu wen xian yan jiu suo 北京大學古文獻研究所 bian; Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮 [et al.] zhu bian, *Quan Song Shi (QSS) 全宋詩* (Beijing: Beijing da xue chu ban she, 1991-1998), Vol.4, pp2448.

¹²⁷ SHY, *Chongru*, 1/29

the Directorate School and pass through an examination before receiving appointment to government offices.¹²⁸ Wang Zhu even proposed an institutional change, which required students at the Directorate School to attend lectures for a minimum of 500 days before sitting on the Directorate examination. The proposed regulations that governed student attendance and participation in the Directorate examination were as follows:

For those who intend to register for the Directorate examination, after the pronouncement of the examination schedule and before they submit the certificates listing out their family background for registration, they shall be required to attend classes in the Directorate School for at least 500 days. The respective teachers in the Directorate would be requested to make reference to the attendance book to ascertain their attendance. In accordance with the regulations, they have to ask the capital or court officials to be their guarantor so as to register for the Directorate examination. Three candidates would be recommended by the Directorate to take the Departmental examination among every ten candidates. For those who wanted to participate in the Directorate examination but yet to be a registered student, they could apply for admissions to the Directorate School at any time throughout the year. Whenever ten to twenty applications have been received, the applicants could then be tested in an admission examination. Those successful candidates would be permitted to sit in the classes in the Directorate School, where their names would be recorded by the School registry. Students at the Directorate School had to sign the attendance list themselves in front of their own teachers for daily classes. Should the students need to apply for personal or sick leave, they have to seek the permission of the Supervisor of the Directorate by submitting a statement to formally apply for leave of absence. Upon their return, they have to mark the number of days that they have taken leave on the attendance list. If they were absent from classes for more than a year but did not apply for leave beforehand, they would be deregistered from the list of students.¹²⁹ 欲望自今應國子監，每遇科場敕下，授納取解家狀日已前，須實曾附本監聽學滿五百日者，許投狀。令本授業學官取文簿勘會詣實，依例召京朝官委保，方得取應。每十人之中與解三人。其未係監生欲求試補者，亦不限時月。每有一二十人投狀，即逐旋量試藝業收補，只令在監聽學，簿管姓召。仍每日講筵，應係聽讀生徒，並於本

¹²⁸ Zhang Fangping 張方平, "Fan Zi Ren Zi Di Di Ming Guo Zi Jian Li Ge Shi Ye Bu Yong Lun" 凡資任子弟鑒名國子監立格試業補用論, in Zhang Fangping zhuan; Zheng Han 鄭涵 dian jiao, *Zhang Fang Ping Ji (ZFPJ)* 張方平集 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou gu ji chu ban she, 2000), *Juan* 8, pp.109-111. This also appears in *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 114/7b-8a, pp.1508-1509, which indicated that it was submitted to Renzong. See also Yin Shu 尹洙, "Dun Xue" 敦學, in *QSW*, Vol.28, pp.15.

¹²⁹ *SHY*, *Chongru*, 1/29a. See also *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.395 and *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3659.

監授業官前親書到曆。如遇私故出入，或疾告歸寧，並於判監官處具狀乞假。候迴日，於名簿開記請假日數。若滿一周年已上不來參假者，除落名籍。

The Directorate of Education was then ordered to discuss the proposal of Wang Zhu. After deliberation, the details were worked out to facilitate the implementation of the rule of compulsory attendance:

Heretofore, students newly admitted to the Directorate School who wish to participate in the Directorate examination should be required to attend at least 500 days of classes. Only 100 days of attendance is required for those who passed the Directorate examination but failing the subsequent Departmental examination. A nomination quota of three for every ten candidates should be assigned to the Directorate. Students attending daily classes must all sign the attendance book in person. Should absent students ask their fellow schoolmates to sign the attendance book on their behalf, both parties should be expelled and prohibited from taking the next three rounds of civil service examinations. Moreover, teachers who countenance misdeeds of the sort should be charged with violating school regulations. Students who reside at the Directorate School should compete among themselves based on literary skills to win further advancement. From now on, students should be tested twice per month, with two different teachers setting the examination questions. Students should then be ranked based on evaluation results.¹³⁰ 自今去經試補學生，並依起請，聽讀滿五百日，方許取解。已得國學文解，省試下者，止聽讀一百日，許再請解。並十人與解三人。所有逐日聽讀，親書到曆，如有請假，託人代書，其不到及代書人，實殿三舉，仍落名籍。學官故縱者，科違制之罪。...學徒羣居，宜較文藝，以激進修。自今後每月兩次輪差學官兩員出題目，量加考試，第其優劣。

The emperor endorsed the proposal of the Directorate of Education, and an imperial edict was issued in the intercalary ninth month of 1042 which stipulated the minimum attendance period for students at the Directorate School.¹³¹ After the implementation of the measure, the learning environment at the metropolitan school did improve, at least superficially in terms of the number of students attending

¹³⁰ SHY, *Chongru*, 1/29a-30a. See also WXTK, *Juan* 42, pp.395.

¹³¹ XCB, *Juan* 137, pp.3303.

lectures.¹³² Such minimum attendance requirements also provided an opportunity for the staff at the Directorate School to better understand the daily behavior and conduct of students, an important criterion for identifying genuine talent in the view of most scholar-officials. Partly owing to the positive effect of the requirement on the metropolitan school, together with the support of some reformers, the court extended similar requirements to local prefectural and county schools in 1044/3.¹³³ But the situation did not last long. In 1044/11, the attendance requirements at the metropolitan and local schools were abolished, as we will see below.

Meeting commoners' demand - independence of the Imperial University

Apart from deliberating minimum attendance requirements for students at the Directorate School, the Directorate of Education also discussed the educational prospects for students from humble backgrounds. As noted above, the Directorate School and examination in principle did not admit students whose father and grandfather were officials below the eighth rank; and men of non-official background were excluded altogether. Nonetheless, occasional exemptions had been granted to students from less prominent families in 975 under Taizu and in 1005 under Zhenzong -- ad hoc measures that did not last long. As a result, for the first 80 years since the founding of the Song dynasty, only the scions of high officials could take advantage of the Directorate School and the generous nomination quotas for the Directorate examination. Yet due to the perception of office as the key to career success and

¹³² Tian Guang, *Ru Lin Gong Yi*, Juan 1, in *QSBJ*, Ser.1 Vol.5, pp.96.

¹³³ The extension of such attendance requirement to those candidates taking the prefectural examination was initiated by a group of officials, including Song Qi, in 1044/3. See *SHY*, *Xuanju*, 3/24b-25a. An imperial order was then issued, stipulating that those candidates who were going to take the prefectural examination were required to attend the prefectural school for at least 300 days. For those who have passed the prefectural examination before, they have to attend a minimum of a hundred days. Those candidates who need to take care of their elderly relatives could be exempted and could remain at home to study, provided that they have to find some guarantors. See also *XCB*, Juan 147, pp. 2564 for the imperial decree, which was translated in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.235. We understand from the *XCB* that such requirement was still in force in 1044/5. See *XCB*, Juan 149, pp.3613.

personal fulfillment, commoners were keen to take part in the civil service examinations.¹³⁴ Some commoners even risked exploiting an institutional flaw in the educational system for the sake of enhancing their chances of success in the civil service examination. This was acknowledged by the Directorate of Education in its deliberation in 1043:

Whenever the civil service examinations is approaching, many ineligible candidates use fake identities to register for the Directorate examination, where the Directorate staff could hardly distinguish [the licit from the illicit]. Cases of complaints and litigation were incurred as a result.¹³⁵ 每遇科場，多有冒稱品官子孫，難以詳別，致容假妄，或興訟訴。

The aspirations of the masses for examination success caught the attention of the Song Court. In 1041, on the recommendation of the Supervisor of the Directorate, Liang Shi 梁適 (1001-1070), the requirement for guarantors had been relaxed for candidates registering for the Directorate examination; this served as a kind of preferential treatment for commoners living far away from the capital.¹³⁶ A year later, conceding to the aspirations of the Lower Elites and commoners, the Directorate of Education requested to establish the School of the Four Gates, consistent with the Tang precedent.¹³⁷ To be precise, the School of the Four Gates had originated in the Northern Wei dynasty around 497 based on the ideal of erecting schools in the “four suburbs” surrounding the capital of the ancient Zhou dynasty.¹³⁸ The Tang dynasty inherited this tradition, admitting to the School of the Four Gates students from lower ranking official families as well as commoners.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ This was explicitly spelt out in “Poem to urge study” 勸學詩, a piece suspected to be written by Emperor Zhenzong.

¹³⁵ *SHY, Chongru* 1/30. See also *WXTK, Juan* 42, pp.395.

¹³⁶ *XCB, Juan* 132, pp.3138.

¹³⁷ *SHY, Chongru* 1/30; *WXTK, Juan* 42, pp.395.

¹³⁸ Wei Shou 魏收 (506-572) *zhuan*, *Wei Shu* 魏書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974), *Juan* 55, pp.1222.

¹³⁹ Ouyang Xiu, *Song Qi zhuan*, *Xin Tang Shu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1975), *Juan* 44, pp.1159.

The Song Court formally established the School of the Four Gates in 1043/2 as a school independent from the elitist Directorate School.¹⁴⁰ The school admitted scions of officials ranked below the eighth rank along with men from commoner family backgrounds. In the deliberations of the Directorate of Education, we understand that this measure “not only aimed at rectifying the dishonest practices of the candidates, while promoting expansive state policies to nurture talent”¹⁴¹ 不唯漸革偷薄，亦以示國家育材之廣也。The primary target of this new school was students who frequently attended classes but were ineligible for admission to the Directorate School owing to their humble background. Under this new policy, socially marginal men could attend the School of the Four Gates after passing its annual admissions examination. The Directorate of Education was responsible for administering this matriculation examination, where candidates were locked in an examination hall for several days, with preference for candidates who excelled at literature and reasoning. Certificates to verify student identity, usually made of silk fabric and pasted to a roll, would then be issued to successful candidates.¹⁴² Those who failed in the admissions examination could still continue to attend classes at the School and take the subsequent admissions test. Only candidates who had failed on three occasions would be disqualified for further attempts.¹⁴³

This School of the Four Gates would pass into oblivion after the Imperial University was inaugurated in 1044,¹⁴⁴ the latter was a by-product of the Qingli reforms. By overstating the urgency of those recurrent problems,¹⁴⁵ noticeably a

¹⁴⁰ *SS, Juan 11*, pp.215.

¹⁴¹ *SHY, Chongru 1/30*.

¹⁴² *SHY, Chongru 1/30; SS, Juan 157*, pp.3659. A thorough discussion on the certificates for students in the Imperial University, see Zhu Ruixi 朱瑞熙, “Zai Tan Song Mu Chu Tu De Tai Xue Sheng Die” 再談宋墓出土的太學生牒, *Kao Gu 考古*, No.3 (1979), pp.278.

¹⁴³ *SHY, Chongru 1/30; XCB, Juan 139*, pp.3355; and *SS, Juan 157*, pp.3659.

¹⁴⁴ Chen Xuexun, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu. Song Yuan Fen Juan*, pp.253 and Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.63.

¹⁴⁵ A thorough discussion on the “contingency situation” causing the Qingli reform could be found in Fang Jian 方健, *Fan Zhongyan Ping Zhuan 范仲淹評傳* (Nanjing: Nan Jing Da Xue Chu Ban She,

contingent border situation,¹⁴⁶ rampant banditry,¹⁴⁷ as well as a corrupted bureaucracy,¹⁴⁸ the reformers' ploy stirred Emperor Renzong, who realized the necessity of change.¹⁴⁹ When the veteran Chief Councilor Lü Yijian 呂夷簡 (979-1044) had a stroke in 1043 and proved incapable of performing his duty, Emperor Renzong summoned the war hero Fan Zhongyan from the border to the court and entrusted the task to him. A few months later, Fan and his allies submitted the famous "Ten Points" memorial as a roadmap for reforms. The first four points articulated problems in official recruitment and promotion, where he suggested changes in the education and examination systems. The remaining six points run the gamut from agricultural development, to national defense, to relieve mandatory services for the masses, to law and order as well as to sharpening the emperor's tools of punishment and rewards.¹⁵⁰ We will take a deeper look at reforms of education and examination, which contributed to the formal establishment of the Imperial University.

2001). Li Yumin argued that the contingency situation portrayed by the reformists as well as later historians had been over-exaggerated, which does not conform to historical reality. See his "Fan Zhongyan Bian Fa Xin Lun" 范仲淹變法新論, in his *Song Shi Kao Lun* 宋史考論 (Beijing: Ke Xue Chu Ban She, 2008), pp.13-17.

¹⁴⁶ A detailed analysis of the relationship between Song and the Xi Xia, see Li Huarui 李華瑞 zhu, *Song Xia Guan Xi Shi* 宋夏關係史 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei ren min chu ban she, 1998) and Tsang Sui-lung, *Tuobian xibei: Bei Song zhonghouqi dui Xia zhanzheng yanjiu* 拓邊西北——北宋中後期對夏戰爭研究 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2006). English narratives in the war between the Song and the Xi Xia during the Renzong period can be found in Michael C. McGrath, "Frustrated Empires: The Song-Tangut Xia War of 1038-44," in Don J. Wyatt (ed.), *Battlefronts Real and Imagined: War, Border, and Identity in the Chinese Middle Period* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp.151-190 and Michael C. McGrath, "The Reigns of Jen-tsung (1022-1063) and Ying-tsung (1063-1067)", pp.300-316.

¹⁴⁷ For details, see Ouyang Xiu, "Lun Jiang Huai Guan Li Zha Zi" 論江淮官吏劄子, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 97, pp.1503; Ouyang Xiu, "Zai Lun Zhi Bing Yu Zei Zha Zi" 再論置兵禦賊劄子, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 100, pp.1539; and Ouyang Xiu, "Lun Dao Ze Shi Yi Zha Zi" 論盜賊事宜劄子, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 100, pp.1540. See also James T.C. Liu, *Ou Yang Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), pp.40.

¹⁴⁸ The bureaucracy suffered institutional and structural problems due to innumerable incapable and redundant officials and troops who lacked moral uprightness. The abundance of officials was best articulated in Song Qi's memorial, reiterating the fact that "the number of officials rose five times without an expanding territory" 州縣不廣於前，而官五倍於舊 See SS, Juan 284, pp.9594.

¹⁴⁹ Wu Chong 吳充, "Ouyang Xiu Xing Zhuang" 歐陽修行狀, in *OYXQJ*, Fu Lu 3, pp.2694.

¹⁵⁰ For full details, see XCB. A brief analysis of the Qingli reform in English could be found in James T.C. Liu, "An Early Sung Reformer", pp.105-131; Frederick W. Mote, *Imperial China 900-1800*, pp.124, 136-138; and Michael C. McGrath, "The Reigns of Jen-tsung (1022-1063) and Ying-tsung (1063-1067)", pp.316-327.

In the Preface to his memorial, Fan Zhongyan reiterated the state's indifference to education and the impractical curriculum behind the civil service examinations, which caused the current lack of talent. To ameliorate the situation, Fan reemphasized the importance of instructing students on the Classics. He then proposed that vacant teaching posts in the local schools be filled so that people could learn to behave properly. As a counterpart to the promotion of school education, the examination system, which had been overly affected by the literary vogue of flowery writing, should also be reformed for the sake of selecting talented and morally upright officials. The reformers believed that those who had a better understanding of the Confucian Classics, as reflected in policy essays and discussions in the examination, would have a higher potential to become morally upright officials. Thus the sequence and curricula of the examination for both the Advanced Scholar and "Various Subjects" degrees had to be changed. Accordingly, it was proposed that the standards for marking examination scripts be revised, where those Advanced Scholar degree candidates exceptional in policy essays and discussions should be ranked higher than those doing well in poetry and rhapsody.¹⁵¹

Apart from the classical knowledge and literary skills that could be examined by written and anonymous tests, Fan stressed the personal conduct of candidates. Yet the moral behavior of the candidates could hardly be verified under the existing examination arrangements. For the sake of ensuring the moral reputation of degree-holders, Fan suggested abolishing anonymity in the prefectural examinations, whereby the names of candidates on examination scripts was covered over. Initially measure adopted in the early Song, sought to uphold impartiality in the examination to avoid favoritism. But Fan celebrated the Ancient Zhou ideal of communal nomination

¹⁵¹ See *XCB*, *Juan* 143, pp. 3435-3437. For English translation of the texts, see Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, Appendix D, pp.286-289.

and believed that examiners should also take into account the opinion of the community as pertains to the character and behavior of candidates.¹⁵² In this regard, the local government should investigate the moral character and conduct of the candidates before recommending them to sit in the departmental examination.

Through the above reforms, Fan envisioned that classical learning and practical statecraft could be emphasized in schools and morally upright officials could be nurtured.¹⁵³ In turn, “the right people would be recruited for government service and the masses would be rewarded consequentially.”¹⁵⁴ 國家得人，百姓受賜 Echoing Fan Zhongyan’s proposal, another group of unnamed scholars also memorialized to the throne in 1043/10, reiterating the fact of the dynasty’s early disregard for educational development and recommending that the court to emphasize nurturing talent more than selecting talent:

Since antiquity the method of selecting scholars has been rooted in schools. Schools have prospered since the arrival of Great Peace [under our own dynasty]. But officials have yet to be appointed and regulations on teaching have yet to be set up, implying that little emphasis has been placed on the schools. Today the selection of officials is the outcome of a single day-long examination. How can this compare with nurturing scholars through schools everywhere?¹⁵⁵
慶曆三年十月十九日，臣僚上言：「自古取士之術，皆本學校。太平以來，學校興矣，未嘗設官典教，以重其任。今使士角科舉一日之長，豈如素養士於天下也？」

A few months later, Zhao Shimin 趙師民 even put forward a more radical educational reform proposal. Being a former Directorate Lecturer, Zhao commented that good and virtuous officials could hardly be selected by merely changing the

¹⁵² For the arguments between impartiality, fairness and justice of the civil service examinations system, see Thomas H.C. Lee, “Gong Zheng Ping Deng Yu Kai Fang”, pp.23-34.

¹⁵³ These are the three major characteristics of the Qingli educational reforms summarized by Yuan Zheng, see Yuan Zheng, “Bei Song De Jiao Yu He Zheng Zhi”, pp.269-270.

¹⁵⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 143, pp.3437.

¹⁵⁵ See *SHY*, *Chongru*, 2/4a. Translation was made with reference to John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.76.

examination syllabi. Instead the ancient spirit of communal nominations should be revived and prospective officials should be promoted through schools, where students could be better educated and their behaviour could be better observed.¹⁵⁶

A group of officials including Song Qi, Ouyang Xiu, Wang Gongzhen 王拱辰 (1012-1071), Zhang Fangping, Wang Zhu, Mei Zhi 梅摯 (994-1059), Zeng Gongliang 曾公亮 (999-1078), Sun Fu 孫甫 (998-1057) and Liu Shi 劉湜 (?-1058) summarized the key ideas in their deliberations. They then petitioned Renzong in 1044/3, reiterating the importance of a prolonged assessment of students' moral character at prefectural schools,¹⁵⁷ while denouncing the existing examination for stressing impractical matters such as literary skills and memorization of the Classics:¹⁵⁸

Nowadays teaching is not rooted in schools and scholars are not examined in villages, it is therefore impossible to investigate thoroughly the reality behind reputations. Examiners restrain candidates by proclaiming their philological shortcomings and students concentrate merely on recitation and memory, as a result human talent proved underutilized. This is the common knowledge among critics. We have accessed various opinions and selected those most beneficial today. Nothing is better than making local scholars educating local students in schools. Prefectures and counties could then identify student conduct and cultivate potential. Thus we offer rules for establishing schools, executing guarantees and recommending candidates.¹⁵⁹ 今教不本於學校，士不察於鄉里，則不能覈名實；有司束以聲病，學者專於記誦，則不足盡人材。此獻議者所共以為言也。謹參考眾說，擇其便於今者，莫若使士皆

¹⁵⁶ XCB, *Juan* 146, pp.3544-3548.

¹⁵⁷ This idea has further been elaborated in a discussion essay titled 'School' 學校 by Zhang Fangping, see ZFPJ, *Juan* 11, pp.140. In this essay, Zhang Fangping emphasized the importance of teaching and observation at local schools. He then suggested how teachers in local schools should be carefully nominated and selected, since their comments on the candidates attempting the civil service examinations should be made reference to in the official selection and recruitment process.

¹⁵⁸ See XCB, *Juan* 147, pp.3563.

¹⁵⁹ XCB, *Juan* 147, pp.3563 and SHY, *Xuanju*, 3/23b. See also Bi Yuan 畢沅 (1730-1797) bian zhu, "Biao dian Xu zi zhi tong jian xiao zu" 標點續資治通鑑小組 jiao dian, *Xu Zi Zhi Tong Jian* (XZZTJ) 續資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1957), *Juan* 46, pp.1112. The full text of this memorial could be found in SHY, *Xuanju*, 3/23-29. Translation is made with reference to John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning in Sung China : a social history of examinations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp.68.

土著而教之於學校，然後州縣察其履行，則學者修飭矣。故為設立學舍，保明舉送之法。

Renzong had finally been convinced by these scholar-officials to reform the education and examination systems. On the thirteenth day in 1044/3, the following imperial edict was issued:

Confucians who fully comprehend the patterns of heaven, earth and man, and have insight into the sources of order and chaos in past and present can be called erudite. However scholars could not freely express their opinion, because officials had limited their criticism to philological minutiae. So how the spirits of these extraordinarily talented scholars be lifted? Literati originally bear the pristine traits of pureness and plainness. However, without education and cultivation, without good behavior and moral integrity, they cannot distinguish themselves from miscellaneous sorts. So how will men of exemplary virtue and nimble behavior ever be seen? This is a major defect in the existing mechanism for selecting scholar-officials, something that scholars themselves have long known and criticized. 夫儒者通乎天地人之理而兼明古今治亂之源，可謂博矣。然學者不得騁其說，而有司務先聲病章句以牽拘之，則吾豪雋奇偉之士何以奮焉。士有純明朴茂之美，而無學養成之法，其飭身勵節者，使與不肖之人雜而並進，則夫懿德敏行之賢何以見焉。此取士之甚弊，而學者自以為患，議者屢以為言。

I am cautious in making reforms, and hence have invited officials for thorough discussion and ordered the secretariats and the councilors to deliberate and finalize matters. They all agreed that schools are the root of education, through which they could identify scholars of genuinely moral conduct. By examining firstly the policy essays and discussion questions, those who are strong in reasoning and logic could fully express their views; and by simplifying procedures, erudite talent can be discovered. For those who tested on the Classics, some new measures are added. Because most of the old practices were still in force, we must encourage retesting for those who had previously failed. All the complicated regulations and literary minutiae will be abolished. By highlighting rewards and punishments, hopefully all the people will be encouraged. Through these actions the treatment of scholars is multi-faceted, and the channels for finding talent will be expanded. When we encounter someone short on abilities, we cannot expect breadth. 朕慎於改更，比令詳酌，仍詔宰府加之參定，皆以謂本學校以教之，然後可求其行實。先策論則辦理者得盡其說，簡程式則閱博者可見其材。至於經術之家，稍增新制，兼行舊式，以勉中人。其煩法細文，一皆罷去。明其賞罰，俾各勸焉。如此則待士之意周，取人之道廣。夫遇人以(薄)[薄]者，不可責其厚。

With respect to your deeds as officials, I now inaugurate schools to promote kindness and reform assorted malpractices as a way to honor promising literati. To move in the direction of better education, these measures must be meticulous and exhaustive. Those responsible officials and parties should strictly instruct students and nominate those genuinely deserving candidates in order to satisfy my good intentions. Students who are thinking of advancing their virtue and sharpening their knowledge should not waste this opportunity. All these subjects and regulations can be permanently implemented and promulgated as appropriate by the Ministry of Rites's Examination Bureau.¹⁶⁰ 今朕建學興善，以尊子大夫之行，而更制革弊，以盡學者之材，其於教育之方，勤亦至矣。有司其務嚴訓導，精察舉以稱朕意。學者其思進德修業，而無失其時。凡所科條，可為永式。宜令禮部貢院頒下。」

Convinced that students could be better cultivated, observed, and evaluated during their long stays at schools,¹⁶¹ it was ordered that schools be erected in all prefectures and counties. Circuit Intendants were designated with the task of recruiting qualified teachers for three-year terms. Moreover, the minimum attendance requirement current at the Directorate School was extended to other local schools, where students were required to study at least 300 days before proceeding to sit on the prefectural examinations.¹⁶² By prohibiting people with moral defects from entering the school, as well as by requiring “deportment warranties” from two graduates of the departmental examinations, it was hoped that all admittees would be morally upright.¹⁶³

In addition to moral uprightness, the ability of prospective officials to apply their classical knowledge in the political arena was also a major concern for reformers.

¹⁶⁰ SHY, *Xuanju* 3/29a-30. Similar version of the edict could also be found in XCB, *Juan* 147, pp.3563-3564.

¹⁶¹ John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.76; Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.235.

¹⁶² For the imperial edict ordering the countrywide establishment of schools, see *Song Da Zhao Ling Ji* 宋大詔令集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1962), *Juan* 157, “Jian Xue Zhao”建學詔, pp.590. This edict was promulgated in 1044 instead of 1045. See Sima Guang 司馬光 *zhuan*; Wang Yiling 王亦令 *dian jiao*, *Ji Gu Lu Dian Jiao Ben* 稽古錄點校本 (Beijing: Zhongguo you yi chu ban gong si, 1987), *Juan* 20, pp.739; SS, *Juan* 11, pp.217 and XZZTJ, *Juan* 46, pp.1112.

¹⁶³ SHY, *Chongru*, 2/4b .

To ensure the classical competence of successful candidates, the reformers consented to changing the sequence of questions in the “Advanced Scholar” degree examination as follows: 1) policy essays; 2) discussions; and 3) poetry and rhapsody. Ouyang Xiu and Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012-1067) even radically proposed to automatically disqualify candidates who performed poorly in the first part,¹⁶⁴ -- conventional practice in the early Song that had been suspended since the late 1030’s.¹⁶⁵ Despite the rejection of this second proposal, the adoption of the first implies that the Song Court had been convinced that policy essays and discussion questions should be weighted heavier than poetry and rhapsody. Hence preferences would be given to candidates who could apply their knowledge of the classics to the political realm rather than those who merely produced flawless literary works.¹⁶⁶ In fact, similar proposals for revising the evaluation criteria in the Advanced Scholar degree examination had been made as early as 1002, long before the Qingli reformers, by Zhang Zhibai 張知白 (961-1028),¹⁶⁷ a nominee for Directorate of Education supervisor in 1016 who became the Chief Councilor in the 1020’s.¹⁶⁸ Subsequent to Zhang’s proposal, emperor Zhenzong agreed that policy essays and discussion questions be included in the Advanced Scholar degree examination starting in 1008.¹⁶⁹ The importance of policy essay and discussion questions had occasionally won court sanctioning, as

¹⁶⁴ Ouyang Xiu, “Lun Geng Gai Gong Ju Shi Jian Zha Zi” 論更改貢舉事件劄子, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 104, pp.1590 and Cai Xiang, “Lun Gai Ke Chang Tiao Zhi Shu” 論改科場條制疏, in Cai Xiang 蔡襄 zhuan; Chen Qingyuan 陳慶元, Ou Mingjun 歐明俊, Chen Yiting 陳貽庭 jiao zhu, *Cai Xiang Quan Ji (CXQJ)* 蔡襄全集 (Fuzhou: Fujian ren min chu ban she, 1999), Juan 19, pp.447.

¹⁶⁵ We understand from an edict of 973 that candidates would be eliminated when they performed poorly in the early part of the examinations. See *SHY*, *Xuanju* 3/3. This practice continued until late 1030’s, after which the candidates would be evaluated based on their overall performance. See *WXTK*, Juan 31, pp.289.

¹⁶⁶ For details of the reform in the examination, see Ouyang Xiu, “Ban Gong Ju Tiao Li Zhi Chi” 頒貢舉條例制敕, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 79, pp. 1128.” See also *XCB*, Juan 147, pp.3565 and *XZZTJ*, Juan 46, pp.1112. A brief discussion on this could also be found in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.235-236 and John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.67.

¹⁶⁷ *XCB*, Juan 53, pp.1169.

¹⁶⁸ Zhang Zhibai requested to be the Supervisor of the Directorate in 1016. See *XCB*, Juan 86, pp.1982. He was appointed to be the Chief Councillor in early 1026. See *SS*, Juan 9, pp.181.

¹⁶⁹ *XCB*, Juan 68, pp.1522.

reflected in edicts of 1017, 1027, 1033 and 1037.¹⁷⁰ There was even an exceptional case in 1024 when a candidate in the Advanced Scholar degree examination was elevated to a higher rank due to an outstanding policy essay.¹⁷¹ Only in 1044, however, did policy essays and discussion questions formally outweigh poetry and rhapsody in the civil service examination.

As a counterpart to the countrywide promotion of education, increased court support for the metropolitan schools was also a predominant feature of educational reform in the Qingli era. In 1040, 50 hectares of agricultural fields were endowed by the Directorate of Education to generate income at the request of the Supervisor of the Directorate Ye Qingchen.¹⁷² We also understand from the above that an independent School of the Four Gates was erected in 1042 to satisfy the public demand for education. A year later in 1043/10, likely in response to the educational reform proposals of Fan Zhongyan, 22 hectares of farmland from the *Yu Qing Zhao Ying* Palace 玉清昭應宮 was granted to the Directorate.¹⁷³ Based on calculations by Thomas Lee, the yield from 72 hectares of farmland was probably adequate to support a hundred staff members and students at the Directorate School.¹⁷⁴

Partly because of an projected expansion of education in the metropolitan schools, further financial support was given to the Directorate of Education in 1044/2, representing the fields and residence of the *Shang Qing* Palace 上清宮.¹⁷⁵ One month after issuing the edict promulgating the establishment of local schools, the

¹⁷⁰ XCB, *Juan* 90, pp.2082; *Juan* 105, pp.2435; *Juan* 113, pp.2639 and *Juan* 120, pp.2826. Regarding the changing status of policy essay and discussion questions in Song civil service examinations as well as the formats of the answers, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書 zhu, *Song Dai Ke Ju Yu Wen Xue* 宋代科舉與文學 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2008), Ch.10 “Song Dai De Ke Ju Shi Wen: Ce Lun” 宋代的科舉時文：策論, pp.284-320.

¹⁷¹ XCB, *Juan* 102, pp.2354.

¹⁷² SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/3b; XCB, *Juan* 126, pp.2965; and SS, *Juan* 10, pp.206.

¹⁷³ XCB, *Juan* 144, pp.3479; SHY *Zhiguan*, 28/4a.

¹⁷⁴ See Thomas H.C. Lee, “Bei Song Guo Zi Jian Yu Tai Xue De Jing Fei”, pp.77-78.

¹⁷⁵ XCB, *Juan* 146, pp.3541.

court received memorials from Wang Gongzhen, Tien Kuang 田況 (1005-1063), Wang Zhu and Yu Jing 余靖 (1000-1064), men then supervising the Directorate of Education. Their petition in 1044/4 stated:

The lead in promoting virtue should come from the capital. The Imperial University under the Han dynasty had 240 dormitories and over 1,800 classrooms for a student population of 30,000. The Tang campus consisted of 1,200 classrooms. Now the means in selecting talent and nurturing scholars has thrived, but buildings in the Directorate of Education consist of only 200 partitioned sections. The institution was too tiny to accommodate students. It is therefore recommended that the Xi Qing Garden revert to the Imperial University, where lecture halls are built for imperial visits in the future. The Palace of Prince Lu should then be converted into the new Xi Qing Garden.¹⁷⁶ 首善當自京師，漢太學二百四十房、千八百餘室、生徒三萬人。唐學舍亦一千二百間。今取才養士之法盛矣，而國子監才二百楹，制度狹小，不足以容學者，請以錫慶院為太學，葺講殿，備乘輿臨幸，以潞王宮為錫慶院。

The emperor, pleased with this proposal, ordered that the Xi Qing Garden, situated near the Directorate of Education, revert to the Imperial University.¹⁷⁷ The original Xi Qing Garden was a reception office for foreign ambassadors. But recent military conflicts between the Song and its neighbors had reduced diplomatic visits and left the space underutilized, so the proposal met little resistance.¹⁷⁸ The new campus development project aimed to accommodate a total of 200 students, a great increase in comparison with 70 Directorate students in the early Song. These 200 students would register in the Inner Hall, where meal allowances and stipends were provided.¹⁷⁹ To support the students' living expenses, the court had allocated an additional 200 hectares of farmlands to the Imperial University.¹⁸⁰ Similar to students

¹⁷⁶ *XCB*, Juan 148, pp.3589. Similar quote also appear in *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.395, *SSQW*, Juan 8b, pp.388, *YH*, Juan 112, 31b-32a, and *SSJSBM*, Juan 38, pp.370 for similar quote.

¹⁷⁷ Sima Guang, *Ji Gu Lu Dian Jiao Ben*, Juan 20, pp.739.; *SS*, Juan 11, pp.217.

¹⁷⁸ See Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.9.

¹⁷⁹ *SHY*, *Chongru* 1/30; *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3660 and *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.395, all indicates that the Imperial University had a student population of 200. We also learn from *SSJSBM*, Juan 38, pp.370 that the Inner Hall of the Imperial University existed in the Qingli era, and from *SHY*, *Chongru* 1/30 that meals were provided to students at the Inner Hall.

¹⁸⁰ Zhao Bian, "Qi Ge Huan Tai Xue Tian Tu Fang Min Zhuang" 乞給還太學田土房繕狀, in *QSW*,

of the Directorate School, University students could now enjoy the privilege of exemption from the prefectural examination. Both students at the Directorate School and the Imperial University shared the nomination quota of the Directorate of Education in the civil service examination.

This newly established Imperial University, under the purview of the Directorate of Education, had a separate campus, revenue stream, and budget as well as faculty members independent from the Directorate School.¹⁸¹ Hence, the Directorate School restricted admission to youths from families of officials of the seventh rank and above, while the Imperial University targeted students from commoner families or lower-ranked official families. Historians generally agree that this newly independent Imperial University was designed to replace the School of the Four Gates and to satisfy the commoners' demand for education,¹⁸² being a sign of transition from aristocracy to meritocracy.

The differing student compositions at the two institutions infer a diverse set of practical functions for the Directorate School and the Imperial University. Following established practice since the dynasty's founding as illustrated above, the Directorate School provided instruction to youths of privilege. Among these Upper Elites, one ambitious group wanted to pass the civil service examinations in order to have better career prospects; while a second less ambitious group entered government through protection privilege without taking the standard examinations. Instruction for the former group of students therefore tended to be more examination-oriented, while instruction for the latter group should be more practical. However, the Directorate

Vol.41, pp.220.

¹⁸¹ Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.63.

¹⁸² See Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.63; Zhang Bangwei and Zhu Ruixi, "Lun Song Dai Guo Zi Xue Xiang Tai Xue Yan Bian", pp.222; Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.104; Chen Xuexun, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu. Song Yuan Fen Juan*, pp.253.

School before 1040, confined to classical training, could hardly satisfy the needs of both groups. A quiet school campus and high absenteeism were vivid signs of the failure of the Directorate School to serve such practical functions.

Unlike the Directorate School, the Imperial University turned to Lower Elites and commoners as recruits. Since they could not exploit protection privilege, they needed to sit on the civil service examinations to qualify for office.¹⁸³ But reformers wanted to do more than merely to prepare its students to take the examinations. The ultimate goal of students should be to apply their learning and classical knowledge to enhance governance; passing through the examinations was just a means to this end.

In order to attain the reformers' vision, students had to be well trained in practical matters, and the pedagogy adopted by Hu Yuan 胡瑗 (993-1059) at the Huzhou Prefectural School seems to offer an ideal model. This mode of teaching was highly unique: at a time when poetry and rhapsody were popular, Hu Yuan insisted on a more pragmatic mode of learning. Disillusioned with the existing recruitment mechanism, which had failed him personally, Hu Yuan adopted a curriculum at the Huzhou prefectural school that separates students into two classes, one on Classical Meaning (*Jingyi* 經義) and the other on Practical Matters (*Zhishi* 治事).¹⁸⁴ The former emphasized the essential meanings of the classics and admitted students pure in heart, forgiving in character and responsible in will. The second group usually consisted of specialists of practical approaches to current affairs, such as improving irrigation

¹⁸³ Theoretically all commoners were eligible to seek for admissions to the Imperial University. However we should not obscure the social reality of China in 11th century that only a tiny portion of the entire population was, in Benjamin Elman's term, "literate in Classical Chinese". Hence even though the Imperial University was opened to commoners, it "was limited to candidates already literate in Classical Chinese, and thus oriented only to the civil examinations and not reading, writing, or other more elementary learning tasks". See Benjamin A. Elman, "Review: Education in Sung China", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 111, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1991), pp.91.

¹⁸⁴ *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3659; *SSJSBM*, *Juan* 38, "Xue Xiao Ke Ju Zhi Ji" 學校科舉之際, pp.369. See Xu Hongxing 徐洪興, "Hu Yuan Lun" 胡瑗論, *Academic Journal of Zhongzhou* 中州學刊, No.5 (1988), pp.100.

networks or local policing.¹⁸⁵ The former group aimed to nurture future councilors and the latter intended to train executives, yet practical learning was central to both and a critical element in Hu Yuan's educational philosophy -- a philosophy widely acclaimed by later educators.¹⁸⁶ 800 years later, the educational reforms of the late Qing drew inspiration from the ideas of Hu Yuan.¹⁸⁷

Although the court ordered that the teaching methods of Hu Yuan be adopted at the Imperial University, the process by which this mandate was actualized is uncertain. It is therefore doubtful whether the Hu Yuan model was ever adopted at the Imperial University.¹⁸⁸ The sudden departure from court of Fan Zhongyan in 1044/6

¹⁸⁵ SYXA, *Juan* 1. pp.24.

¹⁸⁶ Sheng Kang 盛康 (1844 jin shi), *Huang Chao Jing Shi Wen Xu Bian* 皇朝經世文續編, *Juan* 2/22a, in *Jin Dai Zhong Guo Shi Liao Cong Kan* 近代中國史料叢刊 (Taipei: Wen hai chu ban she, 1972), Vol.831-850, pp.233.

¹⁸⁷ See Li Duanfan 李端分, "Qing Tui Guang Xue Xiao Zhe" 請推廣學校摺, in Mao Peizhi 毛佩之, *Bian Fa Zi Qiang Zou Yi Hui Bian* 變法自強奏議彙編, *Juan* 3/1b, in *Jin Dai Zhong Guo Shi Liao Cong Kan Xu Bian. Di 48 Ji* 近代中國史料叢刊續編. 第 48 輯 (Taipei: Wen hai chu ban she you xian gong si, 1977), pp.90.

¹⁸⁸ Wong Fu Wing (Wang Furong) 黃富榮 has given a detailed analysis on whether Hu Yuan's method of teaching had been adopted by the Imperial University in the Qingli era after comparing various accounts by Song people as well as contemporary historians. See Wong Fu Wing, "The thoughts of Hu Yuan (993-1059)" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Hong Kong, 1996), pp.30, footnote 82. According to Wong, the key evidence supporting the adoption of Hu Yuan's teaching methods at the Imperial University was the epitaph of Hu Yuan written by Ouyang Xiu: "the Song government requested to set up University regulations with reference to the pedagogy adopted by Hu Yuan in Huzhou, which is now promulgated as Orders." 有司請下湖州，取先生之法，為太學法，至今著為令。See Ouyang Xiu, "Hu Xian Sheng Mu Biao" 胡先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.25, pp.389. Later interpretations in the *WXTK* and the *SSJSBM* followed Ouyang Xiu's record. See *WXTK*, *Juan* 46, pp.432 and *SSJSBM*, *Juan* 38, "Xue Xiao Ke Ju Zhi Ji" 學校科舉之際, pp.370. However hints could hardly be found on how the teaching approach of Hu Yuan was institutionalized at the Imperial University in the Qingli era. A contemporary scholar Thomas Lee therefore believed that the court never attempted to adopt Hu Yuan's teaching method at the Imperial University. Thomas Lee further hypothesized a disagreement between Hu Yuan and Fan Zhongyan, arguing that the former was mild and practical while the latter was aggressive and idealistic, which explained why Hu had not been involved in the Qingli reform and consequentially Hu's teaching method was not adopted by the Imperial University. See Thomas H.C. Lee, "Song Dai Jiao Yu Yu Ke Ju De Ji Ge Wen Ti", pp.49-50. Nevertheless such hypothesis is a bit far-fetched. Should Fan Zhongyan dislike Hu Yuan, how come did he send his son to study under Hu? Doubts were clarified a bit when a Mainland scholar Yuan Zheng (Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.252-253.) made reference to the correspondences between the Southern Song scholars Zhu Xi and Xue Jixuan 薛季宣 (1134-1173), by then a local official at Huzhou. Zhu asked Xue for a copy of the documents submitted by the Huzhou government in the Qingli era in connection with the adoption of Hu Yuan's teaching method by the Imperial University. Xue explained that owing to a fire accident, these documents were burnt. But he mentioned in his reply that "those that were adopted in the Qingli era were current school regulations as well as construction plans for dormitories and learning facilities." 慶厯所取，則今學規與夫作院制器之法 See Xue Jixuan, "You Yu Zhu Bian Xiu Shu" 又與朱編修書, see *QSW*, Vol.257, pp.247. Another anecdote *Shang Xiang Lu* 上庠錄, written by a University student in the late Northern Song, even quoted a common saying that

likely undermined many reforms, it is believed.¹⁸⁹ As already stated, Fan Zhongyan and Hu Yuan were old associates. Fan invited Hu to teach in the Suzhou prefectural school and arranged for two sons to study under Hu in the mid 1030's. Fan had recommended Hu Yuan and Li Gou 李覲 (1009-1059) to be teachers at the Directorate School at the peak of the Qingli reforms.¹⁹⁰ In fact, Fan and Hu were equally dissatisfied with the existing civil service examinations system. Hu Yuan's emphasis on classical knowledge and its practical application seems to offer a prescription for the gravely flawed recruitment system. It is therefore reasonable for us to believe that the adoption of Hu Yuan's teaching method in the Imperial University was a proposal emanating from Fan. But owing to Fan's abrupt departure in the middle of the reform, his recommendation of Hu Yuan and Li Gou did not receive favorable response from the court. Without the guidance of the forerunner Hu Yuan, it is reasonable for us to believe that the Imperial University could hardly practice Huzhou's teaching. Without actualizing Hu Yuan's practical teaching methods, the Imperial University, similar to the Directorate School since the early Song,

the current five-level dormitory regulations imitated those adopted by Hu Yuan in Huzhou. See Hu Zi 胡仔, *Tiao Xi Yu Yin Cong Hua* 苕溪漁隱叢話 (Beijing: Ren min wen xue chu ban she, 1984), *Hou Ji* 後集, *Juan* 35, pp.271 quoting *Shang Xiang Lu*.

¹⁸⁹ See Yuan Zhen, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.252-253.

¹⁹⁰ Fan Zhongyan, "Zou Wei Jian Hu Yuan Li Gou Chong Xue Guan" 奏為薦胡瑗李覲充學官, in *FZYQJ*, *Juan* 20, pp.615. The text could also be found in the *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 132/9b, pp.1737, which recorded that this was submitted in the middle of the Qingli era. The full text of the recommendation of Hu Yuan is translated as follows: "Your subject noticed that those officials who demonstrated ultimate loyalty placed nomination of officials ahead of other agenda, while the ruler who displayed supreme virtue emphasized on nothing but recruitment of talent. At a time when the court was extremely unobstructed, how am I daring to hide? Your subject noticed an ex-military observer in Mizhou Hu Yuan, who concentrated on studying those buried classical texts and behaved righteously in accordance with rites. He was now teaching in the Huzhou prefectural school, where more than a hundred students gathered. Hu Yuan not only discussed with his students on the meaning of the classics and engaged in composing and editing poetry, but also instructed them on filial piety and fraternity so that they behaved according to proper rites. As a result, people in that region tended to do good and the neighbourhood was greatly admired. This could definitely help your majesty in promotion of teaching that was beneficial to a generation. I beg the kindness of your majesty to offer extra reward to Hu Yuan, to elevate him to the Imperial University so as to be an exemplar for teachers." 臣聞臣之至忠,莫先於舉士;君之盛德,莫大於求賢。泰通之朝,豈敢隱默!臣竊見前密州觀察推官胡瑗,志窮墳典,力行禮義。見在湖州郡學教授,聚徒百餘人,不惟講論經旨,著撰詞業,而常教以孝弟,習以禮法,人人嚮善,閭里歎伏。此實助陛下之聲教,為一代美事。伏望聖慈特加恩獎,升之太學,可為師法。 This recommendation should have been made around 1044/4 when the Imperial University was formally established.

remained a “crammer” school that barely prepared its students for the civil service examinations.

After losing the chance to teach at a metropolitan school, Hu Yuan continued to stay in Huzhou and actively engage in teaching for the remainder of the 1040's. The unique teaching methods associated with Huzhou had come to attract several hundred students, who in turn taught the meaning of the classics to students elsewhere. After this comprehensive teaching approach continued for several years, literati across the Southeast were fond of learning humaneness, righteousness, rites and music.¹⁹¹ Hu Yuan's effort ultimately caught the attention of the court, where he was summoned to the capital to supervise the Directorate of Education in the 1050's. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

General assessment of the metropolitan schools in early Song

To sum up, the Directorate School in the first 80 years of the Song was mainly an elitist institution restricted to the “national youths”. Although the school had occasionally opened up to students of humble background, such arrangements did not last long. One reason is the objection of some influential officials, who perceived the granting of the educational opportunity to Lower Elites and commoners as a threat to their own power and the career prospects of their own offspring. Ironically, these privileged youths did not necessarily value the educational opportunity which their parents had tried to safeguard. Those sufficiently talented and diligent preferred to study privately for the civil service examinations rather than attend classes at the metropolitan school, a slower course of action. Those less ambitious could just wait

¹⁹¹ Ouyang Xiu, “Hu Xian Sheng Mu Biao” 胡先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.25, pp.389. See also James T.C. Liu, *Ou Yang Hsiu*, pp.88-89.

for official appointment through the protection privilege afforded by their parents, a process that involved neither study at government schools nor the passing of stiff examinations. As a result, the campus of the School appeared almost empty, according to various scholar-officials, leaving historians an impression that the elitist educational institution “took no part in making education available to its subjects generally, at least in the first few decades.”¹⁹²

The mismatch between the examinations syllabi and the school curricula was also accountable for the underdevelopment of the Directorate School. As noted above, the “Advanced Scholar” degree became the most prestigious among other subjects in the civil service examinations since the Tang dynasty in view of a better career prospect of its holders. This situation continued in the Song, particularly under Taizong and Zhenzong who wished their subjects to glorify the stable and prosperous environment under their reigns through poetry and rhapsody.¹⁹³ Since scholars who excelled in these writings were usually “Advanced Scholar” degree holders and could easily catch the attention of the emperors, they could easily get promoted. Under an impression that the “Advance Scholar” degree holders would have a higher chance of promotion, more and more people were therefore coveted after this prestigious degree in the examinations.

The primary criterion for an “Advanced Scholar” degree holder was the ability in writing poetry and rhapsody, whereas knowledge on the Confucian Classics was merely secondary. Nevertheless, such skills in literary writing had yet to be covered in the curriculum of the Directorate School, which continued to train its students on classical knowledge. The academic profile of the Directorate Lecturers

¹⁹² Thomas H.C. Lee, “Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi”, pp.108.

¹⁹³ In 984, it was the first time that Taizong invited his officials to make poems and rhapsodies during their leisure in the garden. And this became a common practice between emperor and officials later on. See *XCB*, *Juan* 25, pp575-576. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.12-13.

under the reigns of the first three Song emperors was a clear evidence of this proposition, since most of them were prominent experts in the Confucian Classics but not literature. Even though a School of Literature under the Directorate School was set up with an aim to prepare its students for the “Advanced Scholar” degree examinations, its focus was likely to be on the less important part on the Classics instead of the primary part on poetry and rhapsody. A comparison between these national youths and those candidates who passed the prefectural examinations as depicted by Yin Shu was a good evidence to reflect on the mismatch between the examination syllabi and the curricula in the Directorate School:

Nowadays those University students who attended the classical lectures held by their professors, elaborated on various chapters and sentences of the Classics, as well as investigated thoroughly on the meaning and teaching of the Classics were all aiming for career. But when they compete with those candidates who were nominated by various prefectures, the meaning of the Classics that they learnt could hardly be applied. Their performances were poor than those who studied privately.¹⁹⁴ 今太學生徒，博士授經，發明章句，究極義訓，亦志於祿仕而已。及其與郡國所貢士並校其術，顧所得經義，訖不一施，反不若閭里誦習者...

As noted in this quote, students in the Directorate School in general performed poorer than other candidates in the examination. On the understanding that many of them could not pass through the first “thorny gate” to join the civil service, it is unlikely that they could make much contribution in the political arena later on.¹⁹⁵ But subsequent to the changes in the school and examination system since Renzong, the situation is going to change, as revealed in the following chapters.

¹⁹⁴ Yin Shu 尹洙, “Dun Xue” 敦學, in *QSW*, Vol.28, pp.15.

¹⁹⁵ One of the most noticeable early Song Directorate students was the famous military commander Ma Zhijie 馬知節 (955-1019), son of early Song military elites Ma Quanyi 馬全義 (924-961). For a detailed biographical study of Ma, see Ho Koon Wan, “Lun Song Chu Gong Chen Zi Di Ma Zhijie (955-1019)” 論宋初功臣子弟馬知節 (955-1019), in Ho Koon Wan zhu, *Bei Song Wu Jiang Yan Jiu* 北宋武將研究 (Xianggang: Zhonghua shu ju, 2003), pp.137-202, see particularly pp.149 for Ma’s experience at the Directorate School.

Countrywide erection of local schools not only promoted learning in rural areas, but also served as a training camp for candidates planning to take the examination. Schools could monitor the conduct of the candidates and local officials could better guarantee the character of candidates, as required by law. It is noteworthy that the Qingli reformers never intended to use schools as an alternative to the civil service examinations. Instead, schools played a complimentary role to the examination system – preparing students to take the examinations.

Many historians have stressed the positive impacts of the reform in promotion of learning and applauded the reformers for bold ideas. But did the reformers really deserve such praise? As indicated earlier, long before the Qingli reforms, academies and local schools had already existed sporadically across the country.¹⁹⁶ The eremite Qi Tongwen and the prominent classicist and educator Sun Shi were the most famous founders of local schools. To exert government influence on local communities, it was common for the Song court to absorb these private academies into government-run prefectural and county schools.¹⁹⁷ At the same time, Song Emperors also urged prefects to erect local schools. A Mainland scholar, Chen Zhi'E, has argued that the Jingyou period (1034-1037) of Renzong was the peak in the development of local schools at government initiative.¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, it is unlikely that many new schools were built after 1047. The following comments by Wang Anshi, Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) and Shen Gou 沈遘 (1025-1067) might better represent the historical reality. “Despite the existence of schools in prefectures and counties”,

¹⁹⁶ For a detailed study on local schools in the Song period, see Zhou Yuwen 周愚文, *Song Dai De Zhou Xian Xue*. On pp.72 in the book, there is a table listing out the time of establishment of various Prefectural and County Schools in Song times (Table 4.13), which shows that a number of local schools had already existed before the Qingli reform.

¹⁹⁷ The phenomenon regarding how Academies were “governmentalized” in the Southern Song was noticed by a Japanese scholar Gō Tereda as early as 1965, see his *Sōdai kyōiku shi gaisetsu*, pp.313-317. James T.C. Liu and Chen Wenyi further discusses on this, see James T.C. Liu, “Lue Lun Song Dai Di Fang Guan Xue He Si Xue De Xiao Zhang”, pp.211-227 and Chen Wenyi, *You Guan Xue Dao Shu Yuan*.

¹⁹⁸ Chen Zhi'E, *Bei Song Wen Hua Shi Shu Lun* 北宋文化史述論 (Beijing: Zhongguo she hui ke xue chu ban she, 1992), pp.124-125.

according to Wang Anshi, “they consist of merely walls and equipment, not teachers to fulfill the mission of nurturing talent.”¹⁹⁹ 方今州縣雖有學，取牆壁具而已，非有教導之官，長育人才之事也。Su Shi adds, “among the schools once established in the Qingli era, today exist in name only.”²⁰⁰ 慶曆固嘗立學矣，至于今日，惟有空名僅存。Comments from Shen Gou were even more pessimistic: “originated from the lost at the Imperial University, all under heaven followed and collapsed. After more than a decade until now, not a single proposal that asserts education was heard.”²⁰¹ 始失於太學，而天下從以隳。於今十餘年，莫復有言治學者。Those accountable for local schools – local officials – were busy with judicial cases and viewed education as a secondary duty.²⁰² Some of them even exploited the funding of prefectural schools as pretext to levy extra taxes.²⁰³ Therefore we should not overstate the impact of the Qingli reforms as trigger for expanding educational opportunity. In fact, corrupt Song officials continuously inhibited policy implementation, as we shall see in the chapters to follow.

Nevertheless, the role of the reformers in actualizing and expanding the educational measures was critical. As we learn from the above, the Song examination system, despite operating smoothly for more than 80 years, was far from desirable to some scholar-officials in selecting officials both academically and morally gifted. The reformers optimistically hoped that through education at schools and changes in the

¹⁹⁹ Wang Anshi, “Shang Ren Zong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu” 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in Wang Anshi zhuan; Li Zhiliang 李之亮 jian zhu, *Wang Jing Gong Wen Ji Jian Zhu* (WJGWJJZ) 王荊公文集箋注 (Chengdu Shi: Ba Shu shu she, 2005), Juan 2, pp.34

²⁰⁰ SS, Juan 338, pp.10803. This was extracted from a memorial of Su Shi submitted in 1069. See Su Shi, “Yi Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zhuang” 議學校貢舉狀, in Su Shi zhuan, Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 dian jiao, *Su Shi Wen Ji* (SSWJ) 蘇軾文集 (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju, 1986), Juan 25, pp.723.

²⁰¹ Shen Gou 沈遘 (1025-1067), “Dan Zhou Xin Xue Ji” 丹州新學記 嘉祐二年六, in QSW, Vol.74, pp.338.

²⁰² Wang Anshi, “Shang Ren Zong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu” 度州學記, in WJGWJJZ, Juan 45, pp.1556.

²⁰³ An imperial order issued in 1045/3 reminding local officials not to levy extra taxes under the banner of erecting local schools somehow implied that this kind of practices pervaded among local officials. See SHY, *Chongru*, 2/4b-5a and SDZLJ, Juan 157, “Zhou Xian Xue Xu Ben Tu Ren Ting Xi Wai You Xue Ren Le Gui Ben Guan Zhao” 州縣學許本土人聽習，外遊學人勒歸本貫詔 慶曆五年三月辛未, pp.590-591.

examination system, better candidates could be selected. In the reigns of Taizong and Zhenzong, the most notable reformers were Yang Huizhi, Sun He, Qi Lun, Yang Yi and Zhang Zhibai. Nevertheless, their suggestions had never been fully actualized, partly because they did not possess the political power. That may explain why Fan enjoyed far greater acclaim than his predecessors in terms of his contribution to Song education,²⁰⁴ and why historians neglect Sun Shi, a veteran teaching official who devoted his entire career to education and the Directorate School.

²⁰⁴ As argued by Charles Hartman, “over the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Fan’s image tracks the growth of daoXue, expanding from that of a committed, generous colleague to that of a protean moral exemplar.” (See Charles Hartman, “Zhu Xi and His World”, *Journal of Song Yuan Studies*, No.36 (2006), pp.114). This partly explains why historians in later centuries continued to applaud Fan Zhongyan.

Chapter 3

HUNDRED FLOWERS BLOSSOMED

Liberal Environment at the Imperial University in the Renzong Era

The development of the Imperial University in the middle and late Renzong era will be thoroughly discussed in this chapter. It reveals how a liberal academic environment at the University campus was nurtured during the interim period when the old standard was challenged and a new orthodoxy had yet to be established. It also highlights how opinion power at the metropolitan schools, echoing the rising power of Censors and Policy-critique advisers at that time, burgeoned. The last part of this chapter tries to provide an explanation for the diverse, interestingly contradictory, comments held by the scholar-officials on the educational development for this period.

Learning at the new Imperial University around 1044

In the midst of the educational reforms in the Qingli era, the court assigned prominent scholars to teach in the metropolitan schools, including Sun Fu 孫復 (992-1057) and Shi Jie 石介 (1005-1045). Both men later joined the Directorate School and became lecturers in 1042. Together with other young lecturers, they advocated poetry and prose in the school, in stark contrast with Directorate Lecturers a generation earlier who instructed students only in the Confucian Classics. This new generation of Directorate Lecturers tested their students monthly on poetry, rhapsody, policy essays and discussions questions. Based on these tests, students were ranked and their names posted at the gates of the school.¹ The inclusion of poetry and rhapsody in the school curriculum and assessment shows that teaching in the Directorate School had finally matched curriculum for the examination. After the

¹ Tien Guang, *Ru Lin Gong Yi*, Juan 1, in *QSB*, Ser.1 Vol.5, pp.96.

Imperial University was established in 1044, Sun Fu and Shi Jie were subsequently assigned as teachers, where witnessed a series of dramatic changes.

The most dramatic change in the Imperial University experienced by Sun Fu and Shi Jie was the surge in student number, which Tien Kuang, the Supervisor of the Directorate of Education in the early Qingli era, vividly depicted:

In the early Qing Li era, Shi Jie and Sun Fu, men native to Shandong, were both fond of the way of antiquity. They served as lecturers, supported the school and wished it to flourish. But in fact only a few students were engaged in serious study, in the absence of regulations to encourage them. The official Wang Zhu, who worked in the Historical Records Office, cited the situation to the throne and requested a minimum attendance requirement and an expanded nomination quota of the Directorate School. As a result, those who attended classes for less than 300 days were not allowed to sit in the Directorate examination. Hence students attending classes managed to fill a space of several thousand feet. Neither adverse weather conditions such as freezing temperatures in winter nor heat and heavy rain in summer managed to hamper students. Different lectures were given in the various halls, where stairs and corridors were packed with students. After classes, students had to sign up for attendance. It was so crowded and noisy. Many lecturers reported such conditions to the Supervisor, requesting more classrooms in the Xi Qing Garden, located on the eastern edge of the school, for conversion into the Imperial University. The emperor approved. People like Shi Jie and Sun Fu were elated, believing that the way of education had begun to flourish.² 慶曆初...時山東人石介、孫復皆好古醇儒為直講，力相贊和，期興庠序。然向學者少，無法例以勸之。於是史館檢討王洙上言，乞立聽書曰限，寬國庠薦解之數以徠之，聽不滿三百日者，則屏不得與。由是聽徒曰眾，未幾遂盈數千。雖祁寒暑雨，有不卻者。諸席分講，坐塞階序，講罷則書名於籍以記曰，固已不勝其嘩矣。講員眾白判長，奏假庠東錫慶院以廣學舍為太學，詔從之。介、復輩益喜，以為教道之興也。

A crowded University campus occurred partly because of the minimum attendance requirement. But the charisma of certain University lecturers should never be slighted. Despite his repeated failures at the civil service examination, Sun Fu's fame as a teacher of great renown had been widely acknowledged by the 1030's,

² Tien Guang, *Ru Lin Gong Yi*, Juan 1, in *QSB*, Ser.1 Vol.5, pp.96.

causing degree holders like Shi Jie and Shi Jianzhong 士建中 to become his disciples. Partly owing to the excellent teaching of Sun Fu, Renzong conferred a special badge in red and a pouch containing silver-fish for officials of the fifth-rank during a visit to the Directorate School and the Imperial University in 1044/5.³

Shi Jie was an equally appealing teacher, who drew hundreds of students at Mount Cui Lai. After his appointment as Directorate Lecturer in 1042, some of Shi Jie's students followed him to the capital, including the venerated Zhang Ji 張績 (1019-?) and Li Chang 李常 (1020-1059). The talent of both Zhang and Li received high praise from Ouyang Xiu, who commented their "utterings were dignified, their will upright and beyond the ordinary."⁴ 辭嚴意正質非俚 Although both men failed in the departmental examination in 1042.⁵ The charisma of Shi Jie managed to convert even Daoist priests to Confucian ideology.⁶ As a result, several thousand students from the four corners gathered at the Imperial University.⁷

Apart from the surging number of students attending classes, the literary style in the school also changed gradually from "Parallel Prose style" to an "Unorthodox

³ Ouyang Xiu, "Sun Ming Fu Xian Sheng Mu Zhi Ming" 孫明復先生墓誌銘, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.30, pp.458; *XCB*, Juan 149, pp.3609; and *SS*, Juan 11, pp.217-218.

⁴ Ouyang Xiu, "Du Zhang Li Er Sheng Wen Zeng Shi Xian Sheng" 讀張李二生文贈石先生, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.2, pp.25.

⁵ See Shi Jie, "Song Zhang Ji Li Chang Xu" 送張績李常序, in Shi Jie 石介 zhu; Chen Zhi'e 陳植鵠 dian jiao, *Cu Lai Shi Xian Sheng Wen Ji (CLJ)* 徂徠石先生文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1984), Juan 18, pp.215. Evidence could also be found in a poem by Ouyang Xiu, see Ouyang Xiu, "Du Zhang Li Er Sheng Wen Zeng Shi Xian Sheng" 讀張李二生文贈石先生, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.2, pp.25. In another poem written by Ouyang Xiu after he read the literary collection of Shi Jie, Ouyang also indicated that Zhang Ji and Li Chang were top students of Shi Jie. See Ouyang Xiu, "Du Cui Lai Ji" 讀徂徠集, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.3, pp.43. See also an anecdote record in Wang Pizhi zhuan 王闢之 (1067 *Jinshi*), *Sheng Shui Yan Tan Lu* 澠水燕談錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), Juan 7, "Ge Yong" 歌咏, pp.89. For a discussion on this, see Chen Zhi'e zhu; Zhou Xiurong 周秀蓉 zheng li, *Shi Jie Shi Ji Zhu Zuo Bian Nian* 石介事蹟著作編年 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2003), pp.102-103.

⁶ Two Daoist believers Zhang and Meng were attracted by Shi Jie, who granted them a new name of Guilu 歸魯 and Zhongru 宗儒 respectively. The former implies "returning back to the Lu area", being the origin of Confucius, while the later means "following the Confucian school" See Shi Jie's poems "Gui Lu Ming Zhang Sheng" 歸魯名張生 and "Zong Ru Ming Meng Sheng" 宗儒名孟生, in *CLJ*, Juan 7, pp.82.

⁷ *SS*, Juan 457, pp.13435.

Style” (*Bian Ti* 變體). Parallel prose “was a style of prose composed in couplets of grammatically parallel lines and marked by the heavy use of literary allusion and ornate diction. Another convention was that most of the lines should be either four or six syllables long.”⁸ This style of writing, traceable to the Northern and Southern dynasties, became popular among the literati during the Tang dynasty. Because of its elegance and decorum, “parallel prose” style befitted the solemn purposes of memorials, edicts, and other state papers. In view of its practical functionality and its rigid structure, which proved a convenient guide for examiners to assess examinations objectively, “parallel prose” became the standard for the civil service examinations in the Tang and early Song.⁹

The literary genius Yang Yi would push the “parallel prose” style to new heights. The euphuistic and elegant writings of Yang Yi made him a celebrated literary master during the reigns of Taizong and Zhenzong, both admirers of Yang’s writings. Thus, the literary style of Yang Yi, dubbed “Current Style” (*Shi Wen* 時文), became widely emulated by young scholars in the early Song. Despite the beauty of the “Current Style” of writing, a group of scholars, starting with Han Yu and Liu Zhongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819) in the mid Tang and extending to Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954-1001) and Liu Kai 柳開 (948-1001) in the early Song,¹⁰ asserted that literature should place greater stress on content, function, and usage. They argued that

⁸ Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.12. For further discussion on this style and some translated examples, see James R. Hightower, “Some Characteristics of Parallel Prose”, in John L. Bishop (ed.), *Studies in Chinese Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp.108-139.

⁹ A brief discussion on the literary development of the parallel prose could be found in Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.12-14.

¹⁰ Being the forerunners of the Gu Wen movement in the Northern Song, Liu Kai and Wang Yucheng actually represented two different inclination. Liu merely criticized the current style of writing and emphasized on the importance of writing in transmitting the Confucian way. But apart from these, Wang walked a step further and created a new style of writing that relates to social reality through his own composition. Later, Shi Jie and Ouyang Xiu respectively succeeded the style of Liu Kai and Wang Yucheng in the Kuwen movement. For further details, see Chen Zhi'E, “Lue Lun Song Chu Gu Wen Yun Dong De Liang Zong Qing Xiang” 略論宋初古文運動的兩種傾向, in Deng Guangming, Li Jiaju deng zhu bian, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji*, pp.431-451.

“writers preoccupied with linguistic niceties tend to lose sight of the didactic purposes that writing should rightfully serve. The Confucian principles that writing should embody were neglected, as scholars strove to make their compositions more brilliant and scintillating.”¹¹ Among critics of the “Current Style”, Shi Jie was almost the most radical.¹² He condemned Yang Yi’s flowery Style as evil as Buddhism and Daoism, which kept people from seeing the way of the sages.¹³ To counter the “Current Style”, the “Classical Style” (*Gu Wen* 古文) of writing ancient principles and values, was proposed.¹⁴

Partly inspired by these advocates of the “Classical Style”, Renzong issued two decrees in 1029 expressing his dissatisfaction with the writings of examination candidates.¹⁵ He criticized these works were “little more than a mosaic of elegant phrases lifted from earlier works”.¹⁶ 會萃小說，礫裂前言 Even with literary embellishment and colorful ornaments, they were useless for governance. Hence, the “Current Style” declined, and scholars began to shift towards employing the “Classical Style”.¹⁷ Nevertheless, it was the more extreme “Classical Style”, dubbed

¹¹ Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.15.

¹² SYXA, *Juan* 2, pp.111.

¹³ In essays entitled “On Aberrations” and “On Our Realm”, Shi Jie linked the “Current Style of Writing” together with Buddhism and Taoism as the three great evils of the realm. Shi Jie’s denunciation of the Current Style of Writing could be found in his ‘On Aberrations’ 怪說中 “Guai Shuo Zhong”, in *CLJ*, *Juan* 5, pp.62. Part of the essay was translated by Egan as follows: “At the present, Yang Yi uses every possible embellishment and adornment in his writing. He weaves together the wind and moon, and dallies with blossoms and grasses. He cultivates excessive gorgeousness, braiding superficial beauties together. Thus he carves apart the Sage’s classics, pulverizes the Sage’s words, destroys the Sage’s doctrines, and corrupts and ruins the Sage’s Way.” 今楊憶窮研極態，綴風月，弄花草，淫巧侈麗，浮華纂組，刊鋟聖人之經，破碎聖人之言，離析聖人之意，蠹傷聖人之道 See Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.17.

¹⁴ A brief account on the struggle between “Parallel Prose” style and “Gu Wen” style of writing in the early Song could be found in Peter K. Bol, *This culture of ours*, pp.160-166. For a detailed study on the development of the Classical Style of writing in the Northern Song, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, *Bei Song Gu Wen Yun Dong Fa Zhan Shi* 北宋古文運動發展史 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1995); Feng Zhihong 馮志弘 zhu, *Bei Song Gu Wen Yun Dong De Xing Cheng* 北宋古文運動的形成 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2009); and Zhang Xingwu 張興武 zhu, *Song Chu Bai Nian Wen Xue Fu Xing De Li Cheng* 宋初百年文學復興的歷程 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2009).

¹⁵ SHY, *Xuanju*, 3/16-17; XCB, *Juan* 108, pp.2512.

¹⁶ Translation is adopted from Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.24.

¹⁷ Ouyang Xiu, “Su Shi Wen Ji Xu” 蘇氏文集序, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.43, pp.614.

the “Unorthodox Style”, not the “Classical Style” as advocated by the literary champion Ouyang Xiu, that filled in the gap and caught the spotlight. The role of Shi Jie in this movement was crucial.

The official denunciation of the “Current Style” in 1029 together with the success of Zhang Tangqing 張唐卿 (1010-1037) and Shi Jianzhong in the civil service examinations in 1034 marked a shifting trend in examination writings.¹⁸ Believing that the “Unorthodox Style” had already become increasingly appealing than the “Current Style” in the civil service examinations, more candidates were attracted to the former. Partly as a response to market demand, Shi Jie started to teach his students to adopt the “Unorthodox Style” for the rhapsody, policy essays and discussions questions in the civil service examination. He began promoting this “Unorthodox Style” of writing in the mid-1030’s as instructor at the Ying Tian Fu Academy and later under Mount Cui Lai.¹⁹

After Shi Jie joined the Directorate School in 1042, he began to promote this “Unorthodox Style” across the campus. Gradually Shi Jie changed literary fashions at the metropolitan schools. In one occasion, when he noticed that Emperor Renzong would pass by the Directorate School in the summer, he asked students to compose a rhapsody of “Invitation from students for the emperor’s visit to the Directorate

¹⁸ Zhang Tangqing, who provided an outspoken commentary in his answer in the discussion question, was the top candidate in the palace examination in 1034. For Shi Jianzhong, he indulged himself in eccentricity. He despised on poetry and rhapsody questions in the civil service examinations and never practiced these styles of writing. Nevertheless, he was ranked in the first class in the departmental examination in 1034 partly because of his excellent performance in the discussion questions. It is likely because of the success of these two candidates that the “Unorthodox Style” of writing became increasingly popular. For further details on the evolution of this “Unorthodox Style” and its relationship with the “Imperial University” style of writing in the 1040’s and 50’s, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, “Bei Song Tai Xue Ti Xin Lun” 北宋 “太學體” 新論, in Zhu Shangshu zhu, *Song Dai Ke Ju Yu Wen Xue Kao Lun* 宋代科舉與文學考論 (Zhengzhou Shi: Da xiang chu ban she, 2006), pp.383-392. and Zhang Xingwu 張興武, “Bei Song Tai Xue Ti Wen Feng Xin Lun” 北宋 “太學體” 文風新論, *Literary Review* 文學評論, Vol.6 (2008), pp.89.

¹⁹ Zhang Xingwu 張興武, “Bei Song Tai Xue Ti Wen Feng Xin Lun”, pp.89.

School” 諸生請皇帝幸國學賦. An anonymous student submitted his work in “Current style”, whereupon Shi Jie summoned all students to the lecture hall and publicly condemned the style, causing several dozens of students to be expelled.²⁰

Beyond criticizing students who wrote in “Current Style”, Shi Jie also praised student practitioners of his own style of writing. He Qun 何羣, a student from Sichuan who adhered to the ancient way, was commended by Shi Jie for his faith in humanity and righteousness. While donning the clothing of the ancients, He also abandoned rhapsodies in the civil service examinations. As a beloved student, He Qun lived with Shi Jie before his appointment as school prefect.²¹

The above illustrated how hard Shi Jie had strived to advocate the “Unorthodox Style” of writing at the Imperial University. His strenuousness somehow implied that the “Unorthodox Style” was competing fiercely with “Current Style” in the metropolitan schools. The experience of the later prominent “Classical Style” master Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019-1083) in his youth might shed some light on this. Zeng was studying at the Imperial University in the early 1040’s.²² When he took the school examination, he was failed by teachers as he could not meet the prescribed gauges and templates. Literary master Ouyang Xiu felt very odd regarding Zeng’s

²⁰ Wen Ying 文瑩 (11th century), *Xiang Shan Ye Lu* 湘山野錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1984), pp.24. This anecdote record mentioned that this incident happened in the Kangding year (1040) of Renzong. Probably following this anecdote note, Thomas Lee deduced that Shi Jie was the Director of Education in 1040. See his *Government education and examinations in Sung China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1985), pp.187. However, we understand from the biography of Shi Jie that he was mourning for his deceased parents under Mount Cui Lai during this period. It is therefore reasonable for us to believe that it happened in the middle of the Qingli instead of Kangding era (1040), after which Shi Jie joined the Directorate School. See Wang Qian 王茜, “Shi Jie Nian Pu” 石介年譜 (unpublished Master dissertation, Zhengzhou University, 2002), pp.38. and Chen Zhi’e, *Shi Jie Shi Ji Zhu Zuo Bian Nian*, pp.90-112.

²¹ Fan Zhen 范鎮 (1007-1087), Ru Pei 汝沛 dian jiao, *Dong Zhai Ji Shi* 東齋記事 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1980), *Juan* 1, pp.6; SS, *Juan* 457, pp.13435-13436. See also Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp. 210 and 226.

²² Lin Xi 林希, “Zhong Shu She Ren Ceng Gong Mu Zhi Ming” 中書舍人曾鞏墓志銘, in Chen Boquan 陳柏泉 bian zhu, *Jiangxi Chu Tu Mu Zhi Xuan Bian* 江西出土墓志選編 (Nanchang: Jiangxi jiao yu chu ban she, 1991), pp.38.

failure, as he perceived that by then “in what he (Zeng Gong) excels at, he is without doubt exceptional and even in his lesser points, he meets the gauges and templates.”²³ 其大者固已魁壘，其於小者亦可以中尺度 A possible explanation for Zeng’s failure is that since he neither adhered to “Current Style” nor “Unorthodox Style”, he became a victim in this war on literary style.

Shi Jie’s lifelong promotion of the “Unorthodox Style” seems to have paid off, since this eccentric style gradually dominated the Directorate School. Zhang Fangping, one of the Chief Examiners of the departmental examination in 1046, summarized the prevalence of this literary style at the metropolitan school:

In the first year of the *Jingyou* period (1034) some candidates passed the examinations by writing answers in the Unorthodox Style, and subsequently others imitated them until that style became the norm. Since then writing has daily strayed further from the old standards, with each candidate striving for novelty, trying to outdo all others in strangeness. After the Imperial University was established, lecturer Shi Jie tested students according to his own preferences, which thereafter became the fashion of the day. Presently, writing that is weird, hyperbolic, and inflated is considered exalted, and unrestrained license and prolixity are thought of as proper amplitude. Old standards were overruled, which is confusing for future students.²⁴ 景祐元年，有以變體而擢高等者，後進傳效，因是以習爾來文格，日失其舊，各出新意，相勝為奇。至太學之建，直講石介課諸生試所業，因其所好尚，而遂成風，以怪誕詆訕為高，以流蕩猥煩為贍，逾越規矩，惑誤後學。

From the remarks of Zhang Fangping, we learn that this “Unorthodox Style” of writing was commonly found in rhapsodies, policy essays and discussions submitted by University students in the examinations. These writings were

²³ Ouyang Xiu, “Song Zeng Gong Xiu Cai Xu” 送曾鞏秀才序, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.44. pp.625. A full translation of this work can be found in Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.209-211.

²⁴ Zhang Fangping, “Gong Yuan Qing Jie Li Tian Xia Ju Ren Wen Zhang” 貢院請誠勵天下舉人文章, in *ZFPJ*, Juan 20, pp.278. The translation is basically adopted from Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.18, with slight modification. Similar text could also be found in *XCB*, Juan 158, pp.3821-3822 and *XZZTJ*, Juan 48, pp.1159. Other comments by the *Ministry of Rites* on the style of writing of the students in the Directorate School could also be found in *XCB*, Juan 164, pp.3946.

extraordinarily long with extravagant commentaries and strange expressions. Zhang Fangping recalled that some candidates who adopted the “Imperial University” style composed formless and profligate rhapsodies that exceeded 800 characters, with 16-18 characters in a sentence. Some of their discussions essays even had over 1,200 words, which were exceptionally long with reference to the standard format. In terms of contents, these candidates were not directly answering the policy essay questions; instead they expressed their slanderous and bizarre ideas commenting on current affairs.²⁵

Recent reforms in the civil service examinations might partly explain why students indulged themselves in this absurd writing style. The rising status of policy essays and discussions which began to outweigh poetry and rhapsody in the “Advanced Scholar” degree examinations after 1044 likely had an impact on this. From the remarks of the Song scholars, we understand that evaluation on policy essays and discussions questions were more subjective than poetry and rhapsody. In order to get a higher rank in the former questions, candidates chose to give answers in an unconventional way so as to attract the attention of the examiners. The need to become conspicuous was particularly crucial after 1041 when submissions of “public essays” (*Gong Juan* 公卷) in both the prefectural and departmental examinations were abolished. As an inheritance of the Tang, candidates in the early Song were required to submit samples of poetical compositions to examiners before the examinations so that both their reputation and character could be taken into account. But after this measure was displaced in 1041 on the grounds of anonymity,²⁶ the only way for candidates to distinguish themselves among competitors in the context of anonymous submissions was by extraordinary answers. Candidates therefore chose to

²⁵ *XCB, Juan* 158, pp.3822.

²⁶ *SHY, Xuanju* 15/11; *XCB, Juan* 133, pp.3162. See also John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.51.

use strange and difficult words as well as unconventional style in order to catch the attention of the examiners as noticed by the literary Master Ouyang Xiu: “For those who wish to set themselves apart, they take an indirect path through bizarre deeds or lofty and vague commentaries for the sake of fame for virtue and honor.”²⁷ 苟欲異眾，則必為迂僻奇怪以取德行之名，而高談虛論以求材識之譽。

The ascendance of the Censorate (*Yu Shi Tai* 御史臺) and Bureau of Policy Criticism (*Jian Yuan* 諫院) is another possible contributor to students’ increasingly active commentaries on current affairs and their bizarre commentaries on current affairs as shown in the “Unorthodox Style”. Since the founding of the Song, although some officials took up titular offices as Censors and Policy-critique advisers, most men assumed regular assignments and commissions. As a result, they could hardly perform the functions of policy advice in the early Song. But later Song emperors gradually recognized the importance of these offices, especially Zhenzong, as stipulated in an edict in 1017 establishing the two offices. Each Office should have six officials: they enjoyed salary increment, and were no longer required to take up other assignments and commissions. At least one of them had to memorialize to the throne on assorted subjects in each month.²⁸ Although in reality the stipulation on assignments and commissions could not be upheld, the emperor’s intention to encourage advice from officials on policy matters was obvious. Heavier reliance of these offices might explain why an independent working office was granted to the Bureau of Policy-Criticism in 1032.²⁹

²⁷ Ouyang Xiu, “Yi Xue Zhuang” 議學狀, in *OYXQJ*, *Juan* 110, pp.1673.

²⁸ *XCB*, *Juan* 89, pp.2040; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 3/51. For a detailed discussion on the Song Censorate and Bureau of Policy-Criticism in Chinese, see Diao Zhongmin 刁忠民 zhu, *Song Dai Tai Jian Zhi Du Yan Jiu* 宋代臺諫制度研究 (Chengdu: Ba Shu shu she, 1999) and Yu Yunguo 虞雲國 zhu, *Song Dai Tai Jian Zhi Du Yan Jiu* 宋代臺諫制度研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai she hui ke xue yuan chu ban she, 2001). For a brief discussion on the role of the the censorial officials in Northern Song politics in English, see Gong Wei Ai, “The participation of censorial officials in politics during the Northern Sung dynasty (960–1126 A.D.)”, *Chinese Culture*, Vol.5 No. 2 (1974), pp.30-41.

²⁹ *XCB*, *Juan* 111, pp.2585; Wang Yong, *Yan Yi Yi Mou Lu*, *Juan* 4, pp.34.

Growing power of the Censorate and Bureau of Policy-Criticism in the early Renzong era not only acted “as a check upon the executive power of the councilors,”³⁰ but also facilitated the growth of “opinion power” among the scholar-officials.³¹ This latter power originated from the idealistic scholar-officials, whom “believed in the Confucian principles as the supreme authority, to which even the ultimate power of the emperor should be subservient. As the guardians of the doctrine, they asserted their right to pronounce judgment and to offer guidance on state affairs.”³² In turn, the vogue in commenting on state affairs flourished among these censorial officials and extended to the metropolitan schools, partly owing to the fact that some censors and policy-critique adviser, concurrently or soon, took up the Supervisorship at the Directorate of Education. Among the 15 Directorate Supervisors that could be identified during the period 1032-1044, 10 served in the offices of censorial or policy-critique. (Appendix 1) In addition, rising significance of policy essays and discussions questions in the civil service examinations during this period also enhanced candidates and students’ political awareness. After Shi Jie had assumed the role as Directorate Lecturer in 1042, the trend in commentating politics in the metropolitan schools even reached newer heights. Shi Jie not only propagated the eccentric writing style, but also cared for public affairs.³³ Being an irascible and arrogant person, Shi Jie made critical and outspoken commentaries on current affairs.³⁴ Powerful ministers of his day, who were mainly conservatives opposing the reforms advocated by the clique of Fan Zhongyan, became the targets of Shi Jie’s attack. Partly under the influence of their mentor Shi Jie, University students became

³⁰ Gong Wei Ai, “The participation of censorial officials in politics during the Northern Sung dynasty (960–1126 A.D.)”, pp.41.

³¹ For a brief discussion on the power structure in the Song dynasty, being an interplay between ultimate power, executive power and opinion power, see James T.C. Liu, “An Administrative Cycle in Chinese History”.

³² James T.C. Liu, “An Early Sung Reformer”, pp.106.

³³ *XCB*, *Juan* 160, pp.3877.

³⁴ This was noted from the correspondences between Shi Jie and Ouyang Xiu. See Ouyang Xiu, “Yu Shi Tui Guan Di Yi Shu” 與石推官第一書, in *OYXQJ*, *Juan* 68, pp.991. See also James T.C. Liu, *Ouyang Hsiu*, pp.89.

fond of expressing their own views and criticism on current affairs, even in examination responses.³⁵ An official He Yan explained how could this happen:

Shi Jie was sincere in study for his entire life. Nevertheless it became a problem when he failed to fully comprehend the way but saw himself as mentor to others. As a result, most of his students were licentious and pretentious.³⁶ 緣石介平生，頗篤學問，所病者，道未周而好為人師，致後生從學者多流蕩狂妄之士。

This trend prevailed at the University campus and turned into a double-edged sword for the reformers. On the one hand, as argued by Thomas Lee, the Imperial University and the Bureau of Policy-Criticism were two crucial organs used by the reformers to exert their influence to facilitate the reforms.³⁷ On the other hand, commentaries in these two institutions were often provocative and offended some powerful high officials,³⁸ leading to their aversion towards not only the reform policies, but the reformers personally. In fact, some close-friends of Shi Jie such as Sun Fu had already foreseen that Shi Jie and his students would be in grave danger should they involve too much in politics and make provocative criticisms of the anti-reformers.³⁹ This prediction finally came true as the anti-reformers adopted some excessive actions as revenge, which caused the expulsion of the reformers from the court, an abrupt end to the reforms, as well as a disastrous end for Shi Jie.

In 1043, after Fan Zhongyan and Han Qi (1008-1075) were summoned back to the capital, Shi envisioned the dawn of a magnificent age and composed a rhapsody to glorify the times. In this work, Shi Jie praised the reformers Fan Zhongyan and Fu Bi 富弼 (1004-1083) as sagacious as the ancient ministers Yi Yin 伊尹 (1648-1549

³⁵ *XCB, Juan 158*, pp.3822.

³⁶ *XCB, Juan 160*, pp.3877.

³⁷ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.79.

³⁸ Tien Guang, *Ru Lin Gong Yi, Juan 1*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.1 Vol.5, pp.96 and 130.

³⁹ Ouyang Xiu, "Cu Lai Shi Xian Sheng Mu Zhi Ming" 徂徠石先生墓誌銘, in *OYXQJ, Juan 34*, pp.507.

B.C.E.) and the Duke of Zhou 周公 (c.a.1100 B.C.E.), while denouncing Xia Song 夏竦 (985-1051) as a petty person. A jealous and enraged Xia plotted revenge by forging a letter in Shi Jie's handwriting that prodded Renzong to abdicate. Xia then accused Fu Bi and Shi Jie of conspiracy against the emperor. Although Renzong apparently did not believe the allegation, Fan Zhongyan and Fu Bi were extremely frightened. To avoid further trouble, both men planned to leave the capital. In the context of border alarms, the emperor approved their departures, assigning Fan to the Shaanxi area to consolidate defenses against the Xi Xia in 1044/6 and dispatching Fu Bi to Hebei in 1044/8 to counter the growing Khitan threat.⁴⁰

Following the departures of Fan and Fu, other reformers such as Ouyang Xiu, Cai Xiang, Yu Jing, Shi Jie, and Sun Fu were either reassigned or demoted to regional posts.⁴¹ Many of them, save for Shi Jie, were summoned back to the court years later. Shi died in 1045, but even before his burial, Xia Song accused him of using death as cover for flight to the Khitan, and hence petitioned for his coffin to be opened to verify the death, a plea effectively thwarted by high officials empathetic with Shi Jie.⁴²

Abrupt end to the Qingli reforms

Some conservatives may have disliked Shi Jie's outspokenness, but this cannot wholly explain their aversion towards the reforms. Perhaps more fatal for the reforms were restrictions on protection privilege and elimination of redundant officials that infringed upon the vested interests of officials as a class. Hence after the downfall

⁴⁰ Fan Chunren 范純仁, "Fu Gong Xing Zhuang" 富公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.71, pp.322. See also *SS*, *Juan* 11, pp.218; *Juan* 313, pp.10253 and *Juan* 314, pp.10275.

⁴¹ In 1044/10, Shi Jie requested to leave the capital and was relocated to the prefect of Puzhou. See *XCB*, *Juan* 152, pp.3710. Sun Fu was reassigned to monitor the taxation matters in Qianzhou in 1045/11. See *XCB*, *Juan* 157, pp.3806.

⁴² *XCB*, *Juan* 157, pp.3806 and *Juan* 160, pp.3877-3878. See also *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 37, pp.659-660.

of Fan Zhongyan, a number of reform policies did not survive opposition from the conservative majority. With reference to education, the policy that required all students at the metropolitan, prefectural and county schools to attend for a minimum period was the first to be abolished as early as 1044/11. The rescission of the measure, which had been adopted in the Directorate School in late 1042, likely proved a heavy financial burden as suggested by the Supervisor of the Directorate of Education Yu Jing:

With reference to the previous edict and the regulations governing examination reform, students at the Directorate School were required to attend the school for five hundred days before being recommended to sit in the Directorate examination. Among every ten students who have satisfied this requirement, three could be nominated. ... I believe the state's mission to erect schools was to praise and nurture talent and provide them with guidance and instruction. With government support for enlarging the school campus and granting land endowment, students could concentrate their mind on the way, righteousness, as well as the skills to join the civil service. Nevertheless, support from the court was limited, while the number of students was infinite. Should extra subsidies be provided, the expenditure could hardly be covered by the income. Should schools operate on their own without government subsidy, many poor students would be financially straitened. If the minimum attendance requirement is still in force, most students dare not be absent from classes. Since they were not devoted to learning, such requirement was just like mandatory labour service. Promotion of education in the ancient ages originally was never like this. Therefore I think the campus should be enlarged in order to entertain those scholars who genuinely wish to learn, while the attendance requirement should be abolished so that those poor students could be relieved. In this regard, the custom of encouraging talent could be kept and those poor students could find a way to learn.⁴³ 「臣伏見先降敕命并貢舉條制，國子監生徒，聽學滿五百日方許取應，每十人之中與解三人。...竊以國家興建學校，所以獎育俊秀而訓導之。由是廣學宮，頒學田，使其專心道義，以思入官之術。伏緣朝廷所賜莊園、房錢等贍之有限，而來者無窮，若徧加廩給，則支費不充，若自營口腹，則貧窶者衆，日有定數，不敢不來，非其本心，同於驅役。古之勸學，初不如此。臣以為廣黌舍，所以待有志之士，去日限，所以寬食貧之人，國家有厲賢之風，寒士得帶經之便。」

The rationale provided by Yu Jing was well sounded and justified

⁴³ XCB, *Juan* 153, pp.3714. See also SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3659. For a brief analysis on this, see Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.107.

economically; especially during the Qingli era (1041-1048) when the Song government was under severe financial stress. Zhang Fangping, the Financial Commissioner in 1047, vividly depicted the problem in his memorial: “in the recent seven years, the workforce was impoverished. Peasants and craft-women could not afford food and clothing. People’s savings are exhausted and the government treasury is empty.”⁴⁴ 邇來七年之間，民力大困。天下耕夫織婦，莫能給其衣食。生民之膏澤竭盡，國家之倉庫空虛 The deficit of the Song government owed much to the military expenses incurred by wars against the Xi Xia and a bloated bureaucracy. Expenditures could only be covered by borrowing three million cash annually from the Imperial Treasury, the emperor’s private cache.⁴⁵ Under such financial constraints, implementing the grandiose educational reform proposals, including the development of the Imperial University, was beyond the government’s means. Yu Jing called for an economizing on investments in education. Only those genuinely eager to study, he argued, should continue to study and enjoy stipends.

In Modern times, educational development is seen as a long-term investment for the future, which should continue regardless of financial constraints. However imposing such modern concepts upon the Song court and intellectuals is unfair. Rather than looking at the future contributions of students, Song officials could not overcome the shocking cost of the educational reform policies, costs including student stipends. The Song government also worried about a swelling student population. Since most students were teenagers, long stays in school entails a shorter work-life, which negatively impacts on the country’s economic productivity. For these various reasons, Song officials called for a halt in these educational reform policies. Subsequently, the

⁴⁴ Zhang Fangping, “Zai Shang Guo Ji Shi” 再上國計事, in *ZFPJ*, *Juan* 23, pp.337.

⁴⁵ Zhang Fangping, “Lun Guo Ji Chu Na Shi” 論國計出納事, in *ZFPJ*, *Juan* 23, pp.334. A thorough discussion on this borrowing mechanism between Bureaus and the Imperial Treasury, see Wong, Hon-chiu, “Government expenditures in Northern Sung China, 960-1127” (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1975), Chapter Three, “Government Borrowing: Financial Relationship between the Government and the Imperial Treasury”, pp.136-153.

learning environment at the Directorate School and the Imperial University reverted back to conditions in the pre-Qingli era, where only a few students attended classes. A critical reason for this is because the reformers failed to set up regulations to govern student learning or policies to compel students to stay in schools. Yuan historian Ma Tuanlin sums it up concisely:

Nowadays the purported learning practices of the Qingli era, despite the existence of lecturer and tutoring, had no rules pertaining to how long students should focus on a single Classic to comprehensively understand it. The so-called glorious path involved merely bypassing the prefectural examination and directly registering for the Departmental examination. No better alternative was available as shortcut. That is the reason why students dispersed and lecturers were idled once the examinations were over. Even though the minimum study period was laid down, it could not keep students in schools for long. Instead schools were flooded with mediocre students, and this stipulation was soon abolished.⁴⁶ 今慶曆之法，所謂習業者，雖有講肄聽讀，而未嘗限以通經之歲月；所謂榮途者，止於拔解赴省，而未嘗別有優異之捷徑。此所以科場罷日，則生徒散歸，講官倚席，雖限以聽學之歲月，而不能強其久留，反以淹滯為困，故不久而遂廢也。

In addition to scrapping the minimum attendance requirement for students, the government retreated from further expansion of the school campus. We learn from Deng Guan's 鄧綰 (1028-1086) memorial in 1071 that the Xi Qing Garden never reverted to the Imperial University as planned,⁴⁷ due to "excessive costs".⁴⁸ As a result, the Xi Qing Garden resumed its original function to receive foreign ambassadors, while the military office of the Inspector in Chief of the Metropolitan Cavalry Command (*Ma Jun Du Yu Hou* 馬軍都虞侯) was chosen as the new site of the Imperial University in 1045/2.⁴⁹ Even worse, the 200 hectares of land and other properties formerly granted to the Imperial University were confiscated by the

⁴⁶ *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.395.

⁴⁷ *XCB*, Juan 227, pp.5524.

⁴⁸ *XCB*, Juan 154, pp.3735, see also *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.395, *SHY*, *Chongru*, 1/30, *SSQW*, Juan 8.

⁴⁹ *XCB*, Juan 154, pp.3735. *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.395; *SSQW*, Juan 8; and *YH*, Juan 112, 32a. See also Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.9-10.

Directorate of Education. In the absence of a separate budget,⁵⁰ further the growth for the Imperial University became impossible.

After eliminating the attendance requirement and the campus development project, critics of educational reform turned their sights on changes in the examination system. Firstly, the anti-reformers argued on practical grounds that policy essays and discussions questions made grading more subjective, in contrast with poetry and rhapsody whose fixed style made evaluation more objective. Moreover, the conservatives argued that poetry and rhapsodies questions had long been adopted in the Advanced Scholar degree examination for nearly five hundred years and the system had produced, in Song times, a cluster of exceptional Councilors and Generals. So why change it? Hence in 1045/3, the court decreed that the examinations for the “Advanced Scholar” and “various subjects” degrees revert back to the old system.⁵¹ He Qun, a top disciple of Shi Jie at the Imperial University, wept after learning of the court’s decision to revive poetry and rhapsodies in the examination. He even burnt over 800 of his own rhapsodies in protest, which led to his expulsion from school.⁵²

Others shared He Qun’s sentiments, including some university students. Having been trained up in writing policy essays and discussion questions under the instruction of prominent essayists like Shi Jie and Fan Zhen 范鎮 (1008-1088), the sudden change seemed a waste of their labors. In a protest of sorts to force the government to revisit its decision, students continued to indulge in the “Unorthodox Style” of writing. In response to this unorthodox literary vogue, the court approved in 1046 a recommendation of Zhang Fangping, one of the examiners in the departmental

⁵⁰ Zhao Bian 趙抃 (1008-1084), “Qi Gei Huan Tai Xue Tian Tu Fang Min Zhuang”, in *QSW*, Vol.41, pp.220. See also Thomas H.C. Lee, “Bei Song Guo Zi Jian Yu Tai Xue De Jing Fei”, pp.79.

⁵¹ *XCB*, Juan 155, pp.3761; *SS*, Juan 155, pp.3613 and *SSJSBM*, Juan 38, pp.371.

⁵² Fan Zhen, *Dong Zhai Ji Shi*, Juan 1, pp.6; *XCB*, Juan 190, pp.4599-4600; and *SS*, Juan 457, pp.13435-13436. See also Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.150.

examination, who failed candidates who practiced the unorthodox style, provided irrelevant answers or failed to employ the expected format.⁵³ But rather than discouraging the “Unorthodox Style”, such punitive measures met with resistance. It took another decade for Ouyang Xiu, as Chief Examiner in 1057, to change things.

Measures to protect the anonymity of candidates in the prefectural examinations, eliminated by the reformers in favor of moral criteria, returned in 1048.⁵⁴ The Song government had reaffirmed the importance of impartial selection in the examination irrespective of moral characters of the candidates. Until this point, almost all the educational reform policies faced a similar fate. Abrupt ending of the Qingli educational reforms highlights the inherent contradictions between the value of examination fairness and the ideal of evaluating candidates’ moral conduct,⁵⁵ which continued to haunt the Song intellectuals, as we shall see below.

New stipulations on the criteria for Directorate Lecturers were another revision that is worth articulating. Echoing the Qingli educational reforms, “most Confucians who concentrate on memorization but fail to understand practical matters; who merely transmit the old sayings but are inadequate in implementing them”⁵⁶ 儒者以記誦為專，多或不通於世務，但能傳古之說，而不足施之於事 were considered as anachronistic. Instead, candidates for the teaching positions should “understand contemporary matters so as to repeatedly participate in discussions.”⁵⁷ 明當世之事，而屢形議論 Apparently it seems favorable to scholar-officials in a

⁵³ Zhang Fangping, “Gong Yuan Qing Jie Li Tian Xia Ju Ren Wen Zhang” 貢院請誠勵天下舉人文章, in *ZFPJ*, Juan 20, pp.278-279. See also *XCB*, Juan 158, pp.3822, *XZZTJ*, Juan 48, pp.1159, and *SS*, Juan 155, pp.3614.

⁵⁴ *XCB*, Juan 164, pp.3945-3946.

⁵⁵ Thomas H.C. Lee, “Song Dai Jiao Yu Yu Ke Ju De Ji Ge Wen Ti”, pp.52.

⁵⁶ Ouyang Xiu, “Qi Zhou Guang Ji Xian Ling Chong Guo Zi Jian Zhi Jiang Shao Bi Ke Dai Li Si Cheng Zhi” 蘄州廣濟縣令充國子監直講邵必可大理寺丞制, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 81, pp.1181.

⁵⁷ Ouyang Xiu, “Qi Zhou Guang Ji Xian Ling Chong Guo Zi Jian Zhi Jiang Shao Bi Ke Dai Li Si Cheng Zhi”, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 81, pp.1181.

younger generation, in view of the fact that Shi Jie, Fan Zhen, Shao Bi 邵必 (1006-1069) and Sima Guang were about 30 *sui* when they began their teaching careers at the Directorate School.⁵⁸ But after an undeserving nomination of a young and arrogant scholar Yang Shen 楊忱 (1024-1062) was discovered, it was ordered in 1052 that only those scholars who were over 40 *sui* could be nominated. These nominees should have a thorough understanding of the Classics as well as a record of proven behavior.⁵⁹ Subsequent to this policy revision, some more matured scholars such as Hu Yuan, Sun Fu, Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002-1060) and Li Gou were appointed as lecturers.⁶⁰ The term of office for Directorate Lecturers was later fixed at 3 years in 1055, with extensions permitted should lecturers wish to continue. There was no mechanism of review and appraisal regarding their teaching performance in schools.⁶¹ Such flexible terms of office for Directorate Lecturers facilitated the continuity and stability at the schools, which also explains why Hu Yuan could continue to serve in the Directorate School for seven years. With these provisions, the educational visions of Hu Yuan, Sun Fu and Li Gou could be better realized, as illustrated in the following narration of their educational activities at the Imperial University in the 1050's.

⁵⁸ Shi Jie (1005-1045) joined the Directorate School in 1042/6 when he was 38 *sui*, see Chen Zhi'e, *Shi Jie Shi Ji Zhu Zuo Bian Nian*, pp.110. Fan Zhen 范鎮 (1008-1088) has also served as Directorate Lecturer since 1042 when he was 35 *sui*, see SHY, Xuanju 19/10. When Sima Guang (1019-1086) became lecturer in 1046, he was merely 27 *sui*, see Ma Luan 馬巒, Gu Donggao 顧棟高 *bian zhu*; Feng Huimin 馮惠民 *zheng li*, *Sima Guang Nian Pu* 司馬光年譜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1990), pp.35.

⁵⁹ XCB, *Juan* 172, pp.4144; SHY, *Zhiguan*, 29/4.

⁶⁰ Hu Yuan (993-1059) joined the Directorate School as lecturer in 1052 at 60 *sui*, see Hu Ming Sheng 胡鳴盛, "An Ding Xian Sheng Nian Pu" 安定先生年譜, in Wu Hongze 吳洪澤, Yin Bo 尹波 *zhu bian*; Li Wenze 李文澤, Diao Zhongmin 刁忠民 *zhu shen*, *Song Ren Nian Pu Cong Kan* 宋人年譜叢刊 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2003), Vol.2, pp.684; Sun Fu (992-1057) returned back to the Directorate to be lecturer in 1054 when he was 63 *sui*, see Ouyang Xiu, "Sun Ming Fu Xian Sheng Mu Zhi Ming" 孫明復先生墓誌銘, in *OYXQJ*, Vol.30. pp.457-458; Mei Yaochen (1002-1060) was recommended to be Directorate Lecturer in 1056 at 55 *sui*, see Zhang Shizeng 張師曾 *bian*, "Wan Ling Xian Sheng Nian Pu" 宛陵先生年譜, in Beijing tu shu guan 北京圖書館 *bian*, *Beijing Tu Shu Guan Cang Zhen Ben Nian Pu Cong Kan* 北京圖書館藏珍本年譜叢刊 (Beijing: Beijing tu shu guan chu ban she, 1999), Vol.13, pp.374; and Li Gou (1009-1059) joined the Directorate School in 1057 when he was 49 *sui*, see "Zhi Jiang Li Xian Sheng Nian Pu" 直講李先生年譜, in Li Gou 李覲 *zhu*; Wang Guoxuan 王國軒 *jiao dian*, *Li Gou Ji (LGJ)* 李覲集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), pp.506.

⁶¹ XCB, *Juan* 181, pp.4386; SHY, *Zhiguan*, 29/4-5.

Three Prominent Educators at the Imperial University - Hu Yuan, Sun Fu and Li Gou

As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, Hu Yuan started his teaching career in Suzhou since 1035 on the invitation of Fan Zhongyan. After spending 5 years in the Suzhou prefectural school, Hu Yuan's fame as an eminent educator caught the attention of Teng Zongliang 滕宗諒 (991-1047), whom invited Hu to teach at the newly established prefectural school in Huzhou around 1040/6.⁶² Nevertheless, he could only engage seriously in teaching in Huzhou upon returning from the Northwestern border. With the support of the local prefect Hu Su 胡宿 (995-1067), the successor of Teng Zongliang, the Huzhou school continued to flourish.⁶³ The rising fame of Hu Yuan as an educator and his unique teaching method in the Huzhou School partly explained why Fan Zhongyan persuaded the court to absorb Hu Yuan and his teaching method at the Imperial University during the Qingli reform. But owing to the departure of Fan, the court did not summon Hu Yuan and he continued to stay at Huzhou.

Although the court subsequently invited him to be the tutor for the princes and discuss on the rules of bells, Hu Yuan declined the invitations on the grounds of his poor health and retired from public service.⁶⁴ The court invited Hu Yuan again in 1052/10 to be Directorate Lecturer to teach at, and later to supervise, the metropolitan schools. The reason for this is because the Imperial University by then was loosely regulated, and hence the emperor wished to identify talented people to instruct and

⁶² The prefectural school at Huzhou was established in 1040/6 by prefect Teng Zongliang. See Zhang Fangping, "Hu Zhou Xin Jian Zhou Xue Ji" 湖州新建州學記, in *ZFPJ, Juan 33*, pp.535. Teng then invited Hu Yuan to teach in the newly established school. See *SYXA, Juan 1*, pp.24.

⁶³ Ouyang Xiu, "Zeng Tai Zi Tai Fu Hu Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 贈太子太傅胡公墓誌銘, in *OYXQJ, Juan 35*, pp.515; *SS, Juan 318*, pp.10366.

⁶⁴ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ, Juan 33*, pp.728; Ouyang Xiu, "Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao" 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ, Juan 25*, pp.389.

regulate students. In view of Hu Yuan's emphasis on substantial learning and his outstanding teaching performance in Suzhou and Huzhou in the past 20 years, this task was entrusted to him.⁶⁵ This time Hu Yuan did not refuse the Court's invitation. Apart from his major duties at the Imperial University, Hu Yuan also assisted in deliberations on the rules of bells,⁶⁶ a task for which he had already been recruited in the mid-1030's on the recommendation of Fan Zhongyan.⁶⁷

Hu Yuan's early days at the Imperial University were far from easy. From an edict of 1051, we understand that those recently appointed as Directorate Lecturer had been frivolous people flocking around the capital, and often tried to bribe powerful officials in order to be nominated for the teaching post.⁶⁸ Since the post of Directorate Lecturer was no longer reputable, together with the fact that Hu Yuan was not a degree holder, it is reasonable for us to understand why some students did not have much confidence in him, some even challenging his academic credentials.

But Hu Yuan soon proved to be a respectable scholar and educator. First, he invited his former students Sheng Qiao 盛僑 and Gu Lin 顧臨 (1028-1099), both of whom had passed the civil service examination in 1053, to assist him at the Imperial University.⁶⁹ In addition to the assistance of top disciples, the unique teaching of Hu Yuan himself was equally crucial in winning the trust of students. This is best

⁶⁵ *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3659.

⁶⁶ *XCB*, *Juan* 173, pp.4175; *SHY*, Yue 樂, 5/1; *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.395.

⁶⁷ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, *Juan* 33, pp.728.

⁶⁸ *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 29/4.

⁶⁹ Lü Xizhe 呂希哲 *zhuan*, *Lü Shi Za Ji* 呂氏雜記, *Juan Shang*, in *QSB*, Ser.1 Vol.10, pp.265-266, which has later been quoted by Ma Tuanlin in his *WXTK*. See *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.395. According to Lü Xizhe record, Hu Yuan assigned another top disciple Sun Jue 孫覺 to teach on *Mencius*. But according to the annalistic biography of Sun Jue, Sun had been assigned outside the capital Kaifeng to Hefei 合肥 and Taiping 太平 (modern Anhui) during Hu Yuan's tenure at the Imperial University (1052-1059). Hence Sun Jue's assistance at the Imperial University in the 1050's is dubious. See Mao Panlin 茆泮林 編, *Song Sun Xin Lao Xian Sheng Nian Pu* 宋孫莘老先生年譜, in *Beijing Tu Shu Guan Cang Zhen Ben Nian Pu Cong Kan*, Vol.18, pp.233-394. See particularly pp.246-251.

illustrated in Hu Yuan's lecture on the *Book of Changes*.⁷⁰ Whereas the conventional way of teaching merely focused on the existing commentaries and exegeses, Hu thoroughly elaborated on the meanings and essentials of the Classics by relating them to current affairs. Such innovative teaching was widely acclaimed in the student community.⁷¹ Gradually scholars around the capital began to pay their respects to Hu Yuan.⁷²

But pressure also came from Hu Yuan's peers.⁷³ Veteran lecturers who adhered to the traditional mode of teaching and classical extrapolations were likely to be the first group of malcontents. Jealousy from others for the achievements of Hu Yuan, who occupied the leading post in the Directorate of Education despite lacking a degree, also increased his stress. In addition, Hu Yuan's discord with his colleagues, noticeably the prominent Directorate Lecturer Sun Fu,⁷⁴ also worsened his ordeal at the School upon the latter's return in 1055.⁷⁵

The disagreement between the two men was first recorded by a Northern Song contemporary, Shao Bo 邵博 (1057-1134), which is now incorporated into a

⁷⁰ Hu Yuan was an expert in the *Book of Changes*. A detailed discussion on Hu Yuan's interpretation on this Classic, see Hon Tze-ki, *The Yijing and Chinese politics: classical commentary and literati activism in the northern Song Period, 960-1127* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), pp.52-71. See also Wong Fu Wing, "The thoughts of Hu Yuan (993-1059)".

⁷¹ Wang Dechen 王得臣 (1036-1116) zhuan; Yu Zongxian 俞宗憲 dian jiao, *Zhu Shi* 塵史 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1986), *Juan Shang*, "Zhong Dang" 忠諫, pp.15; Li Zhi 李廌 zhuan; Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 dian jiao, *Shi You Tan Ji* 師友談記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2002), pp.37; and Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, *Juan* 33, pp.729.

⁷² Lü Xizhe 呂希哲 zhuan, *Lü Shi Za Ji* 呂氏雜記, *Juan Shang*, in *QSB*, Ser.1 Vol.10, pp.266; *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.395.

⁷³ *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.395 and *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3659.

⁷⁴ Wang Jianqiu tried to explain the discord between the two, see Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.227-229. But most of his arguments were not well sounded owing to the confusion of some basic historical facts. For details of the rebuttals on Wang's argument, see Wong Fu Wing, "Sun Fu, 992-1057: his life and thought" 孫復(992-1057)的生平與思想 (unpublished MPhil dissertation, University of Hong Kong, 1987), pp.87-91 and Thomas H.C. Lee, "Song Chao Jiao Yu Ji Ke Ju San Lun" 宋朝教育及科舉散論, pp.114-115.

⁷⁵ (resumed to be the lecturer in 1055 till his death in 1057, see Ouyang Xiu Ji, *Juan* 30 Ouyang Xiu, "Sun Ming Fu Xian Sheng Mu Zhi Ming" 孫明復先生墓誌銘, in *OYXQJ*, *Juan* 30. pp.457.

compilation of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) recording the speeches and conducts of Northern Song officials:

“Mister (Sun Fu) did not like the personality of Hu Yuan, and hence he avoided meeting Hu at the Imperial University. Hu Yuan’s classical knowledge was not as profound as Sun Fu, but the former was more accomplished in instructing and nurturing students.”⁷⁶ 先生惡胡瑗之為人，在太學常相避。瑗治經不如先生，而教養過之。

A recent assertion explaining the discord between the two men is that Hu Yuan had plagiarized the work of Sun Fu.⁷⁷ Traditionally scholars generally cited differences in character and personality as the reasons for the conflict; Zhu Xi once argued that Hu was mild while Sun was vigorous.⁷⁸ Qing scholar Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755) made a further elaboration on this theme in the *Studies on Various Intellectual Schools in Song and Yuan Times* (*Song Yuan Xue An*), arguing that Hu Yuan was persistent, latent and substantial while Sun Fu was brilliant and robust. As a result, students generated towards the character of their respective teachers.⁷⁹ The formation of two parties of students was an unavoidably a negative sign of the “Cold War” between the two educators. Nonetheless, we cannot find any evidence on open dispute between the two.⁸⁰ In fact, Hu Yuan once commended the knowledge of Sun Fu on the Confucian Classics in a memorial to the emperor.⁸¹ Both of them cooperated and pushed the Imperial University to a new height.

⁷⁶ Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) zhuan, *Wu Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu* 五朝名臣言行錄, Juan 10, in ZZQS, Vol.12, pp.322. Similar records in the XCB and SS were basically following this primary source. See XCB, Juan 186, pp.4495 and SS, Juan 432, pp.12833.

⁷⁷ See Wong Fu Wing, “Cong Hu Yuan Yu Sun Fu Chun Qiu Jing Shuo Lei Tong Shuo Qi” 從胡瑗與孫復《春秋》經說雷同說起, delivered at the “Lingnan Song Shi Yan Jiu Hui Cheng Li Hui Yi: 10-13 Shi Ji Zhong Bian Jiang He Dui Wai Guan Xi Wen Ti (Yi Nan Jiang Wei Zhong Xin)” 嶺南宋史研究會成立會議：10-13 世紀中國邊疆和對外關係問題（以南疆為中心），Guangzhou, November 2010.

⁷⁸ Zhu Xi, *Zhu Zi Yu Lei* 朱子語類, Juan 129, in ZZQS, Vol.18, pp.4027.

⁷⁹ SYXA, Juan 1, pp.23.

⁸⁰ A similar conclusion was also reached by Wong Fuwing and Thomas Lee on this issue. See Wong Fu Wing, “The thoughts of Hu Yuan (993-1059)”, pp.91 and Thomas H.C. Lee, “Song Chao Jiao Yu Ji Ke Ju San Lun”, pp.115.

⁸¹ Zhu Xi, *Wu Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu*, Juan 10, in ZZQS, Vol.12, pp.318.

One of the most noticeable achievements was that Hu Yuan and Sun Fu got the court's permission allowing students to stay at the Imperial University overnight.⁸² In the past, candles had to be extinguished at night in the capital.⁸³ Such ban on fire also restricted overnight residence at the Imperial University, meaning that students had to leave the school campus in the evening. After the residential prohibition was lifted under Hu's and Sun's efforts, more and more students gathered at the University.⁸⁴ Despite the fact that allowances to students were significantly reduced around 1056,⁸⁵ the number of University students continued to swell. Students from the four corners gathered in the capital, one of them even coming from south of Panyu in modern Guangdong province.⁸⁶ It is likely that the Higher Elites from the Directorate School came over as well. The University campus was so tiny that it could not accommodate all the students. Some of them had to stay in the infantry barracks nearby.⁸⁷ Such a lively environment in the metropolitan schools enhanced the attractiveness of Hu Yuan and Sun Fu as teachers, as portrayed by Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107), a University student in the 1050's:

In the past years when Professor Hu Yuan lectured on the *Book of Changes*, there were always outsiders, nearly a thousand of them, requesting to be part of the audience. As Executive Assistant of the Department of Palace Services, Sun Fu gave a lecture on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and countless people attended his class in the first ten days. Some of them were asked to leave since the lecture hall was already full. But they insisted on standing outside to hear his teaching. At that time, studies of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* flourished and applauded for several decades up till now.⁸⁸ 往年，胡博士瑗講易，

⁸² Zhang Shunmin 張舜民 zhuan, *Hua Man Lu* 畫墁錄, Juan 1, in *QSBJ*, Ser.2 Vol.1, pp.201.

⁸³ Wei Tai 魏泰 (11th/12th century) zhuan, *Dong Xuan Bi Lu* 東軒筆錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1983), Juan 10, pp.117.

⁸⁴ Zhang Shunmin, *Hua Man Lu*, Juan 1, in *QSBJ*, Ser.2 Vol.1, pp.201.

⁸⁵ Zhao Bian, "Qi Ge Huan Tai Xue Tian Tu Fang Min Zhuang" 乞給還太學田土房緡狀, in *QSW*, Vol.41, pp.220. This memorial could also be found in *LDMCZY*, Juan 114/1b, pp.1505, which recorded that this memorial was submitted in the third year of Zhi He (i.e. 1056).

⁸⁶ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, Juan 33, pp.729; Li Zhi, *Shi You Tan Ji*, pp.37; and *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3659.

⁸⁷ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, Juan 33, pp.729; *XCB*, Juan 184, pp.4461.

⁸⁸ Cheng Yi, "Hui Li Bu Qu Wen Zhuang" 回禮部取問狀, in Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085); Cheng

常有外來請聽者，多或至千數人。孫殿丞復說《春秋》，初講旬日間，來者莫知其數。堂上不容，然後謝之，立聽戶外者甚衆。當時《春秋》之學爲之一盛，至今數十年傳爲美事。

After strenuous efforts, Hu Yuan ultimately overcame the challenges to preside successfully as the supervisor of the metropolitan schools.⁸⁹ Likely due to excellent teaching and leadership, Hu Yuan was promoted to be the Auxiliary Tutor of the Tian Zhang Pavilion 天章閣侍講 in 1056.⁹⁰ He therefore was expected to leave the Imperial University to serve as private tutor of the emperor. But Ouyang Xiu requested that the emperor retain Hu Yuan to supervise the Imperial University in view of his significant contribution and huge impact on the School:

Since Hu Yuan began supervising the Imperial University, students respected his virtue and behavior. They obeyed the regulations and attended the daily lectures, thereby elevated their virtue and knowledge. Among those successful candidates in the recent examinations at the Directorate School and Kaifeng prefecture, more than 300 students were taught by Hu Yuan. Such academic achievement is not only the good fortune of the students, but a flourishing University campus also demonstrates the munificence of the court. Now Hu Yuan is promoted to Imperial Mat Lecturer and should leave the University. Without such a reliable scholar to depend on, I am afraid students will scatter. ... I therefore beg Your Majesty to let Hu Yuan serve as co-administrator of the Directorate of Education, or assume full charge of the Imperial University, so that students in Schools will not scatter.⁹¹ 自瑗管勾太學以來，諸生服其德行，遵守規矩，日聞講誦，進德修業。昨來國學、開封府並鎖廳進士得解人中，三百餘人是瑗所教。然則學業有成，非止生徒之幸，庠序之盛，亦自是朝廷美事。今瑗既升講筵，遂去太學，竊恐生徒無依，漸以分散。...臣等欲望聖慈特令胡瑗同勾當國子監，或專管勾太學，所貴生徒不至分散。

The memorial of Ouyang Xiu reveals that a lot of Hu Yuan's students

Yi 程頤 (1033-1107) zhu, *Er Cheng Ji (ECJ)* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), *Juan* 7, pp.568.

⁸⁹ WXTK, *Juan* 42, pp.395 and SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3659.

⁹⁰ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, *Juan* 33, pp.729.

⁹¹ Ouyang Xiu, "Ju Liu Hu Yuan Guan Gou Tai Xue Zhuang" 舉留胡瑗管勾太學狀, in *OYXQJ*, *Juan* 110, pp.1670.

performed exceptionally well in the recently held examinations for the metropolitan area. The unique teaching methods and vision of Hu Yuan were likely the main reasons behind such success. Hu Yuan taught all students patiently, even though some of them were less clever.⁹² He grouped students into different classes based on their individual talent, allowing those who had similar expertise in classical knowledge, the arts of war, or literature to study together.⁹³ Hu Yuan visited his students regularly, asking them questions and reviewing their progress. After noticing their learning outcome, Hu Yuan further instructed his students to relate their knowledge to practical matters. This was an extension of the Huzhou teaching practice, the division of students into two separate classes of Classical Meaning and Practical Matters as described in the previous chapter.

Through such training, Hu Yuan expected all students to understand the essentials of substance (體 *Ti*), function (用 *Yong*) and literature (文 *Wen*), as the way of the sages. Those constant principles such as ruler, subject, father, son, humanity, righteousness, rites and music derived from substance; Classics, histories and the collections of various thinkers which recorded and promulgated for posterity represented literature; while the application of knowledge to the political and social affairs for the sake of the public good represented function.⁹⁴ Through learning Classical Meaning and Practical Matters in class, students could understand both the

⁹² Ouyang Xiu, “Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao” 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 25, pp.389.

⁹³ Xu Zhengsui 許正綏 ji, *An Ding Yan Xing Lu* 安定言行錄, Juan 1, pp.11b-12a, in *Cong Shu Ji Cheng Xin Bian* (CSJCXB) 叢書集成新編 (Taipei: Xin wen feng chu ban gong si, 1985), Vol. 260, pp.56.

⁹⁴ SYXA, Juan 1, pp.25. “It is said that the Way has three aspects: substance, function, and literary expression. The bond between prince and minister and between father and son, humanity, righteousness, rites and music – these are the things which do not change through the ages; they are its substance. The Books of Odes and History, the dynastic histories, the writings of the philosophers – these perpetuate the right example down through the ages; they are its literary expression. To activate this substance and put it into practice throughout the empire, enriching the life of the people and order all things to imperial perfection – this is its function.” 聖人之道，有體、有用、有文。君臣父子，仁義禮樂，歷世不可變者，其體也。《詩書》史傳子集，垂法後世者，其文也。舉而措之天下，能潤澤斯民，歸于皇極者，其用也。The translation is adapted from Wm. Theodore de Bary (et al), *Sources of Chinese tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), Vol.1, pp.384.

“substance” of the way (*Ming Ti*) and how to adapt “substance” to “function” (*Da Yong*).⁹⁵ Such unique exposition exerted a huge impact on scholarly trends in the Northern Song, as reflected in a reply to emperor Shenzong from Liu Yi 劉彝 (1017-1086), a student of Hu Yuan with expertise in irrigation technology:

Our dynasty has not after successive reigns made substance and function the basis for the selection of officials. Instead we have prized the embellishments of language, and thus have corrupted the standards of contemporary scholarship. My teacher [Hu Yuan] from the *Mingdao* through the *Baoyuan* periods [1033–1039], was greatly distressed over this malady and expounded to his students the teaching which aims at clarifying the substance [of the Way] and carrying out its function. ... The fact that today scholars recognize the basic importance to government and education of the substance and function of the Way of the sages is all due to the efforts of my Master.⁹⁶ 國家累朝取士，不以體用為本，而尚聲律浮華之詞，是以風俗偷薄。臣師當寶元、明道之間，尤病其失，遂以明體達用之學授諸生。...故今學者明夫聖人體用，以為政教之本，皆臣師之功...

The teachings of Hu Yuan had proven a huge success. As noted by Ouyang Xiu, “out of every ten candidates who passed the departmental examination, four or five are students of Hu Yuan.”⁹⁷ 禮部貢舉，每歲所得士，以先生弟子十常居四五。Such men later became influential officials and prominent figures who continuously dominated the Northern Song political and social arena for several decades.⁹⁸ His

⁹⁵ See Satō Hitoshi 佐藤仁 (1927-), “Ko en no (mei karada tachi you) no manani tsuite” 胡瑗の「明体達用」の学について, in Satō Hitoshi cho, *Sōdai no shunjūgaku : Sōdai shitaifu no shikō sekai* 宋代の春秋学：宋代士大夫の思考世界 (Tōkyō: Kenbun Shuppan, 2007), pp.265-331 and Jin Rongguan 金榮官, “Hu Yuan De Fen Zhai Jiao Xue Fa Ji Qi Ying Xiang” 胡瑗的分齋教學法及其影響”, in Jiang Xidong 姜錫東, Li Huarui 李華瑞 zhu bian, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Cong Di Qi Ji* 宋史研究論叢 第7輯 (Baoding: Hebei da xue chu ban she, 2006), pp.360.

⁹⁶ The translation is adopted and modified from Alan Thomas Wood, *Limits to autocracy: from Sung Neo-Confucianism to a doctrine of political rights* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), pp.73-74. For the original Chinese texts, see Zhu Xi, *Wu Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu*, Juan 10, in *ZZQS*, Vol.12, pp.316.. See also *SYXA*, Juan 1, pp.25.

⁹⁷ Ouyang Xiu, “Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao” 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 25, pp.389.

⁹⁸ Wang Zao 汪藻 (1079-1154), “Hu Xian Sheng Yan Xing Lu Xu” 胡先生言行錄序, in *QSW*, Vol.157, pp.231. See also Xu Zhengsui, *An Ding Yan Xing Lu*, Juan 1, pp.11b-12a, in *CSJCB*, Vol. 260,

early students included the Fan brothers, Fan Chunyou 范純祐 (1024-1063) and Fan Chunren 范純仁 (1027-1101), sons of the Qingli reforms leader Fan Zhongyan. At the instruction of their father, they followed Hu when he taught at the Suzhou prefectural school in the 1030's. Fan Chunren later became Chief Councilor in the late 1080's. Sun Jue 孫覺 (1028-1090), a renowned scholar in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, was also an early student of Hu. He got the degree in 1046, assisted Hu in his teaching at the Imperial University in the 1050's, and became the Executive Censor in the late 1080's. Among the successful candidates in 1053, at least nine of them were students of Hu Yuan. Most of them followed Hu Yuan at the Huzhou Prefectural School. After Hu Yuan was appointed as Directorate Lecturer in 1052/10, it is likely that they followed to the capital. They probably attended the Imperial University for a short period, waiting to take the departmental examination in 1053/1. After passing the examinations, they entered official careers. Some of them, such as Gu Lin and Sheng Qiao, returned to the School and assisted Hu Yuan. When Hu Yuan taught at the Imperial University, his most well-known disciple was Cheng Yi, one of the founders of Neo-Confucianism.⁹⁹ When Hu Yuan questioned his students on what kind of learning the Confucian Sage Yan Hui 顏回 (521-490 B.C.E.) favored, the answers provided by Cheng Yi, by then a young man of 25 *sui*, were very impressive. Hu then arranged a meeting with Cheng and invited him to assist in teaching at the Imperial University.¹⁰⁰ As noted by Cheng Yi, most of Hu Yuan's students had a simple, kind, harmonious and easygoing character that was easy to recognize.¹⁰¹ By

pp.56.

⁹⁹ A. C. Graham, *Two Chinese philosophers: Ch'êng Ming-tao and Ch'êng Yi-ch'uan* (London: Lund, Humphries, 1958) is one of the earliest studies in English regarding the philosophy of Cheng Yi. For recent scholarships relating to the thoughts of Cheng Yi and his contribution to Neo-Confucianism, see Peter K. Bol, "Ch'eng Yi as a Literatus", in Willard J. Peterson, Andrew H. Plaks and Ying-shih Yü (ed), *The Power of culture: studies in Chinese cultural history* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1994), pp.172-194. See also Peter K. Bol, *This culture of ours*, Chapter 9 "Ch'eng I and the New Culture of Tao-hsueh", pp.300-342.

¹⁰⁰ SS, *Juan* 427, pp.12718-12719. See also W. T. Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp.547.

¹⁰¹ Shao Bowen, *Shao Shi Wen Jian Lu*, *Juan* 8, pp.80. See also Xu Zhengsui, *An Ding Yan Xing Lu*, *Juan* 1, pp.10b-11a, in CSJCB, Vol. 260, pp.55-56.

observing their behavior, it was easy to identify that they were students of Hu Yuan.¹⁰² Throughout Hu Yuan's entire career as an educator, at least four students were ranked within the top three in the palace examinations. Based on surviving records, we can still identify at least 50 of his students who had passed the civil service examinations during the period 1046-1089. (Appendix 2)

The huge impact of Hu Yuan on the metropolitan schools might partly explain why he was permitted to hold dual offices as supervisor of the Imperial University and tutor to the emperor. Not until 1059, when an aging Hu Yuan could hardly attend court meetings, was he finally allowed to retire.¹⁰³ When students heard the news, they begged for several days outside the office of Hu Yuan, asking him to stay, with predictably disappointing results.¹⁰⁴ When Hu Yuan left the capital, many university students and court officials gave him a warm farewell in admiration. He died at the age of 67 in the same year. When news of Hu Yuan's passing reached the capital, the Editor of the *Jixian* Library (*Ji Xian Jiao Li* 集賢校理) Qian Gongfu 錢公輔 (1021-1072), a former disciple of Hu Yuan, led over a hundred university students in mourning to a Buddhist temple, weeping in homage. Qian even requested for two-day leave to perform mourning rites for his master.¹⁰⁵ Such intimate master-disciple relationship came about through the daily interactions between Hu Yuan and his students.

The existing records usually leave the impression that Hu Yuan was strict teacher. Having high esteem for his students, he set up a code of practice as guidelines

¹⁰² Ouyang Xiu, "Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao" 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 25, pp.389.

¹⁰³ Ouyang Xiu, "Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao" 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 25, pp.390; *SS*, Juan 432, pp.12837-12838.

¹⁰⁴ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, Juan 33, pp.729.

¹⁰⁵ Ouyang Xiu, "Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao" 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 25, pp.390; *XCB*, Juan 189, pp.4548; and *SS*, Juan 432, pp.12837-12838.

for his students to follow. He himself would follow these rules even under adverse conditions, and set himself as an exemplar for his disciples.¹⁰⁶ When a student Xu Ji 徐積 (1028-1103), later famous for filial piety, failed to hold his head erect on one occasion, he was scolded by Hu Yuan.¹⁰⁷ Although Hu perfected the school regulations, he did not utilize them to restrict students; instead he asserted nurturing students through moral education.¹⁰⁸ Despite demanding expectations, Hu Yuan genuinely cared for his students and advised them on daily conduct. When a University student An Tao 安燾 (1031-1105) once fainted in the crowded lecture hall, Hu Yuan cared for An until he recovered. Moreover, for good health, he suggested students avoid sitting after meals and instead take part in sports activities such as archery.¹⁰⁹ After the monthly and annual examinations, Hu Yuan gathered students in the Hall of Primary Excellence (*Shou Shan Tang* 首善堂), and encouraged them to sing poems.¹¹⁰ The depiction in the official history, *Song Shi*, offers the best illustration of the intimacy between Hu Yuan and his students: “Adhered strictly to the traditional concept of the teacher-disciple relationship, treating his students like his own sons or younger brothers; and students trusted and loved him like their own father or elder brother.”¹¹¹ 嚴師弟子之禮，視諸生如其子弟，諸生亦信愛如其父兄。

The vacancy left by Hu Yuan was likely to be succeeded by Li Gou, a scholar

¹⁰⁶ Cai Xiang, “Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi” 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, Juan 33, pp.729.

¹⁰⁷ *SYXA*, Juan 1, pp.29.

¹⁰⁸ Lü Xizhe, *Lü Shi Za Ji*, Juan Shang, in *QSBJ*, Ser.1 Vol.10, pp.266.

¹⁰⁹ Shao Bowen, *Shao Shi Wen Jian Lu*, Juan 8, pp.80. See also Xu Zhengsui, *An Ding Yan Xing Lu*, Juan 1/10b, in *CSJCXB*, Vol. 260, pp.55.

¹¹⁰ *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.395; *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3659. In the ancient past rites and music were formal curriculum in schools to educate students. Since the Han dynasty, they became informal and ceremonial. Following the “Temple School” tradition of the Tang, ceremonial rites were preserved in Song government schools, with a vision that students’ morality could be better nurtured through ritual practices. Nevertheless, music had often been neglected. Hu Yuan was one among a few educators who restored proper music in schools, envisioning that it could nurture a better learning environment to cultivate morality. For a brief discussion on rites in Song schools, see Zhou Yuwen 周愚文, “Song Dai De Xue Li” 宋代的學禮, in Gao Mingshi 高明士 bian, *Dong Ya Chuan Tong Jiao Yu Yu Xue Li Xue Gui* 東亞傳統教育與學禮學規 (Shanghai Shi: Hua dong shi fan da xue chu ban she, 2008), pp.28-51.

¹¹¹ *SS*, Juan 432, pp.12837. The translation is made with reference to Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Sources of Chinese tradition*, Vol.1, pp.384.

who promoted pragmatism and utilitarianism and aimed at using the *Institutes of Zhou* as a model for governance.¹¹² Similar to Hu Yuan, Li Gou was also a prominent scholar without an Advanced Scholar degree. But his talent and educational vision had long been recognized by Fan Zhongyan as early as the 1030's, who tried to persuade Li to teach at the prefectural schools. Having spent around 20 years in local academies, Li Gou finally had a chance to realize some of his visions at the national level when he started to teach at the Imperial University in 1057. After a year, he elaborated further on the functions of the metropolitan educational institutions in his essay "Discourse on the Imperial University" (*Tai Xue Yi*).¹¹³ With reference to the ancient Zhou setting, Li argued that "establishment of the Biyong (i.e. the Imperial University) not merely involves giving lectures and instructions to students, but also performing rites related to educational inspections as well as respecting senior teachers."¹¹⁴ 辟雍之設，非徒講授而已，便當行視學之禮，養老之事 Moreover, the Imperial University, which assumed all the teaching functions at that time, should not be affiliated with the aristocratic Directorate School. Instead the two should be independent, with both supervised by the Directorate of Education – an educational administrative organ.¹¹⁵ Although these proposals elicited no immediate response from the court, they somehow laid the foundation for the future development of the metropolitan schools. In fact, rising significance of the Lower Elites-based Imperial University, which gradually overshadowed the Higher Elites-based Directorate School in late Northern Song,¹¹⁶ represents the actualization of Li Gou's vision, as we shall

¹¹² Li's writing on the *Institutes of Zhou*, called "On that the Zhou-li Could Lead to a Great Harmonious [Government]" 周禮致太平論, predated Wang Anshi's own commentary on and enthusiasm for this canon, and most likely influenced Wang. On a brief description of the political thought of Li Gou, see Xiao Gongquan 蕭公權 zhu, *Zhong Guo Zheng Zhi Si Xiang Shi* 中國政治思想史 (Beijing: New Star Publisher, 2005), pp.298-302 and Shan-yuan Xie, *The Life and Thought of Li Kou, 1009-1059* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1979).

¹¹³ "Zhi Jiang Li Xian Sheng Nian Pu", in *LGJ*, pp.506.

¹¹⁴ Li Gou, "Tai Xue Yi" 太學議, in *LGJ*, Juan 29, pp.333.

¹¹⁵ Li Gou, "Tai Xue Yi", in *LGJ*, Juan 29, pp.333.

¹¹⁶ Zhao Tiehan, "Song Dai De Tai Xue", pp.311-312; Thomas H.C. Lee, "Song Chao Jiao Yu Ji Ke Ju San Lun", pp.97-111; and Zhang Bangwei and Zhu Ruixi, "Lun Song Dai Guo Zi Xue Xiang Tai Xue Yan Bian", pp.219-240.

see in upcoming chapters.

The pragmatic approach of Li Gou was in line with Hu Yuan and Sun Fu that stressed the practicability of Classical knowledge. Despite profound knowledge of the classics and a strong will to improve society, all these men failed to pass the civil service examinations and hence could not realize their vision in the political arena. Alternatively, they became teachers in various prefectural schools. Soon their fame as prominent educators was widely acclaimed and caught the attention of prominent officials. Owing to the recommendation of these officials, Sun Fu, Hu Yuan and Li Gou were able to teach at the metropolitan schools. Through their ceaseless efforts at such elite educational institutions, their ideas were implanted in the minds of future officials. Ironically, their strong passion for teaching emanated from previous failure at the civil service examinations. In the absence of examination credentials, the prospects for appointment to high government positions were nearly impossible. Lecturer at the metropolitan schools likely represented the highest point that they could climb in government. Lecturers with the Advanced Scholar degree often aspired to career advancement, but Sun Fu, Hu Yuan, and Li Gou could focus entirely on teaching. This also means that they were unlikely to engage in opportunistic actions against colleagues and serve as models for students.

Under the efforts of these visionary, enthusiastic, and exemplary scholars, a younger generation of officials might possibly develop commitment to public service through the application of classical knowledge. Apart from the contribution of these educators, the political environment in the late Renzong era as a whole is highly conducive to the Imperial University's development. By then, upright officials such as Han Qi, Fu Bi and Ouyang Xiu occupied top positions in government. New scholarly customs in the capital would likely have a positive impact on the learning

environment at the Imperial University as well. In addition, partly owing to the sicknesses of old age, Renzong ruled in *laissez-faire* fashion and designated most tasks to the top administrative bureaus.¹¹⁷ The intellectual environment in the Renzong era was comparatively liberal in consequence, and the Imperial University enjoyed a high degree of academic freedom. The co-existence of competing schools of classical interpretations as well as the prevalence of the “Imperial University” Style of writing at the metropolitan schools offer good evidence of the climate, as we shall discuss later in this chapter. Under these circumstances, how could this environment best facilitate the learning of the students? How much could the students apply what they learned to the political arena? Before turning to these issues, we have to clarify the student numbers at the metropolitan schools in the 1050’s.

Convolutd relationship between the Directorate School and the Civil Service examinations in the 1050’s

We understand from the above that although the Imperial University became independent from the Directorate School, its land endowment was confiscated by the latter. Huge expenses caused by the attendance requirement at the metropolitan schools also led to abolishing the requirement. The campus development project was also scrapped for the same reason. The institutional development of the School was impeded while the fiscal constraint even affected student allowances.

As mentioned earlier, the University provided allowances for 200 students in the Inner Hall since its establishment. Owing to funding shortages, barely more than half of the students in the Inner Hall could be supported when Chen Xu 陳旭

¹¹⁷ Sima Guang, “Shang Huang Di Shu” 上皇帝疏 (治平二年八月十一日上), in *QSW*, Vol.54, pp.307.

(1011-1079, later renamed as Chen Shengzhi 陳升之) supervised the Directorate in the late 1040's.¹¹⁸ But the situation got worse in the early 1050's. An edict in 1051/7 ordered that the quota for the Inner Hall of the Imperial University be reduced from 200 to 100 by setting aside unfilled places.¹¹⁹ Reducing the student quota allowed the government to allocate less to the Imperial University. In fact, the government's financial support for the Imperial University continued to shrink in the 1050's, with only the poorest 20-30 students receiving the allowance in 1056, when Hu Yuan supervised the School.¹²⁰

This edict of 1051 also reveals the fact that the quota of 200 for the Inner Hall of the Imperial University had yet to be filled. This was likely a consequence of the Directorate of Education's confiscation of Imperial University landholdings. After losing its independent funding, the Imperial University could no longer provide subsistence allowance for all 200 students. Since most students at the Imperial University came from families of low-ranking officials or even commoners, they were not well off. As the University did not provide overnight accommodations, students had to find alternative accommodations in Kaifeng, where the cost of living was exceptionally high. Without the school's subsidy, poorer students could hardly afford life in the capital. As a result, even students eager to learn often had to withdraw from school, leave the capital and return home.

¹¹⁸ Zhao Bian, "Qi Ge Huan Tai Xue Tian Tu Fang Min Zhuang" 乞給還太學田土房緡狀, in *QSW*, Vol.41, pp.220.

¹¹⁹ *XCB*, *Juan* 170, pp.4095; *SHY*, *Chongru*, 1/30.

¹²⁰ "Recently, after Hu Yuan had supervised the school affairs for three years, stipends were only provided to those student prefects who carried on official duties as well as the poorest 20 to 30 students." 近胡瑗管勾，已逾三歲，才贍及掌事諭義、孤寒學徒三二十人而已。 See Zhao Bian, "Qi Ge Huan Tai Xue Tian Tu Fang Min Zhuang" 乞給還太學田土房緡狀, in *QSW*, Vol.41, pp.220. We understand from *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 114, 1a-2a, pp.1502-1503 that this memorial was submitted in 1056. Modern scholars such as Thomas H.C. Lee quoted this as an evidence to illustrate the fact that there were only 20-30 University students under the supervision of Hu Yuan. See Thomas H.C. Lee, *Song Dai Jiao Yu San Lun*, pp.79 and 103-104. But the texts appear to imply "the school **could only subsidize** 20-30 students" rather than "the school **had** 20-30 students".

The poor living conditions experienced by the University students might partly explain why some of them took desperate measures in order to earn a living, as reflected in an imperial decree to the Directorate of Education in 1053:

Officials should be diligent to determine whether any students at the Directorate School have sold their student registration certificates to others, causing men without department or permanent residence to take the Directorate examination by using a fake identity.¹²¹ 如聞監生或以補牒質鬻於人，使流寓無行之士，冒試於有司，其加察之。

The above edict suggests that some people who were ineligible to take the Directorate examination could purchase student identity papers in order to qualify. The attractiveness of the Directorate and Kaifeng examinations, as shortcuts to the Departmental examination, is the main reason for this phenomenon. The occasional relaxation of the admissions requirement of the Directorate School under Taizu in 975 was made in response to this problem, as described in chapter two. This appealing nature of the Directorate and Kaifeng examinations persisted into the early 1050's, as mentioned in a memorial by the official Jin Junqing 金君卿 (c.a.1050):¹²²

I discovered that in recent years, several thousand students had registered for the examinations for Kaifeng prefecture and the Directorate of Education. This year when commencement of the civil service examinations was announced by edict, people from the four corners pursued all ways to the capital. The people's tendency to leave their own prefecture and register for the examinations in the Kaifeng prefecture and the Directorate of Education owes much to the recently uneven distribution of the nomination quota for various prefectures. Moreover, since the unlimited nomination quota in the Kaifeng prefecture and the Directorate of Education was much bigger than

¹²¹ *XCB*, *Juan* 175, pp.4221; *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 29/4.

¹²² In this memorial, Jin Junqing referred to the imperial amnesty granted in the 1050 after the "Hall of Enlightenment" (Mingtang) ceremony. See his "Ren Zong Zhao Yan Gong Ju Bian Yi Shi Zou Zhuang" 仁宗朝言貢舉便宜事奏狀, in *QSW*, Vol.84, pp.59. According to *SHY*, *Xuanju* 15/14, such imperial amnesty was granted in 1050/9, implying that Jin should have submitted his memorial after this time. See also *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 165/15b, pp.2167.

other prefectures, people in those prefectures with a small quota rushed to the capital.¹²³ 臣竊見向來開封府、國子監兩處，應舉者常至數千人... 今年自聞詔下，四方之往者不絕於道... 竊原士之所以輕去州郡而樂趨府、監者，大抵以近者州郡立定解額多不均一，及開封府、國子監素無定額，比之外郡稍寬，故外郡解額少處，競奔湊京師...

Although modern scholars doubt whether the competition for the Directorate examination was less than the prefectural examinations,¹²⁴ the fact that thousands of candidates lingered in the capital to take the Kaifeng prefectural or the Directorate examinations should not be obscured. This phenomenon was cited in a memorial by Sima Guang, who provided three more explanations for the trend. He argued that those who were appointed as Chief Examiners in the Departmental examination were usually high officials in the capital, and their favorite style of writing would become the examination standard. Only the candidates living in the capital for some time could notice this subtle change in literary vogue, and hence they generally performed better in the examinations. Moreover, Sima Guang perceived that only those candidates studying in the capital could master the requisite skills in answering poetry, rhapsodies, policy essays and discussion questions -- the criteria for selection to "Advanced scholar". In addition, the examinations in the capital also provided a way out for those candidates with records of poor conduct in their own prefectures.¹²⁵ As a result, "scholars of the four quarters all abandoned their homes, illegally left their parents, and grew old in the capital without ever returning home."¹²⁶ 四方學士皆棄背鄉里，違去二親，老於京師，不復更歸 To sit on the Directorate examination, these people had to use a forged student identity by purchasing a student registration

¹²³ Jin Junqing 金君卿, "Ren Zong Zhao Yan Gong Ju Bian Yi Shi Zou Zhuang" 仁宗朝言貢舉便宜事奏狀, in *QSW*, Vol.84, pp.59.

¹²⁴ See John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.62, particularly footnote 109.

¹²⁵ Sima Guang, "Gong Yuan Qi Zhu Lu Qu Ren Zhuang" 貢院乞逐路取人狀, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.3. This memorial was submitted in 1069/5.

¹²⁶ Sima Guang, "Gong Yuan Qi Zhu Lu Qu Ren Zhuang" 貢院乞逐路取人狀, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.3. The translation is adopted and modified from John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.63.

certificate, which implied a consistently high demand for the certificate. The financial hardship experienced by some poor students in the 1050's, because of the shrinking subsidy, was likely to be an incentive for them to get involved in this lucrative business. It is reasonable to believe that the above edict issued in 1053 was the court's response to the rampant forgery of student identities in the early 1050's.

Apart from causing a huge number of candidates to linger near the capital, the schedule of the civil service examination was also accountable for the Imperial University's unfilled quota in the early 1050's. As described in the memorial of Wang Zhu in 1042 cited before, there was a cyclical pattern of students' attendance peaking during the examinations: most students would attend classes before the examination and leave afterwards. We understand that three departmental examinations were held in 1049, 1053 and 1057. According to Wang Zhu, we can predict a significant drop in the number of students attending classes in intervening years. The unfilled quota at the Imperial University in 1051 seems to fit this hypothesis perfectly. According to this logic, more students would attend the Directorate School when the examinations approached. The 300-400 active students at the Imperial University, mentioned by Ouyang Xiu in his 1056 memorials, were likely a side-effect of the departmental examination in early 1057.¹²⁷

Once candidates passed the Directorate examination, usually held in autumn, they would be presented to take the Departmental examination held by the Ministry of Rites in the upcoming spring, competing with candidates nominated by prefectures. Before 1058, Renzong generally held the civil service examinations every four years. As a result, six to seven thousand candidates lingered in the capital, awaiting the

¹²⁷ Ouyang Xiu, "Ju Liu Hu Yuan Guan Gou Tai Xue Zhuang" 舉留胡瑗管勾太學狀, in *OYXQJ*, *Juan* 110, pp.1670 and Ouyang Xiu, "Ju Bu Yi Chen Lie Chong Xue Guan Zha Zi" 舉布衣陳烈充學官劄子, in *OYXQJ*, *Juan* 110, pp.1671.

Departmental examination.¹²⁸ This period of several months between the Directorate and the Departmental examination was the cyclical climax of the Imperial University, particularly when Hu Yuan was still teaching there. Since the candidates might have noticed the fact that “four or five out of every ten candidates to pass the departmental examination were former students of Hu Yuan”,¹²⁹ it is likely that they would attend the classes of Hu Yuan for tips on their upcoming examination. After including these several thousand “occasional students”, the total number of students under the Directorate of Education far exceeded the assigned quota. As a result, the school campus became even more crowded, a situation which was described by Ouyang Xiu as “messy and disgusting.”¹³⁰ 狼籍可憎 This phenomenon is clear evidence of how “students” perceived the role of the Directorate School and the Imperial University - they merely saw them as “crammer schools” to better prepare for the examinations.¹³¹

But in view of the potential disturbances caused by these candidates in the capital, together with the goodwill of some officials towards those candidates who failed in previous examinations,¹³² the court ordered in early 1058 that the civil service examinations be held in alternate year cycles.¹³³ Subsequent to the revision of examination schedule, the timetable for admissions to the Directorate School also changed, where candidates had to be admitted to the Directorate School one year before the year of civil service examinations. By requiring study at the Directorate School one year before the examinations, the government sought to improve the moral

¹²⁸ *XCB, Juan 186*, pp.4495.

¹²⁹ Ouyang Xiu, “Hu An Ding Xian Sheng Mu Biao” 胡安定先生墓表, in *OYXQJ, Juan 25*, pp.389.

¹³⁰ This was mentioned in a letter dated 1056 from Ouyang Xiu to his student Jiao Qianzhi 焦千之, whom by then was studying at the Imperial University. In this letter, Ouyang Xiu mentioned about the cool weather, meaning that it is during the period of late autumn/early winter in the year, being the interim period between the Directorate examination and the Departmental examination. The messy school campus that Ouyang Xiu visited during his stay in the capital is likely to be the situation at the Imperial University. See Ouyang Xiu, “Yu Jiao Dian Cheng Qian Zhi Shi Liu Tong Jiu” 與焦殿丞〈千之〉十六通九, dated 1056, in *OYXQJ, Juan 150*, pp.2478.

¹³¹ Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.108.

¹³² *XCB, Juan 18*, pp.4495.

¹³³ *XCB, Juan 186*, pp.4496; *SHY, Xuanju*, 3/33; and *SS, Juan 12*, pp.242.

standard of prospective officials through educational screening and indoctrination.

Nevertheless, the revised admissions schedule did not last long. In 1058/4, the Supervisor of the Directorate Wu Zhongfu 吳中復 (1011-1078) requested that the old admissions schedule be reinstated, admitting students in the year of examination. It is likely because poor students from far away could hardly afford the high cost of living in the capital in view of the small stipend, and hence they often purchased fake student certificate or used another name to register for the Directorate or Kaifeng prefectural examination just before the examination took place. For the sake of poor candidates, the Court approved Wu's request to resume the old practice.¹³⁴ The Directorate School and the Imperial University could therefore admit students in the year of examination. Poor candidates could then seek formal admission to the Imperial University and registration for the Directorate examination without resorting to illicit deeds. Two months later, likely because of the positive response, the student quota in the metropolitan schools was raised from 450 to 600.¹³⁵ This quota remained unchanged for the remainder of Renzong's reign and his successor Yingzong (1032-1067, r.1063-1067).

The cyclical pattern of student attendance at the metropolitan schools and perception of the metropolitan schools as a training ground for the civil service examinations is reflected in the *Works written by Lü Zuqian in a private study* (*Lü Shi Jia Shu Ji*) 呂氏家塾記:

Before the establishment of the Three Halls System, the Imperial University was merely a big Reading Club. At that time it had Sun Mingfu (Sun Fu) and Hu Anding (Hu Yuan). How could people not be

¹³⁴ XCB, *Juan* 187, pp.4509; SHY, *Zhiguan*, 29/4 .

¹³⁵ XCB, *Juan* 187, pp.4509; SHY, *Zhiguan*, 29/4; and SS, *Juan* 12, pp.242.

attracted to the school?¹³⁶ 未立三舍前，太學只是一大書會，當時有孫明復、胡安定之流，人如何不趨慕。

Reading Clubs (*Shu Hui*) had been organized by candidates in the Song dynasty with the aim to sharpen their skills in tackling the examinations. They studied together in these Clubs and took Mock examinations that allowed candidates to familiarize themselves with the examinations settings.¹³⁷ Depiction of the Imperial University as a big Reading Club implies a common perception among the Song public. If the Imperial University had become an examination training ground, the following questions may then be raised: why were prominent scholars such as Hu Yuan, Sun Fu, Li Gou and Mei Yaochen, who had repeatedly failed in the examinations, assigned to the metropolitan schools to teach students to prepare for the examination? Why did so many candidates gather at the metropolitan schools to learn from these lecturers?

To answer these questions, we have to understand why these prominent scholars had failed the civil service examinations. As discussed in previous chapters, poetry and rhapsody questions as well as a style of writing that stressed on literary ornamentation had dominated the limelight in the 1020's to 1030's. Since Hu Yuan, Sun Fu and Li Gou paid more attention to substance and pragmatism, they were repeatedly failed by the examiners in the civil service examinations. Curiously, as Directorate Lecturers in the 1050's, they instructed students in preparing for precisely the examinations that they had failed.

A possible explanation for their appointments is that the emperor and the top

¹³⁶ Zhu Xi, *Zhu Zi Yu Lei*, *Juan* 109, in *ZZQS*, Vol.17, pp.3530.

¹³⁷ See Zhou Yangbo 周揚波, "Song Dai De Shi Shen Hui She" 宋代的士紳會社 in Bao Weimin 包偉民 (ed), *Song Dai She Hui Shi Lun Gao* 宋代社會史論稿 (Shan Xi: Shan Xi Gu Ji Chu Ban She, 2005), pp.62 for a brief discussion on these Reading Clubs.

officials in the 1050's preferred candidates whose writing had more relevance to problems of statecraft. By appointing scholars who stressed substance and practicality as Directorate Lecturer, the government hoped to phase out flowery writings on the examinations. In fact, Renzong's own words are solid evidence in support of this argument. As early as the 1030's, the emperor expressed dissatisfaction towards flowery examination scripts. Drastic reforms were even undertaken in 1044 by weighting policy essays and discussion questions over flowery poetry and rhapsody, although the outcome was less than satisfactory. Likely learning from the failure of the Qingli reform, Renzong came to prefer a gradual over radical change. The appointment of Hu Yuan and Sun Fu to progressively transform the literary vogue of examination candidates could be perceived as a manifestation of such a mindset. It is likely because of the government's resoluteness in promoting substantiality and practicality in the 1050's that Hu Yuan, who had repeatedly refused official appointments in the 1040's, agreed to take up the Lectureship in 1052.

Promotion of Song Learning (Song Xue) - Classical skepticism and pluralistic teaching at the metropolitan schools

Apart from denouncing the writing style which merely emphasizing literary ornamentation, Hu Yuan and Sun Fu also condemned the conventional Classical commentaries and advocated their own interpretations of the Classics, through which they promoted the practical application of classical knowledge to current affairs. Their skeptical views towards traditional Classical commentaries, a dominant feature in the Song learning (Song Xue) in the post-Qingli era, was summarized by the prominent Southern Song scholar and poet Lu You 陸游 (1125-1210):

From Tang till the beginning of the (Song) dynasty, scholars dared

not discuss Kong Anguo 孔安國 and Zheng Xuan, let alone the sages? After the Qingli period, various Confucians elaborated on the meaning of the Classics, a feat that their predecessors could never achieve. But they rejected the *Xi Ci* chapter in the *Book of Changes*, condemned the *Institutes of Zhou*, held the *Mencius* as spurious, ridiculed the *Yin Zheng* and *Gu Ming* chapters in the *Book of Documents*, and spurned the Preface to the *Book of Poems*. They did not hesitate in discussing the Classics, let alone the commentaries and exegeses?¹³⁸ 唐及國初，學者不敢議孔安國、鄭康成，況聖人乎！自慶曆後，諸儒發明經旨，非前人所及；然排《繫辭》，毀《周禮》，疑《孟子》，譏《書》之《胤征》、《顧命》，黜《詩》之序，不難于議經，況傳注乎！

From the above statement, later scholars generally believe that the Song Confucians began to doubt the Classics after the Qingli period of Renzong. In fact, skepticism towards the Classics had been festering among the scholar-officials since the mid-Tang.¹³⁹ After the founding of the Song, a number of scholars such as Wang Yuchen and Liu Kai continued this skepticism.¹⁴⁰ So what was the rationale behind this movement?

Under the influence of Buddhism and Daoism, the Confucian ethical order was in crisis, as evidenced by the disorder in the late Tang and the Five Dynasties. In order to re-establish Confucian ethics in society, the Song Confucians cited the ideal models in the ancient past. They considered that the ancient Kings Yao 堯, Shun 舜 and Yu 禹 were Sages, and that the societies under their governance were ideal. By

¹³⁸ This is quoted from Wang Yinglin zhuan, *Kun Xue Ji Wen* 困學紀聞 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2008), *Juan* 8, “Jing Shuo” 經說, pp.1095.

¹³⁹ A prominent Tang scholar who was skeptical towards the existing Classical exegesis was Dan Zhu 啖助. See Ouyang Xiu; Song Qi, *Xin Tang Shu*, *Juan* 200, pp.5708. For English narratives on this trend of classical skepticism in the mid-Tang, see Mark Edward Lewis, *China's cosmopolitan empire: the Tang dynasty* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), pp.234-238; Chen Jo-shui, *Liu Tsung-yüan and intellectual change in T'ang China, 773-819* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 28-30.

¹⁴⁰ The similarity between mid-Tang and Song scholars on their views towards the Confucian Classics was thoroughly discussed in Feng Xiaoting 馮曉庭 zhu, *Song Chu Jing Xue Fa Zhan Shu Lun* 宋初經學發展述論 (Taipei: Wan Juan lou tu shu you xian gong si, 2001).

imitating ideal society in the ancient past 復古 and reasserting the value of “venerate the King” 尊王, they perceived that an orderly society could be rebuilt. Since the ideal administrative structure and model in the ancient past were recorded in the Six Classics, the Song Confucians had to study and imitate them.¹⁴¹ However Song scholars perceived that the commentaries and exegeses by Han and Tang scholars could not convey the messages of the ancient sages. Later revision of some Classics had even distorted their meaning. In order to recover the true meaning of the Classics, these Song scholars tried to get rid of spurious meanings from Han and Tang exegeses. They queried the authenticity of the authorship of the Classics as well as corrected errors original to the Classics. Later scholars dubbed this movement as one of skepticism towards the Classics.¹⁴²

Skepticism towards the Confucian Classics does not mean that Song intellectuals challenged the authority of the Classics. Contrarily, by eliminating those problematic interpretations of Han and Tang scholars, Song Confucians tried to recover the meaning of the original Classics.¹⁴³ By extracting those authentic ideas in

¹⁴¹ Regarding the background of the development of Song Learning, see Kojima Tsuyoshi 小島毅 cho, *Sōgaku no keisei to tenkai* 宋学の形成と展開 (Tōkyō: Sōbunsha, 1999); Fumoto Yasutaka 麓保孝 cho, *Hokusō ni okeru Jugaku no tenkai* 北宋に於ける儒学の展開 (Tōkyō: Shoseki Bunbutsu Ryūtsūkai, 1967); Qi Xia 漆侠 zhu, *Song Xue De Fa Zhan He Yan Bian* 宋學的發展和演變 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei ren min chu ban she, 2002), particularly chapter 7-9, pp.218-311; Wu Guowu 吳國武 zhu, *Jing shu yu xing li: bei Song ru xue zhuan xing kao lun* 經術與性理：北宋儒學轉型考論 (Beijing: Xue yuan chu ban she, 2009); and Tsuchida Kenjiro 土田健次郎 cho, *Dōgaku no keisei* 道学の形成 (Tōkyō: Sōbunsha, 2002). For Chinese translation of the last book, see Tsuchida Kenjiro (Tutian Jiancilang) zhu ; Zhu Gang 朱剛 yi, *Dao Xue Zhi Xing Cheng* 道學之形成 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2010).

¹⁴² Qu Wanli 屈萬里, “Song Ren Yi Jing De Feng Qi” 宋人疑經的風氣, in *Qu Wanli Xian Sheng Quan Ji* 屈萬里先生全集 (Taipei: Lian jing chu ban shi ye gong si, 1983-1985), Vol.14, pp.237-244, particularly pp.238. See also Ye Guoliang 葉國良, *Song Ren Yi Jing Gai Jing Kao* 宋人疑經改經考 (Taipei: Guo li Taiwan da xue, 1977). Recent studies of Song scholars’ skepticism towards the Confucian Classics include Yang Xinxun 楊新勳 zhu, *Song Dai Yi Jing Yan Jiu* 宋代疑經研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shu Ju, 2007) and Yang Shiwen 楊世文 zhu, *Zou Chu Han Xue: Song Dai Jing Dian Bian Yi Si Chao Yan Jiu* 走出漢學：宋代經典辨疑思潮研究 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2008). For a brief English narrative on this, see Susan Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (Jun., 1994), pp.22-29.

¹⁴³ Some scholars deemed that “Suspecting the Commentaries” (疑傳) was a better term than “Suspecting the Classics” (疑經) to describe the trend of classical studies in the Song. See Gu Yongxin 顧永新 zhu, *Si Wen You Chuan, Xue Zhe You Shi : Ouyang Xiu De Wen Xue Yu Xue Shu Cheng Jiu* 斯

the Classics that were in line with their beliefs, the Song Confucians could add their own elaborations and elevate the status of the Classics. Rather than demolishing, they were actually elevating their status.¹⁴⁴ A similar approach had been adopted by Mencius over a millennium ago to assert the supremacy of the Confucian Classics over other schools.¹⁴⁵

Initiated by Wang Yuchen and Liu Kai and subsequently promoted by Shi Jie and Ouyang Xiu in the mid Renzong period, skepticism towards the existing Classical exegesis and evolution of new meaning of the Classics became increasingly popular after the Qingli era. This trend of Classical studies, better known as “Song Learning”, was somehow politically driven. To substantiate their arguments on current affairs, Song scholars usually made reference to the ideal conditions of the antiquity as set out in the Confucian Classics. In turn they made their own elaborations on the Confucian Classics, which could then be widely circulated among the scholars’ circle after printing technology became increasingly available.¹⁴⁶ The appointment of Sima Guang, Sun Fu, Hu Yuan and Li Gou to be teaching staff at the Directorate School and

文有傳，學者有師：歐陽修的文學與學述成就 (Zhengzhou Shi: Da xiang chu ban she, 2000), pp.106.

¹⁴⁴ See Li Yumin, “Lun Song Xue Jing Shen Ji Xiang Guan Wen Ti” 論宋學精神及相關問題 in Ji nan da xue Zhongguo wen hua shi ji yan jiu suo 暨南大學中國文化史籍研究所 bian; Zhang Qifan 張其凡, Lu Yongqiang 陸勇強 zhu bian, *Song Dai Li Shi Wen Hua Yan Jiu* 宋代歷史文化研究 (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she, 2000), pp.1-10, see particularly pp.5. Wu Huaqi 吳懷祺 zhu, *Song Dai Shi Xue Si Xiang Shi* 宋代史學思想史 (Hefei: Huangshan shu she, 1992), pp.8.

¹⁴⁵ Ouyang Xiu, “Yi Huo Wen Di Er” 易或問第二, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 18, pp.303.

¹⁴⁶ Denis Twitchett, *Printing and publishing in medieval China* (New York: Frederic C. Beil, 1983) and Tsien Tsuen-Hsuin, *Science and Civilisation in China Vol.5 Chemistry and Chemical Technology Part I: Paper and Printing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp.159-169 provided a brief description on the evolution of printing technology since the Tang dynasty till the Song. The latter work also briefly discussed the technology and procedure of woodblock printing (pp.196-201). For a recent study on the history of printing and books in late Imperial China, see Joseph P. McDermott, *A social history of the Chinese book: books and literati culture in late imperial China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006). One of his findings which surprised me is that even with the ascendance of imprints since the 11th century owing to advanced printing technology, hand copied manuscripts still maintained its influence till the 16th century. Readers can refer to Chapter 2 “The Ascendance of the Imprint in China”, pp.43-81 for details. Advanced printing technology also caused the price of books to drop by 90%, meaning that reading materials became more affordable and accessible to the masses. See Weng Tongwen 翁同文, “Yin Shua Shu Du Yu Shu Ji Cheng Ben Di Ying Xiang” 印刷術對於書籍成本的影響, in *SSYJJ* Vol.8, pp.487-503.

the Imperial University in the 1040-50's further facilitated the penetration of "Song Learning" in the metropolitan schools, which indirectly affected the political and educational development of the Northern Song.

Both Hu Yuan and Sun Fu were skeptical towards the exegeses and commentaries of Han and Tang scholars and offered their own interpretations, through which they wanted to access ancient wisdom. One of the targets of Hu Yuan was the official commentary on the *Book of Changes* by the Tang Scholar Kong Yingda, a tool used to justify the misdeeds in the late Tang and Five Dynasties, Hu Yuan believed.¹⁴⁷ Having challenged such authoritative commentaries, Hu Yuan wrote his own exposition on the Five Classics, which was recorded by his students and subsequently collated as oral transmission.¹⁴⁸ The most renowned work that survived today was *The Orally transmitted meanings of the Yi of the Zhou [Dynasty]* (*Zhou Yi Kou Yi* 周易口義), which was compiled by his student Ni Tianyin 倪天隱.¹⁴⁹

Sun Fu's skepticism toward the Classics was even more radical than Hu Yuan, having advocated a thorough revision of all classical texts, as well as the official annotations and commentaries.¹⁵⁰ Being an expert of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, Sun Fu expressed his unique interpretations of this Classic in his masterpiece, *Exposition on the subtle meanings of Venerating the King in the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chun Qiu Zun Wang Fa Wei*), part of which is still extant today. In this work, Sun Fu reasserted the essential values of "honoring the authority of the ruler" (*Zun Wang*) and "expelling the barbarians" (*Rang Yi*), the former aimed to centralize the

¹⁴⁷ Hon Tze-ki, *The Yijing and Chinese politics*, pp.49-50; Tsuchida Kenjirō, *Dōgaku no keisei*, pp.101-111 (For Chinese translation, see Tsuchida Kenjirō, *Dao xue zhi xing cheng*, pp. 106-115)

¹⁴⁸ Cai Xiang, "Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi" 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, *Juan* 33, pp.729.

¹⁴⁹ See Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724-1805) zong zuan, *Si Ku Quan Shu Zong Mu Ti Yao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Shi Jia Zhuang: He Bei Ren Min Chu Ban She, 2000), *Juan* 2, pp.62-63 for an abstract of *Zhou Yi Kou Yi* 周易口義. For a biography of Nie Tianyin, see *Song Shi Yi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), pp.245-46.

¹⁵⁰ Sun Fu, "Ji Fan Tian Zhang Shu Er" 寄范天章書二, in *QSW*, Vol.19, pp.291.

power of the emperor while the latter implied countering the invasions of the Khitan and Tangut as well as the intellectual challenges from the imported Buddhism.¹⁵¹ His intention to use the Classics for solutions to contemporary problems was very obvious. To sum up the key features of Sun Fu's classical studies, we may simply refer to epitaph by Ouyang Xiu in his honor:

Mr. Sun was misled by neither previous commentaries nor heterodox theories that would confuse the meanings of the classics in his study of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. His own words are simple and clear. He established with clarity the respective merits and demerits of the ancient feudal rulers and their officials, thereby assessing how the times prospered or declined, and inferred how orderliness resulted from the kingly way or chaos from the lack of it. In this way, he often managed to access the grander meaning of the Classics.¹⁵² 先生治《春秋》，不惑傳注，不為曲說以亂經。其言簡易，明于諸侯大夫功罪，以考時之盛衰，而推見王道之治亂，得于經之本義為多。

Despite Ouyang Xiu's praise, Sun Fu's unconventional elucidation on the Classics was condemned by Yang Anguo 楊安國, a traditional scholar and veteran Directorate Lecturer. Mainly because of Yang's critique, Sun Fu failed to be promoted to be the emperor's tutor.¹⁵³ Nevertheless, having taught in the Directorate School for several years in both the 1040's and 1050's, Sun Fu's skeptical views towards the traditional exegeses did somehow leave an imprint on the students in the Directorate School.

Another influential lecturer at the Directorate School in the mid-1050's was

¹⁵¹ See Alan Thomas Wood, *Limits to autocracy*, pp.81-110. For a thorough discussion on the thoughts of Sun Fu, see Satō Hitoshi 佐藤仁 (1927-), "Mago fuku no shōgai tosono shisō – (shunjuu mikoto ou hatsu bi) wo chuushin nishite" 孫復の生涯とその思想—『春秋尊王發微』を中心にして—, in Satō Hitoshi, *Sōdai no shunjūgaku*, pp.1-101.

¹⁵² Ouyang Xiu, "Sun Ming Fu Xian Sheng Mu Zhi Ming" 孫明復先生墓誌銘, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 30, pp.458. The translation was made with reference to James T.C. Liu, *Ou Yang Hsiu*, pp.89.

¹⁵³ Zeng Gong, *Long Ping Ji* 隆平集, Juan 15, in *SDZJCK*, Vol.13, pp.585; *SS*, Juan 432, pp.12832

the renowned poet Mei Yaochen. Initially adhering to Yang Yi's "Current Style" of writing, Mei Yaochen gradually shifted to Ouyang Xiu's "Classical Style". He condemned the flowery beauty of the "Current Style" and advocated that poems should be connected to the daily life of the people.¹⁵⁴ His works reflected his concern with the livelihood of the people, sometimes with his own critical and vigorous commentaries on various matters.¹⁵⁵

Under the influence of Hu Yuan, Sun Fu, Li Gou and Mei Yaochen, each developed their own area of excellence in aspects such as classical poetry and innovative commentaries of the Confucian Classics. A diverse and lively intellectual environment had evolved in the metropolitan schools in the mid-1050's, as summarized by Southern Song scholar Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143-1194):

Hu Yizhi [Yuan], Sun Fu, and Shi Jie came to the Imperial University due to their classical knowledge. Li Taibo [Gou] and Mei Yaochen joined them through their literary works and polemical writings. Students began to have excellent teachers since then. At that time, the school had yet to adopt the practices of assessment and examinations. Students coming to the Imperial University, despite living in a congested environment, did not feel tired. The glory of the Imperial University reached its peak at that time.¹⁵⁶ 胡翼之，孫復，石介以經術來居太學，而李泰伯，梅堯臣輩又以文墨議論游泳於其中，而士始得師矣。當是時，學校未有課試之法也。士之來者，至接屋以居而不倦，太學之盛，蓋極於此矣。

Such diverse teaching at the metropolitan schools implied that the orthodox

¹⁵⁴ Mei Yaochen, "Da Han San Zi Hua Han Wu Chi Guo Han Liu Yu Ru Jian Zeng Shu Shi" 答韓三子 華韓五持國韓六玉汝見贈述詩, in Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 zhu ; Zhu Dongrun 朱東潤 bian nian jiao zhu, *Mei Yaochen Ji Bian Nian Jiao Zhu* 梅堯臣集編年校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1980), Juan 16, pp.336.

¹⁵⁵ For a through study of the poetry of Mei Yaochen in Western languages, see Jonathan Chaves, *Mei Yao-ch'en and the development of early Sung poetry* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1976).

¹⁵⁶ Chen Liang, "Bian Wen Fa" 變文格, in Chen Liang zhu; Deng Guangming diao jiao, *Chen Liang Ji* 陳亮集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1987), Juan 12, pp.135.

interpretation of the Confucian Classics was no longer sound. The lecturers' doubts about the Tang commentaries even implied a challenge to the existing standard for the examinations. This was particularly destructive at a time when the orthodox was losing its credibility and a new academic authority had yet to be established. In turn, students who followed Hu and Sun ignored the conventional standards and format, indulging in their own preferred writings to answer examination questions. By relating their examination writings to current affairs as instructed by the lecturers, some students even voiced heterodox opinions while commenting on current affairs with vigor.

Due to the relevance of the eccentric prose promoted by Shi Jie in the 1030's and 40's, as discussed in the previous chapter, this "Unorthodox Style" of writing continued to flourish in the metropolitan schools till the 1050's, irrespective of the court's repeated prohibitions in the late 1040's. Since a huge number of University students were practicing this odd style of writing, it was dubbed the "Imperial University Style",¹⁵⁷ which continued to dominate the literary vogue inside the examination hall. Not until the Departmental examination of 1057 when the Chief examiner Ouyang Xiu failed those candidates who practiced this eccentric style did students turn to the "Classical Style".

¹⁵⁷ Scholars had diversifying views in classifying the "Imperial University" style. It had been commonly argued by modern scholars that this belongs to a sub-category of Gu Wen. See Ge Xiaoyin 葛曉音, "Bei Song Shi Wen Ge Xin De Qu Zhe Li Cheng" 北宋詩文革新的曲折歷程, *Zhong Guo She Hui Ke Xue* 中國社會科學, No.2 (1989), pp.115 and Takashi Takatsu 高津孝, "Bei Song Wen Xue Zhi Fa Zhan Yu Tai Xue Ti" 北宋文學之發展與太學體, in Takashi Takatsu (Gaojin Xiao) zhu; Pan Shisheng 潘世聖 deng yi, *Ke Ju Yu Shi Yi: Song Dai Wen Xue Yu Shi Ren She Hui* 科舉與詩藝：宋代文學與士人社會 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2005), pp.25-36. But some scholars such as Zhang Xingwu does not agree on this traditional classification. See Zhang Xingwu, "Bei Song Tai Xue Ti Wen Feng Xin Lun", pp.87-88.

Prose at Imperial University and the 1057 Departmental examination

Ouyang Xiu was generally in line with Hu Yuan and Sun Fu in terms of their attitude towards classical commentaries. Well-known for his iconoclasm, Ouyang Xiu doubted Confucius' authorship of the *Commentary on Appended Verbal Elaborations* (*Xici*).¹⁵⁸ At another extreme, he suspected Confucius to be the author of the *Ten Wings*, an authoritative commentary on the *Book of Changes*.¹⁵⁹ However, he was not as lenient as Hu and Sun towards the style of writing practiced by University students. Ouyang Xiu disliked the pretentious and lofty writing fervently promoted by Shi Jie.¹⁶⁰ Instead he advocated the "Classical Style" of writing in accordance with the principles of universality, simplicity and credibility.¹⁶¹ Implying permanence and general validity, the ideal of a universal language was imbedded in the Six Classics. Among them, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was considered as the model of "simple and regulated."¹⁶² 簡而有法 Truthfulness of content was also a primary attribute of a literary work, which determined how long such works could be remembered by posterity.¹⁶³

Apart from favouring literary works that were "simple and clear, credible and

¹⁵⁸ Ouyang Xiu, "Yi Tong Zi Wen" 易童子問 (A young child's questions about the Book of Changes), in *OYXQJ, Juan* 76-78, pp.1107.

¹⁵⁹ A brief English discussion on Ouyang Xiu's view on the *Book of Changes*, see Hon Tze-ki, *The Yijing and Chinese politics*, pp.74-76 and Peter K. Bol, "The Sung Context: From Ou-yang Hsiu to Chu Hsi," in Kidder Smith (et al.), *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp.26-55.

¹⁶⁰ This could be reflected in the correspondences between the two in 1035. See Ouyang Xiu, "Yu Shi Tui Guan Di Yi Shu" 與石推官第一書 and "Yu Shi Tui Guan Di Er Shu" 與石推官第二書, in *OYXQJ, Juan* 68, pp.991-994 and See Shi Jie, "Song Zhang Ji Li Chang Xu" 送張績李常序, in *CLJ, Juan* 15, pp.174-177. A brief discussion on this and part of the translation of the letters between the two can be found in Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.18-20.

¹⁶¹ For details elaboration on these three concepts, see Chen Yu-shih, *Images and ideas in Chinese classical prose: studies of four masters* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), pp.115-121.

¹⁶² See Ouyang Xiu, "Lun Yin Shi Lu Mu Zhi" 論尹師魯墓志, in *OYXQJ, Juan* 72, pp.1045.

¹⁶³ Ouyang Xiu, "Dai Ren Shang Wang Shu Mi Qiu Xian Ji Xu" 代人上王樞密求先集序, in *OYXQJ, Juan* 68, pp.984. Ouyang Xiu's *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties* is a typical example showing his "simple and regulated" style of writing as well as his emphasis on the truthfulness of content. See Richard L. Davis, *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*.

thorough” 其言簡而明，信而通，¹⁶⁴ Ouyang Xiu also believed that “literary works relate to good and bad governance” 文章系乎治亂之說，¹⁶⁵ and hence they should not be empty words but have practical use.¹⁶⁶ Due to the social function of literature, he criticized high-flown words without substance and blamed authors who neglected everything else.¹⁶⁷ In his view, only talented scholars with profound knowledge who had noticed the failure and knew the way to improve the situation could rightfully compose in-depth works with solid arguments, pinpointing current weaknesses without empty words.¹⁶⁸ Ouyang Xiu’s literary position rejected both the Current and Imperial University Styles: the former was characterized by its emptiness in content while the latter, distinguished by eccentric and bizarre ideas that were hardly readable, contravened the principles of simplicity, universality and practicability.¹⁶⁹

Ouyang Xiu’s dissatisfaction with the literary rage at the metropolitan schools emerged on several occasions in 1056, a year before he was appointed as the Chief Examiner for the departmental examination. In that year, Ouyang Xiu submitted a memorial discussing educational reforms. Likely bearing in mind the disastrous outcome incurred by vigorous criticisms of University students in the Eastern Han, he criticized the bizarre ideas and high-flown commentaries made by the students in this memorial:

For talented literati, except when manifested under special circumstances, their talent is otherwise unrecognizable under normal

¹⁶⁴ Su Shi, “Liu Yi Ju Shi Ji Xu” 六一居士集叙, in *SSWJ*, Juan 10, pp.316.

¹⁶⁵ Ouyang Xiu, “Yu Huang Jiao Shu Lun Wen Zhang Shu” 與黃校書論文章書, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 68, pp.988, which was written in 1034.

¹⁶⁶ Ouyang Xiu, “Jian Bu Yi Su Xun Zhuang” 薦布衣蘇洵狀, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 112, pp.1698.

¹⁶⁷ Ouyang Xiu, “Yu Zhang Xiu Cai Di Er Shu” 與張秀才第二書, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 67, pp.978; Ouyang Xiu, “Da Li Xiang De Er Shu” 答李諤第二書, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 47, pp.670; and Ouyang Xiu, “Da Wu Chong Xiu Cai Shu” 答吳充秀才書, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 47, pp.664.

¹⁶⁸ Ouyang Xiu, “Yu Huang Jiao Shu Lun Wen Zhang Shu” 與黃校書論文章書, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 68, pp.987.

¹⁶⁹ See Pang Yaling 彭雅玲, “Ouyang Xiu Pai Yi Tai Xue Ti Chu Tan” 歐陽修排抑太學體初探, *Zhong Hua Xue Yuan* 中華學苑, (March, 1995), pp.291.

circumstances. For those who wish to set themselves apart, they take an indirect path through bizarre deeds or lofty and vague commentaries for the sake of fame for virtue and honor. This was a shortcoming of the previous Qingli learning.¹⁷⁰ 夫人之材行，若不因臨事而見，則守常循理，無異眾人。苟欲異眾，則必為迂僻奇怪以取德行之名，而高談虛論以求材識之譽。前日慶曆之學，其弊是也。

The recommendations made by Ouyang Xiu for the two vacant positions of Directorate Lecturers can be understood as a way to rectify such customs in the metropolitan school. He recommended Mei Yaochen and Chen Lie 陳烈 for the positions. Mei was a prominent poet, whose thorough knowledge on the Confucian Classics, particularly the *Book of Odes*, made him a perfect candidate.¹⁷¹ In the case of Chen, Ouyang Xiu praised “his superior learning and behavior that adhered to the ancient way” 其學行高古 and considered him “a scholar neither arrogant nor aggressive” 非矯激之士.¹⁷² Ouyang Xiu envisioned Mei and Chen could assist in eradicating the “Imperial University Style” then prevalent at the Schools. Nevertheless, partly because of the unfavorable response towards the recommendation of Chen Lie, the vision of Ouyang Xiu could not be realized.

But Ouyang Xiu soon got another opportunity to turn the tide of the literary vogue.¹⁷³ In the capacity of the Chief Examiner in the Departmental Examination in 1057, Ouyang Xiu hinted in his three policy essay questions that candidates’ knowledge of the Classics and their ability to write in the Classical Style were critical

¹⁷⁰ Ouyang Xiu, “Yi Xue Zhuang” 議學狀, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 110, pp.1673.

¹⁷¹ Ouyang Xiu, “Ju Mei Yao Chen Chong Zhi Jiang Zhuang” 舉梅堯臣充直講狀, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 110, pp.1671.

¹⁷² Ouyang Xiu, “Zai Qi Zhao Chen Lie Zha Zi” 再乞召陳烈劄子, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 110, pp.1675.

¹⁷³ For a thorough analysis on the 1057 civil service examinations, see Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 zhu, *Wen Xing Cui Can: Bei Song Jiayou Er Nian Gong Ju Kao Lun* 文星璀璨：北宋嘉祐二年貢舉考論 (Shanghai: Fu dan da xue chu ban she, 2010). For English narratives of this incident in the political, intellectual and literary perspective, see Peter K. Bol, *This culture of ours*, pp.192-195, James T.C. Liu, *Ou Yang Hsiu*, pp.150-153, Ronald C. Egan, *The literary works of Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp.27-28; and Ronald Egan, “Chapter 5: The Northern Song (1020-1126)”, in Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Chinese literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 396.

to success.¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, partly owing to their entrenched practices or their lack of awareness of Ouyang Xiu's intention, a number of candidates continued to indulge themselves in the eccentric "Imperial University Style". As a result, those "with reputations for weirdness in writing"¹⁷⁵ 務為險怪之語 were systematically failed. Many of these failed candidates were former University students, among them the top student Liu Ji 劉幾 (1030-1065, later renamed as Liu Hui 劉輝). An anecdote by Shen Kua vividly depicts the setting:

During the Jiayou era (1056-1063), a scholar Liu Ji was the top student at the University. He was given to writing impulsively using strange language, a style that others followed until it became customary. Ouyang Xiu detested the practice. When given responsibility for literary composition, he acted with determination to penalize those who practiced this new style. The reform of this "Unorthodox Style" of writing was due to the excellent merit of Ouyang.¹⁷⁶ 嘉祐中，士人劉幾，累為國學第一人。驟為怪嶮之語，學者翕然效之，遂成風俗。歐陽公深惡之。會公主文，決意痛懲，凡為新文者一切棄黜。時體為之一變，歐陽之功也。

Apart from eliminating candidates who practiced the "Imperial University Style", Ouyang Xiu promoted the "Classical Style" of writing by elevating to the list of top candidates Zeng Gong and the Su brothers, whose "language and meaning were closest to the ancients."¹⁷⁷ 文律庶幾近古 As we all know, they all became prominent Northern Song officials and literary masters. The triumph of the "Classical Style" at the expense of the "Imperial University Style" and the "Current Style" of writing was irreversible, with disgruntled candidates complaining and cursing Ouyang Xiu. Subsequent to the shift in literary tide, it is noted that a number of university students

¹⁷⁴ Peter K. Bol, *This culture of ours*, pp.192.

¹⁷⁵ Han Qi, "Mu Zhi Ming Bing Xu" 墓誌銘〈並序〉, in in *OYXQJ, Fu Lu Juan 3* 附錄卷三, pp.2704.

¹⁷⁶ Original text from Shen Kuo, *Meng Xi Bi Tan*, Juan 9, "Ren Shi Yi" 人事一, pp.65. Translation was modified based on George C. Hatch, "The thought of Su Hsun, 1009-1066 - an essay in the social meaning of intellectual pluralism in Northern Sung" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1972), pp.143-144.

¹⁷⁷ Su Shi, "Ju He Qu Fei Huan Wen Zi Zhuang" 舉何去非換文資狀, in *SSWJ, Juan 29*, pp.837.

were converted to the “Classical Style”. The most notable case was Liu Ji, the top university student whom Ouyang Xiu failed in 1057, as mentioned above. After shifting his literary style, Liu was ranked at the top of the palace examination two years later in 1059. Contemporaries were surprised of Liu’s wit and swift embrace of the new style of writing.¹⁷⁸

It has widely been accepted that the 1057 examination demarcated the triumph of the “Classical Style” of writing. But what was its significance in terms of influence on the Imperial University and Song politics? As discussed above, since a huge number of university students practicing the eccentric “Imperial University Style” of writing were failed by Ouyang Xiu, the credibility of the Imperial University as an examination preparation school might have waned in the short run. But as long as the Directorate examination was still perceived by most candidates as a shortcut to the Departmental examination, the metropolitan schools might still remain attractive in the long run, as we shall see below.

More lasting was Ouyang Xiu’s precedent for Song senior officials exerting political power over schools. As Chief examiner, Ouyang Xiu consciously tried to shift the literary vogue inside the metropolitan schools through his position of power as chief examiner. The success of Ouyang partly inspired Wang Anshi to follow suit in promoting his own school of Classical interpretations across the country by making them the standard for the examinations in 1075, as the following chapter reveals. Such incidents might be perceived as a political intrusion into the academy from a modern perspective. Interestingly, students nowadays are similar to their predecessors a millennium ago in a sense that they protested against political infringement under the

¹⁷⁸ See Yang Jie 楊傑, “Gu Liu Zhi Dao Zhuang Yuan Mu Zhi Ming” 故劉之道狀元墓志銘, in *QSW*, Vol.75, pp.266; Wang Pizhi zhuan, *Sheng Shui Yan Tan Lu*, Juan 4, pp.34. See also James T.C. Liu, *Ouyang Hsiu*, pp.152.

slogan “protecting academic freedom”.

Another unintended impact of Ouyang Xiu’s failure of candidates using the “Imperial University” style was indirect support for the New Policies decades later. Since those practicing the “Classical Style” generally adhered to the values of “simplicity, universality and practicability”, the increased number of successful candidates practicing the “Classical Style” in the examinations from 1057 onwards meant that the Song government would acquire a pool of practical officials by the end of Renzong’s reign. Among these graduates, the cohort of 1057 was exceptionally influential. Apart from the well-known literary achievements of Zeng Gong, Su Shi and Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039-1112) as well as the philosophical talent of Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077) and Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085), this cohort also include future reformists’ Councilors Lü Huiqing 呂惠卿 (1032-1111) and Zeng Bu 曾布 (1036-1107).¹⁷⁹ Political dominance of the latter facilitated the implementation of the full-scale reforms in the Shenzong and Zhezong era.

The school promotion initiatives and its failure

After illustrating how the metropolitan schools evolved under Hu Yuan and interacted with the 1057 departmental examination, our focus will turn to the policy discussions at court concerning the proper role of the Imperial University. From Ouyang Xiu’s 1056 memorial “On school education” (*Yi Xue Zhuang* 議學狀), we find that different plans were submitted by four officials, proposing how prospective officials might be recruited through schools. Although details of the proposals were no longer extant, and the names of the officials are not cited by Ouyang Xiu, hints can be

¹⁷⁹ For a specific study on the 1057 examination as well as those prominent graduates in the year, see Zeng Zaozhuang, *Wen Xing Cui Can*.

found on critical elements of the proposed schemes:¹⁸⁰

Your subject noticed that recently policy advisors have suggested to Your Majesty measures to erect schools and recruit officials. Proposals to establish The Three Halls to nurture candidates, revitalize the Five Classics and install Professors, restore old institutions and repairing schools in poor condition, or create new schools while instituting regulations -- these all have a uniform purpose despite apparent differences.¹⁸¹ 右臣等伏見近日言事之臣為陛下言建學取士之法者眾矣，或欲立三舍以養生徒，或欲複五經而置博士，或欲但舉舊制而修廢墜，或欲特創新學而立科條，其言雖殊，其意則一。

The above proposals included establishment of the “Three Halls” to nurture candidates. But how should it work? Ouyang Xiu was not explicit in his memorial. Luckily, the *Works written by Lü Zuqian in a private institute*, a book no longer extant but is partly quoted in Zhu Xi’s *Anecdotes of Eminent Statesmen Under the Three reigns* 三朝名臣言行錄, gives us some idea:

When Fu Bi was the Chief Councilor, there were discussions on how prospective officials should be promoted through schools. It is suggested that school regulations be instituted by Confucian scholar-officials. University students whose understanding of the Classics was thorough and whose behavior upright were to be promoted from the Right School to the Left School, and then from the Left School to the Upper Hall. By the end of each year, those extraordinary in classical studies and the requisite behavior could be considered equivalent to candidates who had passed the civil service examinations with outstanding results. These outstanding school students could then be eligible for appointment to office.¹⁸² 富韓公為相，議欲稍由學校進士，命侍從儒臣講立法制，太學諸生經明行脩者，由右學升左學，由左學升上舍，歲終擇上舍中經行尤高者，比及第人，命之以官。

¹⁸⁰ Ouyang Xiu, “Yi Xue Zhuang” 議學狀, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 110, pp.1674.

¹⁸¹ Ouyang Xiu, “Yi Xue Zhuang” 議學狀, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 110, pp.1672.

¹⁸² Zhu Xi, *San Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu* 三朝名臣言行錄, Juan 2, in *ZZQS*, Vol.12, pp.398.

Internal promotion within government school is likely originated from the elementary schools in the *Jing Zhao Fu* 京兆府 (modern Xian) around 1054.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, likely owing to the rejection of Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019-1068) and Ouyang Xiu, who considered the scheme disadvantageous to students studying the Classics in schools, this scheme had yet to be adopted in the metropolitan schools.¹⁸⁴ From an article now preserved in the literary collection of Liu Chang, we find that Liu preferred “revitalizing the Five Classics and installing Professors” at the Imperial University as an educational institution for youths of court officials. These students could then be evaluated on a biannual basis through examinations, and the most outstanding one among them selected for office.¹⁸⁵ Ouyang Xiu offered no details on the “Three Hall” proposal. Instead, he stressed educational policies of “substance” practicable within the Song context.¹⁸⁶ This discussion suggests that officials in the 1050’s had become increasingly supportive of government education. Nevertheless, a majority of them hesitated about using government schools to recruit prospective officials, let alone using schools to replace the entire civil service examination system.

Two lingering problems

Other than the above achievements, the metropolitan schools were beset by two problems dating from the final years of Renzong and his short-lived successor Yingzong, problems inherited by Yingzong’s son, Shenzong. The first of them concerned staffing. After the deaths of Sun Fu, Mei Yaochen, Hu Yuan and Li Gou in the late 1050’s, the vacancies left by at the metropolitan schools had gone unfilled for

¹⁸³ Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.101-103. Yuan argued that traits for the school promotion mechanism could be found in the regulations governing the elementary schools in the capital area. See “Jing Zhao Fu Xiao Xue Gui” 京兆府小學規, in Wang Chang 王昶 (1725-1806), *Jin Shi Cui Bian* 金石萃編, Juan 134/23a-25a, in *XXSKQS*, Vol.890, pp.353-354.

¹⁸⁴ Zhu Xi, *San Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu*, Juan 2, in *ZZQS*, Vol.12, pp.398.

¹⁸⁵ Liu Chang 劉敞, “Zai Shuo Liu” 雜說六, in *QSW*, Vol.59, pp.307.

¹⁸⁶ Ouyang Xiu, “Yi Xue Zhuang” 議學狀, in *OYXQJ*, Juan 110, pp.1674.

a long time. Sima Guang attributed this to the high eligibility criteria for Directorate Lecturer, which required degree holders over 40 *sui*. Sima therefore suggested in 1062/9 that nominations for the post of Directorate Lecturers should be made by top officials or the Directorate of Education. Officials proven virtuous in conduct and learned in classical knowledge were to be recommended irrespective of age and qualifications based on interviews and lecturing skills.¹⁸⁷ It is uncertain whether the court ever adopted Sima Guang's proposal, but the task of filling vacant Lectureships proved an ongoing problem.

Another problem that continued to haunt the Song government, one indirectly related to the Directorate of Education, was the huge number of candidates lingering in the capital. By holding the civil service examinations in alternate years and reducing the nomination quota by half, it is hoped that the candidates would scatter.¹⁸⁸ Ironically, it turns out that even more students gathered in the capital, as Sima Guang recalls in a memorial in 1069:

After the civil service examinations had been scheduled in alternate years, more and more candidates coming from far away, seeking to avoid traveling back and forth between their own prefecture and the capital, took up residence in the capital and wished to register for the examination there. Since the bulk of successful "Advanced Scholar" degree candidates were nominated by either the Directorate of Education or Kaifeng prefectural authorities, it is natural for the people to linger in the capital. Who would wish to abandon such benefit and return to their own prefecture?¹⁸⁹ 自間歲開科場以來，遠方舉人憚於往還，只於京師寄應者，比舊尤多。...所以然者，蓋由每次科場及第進士，大率皆是國子監、開封府解送之人，則人之常情，誰肯去此而就彼哉！

¹⁸⁷ Sima Guang, "Qi Zhi Jiang Bu Xian Nian Ji Chu Shen Zha Zi" 直講乞不限年及出身劄子 嘉祐七年九月一日上, in *QSW*, Vol.54, pp.288.

¹⁸⁸ *XCB*, *Juan* 186, pp.4496 and *Juan* 187, pp.4506. See also *SHY*, *Xuanju*, 3/33.

¹⁸⁹ Sima Guang, "Gong Yuan Qi Zhu Lu Qu Ren Zhuang" 貢院乞逐路取人狀, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.3.

According to Sima Guang, the success of candidates recommended by the Kaifeng prefecture and the Directorate of Education in the Departmental examination was the main reason for the plethora of candidates in the capital. Evidence can be found in an earlier memorial by Sima Guang where he cites detailed figures for Departmental examination candidates in 1059, 1061 and 1063. From this, we find that on average for the 3 years, one fifth of candidates nominated by the Directorate of Education, and one sixth of candidates nominated by Kaifeng prefecture had passed the departmental examinations. The success rate of these candidates was much higher than nominees from various prefectures in general, where only one in thirty examination candidates passed the departmental examination. Among the Advanced Scholar degree holders for these three years, 40-50% were nominated by Kaifeng prefecture or the Directorate of Education.¹⁹⁰ Such remarkable rates of success explain why candidates across the country continued to perceive the examinations in the metropolitan area as a shortcut to success. They therefore came to the capital to try their luck.

Examination candidates continued to crowd the capital in the early 1060's, after the examinations were held in alternate years. Soon the government revised the examination schedule again. Starting in 1067, the civil service examinations were held every three years, but the congestion problem remained unresolved. As noted by Chen Xiang 陳襄 (1017-1080), Supervisor of the Directorate and an examiner of the Kaifeng prefectural examination in 1069,¹⁹¹ there were around 3,270 candidates taking the Kaifeng prefectural examination and 1,600 candidates taking the

¹⁹⁰ Sima Guang, "Gong Yuan Qi Zhu Lu Qu Ren Zhuang" 貢院乞逐路取人狀, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.1. See also Lin Yan, *Bei Song Ke Ju Kao Shi Yu Wen Xue*, pp.27.

¹⁹¹ Chen Xiang was assigned to be the examiner in the Kaifeng prefecture in 1069/8. See *SHY, Xuanju* 19/15. He was also the Supervisor of the Directorate in the early Xining era. See his biographical sketch by Ye Zuqia 葉祖洽, in *QSW*, Vol.104, pp.85-91.

Directorate examination.¹⁹² From this, we can deduce that at least 4,870 candidates had gathered in the capital in 1069. To reduce those numbers, new initiatives were required. This partly explains the launch of an internal promotion mechanism at the Imperial University and the expansion of the metropolitan schools in the early 1070's. Only through school development projects, together with a shift in examination nomination quotas, could the candidates aspiring the examinations be attracted to study in earnest at the Imperial University.

The mythologized reign of Renzong

A mainland scholar Yuan Zhen summarized three major characteristics of the education development in the interim period between Renzong's Qingli reforms and Shenzong's Xining reforms, namely (i) focus on Classical education, (ii) emphasis on practical application of knowledge, and (iii) sharpening the conduct and behavior of the literati.¹⁹³ These features somehow relates to the overall literati custom of the Jiayou era, as vividly depicted by Su Shi:

(People) under heaven rinse and sharpen up themselves. They consider those who have a thorough understanding on the Classics as brilliant, those who rescue the (fallen) age and practice the way as virtuous, and those who dare offending the emperor to remonstrate as loyal. Nurturance accomplishes till the end of the Jiayou era, a time famed for abundance of talent.¹⁹⁴ 天下爭自濯磨，以通經學古為高，以救時行道為賢，以犯顏納諫為忠。長育成就，至嘉佑末，號稱多士。

Despite the visionary outlook, the genuine nature of government education during this period - its auxiliary role to the civil service examinations - should never

¹⁹² Chen Xiang, "Li Hui Kao Jiao Jin Shi *Juan Zi Zhuang*" 理會考校進士卷子狀, in *QSW*, Vol.50, pp.31. This also appear in *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 166/21a, pp.2184.

¹⁹³ See Yuan Zheng, "Bei Song de Jiao Yu He Zheng Zhi", pp.269-270.

¹⁹⁴ Su Shi, "Liu Yi Ju Shi Ji Xu" 六一居士集叙, in *SSWJ*, *Juan* 10, pp.316.

be neglected. Since the latter remained the major channel for recruiting prospective officials, the Directorate School and the Imperial University continued their function to prepare students for the examinations. At the same time, University students as well as candidates from prefectures also considered the Directorate of Education, due to its success rate in the Departmental examination, to be a shortcut. Such examination mindset, as argued by Thomas Lee, “initiated quite a few institutional innovations and a more narrowly defined educational purpose, in contrast to the peripatetic (but more liberal) type of education practiced in the earlier part of the Northern Song.”¹⁹⁵ It also attributed to a cyclical pattern of attendance at the metropolitan schools based on the examination schedule. That may explain why a huge amount of candidates from prefectures exploited every opportunity to illicitly sit the examinations in the metropolitan area.

With limited government intervention in school affairs in the post Qingli reform era, the academic environment in the school campus was relatively liberal and open compared to other periods. Consequentially, lecturers could utilize their expertise without constraint and promote their schools of thought. The elegant and realistic poetry of Mei Yaochen, the meaning of “honoring the King” as deduced by Sun Fu from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, as well as the application of the subtle meaning in the *Book of Changes* to practical affairs as advocated by Hu Yuan, flourished at the time. This way echoed in the intellectual trend of critiquing the traditional Classical Exegeses. Nevertheless, the challenges raised by these Directorate Lecturers to the orthodox interpretation of the Classics somehow encouraged the students’ contempt for the orthodox style of writing. Instead of following the orthodox Current Style, an unorthodox “Imperial University” style became rampant inside the school campus and in examination halls. As Chief examiner in the Departmental Examination that failed

¹⁹⁵ Thomas H. C. Lee, “Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi”, pp.128.

candidates based on writing style, Ouyang Xiu set a precedent of targeting the metropolitan schools to change the criteria for the examinations.

The *laissez-faire* attitude of emperor Renzong in general also facilitated the burgeoning of new policy initiatives. The proposal on a school promotion mechanism was one among them. Although it failed to be implemented at that time owing to the objections of certain officials, it provided a blueprint for the development of the Three Hall system at the Imperial University in the Xining era, which will be elaborated in detail in the following chapter.

After illustrating the key stages in the development of the Directorate of Education in the final years of Renzong's reign, it is worth noting that Song scholar-officials posited diverse, interestingly contradictory, comments on the Directorate School and the Imperial University during the interim between the Qingli reform in 1044 and the Xining reform in late 1060's. On the one hand, it was portrayed as the peak for the metropolitan schools, in view of a relatively liberal intellectual environment on campus together with the appointment of prominent scholars as Directorate Lecturers. On the other hand, the school system was perceived as far from satisfactory owing to its failure to nurture and select talented prospective officials. So what explains the perception of diversity relative to the reality during this period? Among those who were critical, the reformist Wang Anshi was the most prominent figure. In his "Ten Thousand word memorial" submitted in 1058, he denounced the education and examination systems for failing to nurture and select reliable talent for the state. In contrast with Wang Anshi's criticism were the affirmative views of Cheng Yi, a conservative in the Yuanyou era. In 1086 when Cheng was assigned to review the organization of the Imperial University, he submitted a detailed plan to rectify the metropolitan schools. His proposals based on

his own experience at the Imperial University in the 1050's as a student, portrayed the metropolitan schools under his master Hu Yuan as ideal. To understand these two contradictory assessments, the concept of "History in Three Keys", as suggested by Paul A. Cohen in his study of the Boxer uprising in the 1900, might shed some light on the issue.

According to Cohen, events are the past as reconstructed by the historian, whose primary objective is "to construct, on the basis of the evidence available, as accurate and truthful an understanding of the past as possible", while myth was created by those who "start out with an understanding of the past ... [owing to their own experience and] draw on it to serve the political, ideological, rhetorical and/or emotional needs of the present."¹⁹⁶ Myth and fact also mixed in the 11th Century. Wang Anshi submitted the "Ten Thousand Word" memorial in 1058, with a main aim to persuade Renzong to reform the education and examination systems so that genuine talent could be selected as prospective officials. His request implies problems with the existing setting. Hence Wang Anshi created negative myths about the educational settings of the Renzong era, illustrating the failure of the system in nurturing and selecting talent. To pressure the emperor to carry out reforms, Wang even cast the *laissez-faire* attitude of Renzong in a negative light: "to act passively by leaving unchanged the dynasty's previous practices might incur good fortune for a while, but it is not sustainable."¹⁹⁷ 夫因循苟且，逸豫而無為，可以徼幸一時，而不可以曠日持久。 Renzong did not respond to Wang, but the reformers proved more persuasive over Shenzong, Zhezong and Huizong.

Cheng Yi's antithetical judgment of the Directorate School was similarly

¹⁹⁶ Paul A. Cohen, *History in three keys: the Boxers as event, experience, and myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp.213.

¹⁹⁷ Wang Anshi, "Shang Shi Zheng Shu" 上時政疏, in *WJGWJJZ*, Juan 2, pp.65, which was submitted in 1061.

driven by political myth. By mythologizing the Directorate School and the Imperial University in positive ways, Cheng Yi glorified his mentor, Hu Yuan, while discrediting the educational reform policies in the 1070's. In fact, Cheng Yi's mythologizing was in line with a common tactic of mythologizing the Renzong reign as practiced by the Yuanyou conservatives who opposed the New Policies. By creating a mythical Renzong as sage emperor and his governance as benevolent, conservatives could celebrate his moderation. After destroying the theoretical basis for the New Policies, the policies themselves could go. The Yuanyou conservatives thus mythologized the Jiayou era: its peaceful border, its upright officials, its flourishing University led by prominent educators, as well as extraordinary crops of talent in the 1057 examinations.¹⁹⁸

Due to the myths surrounding the Renzong reign, how should we, as modern historians, evaluate the educational developments in this period? From the modern expectation of intellectual freedom, the *laissez-faire* attitude of Renzong contributed to limited government intervention in the affairs of the metropolitan schools. In addition, a more universal and fair approach can be used to evaluate the educational system by finding out how well students enrolled at the metropolitan schools fared on the civil service examinations during this period. The above recount suggests that most students of Hu Yuan were highly successful in the civil service examination. The figures provided by Sima Guang also reveal that candidates nominated by the Directorate of Education, out of which students in the metropolitan schools occupied a significant portion, had a high degree of success in the Departmental examinations. These seem to prove that government education in the metropolitan area in the final years of Renzong's reign was very promising.

¹⁹⁸ See Cao Jiaqi 曹家齊, "Some Remarks on the Issue of Peace of Jiayou" "嘉祐之治"問題探論, *Xue Shu Yue Kan* 學術月刊, (Sept, 2004), pp.60-66.

Chapter 4

RESPONSE OF THE THRONE TO OVERWHELMING SCHOLAR-OFFICIALS

Educational Institutionalization under Shenzong

Diluting autocracy – Educational reform in the Xining era

In the previous chapter, we noted that the court had discussed in the middle of Renzong's Jiayou period the recruitment of outstanding graduates of the Imperial University as officials. Owing to the reservations of certain officials, the scheme had to be delayed. However, upon the demise of an aging and conservative Renzong and the accession of a young and energetic Shenzong, the political environment suddenly changed. Officials who had advocated active government intervention and aggressive reforms began to dominate the political arena. At the same time, consensus among scholar-officials began to emerge about transforming the Imperial University into an alternative channel to recruit officials, partly owing to increased dissatisfaction with the existing civil service examinations. Subsequent to a thorough deliberation on the issues in 1069, comprehensive reforms of government education and examinations were finally launched in 1071, as illustrated below.

The establishment of the Outer Hall and response of the Directorate School

A few months after Shenzong acceded the throne, the court approved that another 100 students in the Outer Hall be added to the existing 200 Inner Hall students after incorporating the suggestions by two Policy-critique advisers, Liu Xiang 劉庠 (1023-1086) and Wu Shen 吳申.¹ The difference between Inner Hall and Outer Hall

¹ For details of the memorial, see *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/6-7. *SHY* recorded that the first proposal was made

students was that stipends were granted to the former but not the latter. In order to study at the Outer Hall, students had to take admissions examinations. Whenever there were vacancies in the Inner Hall, students from the Outer Hall could fill the slots.² As a result, the student quota at the Imperial University was increased, with minimal impact on government expenditures.

In 1068/5, the Directorate of Education requested to increase the student quota at the metropolitan schools from 600 to 900.³ The increase was proportionate to the rise in the quota for examination nominees of the Directorate of Education and Kaifeng prefecture under a new examinations schedule.⁴ For the sake of accommodating more students, the guarantors' requirement for admissions was relaxed a month later, allowing candidates to ask lower ranking officials to be guarantors rather than two court and a metropolitan officials.

But the strategy to attract more students to the metropolitan schools turned out to be a double-edged sword which undermined the distinctiveness of the Directorate School and the Imperial University. In 1069/2, admissions criteria were further relaxed where candidates nominated from prefectures and counties as well as students in local schools could seek admission to the metropolitan schools. These candidates could proceed to take the admissions examination after obtaining a certificate issued by their own prefectures. No longer did they have to ask officials to

by a censor named Teng Xiang 滕庠. However no such person could be identified among the censors in the Shenzong period with reference to full list of censors in *SCGY*, *Juan* 8/6a, pp.219. The one who made this proposal is likely to be Liu Xiang 劉庠, a censor and the Supervisor of the Directorate in 1068. See Lü Tao 呂陶, "Shu Mi Liu Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 樞密劉公墓誌銘, *QSW*, Vol.74, pp.64.

² *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/7; *SS*, *Juan* 14, pp.268.

³ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/7; *SCGY*, *Juan* 9/1b, pp.224; *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3660.

⁴ Since 1057 till 1067, the civil service examinations were held in alternate years. But from the year 1070 onwards, examinations were held in every three years. See Zhang Xiqing 張希清 zhu; Wu Zongguo 吳宗國 shen ding, *Zhong Guo Ke Ju Kao Shi Zhi Du* 中國科舉考試制度 (Beijing: Xin hua chu ban she, 1993), pp.40-41.

serve as guarantors; instead, three to five candidates could guarantee one another.⁵ By relaxing the admissions and guarantor requirements to the same degree as the civil service examinations,⁶ the barrier between the Directorate School and the Imperial University was blurred. Without its old aristocratic composition, the Directorate School gradually succumbed to the dominance of the Imperial University.⁷

Another idealistic Policy-critique adviser Sun Jue, a student of the prominent educator and lecturer Hu Yuan, recommended reforming the entire educational and examination systems.⁸ His memorial in 1068/6 addressed the shortcomings in the existing civil service examinations system and offered several prescriptions. He proposed revising the curriculum of the Advanced Scholar degree examinations, granting special nomination quotas for peripheral circuits and prefectures, widening nominations channels for candidates with various talents, as well as reforming the system of higher education. According to Sun, prefectural officials could nominate outstanding people as University students, who then might participate in a court examination after studying for a certain period:

Since the court ordered the erection of countrywide schools in the Qingli era, prefectures and counties had their own school campuses, fields and hostels. The Directorate of Education in the capital was also split to establish the Imperial University. Usually a few hundred students attend the Imperial University, while the number of students in the prefectural school have nearly reached a hundred. Such flourishing schools were reminiscent of the preceding Han and Tang dynasties. Nevertheless, our country does not have a proper selection

⁵ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/7.

⁶ Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.105-106.

⁷ For a detailed discussion on the transition of the elitist Directorate School to commoners' dominated Imperial University, see Zhang Bangwei and Zhu Ruixi, "Lun Song Dai Guo Zi Xue Xiang Tai Xue Yan Bian", pp.219-240.

⁸ This was stipulated in the end of the letter. Another evidence showing that this was submitted in 1068 is that Sun estimated in his memorial that "the edict promulgating the launch of the civil service examinations would be launched in spring next year" 臣竊計來年之春，當下詔選士。Since the previous examinations' cycle was finished in spring 1067, the coming cycle should finish in spring 1070. Since it is a usual practice for the court to announce the launch of the examinations program a year beforehand, Sun Jue therefore predicted that such edict would be promulgated in spring 1069. We could therefore deduced that Sun Jue submitted this memorial in 1068.

mechanism. I sincerely hope that those prefectural officials in service for over a year could nominate students of extraordinary talent and conduct for promotion to the Imperial University. When students are judged to be of insufficient merit, no nomination shall be made. After these students have registered at the Imperial University, the government should provide daily and monthly stipends, while closely observing and frequently evaluating their conduct and ability. Every year, the Supervisor of the Directorate and the Directorate Lecturers shall nominate ten candidates. After examination by the Court, those selected candidates would be conferred the Advanced Scholar degree using the degree quota. For the scions of high officials as well as existing students, admissions would be sought in other ways.⁹ 朝廷自慶歷以來詔天下立學，郡縣往往有學舍、官田、房廊之利，京師亦自析國子監之半，以為太學。太學諸生，常數百人，州學舍，多亦或至百人。學校之盛，侔於漢唐矣。然國家未有學校選士之法，臣願詔天下州郡守臣到任一年以上，得舉所學者才行尤異，升之太學，無其人則闕。既至，官為廩給，更以日月，詳觀而屢試之。每歲判國子監至直講共薦十人，朝廷更以策試，然後推恩，所得人數，即以充進士之額。其公卿大夫之子弟及舊在學生員，即乞別定入學之法。

The above prescriptions suggested by Sun Jue were merely outlines of his educational reform proposals, and he requested the emperor to invite other top scholar-officials including “academicians, special drafting officials of the Secretariat, the secretariat-chancellors, academicians-in-waiting, censors and policy-critique advisers, and the officials in the Three Institutes (Chaowen Institute, Jixian Hall, Institute of History) and the Secret Vault” 兩制雜學士、待制以上，臺諫官、三館祕閣臣寮 to deliberate on the administrative arrangements in greater detail.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Shenzong did not respond to Sun Jue’s request until 1069/4,¹¹ which was likely a consequence of Wang Anshi’s ascendancy.

Wang Anshi and educational reform

When Shenzong was still a prince, he had already learned a lot from his

⁹ Sun Jue, “Shang Shenzong Lun Qu Shi Zhi Bi Yi You Gai Geng” 上神宗論取士之弊宜有改更, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 80, pp.869, which also appears in *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 166/2b-3a, pp.2174-2175 and *QSW*, Vol. 72, pp.349-351.

¹⁰ Sun Jue, “Shang Shenzong Lun Qu Shi Zhi Bi Yi You Gai Geng” 上神宗論取士之弊宜有改更, in *SCZCZY* 宋朝諸臣奏議, *Juan* 80, pp.869.

¹¹ *SCGY*, *Juan* 9/2b, pp.226.

assistant Han Wei 韓維 (1017-1098) regarding the talent and wisdom of Wang Anshi. Acceding to the throne in 1067/1,¹² Shenzong appointed Wang Anshi as Hanlin Academician eight months later. In 1068/4, Wang was honored with a private meeting with Shenzong.¹³ During their conversation, Shenzong inquired Wang about the most critical matters in state governance, and Wang cited the “selection of the right way” as primary in importance. Wang Anshi further advised Shenzong to imitate the ancient Confucian Sage Kings Yao and Shun, whose ways of governance were “simple and uncomplicated, essential and direct, easy and not hard to implement” 至簡而不煩，至要而不迂，至易而不難, but not modeling himself on Taizong of Tang.¹⁴ The spirit of the ancient sage kings, as recorded in the Confucian Classics, was considered the ideal model by most Northern Song scholars; they were the guiding principle for Wang Anshi’s reform proposals.

In the remaining of 1068, Shenzong held several private conversations with Wang Anshi after the court meeting. On one occasion, Wang reminded Shenzong that “transforming the customs and setting up rules and institutions were the greatest need of our time,”¹⁵ 變風俗，立法度，方今所急也 through which the political power could be concentrated in the central government.¹⁶ But before establishing these rules and regulations, talent across the country had to be recruited in order to perform the needed tasks:¹⁷

¹² SS, *Juan* 14, pp.264.

¹³ SS, *Juan* 14, pp.268.

¹⁴ The above recap on the ascendance of Wang Anshi after the enthronement of Shenzong could be found in *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 59 “Wang Anshi Shi Ji Shang” 王安石事蹟上, pp.1042. See also H. R. Williamson, *Wang An Shih: a Chinese statesman and educationalist of the Sung dynasty* (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1935-1937), Vol.1, pp.102-104.

¹⁵ *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 59 “Wang Anshi Shi Ji Shang” 王安石事蹟上, pp.1037-1059.

¹⁶ Ge Zhaoguang argues that the rationale behind “setting up rules and institutions”, a common reform proposal since the mid-Tang, is to concentrate the power in the hands of the central government. See Ge Zhaoguang 葛兆光, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi Di Er Juan* 中國思想史第二卷 (Shanghai: Fudan da xue chu ban she, 2001), pp.191-192. In fact, most leading Northern Song thinkers including Ouyang Xiu, Su Xun and Sima Guang were advocates of state activism. For a summary of their thoughts, see Robert P. Hymes and Conrad Schirokauer, *Ordering the world*, pp.12-19.

¹⁷ The idea of “Talent” is crucial in Wang Anshi’s political philosophy. He wrote a couple of articles,

Before setting up the rules and institutions, it is necessary to recruit and use talent from across the country. If the talented are used, the laws and institutions of the former kings can be revived. Should these be revived, then even the most miniscule of matters would conform to the way of the former kings.¹⁸ 天下法度未立之後，必先索天下之材而用之。如能用天下之材，則能複先王之法度，能複先王之法度，則天下之小事無不如先王時矣。

However, under existing recruitment structures, genuine talent could scarcely be found. Without sufficient talent, “even though the emperor wished to reform or alter human affairs and follow the will of the former kings, he tended to be unsuccessful.”¹⁹ 陛下雖欲改易更革天下之事，合於先王之意，其勢必不能者 So how should the state recruit more talent? Wang Anshi outlined his prescription in his well-known “Ten Thousand memorial” written in 1058, where he reiterated the importance of “education, nurturing, selection, and appointment”.²⁰ 教、養、取、任 The following discussion will mainly focus on the educational aspects.

Before making suggestions on cultivating talent, Wang Anshi criticized instruction at the Imperial University. In Wang’s view, neither textual exegeses of the Classics nor techniques in answering examination questions were satisfactory in view of their impracticality to state affairs:

Only at the Imperial University are officers of instruction and guidance to be found, and even they are not selected with care. Matters relating to court business, rites, music, and punishments have never been addressed in the schools, and students consider that rites, music, and punishments

namely “On Talent” and “Selection of Talent”, to discuss on the theoretical aspects of Talent. A brief discussion on these works in English can be found in H. R. Williamson, *Wang An Shih*, Vol.1, pp.330-336.

¹⁸ Wang Anshi, “Cai Lun” 材論, in *WJGWJJZ, Juan 27*, pp.983.

¹⁹ Wang Anshi, “Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu” 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ, Juan 2*, pp.22.

²⁰ More thorough discussion on the educational thoughts of Wang Anshi can be found in Zhang Xianjue 張先覺 zhu, *Wang Anshi Zhi Jiao Yu Si Xiang* 王安石之教育思想 (Taipei: Wen shi zhe chu ban she, 1982) and Luo Chuanqi 羅傳奇, Wu Yunsheng 吳雲生 zhu, *Wang Anshi Jiao Yu Si Xiang Yan Jiu* 王安石教育思想研究 (Nanchang: Jiangxi jiao yu, 1991).

are the purview of officials, matters to which they should have no access. What is taught to the students consists merely of textual exegeses [of the Classics]. That, however, is not the way that men were taught in ancient times. In recent years, teaching has been based on the essays required for the civil service examinations, but this kind of essay cannot be learned without resorting to extensive memorization and strenuous study, for which students must labor the whole day. The proficiency that they attain is at worse without value to governance, and without relevance to governance. Therefore, even if students remained in school until their hair turned grey, and labored all day in instruction, they would still have not the faintest idea of what to do once in office.²¹ 唯太學有教導之官，而亦未嘗嚴其選。朝廷禮樂刑政之事，未嘗在於學。學者亦漠然自以禮樂刑政為有司之事，而非己所當知也。學者之所教，講說章句而已。講說章句，固非古者教人之道也。近歲乃始教之以課試之文章。夫課試之文章，非博誦強學窮日之力則不能。及其能工也，大則不足以用天下國家，小則不足以為天下國家之用。故雖白首於庠序，窮日之力以帥上之教，及使之從政，則茫然不知其方者，皆是也。

According to Wang, since the existing school curriculum was disconnected from statecraft, student energies were distracted by obsession with refining examination techniques. Such an educational system was therefore destroying talent, but not nurturing them.²² It is interesting to note that the above criticism posted by Wang Anshi in 1058 towards University education, which likely targeting the University condition that he witnessed during 1054-1057 when he served in the capital,²³ is quite different from what his contemporaries described. As thoroughly discussed in the previous chapter, after preeminent educators Hu Yuan, Sun Fu and Li Gou were assigned to teach at the Imperial University in the 1050's, teachings at the elitist school had already tended to practical statecraft. A possible reason for the discrepancy between Wang Anshi's and his contemporaries' portraits is that Wang tried to distort the reality for the sake of justifying his reform proposals – to establish

²¹ Wang Anshi, "Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu" 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ, Juan 2*, pp.34, Translation is adopted and modified from Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Sources of Chinese tradition*, Vol.1, pp.416-417.

²² Wang Anshi, "Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu" 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ, Juan 2*, pp.35.

²³ Regarding Wang Anshi's service in the capital during 1054-1057, see Gu Donggao 顧棟高, "Wang Jing Guo Wen Gong Nian Pu" 王荊國文公年譜, *Juan Shang*, in Zhan Dahe 詹大和 deng zhuan; Fei Rucheng 悲汝誠 dian jiao, *Wang Anshi Nian Pu San Zhong* 王安石年譜三種 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1994), pp.44-48.

schools countrywide and adopt curricula closely related to state affairs, being an imitation of the ancient practices. In addition, admission to schools should be confined to talented men:

In ancient times, the Son of Heaven and feudal lords had schools extending from the capital down to the districts and villages. Officers of instruction were liberally selected with utmost care. Court affairs, rites and music, and legal punishments were all subjects that found a place in the schools. What the students observed and learned were the sayings, the virtuous acts, and the ideas underlying the governance of the entire empire. Men unqualified to govern the empire would not receive an education, while those able to govern never failed to receive an education. This is the way to conduct the education of men.²⁴ 古者天子諸侯，自國至於鄉黨皆有學，博置教導之官而嚴其選。朝廷禮樂、刑政之事，皆在於學，士所觀而習者，皆先王之法言德行治天下之意，其材亦可以為天下國家之用。苟不可以為天下國家之用，則不教也。苟可以為天下國家之用者，則無不在於學。此教之之道也。

Other than statecraft, Wang Anshi was also concerned about practical matters such as military training. In response to the relative weakness of the Song armies against the Qidan Liao and the Tangut Xi Xia, Wang Anshi advocated that the scholar-officials should care more about border defense and military matters. He further suggested that military training, archery in particular, be mandatory in schools for scholar-officials, so that they could assist in border defense and military affairs in the future.²⁵

Apart from elaborating on his own vision to educate, nurture, select and appoint talent, Wang Anshi also emphasized the dominant role of the emperor in cultivating talent. He made reference to the dire conditions of the late Shang period, and explained how talented people were later cultivated under the stewardship of the

²⁴ Wang Anshi, "Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu" 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ*, Juan 2, pp.27. Translation is adopted and modified from Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Sources of Chinese tradition*, Vol.1, pp.415.

²⁵ Wang Anshi, "Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu" 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ*, Juan 2, pp.35.

sage, King Wen (c.a.1152-1056 B.C.E.), who founded the glorious Zhou dynasty:

Near the (end) of the Shang dynasty, all under heaven was in chaos. Those who held government offices were greedy and cruel, bringing disaster and defeat. Posts were not properly filled. When King Wen arose, there was hardly any talent under heaven. In this way, King Wen could nurture scholars across the country to attain the skills to perform duties as officials and become upright people. They were then assigned to various government offices according to their skills. Thus, we know that the talent of human beings can be nurtured by the ruler.²⁶ 商之時，天下嘗大亂矣。在位貪毒禍敗，皆非其人，及文王之起，而天下之才嘗少矣。當是時，文王能陶冶天下之士，而使之皆有士君子之才，然後隨其才之所有而官使之。...由此觀之，人之才，未嘗不自人主陶冶而成之者也。

Education is the means to cultivate talent, Wang Anshi asserted, and the emperor shall have supreme authority over instruction: “all the teachings of the feudal lords emanated from the Son of Heaven. Only after receiving directives from the Son of Heaven did they establish schools.”²⁷ 諸侯之所以教，一皆聽於天子，天子命之矣，然後興學。Subsidiary role of schools and education to government and politics is antithetical to academic freedom in the 21st century. However this was precisely the perfect model that Song scholar-officials desired, not only because the emperor’s autocratic power would benefit scholar-officials, but also because of Confucian dogma. According to Han Yu, the prominent Confucian master in the mid Tang, the Way of King Yao passed to King Shun, then to King Yu of Xia, King Tang of Shang 湯 (c.a. 1675-1646 B.C.E.), King Wen of Zhou, King Wu of Zhou 周武王(?-1043 B.C.E.), the Duke of Zhou, and then Confucius and Mencius (372—289 B.C.E.).²⁸ The first

²⁶ Wang Anshi, “Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu” 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ*, Juan 2, pp.25.

²⁷ Wang Anshi, “Qian Zhou Xue Ji” 虔州學記, in *WJGWJJZ*, Juan 45, pp.1557.

²⁸ See Han Yu, “Yuan Dao” 原道, in *Han Changli Wen Ji Jiao Zhu*, Juan 1, pp.18. This transmission of the Confucian Way was further elaborated by Zhu Xi in the Southern Song, who believed that (1) the knowledge of government and learning of the ancient sage kings was often interrupted throughout history; (2) during periods of interruption, the “Way” was overwhelmed by heterodoxies; (3) only a few extraordinary individuals managed to revive and transmit this Way in the course of history. See William Theodore de Bary, *Neo-Confucian orthodoxy and the learning of the mind-and-heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), pp.2-13 and William Theodore de Bary, *The message of the mind in Neo-Confucianism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp.28-31.

six were not only virtuous men, but were sage and omnipotent Kings, where the genealogy of the way (*Dao Tong* 道統) and the genealogy of governance (*Zheng Tong* 政統) merged. Hence it is totally understandable to later Confucians, including Wang Anshi, that these sage Kings with supreme virtues directed educational affairs. However after King Wu of Zhou, the two sources of sovereignty separated, the Duke of Zhou inherited the Way while Kings of the Zhou dynasty inherited government, and the two sources never converged again.²⁹

By reiterating that the emperor should take the lead in education to cultivate talent, Wang Anshi envisioned Song emperors as imitators of the sage Kings Yao and Shun, through which functions of sovereign and teacher could be united in Shenzong.³⁰ He exhorted his monarch, “Your Majesty sincerely wishes to perfect the world’s talent, which I hope Your Majesty will realize by exerting yourself.”³¹ 陛下誠有意乎成天下之才，則臣願陛下勉之而已 By urging the emperors to follow the sages, Wang Anshi tried to re-establish the link between governance and the Confucian way, which prompted him to compile new exegeses for the Confucian Classics. Interestingly, Wang Anshi’s proposition that the emperors exert their influence over educational affairs was coherent with the primary interest of the Song emperors to concentrate powers in their own hands. Emperor Shenzong followed Wang Anshi’s plan precisely because of its cogent defense of autocracy.³²

²⁹ See Yu Yingshi, *Zhu Xi De Li Shi Shi Jie*, pp.15; Ellen G. Nieskar, “The Cult of Worthies: A Study of Shrines Honoring Local Confucian Worthies in the Sung Dynasty” (unpublished PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1993), pp.308-309; and Ge Zhaoguang, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi Di Er Juan*, pp.189.

³⁰ Likely following Wang Anshi’s precedent, Southern Song Chief Councilor Qin Gui also urged Shenzong’s grandson, Emperor Gaozong, to unit “the functions of sovereign and teacher in his own person” (pp.389) decades later. See Cho-ying Li and Charles Hartman, “A Newly Discovered Inscription by Qin Gui: Its Implications for the History of Song Daoxue”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol.70 No.2 (2010), pp.387-448.

³¹ Wang Anshi, “Shang Renzong Huang Di Yan Shi Shu” 上仁宗皇帝言事書, in *WJGWJJZ*, *Juan* 2, pp.58.

³² Li Yumin 李裕民, Jiao Zhu, *Sima Guang Ri Ji Jiao Zhu* 司馬光日記校注 (Beijing: Zhongguo she hui ke xue chu ban she, 1994), pp.120; *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 62, pp.1110; *CBSB*, *Juan* 7, pp.342-343.

The increased confidence of Shenzong in Wang Anshi led to his appointment as the Assistant Councilor in 1069/2.³³ On the advice of Wang Anshi, the Commission to Coordinate Fiscal Administration 制置三司條例司 was created as an overarching policy-making body superseding the existing Council-Secretary, Bureau of Military Affairs and the Financial Commissions. Establishment of this new bureau, in violation of the principle of divided powers left behind by the Song founders, illustrated Shenzong full faith in Wang Anshi. Wang Anshi hence requested to reform the existing education and examination systems based on the ancient school system, his “Memorial to change the regulations for the Examinations” 乞改科條制劄子, stating:

The ancient method for selecting officials depended essentially on the establishment of schools, which produced uniform thinking amongst the officials on ethical matters and practical methods; it also contributed to the cultivation of correct practices among the people generally. This, too, enabled the Government to have a constant supply of men available for the various services. In recent times, however, the method adopted for producing this supply of men has shown no particular regard for these fundamental principles. In this way, although it is true that the country possesses a number of scholars, they have become so solely because of their natural abilities. For there have been no schools, no tutors, nor any corporate educational life, in which their natural capacities might be developed and perfected. This is a matter of the greatest concern to critics of the current system. It is of course necessary, if we wish to revive the ancient ideas in this matter to rectify the misdeeds, that reform should be introduced gradually. But at least steps can be taken to eliminate the rhyming-couplets and parallel-phrasing style of essay and to require the students to make the “meaning” of the Classics the main object of their studies. Let this be adopted as a temporary measure until the Government have instituted a school system throughout the country. Then it should be feasible to revive the system of education and method of selecting officials under the Three Dynasties. When education is made universal we shall have approached very nearly to the ancient pattern.³⁴ 伏以古之取士，皆本於學校，故道德一於上，而習俗成於下，其人材皆足以有為於世。自先王之澤竭，教養之法無所本，士雖有美材而無學校師友以成就之，議者之所患也。今欲追復古制，以革其弊，則患於無漸。宜先

³³ SS, *Juan* 14, pp.271.

³⁴ The proposal was submitted by Wang Anshi when he was appointed as Assistant Councilor in 1069. See Wang Anshi, “Qi Gai Ke Tiao Zhi Zha Zi” 乞改科條制劄子, in *WJGWJJZ*, *Juan* 5, pp.154. The translation was adopted and modified based on H. R. Williamson, *Wang An Shih*, Vol.1, pp.337.

除去聲病對偶之文，使學者得以專意經義，以俟朝廷興建學校，然後講求三代所以教育選舉之法，施於天下，庶幾可復古矣。

Despite stipulating his desire to imitate the Three Dynasties, where schools in the countrywide gradually replaced the existing mechanism for selecting officials, Wang Anshi did not set out the operational details. Partly for this reason, Shenzong followed the advice of Sun Jue to undertake a comprehensive reevaluation of the examination system in 1069/4. In his edict requesting other top officials to submit proposals on educational and examination reforms within one month,³⁵ Shenzong highlighted two objectives of the reforms, namely to unify morality as well as to discover and recruit talent.³⁶

A number of high officials were involved in the discussion, namely Cheng Hao, Sima Guang, Wang Gui 王珪 (1019-1085), Su Song 蘇頌 (1020-1101), Lü Gongzhu 呂公著 (1018-1089), Chen Xiang, Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (1019-1079), Lü Huiqing 呂惠卿 (1032-1111), Han Wei, Liu Ban 劉攽 (1023-1089), and Su Shi, their proposals still partly or wholly extant.³⁷ Interestingly, with the exceptions of Su Shi and Liu Ban,³⁸ almost all of them criticized the existing selection mechanism.

³⁵ The quotation is from *SHY*, *Xuanju* 3/41-42, which indicates that the edict was promulgated in 1069/4. Besides, those memorials in response to such edict written by various officials also indicated that they were submitted in the mid of 1069, indirectly proving the validity of the record in the *SHY*. The record in the *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 27, which stated that “in 1068/5, officials were permitted to discuss on schools and examinations” 熙寧元年五月，羣臣準詔議學校貢舉， seems to be inaccurate. See *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 27.

³⁶ Wu Zhengqiang 吳錚強, “Song Chao De Xiang Ju Li Xuan” 宋朝的鄉舉里選, in Zhu Ruixi, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji*, pp.165.

³⁷ See Wang Gui, “Yi Gong Ju Xiang Xu Zou Zhuang” 議貢舉庠序奏狀, in *QSW*, Vol.53, pp.116-117.

³⁸ In his memorial, Su Shi argued that since the existing education and selection had already supplied enough talent, it is not necessary to spend huge amount of resources to enlarge the University campus and hire more teachers. See Su Shi, “Yi Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zhuang” 議學校貢舉狀, in *SSWJ*, *Juan* 25, pp.723. In the literary collection of Su Shi, this memorial was dated in 1071; but after comparing other sources, we notice that such plan was submitted in 1069 instead of 1071. For details of the argument, see *CBSB*, *Juan* 4, pp.183-186. This memorial has been partially translated in Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.128. For Liu Ban, he did not think that the existing selection mechanism per se was problematic. Rather, it was because of the officials in poor quality who failed to convey the value of the policy in its implementation that makes the situation worse. Neither was he supportive towards school education, as mentioned in his memorial: “scholars studying in their own house was sufficient for them to become talent. So why should they wait for their teachers to push them to study?” 士修之於家，足以成材，亦何待學官程課督趣之哉？ See Liu Ban 劉攽, “Gong Ju Yi”

They generally agreed about the need to take moral behavior of the candidates into account, observing them in schools.³⁹ In the following paragraphs, we are going to elaborate briefly on these reform proposals, with a focus on the role, structure and function of the Imperial University.

Discussions on Educational reforms and the Three Hall system

The existing civil service examinations system was the primary target of Han Wei. Among the five recommendations that he made, four of them involved revision of the existing examination system, the other requesting the establishment of prefectural schools.⁴⁰ Sima Guang was also dissatisfied with the selection mechanism, particularly at the prefectural examination level. He suggested that candidates taking the departmental examination should be selected instead by the nomination of senior officials or promotion from prefectural schools. According to the latter plan, prefectural schools would evolve in the countrywide, and the Directorate of Education would evolve into the school for Kaifeng prefecture. These prefectural schools should be composed of an Outer and an Inner Hall, and within the Inner Hall, students should further be classified into senior, middle and junior class. Students should firstly be admitted to the Outer Hall, and gradually be promoted to the junior, middle, and senior class of the Inner Hall. Those outstanding students in the senior class would then be exempted from the prefectural examination and directly proceed to the Departmental examinations. Half of the prefectural nomination quota in the civil service examinations would be reserved for these school graduates. Under close

貢舉議, in *QSW*, Vol.69, pp.31.

³⁹ A thorough discussion on these educational reform proposals could be found in Zhou Yuwen 周恩文, “Bei Song De San Ci Jiao Yu Gai Ge” 北宋的三次教育改革 (unpublished Master dissertation, Guo Li Tai Wan Shi Fan Da Xue, 1985), pp.47-51; Chen Xuexun, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu. Song Yuan Fen Juan*, pp.259-265; Lin Yan, *Bei Song Ke Ju Kao Shi Yu Wen Xue*, pp.96-109; and Wu Zhengqiang, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua*, pp.196-205.

⁴⁰ For details, see Han Wei “Yi Gong Ju Zhuang” 議貢舉狀, in *QSW*, Vol.49, pp.154-155. See also *LDMCZY*, Juan 166/29a-30a, pp.2188.

observation by school teachers, the moral conduct of the candidates could be assured.⁴¹

The reform proposals of Cheng Hao and Lü Gongzhu were even more school-oriented. Cheng, a forerunner of neo-Confucianism, basically took the school and selection systems of ancient times as his model for the Song.⁴² His key idea was to promote talented students from local to metropolitan school, to educate them at the Imperial University, and to train them to be officials. According to Cheng Hao, talented students should be admitted to study in prefectural schools. In each year, the prefectural schools would nominate students to the Imperial University on the following basis: knowledge of the Classics, disposition and conduct, as well as their talent and capability. At the Imperial University, talented nominees from the prefectures would be gathered and taught by teachers “who were academically brilliant, respectable in virtue and righteousness.”⁴³ 學業大明、德義可尊者 After studying for a certain period of time, normally three years, those outstanding students would then be further examined by the court:

Each year, the Imperial University will discuss and select the best students and recommend them to the Court. These students will become “selected scholars”. The Court will note what they say, give them positions to see if they are equipped with the necessary talent, grade and rank them according to their performances, and then send them to actual official positions. Each student will have to spend at least three years in the sub-prefectural and the prefectural schools respectively, and he will have to stay in the Imperial University for at least one year. Criteria for selection include an upright nature, proper conduct, filial and fraternal devotion at home, a sense of honesty and shame, politeness and humbleness, brilliant academic understanding,

⁴¹ Sima Guang, “Yi Gong Ju Zhuang” 議學校貢舉狀 熙寧二年五月上, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.130. A brief English description of Sima Guang’s proposal can be found in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.242-243. See also Chen Xuexun, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu. Song Yuan Fen Juan*, pp.259-261.

⁴² Similar idea could also be found in Cheng Hao’s “Chen Zhi Fa Shi Shi” 陳治法十事, in *SYXA*, *Juan* 14, pp.571-573.

⁴³ Cheng Hao, “Qing Xiu Xue Xiao Zun Shi Ru Qu Shi Zha Zi” 請修學校尊師儒取士劄子, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 1, pp. 449.

as well as thorough knowledge of statecraft. These outstanding students could be nominated by fellow schoolmates or recommended by University lecturers.⁴⁴ 太學歲論其賢者能者於朝，謂之選士。朝廷問之經以考其言，試之職以觀其材，然後辨論其等差而命之秩。凡處郡縣之學與太學者，皆滿三歲，然後得充薦。其自州郡升於太學者，一歲而後薦。...凡選士之法，皆以性行端潔，居家孝悌，有廉恥禮遜，通明學業，曉達治道者。...在太學者，先使其同黨，次及博士推之。

Apart from being a school for extraordinarily talented commoners, Cheng Hao also perceived attendance at the Imperial University as mandatory for sons of high ranking officials in the capital and a training centre for officials in office.⁴⁵ Through various channels of evaluation, good officials could be selected and promoted. Should this ancient school system be adopted, Cheng Hao envisioned that the scholarly customs would quickly shift from emphasis on examination techniques to morality.⁴⁶

The ancient school system was equally appealing to Lü Gongzhu. At the beginning of his memorial, Lü quoted various Confucian Classics to illustrate an ideal that “education must originate from schools and rural areas must be targeted for promotion.”⁴⁷ 教必本於學校，進必由於鄉裏 However, after the Qin and Han dynasties, the examination system became dominant and the ideal of school education faded. Lü therefore sought to gradually revive the school system and abolish the examination mechanism. Before school teaching was started, the government should take the lead to unify views on how students should be taught:

School education is the foundation for unifying morality and

⁴⁴ Cheng Hao, “Qing Xiu Xue Xiao Zun Shi Ru Qu Shi Zha Zi”, in *ECJ, Juan 1*, pp. 449. The translation is modified based on Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.126-127, which contains part of the translation of Cheng Hao’s memorial.

⁴⁵ Cheng Hao, “Qing Xiu Xue Xiao Zun Shi Ru Qu Shi Zha Zi”, in *ECJ, Juan 1*, pp. 448-450.

⁴⁶ Cheng Hao, “Qing Xiu Xue Xiao Zun Shi Ru Qu Shi Zha Zi”, in *ECJ, Juan 1*, pp.450.

⁴⁷ Lü Gongzhu, “Shang Shen Zong Da Zhao Lun Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zhi Fa” 上神宗答詔論學校貢舉之法, in *SCZCZY, Juan 78*, pp.852

harmonizing customs. Nowadays if people adapt their own way of teaching, different teachers will have various interpretations, and people will behave differently. Therefore we should select widely those who were renowned in morality as well as potential teachers of the others, gather them at the Imperial University so that they can discuss pedagogy. The court should then consider the respective advantages and shortcomings and decide on the right way. Once this is finalized, those who were capable to teach should be assigned to major prefectures to lead the teaching activities there.⁴⁸ 學校教化所以一道德，同風俗之原，今若人自為教，則師異說，人異習。故宜博選天下所謂有道德，可以為人師，先集於太學，使講議所以教育之法。而朝廷以道揆其得失，講議既定，然後取其得者置之要會州府，使主其學。

Similar to Wang Anshi, Lü Gongzhu concurred that the pedagogy shall be set by the court following deliberations among Confucian scholars at the Imperial University. Apart from masterminding pedagogy, the Imperial University should instruct students nominated from the prefectural schools and the Directorate School on the Classics rather than literary skills. After a minimum of one year, outstanding students could be recommended to the court for official appointment:

For those who were promoted to the Imperial University, the government should provide a stipend. Each year, the University should select 70 students for nomination to the court who have studied for over a year, understand the Classics comprehensively, conduct themselves well, and know practical matters and governing skills. The Council-Secretary could consider students in the Upper class for official appointment after evaluating their talent; while those students in the Lower class should be sent to the Ministry of Personnel, awaiting appointment on the basis of their rankings after evaluation.⁴⁹ 而升於太學者，官為給食。太學每歲於學生內，選到住太學一年以上，經明行修，通世務，可以治人者七十人，進於朝廷。其在上等者，委中書門下量才官使，其在次等者，送流內銓依名次注官。

If the above were adopted, Lü Gongzhu estimated that the school system could gradually be revived and the civil service examinations could be abolished within nine years.

⁴⁸ Lü Gongzhu, "Shang Shen Zong Da Zhao Lun Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zhi Fa", in *SCZCZY*, Juan 78, pp.852.

⁴⁹ Lü Gongzhu, "Shang Shen Zong Da Zhao Lun Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zhi Fa", in *SCZCZY*, Juan 78, pp.852.

Chen Xiang, by then the Supervisor of the Directorate, focused mainly on the staffing at the Imperial University. In his memorial, he firstly recalled the schools' poor learning environment and customs of recent: "the classroom and dormitory lay in ruins, the students are frivolous, officials and clerks are careless, owing to the lack of proper regulations and institutions".⁵⁰ 齋舍頽敝，生徒佻達，官吏苟簡，殊無法度。In order to rectify these conditions, the predominant task was to identify virtuous, talented and wise scholars and assign them to teaching posts. Should this be achieved, problems could all be solved naturally. Chen Xiang therefore nominated Chang Zhi 常秩 (1019-1077) and Chen Lie as professors at the Imperial University to instruct students in the Confucian Classics. With the appointment of Guan Shichang 管師常 and Cheng Yi as teaching assistants, Chen Xiang envisioned them as role models of moral goodness for students at the metropolitan school. School regulations would thereby be observed and the learning customs improve.⁵¹ Concurring with Chen Xiang, Lü Huiqing also acknowledged the importance of selecting good teaching officials. He suggested "selecting scholars to supervise the Imperial University who have a thorough understanding of the Confucian Classics and political matters and ordered high officials to nominate academically and morally outstanding people as professors."⁵² 乞選通經術、曉政事之人主判太學，令侍從舉有學術行藝者為教授

The final reform proposal to be reviewed here came from Su Song, a man famed for his scientific achievements. Apart from his suggestions to reform the civil

⁵⁰ Chen Xiang, "Yi Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zai Zi" 議學校貢舉劄子, in *QSW*, Vol.50, pp.59-60.

⁵¹ Chen Xiang, "Yi Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zai Zi" 議學校貢舉劄子, in *QSW*, Vol.50, pp.59-60. As recorded in "Gu Ling Xian Sheng Nian Pu" 古靈先生年譜 sketching the life of Chen Xiang, compiled in 1161 by Chen Ye 陳晔 and now preserved in the *Yong Le Da Dian* (for the date of completion of this work, see Li Yumin 李裕民, "Song Nian Pu Bian Nian Kao Zheng" 宋年譜編年考証, in Li Yumin, *Song Shi Kao Lun* 宋史考論 (Beijing: Ke xue chu ban she, 2008), pp.262.), this memorial was submitted in 1069 when Chen was Supervisor of the Directorate. See Xie Jin 解縉 (1369-1415) deng zuan xiu; Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝 (1335-1419) deng jian xiu, *Yong Le Da Dian* (YLLD) 永樂大典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1986), *Juan* 3142/10-12, pp.1842-1843.

⁵² Du Da Gui 杜大珪 zhuan, *Ming Chen Bei Zhuan Wan Yan Ji* 名臣碑傳琬琰集, *Xia Juan* 14 "Lü Can Zheng Hui Qing Zhuan" 呂參政惠卿傳, which is from the *Veritable Records* 實錄. See *SDZJCK*, Vol.16, pp.365.

service examinations, he also made recommendations for the Imperial University's institutional structure. As pertains to staffing at the school, Su Song proposed the following division of labor and career track for University lecturers:

Nowadays, there were a total of eight lecturers. Each should be assigned to handle different duties. Five of them should concentrate on lecturing; one for each Classic. The remaining three lecturers shall be responsible for instructing students in poetry and rhapsodies, polemical essays, the Great Essentials of the Classics and Histories, as well as policy essays. They should standby in the lecturer hall in shifts, awaiting students to inquire of them about doubtful meanings while setting questions for the public examinations. For evaluation of examination papers, all eight lecturers should be involved. Those experienced in teaching and respected by students, after fulfilling a three-year tenure, should be reported to the court by Supervisors of the Directorate. Hopefully they could be invited to take the examination for duties at the Advanced Institutes. Those who fail to perform their duties satisfactorily at the school should be fired.⁵³ 今學官八人，謂宜各令分掌職事。五人專職講說，人各講一經。...三人掌教授諸生，以詩賦、文論、經史大義及時務策，仍輪日直學，以待諸生請問疑義，並出公試題目。若考校試卷，則八人通主之。其教導有方，成效顯著，為諸生凜伏者，候及三年，委判監官聞於朝廷，望賜召試館閣職事。其不職者，罷免之。

Su Song then offered a formula by which students should be taught, evaluated, ranked, and nominated. During these process, the role of teaching officials at the Imperial University would be crucial:

The student quota should be set as 500. Everyday early in the morning, they should attend lecture on a Classic of their choosing. For each Classic, there shall be 100 students. Apart from the core Classic, students should concurrently study the *Book on Filial Piety* and the *Analects*. After the lecture, students should attend tutorials for history and literature. There shall be a public examination in each month, where three lecturers shall be responsible for evaluating the performance of the students and dividing them into three ranks. The results of the examination should be posted on the notice board for students' reference. When the lecturers finish teaching one Classic, they should report to the Supervisor. The Supervisor shall then gather the lecturers and ask the students to submit ten essays on the Great Essentials of the Classics. On the next day, students should orally

⁵³ Su Song 蘇頌, "Yi Xue Xiao Fa" 議學校法, in *SWGJ*, *Juan* 15, pp.211.

answer another ten questions on the Great Essentials. After these examinations, students should then be classified into three ranks. Those who provide thorough answers to all ten questions on the Great Essentials, with excellent oral explanations on the deeper meaning of the sages, should be ranked as “Outstanding”. Those who provide thorough answers to 6 questions on the Great Essentials together with a clear oral presentation should be ranked as “Secondary”. Those who could not answer up to 6 questions should be ranked as “Inferior”. Those with a thorough understanding of one of the “Major Classics”, or one “Middle Classic” together with an “Inferior Classic”, plus “Outstanding” evaluation results, their names should be submitted to the Court. Hopefully they could be singled out for elevation, or promoted to take the Departmental examination forthwith. Candidates ranked as “Secondary” should be entered into the record for reference in the next evaluation exercise. And the school should further encourage and educate those inferior students.⁵⁴ 學生以五百人為額，逐日早分經聽受，每經百人。仍兼習孝經、論語，聽讀罷，則課習文史。每月公試，三學官考校優劣，分三等。揭名於學，以為勸沮。...每一經講畢，監上於判，監集官策試大義十道，次日口說十道。各定為三等，大義通十，並口說明白，能發明聖賢深蘊者，為優等。大義通六及口說俱通者，為次等。不及六通，為下等。其通一大經或一中經兼一下經，試入優等者，上於朝廷。望加旌拔，或直送省試。...次等，籍其名以俟再試甄別。下等，本學常加敦勉。

Thomas Lee views the above discussions on education and examination as a debate between practical minded politicians and idealistic moralists. The former were skeptical towards changing the existing official selection mechanism while the latter valued education at schools as moral suasion and indoctrination, which was a necessary and essential stage for a good Confucian scholar-official.⁵⁵ Apart from Su Shi and Liu Ban, other officials who submitted proposals in 1069 belong to the latter. It could generally be argued that placing school education at the heart of official recruitment was a veritable consensus among the scholar-officials. Cheng Hao and Lü Gongzhu even advocated the gradual promotion of students from local schools to the Imperial University, after which outstanding graduates would be selected for government office. Through school education, it was hoped that both the talent and moral conduct of candidates could be better nurtured, observed and evaluated. By

⁵⁴ Su Song, “Yi Xue Xiao Fa”, in *SWGJ*, *Juan* 15, pp.211-212.

⁵⁵ Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.124-125.

incorporating the school system into a recruitment machine, the role of teachers would become increasingly significant.⁵⁶ Hence the appointment of morally upright people of reputable character as school teachers became critical. Measures to evaluate the performance of teaching officials were therefore proposed. Another point worth articulating is that the “visionary” government schools proposed by various scholars, whether local or metropolitan, were primarily targeted at commoners, although privileges for Higher Elites were confined to the proposals of Cheng Hao and Lü Gongzhu. This marks the fading of aristocracy, which prevailed in previous dynasties, and the ascendance of meritocracy.

Even though a scholarly consensus had been nearly reached by mid-1069 to replace the civil service examinations with the school system, a gradual approach had to be adopted, for the examinations could not be abruptly abolished. To start with, the existing civil service examinations system needed change, yet, no major immediate action was taken for the next year, since neither the emperor nor the reformers were ready. Reformers were fully engaged with the various economic reforms, Wang Anshi’s primary concern.⁵⁷ Besides, efforts had to be made to counter the attacks from the censors and policy-critique advisers against the New Policies while gradually purging these organs of anti-reform elements.⁵⁸ For Shenzong, despite acknowledging the need to reform the selection mechanism to rectify customs, he was uncertain of

⁵⁶ Fan Zhen 范鎮, “Song Jian Yi Min Qiu Mu Zhi”宋諫議敏求墓誌, in *QSW*, Vol.40, pp.313.

⁵⁷ For details of the New Policies, which mainly focused on economic reforms, see Qi Xia zhu, *Wang Anshi Bian Fa* 王安石變法 (Shanghai: Shanghai ren min chu ban she, 1959); Deng Guangming zhu, *Bei Song Zheng Zhi Gai Ge Jia Wang Anshi* 北宋政治改革家王安石 (Shijiazhuang Shi: Hebei jiao yu chu ban she, 2000); and Higashi Ichio 東一夫, *Ō Anseki shinpō no kenkyū* 王安石新法の研究 (Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō, 1970). For a brief review of all the New Policies, see Wang Zengyu, “Wang Anshi Bian Fa Jian Lun”王安石變法簡論, in Wang Zengyu zhu, *Zi Zhu Bian* 鎔錄編 (Baoding Shi: Hebei da xue chu ban she, 2006), pp.1-40. For English narratives, see Paul J. Smith, “Shen-tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-shih, 1067-1085”, in *CHC*, Vol.5 Part1, pp.347-483.

⁵⁸ Ari Daniel Levine, *Divided by a common language*, pp.72-98. See also Shen Songqin 沈松勤 zhu, *Bei Song Wen Ren Yu Dang Zheng : Zhongguo Shi Da Fu Qun Ti Yan Jiu Zhi Yi* 北宋文人與黨爭：中國士大夫群體研究之一 (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she, 1998), pp.98-103 and Luo Jiaxiang 羅家祥 zhu, *Peng Dang Zhi Zheng Yu Bei Song Zheng Zhi* 朋黨之爭與北宋政治 (Wuhan: Hua zhong shi fan da xue chu ban she, 2002), pp.17-30.

what direction to take, as reflected in an examination question in 1070: “Root of the frivolous custom attributes to the lack of fundamentals in selecting officials and the unclear way of instruction. I have widely consulted the policy advisers and Academicians, but their assertions were inconsistent. So is there a way to rectify the fallen custom?”⁵⁹ 夫風俗浮薄，根於取士之無本，道教之不明。而〔博〕詢台閣之論，所執者不一，豈無救弊之道焉？ Apart from the diverse views of his officials, Shenzong’s ambivalence owes partly to his sense of insecurity towards the school system, which was advocated under the cloak of reviving the ancient ideal of communal nomination (*Xiang Ju Li Xuan* 鄉舉里選). Contrary to the civil service examinations where Song emperors held absolute power, the authority of communal nomination rested with the local community and the scholar-officials who made recommendation. Should the school recruitment mechanism be adopted, the sovereign’s supremacy may be diluted.⁶⁰ This may explain why edicts promulgating reforms in education and examinations were not issued until 1071, almost two years after the reform proposals were submitted.

In 1071/2, reforms in the civil service examinations were promulgated in three areas: Firstly, the poetry and rhapsodies questions, as well as questions tested rote memorization of the Classics, would be abolished in the Advanced Scholar degree examinations. Instead, candidates would be tested on the meaning of the Classics, together with policy essays and discussion questions. Secondly, the “Various Subjects” degree examination would be gradually abolished. And thirdly, candidates in the five Northern circuits would be granted preferential treatment.⁶¹

⁵⁹ SHY, *Xuanju*, 11/13.

⁶⁰ Wu Zhengqiang, “Song Chao De Xiang Ju Li Xuan”, pp.169-170.

⁶¹ XCB, *Juan* 220, pp.5334; SHY, *Xuanju* 3/43-44; and SS, *Juan* 15, pp.278-279. Key features of the reforms were summarized by Zhang Xiqing, Kondō Kazunari and Lin Yan, see Zhang Xiqing 張希清, “Lun Wang Anshi De Gong Ju Gai Ge” 論王安石的貢舉改革, *Beijing Daxue Xue Bao*, Vol.4 (1986), pp.66-77; Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, “Ou an ishi no kakyo kaikaku wmemgutte” 王安石的科举改革をめぐって, in Kondō Kazunari cho, *Sōdai Chūgoku kakyo shakai no kenkyū* 宋代中国科举社会の

Eight months later, in 1071/10, the Council-Secretary had ultimately finalized the reform measures in connection with schools' development and submitted them to the emperor for endorsement. The classification of University students and the structures for examination and nomination were introduced. Under this scheme, better known as the "Three Hall System at the Imperial University" (*Tai Xue San She Fa* 太學三舍法), outstanding University students could be nominated for office without passing the civil service examinations:

Students would be divided into three categories: newly admitted students would be assigned to the Outer Hall, which has no limit on the number of students. Students in the Outer Hall would then be promoted to the Inner Hall, and gradually to the Upper Hall, which have quotas of 200 and 100 respectively. Each student had to study one Classic by attending lectures where the lecturers administered monthly tests and forwarded the names of top-performers to the Council-Secretary. The two outstanding students of the Upper Hall would be eligible for recruitment by the Directorate to serve as rector, assistant rector, or demonstrator. In the case students exceptional in academic standing and moral conduct, supervisors and lecturers shall be their guarantors and nominators. Upon further examination by the Council-Secretary, these outstanding students could receive official appointment. Those assuming duties in the school could continue to serve on a temporary basis after receiving official titles. Whenever there were vacancies as Lecturer at the University or Professor in the Prefectural schools, these men might be considered for the posts.⁶² 其生員分三等，以初入學生員為外舍，不限員；自外舍升內舍，內舍升上舍，以百員。內舍以二百員為限。其生員各治一經，從所講之官講授。主判官直講，逐月考試，到優等舉業，並申納中書。學正、學錄、學諭，仍於上舍內，逐經選繫二員充。如學行卓然尤異者，委主判及直講保明聞奏，中書考察，取旨除官。其有職事者，授官訖，仍舊管勾。候直講、教授有闕，次第選充。

Apart from assigning students to three halls, there were no clear guidelines

研究 (Tōkyō: Kyūkosho, 2009), pp.73-74 (For Chinese translation, see Jinteng Yicheng 近藤一成, "Wang Anshi de Ke Ju Gai Ge" 王安石的科舉改革, in Liu Junwen 劉俊文 zhu bian, *Ri Ben Zhong Qing Nian Xue Zhe Lun Zhong Guo Shi* 日本中青年學者論中國史 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1995), pp.136-166); and Lin Yan, *Bei Song Ke Ju Kao Shi Yu Wen Xue*, pp.109-118.

⁶² SHY, *Chongru* 1/31, XCB, Juan 227, pp.5529, WXTK, Juan 42, pp.395. Reference should also be made to XCB, Juan 227, pp.5529, which quoted the *Diary of Sima Guang*. See also Li Yumin, *Sima Guang Ri Ji Jiao Zhu*, pp.156; SS, Juan 15, pp.280 and Juan 157, pp.3660.

on how students should be evaluated, promoted or nominated.⁶³ Neither was the distinction between the Inner Hall and Upper Hall clear, apart from the eligibility of Inner Hall students to serve as teaching assistants. Nevertheless, Directorate supervisors and Lecturers could serve as guarantors for students with outstanding in academic results and personal conduct, and nominate them to the Council-Secretary. In view of the expanded role of Directorate Lecturers, selection and appointment became more stringent. In fact, just three months before the promulgation of this reform package, an edict regarding the selection and appointment of lecturers was issued. Traditionally, the Chief Councilor, the Council-Secretary or the Directorate of Education were responsible for selecting and appointing lecturers. The edict in 1071/7 stipulated that academicians and censors should nominate outstanding local teachers in the five circuits to fill vacancies as Directorate Lecturer, with the most deserving nominee appointed to teach.⁶⁴ By restricting Directorate Lecturers to men with teaching experience in local government schools, the court envisioned the nomination of exemplary candidates in the future.

In addition to devising higher eligibility criteria for future lecturers, the Council-Secretary made further suggestions concerning the terms of office, duties and performance review for Directorate Lecturers:

Recently the Imperial University was enlarged, and the student quota in the school was raised. The teaching faculty, excluding the Supervisor of the Directorate, should consist of ten Lecturers. Two of them shall be responsible for lecturing on one Classic. The Council-Secretary should select and appoint these lecturers on three-year terms upon the recommendation of the Supervisor of the Directorate. When these “selected men” arrived at the Directorate, they would be promoted to the rank of “capital official” after five years. Should these lecturers instruct the students well, or should they fail to carry out their responsibilities, the Supervisors of the

⁶³ Chen Xuexun, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu. Song Yuan Fen Juan*, pp.271.

⁶⁴ *XCB, Juan* 225, pp.5493; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/7. See also Zou Hao, “Ying Xue Ti Ming Ji” 穎學題名記, in *QSW*, Vol.131, pp.329. The five circuits include Jingdong, Jingxi, Hedong, Hebei and Shaan Xi.

Directorate shall report these cases to the court, which will discuss the promotion or demotion of the lecturers.⁶⁵ 四年十月十七日，中書門下言：「近制增廣大學，益置生員。除主判官外，直講以十員為額，每二員共講一經。委中書選差，或主判官奏舉，以三年為任。選人到監，五年與轉京官。或教導有方、職事不修者，並委主判官聞奏，當議陞黜。」

What is worth noting is that the Council-Secretary requested to appoint Directorate Lecturers irrespective of the candidates' seniority and remove from office those who could not perform their duties satisfactorily irrespective of their term of service, which was subsequently approved by the court in 1071/10.⁶⁶ The urgency of the Council-Secretary to obtain such discretionary power in firing incumbent University Lecturers owed much to the sensitive answers given by the student Su Jia 蘇嘉 (?- c.a.1128) in a university examination around the time when the Three Hall system was to be launched:

Initially, Su Jia, son of Su Song, was studying in the Imperial University. A lecturer Yan Fu 顏復 (1034-1090) had set discussion questions relating to reforms under Wang Mang of the New Dynasty and Empress Wu in the Zhou Dynasty. In his answers, Su Jia heavily criticized these reforms, and Yan Fu ranked Su Jia as an "Outstanding student". (The Lecturer) Su Yi 蘇液 secretly reported this to Zeng Bu, saying that "these students chanted songs in protest, denouncing the current reform policies". An angry Zeng Bu then blamed the Supervisor of the Directorate Zhang Hu 張琥 (1040-1093, later renamed as Zhang Zao 張瑑), "You are a Policy-critique adviser as well as the Supervisor of the Directorate. Why did you remain silent when the lecturers and students fervently criticized the current policies?" Zeng even reported this to Wang Anshi. An extremely annoyed Wang Anshi then fired all lecturers, and appointed Li Ding 李定 (1028-1087) and Chang Zhi 常執中 as the Supervisors of the Directorate. Only those who were favored by the policy makers were selected and appointed as lecturers.⁶⁷ 初，蘇頌子嘉在太學，顏復嘗策問王莽、後周變法事，嘉極論為非，在優等。蘇液密寫以示曾布，曰：「此輩唱和，非毀時政。」布大怒，責張琥曰：「君為諫官判監，豈容學官與生徒非毀時政而不彈劾。」遂以告安石。安石大怒，遂逐諸學官，以李定、常秩問判監，選用學官，

⁶⁵ SHY, *Chongru* 1/31, XCB, *Juan* 227, pp.5529, WXTK, *Juan* 42, pp.395.

⁶⁶ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/8; SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3660. For a brief discussion on this, see Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.197-198.

⁶⁷ SHY, *Chongru*, 1/31 and XCB, *Juan* 228, pp.5546. According to the record in the XCB, this story was recorded in Lin Xi's *Ye Shi*.

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Since Wang Anshi was annoyed with those current Directorate Lecturers whom indulged University students in discrediting the New Policies through examination rankings, action was taken against teachers who “failed to carry out their responsibilities”. Soon there was a thorough review of the evaluation of students’ examination scripts by the lecturers. After this review, five lecturers including Jiao Qianzhi 焦千之 (? – c.a.1101), Wang Ruyi 王汝翼, Liang Shimeng 梁師孟 (1020-1091), Yan Fu 顏復 (1034-1090) and Lu Tong 盧侗 (? – c.a.1078) were removed from office in 1071/11, likely after the Council-Secretary was granted power to remove non-performing lecturers irrespective of their term of service. Wang Anshi then recommended Gong Yuan 龔原 (1039-1105), Lu Dian 陸佃 (1042-1102), Li Zongmeng 黎宗孟, Ye Tao 葉濤 (?-1100), Zeng Zhao 曾肇 (1047-1107) and Shen Jichang 沈季長 (1027-1087) to fill up the vacancies -- his own cronies, relatives, or students.⁶⁸ An anecdote even shows that they visited Wang Anshi every night to learn his exegeses on the Classics for use in the following day at the Imperial University.

After the launch of the Three Hall System, the Imperial University assumed the additional function of selecting prospective officials. Heavier involvement of the Imperial University in the selection process means that it became more politically valuable, particularly at the time of fierce contests between the reformers and anti-reformers. Since the continuation of these controversial reforms required huge pool of supportive officials, Wang Anshi and the reformers exercised firm control over the Imperial University. By appointing his cronies as the school’s headmaster and lecturers, Wang Anshi envisioned the Imperial University as critical to nurturing

⁶⁸ SHY, *Chongru*, 1/31 and *Zhiguan*, 28/8; XCB, *Juan* 228, pp.5545. See also Li Xinchuan 李心傳 *zhuan*; Cui Wenyin 崔文印 *dian jiao*, *Jiu Wen Zheng Wu* 舊聞證誤 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), pp.28-29.

prospective supporters of the New Policies.

A battleground for reform factionalism under the Three Hall system, the Imperial University was also placed at the heart of power struggles between scholar-officials and the emperor. Under the Three Hall system, University teachers were granted the right to select prospective officials, a power formerly resting with the chief civil service examiners that emperors tried increasingly to control. Implementation of the Three Hall system at the Imperial University in the Xining era somehow implied that teaching officials would share with the emperor the power to select officials. Such delegation of imperial power to scholar-officials partly fulfilled the vision of Northern Song literati to create what Sariti termed “bureaucratic absolutism”.⁶⁹ Rising influence of these teaching officials later rose to a point that alerted Shenzong, who then steered a full-scale revision of the Three Hall system in the Yuanfeng era (1078-1085), as we will see below.

Modern scholars usually attributed the University’s Three Hall system solely to Wang Anshi and his cronies. But in the educational theories and proposals of Wang Anshi, the key features of which have been discussed above, neither the “Three Hall system” nor school promotion mechanism are mentioned. It seems that how the school system worked was not a major concern for him. Instead his focus was on the transitional stage: how to reform the examination system in order to recruit better talent. In fact, the “Three Hall” promotion system of 1071 was inconsistent with the educational vision of Wang Anshi in some ways: Wang Anshi asserted the dominant role of the ruler in cultivating and selecting talent, whereas the emperor’s powers were diluted by diverting the nomination of officials to teaching officials. Based on the

⁶⁹ A. W. Sariti, “The Political Thought of Ssu-ma Kuang: Bureaucratic Absolutism” (unpublished PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, 1970). See also Robert P. Hymes and Conrad Schirokauer, *Ordering the world*, pp.43.

above illustration of educational reform proposals from various officials in 1069, we can discover that the educational reform package of 1071 made reference to the ideas of Lü Gongzhu, Sima Guang, Su Song and Cheng Hao. Interestingly, all of the proposals were critical towards the economic reforms of Wang Anshi. Therefore it is not accurate to attribute the school promotion mechanism only to Wang Anshi. Indeed the role of the so-called “conservatives” in the educational reforms should not be slighted. According to some records in the late Renzong era, Wang Anshi and other “talents” discussed the erection of schools with reference to the preceding dynasties.⁷⁰ Based on various anecdotes, it is likely that Han Wei, Sima Guang and Lü Gongzhu were among these “talented men”,⁷¹ and the educational reforms were likely the outcome of mutual deliberations between “reformers” and “conservatives”. Imploration of more power to teaching officials over official recruitment in the school promotion mechanism, I would argue, is a crucial step to actualize the scholar-officials’ collective vision of “bureaucratic absolutism”. What made Shenzong’s endorsement of a plan that might infringe upon his own authority is likely because of Wang Anshi’s assurance that the emperor can take the lead in education. To attain this, Shenzong should promulgate an ideological orthodoxy to unify morality and custom. In the name of assisting the emperor to fulfill such vision, Wang Anshi managed to utilize the emperor’s authority as well as the state apparatus to promote his own school of thoughts, as we will see below.

Consequential to enlarging the Imperial University was increased government support, including increased stipends to staff and students.⁷² The court

⁷⁰ Zhu Xi, *Yi Luo Yuan Yuan Lu* 伊洛淵源錄, *Juan* 7, in *ZZQS*, Vol.12, pp.1010.

⁷¹ Shao Bowen, *Shao Shi Wen Jian Lu*, *Juan* 3, pp.24-25; and Xu Du 徐度 *zhuan*, *Que Sao Bian* 却掃編, *Juan* Zhong, in *QSB*, Ser.3 Vol.10, pp.144. In fact, the close relationship between Wang Anshi and Lü Gongzhu was even criticized by a group of Censors led by Liu Qi in 1069/10. See Liu Qi 劉琦等, “Shang Shenzong Lun Wang Anshi Zhuan Quan Mou Li Ji Yin Xue Xiang Ling Jun Shu Fei Bian” 上神宗論王安石專權謀利及引薛向領均輸非便, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 109, pp.1188.

⁷² *SHY*, *Chongru* 1/31, *XCB*, *Juan* 227, pp.5529.

also favorably considered a recommendation from an official Deng Guan in 1071 to renovate the *Si Qing* Garden as the University campus, as recommended in 1044.⁷³ As Deng recalled, the existing campus was very congested and could merely accommodate 300 students. Moreover, owing to lack of maintenance, students had to work together to repair campus facilities. Deng therefore requested renovation of the *Si Qing* Garden to house 100 Upper Hall students, 200 Inner Hall students, and an unlimited number of Outer Hall students.⁷⁴ A few years later, it is likely that the *Si Qing* Garden was still too small, so the court in 1074/5 converted a hundred vacant rooms in the Morning Gathering Garden (*Chao Ji Yuan* 朝集院) into the Imperial University campus.⁷⁵ The functions of various University campuses were as follows: the *Si Qing* Garden provided Lecture Halls for the Upper Hall, while the Morning Gathering Garden, as site of the old Directorate of Education, provided Lecture Halls for the Inner Hall as well as the School of Law. The Temple honoring the Generals hence became classrooms for the Outer Hall or staff quarters.⁷⁶

It is also noteworthy that an archery field was set up at the West Gate of the Imperial University in 1077/2 for students to practice archery during holidays.⁷⁷ The effort emanated from Wang Anshi's vision of providing military training to prospective scholar-officials in school settings. In fact, interest in military affairs was occasionally in evidence among University personnel. In the 1050's, in his memorial requesting the resurrection of the Military School, the then Supervisor of the

⁷³ The *Si Qing* Garden was originally assigned to be the University campus originally since its establishment in 1044. But after the departure of the Qingli reformers, the campus was moved to the cavalry barracks. But since there was a huge number of students during the supervision of Hu Yuan in the mid-1050's, the back hall and the two corridors were assigned to be the campus. See *XCB, Juan* 253, pp.6199.

⁷⁴ For primary sources regarding this campus development project, see *XCB, Juan* 227, pp.5534; *SHY, Chongru*, 1/31 and *Zhiguan* 28/8; Lu Dian 陸佃, "Tai Xue Ce Wen" 太學策問, in *QSW*, Vol. 101, pp.211; *YH, Juan* 112, 32b; *WXTK, Juan* 42, pp.395; and *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3660.

⁷⁵ *XCB, Juan* 253, pp.6199.

⁷⁶ See *XCB, Juan* 227, pp.5529 quoting Sima Guang's diary. See also *XCB, Juan* 227, pp.5534.

⁷⁷ *XCB, Juan* 280, pp.6863; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/10-11.

Directorate Hu Yuan mentioned that he himself “knew something of military matters” 知武事, as he had assisted in border defense against the Xi Xia in the early 1040’s. He drafted a set of regulations for the Military School and submitted these to the emperor for consideration. He even recommended to assist in teaching in the Military School the famous poet and Directorate Lecturer Mei Yaochen, whom had a thorough understanding of *Sun Zi’s Art of War* and wrote his own commentary on it.⁷⁸ In addition, a University graduate Yang Ji 楊伋, whose comments on *Li Jing’s Art of War* was replete with diagrams, was assigned to teach at the Military School in 1075/5.⁷⁹ Apart from discussing military theories, some university students were equally outstanding in combat. Hong Zhongfu 洪中孚 (1049-1131), a university student under Shenzong’s reign who earned the advanced scholar degree in 1079, was a superior marksman and killed three bandits with just three arrows during battle at Huanggang 黃岡 county.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, most University students were not interested in military affairs and archery. Neither did the situation significantly improve after introducing the archery field, as the Vice-Director of Education Zhu Fu 朱服 (1048- c.a.1105) admitted in 1083: “a few scholar-officials know archery.” 士鮮能知射 He therefore requested University students to practice archery during holidays at the training grounds of the Military School.⁸¹

Apart from the campus enlargement project, the court also strengthened administrative support for the Directorate of Education by assigning a registrar and an

⁷⁸ Zhu Xi, *Wu Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu*, *Qian Ji Juan* 10, in *ZZQS*, Vol.12, pp.318. Regarding Hu Yuan’s experience in the border, see Cai Xiang, “Tai Chang Bo Shi Zhi Shi Hu Jun Mu Zhi” 太常博士致仕胡君墓誌, in *CXQJ*, *Juan* 33, pp.728.

⁷⁹ *XCB*, *Juan* 264, pp.6459.

⁸⁰ Liu Shen 劉岑, “Hong Gong Zhong Fu Shen Dao Bei” 洪公中孚神道碑, in Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 *ji zhuan*, *Xin An Wen Xian Zhi* (XAWXZ) 新安文獻志 (Hefei: Huang Shan shu she, 2004), *Juan* 73, pp.1781. See also Luo Yuan 羅願, *Chun Xi Xin An Zhi* (淳熙) 新安志, *Juan* 7, in Wang Xiaobo 王曉波 *deng dian jiao*, *Song Yuan Zhen Xi Di Fang Zhi Cong Kan. Jia Bian* (DFZCKJB) 宋元珍稀地方志叢刊. 甲編 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2007), Vol.8, pp.213.

⁸¹ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10-11; Fang Shao 方勺 *zhuan*, *Bo Zhai Bian* 泊宅編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1983), *Juan* 10, pp.55-56.

accountant to the School in 1071/11.⁸² Financial support for the Directorate increased further in early 1072 when the government allocated an additional 4,000 strings of cash as part of an annual appropriation to the Directorate in view of rising expenditures incurred by a rising number of staff and students.⁸³ In 1072/8, the court provided allowances to students in the Outer Hall, likely 850 cash per day.⁸⁴ Probably for the sake of administrative convenience and a better estimation of school budget, student quota for the Outer Hall, originally unlimited as stipulated in 1071/10 for the sake of attracting students,⁸⁵ was fixed at 700 and the Directorate's budget fixed at 10,000 strings of cash.⁸⁶ A growing financial support for the metropolitan schools heightened the government's expectations of the school. Apart from performing the functions of education and selection, the Song court also envisioned the Imperial University as able to "solidify moral culture".

Solidifying moral culture through Higher Education

The call to "unify moral culture" 一道德 originated in the movement of skepticism towards existing classical exegeses and commentaries. Thus, after the Qingli era of Renzong, scholars began to produce their own interpretation of the Classics as discussed in previous chapter. However without an authoritative commentaries, the examiners did not have an objective basis to follow. Instead they assessed the examination candidates according to their own whims. Candidates' protest in 1057 after Ouyang Xiu had failed candidates who practiced the "Imperial University" style of writing offers a typical example. In view of this, both the emperor and scholar-officials such as Cheng Hao and Lü Gongzhu concurred on the need to

⁸² SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/8.

⁸³ XCB, *Juan* 228, pp.5547; SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/8.

⁸⁴ XCB, *Juan* 303, pp.7389; SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/10; SS, *Juan* 16, pp.302.

⁸⁵ Chen Xuexun, *Zhong Guo Jiao Yu Shi Yan Jiu. Song Yuan Fen Juan*, pp.271.

⁸⁶ XCB, *Juan* 237, pp.5768.

unify the morality by standardizing classical commentaries.⁸⁷ The reformer Wang Anshi appears most fervent in asserting this:

At present, talented men are scarce; moreover scholarly skills lack uniformity. Each man has an interpretation [of the classics] and for ten men there are ten interpretations. When the court wants something done, the various arguments are confusing and no one is willing to obey instructions. This, in general, is why the court is unable to unify morality. To do so, we must rectify our schools, and if we wish to rectify our schools, we must change the examination regulations.⁸⁸ 今人材乏少，且其學術不一，一人一義，十人十義，朝廷欲有所為，異論紛然，莫肯承聽，此蓋朝廷不能一道德故也。故一道德則修學校，欲修學校則貢舉法不可不變。

According to Wang Anshi, morality should be unified and dissent silenced in order to facilitate the New Policies. To attain this, schools had to be rectified and the examination system reformed. Hence after promulgating the Three Hall system, Wang Anshi swiftly removed those veteran Directorate Lecturers who indulged student criticism of the New Policies while gradually installing his cronies to teaching positions, as mentioned earlier. Through which he envisioned that the prospective officials studying at the Imperial University could adhere to his teachings and be passionate towards the reforms.

Once the reformers dominated the Imperial University, Directorate Lecturers acted aggressively on Wang Anshi's vision of "unifying morality". In the spring of 1072, admission examinations for the Outer Hall of the Imperial University were conducted by Supervisors of the Directorate and Lecturers. Even though the court had rejected a request from the Directorate Supervisor Li Ding to abolish procedures for

⁸⁷ The phrase "unifying the morality" had already appeared in Shenzong's decree in 1069 that requested the top officials to discuss on education and examination reforms. See *SHY, Xuanju* 3/41-42. This phrase was reiterated in the proposals submitted by Lü Gongzhu and Cheng Hao, see Lü Gongzhu, "Shang Shen Zong Da Zhao Lun Xue Xiao Gong Ju Zhi Fa", in *SCZCZY, Juan* 78, pp.852 and Cheng Hao, "Qing Xiu Xue Xiao Zun Shi Ru Qu Shi Zha Zi" in *ECJ, Juan* 1, pp.450.

⁸⁸ *WXTK, Juan* 31, pp.293. Translation has been made based on John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.79.

anonymity in the examination, lecturers still did not hesitate to admit their own apprentices to the Outer Hall. The dominance of Directorate Lecturers was also reflected by the nomination figures in 1072: 130 out of 150 Directorate of Education nominees were directly associated with the Lecturers. Some lecturers even spread rumors that the civil service examinations would soon be replaced by the school's examination and promotion schemes. As a result, poor candidates from distant areas who still followed the traditional classical interpretation were rejected. Eclipsing talent was students' personal relationship with the lecturers and conformity to Wang Anshi's exegeses as the main selection criteria. Flattering powerful officials and colluding with lecturers became common among literati.⁸⁹

Under the influence of lecturers with a close relationship with Wang Anshi, customs at the Imperial University were soon unified, at least superficially. In 1072/5, numerous students quoted the works of Wang Anshi and his son Wang Pang 王雱 (1044-1076) on the monthly University examinations. A negative consequence was that since students' answers were similar, it was hard to distinguish good and bad performances. In turn, some lecturers did not treat the University examinations seriously.⁹⁰ In fact, under the banner of unifying customs, reformers turned the Imperial University into a private academy for Wang Anshi's learning.⁹¹ Ideals such as fair assessment and openness to the commoners were no longer upheld. Even worse, the control of powerful ministers over University's affairs allowed for their

⁸⁹ *XCB, Juan 237*, pp. 5773-5774.

⁹⁰ *XCB, Juan 233*, pp.5659-5660.

⁹¹ For studies regarding the learning of Wang Anshi and its development in the Northern Song, see Tsuchida Kenjiro 土田健次郎, "Ou an ishi niokeru manano kōzō" 王安石における学の構造, in Sōdaishi Kenkyūkai 宋代史研究会 (ed), *Sōdai no chishikijin : shisō, seido, chiiki shakai* 宋代の知識人 : 思想・制度・地域社会 (Tōkyō: Kyūko Shoin, 1993), pp.3-37. Chinese translation of this article can be found in Tutian Jiancilang, *Dao Xue Zhi Xing Cheng*, Chapter 6.1, "Wang Anshi Xue Shu De Jie Gou" 王安石學術的結構, pp.318-352; Liu Chengguo 劉成國 zhu, *Jing Gong Xin Xue Yan Jiu* 荊公新學研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2006); and Fang Xiaoyi 方笑一 zhu, *Bei Song Xin Xue Yu Wen Xue: Yi Wang Anshi Wei Zhong Xin* 北宋新學與文學：以王安石為中心 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2008).

manipulation of the official recruitment exercise, contravening the tradition of imperial autonomy. Wang Anshi's intervention in the admission of Lian Hangfu 練亨甫 was representative of expanded ministerial sway.

Lian Hangfu was a student of Wang Pang. Both Wang Anshi and Wang Pang had placed high hopes on Lian, predicting that he would be ranked outstanding in the admissions examination. But when the results were announced, they were shocked since Lian failed to be admitted, and they blamed the Supervisors of the Directorate Li Ding and Zhang Hu. Upon retrieving Lian's answer scripts, they discovered that Lian had only answered nine out of ten questions on Classical Meaning. To avoid similar embarrassment in the future, Wang Anshi ordered the number of examinations questions to be reduced to five. Partly because of the influence of Wang Anshi, Lian Hangfu was admitted to the Outer Hall of the Imperial University. Subsequently, Lian was nominated by the Directorate as the top candidate in the autumn of 1072. Irrespective of Lian's talent, this incident reflects the intrusion of political power into education, in this case ministerial preference swaying university admissions. Considering that the Imperial University had become one of the recruitment channels for prospective officials, ministerial control over the admissions exercise implied expanded involvement in preliminary recruitment. Likely to be a measure to ensure that the right kind of officials be recruited so as to facilitate the implementation of the New Policies, Wang Anshi appointed his disciples to be teaching officials at the metropolitan schools. In turn, the alliance between the Chief Councilors and teaching officials dominated the University recruitment channel with limited constraint. The supreme authority of the emperor in selection and appointment was thereby diluted. This is one of the underlying reasons for later revisions to educational policies in the Yuanfeng era. Reduction in the number of examinations questions, together with a more lenient requirement to concentrate on only one Classic instead of five, means a

less rigorous examination and more difficult to identify the most talented. The quality of selected candidates might decline, which in turn would undermine the reform policies themselves.⁹²

Under the firm control of Wang Anshi and his cronies, the Imperial University nominated its first outstanding graduate, Ye Shi 葉適 (?-1074), in 1072/8. Having failed the previous palace examination, Ye Shi fawned on the Directorate Lecturer Lu Dian, whom subsequently recommended Ye to the Supervisors of the Directorate. Likely because Ye Shi could write policy essays pleasing to the Chief Councillor Wang Anshi, the Supervisors of the Directorate Zhang Hu and Li Ding ranked Ye Shi as the top student, praising his extraordinary literary talent and moral conduct. As a result, Ye Shi was conferred the Advanced Scholar degree and remained as teacher in the University. Later he served at the Council-Secretary to learn and practice ritual matters in 1073/12. Half a year later Ye was nominated by Lü Huiqing, who replaced Wang Anshi as Chief Councilor, for a meeting with the emperor. Despite his poor performance at the interview, the emperor still appointed him to assist in the ritual office of the Council-Secretary in 1074/6 because of the patronage of Wang Anshi,⁹³ only for him to die months later.⁹⁴ Although it is hard to evaluate how deserving the first graduate of the Imperial University was, the idea of adopting school promotion as an alternative course for official recruitment had ultimately been realized. Henceforth, the attractiveness of the Imperial University grew tremendously. In 1075, more than 1,500 candidates competed for admissions to the Imperial University to fill

⁹² *XCB, Juan 237*, pp. 5773-5774.

⁹³ The ritual office is one of the five functional offices of the Council-Secretariat. For a brief discussion on the creation and functions of these offices, see Pei Rucheng 裴汝誠, Gu Hongyi 顧宏義, "Song Dai Jian Zheng Zhong Shu Wu Fang Gong Shi Zhi Du Yan Jiu" 宋代檢正中書五房公事制度研究, in Jiang Xidong, Li Huarui zhu bian, *Song shi yan jiu lun cong* 宋史研究論叢 (Baoding: Hebei da xue chu ban she, 2003), pp.85-106.

⁹⁴ *XCB, Juan 237*, pp.5773-5774; *Juan 248*, pp.6058; *Juan 254*, pp.6212; and *Juan 257*, pp.6275. See also Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) zhuan, Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, Zhang Xiqing 張希清 dian xiao, *Su Shui Ji Wen* 涑水記聞 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1989), *Juan 16*, pp.321.

several hundred vacancies in the Outer Hall,⁹⁵ in a stark contrast with the empty campus alluded to in sources for the early Song.

With reforms in the schools and examinations on track, Wang Anshi took a further step to “unify morality” by putting forward new commentaries on the Confucian Classics as the standard for the schools and theoretical foundation for the New Policies. As indicated by Shenzong in his conversation with Wang Anshi, examination candidates were longing for a set of standardized classical exegeses.⁹⁶ Under the trend of skepticism toward traditional exegeses, as illustrated above, university students and examination candidates adopted a variety of classical interpretations. Without a set of authoritative commentaries, students could not easily predict the preference of individual examiners. This was also a concern of Wang Anshi: “talented commoners at the metropolitan schools cannot yet identify dubious meanings in the Classics.”⁹⁷ 尚懼膠庠之黎獻，未昭典籍之群疑 The main reason, according to Wang Anshi, was the “lack of a clear commitment on high to education and the Way such that provincial ideas below are allowed to disturb governance.”⁹⁸ 蓋上無躬教立道之明辟，則下有私學亂治之奸氓 A Bureau on Classical Meaning (*Jing Yi Ju* 經義局), headed by Wang Anshi, was therefore set up in 1073/3. With the assistance of Lü Huiqing and Wang Pang, the bureau began to collate standardized commentaries of the Three Classics - the *Institutes of Zhou*, *Book of Odes* and the *Book of Documents*.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/8. Since the eight lecturers had to go through over 1,500 papers within two days, they were reminded to mark the papers seriously despite within a limited time frame. An edict was later issued, granting more time for the lecturers to mark the papers.

⁹⁶ XCB, *Juan* 243, pp.5917; SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3660.

⁹⁷ Wang Anshi, “Chu Zuo Pu She Xie Biao”除左仆射謝表, in WJGWJJZ, *Juan* 20, pp.778. This was submitted in 1075 upon the completion of the compilation of the New Commentaries. See XCB, *Juan* 265, pp.6495.

⁹⁸ Wang Anshi, “Chu Zuo Pu She Xie Biao”除左仆射謝表, in WJGWJJZ, *Juan* 20, pp.777.

⁹⁹ XCB, *Juan* 243, pp.5917 and *Juan* 252, pp.6173-6174. See also SS, *Juan* 15, pp.283.

Apart from the compilation project, the court ordered in 1073/4 that Directorate Lecturers, most of whom were Wang Anshi's followers, had to pair up in sets of two to produce two volumes of Oral Commentaries of the Classic that they lectured on every month.¹⁰⁰ Besides, six newly conferred Advanced Scholar degree-holders were assigned to the bureau to assist in the project under the patronage of Wang Anshi, although Shenzong himself had reservations about their capabilities.¹⁰¹ Partly because of the urgency to complete the task, even students in the Inner Hall of the Imperial University were involved.¹⁰² Among the three Classics that had to be re-done, the *Institutes of Zhou* was of primary importance, as it provided the theoretical basis for the economic reforms.¹⁰³ Hence Wang Anshi refused to entrust the task of commentating to anyone but himself; Lü Huiqing and Wang Pang assisted in commentary on the Books of *Odes* and *Documents*.¹⁰⁴ With the support of the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University, the entire project was basically finished in 1075, and the *New Commentaries on the Three Classics* were presented to the emperor.¹⁰⁵ In the sixth month of the same year, prefaces written by Wang Anshi on each *New Commentary* were submitted to the emperor, then forwarded to the Directorate of Education for printing.¹⁰⁶ A month later, the *New Commentaries* were formally adopted as the school curriculum and the standard for

¹⁰⁰ XCB, Juan 244, pp.5938.

¹⁰¹ XCB, Juan 244, pp.5939.

¹⁰² Tao Lin, an Inner Hall student of the Imperial University, was assigned to work in the Bureau to assist in the compilation project on the recommendation of Lü Huiqing. See XCB, Juan 262, pp.6397.

¹⁰³ For a brief discussion on the relationship between the *Institutes of Zhou* and the New Policies of Wang Anshi, see Peter K. Bol, "Wang Anshi and the Zhouli", in Benjamin A. Elman and Martin Kern (ed.), *Statecraft and classical learning: the Rituals of Zhou in East Asian history* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), pp.229-251.

¹⁰⁴ See Li Yumin zhu, *Si Ku Ti Yao Ding Wu* 四庫提要訂誤 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2005), pp.12. For a thorough investigation on the personnel assisted in the compilation of the *New Commentaries*, see Cheng Yuanmin 程元敏, "San Jing Xin Yi Xiu Zhuan Ren Kao" 《三經新義》修撰人考, in Tai Jingnong xian sheng ba shi shou qing lun wen ji bian ji wei yuan hui zhu bian, *Tai Jingnong Xian Sheng Ba Shi Shou Qing Lun Wen Ji* 臺靜農先生八十壽慶論文集 (Taipei: Lian jing chu ban shi ye gong si, 1981), pp.153-190.

¹⁰⁵ The original *New Commentaries on the Three Classics* is no longer extant today. Modern scholar Cheng Yuanmin has tried to recover its content and analyze it. See Cheng Yuanmin 程元敏 zhu, *San Jing Xin Yi Ji Kao Hui Ping* 三經新義輯考彙評 (Taipei: Guo li bian yi guan, 1986).

¹⁰⁶ XCB, Juan 265, pp.6495-6514; SS, Juan 15, pp.288 and Juan 157, pp.3660.

the civil service examinations. Copies of the *New Commentaries* were distributed to the Imperial Clan Academy, the Imperial University and various prefectural schools,¹⁰⁷ with the intent of “unifying morality” by standardizing commentary.

To sum up, the smooth implementation of the New Policies rested upon unifying the morality of the people, as noted by Paul Smith in the Shenzong chapter of the *Cambridge History of China*:

This quest for ideological uniformity underlay almost all of Wang’s educational measures, including his proposals for the creation of a national school system, his reform of the examination system, the promulgation of his own commentaries to the Classics as the key to passing the exams, and his attempt to pack such leading educational institutions as the Directorate of Education and the new Bureau for the Interpretation of the Classics with his own relatives and followers.¹⁰⁸

Education and morality had become thoroughly intertwined with the economic policies.

Post Wang Anshi era – advancement through the schools

After the adoption of Wang Anshi’s *New Commentaries*, reformers began to work out the details of a scheme to select officials through government schools instead of the civil service examinations. Although students’ internal promotion mechanism had been devised for the Three Halls, the prospects for University students upon graduation was still unclear. Since the launch of the Three Hall system at the Imperial University, only one University student, Ye Shi, had assumed an official career without passing the civil service examinations. Without a regular nomination mechanism for University graduates, their sense of insecurity was understandable.

¹⁰⁷ XCB, *Juan* 266, pp.6525.

¹⁰⁸ Paul J. Smith, “Shen-tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-shih, 1067-1085”, pp.364.

The Court, aware of such concerns, began to deliberate in 1075/7 the granting of exemptions to University students to participate in the civil service examinations.¹⁰⁹ Three months later, five Upper Hall students were granted exemptions from the prefectural examinations, allowing them to proceed directly to the Departmental examination. For those who had already passed the prefectural examination, exemptions from the Departmental examination were granted, so students could proceed directly to the Palace examination. On the understanding that almost no candidate would be eliminated in the Palace examination,¹¹⁰ it means that these outstanding Upper Hall students could get the degree qualifications without taking the highly competitive departmental examination.¹¹¹ Conditions for these exemptions were specified in 1077/2, where students had to study for a minimum period of two years in the Upper Hall and free of any serious misconduct. Upon verification and guarantee by the supervisors and lecturers, they could be granted exemptions from the examinations, provided that the total number of nominees does not exceed 30.¹¹² Three months later, the minimum study period was shortened from two years to one year.¹¹³

Focusing on the school system to select and recruit officials, the Song government needed to admit more students and find more financial resources for an expanded school system. The merging of the Kaifeng Prefectural examination and the Directorate examination in 1075/7 offered one solution.¹¹⁴ In the past, lots of candidates from other parts of the country had tried to use fake identity to register for the Kaifeng prefectural examination because of its generous nomination quota. But

¹⁰⁹ XCB, *Juan* 269, pp.6602.

¹¹⁰ Since the Jiayou era of Renzong, almost no candidates was failed in the Palace examination. For a brief discussion on this matter, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, "Song Dai Ke Ju Dian Shi Zhi Du Kao Lun" 宋代科舉殿試制度考論, in Zhu Shangshu, *Song Dai Ke Ju Yu Wen Xue Kao Lun*, pp.92-96.

¹¹¹ XCB, *Juan* 269, pp.6602.

¹¹² SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/8-9.

¹¹³ XCB, *Juan* 282, pp.6918.

¹¹⁴ XCB, *Juan* 266, pp.6532.

once these two examinations were conflated, candidates no longer had to resort to identity theft to register for the examination. Instead, they could seek formal admission to the Imperial University and thereby become qualified for the examination. Through this, not only the long nagging problems of the Kaifeng prefectural examination could be solved, but candidates could also be encouraged to seek direct admission to the Imperial University.

Nevertheless, owing to the limited places at the Imperial University, competition was keen. As a result, those candidates not from Kaifeng who failed Imperial University admissions examinations had no chance to take the joint Directorate examination. In view of this, an official Lian Hangfu, a former university student who caused the controversies in university admissions and nominations in view of Wang Anshi's favor as discussed above, recommended in 1076/2 that those failed candidates could register for this combined examination after meeting the guarantors' requirement and paying 3,000 cash in registration fees. This proposal was subsequently approved by the court.¹¹⁵ Having collected registration fees from over a thousand candidates, the financial position of the school improved significantly.

In 1076/11, the combined income of the Directorate of Education was around 10,000 strings of cash, while the court's annual allocation for the institute was 14,000 strings. The head of policy-critique advisers and supervisor of the Directorate of Education Huang Lü 黃履 (1032-1101) therefore proposed that the Directorate retain its own income, funds originally returned to the Financial Commission. These reserves could then be used to invest in properties and other businesses to generate more wealth. Once the Directorate had sufficient funds to cover its expenditures, the government annual allocation to the school could be eliminated. The court approved

¹¹⁵ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/8 and *Xuanju* 3/45.

the arrangement,¹¹⁶ intending to make the Directorate financially independent. In addition, the court transferred school fields in Gushi County, Guangzhou to the Directorate of Education on the recommendation of Huang Lü in 1077/2,¹¹⁷ promising to cut the allocation for the Imperial University once the income of these fields was adequate to cover University's expenditures.¹¹⁸

Apart from policies concerning admissions and finances for the Imperial University, a leading concern of scholar-officials was how to select outstanding students in the Imperial University. For the sake of fairness, justice and impartiality, the University's Inner and Upper Hall initially adhered to the anonymous measures of the civil service examinations. But Peng Ruli 彭汝礪 (1041-1094), a former Directorate Lecturer, held a different view. He argued that should the Imperial University adopt these anonymous measures to evaluate students, there would be no difference between the school system and the civil service examinations? Peng therefore suggested that a candidate's ability and moral deportment should be elevated to primary importance in assessing students:

Now scholars across the country gather or disperse, their comportment and abilities hardly noticeable in an instant. Your subject therefore suggests that everything should originate in our schools. To differentiate students based on conduct and abilities tends to the way of the ancient.¹¹⁹ 今天下之士，或聚或散，而行能之實，非可以遽察，臣以謂當自庠序始 ... 考試官以行能為差，雖未如古，蓋亦殆庶幾焉。

Peng also recommended rescinding rules of anonymity in the Upper Hall examinations:

¹¹⁶ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/8; XCB, *Juan* 279, pp.6824.

¹¹⁷ XCB, *Juan* 280, pp.6863.

¹¹⁸ XCB, *Juan* 282, pp.6918.

¹¹⁹ Peng Ruli, "Shang Shenzong Lun Shang She Dang Ba Hu Ming Zhi Fa" 上神宗論上舍當罷糊名之法, in SCZCZY, *Juan* 79, pp.860, which also appears in QSW, Vol.101, pp.5.

Your subject begs that the literary skills and moral conduct of students should be taken into consideration in the examination of Inner and Upper Hall students. Those who gifted in language skills, intellect and moral purport should be ranked first. Those who exhibited virtue, righteousness and flawless behavior should also be ranked first. But students with a record of misconduct should be eliminated even if their essays are good. These measures would encourage people to behave well, causing virtue to flourish. With little effort, the impact could be far-reaching and significant. Should these practices be implemented gradually, the ancient ways could be recovered in time.¹²⁰ 臣欲乞試內、上舍皆以文行參考。如辭理優長，材行超卓為一等，推恩行義無玷者為一等，如有過闕，文雖中，不與焉。... 使人人知所以自愛，而興於德，所施者寡，而所及者遠，夫是之謂要術。行之以漸，待之以久，古或可復矣。

Likely in response to Peng Ruli's memorial, Shenzong ordered the Directorate of Education in 1077/3 to deliberate as to how students at the Imperial University should be evaluated on the basis of talent and conduct.¹²¹ Yet before any new measures were promulgated, the censor Huang Lian 黃廉 (1034-1092) had already voiced concern in 1078/7 about the impartiality of the examinations at the Imperial University owing to the plausible bias of the Directorate Lecturers. Huang recalled that some University students were intimately familiar with the arguments and styles of Directorate Lecturers and answered the examinations to suit the interest of the designated examiner. Even though it was not the intention of the examiner to be unjust in grading submissions, bias in favor of students was unavoidable. As a result, students from far away without acquaintance with lecturers would be disadvantaged. The ideal of recruiting talent as extensively as possible would be unattainable. In order to uphold the impartiality of the University examinations, Huang requested the appointment of recent degree holders or professors from local schools nearby to be examiners at the University instead of Directorate Lecturers. The court later ordered that the examiners receive a separate edict of appointment, meaning that

¹²⁰ Peng Ruli, "Shang Shenzong Lun Shang She Dang Ba Hu Ming Zhi Fa", in *SCZCZY, Juan 79*, pp.860, which also appears in *QSW*, Vol.101, pp.5.

¹²¹ *XCB, Juan 281*, pp.6884.

scholar-officials outside Directorate Lecturers could be appointed as examiners at the Imperial University.¹²² The court's arrogation of Directorate powers served to reinforce the supreme authority of the emperor in recruiting officials. Since the launch of the Three Hall System in 1071, the powers of Directorate staff in selecting officials had continuously increased to the point of threatening imperial authority. Hence the emperor's decision to oversee the examinations served to limit the role of his subjects. Other measures followed to restrict the role of Directorate staff, as we shall see below.

The Yu Fan Incident

Before the fairness of University's examinations could be addressed, a huge scandal about Directorate Lecturers erupted that continued to haunt the Imperial University for years. In 1078/12, University student Yu Fan 虞蕃 memorialized the emperor to complain that University examinations had been conducted unfairly. Yu claimed, "students who passed the University examinations or received promotions to the Upper Hall either committed bribery or held the recommendation of powerful officials. Most poor men with genuine talent were failed."¹²³ 凡試而中上舍者，非以勢得，即以利進，孤寒才實者，例被黜落。He then launched an accusation against the lecturers:

The instructors in the Imperial University are unjust. After they give regular examinations to students, they rely on private opinions to decide who should be promoted to the next level. In addition, Your Majesty holds court conferences at the crack of dawn, but these instructors often arrive at the University after nine and leave at eleven o'clock. Every day Your Majesty handles numerous affairs of state while attending imperial seminars. It took only a few years for you to finish learning the *Book of Odes*. These instructors instead have already spent seven years on *Institutes of Zhou*, only to complete four volumes.¹²⁴ 太學講官不公，校

¹²² Wei Tai, *Dong Xuan Bi Lu*, Juan 6, pp.71; XCB, Juan 290, pp.7102-7103; WXTK, Juan 31, pp.294.

¹²³ Wei Tai, *Dong Xuan Bi Lu*, Juan 6, pp.71.

¹²⁴ XCB, Juan 295, pp.7181. The translation is adopted from Hu Yongguang, "Cultivating Merit", pp.96-97.

試諸生，升補有私驗。且陛下辨色視朝，而講官赴太學常以已入而午出；陛下日攬萬機，經筵勸講，尚不數年而《詩》畢，今講官講《周禮》七年，才及四卷。

To rectify conditions at the Imperial University, Yu Fan suggested that lecturers hold lectures on alternate days and arrive at school earlier to deal with student' enquiries. Besides, classes should not be suspended, even on days of summer and winter solstices, except for holidays. Even though the motive behind Yu Fan's memorial is uncertain, it is worth noting that another university student, Zhong Shimei 鍾世美 (?- c.a.1102), had been promoted to Rector at the Imperial University a month earlier after submitting a memorial highly appreciated by the emperor.¹²⁵

After reading Yu Fan's memorial, the emperor requested that Supervisors of the Directorate consider his suggestions, while designating that Kaifeng prefecture investigate the charges of unfairness in University examinations.¹²⁶ Partly owing to the complexity of the case, two censors, He Zhengchen 何正臣 (1039-1099) and Shu Dan 舒亶 (1041-1103), were assigned to assist in the investigation in 1079/2.¹²⁷ A month later, the prefect of Kaifeng, Xu Jiang 許將 (1037-1111), was also implicated in the case.¹²⁸ Xu was therefore removed from office and the Censorate took over the investigation. It soon turned out to be a disaster for most staff at the Imperial University as well as a number of high officials.

In 1079/5, Assistant Councilor Yuan Jiang 元絳 (1008-1083) was demoted

¹²⁵ XCB, Juan 294, pp.7166. Zhou Zizhi 周紫芝, "Cheng Zhong Lang Feng Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 成忠郎馮君墓誌銘, in QSW, Vol.162, pp.319.

¹²⁶ For primary narratives of the incident, see Wei Tai, *Dong Xuan Bi Lu*, Juan 6, pp.71; XCB, Juan 295, pp.7181; SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/9; WXTK, Juan 42, pp.396. A brief discussion of the Yu Fan incident and its impact, see Gō Tereda, *Sōdai kyōiku shi gaisetsu*, pp.112-121; Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.230-232; Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, "Ou an ishi no kakyō kaikaku womegutte", pp.73-74 (For Chinese translation, see Jinteng Yicheng 近藤一成, "Wang Anshi de Ke Ju Gai Ge", pp.146-147.); and Hu Yongguang, "Cultivating Merit", pp.95-104.

¹²⁷ XCB, Juan 296, pp.7213.

¹²⁸ XCB, Juan 297, pp.7216.

on the charges that he instructed his son Yuan Qining 元耆寧 to privately greet two Directorate Lecturers, Sun E 孫諤 and Ye Tangyi 葉唐懿, for the sake of guaranteeing a place at the University Inner Hall as well as securing an instructorship at an elementary school for his brothers' grandsons. In turn, Sun E and Ye Tangyi were prevented from teaching.¹²⁹ Two months later, three more Directorate Lecturers, Gong Yuan, Shen Zhu 沈銖 (?-1098), and Ye Tao, were mulcted and punished on various accusations. Induced by another Lecturer Wang Yanzhi 王浚之, Gong Yuan promoted an unqualified student to the Upper Hall. He also accepted silk fabric as a bribe from a student, which forced him to resign. Shen Zhu and Ye Tao were punished for either accepting gifts or illegally meeting with students.¹³⁰ In 1079/8, Directorate Lecturer Zhou Chang 周常 and Registrar Wang Yu 王愈 were suspended or forced to resign for favoring a student for promotion.¹³¹ Both Supervisors of the Directorate, Shen Jichang and Huang Lü, were forced to resign two months later: the former for accepting bribes that led to unfair evaluation and the latter for ignorance of the misdeeds of subordinates.¹³² The Lecturer to receive the most severe punishment was Wang Yunzhi, who was permanently purged from the list of officials in 1079/11 for accepting bribes from a student seeking promotion to the Upper Hall.¹³³ From the 5th till the 11th month of 1079, at least 10 personnel in the Directorate of Education, together with hundreds of implicated officials, received various degrees of punishment. The only Directorate Lecturer to escape the charge of bribery is Man Zhongxing 滿中行, whose just and upright character led to promotion in 1079/9.¹³⁴ Likely because the time and effort used in this inquiry was so huge, the court rewarded staff involved in the investigation with extra bonuses.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ *XCB, Juan* 298, pp.7247; *SHY, Zhiguan* 66/7.

¹³⁰ *XCB, Juan* 299, pp.7275-7276; *SHY, Zhiguan* 66/8.

¹³¹ *XCB, Juan* 299, pp.7286; *SHY, Zhiguan* 66/9.

¹³² *XCB, Juan* 300, pp.7311; *SHY, Zhiguan* 66/9-10.

¹³³ *XCB, Juan* 301, pp.7320.

¹³⁴ *XCB, Juan* 300, pp.7299.

¹³⁵ *XCB, Juan* 300, pp.7302.

The conviction of a number of Directorate personnel who had abused their power for personal gain caused Shenzong's dissatisfaction, as seen in his conversation with his tutor, a former Directorate Lecturer, Lu Dian. Lu pointed out that it was normal for teachers to accept small gifts from students and begged for the emperor's pardon, but Shenzong was not convinced.¹³⁶ After the death of Shenzong, the anti-reformer Liu Zhi 劉摯 (1030-1097) submitted a memorial in 1086/8 to the empress dowager seeking to redress the miscarriage of justice. Liu Zhi's account suggests that most Directorate Lecturers charged with receiving bribes had merely received ordinary stationeries, customary when students greet teachers. Nevertheless, under the pressure from the investigators, most lecturers confessed guilt, while hundreds or thousands of officials, students and candidates directly or indirectly implicated in this affair were punished. In light of the injustice, Liu Zhi requested reassessment of the case, while accusing the former censor He Zhengchen of acting to promote his own career.¹³⁷ Liu's indictment provides hints as to the reasons behind the fiasco.

He Zhengchen had been promoted to censor in the middle of the Yuanfeng era on the recommendation of Cai Que 蔡確 (1037-1093), then the Executive Censor.¹³⁸ It is reasonable to assume that He Zhengchen had colluded with Cai Que in making the accusation. The biography of Cai Que in the official *History of the Song Dynasty* gives us some hints:

When University student Yu Fan sued the teaching officials, (Cai) Que had thoroughly investigated the lawsuit. Lots of officials were involved and jailed, including the Hanlin Academician Xu Jiang. Cai

¹³⁶ Lu You 陸游 zhuan; Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 dian jiao, *Jia Shi Jiu Wen* 家世舊聞 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1993), *Juan* Shang, pp.184-185, which was also quoted in *XCB*, *Juan* 326, pp.7839.

¹³⁷ *XCB*, *Juan* 386, pp.9409-9413. See also Liu Zhi, "Lun Tai Xue Yu Zou" 論太學獄奏, in Liu Zhi 劉摯 zhuan; Pei Rucheng 裴汝誠, Chen Xiaoping 陳曉平 dian jiao, *Zhong Su Ji : Fu Ji Yi Deng* (ZSJ) 忠肅集 : 附輯佚等 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2002), *Juan* 4, pp.89-90.

¹³⁸ *SS*, *Juan* 329, pp.10613.

asked the jailers to live and sleep with the officials in a room. Food was dropped to a huge container inside the room to be distributed to prisoners, whom were treated like dogs and swine. They stayed in such an environment for a long time without being interrogated. So later when they were fortunate enough to be interrogated, they confessed to everything. Cai therefore accused the Assistant Councilor Yuan Jiang of being unfair. Yuan was then demoted to prefect of Haozhou, and his vacancy was filled by Cai. The promotion of Cai Que from Special drafting official of the Secretariat to Executive censor and then to Assistant Councilor all came about through this lawsuit as he replaced those who were demoted. Cai's behavior was fervently criticized by scholar-officials, although he was proud of such tricks.¹³⁹ 太學生虞蕃訟學官，確深探其獄，連引朝士，自翰林學士許將以下皆逮捕械繫，令獄卒與同寢處，飲食旋溷共為一室，設大盆於前，凡羹飯餅馐舉投其中，以杓混攪，分飼之如犬豕。久繫不問，幸而得問，無一事不承。遂劾參知政事元絳有所屬請，絳出知亳州，確代其位。確自知制誥為御史中丞、參知政事，皆以起獄奪人位而居之，士大夫交口咄罵，而確自以為得計也。

The above passage suggests that Cai Que might have created a bogus accusation for the sake of career advancement. By purging Assistant Councilor Yuan Jiang and a potential contender for the post of Assistant Councilor, Hanlin Academician Xu Jiang, the obstacles to Cai's advancement were cleared.¹⁴⁰ Obviously this was an internal power struggle among the reformers themselves: it represents an attack by Cai Que on the allies of Wang Anshi, as Hu Yongguang argues.¹⁴¹ We can also try to understand this through the analytical framework proposed by James T.C. Liu,¹⁴² who asserted that the abusive bureaucrats often managed to gain power by eliminating idealists within the reformers' camp, only to be suppressed when idealists like Wang Anshi were in power. The Yu Fan incident was a manifestation of how an abusive bureaucrat made use of a student compliant to facilitate his rise to power. This was not

¹³⁹ SS, *Juan* 471, pp.13699. The original source depicting how harsh did Cai Que torture the prisoners is likely from the private record of Sima Guang. See Li Yumin, *Sima Guang Ri Ji Jiao Zhu*, pp.184.

¹⁴⁰ Du Da Gui 杜大珪 zhuan, *Ming Chen Bei Zhuan Wan Yan Ji* 名臣碑傳琬琰集, *Xia Juan* 18 "Cai Zhong Huai Gong Que Chuan" 蔡忠懷公確傳, which is from the *Veritable Records*. See *SDZJCK*, Vol.16, pp.414. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 366, pp.8810.

¹⁴¹ Hu Yongguang, "Cultivating Merit", pp.101-102.

¹⁴² For the theoretical framework about the classification of different types of bureaucrats, see James T. C. Liu, *Reform in Sung China : Wang An-shih (1021-1086) and his new policies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp.70-79 and James T.C. Liu, "Eleventh-Century Chinese Bureaucrats: Some Historical Classification and Behavioral Types" *Administrative Science Quarterly* Vol.4 No.3 (Dec., 1959), pp.207-226.

the end of Cai Que's pursuit of political power. In fact, by assisting Shenzong in carrying out bureaucratic reforms in 1082, Cai Que overwhelmed the Chief Councilor Wang Gui so as to rise to a dominant position in the government.¹⁴³

Another significance of the complaint of Yu Fan that has seldom been acknowledged is that it alerted the emperor to the dominance of Directorate personnel in implementing the Three Hall system while infiltrating ministerial influence in the name of "unifying morality" in recruiting officials. The emperor took two remedial actions in response: first he removed those corrupt incumbent teaching officials; and second he devised a set of school regulations to limit the role of the Directorate personnel.

The punishment of teaching officials incurred by Yu Fan's complaint had been widely seen by the literati class as an injustice, as reflected in the comments of Lu Dian and Liu Zhi. Despite acknowledging the dissatisfactions of his subjects, emperor Shenzong had no intention of reconsidering the case. A possible explanation for Shenzong's severity is that such harsh punishment was his own doing. By eliminating these potential challengers, the emperor's authority could be strengthened. In fact, the case of Yu Fan was not an isolated case of "injustice" instructed by the emperor for the sake reinforcing his authority. The famous "Crow Terrace Poetry Case" was widely perceived by the literati as a similar injustice,¹⁴⁴ where the poet Su Shi was harshly punished on the charges of writing poems that denounced the reforms. Since Shenzong had personally directed these reforms after Wang Anshi's retirement,

¹⁴³ Upon the completion of the bureaucratic reform, Cai Que successfully turned the Chief Councillor Wang Gui into a mere figurehead by manipulating the Secretariat. For detailed analysis of this, see Zhang Fuhua 張復華 zhu, *Bei Song Zhong Qi Yi Hou Zhi Guan Zhi Gai Ge* 北宋中期以後之官制改革 (Taipei: Wen shi zhe chu ban she, 1991), pp.32-33.

¹⁴⁴ For a thorough analysis of this case in English, see Charles Hartman, "Poetry and Politics in 1079: The Crow Terrace Poetry Case of Su Shih", *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)*, Vol.12, (Dec., 1990), pp.15-44. See also Kathleen M. Tomlonovic, "Poetry of exile and return: a study of Su Shi (1037-1101)" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1989), pp.57-66.

condemnation of the reforms could be interpreted as *lèse majesté*. Shenzong had personally unleashed the Censorate on Su.¹⁴⁵ Literati discontent with the Censorate's handling of the case is reflected in the nickname for the bureau - the "Crow Terrace". I would therefore argue that it was common for Shenzong to create such "unjust" cases to eliminate officials who were a threat to his authority, deploying abusive bureaucrats such as Cai Que, He Zhengchen and Shu Dan to do so. Historians generally blamed the bureaucrats as treacherous ministers,¹⁴⁶ while the emperor rose to posthumous glory.

In between the second and fifth month of 1079 while Yu Fan's complaint was underway, Li Ding and Zhang Zao were already in place as Supervisors of the Directorate of Education. On the recommendation of the former, the purview of Directorate Lecturers was restricted to Classical instruction, but not regulatory matters.¹⁴⁷ Since then, a series of reforms in the University were underway. In the fifth month of the year, Tan Zongyi 檀宗益, a student in the Outer Hall, submitted a memorial to the emperor proposing seven measures to improve University education, including respecting the directors, lecturers, and rectors, rectifying the three hall system, and enforcing the punishment mechanism. Shenzong, pleased with the proposals, appointed Tan as an assistant rector of the University. Supervisors of the Directorate Li Ding and Zhang Zao, with the assistance of Bi Zhongyan 畢仲衍 (1040-1082), Cai Jing and Fan Tang 范鎰 (1073 *Jinshi*), were then ordered to study

¹⁴⁵ Li Yumin 李裕民, "Wu Tai Shi An Xin Tan" 烏台詩案新探, in Li Yumin, *Song Shi Kao Lun*, pp.24-34, particularly pp.24-26.

¹⁴⁶ See Hu Yongguang, "Cultivating Merit", pp.100-101. For studies on how the *Daoxue*-influenced historiography portrayed certain reformist councilors as "treacherous ministers", see Charles Hartman, "A Textual History of Cai Jing's Biography in the *Songshi*", in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, *Emperor Huizong and late Northern Song China*, pp.517-564 and Ari Daniel Levine, "A house in darkness: the politics of history and the language of politics in the late northern song, 1068-1104" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2002), pp.204-308 and 597-638, the latter comprised of a full translation of the biographies of the four "treacherous ministers" Cai Que, Zhang Dun, Lü Huiqing and Zeng Bu.

¹⁴⁷ XCB, *Juan* 296, pp.7211.

the feasibility of Tan's suggestions.¹⁴⁸ As the policy formulation proceeded, Zhang Zao made additional recommendations regarding school development.

In view of the bias of Lecturers in the University examination, Zhang Zao suggested in 1079/7 that the court reassign the task of examining students for promotion within the University to officials other than the Directorate Lecturers. The court approved the recommendation in the newly formulated University regulations.¹⁴⁹ Two months later, the court relieved Zhang Zao from his heavy duties in the Eastern Office of Appraising officials (*Shen Guan Dong Yuan* 審官東院) so that he could concentrate on the matters at the Directorate of Education, in particular the preparation of University regulations.¹⁵⁰ Apart from formulating University policies, it is likely that Zhang Zao also took up the task of identifying suitable candidates to fill up the Lectureships vacated by the five convicted lecturers mentioned above. This mission was accomplished in early 1080, it appears, since Yu Fen 虞賡, Cai Bian 蔡卞 (1058-1117), Yuan Mo 袁默 and Mei Hao 梅灝 were appointed as Directorate Lecturer, while Ding Zhigu 丁執古 and Ye Jingwen 葉景文 were appointed as Rector and Assistant Rector respectively. All six men were appointed on the recommendation of Zhang Zao.¹⁵¹

Promulgation of the Yuanfeng school regulations

Apart from staffing arrangements, the court ordered in 1079/8 that the University campus be enlarged to 80 buildings. Each building should have 5 dormitories and accommodate 30 students.¹⁵² Four months later, the nomination

¹⁴⁸ *XCB, Juan* 298, pp.7239 and *Juan* 301, pp.7328.

¹⁴⁹ *XCB, Juan* 299, pp.7265.

¹⁵⁰ *XCB, Juan* 300, pp.7303.

¹⁵¹ *XCB, Juan* 301, pp.7326.

¹⁵² *XCB, Juan* 299, pp.7287; *SS, Juan* 15, pp.298.

quotas for the Imperial University and Kaifeng prefecture were revised. In the past, the Directorate of Education had a quota of 160 and Kaifeng prefecture had a quota of 335, which were collapsed into a single quota in 1075 as mentioned above. By early 1080, 500 places were reserved for the University and 100 for Kaifeng prefecture.¹⁵³ Such an increase in favor of the Imperial University implies that the government intended to discourage candidates from taking the Kaifeng prefectural examinations. A year later, the two quotas were combined again.¹⁵⁴ Hence starting in early 1081, the 2,400 university students and 200 directorate school students could enjoy a combined nomination quota of 600, meaning that every 1 out of 4.3 students at the metropolitan schools could be nominated. Compared to a less than 10% success rate for the prefectural examinations,¹⁵⁵ the metropolitan schools clearly received preferential treatment -- the Song government intending to attract more students to the Imperial University. The reallocation of nomination quotas allowed the Song court to move incrementally in replacing the civil service examinations with the school system as the major avenue for official recruitment.

After working for over a half-year, a comprehensive set of regulations governing the Imperial University were finally ready for promulgation, as reflected in a memorial from the Supervisor of the Directorate Li Ding in early 1080:

Based on the ancient way of selecting scholar-officials, a candidate's conduct and ability had to be identified and assessed. Although ability could be tested in a single day, conduct could only be examined over months and years. With reference to the ideal of recruitment in the *Institutes of Zhou*, the court established the three-hall system in the Imperial University with their own examination, promotion and

¹⁵³ *XCB, Juan* 301, pp.7325; *SHY, Xuanju* 15/22.

¹⁵⁴ *XCB, Juan* 310, pp.7525.

¹⁵⁵ The 10% success rate for the prefectural examinations was mentioned by Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019-1068), likely reflecting the situation in the late Renzong era. See Liu Chang, "Song Xin An Wei Zhang Shen Xu" 送新安尉張誥序, in *QSW*, Vol.59, pp.200. But it is likely that competition in the prefectural examinations in the Yuanfeng era is even tougher, on the understanding that only 1 out of 70 candidates could be nominated. See *SHY, Xuanju* 16/4.

selection mechanism. We hereby submit a set of decrees, specifications, and ordinances for the Directorate as well as regulations for Schools, comprising 143 entries, and recommend their promulgation.¹⁵⁶ 竊以取士兼察行藝，則是古者鄉里之選。蓋藝可以一日而校，行則非歷歲月不可攷。今酌周官書考賓興之意，為太學三舍選察升補之法，上國子監敕式令並學令，凡百四十三條。詔行之。

These proposed regulations were soon adopted. The details of the 143 entries are no longer extant, but some basic ideas can be found in the *XCB* and *SHY*, as cited below:

The University should have eighty buildings, each able to accommodate thirty students. There should be a total of 2,400 students, 2,000 in the Outer, 300 in the Inner, and 100 in the Upper Hall.¹⁵⁷ 太學置齋舍八十齋，齋容三十人。外舍生二千，內舍生三百，上舍生百，總二千四百。

A student must secure a guarantor from his native or residing prefectural office and then take the entrance examination.¹⁵⁸ 生員入學，本貫若所在州給文據，試而後入。

[At the Imperial University], there will be a monthly private test and an annual public test. Candidates who pass both will be promoted to the Inner Hall. Every two years, there will be another test to promote worthy students to the Upper Hall. The rules of anonymity and recopying of scripts will be used for all examinations, as in the civil service examinations. Faculty members of the Directorate will not be permitted to oversee the examinations in the Upper Hall.¹⁵⁹ 月一私試，歲一公試，補內舍生；間歲又一試，補上舍生，封彌、謄錄如貢舉法；而上舍則學官不與考校。

The scholarly performance and moral conduct of students in each building will be recorded each month. Moral conduct includes conformity and compliance with regulation, while scholarly performance means progress in classical learning and essay competition. Tutors, Wardens, Associate rectors, Rectors, Lecturers, and the two

¹⁵⁶ *XCB*, Juan 301, pp.7327-7328; *SCGY*, Juan 10a/5b, pp.246. The Basic Annals in the *Song Dynastic History* recorded that the school regulations comprised of 140 entries, which is slightly different from other records. See *SS*, Juan 15, pp.299.

¹⁵⁷ *XCB*, Juan 301, pp.7328; *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/9b; *SS*, Juan 15, pp.298.

¹⁵⁸ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/5 quote the *Zhiguan* chapter of the *Shenzong Official History*. The translation was made with reference to Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.110.

¹⁵⁹ *XCB*, Juan 301, pp.7328; *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/9b; *SS*, Juan 15, pp.298. The translation was made with reference to Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.110.

Supervisors will conduct inspections and record their observations. Those passing in the top two ranks of the annual public test whom teachers reported to be outstanding in morality and scholarship will be promoted to the Inner Hall. Similarly, students in the Inner Hall who are graded as either excellent or fair but whose moral conduct is satisfactory will be promoted to the Upper Hall. The grades of Upper Hall students will be divided into three groups; two grades of “excellent” will be graded as “superior” (Shang deng); one “excellent” and one “fair” will be graded as “average” (Zhong deng); and two “fairs” will be graded as “below average” (Xia deng). The students graded as “superior” will be appointed to office. Those ranked “average” will be exempted from the Departmental examination, whereas those who graduate with the mark of “below average” will be exempted only from the Prefectural examination.¹⁶⁰ 諸齋月書學生行藝，以帥教不戾規矩為行，治經程文合格為藝。齋長、諭、學錄、學正、直講、主判官以次考察籍記。公試，外舍生入第一、第二等，參以所書行藝，預籍者升內舍。內舍生試入優、平二等，參以行藝升上舍。上舍分三等：俱優為上，一優一平為中，俱平若一優一不為下。上等命以官，中等免禮部試，下等免試。

The above quotations clarifies procedures of admission, examination, evaluation, promotion, and graduation for University students. Supplementary information on evaluation and promotion can be found in the *Zhiguan* chapter in the *SHY*, which cites *National History (Guoshi)* for *Shenzong*. According to *SHY*, the Directorate personnel would discuss the list of students to be nominated for the yearly public test every three months based on their moral and scholarly performance in monthly assessments. The year-end performance of these selected students would be recorded and cited when considering them for promotion, assuming outstanding results in the yearly public test or the bi-annual promotion examination of the Upper Hall.¹⁶¹

University personnel were required to consider moral conduct and scholastic performance in promoting students, and the duties and purview of University

¹⁶⁰ *SHY, Zhiguan*, 28/9-10. The translation was made with reference to Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.110-111. Part of these school regulations promulgated in 1079 could also be found in the *Xuanju* and *Zhiguan* chapter in the official *Song Dynastic History*. See *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3660-3661 and *Juan* 165, pp.3910. For English translation of these text in the official history, see John W. Chaffee, “Education and examinations in Sung society (960-1279)”, pp.88-89.

¹⁶¹ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/5.

personnel were clearly prescribed.¹⁶² Directorate Lecturers no longer allowed to oversee the Upper Hall examination.¹⁶³ For examinations of promotion within the University, the court assigned other officials to review the examination results fairly.¹⁶⁴ It was further stipulated that the performance of Lecturers be reviewed based on the moral conduct and scholastic achievement of their students and the number of students promoted, stipulating punishments should bias be uncovered in the promotion exercise.¹⁶⁵

The launch of the Three Hall system at the Imperial University as well as the internal promotion and selection mechanism were a great advancement in the mission to replace the civil service examinations with the school system in the metropolitan area. Nevertheless, examinations were hardly in decline, for they were essential to the recruitment process. Even the most outstanding University students had to go through a series of examinations before assuming a career. They needed to pass the admissions examinations for the Outer Hall. During their stay at the University, students had to take two examinations for promotion to the Inner and Upper Hall. The graduation examination in the Upper Hall could be the final examination for them should they attain “superior” in the examinations. Even disregarding the numerous monthly private tests, outstanding students still had to pass through at least four major examinations to qualify for official appointment. Compared to those most fortunate candidates in the civil service examinations, who could win Advanced Scholar qualifications after passing three examinations, University students faced a tougher set of examinations.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/6.

¹⁶³ *XCB, Juan* 301, pp.7328 and *SHY, Zhiguan*, 28/9b.

¹⁶⁴ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/5.

¹⁶⁵ *XCB, Juan* 301, pp.7328; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/6.

¹⁶⁶ Wu Zhengqiang, “Shi Lun Bei Song De Xue Xiao Qu Shi” 試論北宋的學校取士, *Zhejiang da xue Song xue yan jiu zhong xin* 浙江大學宋學研究中心 編, *Song Xue Yan Jiu Ji Kan* 宋學研究集刊 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang da xue chu ban she, 2008), Vol.1, pp.374.

Nevertheless, the University examinations were less decisive than civil service examinations. Even University students who failed to be promoted to the Inner Hall could still remain as Outer Hall students and try again in the following year. But failure in the civil service's Departmental examination resulted in students returning to their prefectural origin to retake the prefectural examination in order to qualify for the next Departmental examination. Besides, the promotion of University students was based upon continuous performance in school, so University examinations were less important. Hence it seems that the promotion path at the Imperial University was smoother, as long as students could afford a few years time to study in the capital.

From the state's perspective, selection of officials through the Imperial University seems to be a better option in theory. Firstly, since daily behavior of students could be closely observed over several years, the government should have more confidence on their moral conduct relative to examination candidates. Secondly, the University took into account the continuous performance of students. In contrast, the civil service examinations merely assessed candidates' composition at a given period. Nevertheless this new channel of recruitment through the Imperial University placed a higher demand on both financial and human resources. In 1080/1, the Directorate of Education estimated that the annual expenditure for the school would be 37,000 strings of cash, while the annual income was just 23,000 strings. In light of the deficit, the court approved an additional annual subsidy of 15,000 strings.¹⁶⁷ In the following month, the court also topped up funding for public expenses at the school to 1,000 strings of cash.¹⁶⁸ Two months later, the court added a further 6,000 strings of cash to the schools' annual budget to cover the rise in monthly stipend of

¹⁶⁷ *XCB*, *Juan* 302, pp.7347 and *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10. However in the Dynastic History *Song Shi*, it recorded that 25,000 strings of cash were granted. See *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3661. It is likely that the Chinese character “1” was mistakenly written as “2” in the *Song Shi*, and hence the 15,000 strings of cash was understood as 25,000 strings.

¹⁶⁸ *XCB*, *Juan* 302, pp.7353; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10.

Outer Hall students from 850 to 1,100 cash.¹⁶⁹ Apart from offering more subsidies to the Directorate of Education, the court also ordered in 1080/1 that the Fiscal Commissioner (*Zhuan Yun Si* 轉運司) at the circuit level assist in collecting revenues generated by lands owned by the Directorate for restitution to the Directorate of Education each year.¹⁷⁰

An increase in the number of University students as well as the implementation of such complicated evaluation and selection mechanisms placed higher demands on staff while forcing a clearer division of duties at the Imperial University. Directorate Lecturers, renamed as University Professor (*Tai Xue Bo Shi* 太學博士) in 1080,¹⁷¹ were assigned to instruct students on a specific Classic, to review the scholarly performance and moral conduct of students, and to mark their essays.¹⁷² The new expectations for University professors led the court in 1080/2 to require nominees for the post to submit their work for review by senior officials.¹⁷³ Shenzong wanted to go further and issued two years later an edict “Encouraging Learning” 勸學 in 1082.¹⁷⁴ In the first part of the edict, after reiterating his vision of imitating the ancients in developing schools and education, Shenzong expressed his disappointment with the present performance of teaching officials, partly owing to the Yu Fan case:

Those who held positions lacked sincerity of heart, while those who were studying did not aspire to goodness. Teachers and students alike had committed such vile practices as bribery. Complaints and appeals became so rampant that the masses were astonished to learn. How could I trust the same teachers to promote and steer instruction, strive for

¹⁶⁹ *XCB*, Juan 303, pp.7389; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10.

¹⁷⁰ *XCB*, Juan 302, pp.7350; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10

¹⁷¹ *XCB*, Juan 302, pp.7346; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10.

¹⁷² *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/5; *SS*, Juan 165, pp.3911.

¹⁷³ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10; *SS*, Juan 165, pp.3911.

¹⁷⁴ This edict was drafted by the prominent literary master Zeng Gong, by then the Drafting official of the Secretariat 中書舍人 in 1082. See Lin Xi, “Zhong Shu She Ren Ceng Gong Mu Zhi Ming”, in Chen Boquan, *Jiangxi Chu Tu Mu Zhi Xuan Bian*, pp.40.

harmony in rites and righteousness, and cultivate others to pursuit virtue to accumulate in people's heart? What a pity!¹⁷⁵ 在位者無任職之心，承業者無慕善之志。至於師生相冒，挾賂為奸，囂訟囂然，駭於眾聽，而況欲倡率訓導，洽於禮義；磨礱陶冶，積於人心。...朕甚憫焉。

Shenzong followed with an outline of the remedial actions to be taken, namely establishing University regulations and promoting outstanding graduates. He then elaborated on how to reward teaching officials for good conduct and to punish violations of the codes.¹⁷⁶

To improve the quality of University Professors, recruitment examinations were created in 1083,¹⁷⁷ which the Ministry of Personnel later characterized as follows:

The examinations for professor is open to candidates ranked in the “superior” groups on the Advanced Scholar examinations, within the top 10 on Departmental examinations, the top 5 on the Directorate or Prefectural examinations, the top 3 on the University's yearly public and monthly private examinations, the top candidate on the (University's) Quarterly examinations for two times, former students of Upper Hall and Inner Hall to hold posts as classical demonstrator, or had submitted their own works in appeal. Those graded “outstanding” could be appointed as University Professors, while those to receive “average” or “passing” grades can become Rectors or Associate Rectors. They also received the option of appointment as

¹⁷⁵ Zeng Gong, “Quan Xue Zhao” 勸學詔, in Zeng Gong 曾鞏 zhuan, Chen Xingzhen 陳杏珍, Chao Jizhou 晁繼周 dian jiao, *Zeng Gong Ji* 曾鞏集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1984), Juan 26, pp.404.

¹⁷⁶ Zeng Gong, “Quan Xue Zhao” 勸學詔, in Zeng Gong, *Zeng Gong Ji*, Juan 26, pp.404.

¹⁷⁷ A Ming historian Ke Weiqi argued that the recruitment test for teaching officials at the metropolitan and local schools started in the seventh year of Yuanfeng era (i.e. 1084). See Ke Weiqi 柯維騏 zhu, *Song Shi Xin Bian* 宋史新編 (Taipei: Xin wen feng chu ban gu fen you xian gong si, 1974), Juan 34/5, “Nei Wai Xue Guan” 內外學官, pp.165. But from the official dynastic history, it is obvious that recruitment test for prefectural school teachers was launched in 1075, see *SS*, Juan 156, pp.3652. Yuan Zheng therefore argued that the recruitment test for teaching officials at the metropolitan schools and the prefectural school was resumed and started respectively in 1075 and 1084. See Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.200-201. However we noticed that a county magistrate Zhou E had requested to cancel the recruitment examination for University Professor as early as 1083/8. See *XCB*, Juan 338, pp.8145. Similar record can also be found in *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/11. Therefore the recruitment test for University professors should have been resumed by 1083, being consistent with the record in *WXTK*. See *WXTK*, Juan 46, pp.433. For a brief discussion of the recruitment examinations for University professors and prefectural school teachers, see Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.200-201; Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.130.

professor at various prefectural schools.¹⁷⁸ 吏部供到元豐法：進士第一甲，或省試十名內，或府、監發解五名內，或太學公、私試三名內，或季試兩次為第一人，或上舍、內舍生，或曾充經諭以上職掌，或投所業乞試，並聽試。入上等注博士，中等、下等注正錄。即人多闕少，願注諸州教授者聽。

The above statement reflects the Song court's high expectations for University Professors. In general, graduates of the civil service examinations were eligible for most government positions. However, teaching positions at the Imperial University required civil service degree-holders to take an additional recruitment test – a test only open to outstanding officials or exceptional university students. The court's intention was to attract to the Imperial University the best talent. Thus, among the 60 candidates to compete for teaching posts, only 4 were selected.¹⁷⁹

Another indicator of the increased significance of University Professors is the shift of selection from the Ministry of Personnel to the Council-Secretary, which handled only important assignments. The Council-Secretary usually selected among candidates with extraordinary talent, while the Ministry of Personnel merely looked at seniority in making appointments.¹⁸⁰ Traditionally, the appointment of Directorate Lecturers was handled by the Council-Secretary. But during the initial phase of the Yuanfeng reforms in 1081, these positions were reallocated to the Ministry of Personnel.¹⁸¹ However in less than two years, the selection of University Professors reverted to the Council-Secretary.¹⁸² The change demonstrates Shenzong's perception of University Professors as important officials.

¹⁷⁸ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/21; SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3914.

¹⁷⁹ WXTK, *Juan* 46, pp.433; Ke Weiqi, *Song Shi Xin Bian*, *Juan* 34/5, "Nei Wai Xue Guan", pp.165.

¹⁸⁰ For a thorough discussion on the differences between these two schemes of appointment, *Tang Chu* 堂除 and *Bu Zhu* 部注, see Deng Xiaonan, *Song Dai Wen Guan Xuan Ren Zhi Du Zhu Ceng Mian* 宋代文官選任制度諸層面 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiao yu chu ban she, 1993), pp.31-45.

¹⁸¹ XCB, *Juan* 315, pp.7615 and *Juan* 334, pp.8038.

¹⁸² XCB, *Juan* 334, pp.8037-8038.

The government increased in early 1080 the number of rectors to five and assistant rectors to ten. These teaching positions, originally created by Hu Yuan as Imperial University Director in the 1050's, allowed upright and discreet students to fill the non-ranked posts at the school. After the launch of the Three Hall system, elite students in the Upper Hall were appointed. The conversion of some non-ranked assistant rectors to ranked government positions started in late 1070's, when Outer Hall student Tan Zongyi became assistant rector of the University.¹⁸³ In early 1080, among the ten associate rectors, five were government officials ranked 9A (*Ming Guan Xue Lu* 命官學錄) appointed by the government, while the other five were non-ranked (*Zhi shi Xue Lu* 職事學錄) selected from top students.¹⁸⁴ The main task of rectors and associate rectors was to assist the Directorate Lecturers in their instruction as well as to oversee and record students' behavior. Besides, they were also responsible for enforcing the school regulations and punishing students who commit crimes.¹⁸⁵ A clearer distinction between the two emerges in the *Zhiguan* chapter of the *Shenzong Official History*, now incorporated into the *SHY*: "Rectors mainly enforce school regulations and assist with students' examination and selection; associate rectors report students who violate school regulations, assessing their prospect of being selected to the rectors."¹⁸⁶ 舉行學規，以次考選，則正主之；糾不如規者，論選士以告於正，則錄主之。

The tenure of the two posts was set at three years, during which the staff had to be appraised six times on their performance. Reassignment to other offices would

¹⁸³ *XCB*, *Juan* 298, pp.7239. See also Zhu Derun 朱德潤, "Song Yan Ping Xue Lu Xu" 送延平學錄序, in Li Xiusheng 李修生 bian, *Quan Yuan Wen (QYW)* 全元文 (Nanjing: Jiangsu gu ji zhu ban she, 1998-2004), Vol.40, pp.481.

¹⁸⁴ See Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.199. See also *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/5; *XCB*, *Juan* 301, pp.7328; *QSKS*, *Hou Ji* 11 "Tai Xue Zheng Lu"; *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.396 and *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3660-3661 and Lian Wenfeng 連文鳳, "Song Gou Hou Fu Xue Zheng Zhi Chang Guo Xu" 送苟厚夫學正之昌國序, in *QSW*, Vol.359, pp.332.

¹⁸⁵ *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3911. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 301, pp.7328 the text of which is translated above.

¹⁸⁶ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/5, which quotes the *Zhiguan* section in the *Shenzong Official history*.

be considered after taking into account three performance appraisals as well as their experience and seniority.¹⁸⁷ Further arrangements concerning the staffing of the Directorate of Education came in 1080/2, in which the librarian was replaced by an accountant. Besides, a chef and an ambassador were installed at the Directorate of Education. Due to the surge in the number of students, dormitory guards increased to 200 so as to monitor students' behavior at night.¹⁸⁸ Subsequent to an increase in student quota in the Outer Hall from 700 to 2,000, student population at the Imperial University swiftly surged within half a year.

Over the course of institutionalizing the metropolitan schools, a number of scholar-officials called for the establishment of local schools in different prefectures in imitation of the Imperial University.¹⁸⁹ After completing regulations governing the Imperial University in 1079, the reformers switched their focus to the local schools. The two Supervisors of the Directorate Li Ding and Zhang Zao, with assistance from Fan Tang and Cai Jing, were ordered to devise the regulations for local schools in 1080/2.¹⁹⁰ During the deliberation process, Zeng Gong, a famous literary master and disciple of Ouyang Xiu, made an initial proposal to link up the local schools, the Imperial University and the Ministry of Rites as a channel of education, promotion and recruitment in 1080/11. According to his plan, outstanding graduates from prefectural schools should be recommended to study at the Imperial University. After one year of observation, they would be further recommended to the Ministry of Rites for official appointment. Nevertheless, the court did not positively respond.¹⁹¹ Only until the late 1090's when emperor Zhezong began to devise an empire-wide school

¹⁸⁷ XCB, *Juan* 302, pp.7353.

¹⁸⁸ XCB, *Juan* 302, pp.7353; SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/10.

¹⁸⁹ Su Song 蘇頌, "Long Tu Ge Dai Zhi Zhi Yang Zhou Yang Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 龍圖閣待制知揚州楊公墓誌銘, in SWGWJ, *Juan* 57, pp.849.

¹⁹⁰ XCB, *Juan* 302, pp.7352.

¹⁹¹ XCB, *Juan* 310, pp.7515-7516. Similar text could also be found in Zeng Gong, "Qing Ling Zhou Xian Te Ju Shi Zha Zi" 請令州縣特舉士劄子, in Zeng Gong, *Zeng Gong Ji*, *Juan* 30, pp.447.

system would Zeng Gong's vision be realized, as discussed in the next chapter.

Although the linkage between local schools and the Imperial University had yet to be formalized, the Directorate of Education played an expanded role in the development of the former, in particular as pertains to appointment matters, likely for the sake of enhancing the quality of teaching.¹⁹² As early as 1073, the Directorate of Education had been involved in examining nominees for teaching posts in prefectural schools.¹⁹³ Two years later, the Directorate took charge of reporting and investigating underperformed teachers in local schools.¹⁹⁴ In 1080/9, top officials in the Advanced Institutes, Censorial and Policy-critique Offices, Council of State and the Bureau of Military Affairs, as well as Secretaries and Hanlin Academicians were invited to nominate suitable candidates to fill teaching posts in local schools. Once ten candidates were nominated, they would be gathered in the Secret Institute and examined on the Meaning of the Classics, a session chaired by Supervisors of the Directorate.¹⁹⁵ In 1083/7, in view of Su Che 蘇轍 (1039-1112), a literary master who then served as a teacher in a prefectural school in Yunzhou on a provisional basis, had adopted classical exegeses different from the standardized version of Wang Anshi on three policy questions, the Vice-Director of Education Zhu Fu thus requested that all teachers in the prefectural schools on a provisional basis be fired. For the sake of ideological consistency, Zhu also suggested that appointments of local teachers be made on the recommendations of the Prefects after being examined by the Directorate of Education. The Ministry of Rites then requested the Directorate to elaborate on how the conduct and academic credentials of the candidates be assessed for teaching assignments and how impartiality in the appointment process could be ensured.¹⁹⁶ A

¹⁹² See Zhou Yuwen, *Song Dai De Zhou Xian Xue*, pp.134-135 for a brief illustration on this.

¹⁹³ *XCB, Juan* 243, pp.5919.

¹⁹⁴ *XCB, Juan* 264, pp.6477.

¹⁹⁵ *XCB, Juan* 308, pp.7484.

¹⁹⁶ *XCB, Juan* 337, pp.8119.

few months later, the Directorate was ordered to verify the credentials of the nominees for local teaching posts.¹⁹⁷ From the above, the motive behind the increasing involvement of the Directorate of Education in the appointment of local school teachers is quite obvious – to attain ideological consistency through a comprehensive school system extending from the capital to the prefectures.¹⁹⁸

Apart from exerting tighter control on staffing at prefectural schools, the Directorate of Education and Imperial University were also deeply engaged in the recruitment of prospective officials. In addition to the Three Hall promotion mechanism, they also scrutinized the behavior of civil service examination candidates. This was in line with the ultimate goal of school education – recruiting officials who were virtuous and morally qualified. As early as 1076, the Directorate of Education was ordered to scrutinize the behavior of candidates nominated by circuits to take the Departmental examination. Violations of the regulations were to be punished in accordance with school regulations or suspended for the upcoming examination. Harsher punishments might be incurred should the Directorate consider the case as severe and refer it to the Kaifeng Prefectural Office for investigation.¹⁹⁹ The Directorate's role in scrutinizing the behavior of candidates nominated by circuits was reiterated by the court in 1084/8. According to a plan originally proposed by the Vice-Director of Education, Zhu Fu, the Directorate had to monitor, investigate and report candidates involved in gambling, litigation, excessive drinking, creating rumors and commenting on court affairs.²⁰⁰ The last offence ostensibly targeted candidates who criticized the New Policies. The Directorate of Education thus performed the important function of ensuring ideological uniformity among prospective officials and intellectuals, irrespective of whether they were University students.

¹⁹⁷ *XCB, Juan* 344, pp.8256.

¹⁹⁸ Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.201.

¹⁹⁹ *XCB, Juan* 271, pp.6635.

²⁰⁰ *XCB, Juan* 348, pp.8350; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/11.

Attendance for descendants of high officials and relatives of University Personnel at the Directorate School became mandatory in accordance with this rationale. In the past, it is unnecessary for these Higher Elites to study in government schools before registering in the Kaifeng prefectural examinations. But since 1080/5, the Directorate School had set aside a quota of 200 to educate these students, who enjoyed a nomination quota proportionate to University students (without exceeding 40).²⁰¹ Instead of sharing a campus with University students, they stayed in the “Tortoise Head House” which is located behind the 80 existing University buildings.²⁰² Such arrangement was likely a mechanism for moral indoctrination to Higher Elites.

One feature of education in the late Shenzong’s era is the inclusion of legal training at the Imperial University. By founding a School of Law in 1073.²⁰³ examinations on legal matters also became necessary for lower ranking officials and Advanced Scholar degree candidates.²⁰⁴ Even the Imperial University with its focus on Classical instruction had included the “Meaning of Law” in its examinations and encouraged students to study legal matters.²⁰⁵ In 1083/4, on the recommendation of the Vice-Director of Education Zhu Fu, the court allowed University students adept at the meaning of law and judicial judgments to participate in the public examination held by the School of Law. The man to receive the top grade on this Law test was

²⁰¹ *XCB*, Juan 304, pp.7404; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/10; *WXTK*, Juan 42, pp.396; *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3661.

²⁰² *XCB*, Juan 305, pp.7417.

²⁰³ *SS*, Juan 15, pp.283. Readers can refer to Brian E. McKnight, “Mandarins as Legal Experts: Professional Learning in Sung China”, in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (ed), *Neo-confucian education*, pp.504-506 for a summary in English regarding the School of Law in the Song dynasty.

²⁰⁴ *SS*, Juan 155, pp.3618-3619.

²⁰⁵ The inclusion of the Law syllabus in the University examination could be deduced from the commentaries made by a censor Chen Shixi. Chen was re-assigned to the Ministry of Personnel in early 1084 after making a suggestion that the “Meaning of Law” should be abolished in the civil service examination. See *XCB*, Juan 341, pp.8205. This implied that “Meaning of Law” was included in the University examinations before 1084.

treated as ranked in the second class in the private examinations of the University.²⁰⁶ It is hard to imagine that legal matters, a subject ignored by the Confucian mainstream,²⁰⁷ could be highly valued at the high temple of Confucian learning – the Imperial University. A possible explanation is that the reformers, for the sake of gaining imperial favor, opted to relinquish the vested interests or principles of the literati class at the Imperial University. In fact, the reformers even assisted in compiling comprehensive regulations to limit the power of scholar-officials at the Imperial University. In turn, emperor's autocracy was reassured, as inferred by the feedback of the conservatives as seen below.

Negative feedbacks on the institutionalizations

In the wake of comprehensive regulations for the promotion and graduation of students, the Imperial University reached a new height: “quotas were given for student registration, stipends provided based on rank, the treasury and the library assigned managers, and medication provided to the sick.”²⁰⁸ 隸籍有數，給食有等，庫書有官，治疾有醫 In effect, the recruitment of officials *via* the Imperial University had been fully implemented. Increased quotas for Kaifeng prefecture and the Directorate of Education caused more candidates to study at the metropolitan schools. The impact on higher education was very positive, as vividly depicted by Liu Zhi in 1080:

Four years after the accession of the current emperor (Shenzong), the Examination bureau was ordered to select prospective officials on the basis of candidates' understanding of the essentials of the Confucian Classics. Moreover, more teachers at the Imperial University and local

²⁰⁶ *XCB, Juan 334*, pp.8050; *SS, Juan 157*, pp.3673; and Fang Shao, *Bo Zhai Bian, Juan 10*, pp.55-56.

²⁰⁷ Sima Guang's aversion to legal training, as shown in his memorial of 1086/3, is a typical attitude of the moralistic Confucian scholars. See *XCB, Juan 371*, pp.8979 or Sima Guang, “Qi Qing Ke Chang Zha Zi” 起請科場劄子 元祐元年上, in *QSW, Vol.55*, pp.275.

²⁰⁸ *SS, Juan 165*, pp.3911.

schools were appointed, and the Three Hall system was established. It is a pity that ten years later scholars were still unaccomplished. Even though laws were formulated, the goal to educate and nurture remained remote. Starting with the Imperial University, regulations of benefit and detriment had been discussed and documented, namely the decrees, ordinances, specifications. To implement them, new positions were created and officials selected. Regulations that were unfeasible should be reported swiftly. Soon scholars everywhere knew the direction of the emperor and rushed to register in schools – an improvement 1000-fold compared with older times.²⁰⁹ 今上臨御四年，詔有司始以經義取士，增太學、郡國學官，設三舍。既十年，閔學者之未大成，法雖立而教養之意未盡宣，乃慨然更新之。自太學始，其法損益可論定者著之書，曰敕，曰令，曰式，選建官推之。其弗可者，使輒言上。天下之士，於是益曉識上指，至者輻湊，視舊所增，蓋以千數。

However, the sudden surge in students seemed like putting the cart before the horse, according to Liu Zhi:

The rise in student numbers, increase in stipends, heightened diligence of students, and stringent prohibitions -- these could be signs of a glorious age in higher education. Nevertheless, these serve only to attend to the superficial while neglecting the essentials. Should the teachings of the ruler be followed, scholars would start to unify their views on good and bad, distinguish right or wrong, and celebrate classical learning. Only after the scholars have demonstrated such tendencies should regulations come as a supplementary tool – regulations never resented by observers regardless of complexity. This is the proper course for distinguishing essentials and superficialities.²¹⁰ 置生欲多，賦廩欲豐，課業欲勤，糾禁欲嚴，如是以爲盛。此言可爾，尚所謂見其末而忘其本也。恭惟上之教士，始於一好惡，明是非，嚮經術，俾士知所趨，而後申法令以輔焉。其法之詳，又使論者無不厭。此所謂末與本稱。

Liu Zhi's greatest concern was the reliance on regulations to govern schools, students and teachers. In fact, Shenzong himself acknowledged that more had to be done, as reflected in the following question on the palace examination in 1082: "The Imperial University had just been advanced and enlarged, as talents from the four corners gather. How should they be rectified and nurtured so that the glories of the

²⁰⁹ Liu Zhi 劉摯 zhu, "Shou Zhou Xue Ji" 壽州學記, in *ZSJ, Juan 9*, pp.203.

²¹⁰ Liu Zhi 劉摯 zhu, "Shou Zhou Xue Ji", in *ZSJ, Juan 9*, pp.204.

ancient sage kings is attained?”²¹¹ 朕方崇廣三舍，而來四方之賢良，何修何飭，而能臻先王之盛歟？Shenzong recognized that in addition to setting up hardware, more has to be done to reclaim the spirit of the ancients, although he prioritized school regulations over other measures. A prominent example is Shenzong’s ambivalence towards Confucianism. During his entire reign, he never visited the Imperial University to pay tribute to Confucius,²¹² activities in which earlier Song emperors Taizu, Taizong, Zhenzong and Renzong had all participated. When officials at the Directorate of Education proposed posthumous honors for Confucius and other Confucian masters in 1075, Shenzong tabled their request.²¹³ Even though the Imperial University flourished under Shenzong, we should not assume that he favored Confucianism. Rather, echoing the advancement of Shenzong’s absolutism as reflected in ceremonial rites,²¹⁴ the entire educational reform package, particularly the Yuanfeng regulatory regime, could be interpreted as a political tool to strengthen his own authority. In fact, his comprehensive regulatory framework was extended to other policy areas as part of the “family tradition of Song founders” (*Zu Zong Jia Fa* 祖宗家法).²¹⁵ Through laws and regulations to restrict the power of their subjects, Song

²¹¹ Wang Anli 王安禮 (1034-1095), “Yuan Feng Wu Nian Dian Shi Jin Shi Ce Wen Wu” 元豐五年殿試進士策問五, in *QSW*, Vol.83, pp.72.

²¹² A Southern Song anecdote record indicated that Shenzong had visited the Directorate of Education in the Yuanfeng era and offered wine to Directorate personnel, but it did not mention that Shenzong had paid tribute to Confucius. See Zhou Hui 周輝 zhuan; Liu Yongxiang 劉永翔 jiao zhu, *Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu* 清波雜誌校注 (Beijing: Zhong Hua Shu Ju, 1994), *Juan* 4, “Ci Jian Sheng Jiu” 賜監生酒, pp.173-174. Apart from this, Shenzong’s traits of visiting the Directorate of Education or the Imperial University could hardly be found in other historical records such as *XCB*, *SHY*, *YH*, or the official history *SS*. That may explain why Ge Shaoou 葛紹歐 did not include Shenzong’s visit as one of the eighteen visits of Song emperors to the Imperial University. See Ge Shaoou, “Song Dai Di Wang Xing Xue Kao” 宋代帝王幸學考, in *Di er jie Song shi xue shu yan tao hui mi shu chu bian*, *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on Sung History* 第二屆宋史學術研討會論文集 (Taipei: Zhongguo wen hua da xue shi xue yan jiu suo, shi hsue xi, 1996), pp.549-564.

²¹³ Li Qingchen 李清臣 deng, “Shang Shenzong Qi Ba Zhui Di Kong Zi” 上神宗乞罷追帝孔子, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 91, pp.985-986. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 258, pp.6304-6305.

²¹⁴ James T.C. Liu, “The Sung Emperors and the Ming-T’ang or Hall of Enlightenment”, in Françoise Aubin (ed.), *Etudes Song: in memoriam Etienne Balazs* (Paris: Mouton, 1973), Ser. 2 No.1, pp.52-53.

²¹⁵ This family tradition of the Song founding emperors has been articulated briefly by Deng Guangming in an article, see Deng Guangming, “Song Chao De Jia Fa He Bei Song De Zheng Zhi Gai Ge Yun Dong” 宋朝的家法和北宋的政治改革運動, in Deng Guangming zhu, *Deng Guangming Zhi Shi Cong Gao* 鄧廣銘治史叢稿 (Beijing: Beijing da xue chu ban she, 1997), pp.124-143. This phenomenon in the Song has been further elaborated by his daughter Deng Xiaonan, see Deng Xiaonan zhu, *Zu Zong Zhi Fa : Bei Song Qian Qi Zheng Zhi Shu Lüe* 祖宗之法：北宋前期政治述略 (Beijing

emperors could perpetuate their own autocratic rule while enjoying the loyal service of subjects. The Southern Song thinker Ye Shi 葉適 (1150-1223) elaborates:

This country inherited the extreme maladies of the Tang and the Five Dynasties. To address these problems, governors' commands were seized and power concentrated on top. The registration of soldiers, collection of revenue, as well as local defense, all came to be handled by the emperor himself. To attain the greatest benefit and avoid the greatest harm, the emperor relied less on people than laws, less on officials than clerks. Such extensive prohibitions differed entirely from the ancients, and prevented supreme power of the emperor from being diluted.²¹⁶ 國家因唐、五代之極弊，收斂藩鎮，權歸於上，一兵之籍，一財之源，一地之守，皆人主自為之也。欲專大利而無受其大害，遂廢人而用法，廢官而用吏，禁防纖悉，特與古異，而威柄最為不分。

Apart from strengthening the Song monarchy, school regulations and prohibitions provided a perfect tool for reformers to silence their opponents – making them hard to uproot despite the complaints of conservatives. Personnel arrangements at the Imperial University presented another problem for the contemporaries. In 1080/8, University graduate Xiao Zhimei 蕭之美 submitted a policy essay to the emperor to lodge four complaints concerning University personnel: (i) poor teaching by instructors of the *Book of Changes*, where some professors instructed students based solely on the lecture notes prepared by the others; (ii) nominations of tutor and warden based on personal favor;²¹⁷ (iii) careless of University examiners in evaluating students; and (iv) the lack of discipline in the University admissions examinations.²¹⁸ The court ordered the Council-Secretary to devise regulations as a

Shi: Sheng huo, du shu, xin zhi san lian shu dian, 2006). For an English discussion on this concept, see Christian Lamouroux and Deng Xiaonan, "The 'Ancestors' Family Instructions': Authority and Sovereignty in Medieval China", *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, No.35 (2005), pp.79-97.

²¹⁶ Ye Shi 葉適, "Shi Lun Er" 始論二, in Ye Shi zhuan; Liu Gongchun 劉公純, Wang Xiaoyu 王孝魚, Li Zhefu 李哲夫 dian jiao, *Ye Shi Ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1961), Juan 4, pp.759. For a brief discussion on this, see Winston W. Lo, *The life and thought of Yeh Shih* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 1974), pp.124-125.

²¹⁷ XCB, Juan 307, pp.7465; SHY, Zhiguan 28/10.

²¹⁸ XCB, Juan 310, pp.7515.

remedy for the first problem and the Censorate to investigate the second charge.²¹⁹ The Supervisor of the Directorate, Shu Dan, later confessed that he had failed in supervising University personnel and requested punishment.²²⁰

In 1083/8, county magistrate Zhou E 周諤 submitted a memorial to the court with 2 suggestions concerning the Imperial University. Firstly, Zhou requested that the examinations for appointment of University professors be abolished. Instead they should be chosen from the pool of teaching officials, students of the Upper and Inner Halls or holders of the Advanced Scholar Degree under the new curriculum. Zhou also suggested strict enforcement of the regulations governing admissions to the Imperial University while exempting from the admissions examination men with recommendations from local prefects.²²¹ In fact, admissions had long been controversial for the Imperial University. In 1082/1, five previously deregistered students sought re-admission to the University under a different name. They were expelled from the school and suspended for one examination cycle after the case was uncovered.²²² Such complaints reflect the failure of University personnel in managing admission. Hence even though a full set of regulations existed, the quality of officials implementing the regulations was crucial to their success. Despite continuous revisions of regulations governing the Imperial University, the school system performed marginally in recruiting morally qualified officials, causing the civil service examinations to stay the main channel of recruitment.

To conclude, educational reforms in the Xining era should be understood as emanating from a consensus among Song scholar-officials. By transforming official recruitment and making government education more universal and morally

²¹⁹ *XCB, Juan* 307, pp.7465.

²²⁰ *XCB, Juan* 310, pp.7515.

²²¹ *XCB, Juan* 338, pp.8145; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/11.

²²² *XCB, Juan* 322, pp.7761; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/10.

informed,²²³ they aimed to recruit officials with integrity. Ironically, even though intellectual values were ostensibly unified after the *New Commentaries on the Three Classics* was adopted as the orthodox exegesis in 1075, no observable improvement occurred in the moral standards of prospective officials. Even worse, the Imperial University became a venue for political indoctrination. Government control of the metropolitan schools grew tighter under the school selection mechanism of the Yuanfeng era. Under the 143 regulations promulgated in early 1080, all matters in the Imperial University were governed by rules and regulations. Even though some conservatives had reservations about imposing tight restrictions on schools and students, so long as the power of the emperor was strengthened under this regulatory framework, the regulations could not be uprooted and became a prominent feature in Middle-period China.²²⁴ The authority of Shenzong, however strengthened, had yet to become overwhelming according to Peter Bol:

The ruler is not an autocrat; there is no indication that he decides things on his own on the basis of his personal views, nor does he seek to have direct, unmediated power over the population or even the bureaucracy. The policy program - developed by scholar-officials on the basis of their understanding of antiquity, the natural order, and the circumstances of the present - is the constitution to which all should conform.²²⁵

In fact, power had just tilted only slightly and temporarily towards the emperor. Upon the death of Shenzong, a fierce power struggle erupted among court officials and the situation began to change.

²²³ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.130.

²²⁴ One of the preeminent features during the Tang-Song transformation, as argued by Japanese historian Ichisada Miyazaki, is the institutionalization of emperor's autocracy. See Liu Liyan, "He Wei Tang Song Bian Ge", pp.130.

²²⁵ Peter K. Bol, "Emperors Can Claim Antiquity Too: Emperor'ship and Autocracy Under the New Policies", in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, *Emperor Huizong and late Northern Song China*, pp.190.

Chapter 5

THE LIMITS OF AUTOCRACY IN THE ZHEZONG REIGN

The Zhezong reign can be divided into two phases: the first phase was dominated by the regent of the Empress Dowager and the conservative ministers; while the young emperor had resumed his personal rule and continued the reform legacy of his father in the second phase. This chapter stresses on the discussions and policies surrounding the Imperial University in the two phases, which shed light on the subtle relationship between the emperor and the scholar-officials.

Yuanyou deliberations on restoring the metropolitan schools¹

In 1085/3, the most powerful supporter of the New Policies, Emperor Shenzong, perished.² His nine year-old son successor, posthumously known as Emperor Zhezong, was too young to govern, so Empress Dowager Gao, the mother of Shenzong and grandmother of Zhezong, acted as regent. Well-known for her aversion towards the New Policies, she summoned the leader of the anti-reformists, Sima Guang, to lead the government. The conservative historian swiftly abolished a number of less controversial Policies in 1085 upon his return to the capital.³ Other policies that had a crucial impact on state revenues such as the Green Sprouts Policy and the Service Exemption Policy were still in force, partly because the reformist Chief Councilor Cai Que and Military Affairs Commissioner Zhang Dun 章惇 (1035-1105) were still in power. As for education and examinations, minor changes in reform

¹ The following discussions on the metropolitan schools in the Yuanyou era has made reference to Gō Tereda, *Sōdai kyōiku shi gaisetsu*, pp.112-121; Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.32-36.

² *SS*, *Juan* 16, pp.313.

³ *XCB*, *Juan* 353. For a detailed account in English regarding the ascendance of Sima Guang in his last eighteenth months and an analysis of his conservatism, see Ji Xiaobin, *Politics and conservatism in Northern Song China : the career and thought of Sima Guang (A.D.1019-1086)* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2005).

policies were already underway in 1085.

As early as 1085/4, one month after the death of Shenzong, the official Wang E 王諤 had proposed restoring at the Imperial University the Professorial specialty in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, an influential Confucian Classic excluded from the curriculum since the 1070's. Perhaps Wang had sensed a change in Palace attitudes towards the reform, but pro-reformers in the Censorial and Policy-critique offices attacked Wang for "commenting on matters beyond his purview" 非本職所當論列.⁴

The gradual removal of reformers at court in late 1085 led to minor revisions in education and examination policies. In 1085/10, the court approved the Ministry of Rites' request that candidates purged from the civil service examinations be allowed to seek admission to the Imperial University.⁵ This seemed like an imperial amnesty that commonly attends the accession of a new emperor, although personnel arrangements inside the Ministry suggest something else. By then, the anti-reformer Han Zhongyan 韓忠彥 (1038-1109), son of the former Chief Councillor Han Qi, was the Secretary of Rites.⁶ It is therefore likely that Han Zhongyan endorsed and supported this proposal, a strategy of being compassionate towards candidates to win their support as future officials.

Another sign of the anti-reformers' generosity towards the victims of pro-reform persecution is the lifting of the mutual guarantee and penalty requirements. As noted above, students seeking admission to the University had to serve as guarantors for one another since 1081,⁷ as such, violators of school regulations and

⁴ XCB, Juan 354, pp.8480.

⁵ XCB, Juan 360, pp.8611; SHY, Zhiguan 28/11.

⁶ From XCB, Juan 358, 359 and 362, we noticed that Han Zhongyan was the Secretary of Rites during late 1085.

⁷ XCB, Juan 314, pp.7612.

their guarantors were subject to the same punishment. Likely because of the unfairness of this measure in the eyes of the anti-reformers, the practice was abolished in early 1086.⁸ The court subsequently approved a recommendation of the Directorate of Education that only students who violated school regulations should be required to sit for the re-admission examination, not their guarantors.⁹

A number of other educational reform measures were also reversed. In 1085/11, the nomination quota of the Kaifeng prefectural examination, which had previously been allocated to the Imperial University, was restored.¹⁰ This provided a clear sign that some anti-reformers had started to move away from the school system as the leading recruitment mechanism for officials. Some of them even preferred to get rid of the school recruitment mechanism and revert to the civil service examinations.

In the Intercalary second month of 1086, the Censor Zhu Guangting 朱光庭 (1037-1094), a disciple of Hu Yuan, memorialized the emperor requesting to install prominent teachers as Professors at the Imperial University. He detailed the reasons as follows:

In order to establish a peaceful foundation for the country, your subject perceives that the most urgent need is talent. To successfully nurture all talent under heaven, nothing comes before schools. How could talent be available if the court focuses on recruiting them, but not nurturing them? Nowadays the Imperial University and local schools, despite promising to promote talent, fail to nurture them primarily for lack of prominent teachers. For prominent teachers, their classical knowledge enables them to understand thoroughly the meaning of the sages, their conduct and righteous deeds serves as an exemplar for others to follow, and they genuinely take teaching and nurturing as their own responsibility. 臣竊以立國家太平之基本者，莫急於人材。養天下人材之成就者，莫先

⁸ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/11; *XCB*, *Juan* 362, pp.8656; *SS*, *Juan* 17, pp.320 and *Juan* 165, pp.3911.

⁹ *XCB*, *Juan* 375, pp.9098-9099.

¹⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 361, pp.8638; *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3661.

於庠序。朝廷務要廣求人材，而不素為之養，則何由而得？今上庠與州郡學校雖名為興賢，而無養人材之實，所以然者，蓋無名師之故也。夫所謂名師者，其經術足以窮聖蘊，其行義足以為人表，又能至誠以教養為己任者是也。

Previously during the reign of Renzong, Hu Yuan was ordered to oversee the Imperial University. At that time most scholars followed his example, and hence lots of talent was successfully nurtured. But this situation does not exist today. How could a vast country extending to the four seas suffer from an insufficiency of people? The problem lies in lacking the will to identify talent. Schools nowadays do not emphasize rites and righteousness in their teaching and nurturance, caring only for **harsh prohibitions and punishments**. For the classics that students studied or the conduct that they exhibited, it is hard to distinguish students who genuinely understand from those who just blindly follow regulations. Teaching officials just care for themselves and act cautiously, trying to avoid infringing upon those prohibitions. They hardly have spare time to study rites and righteousness! This should not be the situation at the Imperial University, the vanguard for promoting virtue. Now the court has almost eradicated all problematic regulations, but the formulation of superior policies is still imperceptible. To establish superior policies, we must first and foremost appoint prominent teachers and promote schools that nurture talent. The vanguard for virtue should originate in the capital, and the wind will soon sweep all under heaven. 昔在仁宗朝，詔胡瑗典太學。當是時，天下學者翕然向風，所以成就人材為多，至今未見其繼者。豈國家之大，四海之廣無其人？患在不求之也。今庠序之中，不見以禮義教養，唯見以苛禁繩治。其所習經術，所修行義，孰為發明，孰為觀法，學官者區區自顧，苛禁之不暇，奚暇治禮義哉，甚非所以為首善之地也。今朝廷所去弊政幾欲盡，而所修善政未甚聞。臣以謂所修善政，莫先於置名師、興學校以養人材，首善自京師，而風動天下。

I humbly beg Your Majesty to order officials to widely recruit true Confucian scholars of wide repute for appointment at the Imperial University, empowering them to take teaching and nurturing as their own responsibility. The problematic Three Hall System as well as those harsh prohibitions should be abolished. When rites and righteousness are emphasized in the teaching of scholars, talent would naturally be nurtured and Your Majesty's foundation for Grand Peace erected. Your subject sincerely hopes that Your Majesty can address this matter of benefit for all people under heaven.¹¹ 伏望聖慈詔大臣博求真儒為天下所共推者，使主太學，以教養為己任，罷三舍之弊法，去一切之苛禁，專務以禮義教養多士，自然可以成就人材，為陛下立太平之基本。臣願陛下留神，天下幸甚。

¹¹ Zhu Guangting 朱光庭, "Shang Zhezong Qi Ze Ming Shi Zhu Tai Xue" 上哲宗乞擇名師主太學, in SCZCZY, *Juan* 79, pp.861-862. See also QSW, Vol.92, pp.373

Other than articulating the urgency of installing prominent teachers at the Imperial University, Zhu also attributed the poor teaching at the elite institution to the harsh prohibitions and punishments imposed by the reformers. According to Zhu, these measures had inhibited the growth of a healthy learning environment. Partly for this reason, Zhu sought to abolish the Three Hall promotion system. So what were the harsh prohibitions to which Zhu referred? And what problematic elements in the Three Hall system necessitated its abolition? Although details are lacking in Zhu's memorial, the discussion of other officials will provide some clues.

Likely in response to Zhu's memorial, an edict was issued in the intercalary second month of 1086, ordering leading officials to nominate two deserving candidates as teachers at the metropolitan and prefectural schools.¹² But the crucial issue of abolishing the Three Hall system had yet to be touched upon. Nevertheless, minor revisions in the Three Hall system were underway. On the recommendation of another censor, Wang Yansou 王巖叟 (1043-1093), the court ordered in 1086/3 that the Vice-Director of Education and University Professors be in charge of the University's Yearly Public examination. As stipulated in the reform package in 1079, this examination related to promotion from the Outer to the Inner Hall. For the sake of impartiality and fairness, the court had designated officials other than Directorate personnel to oversee its operation. However, Wang Yansou challenged the cost-effectiveness and worthiness of such arrangement, noting that 42 officials, 107 clerks, and 237 assistants were involved in the Public Examination in 1086. As in the civil service examinations, students had to be sequestered for a month in the examination hall, with the court responsible for their subsistence. But only 3, 14 and 8 students were promoted from the Outer Hall to the Inner Hall in 1083, 1084 and 1085 respectively – a very modest yield. Moreover, the outcome of public examinations in

¹² *XCB*, *Juan* 370, pp.8944; *SS*, *Juan* 17, pp.321.

the University appeared far less important relative to the civil service examinations, leaving costs unjustified by consequences. Wang therefore argued that the court should restore operation of the Public examination to carefully vetted Directorate personnel.¹³

After persuading the court to revise the Public Examination, Wang Yansou further proposed in 1086/5 rescinding the mandatory one-year attendance requirement at the Imperial University. According to existing regulations, students were required to study at the University for a minimum of one year in order to be eligible for the University's preliminary examination, an easier gateway to the higher level Departmental examination in view of its generous nomination quota of 600.¹⁴ However, strict enforcement of the attendance rule led to delayed progress for certain students. Wang indicated that some poor students had to wait three more years for the next cycle of civil service examinations just because they failed to meet the minimum attendance requirement due to one day of absence. Some students who had returned late from their leave of absence were required to sit for the University's re-admissions examinations, failure at which caused students to be disqualified from the University's preliminary examination. Wang therefore requested that the minimum attendance requirement be abolished, and that all former University students be qualified for the preliminary examination at the University. He further requested the Directorate of Education to allow students who had cumulatively studied for one year since 1080 to take the upcoming examinations. These several requests were approved and implemented in 1086/7.¹⁵ Interestingly, history repeated itself. In the aftermath of the Qingli reform 40 years ago, a similar minimum attendance requirement at the University was abolished. The lifting of the requirement implies that school education

¹³ See *XCB*, *Juan* 371, pp.8991-8992; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/11; *SS*, *Juan* 17, pp.321 and *Juan* 165, pp.3911.

¹⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 301, pp.7325 and *Juan* 310, pp.7525.

¹⁵ *XCB*, *Juan* 377, pp.9149-9150; *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3911.

was no longer deemed necessary to cultivating moral virtues in examination candidates. Neither was the University *per se* the ideal venue for scrutinizing candidates' conduct. In the view of some anti-reformers, the role of the Imperial University should be similar to the Directorate School prior to the Qingli reform as merely a place to prepare students for the civil service examinations.

Paralleling the re-emphasis on the civil service examinations, the Three Hall system at the Imperial University became a primary target of the anti-reformers. Wang Yansou fiercely criticized it in a memorial in 1086/4. What made his memorial different from that of Zhu Guangting, as quoted above, is his association of the Three Hall system with the poor learning customs at the Imperial University:

There are regulations appealing in name, but tormenting in practice. There are actions with good intentions, but hard to implement. The Three Hall system is of this sort. After the establishment of the Three Hall System, despite having students of estimable talent and extraordinary abilities, we have yet to see them successfully selected and recruited for office. Nevertheless, the harmful effects of keen competition have surfaced. Rampant bribery, the downside of keen competition, results in a flourish of judicial reviews and litigations, which ultimately leads to complicated rules against suspicious deeds. As a result, professors are fatigued by clerical minutia while students are harmed by literary rules and regulations. The natural way of nurturing talent has yet to be revitalized, and wholesome learning at the school has nearly ceased to exist, which caused knowledgeable men to sigh.¹⁶ 法有為名則美而行之則艱，事有用意則良而施之則戾者，三舍是也。三舍之法立，雖有高材異能，未見能取而得之，而奔競之患起。奔競之患起，而賄賂之私行；賄賂之私行，而獄訟之禍興；獄訟之禍興，而防猜之禁繁。博士勞於簿書，諸生困於文法，非復渾然養士之體，而庠序之風或幾乎息，此識者之所共歎也。

Wang goes on to express his vision of an ideal Imperial University:

Your subject believes that schools are places to gather and nurture groups of talented men, shaping their career ambitions while cultivating their reputation. In this way, students can study in a relaxed manner to prepare for

¹⁶ XCB, *Juan* 374, pp.9059.

the civil service examinations. No alternative recruitment channel to the civil service examinations should exist, as multiple paths distract students and incite competition. When students concentrate on the benefits or detriments of their daily activities, it proves detrimental to the ideal of nurturing virtue and the way, and fails to promote education and perfect human talent.¹⁷ 臣竊謂庠序者，所以萃群材而樂育之，以定其志業，養其名譽，優游舒徐，以待科舉也。不必以科舉之外，別開進取之門，多岐以支離其心而激其爭端，使利害得失日交戰於胸中，損育德善道之淳意，非所以篤教化、成人材也。

Wang proposed abolishing the Three Hall system, along with prohibitions against meetings between professors and students that left University personnel suspect. Moreover, results in the monthly private and annual public examinations should cease as the basis for student ranking, promotion and staff recruitment. In this way, students can genuinely concentrate on learning without distraction, making the University a model for the four corners. Aware of potential controversy, Wang requested that the Ministry of Rites and the Imperial University's senior staff deliberate on the entire matter.¹⁸ But the court did not take action until 1086/5, after the Executive Censor Liu Zhi had submitted a detailed critique of the existing school regulations. Despite agreeing with some laws and regulations, Liu found fault with their aggressive implementation, particularly in schools that placed rules and regulations before rites and righteousness. He saw this as a negative consequence of the Yu Fan case, which caused the acts and deeds of students and teachers to be tightly regulated. "Whenever students studying at the school turn their bodies or lift their steps, they ran the risk of crossing the boundaries in the web of regulations. Restrictions were more severe than prison, and regulations worse than those against thieves."¹⁹ 士之學於其間者，轉身舉足，輒蹈憲網，束縛愈於治獄，條目多於防盜 The learning environment at the Imperial University was further worsened by

¹⁷ *XCB, Juan 374*, 9059.

¹⁸ *XCB, Juan 374*, 9059. This also appears in *SCZCZY, Juan 79*, pp.862, *LDMCZY, Juan 114/18b-9a*, pp.1514, and Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 *bian, Qi Zhiping 齊治平 dian Jiao, Song Wen Jian (SWJ) 宋文鑑* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shu Ju, 1992), *Juan 60*, "Shang Zhezong Qi Ba San She Fa" "上哲宗乞罷三舍法" (元祐元年四月 上時為左司諫), pp.862.

¹⁹ *XCB, Juan 377*, pp.9169.

unreasonable restrictions and arrangements, as Liu described:

There are extremely odd regulations, where professors and students are prohibited from meeting each other. As a result, teaching and enquires can hardly be practiced and addressed, since they occur only once a month when Professors perform monitor in their assigned buildings. Since there are many enquirers on such occasions and lots of people are present, private invitations and bribery can be precluded. Alas! Such regulations actually undermine the intent of the Ancient Kings! Is it even possible to eliminate private invitations and briberies? In addition, the number of buildings is uneven, so professors are not assigned to buildings based on classical specialty; instead, they are required to monitor other buildings. For example, a Professor in the *Book of Changes* is assigned to monitor a hall devoted to the *Rites*, a Professor in the *Rites* is assigned to monitor a hall devoted to *Poetry*. Hence when these professors are asked to answer students' enquiries, they just bow to each other with hands clasped and consents to what the other say. Some professors even leave the building without having any conversation with students.²⁰ 法有大可怪者，博士、諸生禁不相見，教諭無所施，質問無所從，但博士月巡所隸之齋而已。謂如此則請問者對眾，足以為證佐，以防私請，以杜賄謝。嗟夫，學之政令，豈不大繆先王意哉！私請賄謝，如是真可以絕之乎？而又齋數不一，不可以隨經分隸也，故使兼巡。如周易博士或巡治禮之齋，禮學博士復巡治詩之舍，往往所至備禮請問，相與揖諾，至或不交一言而退。

The ancient model of school education emphasized repeated questions and answers between teachers and students in the process of learning, something the current regulations undermined. Besides, by imposing unreasonable restrictions to the Imperial University, the government treated the Directorate personnel like lesser men undeserving of its trust. The origin of the problem lay with the government bureau that compiled such regulations and restrictions, as elaborated by Liu:

Since the Three Hall system was implemented at the Imperial University, until now, it could hardly produce a single ideal candidate. Is there really for lack of a deserving person? Since the high officials were threatened by previous calamities, their fear of being charged caused them to avoid false accusation. Hence, despite extraordinarily talented people among the scholars, no one dares to recommend guarantee or nominate them to the top group. Even though the former emperor had the good intention to promote virtue

²⁰ XCB, *Juan* 377, pp.9169.

and nurture talent, the government bureau failed him by installing such regulations and restrictions.²¹ 太學自置三舍之法，寥寥至今，未嘗應令成就一人，豈真無人也？主司懲前日之禍，畏罪避謗，士雖有豪傑拔萃之才，誰敢題品，以人物自任而置之上第哉！則是先帝有興賢造士之美意，而有司以法害之也。

Similar to Wang Yansou, Liu Zhi also requested to lift the prohibitions against meetings between teachers and students so that the latter could freely seek advice from the former. Should private dealings be uncovered among them, they would be punished as the law allows. In addition, Liu requested the Director and Vice-Director of Education to carefully review existing school regulations to eliminate unnecessary encumbrances. These proposed revisions should then be submitted to the Ministry of Rites for further consideration.²²

The court responded swiftly this time. A few days after Liu Zhi's memorial, the court established a bureau to review school regulations and make recommendations for changes. Cheng Yi, Sun Jue and Gu Lin were assigned to the bureau, assisted by the Director and Vice-Director of Education.²³ Cheng, Sun and Gu were students of Hu Yuan, a famous educator at the Directorate of Education in the 1050's, and their proposals supported the inclinations of their master. Details of their proposals, particularly the controversial items, are extant in the collected works of Cheng Yi. The collection also includes recommendation to reform the three metropolitan schools, the Bureau's response to the comments from the Ministry of Rites, as well as intriguing essay elaborating on the proposals after their rejection by the Ministry.²⁴ By analyzing these works, we find that the bureau preferred to abolish the school selection mechanism and revive the old institutional settings of the Imperial

²¹ *XCB, Juan 377*, pp.9170.

²² *XCB, Juan 377*, pp.9170.

²³ *XCB, Juan 378*, pp.9173; *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/11; *SS, Juan 165*, pp.3911 and *Juan 17*, pp.322

²⁴ See Cheng Yi, "San Xue Kan Xiang Wen" 三學看詳文, "Lun Gai Xue Zhi Shi Mu" 論改學製事目, "Hui Li Bu Qu Wen Zhuang" 回禮部取問狀 and "Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang" 論禮部看詳狀 in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.562-576.

University Hu Yuan was in charge.²⁵

The most problematic aspect in the school system, as argued by Cheng Yi, is the Three Hall promotion and selection mechanism,²⁶ forcing “people across the world to discuss, commentators to criticize, and the court to revise. It is the origin of fervent competition and judicial litigation.”²⁷ 天下人所以論議，言者所以為言，朝廷所以重修。及爭競之端，獄訟之興，皆由於此。Recurring evaluations and examinations were equally detrimental to learning custom at the schools and ineffective at selecting genuine talent: “(examinations in schools) were complicated and wasteful without benefiting students.”²⁸ 煩勞費用，...於學者都無所益 Indeed, during the seven years under the “Three Hall System”, only one graduate among several thousand students was appointed to office without taking the civil service examinations. The Ministry of Rites attributed the small yield to the prudent selection mechanism in the school, but Cheng Yi rebutted that “it was because of the impractical measures of recording, observing and evaluating the conduct and ability of candidates.”²⁹ 正由書行藝考察之法不可用爾 Even worse, these competitive measures thwarted the teaching mission of the Imperial University. “Schools should be places to study rites and righteousness. With monthly competitions imposed, the way of education and nurturance are lost.”³⁰ 學校，禮義相先之地，而月使之爭，殊非教養之道。Cheng Yi failed to realize that seven years was simply too short a time to make the transition to the new structure successfully. He recommended replacing examinations in schools with assignments to students, assignments not to be used to rank students. In addition, teachers should occasionally talk with students so as to

²⁵ Li Tao 李燾, a prominent Southern Song historian, had articulated this in his “Xin Xiu Si Zhai Ji” 新修四齋記, in *QSW*, Vol.210, pp.262.

²⁶ Cheng Yi, “Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.570.

²⁷ Cheng Yi, “Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.576.

²⁸ Cheng Yi, “Shang Zhezong San Xue Kan Xiang Tiao Zhi” 上哲宗三學看詳條制, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 79, pp.863.

²⁹ Cheng Yi, “Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.570.

³⁰ Cheng Yi, “Shang Zhezong San Xue Kan Xiang Tiao Zhi”, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 79, pp.863.

understand their study progress and instruct them.³¹

Cheng Yi goes on to argue that the task of promoting and selecting deserving candidates should rest with the Heads of the Imperial University, thereby empowering scholar-officials to play a dominant role in selecting officials. He demanded fairness and impartiality in the entire selection and nomination processes concern.³² But the Ministry of Rites questioned the wisdom of using university administrators to nominate students, to which Cheng Yi retorted:

During our review of the old examinations' practices, only students' records of conduct and their performance on paper were taken into calculation. Hence when we drafted the policies, the Director and Vice-director were designated to make recommendations based on public opinion. They had to verify and decide any recommendations. Whether a recommendation is impartial and open depends on whom the court designates for the task. So why did the court have no confidence in the people it appointed and merely evaluated students based on their examination results and monthly records? Such practices of recommending talent and promoting virtue have never existed since antiquity. Now [it is suggested that] only those students with abilities, moral conduct and a relevant expertise be recommended to the court. But it is at the discretion of the court that men are rewarded. Government Bureaus should not devise regulations to govern this. Regarding the report on student's conduct and ability, how it is presented depends on the attributes of the student. It is hard to set a standard outline for presentation. In this way, [upper hall students] with excellent abilities, moral conduct and expertise will emerge; should undeserving nominations emerge, the public will comment on it in the fashion of legal drafts. Hence a complicated review mechanism is deemed unnecessary.³³ 勘會舊考察法專據文簿計校等差，所以今來立法，只委長貳以公議推擇。凡所推擇，一繫長貳鑒裁。長貳公明與否，則繫朝廷所任用。在朝廷豈可不信所任用，而專考驗於案籍？自古推賢進善，未聞如此。今但取學行才器堪為時用者，聞於朝廷。所推恩數，自繫朝廷裁處，有司不當立法。所狀行能，各隨人之所有，難為更立條目。既推學行才器之人，推擇不當，自有論如律之文，更不須繁文勘會。

Cheng Yi further elaborated the importance of trusting the Director and

³¹ Cheng Yi, "San Xue Kan Xiang Wen", in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.562.

³² Cheng Yi, "Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang", in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.570-571.

³³ Cheng Yi, "Hui Li Bu Qu Wen Zhuang", in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.566.

vice-Director of Education by referencing the supreme governance of the sage kings. Owing to their crucial role in education and official recruitment, Cheng Yi re-emphasized the need for prudence in appointing the Directorship and Vice-Directorship. Moreover, he rejected the idea of limiting their powers.³⁴

Apart from the promotion mechanism, Cheng Yi also criticized the extremely generous nomination quota of the Imperial University compared to other prefectures. As he noted, the University quota in the Yuanfeng era (1078-1085) was 500 -- five times more than the Jiayou era (1056-1063). With over ten thousand candidates at the metropolitan schools, their parents at home were neglected, resulting in a loss in rural productivity and deterioration in social customs. To ameliorate the problem, Cheng Yi proposed getting rid of “measures that lure people to profit” 利誘之法 by retaining merely 100 nomination quotas for the Imperial University while splitting the 400 remaining quotas to prefectures with limited nomination quotas. Cheng Yi wanted candidates to stay in their place of origin to practice filial piety and kindness, hence improving the social customs. In addition, moral conduct and behavior of the candidates could be better observed.³⁵ Cheng Yi’s preference for prefectural nomination over school promotion is obvious.

One of Cheng Yi’s reforms concerned staffing at the Imperial University. In the past, two University professors were paired to instruct students on one Classic. However, Cheng Yi argued that students could easily be confused owing to the different interpretations of the Classic. So he proposed that six among a total of ten professors should specialize and instruct only one Classic, while the remaining four professors collectively teach students the *Analects* and *Mencius*. In this way, students’

³⁴ Cheng Yi, “Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang”, in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.571.

³⁵ Cheng Yi, “Lun Gai Xue Zhi Shi Mu” , in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.563-564.

learning could be better facilitated.³⁶ Besides, with the University no longer holding competitive examinations, professors should have spare time to assist in school administration, allowing the number of ranked Rectors and Assistant Rectors to be reduced.³⁷

The learning environment at the Imperial University was also a concern of Cheng Yi. He recalled in his memorial that dormitories at the Imperial University were too congested to accommodate 2,400 students, where “two students have to share one bed, and it becomes unbearable in the summer. As a result, they have to take turns sleeping away from the dormitories.”³⁸ 兩人共一臥榻，暑月難處，遂更互請假出外 He requested to enlarge the students’ dormitories by renovating the existing 80 dormitories to 50 larger dormitories, where a student population of 1,500 could be accommodated.³⁹ He insisted that it was not his intention to limit the number of University students to 1,500, but he preferred a flexible quota to be determined by social custom and resources.⁴⁰

To strengthen the position of the Imperial University as the cradle of Confucian learning and broaden the horizon of students, Cheng Yi proposed to establish at the Imperial University a “Hall for Venerating Worthies” 尊賢堂 to host scholars of estimable virtues. He recalled that some students traveled over a thousand miles to visit prominent scholars such as Hu Yuan, Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077) and Shao Yong 邵雍 (1011-1077). The Director and Vice-Director of Education should therefore host prominent scholars in the “Hall for Venerating Worthies” at the Imperial

³⁶ Cheng Yi, “Shang Zhezong San Xue Kan Xiang Tiao Zhi”, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 79, pp.863. He further elaborated and clarified his proposals in another essay. See his Cheng Yi, “Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.571-572.

³⁷ Cheng Yi, “Lun Gai Xue Zhi Shi Mu”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.563.

³⁸ Cheng Yi, “Lun Gai Xue Zhi Shi Mu”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.563.

³⁹ Cheng Yi, “Lun Gai Xue Zhi Shi Mu”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.563.

⁴⁰ Cheng Yi, “Lun Li Bu Kan Xiang Zhuang”, in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.570.

University.⁴¹ During their stay, students could learn from them as Confucian exemplars. In addition, since the Imperial University was the highest educational institution to promote primary virtues, Cheng Yi suggested that study tours be organized to draw in literati from across the country. These scholars could thereby observe life at the Imperial University, instruction as well as moral conditioning.⁴² Cheng Yi envisioned that such practices were a sound strategy for asserting Confucianism in response to the surging influence of Buddhism and Daoism.

Despite his persistent effort, most of Cheng Yi's proposals were not adopted, at least in the first instance. Even the bureau charged with reviewing existing University regulations was dissolved in late 1086. In his memorials requesting the abolition of the bureau submitted in the tenth month, Liu Zhi argued that the progress in revising the University's malpractices was too slow, partly owing to other commissions assigned to the staff in the bureau. Liu then reiterated his previous argument that teaching officials most familiar with University affairs should be the most suitable to perform the mission, stressing that the establishment of an independent bureau to review educational policies was inappropriate in principle.⁴³ In these memorials, Liu Zhi also unveiled the disagreement among members of the bureau by citing Sun Jue's resignation.⁴⁴ He even indirectly criticized Cheng Yi for "his lofty plan to imitate the ancient past and novel changes of normal practice, which were not only helpless but harmful."⁴⁵ 高闕以慕古，新奇以變常，非徒無補，而又有害。 The reasons behind Liu Zhi's harsh criticism of Cheng Yi are intriguing. Cheng Yi's recommendations, however controversial, were generally feasible. But Cheng Yi had insisted that the Heads of the Education Bureau be granted the power to

⁴¹ Cheng Yi, "Hui Li Bu Qu Wen Zhuang", in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.564-565.

⁴² Cheng Yi, "Hui Li Bu Qu Wen Zhuang", in *ECJ, Juan 7*, pp.567-568.

⁴³ *XCB, Juan 390*, pp.9493-9494.

⁴⁴ *XCB, Juan 390*, pp.9494.

⁴⁵ *XCB, Juan 390*, pp.9494

select prospective officials, the emperor's overwhelming power in selecting officials would be diluted.⁴⁶ In the view of officials seeking to protect imperial powers, Cheng Yi's suggestions needed to be rejected. This is likely the most critical reason why Cheng Yi's plan was heavily criticized and never implemented. Conflict between the Shuo and Luo factions, represented by Liu Zhi and Cheng Yi respectively, is another possible explanation on the fierce attack.⁴⁷ The personality of Cheng Yi also worked against him. The stern tutor of Zhezong, Cheng Yi usually evinced an arrogance that was quite offensive to other officials,⁴⁸ prompting Liu Zhi to exploit his foibles to discredit Cheng Yi.

Policy Reversals in the Yuanyou era

Between the fifth and tenth months of 1086 when Cheng Yi and the bureau was deliberating on the proposals for the metropolitan schools, a number of minor revisions at the Imperial University were underway. In the sixth month, a lectureship in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, removed from the University curriculum in the Shenzong era, was re-established.⁴⁹ In the following month, on the recommendation of Wang Yansou, the court ordered that Professors at the Imperial University and Prefectural schools be appointed through nominations by top officials, while abolishing the written test as an employment exercise in the Yuanfeng era.⁵⁰ A set of guidelines for nomination was then set, where senior officials were requested to

⁴⁶ Wu Zhengqiang, "Song Chao De Xiang Ju Li Xuan", pp.171.

⁴⁷ For details regarding the factional conflict among the Yuanyou conservatives, see Shen Songqin, *Bei Song Wen Ren Yu Dang Zheng*, pp.285-303 and Luo Jiaxiang, *Peng Dang Zhi Zheng Yu Bei Song Zheng Zhi*, pp.146-171. For English scholarships, see Ari Daniel Levine, *Divided by a common language*, pp.99-125 and Ari Daniel Levine, "Che-tsung's Reign (1085-1100) and the Age of Faction", in *CHC*, Vol.5 Part 1, pp.484-509.

⁴⁸ Yi ming 佚名 zhuan, *Dao Shan Qing Hua* 道山清話, in *QSB*, Ser.2 Vol.1, pp.90. This quote can also be found in Shao Bowen, *Shao Shi Wen Jian Lu* 邵氏聞見錄, *Juan* 14, pp.154.

⁴⁹ *XCB*, *Juan* 380, pp.9227; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/11; *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3911 and *Juan* 17, pp.322; *SCGY*, *Juan* 12, pp.277.

⁵⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 382, pp.9298-9299. See also Wang Yansou, "Shang Zhezong Qing Yong Jian Ju Zhi Shi Wei Xue Guan Qi Ba Shi Fa" 上哲宗請用薦舉之士為學官乞罷試法, in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 79, pp.863.

recommend two candidates for teaching positions each month. These nominees should normally “hold an Advanced Scholar degree, exceed 30 *sui*, have a record without crime, and served for two years in public service.”⁵¹ 須進士出身，年三十以上，無私罪停替，歷任及二年者 After a few years of implementation, an abundance of nominees emerged. The government therefore revised the regulations in 1089/6, stipulating that recommendations should only be made after an edict announcing the vacancies was issued.⁵² In addition, likely to reduce the University’s expenditures, the ten positions of Rectors and Assistant Rectors with official-rank were abolished in the same month. Their remaining duties were taken up by the Professors and outstanding Upper Hall or Inner Hall students who had served as non-ranked Rectors and Assistant Rectors. Such an arrangement served to restore the practices of the Xining era preceding Shenzong.⁵³

The most drastic revision for students was the abolition of the privileges granted to Upper Hall students to be exempt from the civil service examinations and hold government office.⁵⁴ The Imperial University once again became subsumed to the examination system, resuming its previous duty to prepare students for the examinations. The change probably led certain students to convert to Buddhism or Daoism in disappointment.⁵⁵

⁵¹ XCB, *Juan* 429, pp.10366.

⁵² XCB, *Juan* 429, pp.10366.; SS, *Juan* 156, pp.3652 and *Juan* 165, pp.3912. We noticed from the *SHY* that the stipulation in the age requirement for teaching officials was made on the recommendation of Executive Censor Hu Zongyu 胡宗愈 in 1087, see *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/11. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.204-205, which has a thorough analysis on the nomination mechanism for teaching officials in the Yuanyou era.

⁵³ XCB, *Juan* 429, pp.10374; SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3912. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.205-206 for more details.

⁵⁴ SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3661. Taiwan scholar Hou Shaowen 侯紹文 argued that such privilege to Upper Hall students was scrapped in 1086/4, although he did not indicate the relevant sources. See Hou Shaowen 侯紹文, “Song Dai Tai Xue San She Fa Ji Qi Dui Hou Shi Zhi Ying Xiang”宋代太學三舍法及其對後世之影響, *Feng Jia Xue Bao* 逢甲學報, Vol.3 (1970), pp.290, which also appears in Hou Shaowen bian zhu, *Tang Song Kao Shi Zhi Du Shi* 唐宋考試制度史(Taipei: Taiwan shang wu yin shu guan, 1973), pp.396.

⁵⁵ Cen Xiangqiu 岑象求, “Shang Zhezong Lun Fo Lao”上哲宗論佛老, in *SCZCZY, Juan* 84, pp.910.

Another reform-era practice, the prohibition against meetings between teachers and students, was only eradicated in 1091 when taken up by the Executive Censor Cen Xiangqiu 岑象求.⁵⁶ Cen recalled that “in recent years University students did not seek advice from their teachers, and that the teaching officials did not perceive giving lectures and instructions as their own responsibility.”⁵⁷ 近歲太學諸生無叩問師資之益，學官不以訓導為己任 The court then ordered the Ministry of Rites to deliberate the matter and the following solution emerged in 1091/9:

Now should students wish to seek advice on academic matters, they should be permitted to meet the Director and Vice-Director of Education. On the third day in each 10-day cycle, the demonstrators should set poetry, rhapsody and discussion questions as assignments to students based on the Classics, Histories, or various schools of thoughts. They should then elaborate the questions to the Wardens and Prefects, who should convey these questions to students upon their return to the dormitories. Students should submit their answers before the next breakfast. These answer scripts should then be sent to the Professors for review by the end of the daily cycle. Students should be gathered occasionally in the lecture hall, where the Professors can comment on the assignments submitted by students. Professors should also pay visits to students' dormitories for which they are responsible, enquiring about students' study progress. Students should no longer be locked in a room for private examinations. Mass lectures should not be cancelled.⁵⁸ 今欲令生員遇有請益，許見長貳，逐旬遇三日，學諭出題，內詩、賦、論許於經、史、子通出，集長、諭解說，歸齋告諭諸生，次日早食鼓前納，旬終送博士點檢。仍間召生員，以所納齋課，於講堂上指諭，委博士逐月遍巡所隸齋，詢考學生所業。凡私試不鎖宿，欲令不罷講說。

The court's approval of the above proposals allowed for more interaction between teachers and students aimed to revive the more liberal academic climate at the Imperial University in the Renzong era. Moreover, students were no longer restricted using the classical commentaries of Wang Anshi. Instead, poetry and rhapsody were included in the assignments. The Yuanyou intellectual environment in

⁵⁶ XCB, Juan 453, pp.10865; SHY, Zhiguan 28/11-12; SS, Juan 165, pp.3912.

⁵⁷ XCB, Juan 453, pp.10865.

⁵⁸ XCB, Juan 466, pp.11128; SHY, Zhiguan 28/12; SS, Juan 165, pp.3912.

general proved more liberal and pluralistic compared to the preceding Yuanfeng era. In addition, Cheng Yi earlier proposal that students submit assignments to teachers for review was finally adopted in the 1090's.⁵⁹ According to the conservatives, the primary function of the Imperial University was to provide education and promote Confucianism, not select and recruit officials. Hence they strived hard to purge the residual influence of the examinations from the school campus. Re-establishment of the School of Literature in 1092 is owed partly to this.

Upon the restoration of the 100 nomination quota to the Kaifeng prefecture in 1085/11,⁶⁰ the recurrent problem of candidates using fake identity to register for the Kaifeng prefectural examination surfaced again. The problem was aggravated by students who had yet to study at the Imperial University for 100 days. Since they were ineligible for the Directorate Examination, they attempted taking the Kaifeng prefectural examinations by using fake identities, forcing the court to announce the re-establishment of the School of Literature in 1092/7.

This School of Literature functioned like the Directorate of Education in the early Song – that is, a temporary place to study to prepare for the civil service examination that enjoyed a generous nomination quota. The School of Literature invited applications for admission during the year of the civil service examinations. Applicants had to submit their family details and guarantors' reports for verification by the Directorate of Education one month before the admissions examination. They would then sit for the admissions examination on the fifth day in the sixth month, after which a maximum of 2,400 students could be admitted. After studying for around a month at the school, these students would then take the Directorate examination late in

⁵⁹ Cheng Yi, "San Xue Kan Xiang Wen", in *ECJ*, *Juan* 7, pp.562.

⁶⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 361, pp.8638.

the seventh month, 10% of whom were allowed to pass and proceed to take the Departmental examination. Yet those who failed the Directorate examination could still remain to study at the School.⁶¹ The above rules suggest that the primary mission of the School of Literature was to absorb candidates who lingered in the capital or used fake identity to register for the Kaifeng prefectural examinations,⁶² including some University students. It is reasonable to believe that after the re-establishment of the School of Literature, some students might drop out from the Imperial University to enter the School of Literature due to dim prospects for future study at the University. If true, the government could benefit financially since student costs at the School of Literature was lower than the Imperial University. In fact, tighter controls on University expenditures seem to have been a high priority in late Yuanyou era. In 1091/5, the court approved the Directorate's request that Outer Hall students who failed to report to the Imperial University within three days after the admission announcement were deemed as forfeiting their offers.⁶³ This allowed the government to better manage the cost of student stipends. In addition, the role of the Imperial University in selecting and recruiting officials was further diluted, since a number of university students would be lured to the School of Literature in preparing for the civil service examinations. These various outcomes had long been envisioned by the conservatives.

The call to abolish the complicated regulations and restrictions that inhibited students' learning could be interpreted as the response of scholar-officials to "limit to autocracy".⁶⁴ As discussed in the previous chapter, these comprehensive school

⁶¹ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/30-31; *XCB*, *Juan* 474, pp.11303-11304; *SS*, *Juan* 17, pp.334 and *Juan* 157, pp.3661. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.119; Gō Tereda, *Sōdai kyōiku shi gaisetsu*, pp.163-165.

⁶² *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3657.

⁶³ *XCB*, *Juan* 458, pp.10958.

⁶⁴ For a thorough discussion on the manifestation of Northern Song literati in against the rising autocracy, see Ge Zhaoguang, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi Di Er Juan*, pp.189-198. Scholarships in English relating to similar subject can be found in Alan T. Wood, *Limits to autocracy*, which explains

regulations were tools that Shenzong had adopted to ensure his autocratic rule. But the accession of a young successor to Shenzong necessitated a regency led by the empress dowager, giving scholar-officials an excellent opportunity to express their discontent. To limit autocracy, the conservatives advocated minimal government intervention in the affairs of the Imperial University. A hidden agenda of these scholar-officials is to strive for academic independence at the Imperial University and beyond. Therefore, it is not hard to understand why a number of scholars called for imitating the Imperial University of the late Renzong era when the Song government maintained a *laissez faire* attitude. Such calls were in line with the conservatives' strategy to connect the edification of Renzong to the denunciation of the New Policies, as seen below.

In addition, conservatives denounced the Three Hall system at the Imperial University and challenged the idea of selecting officials through study there. In fact, they strived hard to separate examinations from schools, or at least to limit its role in students' promotion or professional recruitment. This owes partly to the conservatives' general perception that examinations in schools drove vicious competition and partly to the belief that educational outcomes could hardly be impartially assessed.⁶⁵ Conservatives saw the primary function of school education as nurturing moral integrity, official recruitment merely secondary. The following comments made by Bi Zhongyou 畢仲游 (1047-1121) sums up the conservative view:

The policy of "presenting the best from villages and hamlets" practiced in the Three Dynasties may not be so easy to implement now. But we should indeed institute the more important mechanism so that students and officials may acquire self-cultivation. We can then call upon teachers and scholars to perfect the proper relationship between ruler and subject, the piety between fathers and sons, and the hierarchy between older and younger brothers, so that they all might distinguish right from wrong and embrace the proper path to moral goodness. As

various Song literati's intention to restrict the emperor's power through their commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.

⁶⁵ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.143

for skills in poetry or classical learning, we have to imitate the ancient way of testing candidates and grade them according to their abilities. This is to say that we ought to keep a separate civil service examination system for candidates to take, preserving this system even if we do not particularly care for it.⁶⁶ 三代鄉舉里選之法，雖難卒行，宜亦倣其大者，使學士大夫有以自得，而後詔先生博士，卒以君臣之義、父子之親、長幼之序，與夫是非、好惡、道藝之正。而詩賦、經義，則如古以射取士之法，行同能偶，然後序之，別為貢舉以待科舉之士，存之而勿論。

The reservations of the Yuanyou conservatives about the school recruitment mechanism owed much to their disappointment with the actual implementation of the Three Hall system at the Imperial University in the Yuanfeng era. Having experienced the failure in recruiting morally upright officials,⁶⁷ the Yuanyou conservatives no longer advocated using schools to recruit prospective officials, as Cheng Hao and Sima Guang once did in late 1060's. Hence we find a stark contrast between the Yuanyou era and the preceding Yuanfeng era in terms of the significance of the metropolitan schools in the official recruitment process. Nevertheless, the countrywide extension of educational facilities, a necessary step to promoting universal education, continued during the Yuanyou era.⁶⁸ This somehow facilitated the countrywide school promotion mechanism in the Huizong era, as we discussed in the following chapter.

Despite the conservatives' general skepticism towards the school recruitment channel, a number of Yuanyou conservatives still proposed remedies to rectify the existing school selection system. Radical conservatives such as Cheng Yi even called for empowering the heads of the Directorate of Education to select talented students as prospective officials, in line with the growing political activism of Northern Song scholars. Their belief in a co-rulership with the emperor is clearly manifested in their

⁶⁶ Bi Zhongyou 畢仲游, "Xue Xiao Yi" 學校議, in Bi Zhongyou 畢仲遊 zhuan; Chen Bin 陳斌 jiao dian, *Xi Tai Ji* 西臺集 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou gu ji chu ban she, 2005), *Juan* 5, pp.59. The translation is modified based on Thomas Lee, *Government Education*, pp.246.

⁶⁷ Bi Zhongyou, "Xue Xiao Yi", in Bi Zhongyou, *Xi Tai Ji*, *Juan* 5, pp.59.

⁶⁸ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.143-145.

study of the Classics. According to modern scholar Hon Tsz ki, Hu Yuan and other early Northern Song literati were zealous to participate in bureaucratic government.⁶⁹ Later scholars such as Sima Guang expanded the scope of literati activism to include molding social behavior through education. Cheng Yi's suggestion to grant more power to the heads of the Directorate of Education is a manifestation of this intellectual shift. The scholar-officials, who perceived themselves as resuscitators of the way, were trying to exert their influence on the emperor's prerogative to rule.⁷⁰ The emperor's reticence was wholly foreseeable.

The quality of teaching officials

Song government's reservations about the quality of the top officials at its educational institutions are possible reasons why it refused to empower them to nominate officials. Censorial censure of the Vice-Director of Education, Huang Yin 黃隱, underscored the government's concern. In late 1086, the censors Lü Tao 呂陶 (1031-1107) and Shangguan Jun 上官均 (ca.1043-1120) attacked Huang Yin as opportunistic. Originally a censor in late 1085, Huang was demoted to be the Vice Director of Education after offending Han Jiang 韓絳 (1012-1088), a reformist leader.⁷¹ Partly because of this, Huang hated the New Policies and turned against them after the death of Shenzong. Likely to appease the conservatives then on the ascent, he discredited Wang Anshi and the New Policies at the Imperial University and failed students using the classical interpretations of Wang Anshi.⁷² When students at the University learned of the death of Wang Anshi, around 3,000 mourned him for an

⁶⁹ Hon Tze-ki, *The Yijing and Chinese politics*. Reference has been made to Hilde De Weerd, "Recent Trends in American Research in Song Dynasty History: Local Religion and Political Culture", which can be downloaded from Taiwanese Song History Research Network.: http://www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~twsung/breview/subpage/02/files/Recent_Trends_in_American_Research_in_Song_Dynasty_History.pdf

⁷⁰ See Wu Zhengqiang, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua*, pp.221.

⁷¹ *XCB*, *Juan* 363, pp.8683 and *Juan* 394, pp.9602-9603.

⁷² *XCB*, *Juan* 390, pp.9497.

entire day.⁷³ But Huang Yin forbid such conduct and punished the students. Even worse, while the Song court was still deliberating revisions to the examination syllabi, Huang Yin had already spread the rumor on the school campus that poetry and rhapsody would be revived.⁷⁴ Despite Huang Yin's efforts to appease the conservatives, his plan never paid off. Instead, he soon found himself criticized by a number of conservative censors.

Although Lü Tao and Shangguan Jun opposed the New Policies of Wang Anshi, they held high esteem for his credentials as a Confucian Classicist.⁷⁵ What the conservatives opposed was Wang Anshi's attempt to impose a single orthodoxy: "he should not have made his own school of thought the standard for instructions across the country."⁷⁶ 不當以一家私學...令天下學官講解 In turn, these censors in the conservative camp objected to Huang Yin's desperate deeds to purge Wang Anshi's learning. Moreover, Huang Yin had indulged personal whim in assessing University students to the detriment of the Imperial University's educational culture. The censors added:

We note that the Vice-Director of Education, Huang Yin, has served in the metropolitan schools for nearly a year. Considering his behavior, he is so arrogant and self-indulgent, abnormal on the verge of evil. Considering his academic credentials, his knowledge of the Classics is slight and his appreciation of righteousness and principle meager. When he examines students, he has never discusses cases with the Director or other Professors. Instead he ranks students according to personal whim

⁷³ It is a common practice for university students to mourn the death of prominent officials. See Zhou Hui, *Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu*, Juan 7, "Ming Gong Xia Shi" 名公下世, pp.321. See also Liu Yan 劉弇, "Shang Cai Yuan Du You Cheng Shu" 上蔡元度右丞書, in *QSW*, Vol.118, pp.277.

⁷⁴ *XCB*, Juan 390, pp.9498.

⁷⁵ Lü Tao argued that "the former Chief Councilor Wang Anshi had made reference to the right commentaries by various Confucian scholars in his elaboration of the essentials of the Classics, which embedded with the intentions of the sages." 故相王安石訓經旨，視諸儒義說，得聖人之意為多。 See *XCB*, Juan 390, pp.9497. Shangguan Jun also commenced Wang's Classical commentaries: "Comparing with the commentaries made by various Confucian scholars, the gap between superficiality and complexity could easily been seen."⁷⁶ 然比諸儒注疏之說，淺深有間矣 See *XCB*, Juan 390, pp.9500.

⁷⁶ Sima Guang, "Qi Qing Ke Chang Zha Zi" 起請科場劄子, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.272. See also *XCB*, Juan 371, pp.8976.

without consulting the others. When he lectures on the Classics, he only articulates personal opinions that are absurd and rash. Corrupted by his urge to advance his career, he skips over the normal steps to promote the relatives of prominent officials. As a result, slanders become so rampant that anonymous poems and songs are made to expose his misdeeds. His own students indulge whim and act like uncontrolled wild horses. But [Huang] Yin, although leader of the schools, is unaware and takes no actions.⁷⁷ 竊見國子司業黃隱自官庠序，將及一年，考其行則倨傲自任，傾邪無常，論其學則暗於經術，不燭義理。每至考試諸生，不與祭酒、博士會議，任意取舍高下，不協眾心。其於講說經法，惟務妄率私見。或躡等升補要官親戚，以為榮進之計。謗語喧騰，至為匿名詩曲以暴其事。學徒縱弛，驚佚無節，而隱備官長貳，曾不察禁。

Censors denounced Huang Yin's "words and actions as catering to power or profit."⁷⁸ 注措語言，皆逐勢利。Even though Huang Yin tried to please the conservatives by denouncing Wang Anshi, the conservatives saw him as opportunistic, not principled. A new Vice-Director of Education Sheng Qiao, a student of Hu Yuan, was installed in 1087 to boost the learning customs at the metropolitan schools.⁷⁹ Huang Yin ultimate removal from the Imperial University came in 1087/8.⁸⁰

University students on examination syllabi

As noted in previous chapters, scholar-officials had questioned the value of poetry and rhapsody in the civil service examination since the founding of the Song.⁸¹ Through the efforts of the Qingli reformers, the government ultimately placed greater weight on policy essay and discussion. After Wang Anshi came to power, the meaning of the Classics rose to importance, while poetry and rhapsody were abolished on the examination. Originally this policy revision was in accordance with the consensus of

⁷⁷ XCB, *Juan* 390, pp.9499.

⁷⁸ Lü Tao 呂陶, "Qing Bai Guo Zi Shi Ye Huang Yin Zhi Ren Zhuang" 請罷國子司業黃隱職任狀, in QSW, Vol.73, pp.157, which also appears in SWJ 宋文鑑, *Juan* 61, pp.906.

⁷⁹ SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3911-3912.

⁸⁰ XCB, *Juan* 404, pp.9835.

⁸¹ A thorough discussion on this could be found in Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, "Song Dai Jin Shi Ke Kao Shi De Shi Fu Jing Yi Zhi Zeng" 宋代進士科考試的詩賦經義之爭, in Zhu Shangshu, *Song Dai Ke Ju Yu Wen Xue Kao Lun*, pp.190-209.

the majority of scholar-officials at the time. However, after Wang Anshi had promulgated his own interpretation of the Classics as the orthodox version for candidates taking the examinations, the opposition grew. After the conservatives had assured senior government positions in the post-reform Yuanyou era, they began to discuss changing the examination syllabi. A number of officials suggested restoring poetry and rhapsody in the examinations, but Sima Guang and Shangguan Jun reassured them of the importance of the Classics and insisted that it should continue in the examination.⁸² During their deliberations, rumors were rife about the revival of poetry and rhapsody and deletion of the Classics on the civil service examination such that nearly half of the University students changed their curriculum of study. To clarify the situation, the Song government followed the recommendation of Su Che and announced in 1086/4 that the civil service examinations to be held in 1088 would basically remain unchanged and the “Meaning of the Classics” continue as core topic. But candidates were no longer restricted to the Wang Anshi exegeses, while questions on the Meaning of Laws would be suspended.⁸³

But the call among conservatives to revive poetry and rhapsody in the Advanced Scholar degree examinations never ended. By 1088, despite the reservations of some high officials, almost everyone expected the revival of poetry and rhapsody, as noted by Peng Ruli 彭汝礪 (1041-1094), who initially opposed the idea.⁸⁴

When the court started to discuss reviving poetry and rhapsodies, many scholar-officials believed that it was impossible and impracticable. But inasmuch as the Imperial University has been urged to adopt these in school assessments, and that those who proposed to revive these questions on the palace examination have not been punished, there is

⁸² See Sima Guang, “Qi Qing Ke Chang Zha Zi” 起請科場劄子, in *QSW*, Vol.55, pp.271. This memorial could also be found in *XCB*, *Juan* 371. See *XCB*, *Juan* 374 for Shangguan Jun’s argument.

⁸³ *XCB*, *Juan* 374, pp.9060.

⁸⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 417, pp.10123-10124.

little doubt that poetry and rhapsody will be restored.⁸⁵ 伏自朝廷有復詩賦議論，學士大夫知其不可者眾，難遂施行。比見催督太學即用此考校，又有乞殿試三題者，而朝廷不以為罪，乃知欲復詩賦不疑。

As this quote reveals, poetry and rhapsody had already been informally revived at the Imperial University before the court could announce its restoration. According to Su Shi, nearly 70% of University students were studying poetry and rhapsody around 1089, even though they had yet been included in the Advanced Scholar Degree examination.⁸⁶ Other officials noticed that University students were no longer interested in the Classics and their meanings: “Nowadays those nominees at the Imperial University and scholars from the four corners, acknowledging the drift at court, no longer study the essentials of the Classics. As for books relating to righteousness and principle, they put them aside and hesitate to discuss them.”⁸⁷ 今太學舉人與四方之士，觀望朝廷意旨，已皆不復治經旨，凡干義理之書，一皆斥而不談。 By the end of the Yuanyou era, among nearly 2,100 university students, only 82 had not chosen the poetry and rhapsody curriculum.⁸⁸ This phenomenon shows how University students responded to the political environment in the Yuanyou era: They paid close attention to policy discussions at the court, and were particularly sensitive to changes in examination syllabi, which directly impacted on their careers. The fact that a majority of students shifted to poetry and rhapsody reflects the opportunistic character of University culture.

⁸⁵ *XCB*, Juan 417, pp.10124, see also *LDMCZY*, Juan 167

⁸⁶ This is extracted from a memorial of Su Shi in 1089/10 when he was the prefect of Hangzhou, requesting the court to grant a larger quota to candidates choosing poetry and rhapsody. See *XCB*, Juan 434, pp.10466. In this memorial, Su Shi recalled that 70% of University students studied poetry and rhapsody when he was serving in the capital. Based on the chorological biography of Su Shi by a modern scholar Kong Fanli, we noted that Su Shi left the capital and took up the prefectural leadership of Hangzhou in 1089. See Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 zhuan, *Su Shi Nian Pu* 蘇軾年譜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1998), Juan 8, pp.863.. Therefore the situation at the Imperial University that Su Shi recalled should be the phenomenon around 1089..

⁸⁷ *XCB*, Juan 420, pp.10169. See also Zou Hao 鄒浩, “Shang Zhezong Huang Di Shu” 上哲宗皇帝書, in *QSW*, Vol.131, pp.136-137.

⁸⁸ *XCB*, Juan 482, pp.11472; *SS*, Juan 155, pp.3621; *WXTK*, Juan 31, pp.296.

Partly owing to the anticipated restoration of poetry and rhapsody, Peng Ruli concurred with Liu Zhi about creating another Advanced Scholar degree syllabus,⁸⁹ the Advanced Scholar degree in Classical meaning and Literature (*Jing Yi Jian Shi Fu Jin Shi* 經義詩賦進士), apart from the existing Advanced Scholar in Classical meaning (*Jing Yi Jin Shi* 經義進士). This new syllabi included poetry and rhapsody in addition to Classical meaning, and was effective starting with the examinations in 1091.⁹⁰ In the same year, poetry and rhapsody were included in University admissions examinations as optional areas of expertise.⁹¹

Zhezong's visit to the Directorate of Education

The above discussions illustrate how the Song court and the conservatives in the Yuanyou era perceived the role of the Imperial University pertaining to social customs as well as official selection and recruitment. In this part, we will see how the Imperial University became a tool of the conservatives to educate and transform the emperor. To better understand this, we have to note firstly the subtle change in the image of Renzong in Yuanyou era.

During Shenzong's reign, due to the fact that most of the New Policies targeted at problems bequeathed by Renzong, it is obvious that Renzong's rule was hardly flawless, at least from the reformers' perspective. A remark attributed to Wang Anshi "we should not hold fast to the rules of the ancestors" (*Zu Zong Bu Zu Fa* 祖宗

⁸⁹ Liu Zhi proposed to incorporate poetry and rhapsody into a new Advanced Scholar degree syllabus as early as the intercalary second month of 1086. See Liu Zhi 劉摯, "Lun Qu Shi Bing Qi Fu Xian Liang Ke Shu" 論取士并乞復賢良科疏, in *ZSJ*, *Juan* 4, pp.93-95 and Liu Zhi, "Shang Zhezong Qi Fu Zhi Zhi Ke" 上哲宗乞復置制科, in *ZSJ*, *Fu Lu* 1, pp.484, which also appears in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 82, pp.888. See also *XCB*, *Juan* 368, pp.8858-8860. For Peng Ruli's consent, see his "Qi Shi Fu Jing Yi Ce Lun Bing Zhong Zou" 乞詩賦經義策論並重奏, in *QSW*, Vol.101, pp.65-66.

⁹⁰ See Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, "Bei Song Hou Qi Ke Ju Ba Shi Fu Kao" 北宋後期科舉罷詩賦考, in Zhu Shangshu, *Song Dai Ke Ju Yu Wen Xue Kao Lun*, pp.233-241, particularly pp.236-238.

⁹¹ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/12; *XCB*, *Juan* 466, pp.11128.

不足法) suggests that he was disappointed with Renzong. Renzong had initiated the Qingli reforms, only to equivocate and abruptly end them. With his own reforms underway, it is likely that Wang Anshi reminded Shenzong not to imitate Renzong in equivocating on policy.⁹²

But the image of Renzong rose tremendously after Zhezong's accession owing to the efforts of the conservatives, since glorification of Renzong's reign was a way to denounce the New Policies. By mythologizing the Jiayou period of Renzong as a peaceful and prosperous era (*Jia You Zhi Zhi* 嘉祐之治),⁹³ the conservatives could then argue that it is not necessary to carry out reforms in the early Xining era, and hence the New Policies in the Yuanyou era should be abolished. To justify their call to rescind the New Policies, the Yuanyou conservatives even tried to portray Renzong as continuously anti-reform by reinterpreting the Qingli reforms of 1044 as mild relative to the radical Xining reforms under Shenzong.⁹⁴ Apart from being a weapon to denounce the New Policies, the glorification of Renzong's reign can also be interpreted as scholar-officials' response to the rising power of the throne by summoning the emperor to follow their lead. It is generally agreed that the power of scholar-officials, particularly mid-level officials, reached an unprecedented level in the Renzong era, as they could raise their opinions in a relatively liberal environment and contribute to policy making at the highest level. Some historians even characterize the Renzong period as a co-rulership between the emperor and scholar-officials.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, subsequent to the enthronement of Shenzong and the formation of his alliance with the reformers, the opinion power of scholar-officials waned, especially

⁹² See Hui Chun Hing (Xu Zhenxing) 許振興, "Lun Wang An Shi De 'Zu Zong Bu Zu Fa' Shuo" 論王安石的“祖宗不足法”說, in *Guo li Taiwan da xue li shi xue xi zhu bian, Zhuan bian yu ding xing: Song dai she hui wen hua shi xue shu yan tao hui lun wen ji* 轉變與定型：宋代社會文化史學術研討會論文集 (Taipei: Guo li Taiwan da xue li shi xue xi, 2000), pp.601-621.

⁹³ Cao Jiaqi, "Some Remarks on the Issue of Peace of Jiayou", pp.60-66.

⁹⁴ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.138.

⁹⁵ Zhang Qifan, "Analysis of Emperor Running the state Together with Scholars bureaucrat, Preliminary Study on Political Framework in Northern Song", pp.119-120.

those opposing the New Policies, whose voices were suppressed by the combination of an increasingly autocratic emperor and autocratically-inclined Chief Councilors. The death of Shenzong and the accession of a teenage emperor hence became a golden opportunity for scholar-officials to alter the power structure. By praising the reign of Renzong, the conservatives sought to reclaim the opinion power of scholar-officials.

The conservatives reinvention of Renzong as sage and praise of his diligence in learning allowed them to transform the young emperor into a tool of the scholar-officials to limit his own power.⁹⁶ According to the conservatives, the virtues of Renzong came through diligence in striving for self-refinement, as vividly depicted by Fan Zuyu 范祖禹 (1041-1098), a conservative imperial tutor:

Past emperors were sometimes fond of learning, but none of them loved learning without tiring for his whole life. Emperor Renzong reigned for 42 years, following the practices of Yao and Shun and treating Confucian officials as teachers. By inviting the learned to lecture at the *Miyang* Vault, the way of the sages penetrated his heart. He never tired (of learning) in his whole life. Hence his words and deeds caused humanity to spread across the four seas, just like the heavenly way runs above and the myriad of things lives below. The reason for this is that Renzong loved learning.⁹⁷ 古之人君好學者有之矣，未有終身好之而不厭者也。仁宗皇帝在位四十二年，以堯舜為師法待儒臣，以賓友邇英講學游心聖道，終身未嘗少倦，是以一言一動，仁及四海，如天運於上而萬物各遂其生於下，其本由於學故也。

Should Zhezong wish to attain the deeds of Ancient sage Kings Yao and Shun,

⁹⁶ Cheng Minsheng summarized how the Song scholar-officials restricted the absolute power of the emperor: namely criticizing the misdeeds of the emperor, refusing to implement the emperors' inappropriate order, remonstrating with reference to the authority of "heaven" and "history", as well as strengthening the emperors' education. See Cheng Minsheng, "Lun Song Dai Shi Da Fu Zheng Zhi Dui Huang Quan De Xian Zhi", pp.56-64. Through portraying Renzong as a sage, the conservatives tried to limit Zhezong's authority through education by urging the teenage emperor to imitate the sagacious Renzong. For a discussion on the changing image of Renzong, see She Huiting 余慧婷, "Song Ren Zong De Li Shi Xing Xiang" 宋仁宗的歷史形象, in Zhu Ruixi, *Song Shi Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji*, pp.657-672.

⁹⁷ Fan Zuyu 范祖禹, *Di Xue* 帝學, *Juan* 6. Out of a total of 8 *Juans*, *Juans* 4-6 of this book depicted how Renzong engaged in learning..

he was advised to simply follow in Renzong's footsteps.⁹⁸ Renzong became a model for Zhezong owing partly to their similar backgrounds – both emperors acceded the throne as teenagers and required regents to oversee the daily operation of the court. Zhezong's advisors also lived during the reign, which provided a personal connection.

One sign of the emperor's diligence in learning is formal visits to the Directorate of Education, activities which also illustrate the emperor's support of Confucianism.⁹⁹ As recalled by the conservative Fan Bailu 范百祿 (1030-1094), the first four Song emperors had paid visits and performed sacrifices to Confucius. Renzong first visited the school at 15 *sui*.¹⁰⁰ But such visits and ceremonies had ceased to be held for nearly five decades since 1044. Despite the rising importance of the Imperial University to Wang Anshi, he had never attempted to invite Shenzong to the metropolitan schools. Partly as a strategy to distinguish themselves from the reformers, Fan Bailu and the Yuanyou conservatives strongly urged Zhezong to resume these activities.¹⁰¹ Encouraging the emperor to follow in the footsteps of Renzong, they asserted that "a visit to the Imperial University would nurture and glorify civilization".¹⁰² 幸太學，可以美文明之化 The hidden agenda behind the emperor's visit is that the rituals to Confucius performed by the emperor served to elevate the status of the scholar-officials and limit the emperor's autocracy.¹⁰³ After

⁹⁸ Fan Zuyu 范祖禹, *Di Xue*, *Juan* 6. Another work *Ren Huang Xun Dian* 仁皇訓典 in 6 *Juans*, also prepared by the Imperial Tutor Fan Zuyu, was a record of the deeds and instructions left by Renzong. See Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 *zhuan*; Xu Xiaoman 徐小蠻, Gu Meihua 顧美華 *dian jiao*. *Zhi Zhai Shu Lu Jie Ti* 直齋書錄解題 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1987), *Juan* 5, pp.164. It is likely that Fan intended to use such work to guide the deeds of Zhezong.

⁹⁹ "Ren Zong Jia Hui Hao Ti Tian Fa Dao Ji Gong Quan De Jun Zhe Ming Xiao Huang Di Yi" 仁宗加徽號體天法道極功全德睿哲明孝皇帝議 元豐六年閏六月庚子, in *SDZLJ* 宋大詔令集, *Juan* 141, pp.507.

¹⁰⁰ Renzong visited the Directorate of Education in 1024, see *XCB*, *Juan* 102, pp.2366. At that time, he was 15 *sui*.

¹⁰¹ Thomas H.C. Lee, "Education in Northern Sung China", pp.134-135

¹⁰² See *XCB*, *Juan* 463, pp.11050, which recorded Fan Bailu had submitted this memorial in 1091/8. The same memorial also appears in *SCZCZY*, *Juan* 79, pp.864, namely "Shang Zhezong Qi Xun Zu Zong Gu Shi Shi Xue" 上哲宗乞循祖宗故事視學, which incorrectly dated this memorial in 1086.

¹⁰³ Significance of Confucian rituals in the study of Song political history has long been neglected. Recently it has been articulated in both Chinese and Western scholarships. For example, Christian

nearly one-month of deliberation, it was confirmed in 1091/9 that Zhezong would visit the University on the 15th day of the following month.¹⁰⁴ During the day of the visit, after performing rites to honor Confucius (*Shi Dian* 釋奠),¹⁰⁵ the Director of Education Feng Ji 豐稷 (1033-1107) delivered a lecture on the *Wuyi* chapter of the *Book of Documents*.¹⁰⁶ *Wuyi*, which means “do not relax”, clearly shows the agenda of the scholar-officials in teaching the teenage emperor to remain diligent in learning like Renzong. But did Zhezong share their esteem for Renzong -- only the death of the Dowager Empress would reveal.

The Reforms Restored

Dowager Empress Gao died in 1093/9, whereupon Zhezong, then 18 *sui*, assumed personal rule. He decided to change the reign name in the following year to Shaosheng (1094-1097), which means “continuing the legacy of the sage”. His intention to imitate his father Shenzong and continue the reforms was clear. Thus, the New Policies abolished in the Yuanyou era were restored. For policies concerning the Imperial University, the court first moved to revive the privilege enjoyed by outstanding students of the Upper Hall at the Imperial University. As noted above, outstanding students in the Upper Hall could receive direct appointment to government offices or be exempted from taking the departmental examination. Without this privilege in the post-reform era, students lacked motivation to study at

Meyer illustrates the interplay among various political actors in connection with their interpretations of Confucian rituals during the period 1034-1093. See Christian Meyer, *Ritendiskussionen am Hof der nördlichen Song-Dynastie (1034–1093): Zwischen Ritengelehrsamkeit, Machtkampf und intellektuellen Bewegungen* (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 2008). While a Mainland scholar Liu Fang discusses in detail the political implications of Southern Song emperor’s visit to the Directorate of Education. See Liu Fang 劉方 zhu, *Sheng Shi Fan Hua: Song Dai Jiang Nan Cheng Shi Wen Hua De Fan Rong Yu Bian Qian* 盛世繁華：宋代江南城市文化的繁榮與變遷 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang da xue chu ban she, 2011), pp.134-145. These insightful scholarships prompt me to explore the political implications of the emperor’s performance of ritual reverence to Confucius.

¹⁰⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 466, pp.11141.

¹⁰⁵ *SS*, *Juan* 105, pp.2549.

¹⁰⁶ For details of Zhezong’s visit to the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University, see *XCB*, *Juan* 467, pp.11150 and *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/12.

the University. An accountant at the Directorate of Education, Han Cuiyan 韓粹彥 (1065-1118), son of the former Chief Councilor Han Qi, an opponent of the New Policies, therefore proposed in 1090 to restore the “Three Hall System” at the Imperial University. By re-launching this school recruitment channel, Han believed that more students would be encouraged to study at the Imperial University. But this pro-reform proposal did not receive a favorable response at a court dominated by conservatives. Interestingly, Han’s approach was only realized after emperor Zhezong assumed his personal rule.¹⁰⁷ On the recommendation of censor Guo Zhizhang 郭知章 (?-1111), privileges granted to Upper Hall students were revived in 1094/3, provided that a maximum of 2 Upper Hall students received exemption.¹⁰⁸ In addition, a maximum of 2 outstanding Upper Hall students were eligible for direct appointment to government offices, and a maximum of 5 students might be exempt from the Departmental and 20 students from the Prefectural examinations in accordance with Yuanfeng precedent.¹⁰⁹ The Zhezong court abolished the School of Literature,¹¹⁰ which had diluted the impact of the University in official recruitment, and resumed practices of the Yuanfeng era concerning student admission.¹¹¹ The school recruitment channel was also reopened.

Since students had to be evaluated in schools, the quality of teaching officials became important once again. The court thus endorsed the recommendation of Policy Critic adviser Liu Cheng 劉拯 (?-c.a.1112) that “the Director and Vice-Director of the Imperial University, the Professors, Rectors and Assistant Rectors should be selected among men who are respected by the people and accomplished in scholarship and conduct. Those who were lazy and unjust, or carried out baseless assessments

¹⁰⁷ Zhao Dingchen 趙鼎臣, “Han Cuiyan Xing Zhuang” 韓粹彥行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.138, pp.256.

¹⁰⁸ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/12; *SS, Juan* 18, pp.339.

¹⁰⁹ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/12-14; *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3661-3662 and . *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

¹¹⁰ *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3661; *SS, Juan* 18, pp.342.

¹¹¹ *CBSB, Juan* 10, pp.412.

should be heavily censured.”¹¹² 自今太學長貳、博士、正錄，選學行純備、眾所推服者為之，有弛慢不公，考察不實，則重加譴責 Concrete policies followed concerning the eligibility and selection of teaching officials. In 1094/3, the court stipulated that only officials with Advanced Scholar degrees or certified as “well versed in classical learning and morally upstanding” (*Jing Ming Xing Xiu* 經明行修) were eligible to be teaching officials.¹¹³ However in 1094/5, the court sacked those teaching officials who were not formally qualified in the decree examination or in the Advanced Scholar examination, as well as those who had not been nominated by the Imperial University for direct appointment.¹¹⁴ According to the second edict, teaching officials “well versed in classical learning and morally upstanding” who had passed the examination had to resign from their teaching posts. But outstanding university students who received direct appointment upon graduation in the Yuanfeng era could stay in office. These subtle changes in the eligibility of teaching officials reflect the intention of the Zhezong government to retain those who had benefited from Shenzong’s New Policies and get rid of those conservatives nurtured under Xuanren’s regency. Their basic assumption was that officials educated and selected during reformists’ dominance would adhere to the reformists’ approach to politics and learning. By appointing them to teach in government schools, they could assist in indoctrinating students. In turn, a new generation of supporters for the reforms could be nurtured and the reforms endure.

Paralleling the removal of the conservatives from teaching posts, the recruitment mechanism for teachers was also revised as a strategy of the reformers to use their own cronies to fill vacant teaching positions. The recruitment test for University Professors, initiated by Shenzong and abolished by the Yuanyou

¹¹² SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

¹¹³ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/12-13 ; SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

¹¹⁴ QSKS, *Hou Ji Juan* 27; WXTK, *Juan* 46, pp.432; SS, *Juan* 18, pp.340 and *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

conservatives, was resumed in 1094/5. Nevertheless, the eligibility for this test was slightly different from its predecessor in that self-recommendation was not allowed. Instead only those candidates nominated by top officials were eligible for the test.¹¹⁵ By combining some features of Yuanfeng and Yuanyou, the pool of candidates eligible for recruitment was reduced to a tiny cohort. In addition, the selection and appointment of Professors, which was handled by the Ministry of Personnel in the past, was assigned to the Council, Secretary and Ministry in the same month.¹¹⁶ The highly restrictive eligibility for the recruitment examination, together with the higher statused bureaus responsible for appointment, means that the Song court sought to elevate the esteem of University Professors to levels in the Shenzong reign. Whether that elite group of professors would necessarily support the reforms is an altogether different matter.

The need for junior teaching officials also grew after restoration of the school promotion scheme. 5 rectors, 5 assistant rectors and 20 demonstrators were reinstalled at the Imperial University in concert with Yuanfeng precedent.¹¹⁷ For the former two positions, candidates should have worked previously in counties, or they should be recommended by high officials. Their work experience in schools could be accumulated in support of future promotions. To ensure appointment quality, it was suggested that these junior teaching officials, like Professors, be required to sit for a recruitment test.¹¹⁸

Apart from aiming to recruit teachers supportive of the New Policies, the

¹¹⁵ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/13. The *SHY* also quoted the *Zhi Guan Zhi*, recording that an edict was issued in the same year, stipulating that only candidates nominated by the top officials were eligible for the recruitment examination for teaching officials. See also *WXTK*, *Juan* 46, pp.432; *SS*, *Juan* 156, pp.3652 and *Juan* 165, pp.3912. Reference can also be made to Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.206-207.

¹¹⁶ *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 27.

¹¹⁷ *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3912; *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 27 quote *XCB*.

¹¹⁸ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/13-14.

government also envisioned that University students would be impartially assessed. In this light, the administrative arrangement for the yearly public examination at the Imperial University was modified at the appeal of Gong Yuan, the Vice Director of Education in 1095/2. The court restored the Yuanfeng practice, where the Director and Vice Director of the school had to oversee the examination and five professors had to take turns to serve as examiners, and assigned five additional officials as examiners.¹¹⁹ Through these measures, Directorate personnel could no longer monopolize the examination process, thus attaining the dual goals of fair evaluation of students and imperial dominance over official recruitment.

To facilitate the implementation and perpetuation of the New Policies, scholar-officials were expected to have a thorough understanding on the dogma of Wang Anshi as the theoretical foundation for the New Policies. Hence the school curricula and examination syllabi had to be revised. In the Yuanyou era, although students could adopt the classical interpretations of Wang Anshi in the examinations, the use of Wang's *Interpretations on Characters* (*Zi Shuo* 字說) was forbidden.¹²⁰ Besides, poetry and rhapsodies as well as the Classic *Spring and Autumn Annals* were restored in the Yuanyou era by the conservatives. However after Zhezong assumed power, prohibition on the *Interpretations on Characters* was uplifted on the recommendation of University Professor Zhan Wen 詹文.¹²¹ Classical meaning was again re-emphasized, while poetry, rhapsodies as well as the *Annals* were removed from the Advanced Scholar syllabi.¹²² In a parallel action, the *Annals* was also

¹¹⁹ QSKS, *Hou Ji Juan* 27 quote XCB. See also SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/13-14 and SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

¹²⁰ SCGY, *Juan* 12, pp.277. The *Interpretations on Characters* is no longer extant today. Modern scholar Zhang Zongxiang has tried to recover its content. See Zhang Zongxiang 張宗祥 ji lu ; Cao Jinyan 曹錦炎 dian jiao, *Wang Anshi "Zi Shuo" Ji* 王安石《字說》輯 (Fuzhou: Fujian ren min chu ban she, 2005).

¹²¹ WXTK, *Juan* 31, pp.296; CBJSBM, *Juan* 130, pp.2185; CBSB, *Juan* 10, pp.425; and SS, *Juan* 18, pp.341.

¹²² The *Spring and Autumn Annals* was removed from the examination syllabi in 1094. See WXTK, *Juan* 31, pp.296; SS, *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

removed from the metropolitan schools, as reflected in the experience of Zhu Changwen 朱長文 (1039-1098).¹²³ Zhu was summoned to the capital to instruct University students on the *Annals* in 1094.¹²⁴ As late as 1095/9, Zhu was still serving as University Professor.¹²⁵ Nevertheless, before his death in 1098, the Professorship in the *Annals* was suspended, and Zhu returned home.¹²⁶ The exclusion of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* as an area of study, as argued by Thomas Lee, was “an effort to belittle Sima Guang’s recently completed synoptic history, the *Zi Zhi Tong Jian*...and to decrease the importance of historical studies and hence to counter the rising historical-analogistic model of thinking.”¹²⁷ The attitude of University Professor Xue Ang 薛昂 (1055-1134) in the Shaosheng era is one of the best illustrations showing the reformists’ skepticism toward historical studies: Xue frequently proposed to abolish the history curriculum despite repeated refusals of the throne.¹²⁸ His contempt for history was also evidenced in his prejudice against students using the language in the *Historical Records* by Sima Qian or the *History of the Han Dynasty* by Ban Gu 班固 (32-92).¹²⁹ Even worse, in collaboration with another professor, Lin Zi 林自, Xue even contemplated destroying the printing blocks of Sima Guang’s masterly *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Governance (Zi Zhi Tong Jian)*. Were it not for the wit of Chen Guan 陳瓘 (1057-1121), who quoted Emperor Shenzong’s preface to the

¹²³ For scholarly studies relating to Zhu Changwen, particularly his activities at the local level, mainly in Suzhou, see Deng Xiaonan, “Bei Song Suzhou De Shi Ren Jia Zu Jiao You Quan: Yi Zhu Changwen Zhi Jiaoyou Wei He Xin De Kao Cha” 北宋蘇州的士人家族交遊圈：以朱長文之交遊為核心的考察, *Guo Xue Yan Jiu* 國學研究, No.3 (1995), pp.451-488 and Deng Xiaonan, “Zhu Changwen Jia Shi Shi Li Kao” 朱長文家世事曆考, *Bei Da Shi Xue* 北大史學, No.4 (1997), pp.72-87. Contravening the hypothesis of Robert Hartwell and Robert Hymes regarding the emergence of local elite in the Southern Song, Zhu Changwen was a typical example of local elite in the Northern Song. See Luo Yinan, “A Study of the Changes in the ‘Tang-Song Transition Model’”, *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, No.35 (2005), pp.122.

¹²⁴ Zhu Changwen, “Chun Qiu Tong Zhi Xu” 春秋通志序, in *QSW*, Vol.93, pp.151-152.

¹²⁵ Zhu Changwen, “Zhu Shi Shi Pu” 朱氏世譜, in *QSW*, Vol.93, pp.174.

¹²⁶ Zhang Jingxiu 張景修, “Zhu Chang Wen Mu Zhi Ming” 朱長文墓誌銘, in *QSW*, Vol.93, pp.222-223.

¹²⁷ Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.131-132.

¹²⁸ *SS*, *Juan* 352, pp.11122.

¹²⁹ *SS*, *Juan* 352, pp.11122. Wu Zeng 吳曾 zhuan, *Neng Gai Zhai Man Lu* 能改齋漫錄 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1979), *Juan* 12, pp.368.

work, the destruction plan would have succeeded in 1094.¹³⁰ Contrary to historical studies, the learning of Wang Anshi reclaimed its honor. The Vice-director of Education, Gong Yuan, a disciple of Wang Anshi, requested the court in 1094/10 to make a copy of the fine edition of the *Interpretations on Characters*, allowing the Directorate of Education to publish a standard version for students across the country.¹³¹ In 1095/3, Gong and his colleagues further requested the Directorate to publish the *Meaning on Mencius* and the *Meaning on the Analects*, authored by Wang Anshi's son, Wang Pang.¹³² These several requests all won court endorsement, such that the Directorate of Education once again played a major role in promoting the learning of Wang Anshi, as in the Xining era.

Perhaps to ensure that prospective officials would be in line with the New Policies, the Song government planned a reshuffle of University students in late 1096.¹³³ The edict suggested that all current University students should sit for an examination for the sake of securing a place at the Imperial University due to the abuses of Yuanyou conservatives:

Since the Yuanyou era when the examination syllabi shifted to poetry and rhapsody, students at the Imperial University could hardly concentrate on classical studies. Moreover, university's admissions examinations were not closely monitored, and the examiners were not carefully selected. In this way, too many candidates passed the admissions test, and there were insufficient vacancies to settle the newcomers. As a result, students had to wait for months or years to get

¹³⁰ *SS*, Juan 345, pp.10962; Zhou Hui, *Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu*, Juan 9, pp.400.

¹³¹ *CBJSBM*, Juan 130, pp.2185; *CBSB*, Juan 11, pp.452.

¹³² *CBJSBM*, Juan 130, pp.2185; *CBSB*, Juan 12, pp.471.

¹³³ The records in the *SHY* are quite confusing here. Bureau's deliberation as well as the edict concerning the reshuffle of University students was appended to "Third Year", the year of Zhezong's death and Huizong's accession, giving us an impression that the reshuffle happened in the "Third Year of Yuanfu" (i.e.1099). But after making reference to a couple of memorials such as "the discussion on selection of officials" ("Shang Zhezong Lun Xuan Ju" 上哲宗論選舉) dated "Third Year of Shaosheng" (i.e.1096) submitted by Chen Cisheng to emperor Zhezong, which could be found in his *Dang Lun Ji* 諫論集 (*SKQS* edition), Juan 1/16a-18a, it is reasonable to believe that such reshuffle happened under Zhezong's reign in 1096 instead of 1099 after Zhezong's death. Records in the official history also supported this argument, see *SS*, Juan 15, pp.3662. See also Zhao Tiehan, "Song Dai De Tai Xue", pp.318-319.

admitted.¹³⁴ 太學生自元祐改用詩賦以來，不得專意經術。又試補之際，察視不嚴，考校之官，不復精選，取人猥多，致後來補中之人，無闕可撥，動須歲月，方得入學。

The problem of over-admissions occurred because the Imperial University did not make good use of its nomination quota, meaning that the number of graduating students was far less than the number of admittees. Even though more nominations had been granted to the Imperial University, the situation did not improve. Such a low graduation rate also implies that most University students could not meet the expectations of the examiners, partly owing to the change in school curricula and examination syllabi. Since poetry and rhapsody had been abolished, students were forced to return to classical studies. As a result, students who were good at literary works, the privileged group in the Yuanyou era, were handicapped in the Shaosheng and Yuanfu (1098-1100) eras. The most obvious sign of their disadvantage was that students promoted to the Inner Hall of the University in the Yuanyou era could not enjoy the privilege of receiving direct appointment, regardless of ranking in the Upper Hall.¹³⁵ It is therefore likely that they were the primary target of the reformers.

The first move of the reformers, as stipulated in an imperial edict in 1096/9, was to force all existing University students to sit for examinations in the upcoming winter and spring in order to decide who deserved to remain at the University. To avoid injustice, the court assigned officials to oversee the examinations. Various admissions quota was also announced for current students as well as new candidates seeking admissions.¹³⁶ If implemented, thousands of existing University students would be affected, particularly those in the Upper and Inner Hall who enjoyed greater privileges than others, and their vested-interests infringed upon.

¹³⁴ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/14.

¹³⁵ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/13.

¹³⁶ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/14.

Anticipating much rancor, the official Chen Cisheng 陳次升 (1044-1119), a former university student, responded with several suggestions. Chen recommended an examination exemption for students admitted to the University in the Yuanfeng era, current outstanding Upper Hall students who had been exempted from the Departmental examination, and students recently promoted to the Upper Hall.¹³⁷ Chen also urged the court to announce the date of examination as early as possible so as to relieve the worries of candidates.¹³⁸

The court endorsed the first recommendation of Chen. A second edict was issued in 1096/10, stipulating that all Upper Hall students, students admitted to the Outer and promoted to the Inner Hall in the Yuanfeng era, as well as those who had just passed the prefectural examination, could be exempted from the re-admission exercise. When the reshuffle was almost complete, likely to better ensure the quality of candidates, the government agreed that a discussion question be included on the admissions examination in addition to the original questions on Classical meaning.¹³⁹

In sum, the institutional arrangement of the Imperial University after Zhezong assumed personal rule largely represents a resumption or further extension of Shenzong's Yuanfeng practices. Measures relating to students' evaluation, nomination quota, privilege for Upper Hall standing, the University's public examination, staff appointments and performance appraisals were all devised on the basis of the Yuanfeng foundation.¹⁴⁰ Any proposal that deviated from that precedent, regardless of literati support, would be rejected. As Zeng Bu 曾布 (1036-1107), a leading Councilor in the late Zhezong era, recalled: even though most officials called for

¹³⁷ See Chen Cisheng 陳次升, "Shang Zhezong Lun Mian Bu Shi Ren Zhuang" 上哲宗論免補試人狀 *QSW*, Vol.102, pp.365.

¹³⁸ Chen Cisheng 陳次升, "Shang Zhezong Qi Cui Bu Shi Zhuang" 上哲宗乞催補試狀, in *QSW*, Vol.102, pp.365. See also CBSB, *Juan* 13, pp.520.

¹³⁹ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/14.

¹⁴⁰ *XCB*, *Juan* 515, pp.12248; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/13-14 ; *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

letting candidates in the Kaifeng prefecture to utilize the unused nomination quota of the Directorate of Education in 1099, the plan was discarded on the excuse that it had been banned by Shenzong in 1084.¹⁴¹ The political implications of Zhezong's adherence to the Yuanfeng precedent are diverse – apart from demonstrating Zhezong's vision to be a filial son, it also reflects his intention to reassert the emperor's autocracy, a prominent feature in the final years of his father, which had been diluted by the Yuanyou conservatives.

Apart from resuming most of the Yuanfeng practices, a number of new measures were also applied to the Imperial University in the remaining years of Zhezong, intended to improve the quality of prospective officials. On the first day of 1097, a new set of University regulations in 23 volumes, drafted by Cai Jing, was promulgated.¹⁴² Two days later, the court ordered that holders of official titles were permitted to register at the Directorate School with a maximum quota of 40.¹⁴³ This is likely to provide some basic training to men who joined the civil service through protection privilege before they took up official duties, a measure intended to improve the overall quality of officials. Besides, for the sake of better managing the examinations, Cai Jing requested in 1097/4 to separate the University's Public examination and admissions examination.¹⁴⁴ For the best learning environment, virtuous students and good teachers are essential. Thus all teaching officials were required to participate in an annual test starting in 1097/7. To nurture filial piety in students, the court approved a recommendation of the Ministry of Rites and the

¹⁴¹ Zeng Bu 曾布 *zhuan*, *Zeng Gong Yi Lu* 曾公遺錄, *Juan* 7 and 8, in *QSBJ*, Ser.1 Vol.8, pp.142-143 and 160.

¹⁴² *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 27 quote *XCB*; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/14; *SS*, *Juan* 18, pp.345; *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3662; *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 131, pp.2218; *CBSB*, *Juan* 13, pp.522. According to Zhang Xiqing, content of these 23 volumes of school regulations are similar to those quoted in the *Zhiguan* section of the *Official History of Zhezong*, now preserved in the *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/6. See Zhang Xiqing, "Bei Song De Ke Ju Qu Shi Yu Xue Xiao Xuan Shi" 北宋的科舉取士與學校選士, pp.191-192.

¹⁴³ *XCB*, *Juan* 494, pp.11738; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/13; *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3662. See also He Zongli, *Song Shi Xuan Ju Zhi Bu Zheng*, pp.117, which argues the auxiliary role of the Directorate School to the Imperial University.

¹⁴⁴ *XCB*, *Juan* 485, pp.11520.

Directorate of Education to grant leaves of absence to students upon request so that they could visit and serve their grandparents and parents.¹⁴⁵ We can see that the measures above were intended to cultivate better students in terms of both knowledge and conduct. Nevertheless it is doubtful whether the efforts produced results, partly owing to the changing political environment and partly to the marginal quality of officials implementing the program.

Extending the University Three Hall System to local schools

After refining the role that the metropolitan schools should play, the reformists went one step further in realizing the educational ideal of the Song literati – to nurture, select and recruit morally upright officials through a school network. As noted in the previous chapter, consensus on the ideal has been reached in the 1070's, and a roadmap to link the metropolitan and local schools had been proposed by Zeng Gong as early as 1080.¹⁴⁶ Even though a number of conservatives expressed dissatisfaction with the school selection mechanism as implemented by the reformists, they still had high hopes of the government schools. Yan Fu, the Director of Education in the conservative Yuanyou era, suggested that candidates be required to study in government schools before they proceed to take the civil service examinations.¹⁴⁷ Liu Anjie 劉安節 (1068-1116), a disciple of Cheng Yi, also reiterated the comparative advantage of the Three Hall system relative to the civil service examinations, and proposed that extending this scheme from the Imperial University to local schools countrywide.¹⁴⁸ During the conservative Yuanyou era, these visions had yet to be realized. Only after the more administratively capable reformers had come to power

¹⁴⁵ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/13.

¹⁴⁶ *XCB, Juan* 310, pp.7515-7516. Similar text could also be found in Zeng Gong, “Qing Ling Zhou Xian Te Ju Shi Zha Zi” 請令州縣特舉士劄子, in Zeng Gong, *Zeng Gong Ji, Juan* 30, pp.447.

¹⁴⁷ *SS, Juan* 347, pp.11009.

¹⁴⁸ Liu Anjie, “Zhou Jun Li Xue Jie Zhi Xue Guan” 州郡立學皆置學官, in *QSW, Vol.137*, pp.233.

were concrete steps taken.

In 1099/11, the Three Hall system at the Imperial University was extended to the Prefectural schools, where the Song government had assigned teachers. These government sponsored Prefectural Schools were divided into three halls, where students would be promoted gradually from the Outer, Inner and then to the Upper Hall. The most outstanding Upper Hall students at the prefectural school would be nominated for admission to the Imperial University. They would then be required to take the University's admissions examination, passing of which led to direct admission to the Inner Hall of the Imperial University. Nominees who repeatedly failed after three attempts had to return back to the prefectural school. In addition, two students from the Inner Hall of the Prefectural school could be nominated annually to study at the Outer Hall of the Imperial University under this new rule.¹⁴⁹

Based on the appraisal by Yuan Zheng, there were roughly one hundred government sponsored Prefectural School or 300 nominees from the prefectural schools admitted to the Imperial University annually.¹⁵⁰ We also noted from other sources that 561 candidates had passed the Departmental examination in early 1100, a significant proportion of them were likely University students.¹⁵¹ It is therefore likely that after the Departmental examination in early 1100, a certain number of students would leave the school, and it was likely to be the intention of the Song government to fill these vacancies with the nominees from the prefectural schools. Such development of the Three Hall system from an internal school promotion mechanism to a bridge between local and metropolitan schools marked a significant development in

¹⁴⁹ *XCB*, *Juan* 518, pp.12338-12339, *SS*, *Juan* 18, pp.354. For similar quote, see *SHY*, *Chongru*, 2/7 and *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3662. See also Yuan Zheng, "The Grade System of Schools in Eleventh-to Thirteenth-Century China", pp.26-27 for a brief discussion in English regarding the promotion from local to metropolitan school.

¹⁵⁰ Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.122.

¹⁵¹ *WXTK*, *Juan* 32, pp.306.

educational history in China.

To summarize the above discussion, we noted that the Imperial University was utilized by the Yuanyou conservatives to limit the power of Zhezong and to assert an active political role of the scholar-officials, as reflected in their proposals to rectify the problems in the metropolitan schools. But their efforts were in vain after the teenage emperor resumed personal rule. Following the footsteps of his father, Zhezong reinstated and further expanded the Yuanfeng practices at the Imperial University, through which the emperor's autocracy was reinforced once again. It also laid the foundation for the countrywide experiment of recruiting officials by way of a school network, as we will see in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

THE DOMINANCE OF IMPERIAL POWER: EDUCATIONAL REFORM UNDER HUIZONG

We noted from previous discussions that recruitment of officials through a school network was almost a consensus among the scholar-officials since the mid-Northern Song, with a vision that officials in better moral quality could be recruited. Such an ideal was partially realized under the reign of Shenzong, where the Three Hall system at the Imperial University was initiated and institutionalized. This school recruitment channel was extended from the metropolitan to local schools and became increasingly mature under the personal direction of his sons, Zhezong and Huizong. The latter even ambitiously attempted to replace the civil service examinations with the school recruitment mechanism. In this chapter, I will discuss certain distinctive features of Huizong's educational reforms, particularly those connected with the metropolitan schools, through which the interplay between politics and education will be highlighted.

The early reign

Zhao Ji, the prince of Duan, acceded to the throne in 1100/3 after the sudden death of his brother Zhezong. At the age of 19 *sui*, the unprepared Huizong requested the widow of Shenzong, Empress Dowager Xiang, to assist him. On the request of Zeng Zhao, the Drafting official of the Secretariat, an edict was issued, inviting comments and critiques from people all over the country, irrespective of their ranks. In this edict, Huizong assured that "people making useful suggestions would be rewarded, while those making inappropriate suggestions would not be punished."¹ 其言可用，朕

¹ CBSB, *Juan* 15, pp.581.

則有賞；言而失中，朕不加罪。Numerous proposals were submitted within a month, and a number of people were rewarded because of their constructive comments. Among them, an Upper Hall university student, namely He Dazheng 何大正, was conferred an Advanced Scholar degree and given an official appointment.² The promise of Huizong seemed very compelling.

Under the influence of the Empress Dowager, who was annoyed with the continuous factional disputes caused by the dominance of the reformers at court, a number of anti-reformists such as Han Zhongyan, Fan Chunren and Su Shi was summoned back to the capital for the sake of reconciling the polarized political environment. By adopting the reign title meaning to “erect the middle way to calm the state” (*Jian Zhong Jing Guo* 建中靖國) in 1101, the intention of Huizong to pacify the contention between reformers and conservatives was obvious. Under the leadership of these moderate conservatives, a number of measures from the conservative Yuanyou era were revived. In 1100/11, the Professorship for the *Spring and Autumn Annals* at the Imperial University was reinstated.³ In the same year, teaching officials at the Imperial University were allowed to take charge of the University’s admissions examination, where the practice of copying applicants’ answer scripts to ensure anonymity was suspended.⁴ It seems that the scholar-officials had managed to exploit the emperor’s death to reclaim their influence at the metropolitan schools, similar to what the Yuanyou conservatives did 15 years ago when the autocratic emperor Shenzong died.

But the death of the Empress Dowager in 1101/1 led to a rapid change in policy direction as well as in the power relationship between the emperor and his

² CBSB, *Juan* 15, pp.586.

³ SHY, *Zhiguan*, 28/14; SS, *Juan* 19, pp.360 and *Juan* 165, pp.3912.

⁴ SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3662.

subordinates. The decision to change his reign title to “Chong Ning” commencing 1102 implied that Huizong admired the Xi Ning reform era of his father Shenzong. Filial piety and fraternal devotion offers one explanation for the change - the reforms an unfulfilled mission of his father and elder brother. Nevertheless, the attractiveness of the reforms in terms of its financial benefit should never be neglected. When the New Policies were in force under Shenzong, the Song government accumulated a huge surplus to finance aggressive policies of territorial expansion. Huizong’s fervency to conquer the Xi Xia far exceeded his father,⁵ hence the financial resources that he needed remains high. Accordingly there was the necessity to further expand the reform policies in order to gather sufficient wealth. Moreover, Huizong was also ambitious about making himself a sagacious emperor comparable to the ancient sage kings -- the symbolism of monarchy. Adherence to the New Policies, restoring the architecture of the Duke of Zhou as recorded in the *Institutes of Zhou*, could somehow helps the emperor realize his dream to restore classical governance.

Having decided to expand the New Policies, Huizong had to form a cabinet of reformers, initially led by the veteran Zhang Dun and Zeng Bu. A number of practices of the Shenzong era were then revived or implemented in a larger scale. Recruitment examinations for teaching officials as well as University admission examinations were among them. In 1101/10, practices concerning university staff recruitment and students’ admissions were revived in accordance with the spirit of Shenzong’s Yuanfeng era (1078-1085).⁶

Other than restoring Shenzong’s structure, Huizong also initiated several innovative and unprecedented reform programs on a sweeping scale. The most

⁵ Regarding the expansionist policies of Huizong against the Xi Xia, see Li Huarui, *Song Xia Guan Xi Shi*, pp.97-119.

⁶ *SHY, Zhiguan*, 28/14-15.

remarkable of which were medical and health programs as well as an educational reform package. Regarding the former, new hospitals, clinics and pharmacies were built for commoners with limited financial means, while relief went to homes with destitute children and dependents.⁷ These institutions were firstly established in the prefectural seats and later extended to rural counties. In addition, nurses were assigned to take care of abandoned infants while cemeteries were set up for paupers. These efforts reflected the humanity of Huizong's governance at the outset.⁸

The educational reform programme was even more ambitious.⁹ Financial subsidy to Primary 小學, Prefectural and County Schools was increased, quotas for teachers and students raised, and new school campuses built. Huizong clearly aimed to extend learning opportunity to ordinary citizens (non-literati families). Furthermore, specialized schools in the fields of mathematics, painting and calligraphy were established to cultivate various expertises. These early reforms demonstrated the ambition of Huizong not only to surpass his father Shenzong and elder brother Zhezong, but also to attain ideal governance as portrayed in the Classics. Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692), a prominent Qing historian, later applauded his initial effort as “magnificently impressive” 粲然可觀.¹⁰

Due to various reasons, Huizong soon lost his faith in Zhang Dun and Zeng Bu.¹¹ Instead he elevated Cai Jing, who had a track record of efficient administration

⁷ A detailed analysis of the medical and health care welfare programmes initiated by Huizong could be found in Asaf Goldschmidt, “Huizong’s Impact on Medicine and on Public Health”, in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, *Emperor Huizong and late Northern Song China*, pp.275-323. See also Chapter Four in Asaf Goldschmidt, *The evolution of Chinese medicine : Song dynasty, 960-1200* (London ; New York : Routledge, 2009), pp.103-136.

⁸ SHY, *Shihuo* 食貨 60/5b.

⁹ For a summary of the educational reforms in the Huizong era, see Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100–1126) and Ch'in-tsung (1126–1127) and the Fall of the Northern Sung”, in *CHC*, Vol.5 Part 1, pp.585-589. Among various educational reforms, this dissertation mainly focuses on those reforms pertaining to the metropolitan schools.

¹⁰ Wang Fuzhi zhu, *Song Lun* 宋論 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1964), *Juan* 8 ‘Huizong’, pp.145.

¹¹ See Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100–1126) and Ch'in-tsung (1126–1127) and the

despite some notoriety, as Chief Councilor in 1102/7. To strengthen his position as the leader of the reformers, Cai Jing adopted violent measures to get rid of his contenders. Three different factional blacklists (*Dang Zhi* 黨籍), mainly filled up with names of the anti-reformists of the Yuanyou era as well as prominent reformers who were potential challengers of Cai Jing, were submitted to the Court. These names were then engraved on stone steles and placed at the *Duan Li Gate* 端禮門 of the Palace in 1102/9, the office of the Circuit Intendants in 1103/9, and various prefectures and counties in 1104/6.¹² As a result, more than 300 officials, irrespective of whether they were alive or deceased, were demoted, punished, or posthumously demoted. Through this, Cai Jing had reached a tactical alliance with the emperor. To paraphrase Ari Levine, Cai Jing appealed directly to the throne to promote his allies and to purge his adversaries, “employing rhetoric that imagined the court as the ultimate source of ethical and political authority and empowered the monarch as the ultimate arbiter of personnel and policy decisions.”¹³ As a trade-off, certain powers enjoyed by scholar-officials had to be relinquished. In turn, the limited purview of the teaching officials’ over official recruitment was curtailed, together with the relative independence of the literati in the metropolitan schools. The fading influence of scholar-officials in the metropolitan schools, in stark contrast to the Xining educational reforms where scholar-officials dominated, will be gradually unveiled in the following discussion of Huizong’s educational reform policies.

Apart from the political enemies of Cai Jing, university students who were critical of the reforms could hardly escape the retribution. A former Upper Hall university student He Dazheng, a man rewarded for his comments in 1100, was fired

Fall of the Northern Sung”, pp.559-571.

¹² Chen Lesu 陳樂素, “Gui Lin Shi Ke Yuan You Dang Ji” 桂林石刻《元佑黨籍》, *Xue Shu Yan Jiu* 學術研究, No.6 (1983), pp.63-72. See also *XZZTJ*, *Juan* 88, pp.2244-2245, 2260-2261 and *Juan* 89, pp. 2271-2273. For the full list of the names on the stone inscriptions, *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 121, pp.2021-2060.

¹³ Ari Daniel Levine, *Divided by a common language*, pp.2.

from office in 1102/7,¹⁴ likely because his previous remarks had offended Cai Jing or denigrated the New Policies. Yong Xiaowen 雍孝聞, a famous university student around 1100, barely escaped from death penalty after fiercely criticizing Cai Jing and those inappropriate policies in a policy essay during the palace examination.¹⁵ Another edict was issued in 1103/7 ordering the expulsion of university students who had expressed their views in response to the edict of 1100.¹⁶ As recalled by a Southern Song scholars, “maligning court politics” 謗訕朝政 was the first thing to be banned by University regulations, a measure initiated by Cai Jing to prohibit students from commenting on politics.¹⁷ Other than expulsion from schools, the guilty students were sent to the “Confession Building” 自訟齋 to correct themselves. Originating in the Imperial University, the “Confession Building” had been erected in various levels of local government schools.¹⁸ But the one at the Imperial University was later relocated to the newly established Biyong Academy, or Outer Hall of the Imperial University.¹⁹ According to stipulations from the Chongning (1102-1106) era, after students had stayed in the “Correction Building” for a year, they could be re-admitted to the Imperial University or to take the civil service examinations after proving that they have corrected themselves.²⁰

Despite Cai Jing’s oppression of university students, he accomplished much in the history of education in Imperial China by recruiting huge number of elite to the

¹⁴ CBSB, Juan 15, pp.586.

¹⁵ Wang Mingqing 王明清 zhuan, *Hui Zhu Lu* 揮麈錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1961), *Qian Lu* Juan 2, pp.20.

¹⁶ SS, Juan 19, pp.368.

¹⁷ Shen Zuobin 沈作賓 xiu ; Shi Su 施宿(1164-1222) deng zuan, *Jia Tai Gui Ji Zhi* 嘉泰會稽志, Juan 1, in Zhejiang Sheng di fang zhi bian zuan wei yuan hui 浙江省地方誌編纂委員會 bian, *Song Yuan Zhejiang Fang Zhi Ji Cheng (SYZJFZ)* 宋元浙江方志集成 (Hangzhou: Hangzhou chu ban she, 2009), Vol.4, pp.1631; Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁 (1178-1237), *Shi You Ya Yan* 師友雅言 Shang, in *He Shan Ji* 鶴山集(SKQS edition), Juan 108/14a.

¹⁸ For Correction Buildings in local government schools, see WXTK, Juan 46, pp.433; Zhou Bida 周必大, “Chao Feng Lang Yuan Zhou Sun Shi Jun Feng Chen Mu Zhi Ming” 朝奉郎袁州孫使君逢辰墓誌銘, in QSW, Vol.233, pp.97.

¹⁹ Wang Yong, *Yan Yi Yi Mou Lu*, Juan 5, pp.51; SS, Juan 165, pp.3913.

²⁰ QSKS, *Hou Ji* Juan 28 quote XCB ; SS, Juan 19, pp.367.

civil service through a countrywide school promotion mechanism. In fact, Cai had been a veteran in formulating educational policies under Shenzong and Zhezong.²¹ With decades of experience, Cai Jing would direct an ambitious countrywide school promotion and selection mechanism under Huizong, through which he put forward ideological control in schools.²² In Hartwell's words, Cai Jing "embarked on a program designed to impose ideological conformity that has few parallels before the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century."²³ Ideally only students who genuinely adhered to the line of thoughts of the reformers could get promoted and nominated, envisioning that they would continue and expand the legacy of reforms. In the following sections, I will highlight several distinctive features of the educational reforms that relate to the metropolitan schools in the Huizong era. Apart from emphasizing on their innovativeness, how they facilitated autocracy will also be brought to light.

Promulgation of the countrywide Three Hall system

One month after appointment as Chief Councilor, Cai Jing proposed a series of reforms in 1102/8. Apart from building schools in every prefecture and county, he institutionalized the promotion mechanism for students from Prefectural Schools to the Imperial University. On the joint recommendation and guarantee by the Circuit Intendants, the Prefect, and the Prefectural Vice-administrator, a fixed number of Upper Hall students at the Prefectural Schools could be nominated to the Imperial University every three years. The nomination quota for Upper Hall Prefectural

²¹ For a brief review on Cai Jing's experience in formulating educational policies, see Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, "Shō kyō no ka kobushi gakkou seisaku" 蔡京の科举・学校政策, in Kondō Kazunari, *Sōdai Chūgoku kakyo shakai no kenkyū*, pp.93-94.

²² Yuan Zheng, "The Grade System of Schools in Eleventh-to Thirteenth-Century China", *Chinese Studies in History*, Vol.25 No.2 (Jan. 1991-1992), pp.36-37.

²³ Robert M. Hartwell, "Historical Analogism, Public Policy, and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century China", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 76, No. 3 (Jun., 1971), pp.715.

Schools' students to the Imperial University was equivalent to one-third of the prefectural examination's nomination quota. Upon nomination to the Imperial University, these Prefectural Schools' graduates could sit for the promotion examination. Based on their marks in the examinations, the Prefectural Schools' graduates would be classified into three ranks – outstanding, intermediate, or pass. Those who were ranked as outstanding and intermediate would be admitted to the middle and lower class in the Upper Hall of the Imperial University respectively, as they waited for the upcoming palace and departmental examinations.²⁴ While those who attained a mere pass would be admitted to the Inner Hall. The rest would be assigned to the Outer Hall of the Imperial University. This formula was subsequently approved by the court.²⁵

The court's countrywide erection of schools was based on “a sense of optimism across the empire, belief that the public and private were in accord, the Song on the verge of realizing, like the ancients, that educative transformation below required not just inspiration but also organization from above.”²⁶ In addition, institutionalization of the promotion mechanism from local schools to the Imperial University marked an accomplishment of a popular literati educational vision - to cultivate and recruit talent through schools - as illustrated by Huang Chang 黃裳 (1043-1129) in a memorandum from a local school:

²⁴ Middle and lower class students in the Upper Hall of the Imperial University were exempted respectively from the Departmental and Prefectural examinations, meaning that they could take the upcoming Palace and Departmental examinations. See *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/6.

²⁵ *SHY, Chongru* 2/7-9. Similar records can also be found in *GMBY, Juan* 26, pp.666; Shen Zuobin; Shi Su, *Jia Tai Gui Ji Zhi, Juan* 1, “Xue Xiao” 學校, in *SYZJFZ*, Vol.4, pp.1631; *WXTK, Juan* 46, pp.432-433; *SCGY, Juan* 16/4a, pp.351; *SS, Juan* 19, pp.364; *Juan* 157, pp.3662-3663 and *Juan* 165, pp.3913. Interestingly there are minor discrepancies regarding the promotion prospects of Prefectural Schools' graduates in another chapter of the official history. See *SS, Juan* 165, pp.3913 The latter record is likely to be inaccurate. Full translation of the educational reform plan of Cai Jing could be found in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.290-292. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.130-131 and Lin Yan, *Bei Song Ke Ju Kao Shi Yu Wen Xue*, pp.199-203. For the edict promulgated afterwards, see *SDZLJ, Juan* 157, “Xing Xue Xiao Zhao” 興學校詔, pp.591.

²⁶ Richard L. Davis, “Custodians of Education and Endowment at the State Schools of Southern Sung”, *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, Vol.25 (1995), pp.111.

The way of establishing local schools ought to be like this: in villages, there should be schools (*xiang*) and these *xiang* schools are to cultivate the talent of students. Their chief function is thus the perfecting of a gentleman. In hamlets (*sui*), there should also be schools (*xu*). These *xu* schools are places where students shoot at targets. The chief function of these schools is the selection of gentlemen. Only when these two functions are accomplished can we say that the ideal of schools has been achieved.²⁷ 黨有庠，庠者，養也，以主乎造士；遂有序，序者，射也，以主乎選士。兼斯二者而有之，學也。

Even though the outline for promotion of school graduates was laid out, a detailed regulatory framework had yet to be articulated. From a policy essay examination question prepared by University Rector Ge Shengzhong 葛勝仲 (1072-1144), we find that views were solicited from University students on how the promotion of students and selection of university graduates should be regulated for the consideration of the Advisory Office (*Jiang Yi Ju* 講議局).²⁸ Nevertheless, the zealous erection of local schools created higher demands on teachers. To meet this quantitative target, the Song government, at the expense of teaching quality, disregarded the selection criteria of the Zhezong era and appointed teaching officials irrespective of qualifications.²⁹ Nevertheless, since these local teachers of poor quality were untrustworthy in nurturing and selecting genuine talents, remedies were soon taken pertaining to teaching staff recruitment, as we shall see below.

Comparing this 1102 scheme to the one in 1099, we find that more privileges were granted to Upper Hall students in the Prefectural schools under the new scheme, since they got a chance to be admitted directly to the Upper Hall instead of the Inner

²⁷ Huang Chang, “Tai Ping Zhou Wu Hu Xue Ji” 太平州蕪湖學記, in *QSW*, Vol.103, pp.346. The translation is adopted and modified from Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.247.

²⁸ See Ge Shengzhong’s policy essay question 策問 titled “selection of officials” 取士, in *QSW*, Vol.143, pp.6. This policy essay question is likely to be an examination question prepared by Ge Shengzhong for University students after he was assigned to be a University Rector in 1103 and before his suspension of duties owing to his performance of the three-year mourning for his father since 1104/11. For the biographical details of Ge, see Zhang Zong 章宗, “Song Zuo Xuan Feng Da Fu Xian Mo Ge Dai Zhi Zhi Shi Zeng Te Jin Shi Wen Kang Ge Gong Xing Zhuang” 宋左宣奉大夫顯謨閣待制致仕贈特進諡文康葛公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.186, pp.183.

²⁹ *SHY*, *Chongru* 2/7.

Hall of the Imperial University.³⁰ With the reservation of one-third of the nomination quota in the prefectural examination for promotion of Prefectural Schools' graduates in 1102 in contrast with only 3 students in 1099, it is obvious that the 1102 scheme aimed to lure prospective officials to the school promotion channel instead of the prefectural examinations. Envisioning that more Prefectural Schools' graduates be nominated to the metropolitan school, student quotas in the Upper, Inner and Outer Hall of the Imperial University was raised from 100, 300, 2000 to 200, 600 and 3000 respectively.³¹

Erection of the *Biyong* Academy

In view of the overall expansion, particularly the addition of 1,000 Outer Hall students, a new campus for the Imperial University had to be constructed outside the Southern wall of Kaifeng. This task was designated to Li Jie 李誠 (1065-1110), a brilliant architect.³² Li then presented a draft construction plan to Huizong, who later gave the following instructions:

In ancient times schools always had sacrifices to the Former Teacher [i.e. Confucius]. Here we are gathering several thousand scholars from every region. We ought to build a hall with statues in the front and a library in the rear, and lay out the lecture mats in the four corners. The rest can be designed as you wish.³³ 古者，學必祭先師，茲聚四方士多且數千，宜增殿像於前，徙經閣於後，布講席於四隅，餘若爾規。

³⁰ A brief comparison between the two schemes in 1099 and 1102, see Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.57.

³¹ See the table in Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.78-79. See also *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3913.

³² *YH*, *Juan* 112; *CBSB*, *Juan* 20, pp.705; *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3663. As recorded in Song Shi, Li Jie was the author of two architecture-related books, namely *Xing Zao Fa Shi* 營造法式 (34 *Juans*) and *Xin Ji Mu Shu* 新集木書 (1 *Juan*). See *SS*, *Juan* 159 and 160, pp.5259 and 5290.

³³ Xue Ang 薛昂, "Huizong Ci Bi Yong Zhao Hou Xu" 徽宗賜辟雍詔後序, in *QSW*, Vol.125, pp.276. For translation, see Patricia Buckley Ebrey, "Huizong's Stone Inscriptions", pp.250.

Following the orders of Huizong, Li continued his new campus project, where a round exterior design with a square shape in the South was initially built in 1102/10. The “Hall of the King *Wen Xuan*” to honor Confucius was erected in 1102/12.³⁴ By 1104, this new campus of the University was finished, containing four lecture halls and 100 residence halls to house 30 students each.³⁵ Serving as the Outer School of the Imperial University, the new campus was named the “*Biyong*” academy.³⁶ *Biyong* was a kind of legendary school founded by ancient Zhou rulers – roughly translated as “moated mound”.³⁷ It was reestablished in the late Western Han together with other institutions of the ancient Kings such as *Mingtang* (Hall of Enlightenment) by Wang Mang. Like Wang Mang, Huizong saw the erection of the *Biyong* as a symbol of ideal governance in the manner of the ancient sage Kings.

Completion of the *Biyong* academy marked a further accomplishment of the school promotion and recruitment system.³⁸ To celebrate this, Huizong paid a visit to the Imperial University and the newly established *Biyong* in 1104/11. Upon his arrival, he firstly went to the “Hall of the King *Wen Xuan*”, which had been conferred the title “Great Completion Hall” by then,³⁹ paid his respect to the Confucian masters including Confucius, Yen Hui, Mencius and also Wang Anshi.⁴⁰ Then Huizong ordered the two Vice-Directors of Education, Jiang Jing 蔣靜 (1079 *Jin Shi*) and Wu Yin 吳綱 (1056-1109), to give lectures on the *Wuyi* chapter of the *Book of*

³⁴ *YH*, *Juan* 112.

³⁵ *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3913. See also Edward A Kracke, “The Expansion of Educational Opportunity in the Reign of Hui-tsung of the Sung and Its Implications”, *Sung Studies Newsletter*, No.13 (1977), pp.17-18. *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.397.

³⁶ *GMBY*, *Juan* 26, pp.666; *SCGY*, *Juan* 16/5a, pp.353.

³⁷ E.A. Kracke, “Sung K’ai-feng: Pragmatic Metropolis and Formalistic Capital”, in John Winthrop Haeger (ed.), *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), pp.73-74; Thomas H.C. Lee, *Education in traditional China*, pp.42.

³⁸ *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3658.

³⁹ *SS*, *Juan* 114, pp.2708 and *Juan* 105, pp.2549-2550.

⁴⁰ *SS*, *Juan* 105, pp.2549.

Documents and the *Book of Change* respectively.⁴¹ Staff members of the schools were then rewarded and 16 outstanding students conferred the “Upper Hall” degree.⁴²

In addition, to commemorate the establishment of the *Biyong* Academy, Huizong conferred upon the school an “Imperial Brush Hand-Drafted Edict”, hoping to inspire scholar-officials to praise this grandiose new project. The emperor directed Jiang Jing and Wu Yin to inscribe in stone the edict in his own calligraphy for erection at government schools across the country. Unlike former steles listing Yuanyou factionalists, “the new stele was probably intended to counter any sense that the new emperor was an enemy of literati, education, or Confucian principles.”⁴³ In addition, Huizong also wished to convey his educational vision to the masses through the steles, the text of which is translated below:

I admired ancient society where customs were wholesome. People enjoyed their work and honored their rulers. This was mainly because of the education they received. In addition, communities were ordered to nominate deserving candidates on the basis of conduct and virtue, where the virtuous could be promoted and the wicked demoted to ensure the nomination of only genuine talent. However later generations failed to nurture scholar-officials. Thereafter, family and social customs changed without being rectified. 朕嘉在昔善天下之俗，勸功樂事，尊君親上，莫不受成於學。命鄉論秀，比其德行而興其賢能，崇德黜惡，人有成材。逮至後世，士失所養，家殊俗異，未之有革。

Only my father, Emperor Shenzong, had recognized this. Hence with reference to the deeds of the Ancient Sage Kings, schools were established where the study of poetry writing was abolished and instruction in the six arts was offered instead. The reform started firstly

⁴¹ SS, *Juan* 114, pp.2708 and *Juan* 356, pp.11211. See also Ge Shengzhong 葛勝仲, “Chao Feng Da Fu Wu Gong Mu Zhi Ming” 朝奉大夫吳公墓誌銘, in *QSW*, Vol.143, pp.67.

⁴² SS, *Juan* 19, pp.370. For the proceedings during Huizong’s visit to the Imperial University and the *Biyong* Academy, see SS, *Juan* 114, pp.2708-2709. The names of the 16 students who were conferred upon the degree could be found in “Tai Xue Shang She Ti Ming Bei” 太學上舍題名碑, in Wang Yun 汪鋐 zhuan, *Shi Er Yan Zhai Jin Shi Guo Yan Lu* 十二硯齋金石過眼錄, *Juan* 17/3b-5b, in Xin wen feng chu ban gong si bian ji bu 新文豐出版公司編輯部, *Shi Ke Shi Liao Xin Bian Di Yi Ji* (SKSLXB) 石刻史料新編第 1 輯 (Taipei: Xin wen feng chu ban gu fen you xian gong si, 1982), Vol.10, pp.7948-7949 and Lu Zengxiang 陸增祥 (1833-1889) zhuan, *Ba Qiong Shi Jin Shi Bu Zheng* 八瓊室金石補正, *Juan* 91/13-17, in SKSLXB, Vol.8, pp. 5474-5476.

⁴³ A quote from Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.240.

in the capital but had not been fully implemented countrywide. Day and night I felt unpleasant when I recalled this unfulfilled vision of my father, and hence I endeavored to work with those virtuous and capable officials to continue the reform. Instructions were then given to the Bureaus concerned to promote widely the Three Hall System introduced by Shenzong. To further enlarge and extend the educational institution, an Academy called “Biyong” was established in the countryside near the capital. In addition to abolishing the civil service examination system, students and officials are now selected on the recommendation of the local community. Besides, books not by the sages and worthies, plus the learning of the Yuanyou period, were forbidden and not to be studied. When the new Academy is completed, a lucky day was chosen for my visit to the School to see how the students are learning. Through meeting various students and offering gifts to teachers, my devotion to the educational development, needless to say, is genuine. 惟我神考，若稽先王，建置校學，罷黜詩賦，訓釋六藝，首善於京師矣。朕追述先志，夙興夜寐，罔（罔）敢墜失，思與有德有造之士共承之。遂詔所司，推原熙、豐三舍之令，播告之。修誕彌，率土即國之郊作辟雍。廢科舉以復裏選之制，非聖賢之書與元祐術學，悉禁毋習。乃涓日之良，臨雍視學，延見多士，縻以好爵，朕心庶幾焉傳不云乎？

Those who are good at cultivating men bring the world into submission. My instruction of the scholars has reached the maximal point, and they wait for and follow the will of the ruler. Thus we will be able to unify the Way and virtue, bring uniformity to customs, and revive the glories of the Zhou at its height, thereby honoring the legacy of our departed Shenzong. Wouldn't this be right?⁴⁴ 以善養人者服天下，朕之迪士至矣，其丕應徯志以從上之欲，則將一道德，同風俗，追成周之隆，以駿惠我神考，豈不韙歟？

In this inscription, Huizong stresses the importance of extending the Three Hall system at the Imperial University, initially a mechanism designed for internal promotion in the Shenzong era, to schools countrywide. Through implementation of this school promotion mechanism, he sought to revive the spirit of communal nomination, the ideal model of recruiting national elites traced to the sage Kings. Subsequently the civil service examinations (to be precise, the prefectural examinations) could gradually be abolished. For Huizong, continuation and expansion

⁴⁴ Song Huizong, “Hui Zong Ci Bi Yong Zhao Shu Bei” 徽宗賜辟雍詔書碑, in *QSW*, Vol.163, pp.385-386. Part of the above translation is adopted from Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.247.

of the scheme initiated by Shenzong is not only a filial deed, but also a plan to revive antiquity.

The impact of factional proscriptions on the scholarly and educational environment was also re-emphasized in the inscription. As early as 1103, it was ordered that scholarly works written and policy issues raised by members of the Yuanyou faction should not be taught or discussed in government schools.⁴⁵ Since such prominent names as Sima Guang, Fan Zuyu, Su Shi and Cheng Yi were on the Yuanyou list, their works were forbidden to be studied at the metropolitan schools. As a result, University students were prohibited from studying the historical masterpieces of Sima Guang and Fan Zuyu, reading renowned poems and essays of Su Shi, or learning the Classical interpretations by Cheng Yi.⁴⁶ The negative impacts of factional proscription on the intellectual development were summarized by Yuan historian Ma Tuanlin as follows:

Honouring [Wang Anshi's interpretation of] the Classics, expelling historical studies and abolishing poetry and rhapsody were the guiding principles for the curricula and syllabi in nurturing scholars since Chongning/Daguan (1107-1110) era. This judgment seems to be upright. But in fact, the Classics were honored because of Wang Anshi's [New Commentaries on] the Three Classics. While Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror to aid in government*, together with Su [Shi's] and Huang [Tingjian's] singings in leisure attributed to the expulsion of history and poetry.⁴⁷ 尊經書，抑史學，廢詩賦，此崇、觀以後立科造士之大指，其論似正矣。然經之所以獲尊者，以有荊舒之三經也；史與詩之所以遭斥者，以有涑水之《通鑑》、蘇黃之酬唱也。

The curricula at the Imperial University were also affected because of the ban. Partly because historical studies were the expertise of anti-reformist leader Sima Guang, the whole history curriculum was in jeopardy under the political dominance of

⁴⁵ SCGY, Juan 16/5b, pp.354; CBJSBM, Juan 126, pp.2119; SS, Juan 19, pp.367.

⁴⁶ CBJSBM, Juan 132, pp.2237; CBSB, Juan 22, pp.762.

⁴⁷ WXTK, Juan 31, pp.296.

the reformists.⁴⁸ The reformists' bias explains why candidates had little knowledge in history, as reflected in their weird answers in examinations.⁴⁹ During the reign of Zhezong, an official Xue Ang, a crony of Cai Jing who later became University Professor and Director of Education under Huizong, frequently proposed to abolish the history curriculum despite refusals from the throne.⁵⁰ Xue's whim ultimately came true in the Huizong era, where history and poetry were discredited in government schools, as vividly depicted by Hu Yin 胡寅 (1098-1156), a student in the late 1110's: "Should sentences in Histories as well as poetry of Li (Bai) and Du (Fu) mentioning chaos and fragmentation be quoted, they would be accused by the masses as slanderous."⁵¹ 或道史書及李、杜詩章亂離之句，則眾以謗訕操切之。 The status of the Confucian Classic *Spring and Autumn Annals* was equivalently pitiful. As early as the Shenzong era, this classic was already removed from the school curricula, mainly because of Wang Anshi's doubt in its value.⁵² It was restored in the Yuanyou era and in late 1100 for a few months when the conservatives were in power, but soon was abolished under the reformists.⁵³ Accordingly the teaching post for this Classic at the metropolitan schools was also scrapped for the entire Huizong era.

⁴⁸ According to a Southern Song official Chen Gongfu, historical studies were denounced since the ascendance of Wang Anshi, whom discouraged studying the *Annals*, the *Historical Records* of Sima Qian, and the *History of the Han Dynasty* by Ban Gu. See *SS*, *Juan* 379, pp.11694.

⁴⁹ For example, a candidate was uncertain which dynasty Dong Zhongshu, a famous Confucian master in the Han period, was living in. See Zhu Bian 朱弁 *zhuan*; Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 *dian jiao*, *Qu Wei Jiu Wen* 曲洧舊聞 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2002), *Juan* 3, pp.116. Ma Yuan, a famous general of the Eastern Han, had made significant contribution to Han's border in the Southwest. Nevertheless, a candidate Ye Yuan was puzzled regarding his achievement. See Ye Mengde 葉夢得 *zhuan*, *Bi Shu Lu Hua* 避暑錄話, *Juan* Xia, in *QSB*, Ser.2 Vol.10, pp.309.

⁵⁰ *SS*, *Juan* 352, pp.11122. For a brief discussion on the prohibitions of the Yuanyou learning, see Yao Hong 姚紅, Liu Tingting 劉婷婷 *zhu*, *Liang Song Ke Ju Yu Wen Xue Yan Jiu* 兩宋科舉與文學研究 (Zhejiang: Zhejiang Renmin Chu Ban She, 2008), pp.68-72.

⁵¹ Hu Yin 胡寅, "Lu Yu Xiang Shuo Xu" 魯語詳說序, in Hu Yin *zhuan*; Rong Zhaozu 容肇祖 *dian jiao*, *Fei Ran Ji* (FRJ) 斐然集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1993), *Juan* 19, pp.404.

⁵² Wang criticized the *Annals* as "Discontinuous and broken court gazettes" 斷爛朝報, see Hu Yin, "Xian Gong Xing Zhuang" 先公行狀, in *FRJ*, *Juan* 25, pp.552.

⁵³ The *Spring and Autumn Annals* was removed from the examination syllabi in 1094. See *WXTK*, *Juan* 31, pp.296. But the Professorship for *Spring and Autumn Annals* was resumed in 1100/11. Nevertheless, it was abolished again in 1103. See *SHY*, *Zhiguan*, 28/14; *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3912; *Juan* 165, pp.3913 and *Juan* 435, pp.12916.

The *New Commentaries on the Three Classics*, on the other hand, continued to prevail. Huizong choose to confer posthumous honors upon Wang Anshi while placing his name in the temple for Confucian Sages.⁵⁴ Elevation of the reformist Godfather Wang Anshi to a level almost equivalent to the Sage Confucius and Mencius, despite opposition from certain officials, clearly reflected the commitment of Huizong in continuing the reform legacy.⁵⁵ Through honoring only the learning of Wang Anshi and denouncing the various schools, the reformers' vision to exert ideological control in government schools is obvious. Such ideological preferences of the Song court also pre-determine staffing arrangements at the metropolitan schools, as seen below.

A world without civil service examinations

Upon completion of the Biyong academy in 1104, the Imperial University hosted a student population of 3,800. Among them, the 3,000 Outer Hall students were to study at the Biyong academy, while the 600 Inner Hall and 200 Upper Hall students stayed at the existing University campus.⁵⁶ Ironically, these newly built facilities in the metropolitan area were not fully utilized. In view of the vacancies in the University's Upper and Inner Halls, good students at the Outer Hall whose year-end assessment was exceptional were permitted to stay in the University campus. Only less advanced Outer Hall students were moved to the Biyong campus. By 1117, when the University campus was too congested, the initial settings came to be strictly observed.⁵⁷ The unfilled quota at the metropolitan schools at the initial stage was

⁵⁴ *SS, Juan 105*, pp.2549.

⁵⁵ One of the officials who opposed the idea was Chen Guan. See Yue Ke 岳珂 (1183-1234), *Ting Shi* 桎史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), *Juan 11*, "Zun Yao Ji Biao" 尊堯集表, *Juan 11*, pp.128.

⁵⁶ Such arrangement of University students was firstly proposed by Cai Jing in 1102 together with the promotion scheme for Prefectural School graduates to the Imperial University, see *SS, Juan 165*, pp.3913. Upon the completion of the Biyong academy in 1104, Cai Jing reiterated this proposal again. See *SS, Juan 157*, pp.3663. Finally Huizong agreed with this proposed settings.

⁵⁷ *SHY, Zhiguan 28/21*.

owed partly to inadequate nominations from Prefectural Schools. The hesitation of candidates in registering at schools as well as the inattentiveness of local officials in the school promotion scheme may also be accountable for this. The former factor is highlighted by a remark of the Secretariat in 1104/1:

All under Heaven have established schools to nurture scholars. Students had to undergo quarterly examination, their behavior recorded in monthly exercises at the schools. Only after their behavior and skills were pure and complete could they be nominated. The selection is very competitive. The civil service examinations merely took into account the performance of candidates in a single day. People were glad to try their luck and hence most preferred the easier way. As a result, those awkward and lazy people hesitated to register at schools. The court's intention of nurturing talents therefore has been lost.⁵⁸ 天下已置學養士，士在學校，月書季考，行藝純備，方與人貢，其選頗艱，而科舉取一日之長，人樂僥倖，眾易以趨，故異意與怠惰之人多憚於入學，甚失朝廷教養之意。

Even though the countrywide erection of local schools and the promotion mechanism from local schools to metropolitan schools was announced in 1102, the civil service examinations were still in force. In fact, prefectural examinations occupied 2/3 of the nomination quota while school nominations took up merely 1/3. Apparently the civil service examinations were more appealing to most candidates, relative to the complicated observation, evaluation and examination process in schools. In addition, poor learning environment as well as inadequate stipends could also explain why admissions to local schools became a taboo, as acknowledged by the Song court in an edict in 1104/11.⁵⁹

Inattentiveness of local officials in promoting school education was also a major factor accounting for the stagnation in school promotion. Since officials would

⁵⁸ *CBJSBM, Juan 126*, pp.2121.

⁵⁹ *CBJSBM, Juan 126*, pp.2122. See also Lin Yan, *Bei Song Ke Ju Kao Shi Yu Wen Xue*, pp.205.

be heavily punished for making undeserving recommendations,⁶⁰ most of them hesitated in nominating students. In view of this, Huizong needed to remind his subjects in 1103/1 not to evade their responsibility to recommend outstanding students.⁶¹ He even requested the Indendant of Educational Affairs (*Ti Ju Xue Shi Shi* 提舉學事司), a position newly created to oversee educational matters in a circuit,⁶² to urge local officials to swiftly implement the school promotion scheme so as to revive the ancient spirit of recruiting future officials through the school system.⁶³ Such passive attitude demonstrated by the local officials in nominating talent reflects that they hesitated in exercising the additional power to recruit officials, partly because of its highly restrictive nature. In their views, it is just another burdensome duty.⁶⁴

To enhance the schools' attractiveness, students studying in government schools were allowed to attempt both the civil service examinations and the school promotion routes, while candidates who did not register in government schools were restricted to the civil service examination path.⁶⁵ This turned out to be a nightmare for those old and poor candidates, since they could hardly afford to study continuously at government schools and wait for promotion. The experience of Zou Gai 鄒陔 (1092-1153), a diligent student who was forced to quit study and resume farming because of poverty, offers a vivid depiction of the situation, as he once shared with his sons:

My diligence as well as literary skills was never behind the others, but I was poor and without savings. By then the Three Hall selection mechanism was implemented in all prefectures and counties. Only

⁶⁰ SHY, *Chongru* 2/8-9.

⁶¹ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2120. See also Wu Zhengqiang, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua*, pp.223.

⁶² See T. Grimm, "The inauguration of t'i-chü hsüeh-shih ssu (Education Intendants) during the Northern Sung dynasty", in Françoise Aubin (ed.), *Etudes Song: in memoriam Etienne Balazs* (Paris: Mouton, 1976), Ser.1 No.3, pp.259-274.

⁶³ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2122. See also Lin Yan, *Bei Song keju kaoshi yu wenxue*, pp.205.

⁶⁴ See also Wu Zhengqiang, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua*, pp.222-223.

⁶⁵ Notes in *GMBY*, Juan 26, pp.666. under the entry "Zhi Wai Xue Ci Ming Bi Yong" 置外學賜名辟雍.

students who accumulated plenty of wealth and studied for months and years in schools could dream for being nominated by the high officials. This led me to extreme poverty, forcing me to quit studies and resume farming. By inheriting my properties and lands, you are now encouraged to study as diligently as your father. Do not disappoint me!⁶⁶ 吾讀書屬文詞不落人後，而貧窶無贏囊之蓄。當是時，州縣三舍選補之法，銖稱寸累，俟以歲月，然後可冀一召于卿大夫之書，則已索我于枯魚之肆矣，以故忍而就此。今有產廬以舍汝，有田園以飲汝，汝曹勉讀父書，無落吾事。

The experience of Zou Gai shows how underprivileged the poor were in the school system, the civil service examinations a more viable route for them. Contrarily, candidates from better-off families benefited the most, since not only could they enjoy privilege of duty exemption for registration in government schools,⁶⁷ but also exploit both the civil service examinations and the school promotion channel.⁶⁸ The Song government, aiming to maintain a fairer basis for the rich and the poor in the recruitment exercise, decided to abolish the civil service examinations so that all future officials were recruited through the school system. This was expressed in an edict issued in 1104/11:

My father Shenzong had previously discussed recruiting scholar-officials through the Three Hall system while abolishing the examinations at counties and prefectures. This scheme had been implemented in the metropolitan area, but not yet extended to counties. I wantonly initiated the plan, asking officials to deliberate on it. When a detailed proposal emerged, it was passed. The Biyong Academy was then established in the suburb near the metropolitan area and waits for nominees from Prefectural Schools. After rites, documents and institutions were in place, a day was selected to honor Confucius. I also paid a visit to the school and met students, candidates who received wide acclaim were appointed to government offices, while an imperial grace was extended to the Professors as well as their offspring. Every possible means to encourage students was utilized. However recruitment through prefectural and county examinations remains in force, while the school promotion mechanism is not yet the sole path to recruitment. As a result, prospective officials cannot concentrate their

⁶⁶ Sun Di, "Song Gu Zou Fu Jun Zhi Nan Mu Zhi Ming" 宋故鄒府君志南墓誌銘, in *QSW*, Vol.161, pp.87.

⁶⁷ See Brian E. McKnight, "Fiscal Privileges and the Social Order in Sung China", in John Winthrop Haeger, *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China*, pp.91-92.

⁶⁸ *WXTK*, Juan 31, pp.296.

minds. This was definitely not my intention! An edict has therefore been issued to abolish all prefectural and departmental examinations except for the upcoming round civil service examinations. Recruitment of officials shall depend exclusively on the school promotion scheme. In this way, we will move towards the ancient way of nurturance and follow the former emperor's ideal of educating talent. My intention to attain ideal governance will thereby be satisfied.⁶⁹ 崇寧三年十一月丁亥，詔曰：“惟昔神考嘗議以三舍取士，而罷州郡科舉之令。其法始於畿甸，而未及行於郡國。肆朕纂圖制詔，有司講議，其方成書來上，悉推行之。設辟雍於國郊，以待士之升貢者，禮文咸舉，制度大畧，乃擇日謁款先聖，臨幸黌舍延見諸生，擇其當論選者而官之，增秩博士加恩子弟。朕所以勸勵學者可謂至矣，然令州郡猶以科舉取士，而學校之法不得專行，故士心所嚮未一，豈朕之意哉！其詔天下，除將來科場如故外，並罷州軍發解及省試法，其取士並繇學校升貢，庶幾洽往古作人之隆，紹先帝造士之美，以稱朕圖治之意。

Abolition of the civil service examinations aimed to force candidates who opted for the fast track of examinations to seek admission to local government schools. To this end, favorable treatment was offered to students in schools in the transitional period, where 70% of the selection quota in 1106 was reserved for them.⁷⁰ Among the 671 degree holders in 1106, 470 were nominated by government schools.⁷¹ Subsequent to the 1106 exercise, the prefectural and departmental examinations were to be abolished.⁷² (Although in reality the latter was never fully abolished in the Huizong era, as we will see below.) Ideally all literary people intending to pursue officialdom should initially seek for admissions to local schools. After going through a comprehensive mechanism of evaluation and promotion, outstanding graduates of the Prefectural Schools could be promoted to the metropolitan schools, entering public service upon graduation from the University Upper Hall. Since metropolitan schools only accepted graduates of local schools, admissions examinations were no longer

⁶⁹ *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB* and *SHY*, *Xuanju* 4/3-4. For an abridged version, see *WXTK*, *Juan* 31, pp.296; *SS*, *Juan* 19, pp.370; and *SCGY Juan* 16/11b, pp.366.

⁷⁰ *SCGY*, *Juan* 16/16a, pp.376; *GMBY*, *Juan* 27, pp.689.

⁷¹ Gong Yanming 龔延明, Fang Fang 方芳, “Bei Song Huizong Chao Gong Shi Yu Jin Shi Kao Bian – Jian Ping Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao Bian Zhuan Ti Li” 北宋徽宗朝_貢士_與_進士_考辨_兼評 皇宋十朝綱要編撰體例, *Wen Xian Ji Kan* 文獻季刊, No.4 (Oct., 2007), pp.43.

⁷² *GMBY*, *Juan* 27, pp.683.

held.⁷³ In order to attract as many students to government schools as possible, larger stipends were offered to students in Prefectural Schools in the intercalary second month of 1105. Two months later, students in prefectural and county Schools were granted exemption from tax duties.⁷⁴ These carrot and stick measures seem to have been very effective. In early 1106, the Department of Ministries reported that “schools in various circuits were ready. Most selectees among the school nominees were mature scholars who had previously failed the civil service examinations. The effectiveness of communal nomination is obvious.”⁷⁵ 諸路學校各已就緒，其所貢人，今來中選，多舊日科舉遺落老成之士，鄉舉裏選之效，已見於此。 Partly because of this success, Prefectural Schools were ordered to nominate outstanding graduates to the Imperial University every year. These nominees had to study at the Imperial University, which “came to stand as the apex of the empire’s pyramid of public education, to which the best graduates of the more advanced local schools were promoted”,⁷⁶ preparing for the upcoming palace examination to be held every three years.⁷⁷

Upon phasing-out the prefectural examinations, the school promotion scheme had to be modified. Details of the changes were promulgated in 1106 and 1107 to cover areas like students’ admissions, evaluation, promotion, demotion or expulsion for different sorts of government schools.⁷⁸ The Biyong Academy, as the Outer Hall of the Imperial University, mainly admitted outstanding Upper Hall graduates of Prefectural schools. Once the nominees from Prefectural Schools were identified, local prefects, Intendants of Educational Affairs, as well as heads of the Prefectural

⁷³ *SCGY*, Juan 16/14b, pp.372; *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3663.

⁷⁴ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2122; *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB*; *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3663. See also Brian E. McKnight, “Fiscal Privileges and the Social Order in Sung China”, pp.91-92.

⁷⁵ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2123.

⁷⁶ E.A. Kracke, “Sung K’ai-feng: Pragmatic Metropolis and Formalistic Capital”, pp.53.

⁷⁷ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2123; *SHY*, *Xuanju* 4/4.

⁷⁸ *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB*; *GMBY*, Juan 27, pp.691; *SCGY*, Juan 17/1b, pp.380; *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3664-3666.

Schools would hold farewell banquets for graduates to wish them good luck in the capital. Local governments had to cover the daily expenses of graduates during their travel to the capital; failure to do so would leave local officials open to accusations of “damaging the educational policies” 害學政.⁷⁹ Usually graduates left the Prefectural Schools in autumn and arrived at the Biyong Academy by the end of the year. During their studies at the Biyong Academy, students had to take seasonal examinations on classical meaning, discussion and policy essays, to be held in the second month of each season. Results of the seasonal examinations, together with the monthly record of students’ conduct, would be converted to scores, which would be taken into consideration for nominating students for the year-end assessment. Based on these scores, students would be ranked as outstanding, intermediate, or passing.⁸⁰ Around 60% and 50% of respective Outer and Inner Hall students could be nominated for year-end assessment.⁸¹

Apart from year-end assessment, another determining factor in student promotion was their results in the annual promotion examination held in the spring of each year. All university students, including those newly admitted Prefectural School graduates, could participate in this promotion examination, in which they would be ranked as outstanding, intermediate, or pass. At most 47 students could attain “outstanding” in both year-end assessment and promotion examination. Dubbed “First Class students in the Upper Hall”, they could graduate from the Imperial University

⁷⁹ Lu You 陸游 zhuan; Li Jianxiong 李劍雄, Liu Dequan 劉德權 dian jiao, *Lao Xue An Bi Ji* 老學庵筆記 (Beijing : Zhonghua shu ju, 1979), *Juan* 2, pp.27. See also *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3664. For a translation of this anecdote, see Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.152.

⁸⁰ This scoring mechanism, as argued by Hou Shaowen, is one of the three major impacts of the Three Hall system on the educational development in later eras. See Hou Shaowen, “Song Dai Tai Xue San She Fa Ji Qi Dui Hou Shi Zhi Ying Xiang” 宋代太學三舍法及其對後世之影響, pp.307-309, which also appears in Hou Shaowen, *Tang Song Kao Shi Zhi Du Shi*, pp.415-418.

For details of the stipulation on the scoring system that became mature at the Southern Song Imperial University, see Zhou Mi 周密(1232-1308), Wu Qiming 吳企明 dian jiao, *Gui Xin Za Zhi* 癸辛雜識 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1988). *Hou Ji* 後集, pp.59-61.

⁸¹ See Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.134. *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3666.

and receive immediate appointment to government office. Those who attained an “outstanding” and “intermediate” grade, or two “intermediate” grades in the year-end assessment and promotion examination, could be promoted to the Upper Hall to prepare for the upcoming palace examination. A maximum of 140 students could be considered. There was no fixed period of study for most Upper Hall students, since it depended on the schedule of the palace examination. But those Upper Hall students newly admitted to the Imperial University had to study at least a half-year at the Upper Hall before receiving official appointment, even if they had passed the palace examination. Generally speaking, the career prospects for such Upper Hall students were very promising, as the palace examination hardly failed candidates. Students who received a mere “pass” on either the year-end assessment or promotion examination would be required to study at the Inner Hall, which could accommodate up to 187 students of this sort.⁸²

Corresponding to the surge in student population, staffing at the metropolitan schools was reconfigured. The original staff hierarchy at the Biyong academy, proposed in 1102, consisted of a Vice-director, Secretary, ten Professors, five rectors, and five assistant rectors. After the Academy’s formal establishment in 1104, the court appointed a Director as well.⁸³ A year later, this Director of Biyong was renamed Director of the Imperial University, responsible for overseeing educational affairs across the country.⁸⁴ To ensure impartiality in student promotion and selection, teaching officials were prohibited from meeting students privately.⁸⁵ What is worth noting is that unlike the settings in the Xining era, teaching officials could no longer dominate students’ promotion. Instead the emperor separately assigned examiners to

⁸² *SS*, *Juan* 157, pp.3665. See also He Zongli, *Song Shi Xuan Ju Zhi Bu Zheng*, pp.118. For a brief discussion on the grading and promotion of University students in the Huizong era, see Yuan Zheng, “The Grade System of Schools in Eleventh-to Thirteenth-Century China”, pp.32-34.

⁸³ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/15; *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3913.

⁸⁴ *SCGY Juan* 16/12a, pp.367; *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3913.

⁸⁵ *SS*, *Juan* 165, pp.3913; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/20; *WXTK*, *Juan* 42, pp.397.

oversee the yearly University promotion examination. Fading influence of the scholar-officials at the metropolitan schools, probably a concession of Cai Jing to win over Huizong's support, reassured the emperor's ultimate power over official recruitment. In this light, government schools are similar to the arts that Huizong indulged in, both shed light on the intriguing power struggle between the throne and the scholar-officials, as Patricia Ebrey argued, "collecting and writing about books, art, and antiquities became an arena in which the educated elite and the throne subtly competed for cultural leadership."⁸⁶

Further stipulations concerning metropolitan school staffing were promulgated in 1107. In the third month, four Professors and two assistants were installed at the Directorate School.⁸⁷ In the ninth month, the court mandated that the metropolitan schools have a total of 20 Professors: 10 at the Biyong Academy, 5 at the Imperial University, and 5 at the Directorate School. Each Professor should focus on teaching one of the Five Classics, namely the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of Documents*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Institutes of Zhou*, and the *Records of Rites*. Only those who obtained credentials in one of these Classics could assume the Professorship in that specific Classic – a step likely intended to ensure quality teaching at the metropolitan schools.⁸⁸ Taking into account the student population at the metropolitan schools, the Professor-to-student ratio for the Biyong Academy was set at 1:300, 1:160 at the Imperial University, and 1:40 at the Directorate School. This suggests that students at the Directorate School received more academic attention, which was likely an indirect way for the Song court to reward the high officials by providing better education to their offspring.

⁸⁶ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating culture: the collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), pp.17.

⁸⁷ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/17. For Huizong's approval with Imperial brush, see *SDZLJ*, *Juan* 157, "Da Shi Cheng Xue Ang Qi Zhi Guo Zi Zheng Lu Yi Dian Jiao Yu Pi" 大司成薛昂乞置國子正錄以典教 御批 大觀元年 (1107) 二月二十五日, pp.591.

⁸⁸ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/17.

Interruption of school promotion under Zhang Shangying⁸⁹

It is noteworthy that staffing in schools and treatment of students changed swiftly in connection with the changing political environment at Huizong's court. When Cai Jing temporarily stepped down in 1109/6,⁹⁰ Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1043-1121), who replaced Cai as Chief Councilor, had altered the existing settings, which were likely incorporated into the 130-*Juan* school regulations compiled by Zheng Juzhong 鄭居中 (1059-1123) and promulgated by the Directorate of Education in early 1112.⁹¹ Originally men ranked as "Upper Class students in the Upper Hall" could receive direct appointment to government office, a privilege scrapped in 1110/8 on the charge that it violated the spirit of Shenzong. Instead of joining the civil service right away, these students had to study at the Upper Hall and wait for the upcoming palace examination.⁹² A number of university students witnessed such policy revisions, including Li Qiu 李璆 (?-1155) and Huang Gui 黃珪 (?-1139). Admitted to the Imperial University in 1102, Li had been promoted to the Inner Hall in 1107 due to outstanding performance in both the year-end assessment and promotion examination; he was listed in third place (the top ten among examinees) and elevated in 1111 to the "Superior students in the Upper Hall". Under the new rules, he could not receive direct appointment to government office. Instead he had to continue to study in the Upper Hall, waiting for the next palace examination in 1112, where he ranked in the first class before receiving appointment as Professor at Directorate School.⁹³ The experience of Huang Gui was similar. Consistently ranked

⁸⁹ For a thorough study of the life, career and philosophy of Zhang Shangying, see Luo Ling 羅凌 zhu, *Wu Jin Ju Shi Zhang Shangying Yan Jiu* 無盡居士張商英研究 (Wuhan: Hua zhong shi fan da xue chu ban she, 2007). For an English narrative, see Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, "Zhang Shang-ying (1043-1122) - An Embarrassing Policy Adviser under the Northern Song", in Ryū Shiken Hakushi Shōju Kinen Sōshi Kenkyū Ronshū Kankōkai hen, *Ryū Shiken Hakushi shōju kinen Sōshi kenkyū ronshū* 劉子健博士頌壽紀念宋史研究論集 (Tōkyō: Dōhōsha, 1989), pp.521-530.

⁹⁰ *SS*, *Juan* 20, pp.382.

⁹¹ *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB*.

⁹² *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 27. *SCGY*, *Juan* 17/7b, pp.392.

⁹³ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/20.

at the top of the admissions examinations for the Biyong Academy, he was selected by the school to graduate in 1111. However, under the new rules, he needed to continue studies for an additional year and take the 1112 palace examination.⁹⁴ Apart from dimmer graduation prospects for such students, the promotion opportunity within the University itself was drastically reduced. As noted above, a maximum of 381 students could be promoted according to the rules in 1106, but the actual quota was only 100 four years later, since the quotas for “outstanding”, “intermediate” and “passing” students in the promotion examination had been fixed at 10, 40 or 50 respectively.⁹⁵ Students at local and elementary schools also suffered due to the scrapping of monthly stipend.

Even more detrimental to the school promotion scheme was the continuation of the prefectural examinations, which should have been suspended after 1106 to discourage candidates from bypassing the comprehensive school promotion mechanism.⁹⁶ These policy revisions were in line with Zhang Shangying’s conclusion that the school promotion system was “beneficial to the noble but not the inferior, to the youths but not the elderly, and to the rich but not the poor,”⁹⁷ 利貴不利賤，利少不利老，利富不利貧。 on the understanding that the noble, young and rich exploited the privileges of duty and tax exemptions during their long stay in government schools while the poor and elderly could hardly afford the time to go through the time-consuming school promotion exercises. By reducing schools stipends and resuming the prefectural examinations, Zhang anticipated the withdrawal of poor candidates from government schools to return to the prefectural examination.

⁹⁴ Zhang Jiucheng 張九成, “Huang Li Bu Mu Zhi Ming” 黃吏部墓誌銘, in *QSW*, Vol.184, pp.170.

⁹⁵ *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB*.

⁹⁶ *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 126, pp.2125; *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB*.

⁹⁷ See Shen Zuobin; Shi Su, *Jia Tai Gui Ji Zhi*, *Juan* 1, “Xue Xiao” 學校, in *SYZJFZ*, Vol.4, pp.1631. The translation can be found in John Chaffee, “Education and examinations in Sung society (960-1279)”, pp.122. See also *WXTK*, *Juan* 31, pp.296 and Wu Zeng, *Neng Gai Zhai Man Lu*, *Juan* 13, “Ba She Fa Cu Ru Huang Shang Yan” 罷舍法卒如黃裳言, pp.382.

Staffing at the metropolitan schools was also a concern for the new Councilor. In 1110/8, five professorships at the Biyong Academy as well as the Directorate School were cancelled. Other support staff at the metropolitan schools considered redundant was also eliminated.⁹⁸ In addition, recruitment examinations for teaching officials were revived. Those wishing to be Prefectural School teachers could apply. The Ministry of Personnel would then summon eligible officials for the posts of University Professor, Rector and Associate Rector to take the recruitment test.⁹⁹ With reference to the settings in the Yuanfeng era, this recruitment examination continued in 1111.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, contrary to the severity of the test in the Yuanfeng era, where only four out of more than 60 candidates were selected, the examinations in 1110 and 1111 were relatively easier with one in three candidates passing. Likely doubtful of the quality of these recently selected teaching officials, the court stipulated that only one in ten candidates could be selected starting in 1112.¹⁰¹

Financial concerns were a plausible reason for these changes. The revival of prefectural examinations offered a much cheaper route for recruiting civil servants relative to the school system. However, by keeping those “Upper Class students in the Upper Hall” at the Imperial University and delaying their progress in joining the civil service, the Song government wasted more resources on monthly stipends. So why did Huizong endorse such plan? It is not hard to understand, since the emperor’s autocracy over official recruitment could be reassured by requiring these outstanding students to sit for the palace examination. Apart from viewing them as tools to assert autocracy, these policy revisions could also be interpreted as Zhang Shangying’s compassion for poor candidates as well as his gesture to break with Cai Jing, his notorious predecessor, and build up his own independent reputation.

⁹⁸ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/18-19; *SCGY, Juan* 17/7b, pp.392.

⁹⁹ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/19; *SCGY, Juan* 17/7b, pp.392; *SS, Juan* 20, pp.385.

¹⁰⁰ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/19; *SCGY, Juan* 17/8b, pp.394.

¹⁰¹ *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/19.

But the councillorship of Zhang Shangying did not last long. The court reinstated Cai Jing as Chief Councilor in 1112/5,¹⁰² who restored the educational settings of 1109/4.¹⁰³ Privileges granted to Upper Class students in the Upper Hall and the staff structure at the metropolitan schools, both altered by Zhang Shangying, were restored in 1112 and remained effective until 1121, when Cai Jing retired. Moreover, recruitment test for teaching officials that Zhang had revived was abolished in 1112/8. Without the recruitment tests, teaching officials could only be selected among a cluster of outstanding University students – top five students in the Upper Hall, top ten in the promotion exercise, top three in the Yearly public examination, first class in the palace examination, or non-ranked staff at the Imperial University.¹⁰⁴ In this way, the Song court aimed to reassure the supremacy of continuous school education in selecting good candidates for the teaching positions. Nevertheless, likely because of the disappointing performance of university graduates, the recruitment test was re-instated six years later in 1118.¹⁰⁵

What deserves a bit more attention is the state of the civil service examinations under a flourishing school promotion system. As noted above, civil service examinations consisted of three levels: palace, departmental and prefectural. According to the stipulation in 1104, both the departmental and prefectural examinations were to be abolished upon completion of the 1106 round. However, continuation of the prefectural examinations as late as 1111 indicates that examination continued many years after their intended expiration.¹⁰⁶ As for the departmental

¹⁰² *SS*, Juan 21, pp.389.

¹⁰³ *SDZLJ*, Juan 157, “Xue Xiao Yu Bi” 學校御筆 政和二年五月十六日, pp.592; *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2126.

¹⁰⁴ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/19. See also Li Zhi, *Song Shi Chao Gang Yao*, Juan 17/20b, in *XXSKQS*, Vol.347, pp.562. The texts in the *Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao* appear in the Qing copy edition, while they are omitted in the *Dong Fang Xue Hui* printed version (published by Taiwan Wen Hai in 1967).

¹⁰⁵ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/21.

¹⁰⁶ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2125; *QSKS*, *Hou Ji Juan* 28 quote *XCB*. It was reiterated in 1112/5 that the civil service examinations be abolished. See *SCGY* Juan 17/19b-20a, pp.562. The texts in the *Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao* appear in the Qing copy edition, while they are omitted in the *Dong Fang Xue*

examination, the contemporary scholar Lin Yan, after thoroughly analyzing various sources, concludes that the examination had never been suspended for the entire Huizong period.¹⁰⁷ Continuation of the Departmental and Palace examinations highlights the dominant role of the emperor over official recruitment, the sovereign holding the discretionary power to do as he pleases on examination matters. At the same time, the examinations enabled university students to exploit multiple channels for access to the civil service. The most outstanding university students could depend entirely on the school promotion channel, receiving direct appointment to office without passing the departmental and palace examinations; those less brilliant could still access office through the examinations in conventional fashion. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Imperial University under Huizong and its contribution to Song politics, a group of elite students will be studied below. Before shifting our attention to these students, we are going to discuss on two other initiatives of Huizong designed to broaden the knowledge and augment the morality of prospective scholars.

Broadening the knowledge of scholar-officials

As noted in the Shenzong chapter, after poetry and rhapsody were removed from the syllabi of the civil service examinations by Wang Anshi, candidates were no longer required to command all Confucian Classics to pass the examinations. After Wang Anshi's *New Commentaries on the Three Classics* were sanctioned as the standard for the examinations, life became much simpler for examination candidates since the answers could easily be found in the *New Commentaries*. As a result, most University students merely focused on the *New Commentaries* for the *Institutes of Zhou*, the *Book of Odes*, or the *Book of Documents*. The narrowness of student

Hui printed version (published by Taiwan Wen Hai in 1967).

¹⁰⁷ Lin Yan, *Bei Song Ke Ju Kao Shi Yu Wen Xue*, pp.221-228.

knowledge was hence a negative consequence of the New Policies. To rectify this, poetry and rhapsody had been revived in the Yuanyou era, only to be abolished after the reformists resumed power. Proscriptions against “Yuanyou academics” in the early Chongning era effectively prohibited students from studying the history of Sima Guang, the literary works of the Su brothers, and the classical interpretations of Cheng Yi. To broaden students’ horizon, the Song government opted to introduce a minor in a Confucian Classic apart from the one they majored in. The “Optional minor of another Classic” was launched in 1108/5, with clear stipulations on the examination mechanism and schedule, passing rate and nomination quota for the minor Classic. Should they perform well in this examination, they would be ranked higher among other “Upper Class students in the Upper Hall” or candidates in the palace examination and receive better assignments upon graduation.¹⁰⁸ But the scheme proved unattractive because it failed to grant privileges to students opting for a minor in local schools and failed to guarantee a better career prospects for these students, while setting too strict a passing grade for the minor.¹⁰⁹

In addition to broadening the knowledge base of students, Huizong also intended to uplift the moral quality of officials. Generations of Song emperors were searching for a proper way to recruit moral men. Revisions in the examination syllabi as well as development of the school system were two among the many measures attempted by Huizong’s predecessors. Nevertheless, the outcome seems far from satisfactory. The situation even worsened after Wang Anshi relied on those career-minded bureaucrats with marginal moral probity to carry out the New

¹⁰⁸ *SDZLJ*, Juan 157, “Ting Zhu Sheng Jian Wu Jing Yu Bi” 聽諸生兼五經御筆 大觀二年二月一日, pp.591. Based on the above order of Huizong in 1108/2, the Secretary launched the scheme of “Optional minor in other Classics”. See *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/17-18. See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.138-139.

¹⁰⁹ See also Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.139.

Policies.¹¹⁰ Huizong acknowledged the poor moral quality of officials in an inscription placed across the country: “....the unfilial and unfraternal are sometimes tolerated, but there is nothing they will not do: When serving in office they pursue profit and violate duty, they incite acrimony and accept bribes”.¹¹¹ 不孝不悌有時而容。故任官臨政，趨利犯義，詆訕貪污，無不為者。

To recruit morally qualified candidates as officials, Huizong initiated a new recruitment system similar to the ancient ideal of communal nomination, namely the “Eight Virtues of Conduct”. Launched in 1107,¹¹² candidates with outstanding moral virtues could be nominated by their prefecture of origin for admission to government schools. Upon graduation, they could receive appointment to government office. This was likely intended as a fast-track exception to the Three Hall system,¹¹³ which had been denounced for its rigidity and sluggishness in promoting students.

The “Eight Virtues” and “Eight Evils”¹¹⁴

Thomas Lee argued that the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” promotion scheme was a manifestation of the reformists’ “moralistic conception of education”.¹¹⁵ It might also be interpreted as a strategy of Huizong and the reformists to legitimize their policies by linking them to the ancient ideals reflected in the famous Confucian adage: “Men filial as sons and obedient as young men will rarely be insubordinate of superiors; but men without such filial and fraternal proclivities will inevitably incline

¹¹⁰ Wang Anshi himself frankly admitted this. See XCB, *Juan* 264, pp.6461.

¹¹¹ The stone monuments were known as “Da Guan sheng zuo zhi bei” 大觀聖作之碑, the full text of which could be found in *Jiangsu Jinshi zhi* 江蘇金石志, in *SKSLXB*, Vol.13, pp.9673-9674. The translation was adopted from Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.247.

¹¹² Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government education*, pp.248.

¹¹³ Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100–1126) and Ch’in-tsung (1126–1127) and the Fall of the Northern Sung”, pp.587.

¹¹⁴ For a thorough discussion on the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” scheme, see Gō Tereda, *Sōdai kyōiku shi gaisetsu*, pp.177-184; Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.139-144; and Yongguang Hu, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.124-127 and 202-207.

¹¹⁵ Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.156.

toward rebellion.”¹¹⁶ 其為人也孝弟，而好犯上者，鮮矣；不好犯上，而好作亂者，未之有也。

Confucius considered filial piety as a pre-condition for loyal service in government. Huizong similarly deduced that if filial piety and fraternal devotion were widely promoted in schools, his subjects would appreciate ethical relationships and conform to wholesome customs. With more virtuous people available to the emperor, good governance would be advanced.¹¹⁷ However, the educational system in the Song had emphasized literary skills and the Confucian Classics, while slighting any assessment of moral character due to the absence of community input. Huizong thus selected the “Six Conducts” (六行) and two of the “Six Virtues”(六德) from the *Institutes of Zhou* to constitute the “Eight Virtues of Conduct”:

1. Filial (孝 Xiao)
2. Fraternal (悌 Ti)
3. Compassionate (睦 Mu)
4. Endearing (姻 Yin)
5. Trustworthy (任 Ren)
6. Beneficent (恤 Xu)
7. Loyal (忠 Zhong)
8. Harmonious (和 He)¹¹⁸

Henceforth, new regulations were established for admission and promotion in state schools, as well as recruitment for the civil services, which employed the Eight Virtues of Conduct. Those who were identified as possessing at least one of the eight virtues in their villages could be admitted to the County Schools on the

¹¹⁶ The translation has been made with reference to Confucius; translated with an introduction by D. C. Lau, *The analects* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), pp.59.

¹¹⁷ *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3666.

¹¹⁸ *SS, Juan* 157, pp.3667. See also *XZZTJ, Juan* 90, pp.2303. The translation of the “Eight Virtuous of Conduct” is based on Richard L. Davis, *Court and family in Sung China*, pp.18-19. Reference has been made to John Chaffee, “Huizong, Cai Jing, and the Politics of Reform”, in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (ed.), *Emperor Huizong and late Northern Song China*, pp.47 and Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.247-248.

recommendation of neighborhood militia units 保伍. Upon confirming the veracity of a candidate's virtue, local officials nominated the candidate to the Prefectural School. Should the student possess all eight virtues, he might be promoted directly to the Upper Hall of the Imperial University, without being examined competitively with other metropolitan candidates. At the University, the candidate would be examined by officials in the Directorate of Education for the purpose of further verifying their virtuous behavior before making recommendation to the Personnel Bureau for formal appointment.¹¹⁹

Apart from this small group of supremely virtuous men, the remaining candidates might be promoted to the University or placed in Government Schools, in accordance with the level of virtue they possessed. Among the eight virtues, 1,2,7,8 were clustered together as higher virtues, 3 and 4 were deemed second-tier, and 5 and 6 considered elementary.¹²⁰ In general, students ultimately received promotion to the Upper Hall of the Imperial University after a certain period in the absence of expulsion from school for misconduct. From any level in the Upper Hall of the Imperial University, candidates could be promoted further. Students in the upper class could receive direct appointment to office, while those in the lower class had to sit on the palace examination before receiving assignments. Either route offered a good prospect for becoming a government official.

After the launch of the "Eight Virtues of Conduct" scheme, it is worth noting that educational opportunity to commoners was further extended. Before that, the Song national school system, as argued by Benjamin Elman, "was limited to candidates already literate in Classical Chinese, and thus oriented only to the civil

¹¹⁹ *SS, Juan 157*, pp.3667.

¹²⁰ *SS, Juan 157*, pp.3667, *XZZTJ, Juan 90*, pp.2303.

examinations and not reading, writing, or other more elementary learning tasks.”¹²¹ However, subsequent to the implementation of the scheme, even illiterate commoners, as long as they possessed outstanding virtues of conduct, could be nominated to study in government schools. For the Shi family of Ningbo, according to Richard Davis’s study, the scheme was also positive in opening the door to political novices like the Shi.¹²² Such extension of educational opportunities should generate greater social mobility in theory, but more research has to be done to determine real outcomes, something beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Conversely, paralleling the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” was the “Eight Evils” scheme to identify evil. Locals guilty of immorality would be banished from Prefectural Schools for periods of varying duration. People without the cardinal virtues of filial piety, fraternal devotion, loyalty or harmoniousness might be banned for life. Lesser degrees of misconduct involved banishment for 3 to 10 years. But such persons might return to school, should their neighbours prove that they had changed their ways and demonstrated evidence of possessing at least two virtues.¹²³ These carrot-and-stick measures, as argued by Patricia Ebrey, demonstrate Huizong’s strategy of lending imperial authority to the structure of rewards and punishments for moral conduct.¹²⁴

Implementation of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct”

The scheme of “Eight Virtues of Conduct” was officially promulgated in 1107/3.¹²⁵ Huizong personally crafted the “Description for the Eight Virtues of

¹²¹ Benjamin A. Elman, “Review: Education in Sung China”, pp.91.

¹²² Richard L. Davis, *Court and family in Sung China*, pp.43.

¹²³ *XZZTJ*, *Juan* 90, pp.2303.

¹²⁴ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.248.

¹²⁵ He Zhongli, *Song Shi Xuan Ju Zhi Bu Zheng*, pp.119.

Conduct and Eight Punishments” (*Ba Xing Ba Xing Tiao Zhi* 八行八刑條制).¹²⁶ Based on the regulations of the Department of Ministries, the texts, inscribed on stone steles that were designed as monuments, were called the “Imperially Inscribed Stele commemorating the Eight Virtues and Eight Punishments” (*Yu Zhi Ba Xing Ba Xing Tiao Zhi Bei* 御製八行八刑條制碑). Each Prefectural and County School across the country, starting with 1107/6, received one slab, which weighed a ton and stood 4 meters high.¹²⁷ Huizong even employed his “imperial brush” in “slender gold” to copy the rules, which were presented as gift to Zheng Juzhong, then Academician of the Academy for Advancing Good Governance 資政殿學士.¹²⁸ In 1107/8, Zheng proposed to apply the calligraphy of Huizong to the contents in the rescript, inscribing steles to be placed at government schools around the country. The proposal received the approval of Huizong in 1108/8, now renamed as “Stele of the Sagacious Ruler of the Dagan reign” (*Da Guan Sheng Zuo Zhi Bei* 大觀聖作之碑).¹²⁹ Since stone inscriptions were seen by Huizong and his top officials as signifying permanence,¹³⁰ Huizong’s faith in the lasting impact of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” program is well in evidence. In addition, through the empire-wide placement of steles in the emperor’s own calligraphy, the world would be drawn to his message of moral leadership.¹³¹ It was therefore imaginable that by 1108/12, the dual promotion and

¹²⁶ These “imperially made” regulations on Eight Virtues of Conduct and Eight Punishments were recorded in *SS, Juan* 204, pp.5143.

¹²⁷ *XZZTJ, Juan* 90, pp.2305, and *CBJSBM, Juan* 126 “Bai Xing Qu Shi”, pp.2116. The earliest erection of the stele in 1107/6 was recorded in Bi Yuan, *Shan Zuo Jinshi zhi* 山左金石志, *Juan* 17/38, in *SKSLXB*, Vol.19, pp.14648.

¹²⁸ It was a usual practice of Huizong to give away his calligraphic and painting work to Court officials. As argued by Patricia Buckley Ebrey in her work “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.232, this strengthened the bonds between Huizong and the recipients. Such measures also demonstrated how skillful Huizong was in maintaining good relationship with his subordinates.

¹²⁹ *SHY, Xuanju* 12/34. The earliest erection of the stele titled “Da Guan Sheng Zuo Zhi Bei” in 1108/8 was recorded in Bi Yuan, *Shan Zuo Jinshi zhi, Juan* 17/34b-38a, in *SKSLXB*, Vol.19, pp.14646-14648. Xian Bei Lin 西安碑林, which holds one of the originals, has reproduced a facsimile, see Yu Huaqing 余華青; Zhang Tinghao 張廷皓 *zhu bian*, *Shanxi Sheng she hui ke xue yuan* 陝西省社會科學院, *Shanxi Sheng wen wu ju* 陝西省文物局 *bian*, *Shanxi Bei Shi Jing Hua* 陝西碑石精華 (Xi'an: San Qin chu ban she, 2006), pp.216-219.

¹³⁰ Zheng Juzhong *deng zhuan*, *Zhenghe wuli xinyi* 政和五禮新儀 (*SKQS* edition), *Juan shou* 卷首, 38b.

¹³¹ A detailed analysis of the advantages of using stele instead of paper as a medium to promulgate government policies could be found in Patricia Buckley Ebrey, “Huizong’s Stone Inscriptions”, pp.237.

punishment schemes were carried out around the country and applied to all people, irrespective of whether they were students.¹³²

During the course of implementation, further privileges were granted to exemplars of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct”. In the year 1111, these virtuous students at the County Schools could receive allowances for food, similar to the stipend for students in the Outer Hall of Prefectural Schools.¹³³ Moreover, other advantages accrued to these nominees two years later, including employment opportunities and social status. In 1113/4, the government gave preference to candidates with “Eight Virtues of Conduct” for appointment as professors at local schools.¹³⁴ Within this group of appointees, the Court might authorize plaques and banners for their homes so that whole neighborhoods might imitate their deeds.¹³⁵

However, negative feedback about the program came within three years of implementation. In 1110/1, the official Wu Zhizhong 吳執中 (1063 *Jin shi*) memorialized Huizong to report that numerous candidates in the Prefectural Schools, nominated on the basis of “Eight Virtues of Conduct”, were not exceptionally virtuous. Some of them did conventional things like praying or reading Buddhist texts, becoming a vegetarian when their parents were ill, or living with their younger brothers for more than ten years!¹³⁶ Many ordinary villagers allegedly lacked scholarly credentials and seldom discussed academic matters.¹³⁷ The reason for making such incredulous nominations might be that officials at the village and county level were required to meet a rigid quota for the Prefectural Schools; or may be they tried to impress Huizong and his courtiers by demonstrating their enthusiasm for the

¹³² SHY, *Xuanju* 12/35.

¹³³ CBJSBM, *Juan* 126 “Bai Xing Qu Shi”, pp.2117.

¹³⁴ CBJSBM, *Juan* 126 “Bai Xing Qu Shi”, pp.2117; SHY, *Chongru* 2/19.

¹³⁵ CBJSBM, *Juan* 126, pp.2117.

¹³⁶ XZZTJ, *Juan* 90, pp.2325-2326.

¹³⁷ SHY, *Xuanju* 12/36.

new policies. Hence they stressed administrative responsiveness and repute in making nominations.

In order to avoid subverting the objective of nurturing virtuous officials, nominees needed to be scrutinized. Wu therefore suggested that teachers at the Imperial University and Prefectural Schools should clearly distinguish the virtuous from the unvirtuous, expelling the latter. In addition, officials in village and County Schools should verify the virtue of the candidates before making nominations. When candidates are judged to be deficient in merit, no nomination shall be made to the government schools.¹³⁸ Huizong agreed with Wu's proposal, and ordered that officials concerned will be punished for bogus nominations.¹³⁹ This offered a temporary reprieve for the "Eight Virtues of Conduct" program, but its progress seemed destined to doom.

In 1113/9, an imperially mandated restriction was placed on nominees for "Eight Virtues of Conduct", noting that the large quota for candidates with "Eight Virtues of Conduct" might negatively impact upon the educational opportunity for other candidates.¹⁴⁰ This statement could be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, perhaps a lopsided admission quota for "Eight Virtues of Conduct" came at the expense of other candidates. On the other hand, it might imply that the quotas originally reserved for candidates with "Eight Virtues of Conduct" could not be filled, since officials fearful of punishment refused to make nominations.¹⁴¹ The latter interpretation is supported by the fact that candidates with official status were allowed to be nominated for "Eight Virtues of Conduct" a few months later in 1113/11.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ *XZZTJ*, Juan 90, pp. 2326.

¹³⁹ *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3664.

¹⁴⁰ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2118.

¹⁴¹ *WXTK*, Juan 31, pp.296.

¹⁴² *SS*, Juan 21, pp.392.

Irrespective of how the statement might be interpreted, it was obvious that more restrictions were placed on the candidates with “Eight Virtues of Conduct” for admissions to government schools, implying a retreat from the program.

In 1116, a further restriction was placed on the promotion of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” candidates to the Upper Hall of the Imperial University. Since previously they could get promoted mainly on the basis of their conduct instead of academic merit, lots of people found it a relatively easy path to the fountain of fortune – officialdom. They therefore tried to please higher officials by offering bribes in exchange for being nominated or promoted, which ironically fostered misconduct among ostensibly virtuous candidates. Even worse, some corrupt officials abused their power to recommend undeserving candidates. As a result, a viable route was available for candidates with insufficient merit.¹⁴³ At this point, not only did Huizong’s vision of cultivating good customs fail to be realized, the corrosive custom of bribery came about in the course of implementing the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” scheme.

For the sake of preventing those undeserving but “propitious” candidates from becoming prospective officials, the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” candidates were required to sit for the promotion examination at the Imperial University with other University students in order to qualify for the Upper Hall.¹⁴⁴ Although the conducts and diligence of the candidates in the Upper Hall might be assured, the problems attended to the appointment of “Eight Virtues of Conduct” candidates to various teaching positions were gradually arising. The career prospects of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” candidates would be further restricted within the next two years.

¹⁴³ Song Shou (991-1040), Song Minqiu (1019-1079) bian, *SDZLJ*, Juan 157, ‘Chen Liao Shang Yan Ba Xing Yu Gong Ren Yu Zhu Zhou Gong Shi Hun Shi Yu Bi Shou Zhao’ 臣僚上言八行預貢人與諸州貢士混試禦筆手詔, pp.593.

¹⁴⁴ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2118.

In 1118/8, Huizong decreed that candidates with “Eight Virtues of Conduct” could only be appointed as teachers in large prefectures but not across the country, and that they could only bear the title of professors but not assume teaching duties.¹⁴⁵ Despite the subsequent rescission of his ruling a month later,¹⁴⁶ the action reflects Huizong’s loss of faith in appointing moral officials irrespective of their academic background. Without the support of a passionate Huizong, the 1121 abolition of the entire scheme seemed predictable.

School system under Cai Jing’s Councillorship, 1112-1121

Paralleling flaws in the “Eight Virtuous of Conduct” Scheme, the countrywide Three Hall system was also haunted by a number of problems in the course of its implementation. The most obvious one was the poor literary ability of University students, as noted by Huizong in a handwritten edict in 1113:

Recently when I read the essay submitted by University students in the private test, [I found that] their works had complicated phrases without any substance. The structure of their writings was very weak. Meaning could not be conveyed despite many words. In a piece of work with 200 sentences, there were 6 redundant characters among every 20 words. How could the literary skills be so poor!¹⁴⁷ 近覽(大)[太]學生私試程文，詞繁理寡，體格卑弱，言雖多而意不逮。一幅或二百言，用之字冗，二十有六。為文之陋，於此為甚。

A number of teaching officials at the school were demoted, and Professors at the Imperial University and Biyong Academy were instructed to fail students who submitted such poor writings, or to give them a low-pass.¹⁴⁸ Likely because the above instructions had yet to be strictly followed, the court reiterated in 1116/8 that teaching

¹⁴⁵ *CBJSBM*, Juan 126, pp.2118.

¹⁴⁶ *SHY*, *Xuanju* 2/29-30.

¹⁴⁷ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/20, see also *SDZLJ*, Juan 157, “Kao Jiao Cheng Wen Guan Jiang Guan Yu Bi Shou Zhao” 考校程文官降官御筆手詔 政和三年閏四月三日, pp.592.

¹⁴⁸ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/20.

officials in examining students should adhere to the standard prescribed in the Xining and Yuanfeng eras. Through this, the Song government envisioned that “those who are diligent in learning and have a thorough command of the Classics can be selected, while those with counterfeit or plagiarized writings can be eliminated. Thus genuine talents can be recruited for eventual service to the Court.”¹⁴⁹ 務得通經篤學之士，黜浮偽剽竊之文...庶得真材實能，以待朝廷之用。

Apart from poor literary skills, the learning environment at government schools was also undesirable. An official Cheng Ju 程俱 (1078-1144) recalled in 1115 that even though schools had been built countrywide, students were not refining their virtue and conduct. Instead they lavished praise on the glorious age, with the aim of getting fame, honor and official position.¹⁵⁰ Such depiction is consistent with the learning experience of Hu Yin, a student in government schools in the later half of 1110's: “When I studied in government schools, the taboo was exalted. The vogue of flattering was rampant. Students were glorifying the achievements and virtues of the era which surpassed the ancient Sage Kings of Tang (Yao) and Yu (Shun).”¹⁵¹ 既游庠序，方崇忌諱，肆諛諂，歌功頌德，陵跨唐、虞。Deng Su 鄧肅, a famous University student who in 1119 condemned the “network transporting flowers and rocks”,¹⁵² also noticed that local schools' students were merely concerned with the amount of their stipend, competition that spoiled the learning environment in schools that should ostensibly be harmonious.¹⁵³

Another contemporary official, Li Xin 李新 (1062-1125), reported that most

¹⁴⁹ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/21.

¹⁵⁰ Cheng Ju, “Qu Zhou Kai Hua Xian Xin Xue Ji” 衢州開化縣新學記 政和五年八月，in *QSW*, Vol.155, pp.334.

¹⁵¹ Hu Yin 胡寅, “Lu Yu Xiang Shuo Xu” 魯語詳說序, in *FRJ*, *Juan* 19, pp.404.

¹⁵² *SCGY Juan* 18/5b, pp.428; *GMBY*, *Juan* 28, pp.730; *SS*, *Juan* 22, pp.405.

¹⁵³ Deng Su 鄧肅, “Sha Yang Chong Xiu Xian Xue” 沙陽重修縣學, in *QSW*, Vol.183, pp.168; Zhu Xi, *Zhu Zi Yu Lei*, *Juan* 109, “Zhu Zi Liu” 朱子六, in *ZZQS*, Vol.17, pp.3539 and 3542.

students cheated on the examinations in local schools. Some students merely registered at schools for the sake of enjoying monthly stipends, but in fact never attended classes. Even those who were unregistered from schools owing to unwarranted leaves of absence could be re-admitted by using a forged identity.¹⁵⁴ Such poor habits alarmed the emperor. In his imperially handwritten edict of 1118 to Li Bangyan 李邦彥(?-1130), then Director of Education, Huizong expressed his worry that “poor customs proliferated and literati habits were corrupt. When the principle of nurturance is lost and the foundation of education is harmed, we become a laughing stock for posterity.”¹⁵⁵ 薄俗浸漬，士風陵夷，失崇養之指，害教化之原，為天下後世笑。

Poor learning custom in schools was not only attributable to the poor quality of students, but also the poor quality of officials responsible in overseeing school administration. The following remarks by a Reviewing Policy Adviser in 1112 illustrates that lots of local officials had illicitly used school resources for their own benefit:

Those who supervise the prefectures and counties fail to realize that the fundamental aim of the court is specifically the education of great talent. They engage in [obtaining] a plentitude in food and drink, their abuses extending to the conversion of [grain] to market price. They engage in borrowing from students, their abuses extending to breaking laws and damaging culture. Many [cases] reach our courtrooms, some [involving] violence against officials and some encroachments on the people, yet no one dares to question [them]. They engage in [buying] superfluous decorations that uselessly deplete funds and provisions. They engage in applying for bequests and quarrel over profits with the people among other evils.¹⁵⁶ 竊慮學校方興之際，監司州縣不知朝廷本意，專為育(大)[人]材，有務為豐腴飲食，其弊至於以實直時估移為市價；務為假借學生，其弊至於犯法害教，多至訟庭，或戾

¹⁵⁴ Li Xin, “Qi Jin Zhou Xian Xue Lan Jin Zhi Bi Zha Zi” 乞禁州縣學濫進之弊劄子, in *QSW*, Vol.133, pp.329.

¹⁵⁵ Song Huizong, “Ci Li Bang Yan Zhao” 賜李邦彥詔 政和八年二月, in *QSW*, Vol.165, pp.265.

¹⁵⁶ *SHY*, *Chongru* 2/18a. The translation is adopted from John W. Chaffee, *The thorny gates of learning*, pp.80.

知佐，或侵良民，而不敢問；務為從事外飾，則有枉用錢糧之費；務為申請遺利，則有與民爭利之過。

The marginal quality of teaching officials appears the primary reason for these problems. As discussed above, during the initial stage when the countrywide school promotion scheme was launched, teachers were recruited with minimal scrutiny in order to swiftly fill vacancies. In turn, numerous school teachers of marginal quality were on board. To rectify this, the Intendants of Educational Affairs were ordered to report those local school teachers who had performed poorly in 1108/4,¹⁵⁷ and the recruitment tests for teaching officials were resumed in 1110 during Zhang Shangying's councillorship, as discussed above. Nevertheless, it is uncertain how effective the government was in purging such harmful elements. According to the official Li Jia 李嘉 in 1113, some professors had "never shown up in the [lecture] hall. They merely assign a classic to be studied, make up an oral examination to send to the dormitories and keep attendance records."¹⁵⁸ 有未嘗升堂者，往往止託逐經學諭撰成口義，傳之諸齋，抄錄上簿而已。 Even more detrimental to the school system was the unfair treatment of the teachers responsible. Zhuang Anchang 莊安常 (1072-1146), a conscientious University Professor in the mid 1110's, had made better nominations, in terms of both quality and quantity, than his colleagues. Even though the Directorate of Education recognized Zhuang's contributions, his mediocre colleagues managed to climb faster and higher than him by flattering powerful officials.¹⁵⁹ Such practices undermined the morale and motivation of teaching officials.

Marginal moral probity of some teachers and students might explain why

¹⁵⁷ *SDZLJ*, Juan 157, "Ling Ti Ju Xue Shi Ti Liang Shi Ru Guan" 令提舉學事體量師儒官 御筆大觀二年四月一日, pp.591.

¹⁵⁸ *SHY*, *Chongru* 2/19. The translation is adopted and modified from John Chaffee, "Education and examinations in Sung society (960-1279)", pp.95

¹⁵⁹ Zhong Ping 仲并, "Gu Zuo Chao Qing Da Fu Quan Fa Qian Fu Zhou Zhuang Gong Xing Zhuang" 故左朝請大夫權發遣撫州莊公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.192, pp.328-329.

cheating in schools became rampant. The school promotion mechanism which ignored the anonymity measures of the civil service examinations gave room for students to maneuver, since they could submit their works to their teachers or nominating officials beforehand to make a better impression.¹⁶⁰ To maximize their chances of getting promoted in schools, some students were so desperate that they risked bribing teachers. Such illegal deeds led to the demotion of some heads of the metropolitan schools and education bureau,¹⁶¹ and the moral baseline of teaching officials was critically challenged.

Likely in response to the unworthy nominations made by corrupt teachers, the court restored the prohibitions against private meetings between teachers and students in 1113/7. But undeserving nominations to the metropolitan schools still occurred. For instance, the Biyong Academy, upon verification of the nomination documents provided by the nominees upon their arrival, had sent back a number of undeserving nominees back to the Prefectural Schools. Partly in view of this, the procedures of promotion were revised in 1114/6, requiring those nomination documents to reach the Biyong Academy for verification within 10 days after the promotion exercise at the Prefectural School. In addition, to warn teaching officials and school students against bribery, punishments for corrupt teaching officials and students at various levels of government schools were reiterated in 1114 and 1115.¹⁶² Under these draconian measures, the number of undeserving nominations was likely reduced. Some teaching officials even hesitated to make nominations to avoid trouble. Without nominations from local schools, the school promotion scheme could hardly fulfill its function of injecting new blood into the civil service. To avoid this, Huizong

¹⁶⁰ *SHY, Xuanju* 2/6.

¹⁶¹ The Head of the Biyong Academy Zhang Bangchang, the Director of Education Lu Guan as well as the vice-Directors Wei Shoulong and Geng Nanchong were demoted in 1112/5 on the charges that they failed to observe students' disciplines, leading to the latter's violation of rules. See *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/19.

¹⁶² *SHY, Zhiguan* 28/20-21; *SDZLJ, Juan* 157, "Xue Sheng Huai Xie Dai Bi Jian Si Hu Cha Yu Bi Shou Zhao" 學生懷挾代筆監司互察御筆手詔 政和六年十一月十五日, pp.593.

issued an imperially written edict to remind the teaching officials at the Imperial University, the Biyong Academy as well as the Intendants of Educational affairs, that should they discover men of extraordinary talent, they could nominate these students directly to him, quoting solid evidences without going through the complicated school evaluation process.¹⁶³ Huizong consented to bypassing the school evaluation mechanism in this way hints of his losing faith in the school system. At the same time, it reflects the dominance of the emperor's absolute power over the collective power of the scholar-officials – power embedded in his own handwritten edict.

Another sign of the overwhelming power of Huizong is the infiltration of Daoist elements into the school system. Traditionally the Confucian Classics were the core curriculum at the metropolitan schools, the stronghold of Confucianism. However at the instructions of the Daoist-addicted Huizong, students at various levels of government schools were ordered to study the *Internal Classic*, Daoist Classics, as well as Works by Zhuang Zi 莊子 (369-286 B.C.E.) and Lie Zi 列子. Moreover, two professors were installed at the Imperial University and the Biyong Academy in 1118/9 to instruct students on these Daoist texts.¹⁶⁴ Such a pluralistic intellectual environment at government schools, although estimable in modern times, must have been received unfavorably in Song by scholar-officials steeped in Confucian tradition. Even though some scholars felt uncomfortable with the Daoist infiltration of Confucian temples,¹⁶⁵ a force strong enough to constrain the emperor's indulgence had yet to form. Contrarily, there was even flattering ingratiation when Huizong did something contrary to the Confucian ideal such as putting all the polytheistic deities

¹⁶³ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/21; *SDZLJ*, *Juan* 157, “Xue Xiao Shi Neng Bo Tong Shi Shu Li Le Zhi Zhi Shang Deng Yu Bi Shou Zhao” 學校士能博通詩書禮樂置之上等 御筆手詔 政和六年八月十六日, pp.593.

¹⁶⁴ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/21; *SCGY Juan* 18/2b, pp.422; *SS*, *Juan* 21, pp.400.

¹⁶⁵ A typical example showing the scholar-officials' discontent on Daoist infiltration in schools is the response of Wang Junyi 王俊義, a University student, towards the Daoist priest Lin Lingsu when the latter visited the metropolitan schools. See Zhou Hui, *Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu*, *Juan* 3, pp.108-109. and *SS*, *Juan* 344, pp.10945.

back into the Hall of Enlightenment rites and ordering the Daoist priests to take part in the supposedly Confucian rites.¹⁶⁶ Apparently the ultimate power of the sovereign prevailed.¹⁶⁷

Before concluding this section on the educational reforms of Cai Jing, one more feature worth articulating was his preferential treatment for the offspring of officials – students studying at the Directorate School and men conferred official title owing to protection privilege. From the Professor-to-student ratio at the metropolitan schools, as discussed above, students at the Directorate School received the best education relative to other metropolitan schools. After Cai Jing resumed his councillorship in 1112, more privileges were granted to these scions of officials. In 1113/5, students at the Biyong Academy and the Imperial University who already had an official title, mostly owing to protection privilege, were privileged to better office assignments.¹⁶⁸ Years later, some officials further proposed promotion privileges to students at the Directorate School, although this was rejected and the petitioners demoted in 1115/2. By providing better education as well as an advanced promotion channel to the offspring of officials, Cai Jing not only sought to buy off high officials and their offspring, but also to nurture a new generation of officials favorable to the reforms. For the sake of ensuring the quality of these men, students who held official title through protection privilege should study at the Imperial University for a minimum of one year before proceeding to the selection exercise. Nevertheless, most of these students were not eager to study in metropolitan schools. They simply took

¹⁶⁶ James T.C. Liu, “The Sung Emperors and the Ming-T’ang or Hall of Enlightenment”, pp.53.

¹⁶⁷ Zhang Bangwei attributes the rise of Huizong’s power where earlier Song emperors could hardly match with, as well as the expanding power of the inner and outer courts, to the collapse of the Northern Song. See Zhang Bangwei, “Bei Song Wang Guo Yu Quan Li Peng Zhang” 北宋亡國與權力膨脹, in Zhang Bangwei zhu, *Song Dai Zheng Zhi Wen Hua Shi Lun* 宋代政治文化史論 (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she, 2005), pp.177-189. See also Peter K. Bol, “Whither the Emperor? Emperor Huizong, the New Policies, and the Tang-Song Transition”, pp.103-134.

¹⁶⁸ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/20. See also Miao Shumei, *Song Dai Guan Yuan Xuan Ren He Guan Li Zhi Du*, pp.246.

extended leaves for most of the time, time counted towards their period of study at school, and went on to the promotion and selection exercises. The court ordered in 1117/8 that the leave of absence should not be counted towards the study period, meaning that students had to study longer at the Imperial University should they take leave of absence,¹⁶⁹ but it is unlikely that the learning attitude of these Higher Elites improved right away.

To sum up, despite the fact that the entire school promotion system was governed by a comprehensive regulatory framework, problems gradually surfaced in the course of implementation, mostly owing to poor quality of personnel who exploited the system. To ameliorate the situation, remedial actions, mostly in small scale, were taken. However it is interesting to note that whenever Cai Jing stepped down from his councillorship, major revisions which altered the selection procedure took place.¹⁷⁰ To better comprehend this phenomenon, we need to discuss on the vision of Huizong and its impact on the relationship between Huizong and Cai Jing. Huizong envisioned reviving the ancient spirit of communal nomination while at the same time upholding his authority over official recruitment. Since communal nomination rests with the decisions of local communities, should this be adopted, the Song emperors could no longer dominate official recruitment. In order to attain such contradictory missions, Huizong believed that Cai Jing, whom possessed superb administrative abilities, could assist him. As Cai Jing also needed to derive political power from Huizong to get rid of his political enemies, a strategic alliance between Huizong and Cai Jing was formed. This alliance was stable for most of the time during

¹⁶⁹ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/20-21.

¹⁷⁰ In fact, not only the educational reforms were tied with the destiny of Cai Jing, but also other reform policies, as Chaffee noticed: "The reforms were first and foremost the personal undertaking of Huizong, who saw them as his "continuing legacy," but that they then became personified by Cai, so that the fortunes of reform came closely to parallel his own." "With remarkable temporal precision, when he (Cai Jing) was in power, reform flourished, and while he was out of power, it languished, and this held true over a span of eighteen years." See John Chaffee, "Huizong, Cai Jing, and the Politics of Reform", pp.32-33 and 56 respectively.

the reign of Huizong, except during the time when Cai Jing was removed from Councillorship. Demotion of Cai Jing owes partly to his unsatisfactory performance in realizing Huizong's contradictory vision, as unveiled in the corrupted practices of school teachers which diluted Huizong's authority over official recruitment. Cutbacks in the reform program during Cai Jing's demotion were in fact measures to reassert the emperor's role over official recruitment. Reinstallation of the prefectural examinations and students' mandatory attendance at the palace examination during Zhang Shangying's interregnum are among them. Even though Huizong repeatedly intervened in educational policies, his authority could hardly be recovered to a degree that was enjoyed by his father Shenzong in the Yuanfeng era. Huizong's disappointment ultimately led to the abolition of the countrywide school promotion scheme and the restoration of the Yuanfeng practices, through which autocracy could be better facilitated, as his father Shenzong had achieved.

Abolition of the countrywide Three Hall system

The time of drastic change finally came in 1121. One month after Cai Jing's retirement, the linkage between metropolitan and local schools was broken and the prefectural examinations were revived, as stipulated in an edict in the second month of the year:

It is ordered that the Countrywide Three Hall system be abolished. The Imperial University shall remain to adopt the Three Hall mechanism to evaluate and select students, while the Kaifeng prefecture as well as various circuits shall resume civil service examinations to recruit prospective officials. Before the prefectures and counties had adopted the Three Hall system, teaching officials should have been installed and students should have their way of promotion. All these shall follow the Yuanfeng stipulation. Current University students shall fill the previous quota of the Imperial University, while students at the Biyong Academy who had previously occupied the quota of the Imperial University shall withdraw. They can only be admitted to the Imperial University should

there be vacant positions, a measure in accordance with the old practice. Students of the Directorate School as well as those of the University's Inner Hall with "outstanding" grades in year-end assessment can be exempted from the admissions test should they wish to register at the Imperial University. Official positions under the structure of the Biyong Academy shall be abolished.¹⁷¹ 宣和三年二月二十日，詔罷天下三舍。太學以三舍考選，開封府及諸路以科舉取士。州縣未行三舍以前，應置學官及養士去處，並依元豐舊制。太學生並撥填太學舊額，辟廡舊額入太學者，撥入額外，依舊制遇闕填。國子生及諸內舍上等校定人，願入太學者，與免補試。辟廡官屬並罷。

Abolition of the countrywide Three Hall system, as argued by Mainland Scholar Zhang Xiqing, was partly a political strategy of the new Chief Councilor Wang Fu to neutralize the notoriety of his predecessor.¹⁷² Another Mainland scholar Wu Zhengqiang perceived that the collapse of the school recruitment mechanism is somehow predictable since the Emperor, candidates, or officials could not benefit from the system.¹⁷³ Other scholars tried to analyze this through various social and economic perspectives. A Taiwanese scholar Zhou Yuwen attributed the failure of the Three Hall system to (i) personnel failures in its implementation; (ii) structural hindrances (autocratic political structure, population pressures, economic constraints, and family morality); and (iii) the negligible social function of government education. Regarding the last argument, Zhou further elaborated that government schools were not conducive to the creation of knowledge owing to the monopoly of Wang Anshi's learning. Moreover social connections in schools were less influential compared with family, marriage, or regional networks. Furthermore the school promotion channel was less effective than the civil service examinations in bridging the gap between the ruler and the masses.¹⁷⁴ A number of scholars also concurred on the last point. Thomas Lee reiterated that the examination system "supposedly embodied the essence of impartiality. If the authority to recruit officials passed to individual schools, the risk

¹⁷¹ SHY, *Zhiguan* 28/22. See also QSKS, *Hou Ji Juan* 27 quote XCB. See also SS, *Juan* 155, pp.3623 and *Juan* 157, pp.3668.

¹⁷² Zhang Xiqing, "Bei Song De Ke Ju Qu Shi Yu Xue Xiao Xuan Shi", pp.198-199.

¹⁷³ Wu Zhengqiang, "Shi Lun Bei Song De Xue Xiao Qu Shi", pp.374.

¹⁷⁴ See Zhou Yuwen 周愚文, "Bei Song De San Ci Jiao Yu Gai Ge", Chapter 6.

of favoritism and corruption would increase.”¹⁷⁵ Mainland scholar Yuan Zheng argued similarly that since the civil service examinations embedded the values of extensiveness and comprehensiveness, it better suited the social and economic environment in the Song period than the school system.¹⁷⁶ Wu Zhengqiang even asserted that since the government schools failed to be a bridge between the ruler and the masses, while the civil service examinations could perform such function, the Neo-Confucians had rationalized the latter, leading to its survival for nearly a thousand years before its final abolition in 1905.

Apart from analyzing the failure of the school system from a social perspective, Ichisada Miyazaki, Thomas Lee and Kazunari Kondō focused more on the financial and economic side.¹⁷⁷ Miyazaki argued that “the educational system that had been set up with such care was unable completely to supplant the examination system, probably for economic reasons. Education always costs money. And governments everywhere are apt to economize on such programs as education, which do not show immediate gains.”¹⁷⁸ Lee illustrated further that the farmlands granted to government schools should be sufficient to support expenditures on staff and students. Even if the Song government were required to cover all these educational expenditures in view of the countrywide implementation, it would have likely take up only 5-8% of the government revenues.¹⁷⁹ As such, the entire plan was still sustainable financially. The major factor inhibiting the implementation of such an ambitious school scheme, as argued by Lee, rested with the social and rural economic

¹⁷⁵ Thomas H.C. Lee, “Education in Northern Sung China”, pp.163-164.

¹⁷⁶ Yuan Zheng, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.150-151; Yuan Zheng, “The Grade System of Schools in Eleventh-to Thirteenth-Century China”, pp.37-38.

¹⁷⁷ Zhang Dun had foreseen the financial burden to be incurred by the countrywide school system when it was just launched. See Zeng Zao 曾慥 zhuan, *Gao Zhai Man Lu* 高齋漫錄, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.5, pp.106.

¹⁷⁸ Quoted from Ichisada Miyazaki; Conrad Schirokauer (tran.), *China's examination hell*, pp.117.

¹⁷⁹ Contrasting with Thomas Lee, a number of Mainland scholars held the perception that government expenditure on the countrywide school system is too huge that led to deficit of the Song finance, causing its abolition in 1121. See Zhang Xiqing, “Bei Song De Ke Ju Qu Shi Yu Xue Xiao Xuan Shi”, pp.199-200.

structure in Imperial China. Since the school promotion scheme required students to study in government schools continuously for a long time, peasant families might suffer a decline in labor force.¹⁸⁰

Kazunari Kondō analyzed the collapse of the school system from another financial perspective. He argued that since a huge number of students and their families were exempted from tax duties, the income of Song government was significantly reduced, and hence the scheme could not be sustained.¹⁸¹ His argument was substantiated by a report from an official Mao You 毛友 in 1117. Mao reported that lots of students from well-off families adopted various corrupt measures in order to seek admissions to government school. However their aim was not to study, but to evade personal and tax duties for themselves and their families.¹⁸² Likely because these rampant evasions, the court scrapped some of the exemption privileges for students at local schools in 1120/6.¹⁸³ One month after the abolition of the countrywide Three Hall system in 1121, all the exemption privileges granted to students in local schools were cancelled in view of the exploitation of the school system by better-off students, whom preferred pursuing family and personal benefits over enriching knowledge.¹⁸⁴

Attending the halt of the countrywide Three Hall system, the educational settings in the Yuanfeng era were resumed. Student quotas at the Imperial University were reduced significantly from 3,800 to 2,400. The existing 3,000 students at the Biyong academy had to compete for vacant slots at the Outer Hall with its quota of 2,000. Competition for each slot seems to be very keen. Interestingly, from an account

¹⁸⁰ Thomas Lee, “Song Dai Jiao Yu Yu Ke Ju De Ji Ge Wen Ti”, pp.64-67.

¹⁸¹ Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, “Shō kyō no ka kobushi gakkou seisaku” 蔡京の科举.学校政策, pp.109-114.

¹⁸² *WXTK*, Juan 46, pp.433.

¹⁸³ *SHY*, Chongru 2/30; *SCGY*, Juan 18/6b, pp.430.

¹⁸⁴ *QSKS*, Hou Ji Juan 27 quote Shi Lu.

in early Southern Song, we learn that these vacant slots at the Outer Hall had yet to be utilized. The main reason for this is the revival of the prefectural examinations in 1121. A lot of University students preferred going back to their native place to take prefectural examinations over staying at the Imperial University, which took much longer to graduate. Demotion and expulsion of lazy students who failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress was also a contributing factor in the unfilled slots at the Imperial University.¹⁸⁵

Despite abolishing the countrywide Three Hall system, an educational program which hosted nearly 0.2% of the entire population at its peak,¹⁸⁶ Huizong's passion for promoting education had yet to wane, enthusiasm evident in a visit to the Imperial University in 1122/3. Huizong initially honored Confucius through ritual, and then summoned Director of Education Wei Shoulong 韋壽隆 give lectures on the *Book of Documents* and Vice Director of Education Quan Bangyan 權邦彥 (1080-1133) to lecture on the *Book of Odes*. Generous rewards to the teaching officials as well as university students were then offered. Huizong even visited two dormitories at the school, after which he ordered his favored eunuch Liang Sicheng 梁師成 (?-1126) to oversee the renovations of the buildings and dormitories. From the edict issued after the visit, we learn that Huizong was still proud of the school promotion scheme in terms of selecting prospective officials.¹⁸⁷ His visit to the school could therefore be perceived as a gesture in support of the school promotion scheme at the Imperial University and a public demonstration that the emperor himself was still in

¹⁸⁵ WXTK, Juan 42, pp.398-399.

¹⁸⁶ The total number of students studying in government schools during the peak of Huizong educational reforms is estimated to be around 200,000, while the entire population near the end of the Northern Song is estimated to be 100,000,000. For a discussion on the number of students in the Huizong period, see Hu Yongguang, "Cultivating Merit", pp.150-152. For a study of Song population, see Ping-ti Ho, "An estimate of the total population of Sung-Chin China", in Françoise Aubin (ed.), *Etudes Song: in memoriam Etienne Balazs* (Paris: Mouton, 1970), Ser. 1 No.1, pp.33-53, see particularly pp.49-50.

¹⁸⁷ SHY, Zhiguan 28/22-23; QSKS, Hou Ji Juan 27 quote XCB; YH, Juan 113; SS, Juan 22, pp.409.

control of educational matters.

After Huizong's visit, the renowned scholar Weng Yanshen 翁彥深 (1079-1141) was named Director of Education. A son of Weng Zhongtong 翁仲通, who had studied under the famous educator Hu Yuan, Weng Yanshen had courageously pointed out the flaws of the Three Hall system at the time of implementation. He subsequently made some recommendations on ways to improve the learning environment at the Imperial University:

Since the implementation of the Three Hall system, students were keen to be selected. Having opportunistic minds, they no longer worked hard on the Classics and Histories. Instead they merely memorized sample answer scripts, plagiarizing others' views for questions on classical meaning while providing flattering answers for policy essays. The custom of righteousness was so weak that the rise and fall [of the dynasty] was at stake. Those who witnessed were deeply worried. Now the school promotion mechanism has been abolished, and it is an appropriate time to promulgate an edict to remind the literati. By encouraging them to have a thorough command of the Classics and to be erudite in past and present affairs, the custom of righteousness can be nurtured. For external areas where professors have yet to be installed, the top administrators should search for famed scholars who are widely respected to fill the positions.¹⁸⁸ 自三舍法行，學者急於中選，有苟得之心，不復窮經閱史，惟誦程文為楷式，以剽竊對義，以阿諛答策，氣節委靡，寔關盛衰，識者以為深憂。今既罷舍法，宜降詔旨，申敕多士，俾深明經術，博知古今，以養其氣節。在外舊無教授處，委知通物色名士，為眾所推服者充之。

Echoing Weng Yanshen's call for improving learning customs, University Professors Chen Yuyi 陳與義 (1090-1138) and Qi Chongli 綦崇禮 (1083-1142) tried to "rescue the declining literary standards by failing those students who adopted the flowery writings and abandoning the arguments of Wang Anshi while honoring those of the Cheng brothers in order to follow the Principle."¹⁸⁹ 力救文弊，黜三舍偶

¹⁸⁸ Hu Yin 胡寅, "You Chao Feng Da Fu Ji Ying Dian Xiu Zhuan Weng Gong Shen Dao Bei" 右朝奉大夫集英殿修撰翁公神道碑, in *FRJ*, Juan 26, pp.591.

¹⁸⁹ Chen Yuyi 陳與義 zhuan ; Bai Dunren 白敦仁 jiao jian, *Chen Yu Yi Ji Jiao Jian* 陳與義集校箋 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1990), pp.494.

儷躰，去王氏之論，而尊用程氏，稍索理致 As a result, the learning custom at the Imperial University had slightly improved.¹⁹⁰ But the Imperial University was haunted by some other problems that gradually surfaced after the elimination of the Biyong Academy. The most obvious trouble involved redundancies in teaching officials, former Professors at the Biyong Academy and the Directorate School had to wait for vacancies in the University.¹⁹¹ As recalled by some officials in a report in 1125, three candidates had been waiting for one vacant Professorship in recent years. Likely in response to the problem, the court forced a rapid turnover in University Professorships. Such frequent change in academic staff was surely unfavorable to student learning. It was therefore recommended that future University Professors be promoted gradually from assistant rectors onwards. Professors could then stay longer in their post similar to their predecessors in the Xining and Yuanfeng era.¹⁹² Apart from staffing structure, the University curricula also underwent changes. The Daoist Classics which were introduced in 1118 were stricken in 1125.¹⁹³ Nevertheless, the Jurchen conquest hindered our assessment of the impact of these policy revisions on student learning at the Imperial University.

Student activities during the Jurchen invasion¹⁹⁴

An alliance between the Song and the Jurchen had once been formed in early

¹⁹⁰ Hu Yin 胡寅, “You Chao Feng Da Fu Ji Ying Dian Xiu Zhuan Weng Gong Shen Dao Bei” 右朝奉大夫集英殿修撰翁公神道碑, in *FRJ*, Juan 26, pp.591.

¹⁹¹ *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/22. The experience of Li Jian 李健 (?-1144) is an illustrative example showing how teaching officials at the Biyong Academy were re-allocated to the Imperial University upon the abolition of the Biyong. See *Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan* 京口耆舊傳, Juan 7/8b, in *SDZJCK*, Vol.31, pp.284.

¹⁹² *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/23; *SS*, Juan 165, pp.3914.

¹⁹³ *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3668.

¹⁹⁴ Primary accounts on the activities of Northern Song University students under Jurchen invasions scatted in Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1126-1207) zhuan, *San Chao Bei Meng Hui Bian* (*SCBMHB*) 三朝北盟會編 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1987) and Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166-1243) zhuan, *Jian Yan Yi Lai Xi Nian Yao Lu* (*XNYL*) 建炎以來繫年要錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1956). For secondary scholarships in Chinese, see Huang Xianfan, *Song Dai Tai Xue Sheng Jiu Guo Yun Dong*, Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.264-289.

1120's to defeat their common enemy – the Khitan Liao. Upon the defeat of the Liao, a peaceful agreement was reached between the Song and Jin in 1123.¹⁹⁵ Nevertheless, after a few incidents of betrayal were unveiled, the alliance broke up and the Jurchen started to invade the Song in 1125.¹⁹⁶ In view of the ominous threat of the Jurchen, Emperor Huizong abdicated powers. On the 23rd in 1125/12, his eldest son Chao Huan, known as Emperor Qinzong, assumed the throne.¹⁹⁷ Just 5 days after Qinzong's accession, a University student Chen Dong 陳東 (1086-1127) kneeled before the palace gate and submitted a memorial to the emperor. In order to show the public a proper way of reward and punishment, Chen Dong demanded the execution of the so-called “six thugs”, including prominent court officials Cai Jing and Wang Fu 王黼 (1079-1126), palace eunuchs Tong Guan 童貫 (1054-1126), Liang Shicheng and Li Yen 李彥 (?-1126), as well as Zhu Mian 朱勔 (1075-1126), the architect behind the flower and rock network.¹⁹⁸ The Director of Education Xie Kejia 謝克家 (?-1134) and University Professor Sun Di 孫覿 (1081-1169) initially doubted the motives of Chen Dong, but they were soon convinced by his humility. The memorial was then widely circulated among the literati.¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless the court did not respond immediately, partly owing to the grim border situation. Such unresponsiveness caused Chen Dong's submission of two more memorials, reiterating his arguments, on the 6th

¹⁹⁵ For a thorough study on the agreement between the Jin and Song in 1123, together with English translations of their oath-letters, see Herbert Franke, “Treaties between Sung and Chin”, in Françoise Aubin (ed.), *Etudes Song: in memoriam Etienne Balazs* (Paris: Mouton, 1970), Ser. 1 No.1, pp.60-69.

¹⁹⁶ For backgrounds concerning the establishment and break down of the Song-Jin alliance, see Chen Lesu, “Song Huizong Mou Fu Yan Yun Zhi Shi Bai” 宋徽宗謀復燕雲之失敗, in Chen Lesu zhu, *Qiu Shi Ji* 求是集 (Guangdong: Guangdong ren min chu ban she, 1984-1986), Vol.1, pp.46-100; Herbert Franke, “The Chin dynasty”, in *CHC*, Vol.6, pp.226-229; Jing-shen Tao, *Two sons of heaven: studies in Sung-Liao relations* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1988), pp.87-97 and Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100–1126) and Ch'in-tsung (1126–1127) and the Fall of the Northern Sung”, pp.627-639.

¹⁹⁷ *SS*, *Juan* 23, pp.421; *CBJSBM*, *Juan* 146, pp.2459-2466.

¹⁹⁸ Chen Dong, “Shang Gaozong Huang Di Di Er Shu” 上高宗皇帝第二書 建炎元年八月十九日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.219. Chen Dong, “Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu” 辭誥命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.203. See also Chen Nan 陳南, “Chen Dong Xing Zhuang” 陳東行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.182, pp.326; *GMBY*, *Juan* 29, pp.763-766; *SCGY*, *Juan* 18/22a, pp.461.

¹⁹⁹ Chen Nan 陳南, “Chen Dong Xing Zhuang” 陳東行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.182, pp.330.

and 30th day in 1126/1,²⁰⁰ and his effort still in vain. After learning the Song court had agreed the cession of Taiyuan 太原, Zhongshan 中山 and Hejian 河間, three northern prefectures with high strategic significance, in exchange for the Jurchen withdrawal, and learning of the demotion of Li Gang 李綱 (1083-1140), a hero who had successfully defended Kaifeng against Jurchen armies, Chen Dong drafted another memorial on the 4th day in 1126/2.²⁰¹ He criticized the court's decision to cede lands, while imploring the court to remove the pacifist councilor Li Bangyan and reinstall the hawkish minister Li Gang and prominent general Chong Shidao 種師道 (1051-1126).²⁰²

At the dawn of the 5th day, Chen Dong and a number of University students including Lei Guan 雷觀, Gao Deng 高登 (?-1148), Hu Yi 胡沂 (1107-1174), Feng Song 馮宋, Chen Hao 陳好, Yuan Dacheng 阮大成 and Jiang Zhiyi 江致一 knelt before the palace gate,²⁰³ awaiting the chance to pass their memorials to the emperor.²⁰⁴ Nearly a hundred thousand civilians gathered at the site, murmuring

²⁰⁰ Chen Dong, "Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu" 辭誥命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.204.

²⁰¹ Chen Dong, "Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu" 辭誥命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.203.

²⁰² For the full memorial, see Chen Dong, "Fu Que Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu" 伏闕上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年二月五日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.199-203. See also Chen Dong, "Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu" 辭誥命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.203.

²⁰³ Regarding the joint activities of Gao Deng and Chen Dong, see Luo Dajing 羅大經 (13th century) *zhuan*; Wang Ruilai 王瑞來 *dian jiao*, *He Lin Yu Lu* 鶴林玉露 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1983), *Juan* 6, "Rong Nan Qian Ke" 容南遷客, pp.103; *SS*, *Juan* 399, pp.12128. Another University student joining Chen Dong was Feng Song, see Wang Xiangzhi 王象之, (1196 jin shi), *Yu Di Ji Sheng* 輿地紀勝, *Juan* 158/10a, in *XXSKQS*, Vol.585, pp.312. For Yuan Dacheng, see Chen Dao 陳道, Huang Zhongzhao 黃仲昭 *zuan xiu*; Fujian Sheng di fang zhi bian zuan wei yuan hui jiu zhi zheng li zu 福建省地方志編纂委員會舊志整理組, Fujian Sheng tu shu guan te cang bu 福建省圖書館特藏部 zheng li, *Ba Min Tong Zhi (BMTJ)* 八閩通志 (Fuzhou: Fujian Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1990), *Juan* 72, pp.730. For Chen Hao, see Zhou Xuezheng 周學曾 *deng zuan xiu*; Jinjiang Xian di fang zhi bian zuan wei yuan hui 晉江縣地方志地方志編纂委員會 zheng li, *Jin Jiang Xian Zhi* 晉江縣志 (Fuzhou: Fujian Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1990), *Juan* 57, pp.1361. For Hu Yi, see Xu Xiangmei 徐象梅 *zhuan*, *Liang Zhe Ming Xian Lu* 兩浙名賢錄, *Juan* 22/45a-b, in Beijing tu shu guan gu ji zhen ben cong kan 北京圖書館古籍珍本叢刊, Vol.17-18 (Beijing: Shu mu wen xian chu ban she, 1987), pp.673. For Jiang Zhiyi, see Cheng Minzheng, *Xin An Wen Xian Zhi*, *Juan* 77, pp.1891

²⁰⁴ In his memorial, Lei Guan argued that the court should no longer rely on Li Bangyan and Zhang Bangchang. For the full memorials of Lei Guan, see *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 35/3b-14a, pp.260-266.

“should Li Gang and Chong Shidao not be restored, we will not go home.”²⁰⁵ 非見李右丞、种宣撫復用，毋得歸。 When the court meeting was over and the officials prepared to leave the *Dong Hua* gate, the crowd targeted Chief Councilor Li Bangyan, denounced him and threw pieces of tiles and rocks at him. Someone even grabbed Li by the hair intending to bite him, forcing him to flee to the Bureau of Military Affairs.²⁰⁶ When emperor Qinzong learned of this, he asked the guards at the palace gate to pass him the student memorials. Sometime later, the emperor conveyed the following message to students through an agent: “I have already read your memorials, which clearly show your loyalty and righteousness. Your suggestions will soon be implemented.”²⁰⁷ 諸生所上書，朕已親覽，備悉忠義，當便施行。

After hearing this, certain people wanted to return home, but the majority remained in doubt. They insisted on staying until the restoration of Li Gang and Chong Shidao. Even though high officials of the Bureau of Military Affairs such as Wu Min 吳敏 (1089-1132) and Geng Nanzhong 耿南仲 (?-1129) reassured the masses of the emperor’s will to restore Li and Zhong, the crowd remained dissatisfied, intending to suppress, causing the prefect of Kaifeng, Wang Shiyong 王時雍 (?-1127), to bring along a hundred armed troops and several executioners to the site. Wang then accused the students of coercing the emperor and ordered them to leave. The students rebutted and prepared to fight back, causing Wang to flee.

As an expediency, the head of the palace army Wang Zongchu 王宗濬 advised emperor Qinzong to obey the masses and restore Li Gang and Chong Shidao, since a mass revolt might break out. To calm the masses, the emperor agreed to restore Li Gang. Intending to resolve the crisis as soon as possible, Qinzong sent different

²⁰⁵ Wang Zao 汪藻 zhu; Wang Zhiyong 王智勇 jian zhu, *Jing Kang Yao Lu Jian Zhu (JKYL)* 靖康要錄箋注 (Chengdu: Sichuan da xue chu ban she, 2008), *Juan* 2, pp.358.

²⁰⁶ *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 48/12b-13a, pp.363-364.

²⁰⁷ *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.358.

eunuchs again and again to summon Li forthwith. One of the eunuchs Zhu Hongzhi 朱拱之 (?-1126), however, had delayed transmission of the message, causing the masses to castigate Zhu as “rebel” and violently slay him. Mass hysteria ensued and the irate mob slaughtered dozens of eunuchs with rare brutality. Only after they noticed the genuine restoration of Li Gang and Chong Shidao did the murderous throng disperse. Edicts were soon promulgated to restore civil order, but occasional violence against eunuchs continued for several days.²⁰⁸

On the 7th day in 1126/2, two days after the fierce protest, the officials Li Tuo 李稅 and Cai Mao 蔡楙 memorialized Qinzong, accusing university students of leading the masses to gather at the palace gate to revolt.²⁰⁹ Remonstrator Sun Di concurred.²¹⁰ The three requested due punishment for the students. Although Qinzong did not heed their advice, Li and Cai asked the Director and Vice-Director of Education to expel the student leaders, which left students furious. Disappointed with the government decision, most students left school immediately without applying for a formal withdrawal. In view of their contravention of proper procedures, they were considered in violation of the school regulations and expelled. As a sign of protest as well as disappointment with the Song court, other students asked for expulsion at the same time. Such civil disobedience caused the Vice-Director of Education Huang Zhe 黃哲 to blame himself for failing to educate the youths and requested due punishment. In response, Qinzong acknowledged Huang Zhe that the student movement was motivated by loyalty and righteousness and reassured him that teaching officials

²⁰⁸ For details of the student movement on the 5th of 1126/2, see *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.357-359; Li Gang 李綱 *zhuàn*, *Jing Kang Chuan Xin Lu* 靖康傳信錄, *Juan* 2, in *QSB*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.21-22; Chen Nan 陳南, “Chen Dong Xing Zhuang” 陳東行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.182, pp.326-337; Chen Dong, “Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu” 辭誥命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.203; *GMBY*, *Juan* 30, pp.777-778; *SCGY*, *Juan* 19/5b, pp.472. Narrative in English can be found in Richard L. Davis, *Wind against the mountain: the crisis of politics and culture in thirteenth-century China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1996), pp.126-127.

²⁰⁹ *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.359.

²¹⁰ Sun Di 孫覿, “Shi Yu Shi Lun Tai Xue Zhu Sheng Fu Que Zha Zi” 侍御史論太學諸生伏闕劄子, in *QSW*, Vol.158, pp.466, *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 62/1a-3a, pp.462-463.

would not be held responsible for the uprising.²¹¹

But the attitude of students continued to aggravate certain officials at court. Li Tuo and Cai Mou further persuaded Wang Shiyong, the prefect of Kaifeng, to arrest and execute the student leaders and citizens who had joined the mass riot. Notices were then posted in the school campus, pronouncing that those University students who knelt before the palace gate should be punished according to martial law and executed for sedition. Wang then persuaded students, who hailed from the same prefecture as him, to leave the school, warning that troops would soon arrive. Qinzong had called a halt to the persecution on the advice of Nie Shan 聶山 (later renamed to Nie Chang 聶昌, 1079-1127), who reminded the emperor not to let “loyal and righteous people die at the hands of treacherous ministers”.²¹² 忠義之人不死奸臣之手 This allowed the students to be spared.

But Qinzong’s sentiments soon changed. A few days later, elite troops in the capital posted at the school campus another threatening notice bearing Qinzong’s seal, threatening execution according to martial rule for student offenders:

During the period when the court opens the channel for remonstrance, civilians, military personnel, commoners or examination candidates should submit loyal and constructive statements and arguments. I will read them personally, see whether they are applicable, and gradually implement them. Inasmuch as students and commoners who gathered at the palace gate to submit memorials did so with the intent of creating disorder, similar deeds in the future will lead to arrest and execution by elite forces in adherence to martial law.²¹³ 朝廷方大開言路之時，應文武下士庶秀才等，宜以忠嘉之言讜論建陳，當用納親覽，於其可否，一一施行。然有似此伏闕上書為名者，意在

²¹¹ See also *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.359-360; *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.326; *SHY*, *Zhiguan* 28/23; *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 39/8a-b, pp.293.

²¹² *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 40/1a-b, pp.299; *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 40/2b-3a, pp.299-300; *JKYL*, *Juan* 13, pp.1323.

²¹³ *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 40/3a-b, pp.300. See also Shen Changqing 沈長卿, “Shang Qinzong Shu” 上欽宗書, in *QSW*, Vol.190, pp.320; *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp. 360; Chen Dong, “Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu” 辭誥命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.203; Chen Nan 陳南, “Chen Dong Xing Zhuang” 陳東行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.182, pp.327.

作亂之人，仰三衙立便收捉，當行軍法。

The Head of the Palace Guard Wang Zongchu was even authorized to execute first before reporting to the emperor. Coincidentally, the teaching official Wu Ruo 吳若 was demoted after criticizing the Councilors Li Bangyan and Wu Min.²¹⁴ Wu's demotion shows Qinzong's support for the two Councilors. To please the Councilors in turn, the Director and Vice-Director of Education agreed to expel Chen Dong from the university. Students were boisterous upon hearing this. To prevent another wave of student protest, the court's attitude swiftly changed. Nie Shan, the official who previously salvaged the students, was sent to tame the students, and the threatening notices were soon removed.²¹⁵ Considering that the current leadership of the metropolitan schools had created the recent chaos, the court decided to replace the existing Director of Education on the 19th in the second month with the veteran scholar Yang Shi 楊時 (1053-1135), a top disciple of the renowned Cheng Yi who enjoyed the respect of students.²¹⁶ In coming months, the court even rewarded student leaders Chen Dong and Lei Guan, conferring the Advanced Scholar degree upon them and bestowing official titles.²¹⁷ Nonetheless, activities remained under the close surveillance of Wang Shiyong and Wang Zongchu. The environment at the Imperial University had become too disturbing for study.²¹⁸

Despite the skeptical stance of the Song court towards university students, the righteous deeds of Chen Dong somehow serve as catalyst, motivating his fellow schoolmates to follow with suggestions to the court. On the 11th day in 1126/2, just six

²¹⁴ For the full text of Wu Ruo memorial criticizing Li Bangyan and Wu Min, see *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 41/7b, pp.308. See also *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 42/6a-b, pp.315.

²¹⁵ *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 40/3a-b, pp.300.

²¹⁶ *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.357; *SS*, *Juan* 428, pp.12741.

²¹⁷ *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 42/12b-13a, pp.318-319; *JKYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.255; *Juan* 4, pp.564; and *Juan* 5, pp.627. See also *SHY*, Xuanju 9/16-17. It is worth noting that such rewards were welcomed by Lei Guan, but not Chen Dong.

²¹⁸ Chen Dong, "Ci Gao Ming Shang Qinzong Huang Di Shu" 辭詣命上欽宗皇帝書 靖康元年四月十六日, in *QSW*, Vol.175, pp.203.

days after the violent protest, University student Yang Hui 楊誨 submitted a memorial citing the three inconveniences of the court's decision to cede land to the Jurchen in exchange for peace.²¹⁹ On the 22nd day in the same month, another student Shen Changqing 沈長卿 suggested removing Wu Min and Li Bangyan from the Councillorship in view of their corrupt deeds.²²⁰ It is worth noting that these proposals were made in the midst of the court's outright suppression of university students, meaning that their deeds might be considered by the court as subversive. The bravery and courage of these students was laudable.

A drastic change in the political environment was likely the primary reason leading to social activism of Chen Dong and his fellow schoolmates. Students were prohibited from commenting on politics since Cai Jing's Councillorship in early 1100's. Even after the downfall of Cai, such prohibitions were still in force, meaning that student activism could still be suppressed. But the Jurchen invasion reignited the courage of university students to put forward proposals to save the country. This vogue of commentating on politics had been embedded in the University since the Renzong era, encouraged by the rising power of remonstrators and policy review advisers. Later, Wang Anshi and Cai Jing tried every possible means to silence students and minimize opposition to the reform policies. Nevertheless this spirit of political activism was never fully eliminated from the metropolitan schools, and it once again burgeoned at the right time. As Thomas Lee noted, "the heightened sense of national urgency in the wake of incessant foreign encroachments no doubt served as another important incentive to the University students to demand a more responsive or aggressive government."²²¹ Ironically the Song court was skeptical towards student

²¹⁹ *SCBMHB*, Juan 36/10b, pp.271, *QSW*, Vol.177, pp.238-242.

²²⁰ Shen Changqing 沈長卿, "Shang Qinzong Shu", in *QSW*, Vol.190, pp.320. See also Xu Ziming 徐自明 zhuan; Wang Ruilai 王瑞來 jiao bu, *Song Zai Fu Bian Nian Lu Jiao Bu* 宋宰輔編年錄校補 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1986), Juan 13, pp.829-830.

²²¹ Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.187.

patriotism, which was perceived as a challenge to the sovereign's ultimate power and the councilors' executive power. In turn, student activities inside the University campus were closely monitored. Political surveillance in the metropolitan schools implies that scholars had entirely lost ground at the Confucian high temple, which did not occur until the Southern Song.²²²

Yang Shi and the dogma of Wang Anshi

The appointment of Yang Shi as Director of Education in 1126/2 was a compromise between the court and university students. Ironically, rather than placating students, Yang Shi further provoked them in view of his radical proposal to eradicate the learning of Wang Anshi.²²³ In fact, right after Yang Shi's assumption of the Directorship, the intellectual environment had gradually changed against Wang Anshi's learning. In 1126/4, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, a Confucian Classic removed from the school curriculum under the reformers, was restored on the recommendation of Councilor Wu Min.²²⁴ A possible reason for such change may have been the association of the *Annals* with the "expulsion of the barbarians", a theme that suited the political atmosphere of the day.²²⁵ At nearly the same time,

²²² Hartwell and Hymes argued that there is a stark contrast between elites of the Northern and Southern Song, where the former focused on matters in the national level while the latter tended to stress on locality. Personally I think this localist orientation, originated in the Southern Song, gradually became mature in the Song-Yuan-Ming transition period and persisted till late Imperial China. The original Hartwell thesis is set out in Robert M. Hartwell, "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750-1550", pp.365-442, which has further been elaborated by his student Robert Hymes in a monograph regarding the local elites of Fuzhou. See Robert P. Hymes, *Statesmen and gentlemen*. For a discussion on the hypothesis and several prominent features of the Song-Yuan-Ming transition, a period since the Southern Song to around 1500 in between the two periods of explosive change - the Tang-Song and Ming-Qing, see Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn (ed), *The Song-Yuan-Ming transition in Chinese history* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003).

²²³ Yang Shi's opposition to Wang Anshi's learning could be best reflected in his work *San Jing Yi Bian* 三經義辯, being his refutations on the *New Commentaries on the Three Classics*. See Yang Shi, "Da Xiao Zi Zhuang" 答蕭子莊 and "Ti Zhu Gong Xie Shuo Lun Hou" 題諸公邪說論後, in *QSW*, Vol.124, pp.221 and *QSW*, Vol.124, pp.274 respectively.

²²⁴ *JKYL*, Juan 5, pp.632-633. See also *SHY*, Xuanju 4/16.

²²⁵ John W. Chaffee, "Examinations During Dynastic Crisis: The Case of the Early Southern Song", *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, Vol.37 (2007), pp.137.

Mencius, a text favored by Wang Anshi, was abolished.²²⁶ Some officials even suggested prohibiting the use of Daoist Classics as well as Wang Anshi's *Interpretation of Characters* in the civil service examinations.²²⁷ The remarks of Yang Shi on Wang Anshi were even more critical. Adhering to the teachings of his master Cheng Yi, Yang believed that education had the dual purpose to preserve culture and serve society, but it "had to be integrated with the ultimate concern of moral self-transformation. ...Without the moral transformation of the self as the linchpin, neither culture nor politics can remain wholesome."²²⁸ Believing that Wang Anshi had merely confined education to politics, Yang Shi criticized Wang's obsession with wealth and power: "Wang Anshi, with the skills of [the Legalists] Shang (Yang) 商鞅 (390-338 B.C.E.) and Guan (Zhong) 管仲 (?-645 B.C.E.), cloaked his evil ideas in the words of the [Confucian] Six Classics, and distorted the rules and regulations of the dynastic ancestors."²²⁹ 安石挾管、商之術，飭六藝以文姦言，變亂祖宗法度。Since Wang was not a true Confucian, he should be removed from the Confucian temple so that his evil learning will no longer confuse the people.²³⁰ The court initially concurred with Yang, demoted Wang Anshi's status in the Confucian temple and ordered the destruction of the printing blocks of the *New Commentaries of the Three Classics* then housed at the Directorate. Nevertheless, students had followed Wang Anshi's learning for several decades to prepare for the examinations, and they were never conscious of a problem. When Yang Shi suddenly proclaimed that it was heresy, students were confused and annoyed. They gathered, groaned, and condemned Yang Shi, forcing him to hide.²³¹ Such chaotic conditions owed much to the

²²⁶ SYXA, Juan 22, pp.67.

²²⁷ JKYL, Juan 5, pp.680; CBSB, Juan 54.

²²⁸ Wei-Ming Tu, "The Sung Confucian Idea of Education: A Background Understanding", in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee, *Neo-confucian education*, pp.150. A brief discussion on the diversifying views of various schools of Song Confucians on education can be found in this article, particularly pp.148-150.

²²⁹ SS, Juan 428, pp.12741.

²³⁰ JKYL, Juan 6, pp.717-718; CBSB, Juan 54.

²³¹ SYXA, Juan 25 p.946-947.

radicalism of Yang Shi, as revealed by an executive censor Chen Guoting 陳過庭 (1071-1130):

Teachings of the Five Classics on righteousness and rites are subtle. It is unavoidable for posterity to have various interpretations on them, although they might be right or wrong. Taking what they agree with as orthodox and taking what they oppose as heterodox is a bias of the contemporaries, not a general consensus for the eternity. Since Cai Jing was in power, the learning of Wang Anshi was honored; but the learning of Su Shi was considered as heresy and hence strictly prohibited. Recently such restrictions were lifted and the learning of Su Shi came into general use. [It is good for students] to adopt the good and abandon the bad elements from various schools. But Director of Education Yang Shi took the matter to another extreme by denouncing the learning of Wang Anshi as heresy. Such improper action caused students to gather, walk strictly to his office, and castigate him. If Yang Shi had not gone into hiding, a disaster might have happened.²³² 《五經》之訓，義禮淵微，後人所見不同，或是或否，諸家所不能免也。是者必指為正論，否者必指為邪說，此乃近世一偏之辭，非萬世之通論。自蔡京擅權，專向王氏之學，凡蘇氏之學，悉以為邪說而禁之。近罷此禁，通用蘇氏之學，各取所長而去所短也。祭酒楊時矯枉太過，複論王氏為邪說，此又非也。致使諸生集眾，直造祭酒位次，欲見而詆之。時若不自引避，必致生事。

Likely because of criticism from censors and policy-critique advisers, Yang Shi was forced to step down from the Directorship on the 9th day in 1126/5.²³³ But the intellectual environment continued to be more pluralistic. Prohibitions against the works of the Yuanyou faction were lifted, and the learning of Wang Anshi was no longer the single acceptable interpretation. Apparently this was very appealing, but in reality such a so-called relaxed intellectual environment had created two camps – either disciples of Wang Anshi or followers of the Yuanyou learning. Even more detrimental to the school climate is that teachers and examiners were all biased, and they merely evaluated and ranked students on the basis of the camp to which students belonged. Foreseeing the problem posed to selecting genuine talent, policy-critique

²³² *JKYL*, Juan 6, pp.731 and *CBSB*, Juan 54. For a simplified version, see *SS*, Juan 157, pp.3669.

²³³ *JKYL*, Juan 8, pp.843-844.

adviser Feng Ji 馮檣 (1075-1152) suggested in 1126/5 that teachers and examiners should accept any interpretations that accorded with principle other than the two camps, which the court approved.²³⁴ Despite his neutral remarks, Feng Ji was soon accused by other officials for pro-Wang Anshi leanings.²³⁵ Rational discussion among officials once again devolved into fierce factional disputes, which consumed the energy of the officials and ultimately engulfed the entire empire.

Students' activities at the brink of Song collapse

When the Jurchen re-launched attacks on the Song in the latter half of 1126, the attitude of the Song court was still ambivalent towards the invaders, oscillated between sealing a peace deal and countering with a dogged resistance. When the Jurchen armies approached the Song capital Kaifeng in 1126/11, the court ordered soldiers and civilians to clear the fields and prepare a staunch defense of the city. But the court soon reversed its order after a small victory against the Jurchen detachment. A university student, Ding Teqi 丁特起, argued that news from the frontier might be dubious and the city's defenses should not be dismantled. Troops inside the city should instead be reallocated outside the city to assist in defense. Ding even proposed eight strategies to defend the city for the court's consideration. Echoing Ding, other university students such as Chen Dong and Xu Kui 徐揆 (?-1127) also reminded the court not to remove the city's defenses. However the advice of these students was not taken seriously at the Bureau of Military Affairs.²³⁶ With limited resistance of the Song armies, elite Jurchen troops soon crossed the Yellow River, encircled the capital,

²³⁴ *JKYL*, Juan 6, pp.754-755; *CBSB*, Juan 54; *SHY*, Chongru 2/31; *SHY*, Zhiguan 28/23; *SS*, Juan 165, pp.3915.

²³⁵ Cui Ou 崔鷗, "Lun Feng Xie" 論馮檣 and "Zai Lun Feng Xie" 再論馮檣, in *SWJ*, Juan 62, pp.924 and 925. See also *JKYL*, Juan 7, pp.803-804.

²³⁶ Ding Teqi 丁特起, *Jing Kang Ji Wen* 靖康紀聞, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.4, pp.96; Chen Dong 陳東, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu* 靖炎兩朝見聞錄, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.148. See also Huang Xianfan, *Song Dai Tai Xue Sheng Jiu Guo Yun Dong*, pp.30.

and began a siege of Kaifeng. In the intercalary 11th month of 1126, with Kaifeng under siege, Ding, Chen and Xu articulated ways to eliminate the Jurchen and five reasons to pursue counterattacks, but the court was unresponsive.²³⁷ Believing the court to be ambivalent, they urged the court to take immediate action. Again their efforts were in vain.²³⁸ Without the determined resistance of Song forces, the Jurchen easily broke through the city walls, causing emperor Qinzong to declare unconditional surrender as the entire city fell to plunder. The Jurchen looted gold, jewels and antiquities, valuable printing blocks and rare books from the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University, including the literary collection of Su Shi and Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105) as well as Sima Guang's *Comprehensive Mirror*. Ironically, the works of Wang Anshi were abandoned by the Jurchen.²³⁹

To win the support of the Song people and to demonstrate a civilized side to the conquest, 21 Jurchen visited the Directorate of Education on the second day of 1127 and performed rites to honor Confucius.²⁴⁰ They treated emperor Qinzong less venerably: taken hostage a few days later, he became a tool to extort gold and silver from the people of Kaifeng. Detention of the emperor in the Jin camp somehow activated another wave of loyalist and righteous movement on the university campus. On the 13th in 1127/1, a student named Yu Juewen 余覺民 prepared a letter to the leaders of the Jurchen, claiming that sufficient gold and silver had been gathered to redeem the emperor. Hundreds of his fellow schoolmates joined him, gathering at the *Nan Xun* Gate to weep and beg for the release of the emperor. But to avoid a repeat of the murderous disaster a year ago, officials in Kaifeng sent troops to stop students

²³⁷ Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.151.

²³⁸ Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.148 and 154.

²³⁹ *SCBMHB*, Juan 70/8b, pp.529 and Juan 73/5b, pp.550; *JKYL*, Juan 14, pp.1487; Wei Cheng 韋承 玆uan, *Weng Zhong Ren Yu* 甕中人語, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.8, pp.56; Ding Teqi, *Jing Kang Ji Wen*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.4, pp.113.

²⁴⁰ *SCBMHB*, Juan 74/2a, pp.554; *XNYL*, Juan 1, pp.23.

from approaching the Jurchen camp.²⁴¹

Despite the intervention, the loyal deeds of Yu Juewen motivated his fellow schoolmates. Within a few days, other university students such as Ding Teqi, Wang Ruohai 汪若海 (1101-1161), He Lie 何烈 and Xu Kui prepared letters to the Jurchen commanders, requesting the return of Qinzong. Again, their action was hindered by the city guards. A brave student Xu Kui managed to elude the obstacles and reach the Jin camp by telling city guards that he was on his way to offer gold and silver. After the Jurchen had noticed him, cavalries were sent to escort Xu to the Jin camp. Upon his arrival, Xu took out a letter, explaining that all the valuables in Kaifeng were already exhausted and hence holding Qinzong as captive was no longer necessary. Xu then suggested that the Jurchen release Qinzong and retreat, allowing the Song to gather resources across the country to pay tribute to the Jin in the future. The disappointed Jin leaders were furious, and castigated and executed Xu Kui, who died a martyr.²⁴²

The tragedy of Xu Kui somehow discouraged student attempts to rescue the captive emperor in the short run, but not the long run. On the 5th in 1127/2, another student Huang Shicheng 黃時偁 prepared a letter for the Jurchen commanders, raising a similar request to release Qinzong.²⁴³ As expected, his effort was in vain. In the meantime, the Jurchen continued their extortion of the people in Kaifeng. Apart from gold and silver, they raided the imperial palace and emptied the palace treasury and libraries, removing imperial seals, jewels, antiquities, rare books, printing blocks

²⁴¹ *JKYL*, Juan 15, pp.1547; *XNYL*, Juan 1, pp.29; *SCBMHB*, Juan 74/12b-13a, pp.559-560.

²⁴² *XNYL*, Juan 1, pp.30-31; *SCBMHB*, Juan 76/8a-b, pp.574; Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.173; *JKYL*, Juan 15, pp.1554 and 1586. The full letter of Wang Ruohai to the Jurchen General Tie Han can be found in *SCBMHB*, Juan 76/1a, pp.571 or Wang Ruohai 汪若海, “Yu Jin Tie Han Qing Xi Bing Jiang Hao Shu” 與金粘罕請息兵講好書, in *XAWXZ*, Juan 8, pp.245-249. For the letter of Xu Kui to the Jurchen leaders, see *SCBMHB*, Juan 76/5b, pp.573.

²⁴³ For the letter of Huang Shicheng to Tie Han, see *SCBMHB*, Juan 78/5b, pp.588. The above also appear in Wang Mingqing, *Hui Zhu Lu*, *Hou Lu* Juan 4, pp.125-130.

and other invaluable art works. The abdicated emperor Huizong, empress of Qinzong, the heir apparent (who had governed while Qinzong was in custody), consorts, imperial clansmen, eunuchs as well as hundreds of imperial servants were all captured. On the 6th day in 1127/2, the Jurchen even stripped Qinzong and Huizong of imperial status, symbolically decapitated the Song dynasty. The Zhao clan together with its servants was then transferred to the Jin camp outside Kaifeng. Thousands of people gathered at the *Nan Xun* Gate, cried loudly to bid farewell. Some university students even knelt and sobbed before the procession, but they were powerless to change the fate of the captives.²⁴⁴

After stripping the imperial status of the Zhao clan, the Jurchen decided to choose another emperor to rule the south. They coerced former Song officials to deliberate on a suitable candidate. Consensus had been reached among the majority, where the former Chief Councilor Zhang Bangchang 張邦昌 (1081-1127) was nominated to accede the throne.²⁴⁵ A few officials who refused to endorse such plan, among them university graduates Hu Yin and Zhang Jun 張浚 (1097-1164),²⁴⁶ hid themselves inside the Imperial University to evade troubles.²⁴⁷ Soon the decision was announced to the public, where most of the people, including soldiers and civilians, the elderly, as well as Daoist priests and Buddhist monks, remained silent. Only some university students openly declared their refusal to submit. In fear of the public becoming riotous, the corrupt general Fan Qiong 范瓊 (?-1129), who fawned on the Jurchen, warned the masses loudly: “Nowadays being loyal (to the Zhao clan) is

²⁴⁴ *JKYL*, *Juan* 15, pp.1641.

²⁴⁵ Among the group of minorities who opposed the enthronement of Zhang Bangchang and asserted the retention of the Zhao Imperial clan was Qin Gui, the notorious Chief Councilor in the Southern Song who by then was the Executive Censor in 1127. For a brief English narration of the controversial role of Qin Gui in this incident, see Charles Hartman, “The Making of a Villain: Ch'in Kuei and Tao-hsiueh”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 1, (Jun., 1998), pp.78-79.

²⁴⁶ Hu Yin, “Shang Cai Lun Yu Jie Hou Xu” 上蔡論語解後序, in *FRJ* 斐然集, *Juan* 19, pp.394; Zhu Xi, “Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang Shang” 張公行狀上, in *QSW*, Vol.252, pp.194.

²⁴⁷ *XNYL*, *Juan* 2, pp.52; Zhu Xi, “Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang Shang” 張公行狀上, in *QSW*, Vol.252, pp.194. See also *SS*, *Juan* 435, pp.12908 and *Juan* 360, pp.11285.

inappropriate. Filial piety remains the only option.” 當今為忠不可，只可為孝。He then ordered students to return to the Directorate of Education.²⁴⁸

The loyalty of certain students to the Song should not obscure the fact that others were keen to join the Jurchen. After deciding to entrust the south to Zhang Bangchang, the Jurchen prepared to retreat to the north. Ten teaching officials and eighty students with expertise in the Classics were invited to accompany them. In order to attract these scholars, the Jurchen enjoined the Vice-Director of Education, Dong You 董道 (c.a.1079-1140), to persuade them with promises rewarding them with wealth. Among the students, those from Fujian, Liangzhe, Sichuan, as well as the northern prefectures were quick to respond. Nearly a hundred applications were received. Soon these 100 students were brought to the Jurchen campsite, where they were forced to provide details of their prefectural origins. To flatter on the Jurchen, some unscrupulous students from the south even volunteered to draw maps of their home towns, setting out the details of landscape and defensive structures, to facilitate the Jurchen's infiltration to the south. In exchange, they requested prostitutes to be sent to the campsite for their amusement. The Jurchen soon discovered that these students were without talent and inadequate as teachers. In turn, the Jurchen picked only 30 students to accompany them north, while the remaining 60-70 students were deemed as redundant and returned.²⁴⁹ Upon noticing that some widely-acclaimed teachers and students had yet to be included in the pool, the Jurchen requested their immediate presence at the campsite. University professor Sun Hong 孫鉉 (?-1127) sternly refused to join the Jurchen, which ultimately cost his life.²⁵⁰ While two elite students, Yang Yuan 楊愿 (1101-1152) and Huang Feng 黃豐, barely escaped by

²⁴⁸ *JKYL*, Juan 15, pp.1642; *JKYL*, Juan 15, pp.1649.

²⁴⁹ *SCBMHB*, Juan 81/4a-6a, pp.608-609; Ding Teqi, *Jing Kang Ji Wen*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.4, pp.134-135; *JKYL*, Juan 15, pp.1653 and Juan 16, pp.1662 and 1683; Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.186.

²⁵⁰ Wang Xiangzhi, *Yu Di Ji Sheng*, Juan 163/10b-11a, in *XXSKQS*, Vol.585, pp.341.

pleading sickness.²⁵¹

The sentiments of Yang and Huang may well reflect the reality at the university at that time. In fact, out of nearly 700 students at the university in autumn 1126, over 200 had died from disease. From the symptoms of these students as recorded in various anecdotes, it seems that they had suffered from Beriberi, a disease caused by malnutrition.²⁵² The hidden message behind the high death toll is that food supplies in the capital were scarce in the height of the Jurchen siege. With their survival at stake, it is not hard to understand why some university students failed to adhere to loyal duty. Those 50-60 university students who stole grain from the school storehouse, likely to establish a private reserve of grain supply,²⁵³ or deflected to the Jurchen belong to this group of morally ambivalent men. In contrast, students upheld their loyalty despite desperate conditions gained even more respect.

With the support of the Jurchen, Zhang Bangchang acceded the throne in 1127/3 and established a new regime named “Chu”. But many former Song officials resented, among them the general Wu Ge 吳革 (?-1127), a descendant of Wu Tingzuo 吳廷祚 (918-971) who made enormous contributions to the founding of the Song empire.²⁵⁴ With assistance from university students including Wu Zhu 吳銖, Zhu Mengshuo 朱夢說 and Xu Ren 徐仁, together with several hundred troops, Wu Ge plotted a mutiny against Zhang Bangchang. They even planned to rescue emperors Huizong and Qinzong from the Jurchen. Nevertheless the conspiracy was uncovered and soon suppressed, while Wu Ge perished.²⁵⁵ As a measure to stabilize the new

²⁵¹ *SCBMHB*, Juan 83/2a-b, pp.622; *XNYL*, Juan 2, pp.58; Ding Teqi, *Jing Kang Ji Wen*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.4, pp.136; Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.187.

²⁵² *SCBMHB*, Juan 99/3b, pp.729 and Juan 86/3b-4a, pp.640-641; Wang Mingqing 王明清 (1127-ca. 1215), *You Zhao Xin Zhi* 玉照新志 (Shanghai: Shanghai Gu Ji Chu Ban She, 1991), Juan 3, pp.48-50.

²⁵³ Sun Di, “Shang He Cheng Xiang Zha Zi Er” 上何丞相劄子二, in *QSW*, Vol.159, pp.69-70.

²⁵⁴ *DDSL*, Juan 111, pp.965.

²⁵⁵ *SSQW*, Juan 15, pp.865-866.

kingdom as well as to solicit support of university students and the literati class, Zhang Bangchang sent Director of Education Dong You to assuage the students. Ten doctors were sent to the school to cure students of disease.²⁵⁶ Compared with the stern attitude of the Song court towards university students after the riot initiated by Chen Dong, the caring approach of Zhang Bangchang might have easily won student support and legitimized the new regime. Interestingly, after the Jurchen retreat, Zhang Bangchang abdicated in favor of the enthronement of Zhao Gou, the ninth son of emperor Huizong. A number of university students such as Yang Yuan, Wang Ruohai, and Chen Bian 陳抃 were involved in the process of conveying messages between the Song loyalists in Kaifeng and Zhao Gou in the south, actively assisting the latter's enthronement.²⁵⁷ Soon Dong You led a group of university students to the southern capital Ying Tian Fu, persuading Zhou Gou to accede the throne, which finally took place in 1127/5, demarcating the continuation of the Song dynasty in the south.²⁵⁸

Political activism of Northern Song University students, demonstrated through their loyal and brave deeds narrated above, can be attributed to multiple reasons. To paraphrase Richard Davis's explanations for the Southern Song case,²⁵⁹ participation of Northern Song University students in politics owes much to the inspiration of Song Learning, which emphasized on the application of classical knowledge to the political realm, and to students' idealism and passion, as byproducts of the socially open Imperial University. Student activism also occurred due to the vogue of political tolerance embedded in the metropolitan schools during the Renzong

²⁵⁶ XNYL, Juan 3, pp.77; SCBMHB, Juan 86/3b-4a, pp.640-641; Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.192.

²⁵⁷ XNYL, Juan 4, pp.97-98. The above also appears in Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 bian; Wang Deyi Dian Jiao, *San Chao Bei Meng Hui Bian* 三朝北盟會編 (Taibei: Da Hua Shu Ju, 1979), Vol.2, Jing Kang Zhong Zhi 65.靖康中帙 65, pp.327; Yang Shi, "Shu Mi Cao Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 樞密曹公墓誌銘建炎二年十二月, in *QSW*, Vol.125, pp.117.

²⁵⁸ XNYL, Juan 4, pp.112; Chen Dong, *Jing Yan Liang Chao Jian Wen Lu*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.3 Vol.5, pp.195.

²⁵⁹ Richard L. Davis, "The Reign of Li-tsung", in *CHC*, Vol.5 part 1, pp.906.

era, which coincided with the rising power of censors and policy-critique advisers. Students also responded to “the distinct character of individual decision makers who, at different times, inspired, incited, patronized, and pressured different centers of power within the capital and throughout the empire”,²⁶⁰ -- the unstable characteristic of a politically open and constantly changing system. The high standards of political engagement and personal sacrifice of university students became a model for the Southern Song.²⁶¹ Despite the fact that students were prohibited from commentating on politics since 1383 for more than half millennium,²⁶² university students in the 20th century managed to revive the spirit of political activism of their Song predecessors.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Richard L. Davis, “The Reign of Li-tsung”, in *CHC*, Vol.5 part 1, pp.906.

²⁶¹ For a brief account on the political activism of Southern Song university students during the Lizong period, see Richard L. Davis, “The Reign of Li-tsung”, in *CHC*, Vol.5 part 1, pp.897-906.

²⁶² Shen Shixing 申時行 (1535-1614) deng Xiu; Zhao Yongxian 趙用賢 (1535-1596) deng , *Da Ming Hui Dian* 大明會典, Juan 78/5b, in *XXSKQS*, Vol. 790, pp.412. Similar regulations have been adopted by the Qing, see Liang Guozhi 梁國治 (1723-1787) zhuan, *Guo Zi Jian Zhi* 國子監志 (*SKQS* edition), Juan 2/3a.

²⁶³ In the 20th century, two student movements were held in 1919 and 1989. For studies relating to the former, see Charlotte Furth, “Intellectual change: from the Reform movement to the May Fourth movement, 1895-1920”, in *CHC*, Vol.12, pp.322-405 and Benjamin Isadore Schwartz (edited and with an introd.); with contributions by Charlotte Furth [et al.], *Reflections on the May Fourth movement: a symposium* (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1972, 1973). Regarding the 1989 movement, see Zhang Liang (compiled); Andrew J. Nathan and Perry Link (ed.); with an afterword by Orville Schell, *The Tiananmen papers* (London: Little, Brown & Co., 2001).

Chapter 7

THE IDEAL OF RECRUITING ETHICAL OFFICIALS THROUGH GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

A Critical Evaluation

Changing views of literati towards the school promotion system

The preceding chapter illustrates the educational reforms of emperor Huizong to recruit virtuous people as government officials, including the replacement of the prefectural examinations with a countrywide school promotion system as well as the launching of the “Eight Virtues of Conduct” scheme. To legitimize their plans, Huizong and his Chief Councilor Cai Jing implemented these reforms under the banner of reviving antiquity. Initially majority of the officials apparently believed in such political dogma. In various works written by officials in the Huizong era, particularly the first two decades of the 12th century, educational reforms were highly acclaimed. Fu Cha 傅察 (1089-1125) celebrated the era’s educational reforms as “emphasizing the proper measures of school education and promotion while suspending the old practice of civil service examinations,”¹ 講成均之良法，停科舉之舊章 signaling his preference for the school promotion scheme. Qi Chongli’s remark on the countrywide school system was equally affirmative, praising the contribution of government schools in nurturing talented people who ultimately turned out to be senior courtiers.² Another official Wei Xiang 韋襄 (1053 *Jinshi*), father of the 1122 Director of Education Wei Shoulong, even exaggerated the positive impacts of the school system:

¹ Fu Cha, “Fa Jie Xie Shi Guan Qi” 發解謝試官啓, in *QSW*, Vol.181, pp.74. Fu was *Jinshi* in 1107, and he glorified the educational achievement of Huizong.

² Qi Chongli 綦崇禮, “Ji Di Xie Xiang Jun Shou Cui Qi” 及第謝鄉郡守倅啓, in *QSW*, Vol.167, pp.391.

As pertains to the nurturing of literati, the state erected the Biyong Academy and respected Confucian scholars. It restored and expanded the Three Hall mechanism, allowing talent from the four corners to gather. It honored broad and subtle learning of the way while eliminating writings that departed from the Classics. With the promotion mechanism, talent can be stimulated; with evaluation and observation, laziness can be exposed. Intending to observe [student performance] over a longer time, their period of study was stipulated. Those who seriously violated the regulations were punished and suspended. To elevate the able is to cultivate upright gentlemen; allowing students' daily behavior to be modeled on the sages.³ 伏以國家養完士類，辟雍尊建師儒，恢張三舍之規，延聚四方之雋。崇淵微詣理之學，斥破碎不經之文。有升補以激其能，有考察以砥其怠。欲觀其久，則歲月以限；必懲其甚，則殿罰以終。蓋誘之掖之，使成君子之器；則或出或處，盡冒聖人之風。

Nevertheless, after experiencing the irresolute attitude of the emperors and the court in countering the Jurchen invasion, which finally led to the fall of the capital and the imprisonment of the two emperors, people were disappointed with the majority of the high officials. Since many officials were graduates of the Imperial University, people doubted the effectiveness of the Three Hall system in recruiting genuinely upright officials. While acknowledging the good intentions of the court in initiating the school system, its failures were attributed to the complicated examination procedures at the schools, as Zong Ze 宗澤 (1059-1128), an official who staunchly defended Kaifeng after the Jurchen retreat, argued in 1127:

When the state shifted to the Three Hall system to select officials, it envisioned the emergence of men like Gao, Kui, Ji, Qi [four virtuous officials under the Sage King Shun]. But students, pressed by the monthly tests, merely plagiarized sample essays that were widely circulated. No one genuinely followed the ancient way. It turns out that the Three Hall is not sufficient to select officials.⁴ 伏觀國家嘗變更三舍之法以取士，意謂臯、夔、稷、契皆自此塗出。卒之迫於月試，剽竊時文，罔有稽古者，是三舍果不足以取士也。

As time went on, the shortcomings in implementing the school promotion

³ Wei Xiang, "Dai Ren Xie Ji Di" 代人謝及第, in *QSW*, Vol.81, pp.274.

⁴ Zong Ze, "Qi Hui Lian Shu San" 乞回鑾疏三 建炎元年九月通前後 表疏係第六次奏請, in Zong Ze zhaun, *Zong Ze Ji* 宗澤集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang gu ji chu ban she, 1984), *Juan* 1, pp.15.

system were magnified, and the products of the Three Hall system – graduates of the Imperial University – were widely denounced. This owed much to the bias of emperor Gaozong against Wang Anshi, as he once mentioned “the crime of Wang Anshi was to implement the New Policies”.⁵ 王安石之罪在行新法。In turn, Wang Anshi, Cai Jing and the reforms – not the emperor – became scapegoats for the collapse of the Northern Song.⁶ Accordingly, the scheme to recruit government officials through schools, originally reflecting a consensus among the Northern Song literati, was later denounced as a scheme by Cai Jing to exert political influence. In turn, even piecemeal revival of the scheme might incur criticism. Despite the fact that nearly half of the high officials in Gaozong’s court had benefited from government education, hardly anyone proposed reviving the school recruitment mechanism. Contrarily, officials reiterated the effectiveness of the examinations in recruiting genuine talents, as reflected in a question raised by Wang Shipeng 王十朋 (1112-1171) in the mid-12th century:

The triennial recruitment examination had been in place for a long time. All the famed officials and erudites of acclaim for two hundred years of Song rule came by this route. Therefore it cannot be said to have failed in finding talent. Nevertheless, influential officials in the Chongning era professing to imitate the ancients while preferring novel approaches, insisted that should selection not originate in the community, accomplishment should not originate from learning. They

⁵ Shen Yuqiu 沈與求, “Zhi Shu Mi Yuan Shi Shen Gong Xing Zhuang” 知樞密院事沈公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.152, pp.242.

⁶ In order to legitimize the newly established regime, a valid and convincing explanation for the fall of the old capital as well as the capture of the two emperors is necessary. Accordingly, Wang Anshi and Cai Jing were held responsible. It is not hard to understand why Cai Jing was held responsible owing to his well-known corrupted practices, but how come Wang Anshi, an excellent statesman with upright conduct, was also blamed? The role of Yang Shi, a disciple of Cheng Yi who received wide scholarly acclaim, is crucial. Since Yang Shi enjoyed Cai Jing’s patronage, he hesitated blaming Cai whom, same as Yang, came from Fujian. Instead Yang Shi traced the origin of the reforms and laid the blame on the founder of the New Policies – Wang Anshi. Most Southern Song scholars were influenced by Yang Shi and hence attributed the fall of Northern Song to Wang Anshi. See Deng Guangming zhu, *Bei Song Zheng Zhi Gai Ge Jia Wang Anshi* 北宋政治改革家王安石 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiao yu chu ban she, 2000), pp.6-7; Li Huarui 李華瑞 zhu, *Wang Anshi Bian Fa Yan Jiu Shi* 王安石變法研究史 (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she, 2004), pp.1-199; He Zhongli 何忠禮 zhu, *Song Dai Zheng Zhi Shi* 宋代政治史 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang da xue chu ban she, 2007), pp.291-292; and Kondō Kazunari, “Nan so shoki no O An-seki hyoka ni tsuite” 南宋初期の王安石評価について, in Kondō Kazunari, *Sōdai Chūgoku kakyo shakai no kenkyū*, pp.121-150. For a brief discussion on the fate of the reform policies owing to Gaozong’s aversion, see James T.C. Liu, *China turning inward*, pp.63-67.

set aside the examination which seemed inadequate for a thorough vetting of talent. They therefore reorganized the way of selection, dividing students into different halls for promotion and selection. In addition to monthly records and seasonal examinations, there were nominations from prefectures and counties. In this way, scholars excelled in both literary talent and moral conduct could be selected. Adhering to the ancient model of communal nomination, they aspired to attain ideal governance, surpassing Han and Tang to reach the ancient Zhou. But in a matter of days and months, the calamities of Jingkang struck. Hardly a single martyr or person resolving the crisis was to be found. Observers claim that the school promotion system ruined everything.⁷ 三歲取士之法，國朝行之舊矣。名公鉅儒建勲立業，相與光二百年之宋者，咸出自此塗，不可謂不得人也。崇寧用事之臣好奇而慕古，謂選不自里，成不自學，決得失於一夫之目，計工拙於寸晷之下，不足以盡人。於是作而新之，命分舍而選，月有書，季有攷，邑有升，郡有貢，謂能兼得文行之士，而有合於賓興之制，宜其致治之效，邁漢唐而追成周可也。卒乎日漸月漬，養成靖康之禍，伏節死義排難解紛者，絕無一人。識者咸謂舍法壞之。

The prominent Southern Song historian Li Tao concurred with Wang Shipeng on the poor output of the Imperial University, asserting that “heroic people nurtured by the Imperial University did not exist.”⁸ 未見豪傑之士卓然自大學興起者 The primary reason for such failure, according to Li Tao, was because “promotion and demotion in the Three Hall System, as well as those complicated measures of evaluation such as the monthly tests and quarterly examinations, seduced students with the benefit of salary.”⁹ 三舍陞降，月書季考之法纖悉備具，大率誘以祿利 Corrupted by “benefit”, students could hardly perform “righteous” deeds. Following this dichotomy between “righteousness” and “benefit”, a core element of Neo-Confucianism in the Southern Song, Zhu Xi continued to criticize the Imperial University. He claimed that the ideal learning environment of the metropolitan schools under the supervision of Hu Yuan in the late Renzong era grew gradually corrupt in the Xining era of Shenzong owing to this benefit-oriented mindset:

⁷ Wang Shipeng 王十朋, “Ce Wen Yi Ba” 策問一八, in *Wang Shi Peng Quan Ji* 王十朋全集 (Shanghai: Shanghai Gu Ji Chu Ban She, 1998), *Wen Ji Juan* 9, pp.724-725.

⁸ Li Tao 李燾, “Xin Xiu Si Zhai Ji” 新修四齋記, in *QSW*, Vol.210, pp.262.

⁹ Li Tao 李燾, “Xin Xiu Si Zhai Ji” 新修四齋記, in *QSW*, Vol.210, pp.262.

At the time of Renzong, regulations at the Imperial University were accommodating and simple. Teachers at the Directorate hailed from talented people across the heavens -- genuine mentors. Among them only extraordinarily talents such as Hu Yizhi were selected to concentrate on matters relating to instruction and guidance. By then, students around the country, even though they needed to travel thousands of mile, were eager to come to the capital to follow these masters. Students who studied at the Imperial University then were earnest in enriching knowledge. They thoroughly respected their teachers as they searched for the Ancient Way. This way of learning came to be undermined since the Xining era, when the Imperial University became a venue for profit. Those who oversaw the school merely selected men good at writing examination essays and effective in the examination halls. Students devoted to righteousness and principles found nothing to learn in the schools. The main reason for the high attendance was merely the lucrative nomination quota and the convenience of the school promotion mechanism.¹⁰ 仁宗之時，太學之法寬簡，國子先生必求天下賢士真可為人師者，就其中又擇其尤賢者，如胡翼之之徒，使專教導規矩之事。故當是時，天下之士不遠萬里來就師之。其游太學者端為道藝，稱弟子者中心說而誠服之，蓋猶有古法之遺意也。熙寧以來，此法浸壞，所謂太學者但為聲利之場，而掌其教事者不過取其善為科舉之文而嘗得雋於場屋者耳。士之有志於義理者既無所求於學，其奔趨輻湊而來者不過為解額之濫、舍選之私而已。

Concurring with Zhu Xi on the deterioration of literati customs after the adoption of the Three Hall system was another Southern Song scholar-official, Cheng Fu 程昉 (1164-1242). He attributed this to the comprehensive regulatory framework adopted at government schools:

Since the implementation of the Three Hall system, students were controlled daily within a regulatory web. Even worse, teaching officials were accused of accepting bribes, which turned to be a complicated judicial case. Scholar-officials were ashamed of them. In the past the regulations were relaxed and customs naturally pure; later, the precautionary measures proliferated and the practices of the literati grew frivolous.¹¹ 自三舍之行，日繩學者於規繩之內，而學官受金之訟，至興大獄，為衣冠之深恥。昔者條約之疏而風俗自淳，今也防閑之周而士習益薄。

The relatively practical and utilitarian scholars in the east of Zhejiang were

¹⁰ Zhu Xi, "Xue Xiao Gong Ju Si Yi" 學校貢舉私議, in ZZQS, Vol.23, pp.3362-3363.

¹¹ Cheng Fu, "Wen Xue Xiao" 問學校, in QSW, Vol.298, pp.33.

no less hostile towards the Three Hall system.¹² Unlike the neo-Confucians who invoked the idea of “benefit”, Ye Shi (1150-1223) simply denounced those graduates of the Imperial University as the chief villains responsible for the fall of the Northern Song:

The dynasty discussed establishing schools for a long time without acting on the mission. Wang Anshi finally did so. But soon proscriptions ensued. During the Chongning and Daguang eras, talented students who were famous in schools soon rose to high officials. Most officials who misled the country in the Xuanhe (1119-1125) and Jingkang (1126-1127) eras were prominent school graduates.¹³ 本朝其始議建學，久而不克就，至王安石乃卒就之，然未幾而大獄起矣。崇、觀間，以俊秀聞於學者，旋為大官，宣和、靖康所用誤朝之人，大抵學校之名士也。

Such negative remarks on the Imperial University and the school promotion scheme under Huizong seem to reflect a consensus among scholar-officials of the Southern Song, which explains why most of them perceived replacing the civil service examinations with the countrywide Three Hall system as a taboo.¹⁴ In their attacks on the poor learning customs at the Imperial University, Cai Jing was always held responsible. The origin of such accusation can be traced to the Qinzong era, when censor Cui Ou 崔鷗 (1058-1126) denounced the school system as a form of military rule exploited by Cai Jing to exert political control.¹⁵ The negative stigma associated

¹² Hoyt Cleveland Tillman describes these practical scholars as Utilitarian Confucianists who formed a statecraft school in the Southern Song. Contrasting Zhu Xi's school that focused on ethical philosophy, these utilitarian scholars emphasized more on historical and statecraft writings. For a thorough discussion on this intellectual tradition in the Southern Song, see Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism: Ch'en Liang's challenge to Chu Hsi* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1982), Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Confucian discourse and Chu Hsi's ascendancy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992), and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Ch'en Liang on public interest and the law* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

¹³ Ye Shi, “Xue Xiao”學校, in Ye Shi, *Ye Shi Ji*, *Juan* 13, pp.800.

¹⁴ A group of officials in the Guangzong (1147–1200, r.1189–1194) era, led by Zhao Ruyu, advocated “stressing on the selection of teaching officials, delegating authorities to the Heads, imitating the Three Hall system to nurture talent, and accommodating the examination schedule to recruit officials.” 重教官之選，假守貳之權；倣舍法以育材，因大比以取士。 See SS, *Juan* 157, pp.3671. Although they called for “imitating the Three Hall system”, they perceived an auxiliary rather than a dominating role of the school system to the civil service examinations.

¹⁵ Cui Ou, a censor in the Qinzong era, was the first to accuse the school regulations under Cai Jing as military rule, as he argued, “since the Chongning era, the treacherous Cai Jing monopolized politics. He

with Cai Jing and the educational reforms under his stewardship continued throughout the Southern Song and beyond.¹⁶ The disinterest of Southern Song scholars to revive the countrywide school recruitment system is also attributable to other factors. A possible reason is because Southern Song scholars had turned to academies or community schools as vehicles for moral instruction, and hence had no need to revive the government school system.¹⁷ Some preferred keeping the civil service examinations in order to protect their vested interests, recognizing that the school promotion system generated more social mobility than the examinations.¹⁸ Such choices predetermined the course of educational development in late Imperial China. Even though the school promotion system managed to survive into the Southern Song, it was never extended to the scale of the late Northern Song, when it nearly displaced the civil service examinations. Under subsequent Yuan dynasty, traits of the Three Hall system could hardly be found at the Directorate of Education.¹⁹ And in Ming times, the Directorate School resumed the school promotion mechanism,²⁰ but government education remained subservient to the examinations, as registration at local schools was a prerequisite for candidates sitting for the civil service examinations.

relied on the school system to muzzle scholars just as [the government] relied on military laws to coerce soldiers.”自崇寧以來，京賊用事，以學校之法馭士人，如軍法之馭卒伍。See Cui Ou, “Lun Feng Xie”, in *SWJ, Juan* 62, pp.924. The Yuan historian Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 had followed Cui’s argument, accusing Cai Jing had “relied on the school system to muzzle scholars just as [the government] relied on military laws to coerce soldiers.” 借學法以鉗士人，如用軍法以脅卒伍。See *WXTK, Juan* 42, pp.397. Translation is adopted and modified based on Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.196.

¹⁶ Gao Side 高斯得, “Ba Hu Zhe Qi Si Shi” 跋胡哲七思詩, in *QSW*, Vol.344, pp.166. Even contemporary Chinese historians are under its influence, see Yuan Zhen, *Song Dai Jiao Yu*, pp.147-148 and Wang Jianqiu, *Song Dai Tai Xue Yu Tai Xue Sheng*, pp.159-161 and 245-248.

¹⁷ See James T. C. Liu, “Lue Lun Song Dai Di Fang Guan Xue He Si Xue De Xiao Zhang”, pp.211-228; Chen Wenyi, *You Guan Xue Dao Shu Yuan*; Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Chapter 4, pp.115-152; Thomas H.C. Lee, “Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi”, pp.105-136.

¹⁸ From a preliminary study of the biographies in the official Song Dynastic history, Thomas H.C. Lee “suggests the Imperial University indeed was pretty open to a rather wide spectrum of people, more so than the civil service examinations.” See Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.265.

¹⁹ For a thorough discussion on the Directorate of Education in the Yuan dynasty, see Wang Jianjun 王健軍 zhu, *Yuan Dai Guo Zi Jian Yan Jiu* 元代國子監研究 (Aomen: Ao Ya zhou kan chu ban you xian gong si, 2003).

²⁰ For details of student promotion in Ming Directorate School, see Lin Liyue 林麗月 zhu, *Ming Dai De Guo Zi Jian Sheng* 明代的國子監生 (Taipei: Guo li Taiwan shi fan da xue li shi yan jiu suo, 1979).

Evaluation of the Imperial University - an alternate approach

Problems that occasioned the implementation of the educational reforms, together with the negative views of Southern Song scholars toward the school promotion scheme, leaves the impression that government education in late Northern Song was a disaster. But does this image square with historical reality? In his attempt to recover the historical truth, Hu Yongguang clarified the relationship between Cai Jing and the school system in a recent doctoral thesis. By tracing the life and career paths of several students who dared to oppose Cai Jing, Hu found that “even though these upper hall degree holders refused to join the political faction of Cai Jing after they graduated, all of them were able to pass levels of investigation and examination in different levels of schools. It is evident that Cai Jing had no direct influence on certain schools during these years.”²¹ Apart from removing the stigma associated with the school system, Hu also highlights the social contribution of the Three Hall System - it “helped many commoners to acquire literacy and increased social mobility to a certain level” so that they could “establish their fame in local regions and transform themselves into new generations of local elites in the Southern Song period.”²² Hu’s acknowledgement of the contribution of government schools to social mobility is consistent with the observations of Richard Davis in his study of the Shi family of Mingzhou decades ago. He argued that subordination of literary training to practical knowledge at the Imperial University “tended to favor bureaucratic aspirants of nonstatus origins, for adeptness at composing the highly stylized essays and poems of the examinations came through rigorous and prolonged training, whereas practical knowledge is as much a function of native intelligence as formal education.”²³ But no scholarly consensus exists today. Thomas Lee argued that contribution of local

²¹ Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.201.

²² Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.233-234.

²³ Richard L. Davis, *Court and family in Sung China*, pp.19-20, For a brief account on how the humble early Shi generations benefited from the government school education, see pp.43-45.

government schools in promoting education to the masses was negligible, since poor peasants' families likely hesitated in sending their youths to schools. In turn the spirit of communal nomination, the ideal way to identify virtuous commoners, was never revived through the school system.²⁴ Instead of focusing merely on the commoners, I would argue that the Imperial University contributed significantly to the education of the large group of lower elites who were neither poor nor commoners.

Instead of assessing the school system in terms of its social change, as many scholars have tried, a more direct and target-oriented approach is adopted here. As discussed in previous chapters, the primary objective of the Song court and the scholar-officials in devising a school recruitment network was to nurture and select morally upright officials. In addition, through manipulating the system, Cai Jing and the reformers intended to exert political and ideological control over students, envisioning student support for the reforms. Hence the behavior and job performance of the officials who graduated from government schools, together with their ideological and political inclinations throughout their careers, should be the criteria by which to assess the effectiveness of the school system under Huizong. In this connection, the relevant personnel at the Imperial University should be thoroughly investigated. What sorts of men were appointed as teaching officials? Were they suited to the task of indoctrinating students and did they succeed? Who were identified as the most deserving students? What contributions did they make upon graduation from the University? How did university students and graduates react, in times of crisis, when the Northern Song dynasty reached its nadir? Answers to the above questions hopefully can help us to attain a fuller understanding and a fairer judgment of the school promotion scheme under Huizong.

²⁴ Thomas Lee, "Song Dai Jiao Yu Yu Ke Ju De Ji Ge Wen Ti", pp. 67-72.

Political and ideological indoctrination in government schools

“Relying on institutions to transform the world,”²⁵ as noted by the Southern Song neo-Confucian master Zhu Xi, was a common strategy of Wang Anshi and the reformers. They utilized the elitist educational institution – the Imperial University – to exert their ideological and political control. Under the label of “unifying morality”, a process started in the early 1070’s, Wang Anshi replaced a group of veteran Directorate Lecturers with his own disciples. The latter group assisted him in manipulating a channel to recruit officials while compiling the *New Commentaries* as the standard in the civil service examinations and school curriculum. Despite a brief interruption by the Yuanyou conservatives, the learning of Wang Anshi continued to dominate the intellectual arena for another 30 years while the reformers were in power. This owes much to the intellectual control over government schools exerted by Cai Jing. Apart from the factional proscription in the Chongning era that prohibited the learning of Yuanyou, Cai Jing also enforced punishments for students who commented on politics. Such suppression of dissent, according to Peter Bol, “was a practical means of removing those officials who could not understand how things were supposed to work and blocked the effectuation of the Policies.”²⁶ To exert ideological indoctrination, the reformers selected teachers for different levels of government schools with great care. In general, officials who criticized the New Policies or individual reformers were prohibited from taking the recruitment test for teaching officials.²⁷ Even students who studied at the Imperial University, or candidates who got the Advanced Scholar degree during the conservative Yuanyou era, were considered as ideologically “impure”, and hence disqualified to serve as teachers,

²⁵ Peter K. Bol, “Chu Hsi’s Redefinition of Literati Learning”, in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee, *Neo-confucian education*, pp.170.

²⁶ Peter K. Bol, “Whither the Emperor? Emperor Huizong, the New Policies, and the Tang-Song Transition”, pp.122.

²⁷ *SCGY*, *Juan* 17/9b, pp.398; *SS*, *Juan* 20, pp.387.

especially for the metropolitan schools.²⁸ In turn, the incumbent “students of Yuanyou” would be replaced by those who studied in the metropolitan schools or earned degrees in the reformist era (1068-1085, 1094-1125). Among the 121 Professors at the metropolitan schools appointed after 1094 whose name can be identified today, at least 77% (93/121) of them either studied at the metropolitan schools or got their degree in the reformist era. Only 4 University professors were degree holders in the Yuanyou era. (Appendix 3)

This policy stemmed from the assumption that officials educated and selected in reform era would adhere to the reform policies and Wang Anshi learning. However this proved less the reality. In fact officials who studied at the Imperial University and passed the examinations in the reform era were often critical towards the reforms, as in the case of Chen Guan. Admitted to the Imperial University before 1076, Chen was conferred the Advanced Scholar degree in 1079.²⁹ He once served as University Professor in the Zhezong era and he fervently criticized Wang Anshi and the reforms.³⁰ Neither were university students of the reformist era necessarily passionate towards the learning of Wang Anshi. Yang Shi, a university student in the mid-1070’s and an Advanced Scholar of 1076, denounced Wang Anshi’s learning as twisted and evil in 1126 as the Director of Education. The “Nine Gentlemen at the University from Wenzhou” 溫州“太學九先生”who studied at the metropolitan schools under reformists’ dominance were similar. Ideologically they were inclined to Cheng Yi and

²⁸ One of the typical victim was Hong Ni. He was a student at the Inner Hall of the Imperial University in the Yuanyou era and successfully got the Advanced Scholar degree in 1094. He was then appointed as University Professor. But in view of his educational background, he was reallocated to the Fujian area when the reformers were in power. See *Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan* 京口耆舊傳, *Juan* 4/11b, in *SDZJCK*, Vol.31, pp.196.

²⁹ Fei Gun 費袞 *zhuan*, *Liang Xi Man Zhi* 梁谿漫志 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1985), *Juan* 3, “She Yan Tang” 射雁堂, pp.31.

³⁰ Chen Guan’s criticisms on Wang Anshi could be found in his *Si Ming Zhuan Yao Ji* 四明尊堯集. According to the comments of the compilers of the *Si Ku Quan Shu* on this book, “Chen Guan’s critique (on Wang Anshi and the New Policies) were appended to the quotations from the *Veritable Records*, comprising a total of 65 entries.” 皆摘《實錄》原文，而各著駁論其下，共六十五條 See Ji Yun, *Si Ku Quan Shu Zong Mu Ti Yao*, *Juan* 89, pp.2295.

literally they followed Su Shi and his disciples,³¹ both schools were denounced by the reformers. If appointed teaching officials at the metropolitan schools, it is doubtful whether they would genuinely promote Wang Anshi's learning and the reformists' agenda, in the cases of Hu Anguo 胡安國 (1074-1138) and Zeng Ji 曾幾 (1084-1166). Hu was admitted to the University in the Shaosheng era. Even though he did not following the classical exegesis of Wang Anshi, he managed to pass through the Advanced Scholar degree in 1097 with outstanding result. During his tenure as a teaching official at the University in the Chongning and Daguan era when the Yuanyou learning was forbidden, Hu Anguo continued to study the works by Cheng Yi and Zhang Zai and get along with Cheng's disciples Yang Shi, You Zou 游酢 (1053-1123) and Xie Liangzuo 謝良佐 (1050-1121).³² It is therefore unlikely that Hu Anguo would genuinely promote the learning of Wang Anshi. Zeng Ji, another outstanding university student during the reform period, was conferred the Upper Hall degree in 1115 and subsequently appointed Professor at the Biyong Academy. By then Yuanyou learning was still prohibited in schools, and students merely plagiarized sample answer scripts to pass the examinations. One day, in marking examination scripts, he found an excellent piece on classical meaning. But the candidate had been disqualified by previous readers for adopting Yuanyou literary style. Zeng challenged with his colleagues about excluding, but in vain. A day later, in desperation, Zeng openly praised this student and recited his work aloud. Teachers and students were all impressed by the high quality of the student's submission, allowing the student to win the degree.³³ By appointing these dissidents to teach at the metropolitan schools, the reformists compromised their mission to indoctrinate students.

³¹ See Yang Wanli 楊萬里, "Wenzhou Tai Xue Jiu Xian Sheng De Xue Shu Ji Qi Wen Xue Cang Zuo" 溫州“太學九先生”的學術及其文學創作, *Literary Heritage* 文學遺產, No.6 (2010), pp.75-83.

³² Hu Yin, "Xian Gong Xing Zhuang" 先公行狀, in *FRJ*, Juan 25, pp.518; Zeng Minxing 曾敏行 zhu; Zhu Jieren 朱杰人 biao jiao, *Du Xing Za Zhi* 獨醒雜誌 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1986), Juan 7, pp.68.

³³ Lu You 陸游, "Zeng Wen Qing Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 曾文清公墓誌銘, in Lu You zhuan, *Lu You Ji* 陸游集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1976), Juan 32, pp.2301-2302.

Apart from recruiting “ideologically” correct officials as university professors, Cai Jing also tried to control the staff and students in government schools by appointing his cronies to oversee the Education Bureau, among them Qiang Yuanming 強淵明 (?-1124) and Xue Ang. Qiang earned the Advanced Scholar degree in 1085 and became a close ally of Cai Jing. He assisted Cai in creating the lists of Yuanyou factionalists as a tool to purge Cai’s political enemies and consolidate his authority as Chief Councilor. In reward, Qiang was swiftly promoted to be Drafting official of the Secretariat, Director of Education, and then Hanlin Academician. In 1109 when Cai temporarily stepped down as Councillor, Qiang was also demoted,³⁴ evidence of close tie between them. Another crony of Cai Jing, Xue Ang, was a follower of Wang Anshi learning. Despite his weak academic performances, especially in poetry, Xue was appointed University Professor in 1094. In collaboration with another teacher Lin Zi, Xue even contemplated destroying the printing blocks of the anti-reform leader Sima Guang’s masterpiece - *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Governance*. Cleverly, Chen Guan quoted Emperor Shenzong’s Foreword to the work to thwart Sima’s enemies.³⁵ Despite these deficiencies, Xue Ang continued to rise as a teaching official. When construction of the Biyong was finished in 1104, Xue Ang had become the Director of Education. His elevation to this top position as overseer of educational policy owes much to his fawning on Cai Jing.³⁶ The appointment of such a figure to head the Imperial University undermined the image of government schools in general.

It appears that the quality of leaders of this elitist educational institution was

³⁴ *SS, Juan* 356, pp.11209.

³⁵ *SS, Juan* 345, pp.10962; Zhou Hui, *Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu*, *Juan* 9, pp.400.

³⁶ In order to please Cai Jing, Xue Ang forbid his family members to mention the name of Cai Jing. Those who violated such rules would be beaten by a stick. Xue’s respect for Cai endured even after the death of the Chief Councilor. During one occasion when Xue mistakenly broke such taboo, he hit his own mouth as punishment. See Wu Zeng, *Neng Gai Zhai Man Lu*, *Juan* 12, pp.368 and *SS, Juan* 352, pp.11122-11123.

in decline. Heretofore, supervisors of the Directorate with long tenures, such as Sun Shi and Hu Yuan, were prominent scholars of upstanding character who students wished to imitate. Once the Song court adopted the school promotion scheme, practical administrators rather than upstanding scholars were appointed to lead the institution, men like Li Ding and Zhang Zao. This situation worsened in the Huizong era. Apart from the unscrupulous Xue Ang cited above, the court named as Director of Education Zhang Bangchang,³⁷ a man who turned traitor to the dynasty. Ironically, precisely as the expectations of the elitist institution to nurture moral men increased, the quality of its leadership declined.

Other than appointing cronies to lead the education bureau, Cai Jing also relied on a comprehensive regulatory framework to exert political control. Students charged with “maligning court politics” 謗訕朝政 might be expelled or locked in the “Confession Building” 自訟齋 as a corrective. Despite these threats, a few university students risked their career to criticize the errors of the court and high officials. Student Chen Chaolao 陳朝老 cited 14 corrupt practices of Cai Jing in a memorial of 1109.³⁸ Upon resuming the Chief Councillorship in 1112, Cai instructed censors to denounce Chen; exile at Daozhou ensued.³⁹ Another student, Deng Su, was expelled from school in 1122 after submitting nearly a dozen poems to Huizong about transporting exotic flowers and rocks to the capital, which had caused much suffering in the southeast.⁴⁰

³⁷ Zhang Bangchang was the Director of the Imperial University around 1111. See *SHY, Chongru* 2/16, 3/32 and *Xuanju* 17/22-23.

³⁸ Quoted from Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100–1126) and Ch'in-tsung (1126–1127) and the Fall of the Northern Sung”, pp.581. See also *CBJSBM, Juan* 131, pp.2222; *SS, Juan* 472, pp.13725. The full memorial submitted by Chen Chaolao could be found in *SCBMHB, Juan* 50/4b-6b, pp.376-377. For a brief narration of this in English, see Charles Hartman, “A Textual History of Cai Jing biography in the Song Shi”, pp.541-542.

³⁹ See Lu Xinyuan 陸心源 (1834-1894) *ji zhuan, Song Shi Yi* 宋史翼 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1991), *Juan* 8/17a-18b, pp.93.

⁴⁰ *SS, Juan* 375, pp.11603. Deng explained why he wrote these 11 poems in his “Jin Hua Shi Shi Zhuang” 進花石詩狀, see *Bing Lü Ji* 栢欄集, *Juan* 1. These 11 poems, namely “Hua Shi Shi Shi Yi Zhang Bing Xu” 花石詩十一章并序, can also be found in *Bing Lü Ji, Juan* 1. See also Wang Zhaopeng

In addition to political control, Cai Jing sought to control ideas. He prohibited the works of Yuanyou factionalists, while sanctioning the works of Wang Anshi, making them the standard in government schools and examinations. Students who refused, such as Wang Juzheng 王居正 (1087-1151) and Cao Chongzhi 曹崇之 (1082-1125), were punished. When admitted to the Imperial University during the Chongning era, Wang's talent was widely acclaimed among schoolmates. But he refused to follow the learning of Wang Anshi and lingered at the university for more than a decade before finally getting a degree in 1121.⁴¹ Cao Chongzhi fared better. His father a close friend of Su Shi and Huang Tingjian, Cao adopted a writing style of the Yuanyou faction and despised on the literary style of the examination halls. He was nonetheless admitted to the Upper Hall of the Biyong Academy and soon promoted to the Imperial University. But he did not advance further in school. A few empathetic professors gave him the following advice:

Your writings, in erudition and argumentative eloquence, must be considered exquisite. Nonetheless they do not conform to the regulations of today. Nowadays should essays mention the various *Histories*, or carelessly use a sentence of Su Shi, they are deemed impure. Even though the examiners love your essays, they dare not recommend you. You seek to defer to your father's preferences, but you might want to modify your style of writing to conform to today's rules, in which case, how dare the examiners fail you?⁴² 子之文博辯雄偉，非不美也，奈不合今之法度。今之程文，出入諸史，或誤用東坡公一句，即謂之不純正，有司雖愛其文而棄不敢取。子急於奉親，宜少變其體以就今之繩尺，則有司何敢棄也？

Despite his reluctance, Cao followed their advice and changed the style to

王兆鵬; Chen Weimin 陳為民, "Deng Su Nian Pu" 鄧肅年譜, in Wang Shuizhao 王水照 zhu bian, *Xin Song Xue Di Yi Ji* 新宋學 第一輯 (Shanghai: Shanghai ci shu chu ban she, 2001), pp.113-140, particularly pp.122-123.

⁴¹ Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137-1181), "Gu Zuo Chao San Lang Hui You Ge Dai Zhi Ti Ju Jiang Zhou Tai Ping Xing Guo Gong Jiang Du Xian Kai Guo Zi Shi Yi Wu Bai Hu Zhi Shi Zeng Zuo Tong Yi Da Fu Wang Gong Xing Zhuang" 故左朝散郎徽猷閣待制提舉江州太平興國宮江都縣開國子食邑五百戶致仕贈左通議大夫王公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.262, pp.49.

⁴² Wang Tinggui 王庭珪, "Gu Jiao Shu Lang Cao Gong Xing Zhuang" 故校書郎曹公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.158, pp.276.

achieve outstanding results in the 1109 degree examinations.⁴³ These two stories show that most teaching officials followed the selection criteria set by the government, failing candidates who employed Yuanyou dogma, while pressuring non-conformists to conform by slightly changing their style for the sake of appearances. Such flexibility provided a loophole around ideological conformity at government schools and explains the ongoing presence of dissidents at government school. In the case of Zhu Song 朱松 (1097-1143), father of Zhu Xi who earned the Upper Hall degree in 1118, his passion for poems and prose were both disallowed under the Cai Jing administration.⁴⁴ Another university student Jiang Qi 江琦 (1085-1142) was a follower of Cheng Yi, but paid lip service to Wang Anshi's learning to prepare for examinations at the University.⁴⁵ Thus, ideological and political control at government schools was hardly complete.

The political attitude of University graduates is another measure of how effective government schools were in carrying out ideological indoctrination. It is interesting to note that even though Upper Hall graduates benefited the most from the educational reforms as they could enter the officialdom without passing the civil service examinations, not all students were grateful. In fact, their discontent with the reformers, the reforms and/or Wang Anshi learning often emerged after their graduation. Zhang Gang 張綱 (1083-1166), the top University graduate of 1114, expressed his contempt for Cai Jing when the latter attempted to win his support.⁴⁶

⁴³ Wang Tinggui 王庭珪, "Gu Jiao Shu Lang Cao Gong Xing Zhuang" 故校書郎曹公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.158, pp.276.

⁴⁴ Zhu Xi, "Huang Kao Zuo Cheng Yi Lang Shou Shang Shu Li Bu Yuan Wai Lang Jian Shi Guan Jiao Kan Lei Zeng Tong Yi Da Fu Zhu Gong Xing Zhuang" 皇考左承議郎守尚書吏部員外郎兼史館校勘累贈通議大夫朱公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.252, pp.321.

⁴⁵ Hu Yin, "Zuo Xuan Jiao Lang Jiang Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 左宣教郎江君墓誌銘, in *FRJ*, *Juan* 26, pp.576-577.

⁴⁶ See Hong Zhen 洪箴, "Gu Zi Zheng Dian Xue Shi Zuo Tong Yi Dafu Dan Yang Jun Kai Guo Gong Shi Yi Er Qian Er Bai Hu Shi Shi Feng Yi Bai Hu Zhi Shi Zeng Zuo Guang Lu Da Fu Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang" 故資政殿學士左通議大夫丹陽郡開國公食邑二千二百戶食實封一百戶致仕贈左光祿大夫張公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.220, pp.248-249. For a brief description regarding the outstanding performance of Zhang Gang in government schools as well as his early career during Cai Jing's

Another top University graduate Chen Gongfu vigorously criticized the learning of Wang Anshi in 1136. He argued that “the harm done by Wang Anshi’s learning was worse than his policies. His policies were harmful to talented men, but his teachings harmed people’s heart. The *Three Commentaries* as well as the *Interpretation on Characters* maligned the sages and desecrated the way.”⁴⁷ 安石學術之不善，尤甚於政事，政事害人才，學術害人心，三經、字說詆誣聖人，破碎大道…。Echoing Gaozong’s critique of Wang Anshi, Shen Yuqiu, an university graduate of 1115, went a step further to compare Wang Anshi to Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53B.C.E. -18) and Feng Dao 馮道 (882-954), two notoriously disloyal ministers.⁴⁸ Such statements prove that political and ideological controls at government schools were a failure.

There are multiple reasons for Cai Jing’s failure at ideological control. As argued by contemporary scholar Hu Yongguang, “the increased educational opportunity inevitably stimulated academic diversity since more and more people had acquired a high level of literacy. Their views could not be easily molded and shaped by the court.”⁴⁹ Also accountable for the failure was advances in printing technology. Printing technology permitted a wide circulation of books prohibited by the government. Despite the ban on the learning of Yuanyou at the university, students such as Wang Tinggui 王庭珪 (1080-1172) and Liu Caishao 劉才邵 (1086-1158), graduates in 1118 and 1109 respectively, managed to smuggle onto campus copies of the literary works by Su Shi and Huang Tingjian. Another student Liu Mianzhi 劉勉之 (1091-1049) illicitly brought the works of the Cheng brothers to campus. These forbidden pieces were hidden in the daytime, but studied privately by students at

Councillorship, see Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.200-201.

⁴⁷ SS, *Juan* 379, pp.11693.

⁴⁸ Liu Yizhi 劉一止, “Zhi Shu Mi Yuan Shi Shen Gong Xing Zhuang” 知樞密院事沈公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.152, pp.242.

⁴⁹ Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.233. In his doctoral dissertation, Hu had reservations in whether the government school network was a tool of Cai Jing to exert ideological and political control. See Hu Yongguang, “Cultivating Merit”, pp.195-202.

night.⁵⁰ The story reveals that teaching officials at the university failed to enforce school regulations, either willfully or by neglect.

Another explanation for the failure of political control in government schools may relate to the unique political and academic culture of the Song dynasty. As noted by Hilde De Weerdt, the Song literati had a widespread interest in current affairs as evident in the circulation of politically sensitive documents such as court archival compilations, collections of memorials, the court gazette, and examination policy questions and essays.⁵¹ Partially attributed to advances in printing technology, the political awareness of the literati correlates with their rising consciousness about Confucian ideology through opinion power.⁵² The growth of “opinion power”, a by-product of the rising power of censors and policy-critique advisers since the late Zhenzong era, soon spread to the metropolitan schools. The Imperial University thus became a fountain of political opinions, where countless students commented on politics.⁵³ But “the gathering of a group of elite students in the capital...could be potentially explosive”, since “young students could easily entangle themselves in all types of political controversies.”⁵⁴ The results might not be always what the government had intended, in view of the fact that some students fiercely criticized policy failures as well as the misdeeds of high officials despite the repression of the regime.

⁵⁰ Yang Wanli, “Shan Xi Ji Hou Xu” 杉溪集後序, in Xin Gengru 辛更儒 *jian jiao*, *Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao* 楊萬里集箋校 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2007), *Juan* 83, pp.3351; Hu Quan 胡銓 (1102-1180), “Jian Bu Fu Wen Wang Gong Mu Zhi Ming” 監簿敷文王公墓誌銘, in *QSW*, Vol.196, pp.136. See also Zhu Xi, “Pin Shi Liu Gong Xian Sheng Mu Biao” 聘士劉公先生墓表, in *QSW*, Vol.253, pp.76 and *SS*, *Juan* 459, pp.13462.

⁵¹ Hilde De Weerdt, “Byways in the Imperial Chinese Information Order: The Dissemination and Commercial Publication of State Documents”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Jun., 2006), pp.145-188.

⁵² James T.C. Liu, “An Administrative Cycle in Chinese History”, pp.141.

⁵³ For a summary on the political activism of Northern Song University students, see Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.186-192.

⁵⁴ Thomas H.C. Lee, *Government Education*, pp.186.

In addition, the metropolitan schools were primarily designed for students to prepare for examinations and equip themselves to become officials. Located in the heart of Kaifeng, south of the Imperial Palace (Appendix 4), the university was close to the Song court. Envisioning that students could get closer to government officials serving and residing in the capital so that the former group could familiarize themselves with the latter's life and duties,⁵⁵ the location of the campus also facilitated the court easy monitoring of students. Besides, University students, scholars on the verge of becoming officials, served an important mission of bridging the gap between the government and the community. Students at the Imperial University were never detached from politics. The autonomy as well as interdependence of academia and politics made political control at the Imperial University nearly impossible.

Contributions of Upper Hall graduates

Another criterion to evaluate the countrywide Three Hall system is the behavior and work performance of university graduates, which should shed light on the political significance of the Imperial University and the school system as a whole. How well did the product of the Imperial University perform in their official careers? Did university graduates managed to climb the career ladder to hold influential positions at court? To answer these questions, a comprehensive survey will be done of the high officials during the reigns of Huizong, Qinzong and Gaozong (1100-1162). The rationale behind choosing this target group correlates with the stages of development of the Imperial University. As discussed throughout the dissertation, the Imperial University played a crucial role in selecting prospective officials: at its early

⁵⁵ See Thomas H.C. Lee, "Life in the Schools of Sung China", pp.57, which mentioned that the Imperial University is a place for students to build social connection with officials.

stage in the Renzong and Yingzong era, it was merely an elitist institution preparing candidates for the most competitive Departmental examinations. Starting in the Shenzong era, its graduates could receive appointments to government offices without participating in civil service examinations, despite the fact that only a few graduates managed to enter officialdom via this route. During the conservative Yuanyou era, the school promotion channel was interrupted. Only after Emperor Zhezong assumed personal rule in 1094 did the Imperial University reclaim its recruitment function. Its role further expanded in the Huizong era, hosting and educating talented students nominated by local schools, and in turn recommending the most outstanding students to be government officials.

Due to the heightened role of the Imperial University in the official recruitment process in the late Zhezong and Huizong eras, the performance of students who studied then deserves investigation in assessing the effectiveness of the University. Since university students generally took 8-10 years after graduation to assume influential positions, it means that students who studied at the university in between the late Zhezong and Qinzong eras (1094-1127) became active in court politics in the Huizong, Qinzong and Gaozong eras (1100-1162). Hence through studying high officials of these three reigns, a majority of whom can be found in the *Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao*, we can have a general understanding of the political influence of the Northern Song Imperial University. It is interesting to note that among the 87, 29 and 76 civilian Councilors in the Huizong, Qinzong and Gaozong era, at least 29%, 38% and 49% respectively were former university students. Whereas University graduates' participation in secretarial jobs, which handles the drafting of edicts and imperial instructions, is equally appealing, since at least 36%, 50% and 45% of the 240, 26 and 192 Secretaries during Huizong, Qinzong and Gaozong era respectively were university graduates.

Active participation of former University students in the political arena somehow highlights the significance of the Northern Song metropolitan schools, particularly during the Huizong period when the countrywide school system overshadowed the civil service examinations in recruiting officials. Notwithstanding the crucial positions assumed by University alumni, how well did they behave as individuals and officials? Did they turn out to be morally upright officials as envisioned? These questions require a more in-depth analysis on the group of University graduates.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, after the countrywide Three Hall system had been implemented, students at the Imperial University who were considered by the teaching officials as outstanding in both conduct and Classical knowledge were recommended to the emperor. It was unnecessary to pass any civil service examination, so they were conferred the “Upper Hall” degrees and promptly assigned to government offices. In addition, in the course of implementing the Three Hall system countrywide, the court continued the top two levels of the civil service examinations, the Palace and Departmental examinations in three-year intervals; most candidates who participated were University students. Hence a broad definition of university graduates in the Huizong era covers (i) students recommended annually by the University to the emperor for conferral of the “Upper Hall” degree (*Gong Shi*); and (ii) candidates with a history of study at the Imperial University who subsequently passed the Palace and Departmental examinations (*Jin Shi*) in the years 1103, 1106, 1109, 1112, 1115, 1118, 1121 or 1124 – a group of more than a thousand.⁵⁶ In view of the huge number of university graduates in these 2 groups, the scope of analysis will

⁵⁶ For a brief discussion on the meaning of the terms “Gong Shi” and “Jin Shi” in the Huizong era, see Gong Yanming, Fang Fang, “Bei Song Huizhong Chao Gong Shi Yu Jin Shi Kao Bian – Jian Ping Huang Song Shi Chao Gang Yao Bian Zhuan Ti Li”, pp.39-43; Ju Wei 祖慧, “Liang Song Shang She Shi He Kao Shu” 兩宋“上舍釋褐”考述, *Wen Shi* 文史 Vol.81, No.4 (2007), pp.237-246, particularly pp.242.

be focused on the top 3 students on the list of Upper Hall students presented to the emperor, plus the top candidate in the Palace examination (*Zhuangyuan*) with University affiliation at some point. Under this definition, 23 men constitute this elite cluster of university graduates for the period 1103-1121. (Appendix 5) In the following paragraphs, the behavior and career of these elite graduates will be reviewed to assess the effectiveness of the Imperial University, and the school system as a whole, in nurturing and selecting morally upright officials.

Among these elite graduates, Li Bangyan, He Li 何臬 (1089-1127) and Zhu Shengfei 朱勝非 (1082-1144) rose to Grand Councilor in the course of their careers. The three men were a mixed group in terms of ethics. Li Bangyan was a commoner from Huaizhou, his father a craftsman in silver. Li Bangyan got along well with students from the Hedong area. When they passed by Huaizhou *enroute* to the capital, Li Bangyan's father generously received the students and sponsored their trip. In this way, Li Bangyan became highly regarded by these prospective officials. Such personal factors likely explain why Li Bangyan managed to graduate from the Imperial University as the top candidate in 1107.⁵⁷ The obsequious Li then flattered Cai You 蔡攸 (1077-1126), son of the veteran Councilor Cai Jing, and a number of powerful eunuchs with his glib tongue, gaining additional favors. With their assistance, Li quickly rose to Chief Councilor in early 1126. Under military pressure from the Jurchen, Li insisted on ceding territory to the invaders in order to seal a peace deal. His cowardice ultimately led to the mass protest in 1126/2, where he barely escaped from unruly mobs. Soon he was demoted and was never rehabilitated until his death in 1130.⁵⁸ Li Bangyan was clearly a man of marginal moral probity.

⁵⁷ *TPZJTL*, *Juan* 28/51a, pp.1973.

⁵⁸ For biographies of Li Bangyan, see *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 28/4a-b, pp.207 and *Juan* 48/10a-12a, pp.363-364; *SS*, *Juan* 352, pp.11120-11121.

The repute of He Li was somewhat better. He Li was a naturally talented men, adept at writing poems and essays. After studying for some time at the Imperial University, he was ranked as the first candidate in the palace examination of 1115.⁵⁹ A native of Sichuan, the home of Su Shi, He Li was once accused of being a follower of Su Shi, causing his demotion. But soon Huizong elevated He Li to Executive Censor. He Li later criticized the corrupt practices of the Councilor Wang Fu and his faction that led to their purge. After the accession of Qinzong, He Li became Hanlin Academician, Right executive assistants of the Department of Ministries, Executive of the Secretaries and finally Chief Councilor. When the Jurchen launched their second invasion, the hawkish He Li insisted on a staunch defense against the enemy. Ironically He Li's naïve belief in the supernatural power of Guo Jing 郭京 (?-1126), compounded by heavy drinking in the midst of the Jurchen siege, partly contributed to the fall of the capital.⁶⁰ As the Chief Councilor, He Li was sent to the Jurchen campsite to negotiate a peace treaty. The Jurchen general informed He Li that he might indulge his troops and liquidate the entire populace of Kaifeng. He Li responded cleverly by saying "to indulge your troops and liquidate a city is merely a onetime demonstration of power. But to love the people and to extend virtue will leave a thousand generations forever grateful."⁶¹ 縱兵洗城，元帥一時之威也；愛民施德，元帥萬世之恩也。 Probably owing to his moving reply, tens of thousands of lives were spared. When Huizong and Qinzong were escorted North as captives of the Jurchen, He Li accompanied them for a spell. He also refused to join the puppet regime of Zhang Bangchang and died of willful starvation.⁶² Despite flawed military policies, He Li was a loyal and ethical official.

⁵⁹ Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202) zhuan; He Zhuo 何卓 dian jiao, *Yi Jian Zhi* 夷堅志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1981), *Yi Jian Yi Zhi* 夷堅乙志, Juan 7, "He Cheng Xiang" 何丞相, pp.243.

⁶⁰ See Wang Zengyu, "Song Qinzong He Ta De Si Ming Zai Zhi" 宋欽宗和他的四名宰執, in Wang Zengyu zhu, *Si Hao Bian* 絲毫編 (Baoding: Hebei da xue chu ban she, 2009), pp.170.

⁶¹ *SCBMHB*, Juan 87/8a, pp.650.

⁶² The biographies of He Li could be found in *SCBMHB*, Juan 87/5a-8a, pp.648-650. *SS*, Juan 353, pp.11135-11136. For a recent narration of He Li's role in the Qinzong era, see Wang Zengyu, "Song Qinzong He Ta De Si Ming Zai Zhi", pp.169-171.

The third Chief Councilor in our group, Zhu Shengfei, proved less respectable. Upon graduation from the University in 1105, Zhu held only minor bureaucratic positions during the Huizong reign. But “his literary skills, conduct, as well as administrative abilities caused contemporaries to scoff,” 文學行治，皆為人所傳笑 due partly to his association with the notorious Wang Fu. Even in the Xuanhe period, his mediocre performance was reproached.⁶³ His ethical deficiencies came to light during the Jurchen assault on the Southern capital Ying Tian Fu, where Zhu Shengfei was acting prefect; rather than fight, he disguised himself as a commoner and fled.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, he managed to join the Prince of Kang, who acceded the throne as Southern Song emperor in 1127/5. Zhu was then appointed Drafting official of the Secretariat. He was further promoted to be the Right Executive Assistant of the Department of Ministries and subsequently the Chief Councilor. Zhu’s most valuable contribution to emperor Gaozong, as noted in the *Official History of the Song Dynasty*, involved in curbing a mutiny in 1129.⁶⁵ There seems little else of merit among his political achievements.⁶⁶ Song contemporaries portray Zhu as “an obsequious person who flattered others and pandered to the emperor. He occupied [key] positions without making a name for himself.”⁶⁷ 惟諂佞阿諛，迎合上意...備位無所建明。One official, Hu Yin, accused Zhu of being corrupted by the practices of Xuanhe, indulging in unrighteous deeds, and drawing upon eunuchs and clerks to build a good reputation among these inferior men.⁶⁸

⁶³ Hu Yin, “Zai Lun Zhu Sheng Fei” 再論朱勝非, in *FRJ*, *Juan* 15, pp.329. See also *LDMCZY*, *Juan* 182/24b-29b, pp.2394-2396.

⁶⁴ *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 213/10a, pp.1535.

⁶⁵ *SS*, *Juan* 362, pp.11319. For a brief English narrative on the achievement of Zhu Shengfei in resolving the mutiny, see James T.C. Liu, *China turning inward*, pp.89-90.

⁶⁶ Li Huarui, “Zhu Shengfei Yu Nan Song Chu Qi He Zhan” 朱勝非與南宋初期和戰, in Li Huarui zhu, *Song Xia Shi Yan Jiu* 宋夏史研究 (Tianjin: Tianjin gu ji chu ban she, 2006), pp.180-181. This article (pp.176-189) illustrates the role of Zhu Shengfei in the changing attitude towards war and peace of the early Southern Song government.

⁶⁷ *SCBMHB*, *Juan* 213/11b, pp.1535.

⁶⁸ Hu Yin, “Zai Lun Zhu Sheng Fei” 再論朱勝非, in *FRJ*, *Juan* 15, pp.332-333.

Other elite graduates of significance as political and moral leaders include Quan Bangyan, Chen Yuyi, Zhang Gang, and Duan Fu 段拂. All four men had been Assistant Councilors in the Gaozong era. Graduating in the same cohort as Zhu Shengfei in 1105, Quan Bangyan served in various Educational Bureaus at both the central and local level for most of the Huizong period.⁶⁹ When the capital was encircled by the Jurchen in late 1126, Quan Bangyan and the veteran loyalist Zong Ze led troops from the Hebei circuit in defending Kaifeng, all in vain. After the capture of Huizong and Qinzong, Quan and Zong urged the Prince of Kang to accede the throne and lead the country. In late 1127, Quan served as prefect of Dongping, half of which had been taken by the Jurchens. But Quan did not decline this dangerous task. By reiterating the core values of “loyalty and righteousness”, Quan rallied soldiers, whom by then were starving, to staunchly defend the city. In this way, a city encircled by 200,000 Jurchen troops managed to resist for several months, impressing the Jurchen general of the high morale of Song armies. The city ultimately fell after the Jurchen launched a full-scale attack. Quan managed to escape the city, but his parents and wife all perished. Failing to die as martyr, Quan submitted himself for punishment, although Gaozong pardoned him.⁷⁰ After proving his administrative abilities in several circuits, Quan became the Secretary of the Bureau of Military Affairs in 1132. He then submitted ten proposals to restore the glory of the Song dynasty.⁷¹ Likely on the recommendation of Chief Councilor Lü Yihao 呂頤浩 (1071-1139), Quan was further advanced to Acting Assistant Councilor. He died a year later, partly explaining why official historians characterized him as “just an ordinary man who filled the post without notable achievements.”⁷² 碌碌無所建明，充位而已 Nevertheless, his loyalty

⁶⁹ *TPZJTL*, *Juan* 28/51a, pp.1973. Yang Wanli, “Shu Mi Jian Can Zhi Zheng Shi Quan Gong Mu Zhi Ming” 樞密兼參知政事權公墓誌銘, in Xin Gengru, *Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao*, *Juan* 124, pp.4806; *SS*, *Juan* 396, pp.12075.

⁷⁰ Yang Wanli, “Shu Mi Jian Can Zhi Zheng Shi Quan Gong Mu Zhi Ming”, in Xin Gengru, *Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao*, *Juan* 124, pp.4807; *SS*, *Juan* 25, pp.459.

⁷¹ *SS*, *Juan* 396, pp.12076.

⁷² *SS*, *Juan* 396, pp.12077.

to the Song court and wit in composing prose and poetry are surely noteworthy.⁷³

Even more eminent in literary talent was Chen Yuyi. He could already compose prose as a boy, the source of some repute. After being ranked third among Upper Hall graduates in 1113, he took up various teaching positions in the metropolitan schools. Chen's writings were so popular that "immediately upon some compositions, his reputation reverberated throughout the capital, where venerable and influential men competed to host him."⁷⁴ 辭章一出，名動京師，諸貴要人爭客之。 During the calamities of Jingkang, Chen returned home to mourn his parents. In 1131, Gaozong appointed him as Drafting official of the Secretariat and Hanlin Academian. He became Assistant Councilor in 1137/1. During Chen's career, his political acuity surpassed others. He once characterized himself as "following moral principles in conducting court affairs and honoring the ruler's authority in resurrecting law and order."⁷⁵ 唯師用道德以輔朝廷，務尊主威而振綱紀。 He was also fond of recommending talent. These various deeds earned him great acclaim among scholar-officials.⁷⁶

Zhang Gang was another equally honorable elite graduate. The top graduate of the county, prefectural and metropolitan schools, he worked at the metropolitan schools as teaching officials upon graduation in 1114. During a meeting with Huizong, Zhang Gang reiterated the importance of distinguishing honorable from petty men and

⁷³ Yang Wanli, "Shu Mi Jian Can Zhi Zheng Shi Quan Gong Mu Zhi Ming", in Xin Gengru, *Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao*, Juan 124, pp.4810.

⁷⁴ Zhang Nie 張嶠(1096-1148), "Chen Gong Zi Zheng Mu Zhi Ming" 陳公資政墓誌銘, in *QSW*, Vol.187, pp.227.

⁷⁵ Zhang Nie, "Chen Gong Zi Zheng Mu Zhi Ming", in *QSW*, Vol.187, pp.228. See also *SS*, Juan 445, pp.13130.

⁷⁶ For primary sources regarding the life of Chen Yuyi, see Zhang Nie, "Chen Gong Zi Zheng Mu Zhi Ming", in *QSW*, Vol.187, pp.227-229 and Zhang Nie, "Ji Chen Can Zheng Qu Fei Wen" 祭陳參政去非文, in *QSW*, Vol.187, pp.233. See also *SS*, Juan 445, pp.13129-13130. For recent studies regarding the life of Chen, see Bai Dunren 白敦仁 zhu, *Chen Yu Yi Nian Pu* 陳與義年譜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1983).

rectifying degenerated customs with education. His talent was highly valued by Huizong, as reflected in the following remarks: “Widely acclaimed in the field of literature, Zhang’s deportment and work performance are equally acclaimed.”⁷⁷ 馳譽文場，行實相稱 During the first wave of Jurchen invasion, Zhang assisted in the defense of Kaifeng, but he refused to be rewarded after the intruders withdrew. He was then sent to the southeast to oversee judicial matters, where he succeeded in forcing the military generals to follow law and order. Emperor Gaozong soon elevated Zhang to be Drafting official of the Secretariat and Policy review adviser. During his tenure, Zhang tried every means to restore law and order and to relieve the suffering of the people. After Qin Gui’s 秦檜 (1090-1155) ascendance, Zhang retired from politics for 22 years, returning to serve as Imperial tutor after the death of Qin. Gaozong appreciated his teaching, and soon appointed him as Assistant Councilor. Echoing Gaozong’s call to rescind the harsh policies of Qin Gui, Zhang Gang cited more than 80 crucial matters of benefit to the people, which were promulgated by the emperor. “After he became Assistant Councillor, all matters under heaven became clear and bright. Since Gaozong’s restoration [after the death of Qin Gui], the maintenance of law and order able to last hundreds of years was the handiwork of Zhang.”⁷⁸ 公自參機政，天下事多所建明，更化以來，所以維持紀綱法度可以數百年猶蒙其功者，公實有力 Zhang Gang retired due to advanced age, but his upright character earned ample applause from contemporaries, in contrast with Qin Gui.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Hong Zhen 洪箴, “Gu Zi Zheng Dian Xue Shi Zuo Tong Yi Dafu Dan Yang Jun Kai Guo Gong Shi Yi Er Qian Er Bai Hu Shi Shi Feng Yi Bai Hu Zhi Shi Zeng Zuo Guang Lu Da Fu Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang” 故資政殿學士左通議大夫丹陽郡開國公食邑二千二百戶食實封一百戶致仕贈左光祿大夫張公行狀, in *QSW*, Vol.220, pp.250.

⁷⁸ Hong Zhen 洪箴, “Gu Zi Zheng Dian Xue Shi Zuo Tong Yi Dafu Dan Yang Jun Kai Guo Gong Shi Yi Er Qian Er Bai Hu Shi Shi Feng Yi Bai Hu Zhi Shi Zeng Zuo Guang Lu Da Fu Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang”, in *QSW*, Vol.220, pp.257.

⁷⁹ For a detailed biography of Zhang Gang, see Hong Zhen 洪箴, “Gu Zi Zheng Dian Xue Shi Zuo Tong Yi Dafu Dan Yang Jun Kai Guo Gong Shi Yi Er Qian Er Bai Hu Shi Shi Feng Yi Bai Hu Zhi Shi Zeng Zuo Guang Lu Da Fu Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang”, in *QSW*, Vol.220, pp.247-262. See also *SS, Juan* 390, pp.11951-11953.

In contrast, Duan Fu fell far short of expectations for an elite graduate. The son-in-law of the preeminent calligrapher Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107),⁸⁰ he graduated from the Upper Hall in 1107, making second place.⁸¹ In the 1140's, Duan was elevated to Drafting official of the Secretariat and subsequently Assistant Councilor,⁸² his performance far from satisfactory. According to an anecdote, Duan took a long time to draft edicts, causing colleagues to urge him to speed things up. Duan decided instead to shut himself inside a room at home and refuse visitors.⁸³ This story suggests that Duan was a marginal literary talent. Neither was he especially responsible as Councilor. During an audience between the emperor and Chief Councilor Qin Gui, Duan fell asleep, unaware that Qin had finished.⁸⁴ He was something of a buffoon.

A number of elite graduates were gravely flawed in moral virtues based on traditional Confucian expectations of (i) ethical conduct (De Xing 德行), (ii) cultural attainment (Wen Xue 文學), and (iii) governance (政事 Zheng Shi).⁸⁵ Elite graduates such as Jia Anzhai 賈安宅 (1088-1140), Mo Chou 莫儔 (1089-1164) and Song Qiyu 宋齊愈 (?-1127) were passively supportive of the puppet Zhang Bangchang in 1127. They initially hesitated to support the Prince of Kang, Zhao Gou, as legitimate successor to the Song throne, causing them to be portrayed as disloyal to the Song dynasty. Then, there was the notorious coward Li Bangyan, whose ambivalence about

⁸⁰ Chen Gu 陳鵠 zhuan, *Xi Tang Ji Qi Jiu Xu Wen* 西塘集耆舊續聞 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1993), Juan 3, pp.316.

⁸¹ *TPZJTL*, Juan 28/51a, pp.1973.

⁸² *XNYL*, Juan 152, pp.2455 and, Juan 157, pp.2549.

⁸³ Hong Mai, “Wai Zhi Zhi Nan” 外制之難, in *Rong Zhai San Bi* 容齋三筆, Juan 4, in Hong Mai zhu, *Rong Zhai Sui Bi* 容齋隨筆 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2005), pp.475.

⁸⁴ Hong Mai, “Li Lin Fu Qin Gui” 李林甫秦檜, in *Rong Zhai Xu Bi* 容齋續筆, Juan 15, in Hong Mai zhu, *Rong Zhai Sui Bi*, pp.401.

⁸⁵ These three categories, as Peter Bol argues, “were frequently used in Tang and Song to define areas of elite endeavor and ways of gaining good reputations.” See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, pp.50. See also Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895-1990), “Zhong Guo Li Shi Shang De Chuan Tong Jiao Yu” 中國歷史上的傳統教育, in Qian Mu, *Guo Shi Xin Lun*, pp.224 for the interpretations of these categories in the modern world.

resisting the Jurchen contributed to the fall of Kaifeng. Another elite graduate of ill-repute is He Dagui 何大圭. After graduating in 1118, He Dagui took up various metropolitan and local positions. But during the first Jurchen invasion in early 1126, He abandoned his duties and fled.⁸⁶ After Gaozong resuscitated the ruling house, He joined the Southern Song government. But he was soon demoted to the Lingnan region in 1130 on charges of ineptitude and poor conduct, indulging in alcohol and wanton deeds.⁸⁷ The recommendation of the Chief Councilor Zhang Jun allowed He Dagui to be restored in 1135.⁸⁸ But later when Zhang Jun lost the emperor's favor, He Dagui turned against his patron and fawned on Qin Gui.⁸⁹ Such unscrupulous deeds were widely denounced by scholar-officials, which partly led to his demotion in 1158.⁹⁰ These left Ye Shi with the impression that “most officials who misled the country in the Xuanhe and Jingkang eras were prominent school graduates.”⁹¹ 宣和、靖康所用誤朝之人，大抵學校之名士也。

Even more noteworthy, certain ordinary graduates of the Imperial University demonstrated virtues far exceeding the elite graduates. One exemplar was Li Ruoshui 李若水 (1093-1127), a University graduate in 1118.⁹² Li accompanied Emperor Qinzong to the Jin camp in early 1127 to negotiate a peace treaty. After he appraised as a ruse the Jurchen demand for gold and silver from the Song people by holding Qinzong hostage, he denounced them as untrustworthy dogs. His face badly beaten, Li was then imprisoned. The Jurchen general offered a lucrative reward to win his fealty. In response, Li insisted that “just as the sky has no second sun, how can I serve a

⁸⁶ *SCBMHB*, Juan 27/8b, pp.201 and Juan 45/7b, pp.338.

⁸⁷ Zhang Gang 張綱 “Bo Wang Ruohai Chai Qian Zhi Hui Zhuang” 駁汪若海差遣指揮狀, in *QSW*, Vol.168, pp.263; *XNYL*, Juan 36, pp.695.

⁸⁸ *XNYL*, Juan 85, pp.1401.

⁸⁹ *XNYL*, Juan 161, pp.2615.

⁹⁰ *XNYL*, Juan 179, pp.2956.

⁹¹ Ye Shi, “Xue Xiao” 學校, in Ye Shi, *Ye Shi Ji*, Juan 13, pp.800.

⁹² Yuan historians also categorized Li Ruoshui under the group of martyrs in the *Official Song History*, see *SS*, Juan 446, pp.13160-13162. Highlights of the loyal deeds of Li could also be found in *SCBMHB*, Juan 81/9a-12b, pp.611-612 and Ding Teqi, *Jing Kang Ji Wen*, in *QSBJ*, Ser.4 Vol.4, pp.137.

second overlord?”⁹³ 天無二日，若水寧有二主哉 A servant of Li Ruoshui also urged him to surrender, citing the need to take care for elderly parents, but Li argued that loyalty to the emperor outweighs filial piety. When the Jurchen then threatened to purge the Zhao clan and establish a new monarch, Li countered “the Song emperor is humane, filial, respectful and frugal. Since he is without fault, he scarcely deserves to be removed?”⁹⁴ 主上仁孝恭儉，未有過失，豈可輕議廢立 He proceeded to curse the Jurchen: “You conquered other peoples’ country, but instead of preserving the populace, you merely plunder gold and silk, treating them as slaves to enrich your own self. Your failure will come soon.”⁹⁵ 汝伐人之國，不務安全生民，徒掠金帛子女以自豐，汝滅亡不久矣。The Jurchen then retaliated by cutting out the tongue of Li Ruoshui and torturing him to death.

Another ordinary university graduate who died as Song martyr was Yang Bangyi 楊邦乂 (1086-1129). In 1129/11 when the Jurchen invaded Jiankang (modern Nanjing), Song commanders Chen Bangguang 陳邦光 and Li Jue 李榘 surrendered. But their subordinate Yang Bangyi refused to follow, insisting on loyalty to the Song.⁹⁶ Yang wrote the following passage on his clothes: “I would rather be a ghost of Song royals than a subject of a rival regime.”⁹⁷ 寧作趙氏鬼，不為他邦臣 When brought to the Jurchen camp and forced to prostrate to the Jurchen general, Yang refused to do so, claiming that “I am not surrendering, why should I prostrate?”⁹⁸ 我不降，何拜 and returned home. On the following day, generous rewards were offered to Yang to induce his surrender, but Yang refused. A day later Yang was brought to a

⁹³ SS, *Juan* 446, pp.13161

⁹⁴ XNYL, *Juan* 2, pp.56. 建炎元年(1127)二月辛巳

⁹⁵ XNYL, *Juan* 2, pp.56. 建炎元年(1127)二月辛巳

⁹⁶ SS, *Juan* 25, pp.470. Yuan historians also categorized Yang Bangyi under the group of martyrs in the *Official Song History*, see SS, *Juan* 447, pp.13195-13196. A brief biography of Yang could also be found in Zhou Yinghe 周應合 zhuan, *Jing Ding Jian Kang Zhi* 景定建康志, *Juan* 48, in *DFZCKJB*, Vol.3, pp.1969.

⁹⁷ Zhou Yinghe zhuan, *Jing Ding Jian Kang Zhi*, *Juan* 48, in *DFZCKJB*, Vol.3, pp.1969.

⁹⁸ Zhou Yinghe zhuan, *Jing Ding Jian Kang Zhi*, *Juan* 48, in *DFZCKJB*, Vol.3, pp.1969.

banquet hosted by the Jurchen general, where Chen Bangguang and Li Jue were also present. Yang not only publicly denounced the two renegades, but once again expressed his desperation for death. This time Yang scolded the Jurchen as barbarians who invaded China. “Heaven will hardly allow your survival, but will render into thousands of pieces. I will scarcely be contaminated by you!”⁹⁹ 天寧久假汝，行磔汝萬段，尚安得汙我！ The Jurchen ultimately killed him, ripping his heart from his chest in retribution.

The above stories about Li Ruoshui and Yang Bangyi are not isolated. Zhu Bi 朱蹕 (1079-1129) and Liu Shiying 劉士英 (1082-1126),¹⁰⁰ to name just a few, were ordinary graduates of the Imperial University in the Northern Song who became martyrs in the Song-Jin wars of the 1120’s to 1130’s. We already cited the loyal deeds of Chen Dong and his cohort in the midst of Jurchen invasion of Kaifeng. Even Zhu Xi, a skeptic of the school system, still acknowledged the fact that “there was a limitless pool of talent in schools, men like Hu Bangheng [Hu Quan 胡銓 (1102-1180)], who demonstrated such righteous vigor!”¹⁰¹ 學舍中無限好人才，如胡邦衡之類，是甚麼樣有氣魄！ In this light, in terms of nurturing student virtues, the University was not a complete failure. What is really problematic was the selection mechanism adopted in schools: marginal students managed to pass and ranked alongside elite graduate, while genuinely talented men of outstanding conduct lost out. This educational problem still persists even in modern times.

⁹⁹ Zhou Yinghe zhuan, *Jing Ding Jian Kang Zhi*, Juan 48, in *DFZCKJB*, Vol.3, pp.1970.

¹⁰⁰ For a detailed biography of Zhu Bi, see Zhang Shou 張守, “Cong Shi Lang Lin An Fu Qian Tang Xian Ling Zeng Xuan Jiao Lang Zhu Jun Mu Biao”從仕郎臨安府錢塘縣令贈宣教郎朱君墓表, in *QSW*, Vol.174, pp.46-48. See also *SS*, Juan 25, pp.471. For Liu Shiying, see Wang Xiangzhi, *Yu Di Ji Sheng*, Juan 4/23b, in *XXSKQS*, Vol.584, pp.72.

¹⁰¹ Zhu Xi, *Zhu Zi Yu Lei*, Juan 109, “Zhu Zi Liu”朱子六, in *ZZQS*, Vol.17, pp.3541. For the biographical sketch of Hu Quan, see Yang Wanli, “Song Gu Zi Zheng Dian Xue Shi Chao Yi Da Fu Zhi Shi Lu Ling Jun Kai Guo Hou Shi Yi Yi Qian Wu Bai Hu Shi Shi Feng Yi Bai Hu Ci Zi Jin Yu Dai Zeng Tong Yi Da Fu Hu Gong Xing Zhuang”宋故資政殿學士朝議大夫致仕廬陵郡開國侯食邑一千五百戶食實封一百戶賜紫金魚袋贈通議大夫胡公行狀, in Xin Gengru, *Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao*, Juan 118, pp.4496-4520.

Personal failures is a possible explanation for this phenomenon, taking into account that corruption and cronyism informed the selection process and produced some undeserving nominations. Besides, institutional innovations carried out by the reformers “only led to the profusion of school regulations and ever more bureaucratic approaches to disciplinary matters...ultimately brought discredit to their own educational ideals.”¹⁰² Even more crucial are flaws in the schools’ assessment and promotion mechanism. As argued by Wu Zhengqiang, although the conduct of students could be better observed in schools, they still had to pass a series of examinations at different levels of schools in order to be nominated. In this light, there seems little difference between the school promotion scheme and the civil service examinations, since written examinations, despite different venues, still played a dominant role in both channels.¹⁰³ The school system, similar to the civil service examinations, still failed to recruit morally qualified officials. However, there was a huge disparity between the two schemes as pertains to the resources involved, as the school promotion scheme cost far more than the civil service examinations. Not only the Song government needed to support teachers and students,¹⁰⁴ but families had to invest more time and money for school promotion scheme relative to the civil service examinations.¹⁰⁵

Despite deficiencies in recruiting genuinely talent and morally upright officials, the metropolitan schools, hosting nearly 4,000 students during its peak, successfully cultivated a huge pool of prospective officials. These university graduates might be perceived as redundant officials during times of peace, but in the midst of a dynastic crisis when numerous civil officials were killed or captured, they became

¹⁰² Thomas H.C. Lee, “Song Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi”, pp.120.

¹⁰³ Wu Zhengqiang, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua*, pp.225 and 228-229.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Lee estimates that the government expenses on education take up 5.1-8.4% of overall expenditure. See Thomas Lee, “Song Dai Jiao Yu Yu Ke Ju De Ji Ge Wen Ti”, pp.64-67.

¹⁰⁵ Wu Zhengqiang, *Ke Ju Li Xue Hua*, pp.228.

perfect candidates to fill vacant positions. As noted above, nearly 50% of high officials in Gaozong's administration had a history of study at the Northern Song Imperial University. Needless to say there must have been countless university graduates working in various prefectures and counties during the transition from the Northern to the Southern Song.¹⁰⁶ Their service maintained the continuity in local government as well as the central administration, hence facilitating the successful restoration of Southern Song rule.¹⁰⁷ Despite the fact that the university, as the sole vehicle for civil service recruitment for a generation, was bound to have a big impact on the court of Gaozong a generation later, these contributions of its graduates need to be acknowledged.

¹⁰⁶ Zhao Tiehan quoted a few exemplars of Song University graduates in his article "Song Dai De Tai Xue", pp.354. For a more detailed list of graduates and a brief articulation of their distinctive characters, see Table 8 appended to the Graduate thesis of Zhu Chongsheng, who categorized University graduates into six categories: civil officials (*Wen Guan* 文官), military official (*Wu Guan* 武官), loyal and upright (*Zhong Yi* 忠義), Confucian (*Ru Lin* 儒林), Eremites (*Yin Yi* 隱逸), Treacherous officials (*Jian Chen* 姦臣). See Zhu Chongsheng, "Song Dai Tai Xue Xue Feng Yu Guo Yun De Guan Xi", pp.242-291.

¹⁰⁷ For a thorough analysis on the politics under Gaozong's reign, see Teraji Jun 寺地遵, *Nansō shoki seijishi kenkyū* 南宋初期政治史研究 (Horoshima: Keisuisha, 1988) and James T.C. Liu, *China turning inward*. Readers may also refer to Tao Jing-shen, "The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127–1162)", in *CHC*, Vol.5 part 1, pp.644-709 for a shorter narrative.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

From the above history of the Directorate of Education and the Imperial University in the Northern Song, we noted the rising importance of the metropolitan educational institutions, which became intertwined with Song politics. In the early Song, the Directorate of Education played insignificant political role: assisting in the collation of Classical texts, printing and publishing books, as well as preparing higher elites for the civil service examinations and/or appointment to government office. Subsequent to the gradual acknowledgment of the commoners' demand for education, the Imperial University was formally established in the middle of Renzong's reign, representing the transition from aristocracy to meritocracy. At the same time, echoing the rising power of the censors and policy-critique advisers, most of whom also supervised the Directorate of Education, the trend in commenting on politics soon became a vogue in metropolitan schools. With limited government intervention, a pluralistic intellectual environment in the school was nurtured in late Renzong's era - diverse views blossomed while orthodoxy was challenged. Soon scholarly consensus had been reached to develop a school system as an alternative to the existing civil service examinations to recruit officials. Envisioning to select morally upright officials and unify customs, the Three Hall system at the Imperial University and a set of New Classical Commentaries was promulgated. Although the University's function in recruiting officials was temporarily downscaled during the conservative Yuanyou era, its political significance soon rose to a newer height when emperors Zhezong and Huizong decided to continue their father's reform legacy. To realize the ideal of recruiting morally upright officials, a countrywide Three Hall system was carried out, which at one point displaced the civil service examinations and dominated the channel to recruit officials. Being the supreme educational institutions in the capital, the

metropolitan schools hosted thousands of elite students nominated by prefectures, most of whom rose to be high officials at the court of Huizong, Qinzong and Gaozong. Other than serving as a mechanism to nurture and select talent, the school system also served as a tool of political and ideological control. This political mission, despite its failure, somehow corrupted the ideal of nurturing talent, as the moral record of University graduates proved uneven. The famous dictum of Max Weber (1864-1920) seems applicable to describe the fate of Northern Song educational reforms: “The final result of political action often, no, even regularly, stands in completely inadequate and often even paradoxical relation to its original meaning. This is fundamental to all history, a point not to be proved in detail here.”¹ This deficiency in the school selection mechanism was exaggerated by Southern Song literati, who became increasingly skeptical toward political reforms in the late Northern Song, leaving posterity an unfairly negative impression of the school recruitment experiment.

Through a comprehensive survey of elite graduates of the late Northern Song Imperial University, we found that the Imperial University, and the countrywide school system as a whole, was not a complete failure in terms of nurturing morally upright officials, contrary to Southern Song perceptions. Another significance of this research is that it re-emphasizes the impact of politics on educational institutions, a perspective which has often been ignored in recent Chinese and Western scholarships, where social history perspectives dominate. Lastly, in this specific study of an elite educational institution during one of its most flourishing periods in Imperial China, I aimed to address a larger issue – the conflict-riddled relationship between emperors and scholar-officials in the Northern Song as reflected in initiatives in higher education. Song intellectuals in general had sought to strengthen the throne, and hence

¹ Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation”, in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (ed), *From Max Weber: essays in sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp.117.

the state apparatus, for the sake of effective governance. Power struggles in the educational arena as highlighted in this thesis proves that the scholar-officials had yet to resolve what Frederick W. Mote called “the dilemma created by the juxtaposition of an increasingly powerful imperial institution (largely of their making) and the reinvigorated power of the new Confucian political thinking (which genuinely motivated them).”² Only near the end of the dynasty did a way out emerge - scholar-officials ultimately lost ground at the Imperial University, the stronghold of Confucian ideological authority,³ which facilitated the institutionalization of the emperor’s autocracy – a prominent feature of middle period Chinese politics.

As noted by the prominent Japanese historian Ichisada Miyazaki, the institutionalization of imperial autocracy was a preeminent feature of the Tang-Song transformation.⁴ This process evolved over the Song period and culminated in the early Ming.⁵ During this process, competition existed between the emperor’s ultimate power and the power held by scholar-officials. The proposals of the Song literati on

² Frederick W. Mote, *Imperial China 900-1800*, pp.137.

³ A modern scholar Ge Zhaoguang also acknowledges this subtle relationship between emperors and scholar-officials in the Song period. In his words, “emperors, government, and bureaucrats who controlled political resources dominated, while the class of scholar-officials who possessed cultural resources was losing ground.” See Ge Zhaoguang, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi Di Er Juan*, pp.189.

⁴ Lau Nap Yin, “He Wei Tang Song Bian Ge”, pp.130.

⁵ Miyazaki concluded that institutionalization of the emperor’s autocracy was completed in the early Song. However I would argue that the process was completed in early Ming, signified by the emergence of a despot “who exercises absolute power, especially in a cruel or oppressive way.”(*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th edition (revised) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp.389) Differences in the end point owe much to how “autocracy” is defined. Miyazaki’s view of emperor’s autocracy means the emperor’s personal assumption of direct responsibility. In James T.C. Liu’s terms, the emperor held both the ultimate power and executive power. Since the founding emperors of the Song, Taizong and Taizu, had already held such powers, Miyazaki therefore concluded that the process was accomplished in the early Song. But should we define autocracy as “a system of government by one person with absolute power”(*Concise Oxford English Dictionary* , pp.88), which, to an extreme, led to despotism, the end-point of institutionalization of autocracy would be different from what Miyazaki argued. Since other powers such as the executive and opinion powers in some ways constrained the ultimate power of Song emperors, it is inappropriate to conclude that institutionalization of emperor’s autocracy was accomplished in Song times. Rather the reign of the founding Ming emperor Zhu Yuanzhang is generally perceived as the height of despotism, a point where emperor’s autocracy was fully institutionalized. See F.W. Mote, “The Growth of Chinese despotism”, pp.1-41. A detailed illustration on how the power of the Song emperor’s was limited by the scholar-officials can be found in Wang Ruilai, “Lun Song Dai Xiang Quan”, pp.106-120 and “Lun Song Dai Huang Quan”, pp.144-160. For James T.C. Liu’s conceptual framework of the power structure in the Song, see his “An Administrative Cycle in Chinese History”, pp.137-152.

recruiting talent through government schools can be interpreted as their attempt to share power over official recruitment with the emperor. This vision was somehow realized in the 1070's when the Three Hall system at the University was launched. In response, the emperor devised a comprehensive set of school regulations in the Yuanfeng era, limiting the function and power of scholar-officials as well as strengthening his control over official recruitment. But the accession of a child emperor after the untimely death of Shenzong reignited the hopes of scholar-officials seeking greater autonomy from the monarch. Under the cloak of reviving the ideal of moral education in schools, the conservatives advocated abolishing restrictive regulations and urged the emperor to visit the Directorate of Education, through which they envisioned limiting the emperor's autocracy. Nevertheless, fierce factional conflicts among scholar-officials made the situation increasingly favorable to the emperor, as Ari Levine argues, "factionalists appealed directly to the throne to promote their allies and to purge their adversaries, employing rhetoric that imagined the court as the ultimate source of ethical and political authority and empowered the monarch as the ultimate arbiter of personnel and policy decisions."⁶ To ally themselves with the emperor, the reformers chose to relinquish some powers enjoyed by scholar-officials in the metropolitan schools. Thus even though the countrywide Three Hall system had been adopted, apparently fulfilling the ideal of recruiting talent through government schools, teaching officials in late Northern Song could no longer enjoy the power of their predecessors in the Xining era. Other elements showing the dominance of the emperor's authority in education include Huizong's direct intervention in the affairs of metropolitan schools by way of repeated imperially handwritten edicts, the ongoing presence of the Palace examinations in the face of school reforms, and the infiltration of Daoism to the University campus on imperial whim. Under these reforms, the emperors' autocracy was reinforced and the power of

⁶ Ari Daniel Levine, *Divided by a common language*, pp.2.

scholar-officials as a whole was weakened. Nevertheless, the opinion power held by the scholars inside the metropolitan schools, despite efforts at suppression by the reformist administration, remained a potential challenger to the alliance between the emperor and corrupt court officials. This power rose to an unprecedented level subsequent to the invasion of the Jurchen, as demonstrated by Chen Dong and his cohort. Such patriotism among students, however, was interpreted as a challenge to the absolute power of the emperor and soon suppressed. The end of the Northern Song marks the final victory of the emperors' ultimate power against the scholarly powers and marks a significant step in the long-term institutionalization of the emperor's autocracy.⁷

Probably in view of the painful experience of Northern Song scholar-officials who lost ground at the metropolitan schools, most Southern Song literati recoiled from the outer realm of practical statecraft and turned to the inner realm of moral perfection.⁸ Failing to infiltrate their ideology at the Imperial University and to make it as the state's orthodox as Wang Anshi did, Southern Song literati, subsequent to the court's retreat from local education following the Jurchen conquest,⁹ turned to transmit the Confucian cultural tradition through private academies.¹⁰ As argued by Linda Walton, these Academies "had to carry the burden of transmitting orthodox tradition and stand as an alternative locus of authority to the state."¹¹ They "began to

⁷ For a brief highlights of the evidence from the realm of thought as well as the political and general history regarding historians' perception of despotism in the Song period, see F.W. Mote, "The Growth of Chinese despotism", pp.5-17. For more evidence regarding the social and economic change in the Song period, see E.A. Kracke, Jr., "Sung Society: Change Within Tradition", *Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol.14 No.4 (Aug. 1955), pp.479-488.

⁸ For a thorough discussion on this intellectual trend during the transition period of the two Songs, see James T.C. Liu, *China turning inward*.

⁹ Richard L. Davis, "Custodians of Education and Endowment at the State Schools of Southern Sung", pp.112.

¹⁰ See James T. C. Liu, "Lue Lun Song Dai Di Fang Guan Xue He Si Xue De Xiao Zhang", pp.211-228; Chen Wenyi, *You Guan Xue Dao Shu Yuan*; and Linda Walton, *Academies and society in southern Sung China*.

¹¹ Linda Walton, "The Institutional Context of Neo-Confucianism: Scholars, Schools, and *Shu-yuan* in Sung-Yuan China", in Wm. Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee, *Neo-confucian education*, pp.489.

be seen by thinkers identified with the Taoxue movement as alternative institutions that could be molded to meet their educational goals and ideals.”¹² This separation between the genealogy of the way and the genealogy of sovereignty was later narrowed when the learning of the way (Dao Xue) was adopted by the state as the ideological authority.

Another dilemma which remains unresolved nowadays is the discrepancy between performance in schools/examinations and that in the working environment. Students who manage to perform outstandingly in schools and examinations do not necessarily turn out to be extraordinarily talented in the job market. Apart from corruption and cronyism which affects schools’ and examinations’ assessment, the mismatch between the school curricula and the demands of the real world is also a possible reason. One of the missions of modern educators is to bridge this gap between the two. Another point which is worth noting is that since the abolition of the school recruitment mechanism, the ideal to recruit morally upright officials through a government school system had seldom been articulated again. With limited emphasis on morality in government education and official recruitment, corrupted practices of literati pervaded in late Imperial China and spread to merchants, workers and farmers. The current standard of morality of Chinese people as a whole has dropped to a point that is far worse than a millennium ago. To rescue the nation and human beings, there is an urgent need to revive morality through education. The Northern Song experiment, despite its deficiencies, is certainly a good reference for incumbent policy makers and educators. In the following paragraph, I would limit myself to a discussion of the ongoing need for moral officials, teachers, and students.

Numerous cases of executors exercising unnecessary violence during law

¹² Linda Walton, “The Institutional Context of Neo-Confucianism”, pp.458.

enforcement as well as arrest of countless bureaucrats on the charges of bribery unveil how corrupted government officials are in contemporary China. Even in Hong Kong, a city famed for high moral standard of civil servants, unauthorized building works are discovered in residences of high officials, whom can hardly escape the blame of abusing power. Marginal ethical standard in Western countries is also exposed in the recent economic downturn, in which Government regulators, rating agency, banks are all lying, trying to cover up the seriousness of debts in their countries. These abusive, corrupted and irresponsible officials are causing civil discontent and unrest, indirectly ruining not only the governance in a particular area but the well-being of the human race. To maintain stability and harmony in the society, a vision frequently articulated by Chinese leaders, there is an urgent need to uplift the ethical standard of bureaucrats who play regulatory roles. This is also crucial to economic recovery, since we have to rely on morally upright regulators to uphold the cardinal principles of trust and faith in businesses. To attain such vision, apart from following the Legalist doctrines to impose restrictions, the Confucianist approach of moral education to both incumbent and prospective officials is inevitable. The Northern Song experience discussed throughout the dissertation sheds light on how the latter should be carried out in the modern context. The first and foremost task is the careful selection of teachers with outstanding moral virtues. Instead of recruiting teachers on the basis of their ideological inclination, as what the reformers did in late Northern Song, people with respectable character and conduct who are devoted to a teaching career, similar to Hu Yuan and Sun Fu in the Northern Song, should be selected so that they can become moral exemplars for imitation. Besides, students' moral behavior apart from their academic results should also be emphasized, where promotion in schools and eligibility to participate in public examinations should take students' conduct into account, as the Song government attempted a millennium ago. With the help of moral teachers and the re-emphasis of morality in the education system, it is envisioned that

moral students will turn out to be moral officials, whom in turn will contribute to moral governance in the 21st century.

Appendix 1: Supervisors of the Directorate of Education during the period 1032-1044

Year of Supervisorship	Name	Served in the offices of censorial or policy critique	Sources
1033	Lu Gongchuo 呂公綽 (999-1055)		Wang Gui, "Zeng Zuo Jian Yi Dai Fu Lu Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 贈左諫議大夫呂公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.53, pp. 234.
1033 and 1035	Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052)	Yes	Lou Yue, "Fan Wen Zheng Gong Nian Pu" 范文正公年譜, in <i>FZYQJ</i> , pp.876-881; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134.
1036	Yao Zhongsun 姚仲孫 (?-1043)	Yes	<i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 300, pp.9971; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134 and 136; Song Xiang, "Qi Ju She Ren Zhi Jian Yuan Yao Zhong Sun Ke Shang Shu Hu Yuan Wai Lang Jian Shi Yu Shi Zhi Za Shi Zhi" 起居舍人知諫院姚仲孫可尚書戶部員外郎兼侍御史知雜事制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.20, pp.223.
1036	Gao Ruona 高若訥 (997-1055)	Yes	<i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 288, pp.9684; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134 and 136; Song Qi, "Gao Guan Wen Mu Zhi Ming" 高觀文墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.25, pp.144-145; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Xuanju</i> 33/5.
1037	Zheng Jian 鄭戢 (992-1053)		<i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 292, pp.9767; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/3, Hu Shu 胡宿, "Tai Wei Wen Su Zheng Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 太尉文肅鄭公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.22, pp.225.
1037	Song Xiang 宋庠 (996-1066)	Yes	Wang Gui 王珪, "Song Yuan Xian Gong Shen Dao Bei Ming" 宋元憲公神道碑銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.53, pp.212; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134.

1039	Zhang Youzhi 張友直 (1002-1059)		Hu Shu, "Zeng Gong Bu Shi Lang Zhang Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 贈工部侍郎張公墓誌銘. in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.22, pp.242.
1040	Ye Qingchen 葉清臣 (1000-1049)		<i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/3.
1041	Liang Shi 梁適 (1000-1069)	Yes	Wang Gui 王珪, "Liang Zhuang Su Gong Shi Mu Zhi Ming" 梁莊肅公適墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.53, pp.309; <i>XCB</i> , <i>Juan</i> 132, pp.3138; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/3; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134.
1042	Wang Su 王素 (1007-1073)	Yes	Wang Gui 王珪, "Wang Yi Min Gong Su Mu Zhi Ming" 王懿敏公素墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.53, pp.314; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/3; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134 and 137.
1044	Yu Jing 余靖 (1000-1064)	Yes	<i>XCB</i> , <i>Juan</i> 148, pp.3579-3580 and <i>Juan</i> 153, pp.3714; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.135.
1044	Wang Gongchen 王拱辰 (1012-1071)	Yes	<i>XCB</i> , <i>Juan</i> 147, pp.3563 and <i>Juan</i> 148, pp.3589; Liu Zhi, "Wang Kai Fu Xing Zhuang" 王開府行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.77, pp.109; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.137.
1044	Tian Kuang 田況 (1005-1063)	Yes	<i>XCB</i> , <i>Juan</i> 147, pp.3563 and <i>Juan</i> 148, pp.3589; Wang Anshi, "Tai Zi Tai Fu Zhi Shi Tian Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 太子太傅致仕田公墓誌銘, in <i>WJGWJJZ</i> , <i>Juan</i> 54, pp.1866; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134.
1044	Wang Zhu 王洙 (997-1057)		<i>XCB</i> , <i>Juan</i> 148, pp.3589.
1044	Sun Bian 孫抃 (996-1064)	Yes	Su Song, "Tai Zi Shao Fu Zhi Zeng Tai Zi Tai Bao Sun Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 太子少傅致仕贈太子太保孫公墓誌銘, in <i>SWGWI</i> , <i>Juan</i> 55, pp.837; <i>SCGY</i> , <i>Juan</i> 4, pp.134 and 136.

Appendix 2: Performance of Hu Yuan's students in the civil service examination during 1046-1089

Students of Hu Yuan who were ranked within the top three in the palace examinations:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Degree Year</u>
Qian Gongfu 錢公輔 (1021-1072)	1049
Teng Yuanfa 滕元發 (1020-1090)	1053
An Tao 安燾 (1031-1105)	1059
Dou Bian 竇卞	1057

Sources: SYXA, Juan 1, 19, 98, 5, 4, 30, 3; Chun Xi Xin An Zhi, Juan 5; SS, Juan 336, 354, 330; An Ding Yan Xing Lu; YLDD, Juan 921/11b-12a, 8570/23a, 3145/11b; Cheng Hua Hu Zhou Fu Zhi, Juan 19; FRJ, Juan 26; QSW; Yong Zheng Zhe Jiang Tong Zhi, Juan 123, 124; Guang Xu Chang Shan Xian Zhi, Juan 49; Jia Jing Shao Wu Fu Zhi, Juan 13; Bao Qing Si Ming Zhi, Juan 8; Hong Wu Wu Xi Xian Zhi, Juan 3; Lü Shi Za Ji, Juan Shang; Gui Ji Xu Zhi, Juan 5; Jia Ding Chi Cheng Zhi, Juan 33; Song Deng Ke Ji Kao; Mo Ji; XCB, Juan 199; Yi Luo Yuan Yuan Lu, Juan 7; SYXABW, Juan 1; SHY, Xuanju 2/9; Chong Zhen Tai Zhou Zhi, Juan 6; Jia Jing Yong Feng Xian Zhi, Juan 4; Jia Jing Jia Xing Fu Tu Ji, Juan 17; Guang Xu Sui Chang Xian Zhi, Juan 8; Jia Tai Wu Xing Zhi, Juan 17; Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan, Juan 6; Zhi Shun Zhen Jiang Zhi, Juan 18; Qian Long Jiang Nan Tong Zhi, Juan 119.

Appendix 3: Professors at the metropolitan schools appointed after 1094 who either studied at the metropolitan schools or got their degree in the reformist era (1070-1124, except 1086-1093).

Period	Name	Sources indicating their Lectureship	Sources indicating their experience at the metropolitan schools or degree year
1. Zhezong	Chen Guan 陳瓘 (1057-1122)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 345, pp.10962; <i>Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu</i> , Juan 9, pp.400.	<i>Liang Xi Man Zhi</i> , Juan 3, pp.31.
2. Zhezong	Zhan Wen 詹文	<i>CBJSMB</i> , Juan 130; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Xuanju</i> 3/55.	<i>Yong Zheng Zhe Jiang Tong Zhi</i> , Juan 124.
3. Zhezong	Shen Zhu 沈銖 (?-1098)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 354, pp.11157.	<i>Song Ren Chuan Ji Zi Liao Suo Yin</i> , pp.685.
4. Zhezong	Jia Bin 家彬	Lü Tao, “Chao Qing Lang Xin Zhi Jia Zhou Jia Fu Jun Mu Zhi Ming” 朝請郎新知嘉州家府君墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.74, pp.89.	<i>Yong Zheng Si Chuan Tong Zhi</i> , Juan 33.
5. Zhezong	Lin Zi 林自	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 485, pp.11529.	<i>Song Shi Yi</i> , Juan 40.
6. Zhezong	Xue Ang 薛昂 (?-1146)	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 492, pp.11678.	<i>SS</i> , Juan 352, pp.11122.
7. Zhezong	Zheng Juzhong 鄭居中 (1059-1123)	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 485, pp.11521; <i>Qi Jiu Xu Wen</i> , Juan 7, pp.361-363.	<i>Zhong Wu Ji Wen</i> , Juan 4, pp.80; <i>Xi Tang Ji Qi Jiu Xu Wen</i> , Juan 7, pp.361-363.
8. Zhezong	He Zhizhong 何執中 (1044-1117)	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 489, pp.11610; <i>SS</i> , Juan 351, pp.11101.	<i>Yong Zheng Zhe Jiang Tong Zhi</i> , Juan 124.
9. Zhezong	Bai Shizhong 白時中 (?-1127)	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 493, pp.11712.	<i>Bei Chuang Zhi Guo Lu</i> , Juan Xia, in <i>QSB</i> , Ser.3 Vol.8, pp.212.
10. Zhezong	Wu Shili 吳師禮	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 502, pp.11966; <i>SS</i> , Juan 347, pp.10999.	Wang Anshi, “Yu Wu Te Qi Shu” 與吳特起書, in <i>WJGWJJZ</i> , Juan 37, pp.1292, <i>SS</i> , Juan 347.
11. Zhezong	Liu Yan 劉弇 (1048-1102)	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 504, pp.12016; <i>SS</i> , Juan 444, pp.13127.	Liu Yan, “Shang Xu Tong Pan Shu” 上許通判書, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.118, pp.299.
12. Zhezong	Fan Zhixu 范致虛 (1070-1129)	<i>XCB</i> , Juan 518 pp.12323; <i>SS</i> , Juan 362, pp.11327.	<i>SS</i> , Juan 351, pp.11099.
13. Huizong	Zhao Shen 趙諗 (?-1102)	<i>SCGY</i> , Juan 16, pp.347.	<i>Du Xing Za Zhi</i> , Juan 4.
14. Huizong	Yu Tianmin 尹天民	<i>CBJSMB</i> , Juan 131, pp.2216; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 68/23.	<i>Yu Di Ji Sheng</i> , Juan 32/16b, in <i>XXSKQS</i> , Vol.584, pp.364.
15. Huizong	Mao You 毛友	Hong Shi 洪适, “Luo Shang Shu Mu Zhi Ming”, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.214, pp.39.	<i>Liang Zhe Ming Xian Lu</i> , Juan 34.

16. Huizong	Wang Ciweng 王次翁 (1079-1149)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 380, pp.11709.	<i>SS</i> , Juan 380, pp.11709.
17. Huizong	Wang Junyi 王俊義	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Xuanju</i> 12/9; <i>SS</i> , Juan 344, pp.10945; <i>Qing Bo Za Zhi Jiao Zhu</i> , Juan 3, pp.108-109.	<i>SS</i> , Juan 344, pp.10945.
18. Huizong	Wang Tao 王綯 (1074-1137)	Zhang Shou, "Zi Zheng Dian Da Xue Shi Zuo Guang Lu Dai Fu Wang Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 資政殿大學士左光祿大夫王公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.174, pp.35.	Zhang Shou, "Zi Zheng Dian Da Xue Shi Zuo Guang Lu Dai Fu Wang Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 資政殿大學士左光祿大夫王公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.174, pp.35.
19. Huizong	Zhu Tingzuo 朱庭佐 (?-c.a.1121)	Wei Liaoweng, "Guan Wen Dian Xue Shi Zuo Tong Feng Dai Fu Zeng Te Jin Shi Wen Jing Zhu Gong" 觀文殿學士左通奉大夫贈特進謚文靖朱公神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.311, pp.83.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.899.
20. Huizong	Song Qiyu 宋齊愈 (?-1127)	Li Shi, "Zi Zhou Cheng Shi Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 資州程使君墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.206, pp.109.	<i>WXTK</i> , Juan 32, pp.306.
21. Huizong	Li Shangxing 李尚行	<i>Wu Xi Xian Zhi</i> , Juan 3a, in <i>DFZCKYB</i> , Vol.3, pp.148.	<i>Xian Chun Chong Xiu Pi Ling Zhi</i> , Juan 17; <i>Wu Xi Xian Zhi</i> , Juan 3a, in <i>DFZCKYB</i> , Vol.3, pp.147; <i>Liang Xi Man Zhi</i> , Juan 6, pp.67.
22. Huizong	Li Duanxing 李端行	<i>Wu Xi Xian Zhi</i> , Juan 3a, in <i>DFZCKYB</i> , Vol.3, pp.147.	<i>Xian Chun Chong Xiu Pi Ling Zhi</i> , Juan 17; <i>Wu Xi Xian Zhi</i> , Juan 3a, in <i>DFZCKYB</i> , Vol.3, pp.147; <i>Liang Xi Man Zhi</i> , Juan 6, pp.67.
23. Huizong	Liu Qiu 李璆 (?-1155)	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/20; Zhai Ruwen, "Cheng Wu Lang Li Qiu Zhong Shang She Ci Di Chu Pi Yong Lu Zhi" 承務郎李璆中上舍賜第除辟廱錄制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.149, pp.52; <i>SS</i> , Juan 377, pp.11654.	Zhai Ruwen, "Li Qiu Chu Guo Zi Bo Shi Zhi" 李璆除國子博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.149, pp.50; <i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/20.
24. Huizong	Li Mai 李邁	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Chongru</i> 2/26; Zhai Ruwen, "Li Mai Quo Zi Bo Shi Zhi" 李邁國子博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.149, pp.50.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.888-889.
25. Huizong	Li Kui 李夔 (1047-1121)	<i>Jia Shi Jiu Wen</i> , Juan Shang; Yang Shi, "Li Xiu Zhuan Mu Zhi Ming" 李修撰墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.125, pp.57.	Yang Shi, "Li Xiu Zhuan Mu Zhi Ming" 李修撰墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.125, pp.57.
26. Huizong	Zhou Lijian 周利建 (1092-1129)	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Zhiguan</i> 28/23.	Zhou Bida, "Zuo Cheng Feng Lang Zhi Fu Wen Ge Zhu Guan Tai Zhou Chong Dao Guan Wang Gong Ting Gui Xing Zhuang"

			左承奉郎直敷文閣主管台州崇道觀王公廷珪行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.232, pp.207.
27. Huizong	Zhou Gu 周固	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 65, pp.540-541.	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 49, pp.126.
28. Huizong	Ji Ling 季陵 (1081-1135)	Qi Chongli, "Song Gu Zhao San Dai Fu Chong Hui You Ge Dai Zhi Ti Ju Jiang Zhou Tai Ping Guan Ji Gong Mu Zhi Ming" '宋故朝散大夫充徽猷閣待制提舉江州太平觀季公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.168, pp.42; Han Yuanji, "Rong Guo Tai Fu Ren Shang Guan Shi Mu Zhi Ming" 榮國太夫人上官氏墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.216, pp.343.	Qi Chongli, "Song Gu Zhao San Dai Fu Chong Hui You Ge Dai Zhi Ti Ju Jiang Zhou Tai Ping Guan Ji Gong Mu Zhi Ming" '宋故朝散大夫充徽猷閣待制提舉江州太平觀季公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.168, pp.42; Han Yuanji, "榮國太夫人上官氏墓誌銘" 榮國太夫人上官氏墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.216, pp.343; <i>SS</i> , Juan 377, pp.11646.
29. Huizong	Yu Li 俞鼎	<i>SHY</i> , Xuanju 19/21, <i>SS</i> , Juan 354, pp.11169.	<i>TPZJTL</i> , Juan 28/51a, pp.1973; <i>SS</i> , Juan 354, pp.11170; <i>Jing Ding Jian Kang Zhi</i> , Juan 32, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.2, pp.1486.
30. Huizong	Shi Jiong 施炯 (?-1144)	<i>SHY</i> , Xuanju 19/22, <i>Wu Xi Xian Zhi</i> , Juan 3 Shang 卷三上, in <i>DFZCKYB</i> , Vol.3, pp.146.	Zou Hao, "Li Ji Mou Mu Zhi Ming" 李季侔墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.132, pp.58; <i>Wu Xi Xian Zhi</i> , Juan 3a, in <i>DFZCKYB</i> , Vol.3, pp.146; <i>Xian Chun Chong Xiu Pi Ling Zhi</i> , Juan 17.
31. Huizong	Liu Yue 柳約 (1082-1145)	Zhou Bida, "Zuo Zhao Yi Dai Fu Chong Fu Wen Ge Dai Zhi Zhi Shi Liu Gong Yue Shen Dao Bei" 左朝議大夫充敷文閣待制致仕柳公約神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.232, pp.214.	Zhou Bida, "Zuo Zhao Yi Dai Fu Chong Fu Wen Ge Dai Zhi Zhi Shi Liu Gong Yue Shen Dao Bei" 左朝議大夫充敷文閣待制致仕柳公約神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.232, pp.214; <i>SS</i> , Juan 404, pp.12222.
32. Huizong	Hong Ni 洪擬 (1071-1145)	<i>Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan</i> , Juan 4, in <i>SDZJCK</i> , Vol.31, pp.196; <i>SS</i> , Juan 381, 11749.	<i>Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan</i> , Juan 4, in <i>SDZJCK</i> , Vol.31, pp.196.
33. Huizong	Hu Anguo 胡安國 (1074-1138)	Hu Yin, "Xian Gong Xing Zhuang" 先公行狀, in <i>Fei Ran Ji</i> , Juan 25, pp.519.	Hu Yin, "Xian Gong Xing Zhuang" 先公行狀, in <i>Fei Ran Ji</i> , Juan 25, pp.518.
34. Huizong	Hu Shen 胡伸	<i>Chun Xi Xin An Zhi</i> , Juan 7, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.8, pp.217; Lo Yuan, "Hu Si Ye Shen Chuan" 胡司業伸傳, in <i>XAWXZ</i> , Juan 81, pp.1971.	Lo Yuan, "Hu Si Ye Shen Chuan" 胡司業伸傳, in <i>XAWXZ</i> , Juan 81, pp.1972.
35. Huizong	Tang Geng 唐庚 (1071-1121)	Lu Rongyi 呂榮義, "Mei Shan Tang Xian Sheng Wen Ji Xu" 眉山唐先生文集序, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.173, pp.4;	唐庚, "Shang Cai Si Kong Shu" 上蔡司空書, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.139, pp.309.

		Zheng Kangzuo 鄭康佐, "Mei Shan Tang Xian Sheng Wen Ji Ba" 眉山唐先生文集跋, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.207, pp.217.	
36. Huizong	Xia Cheng 夏承	Song Huizong, "Qi Chong Li Chu Tai Xue Bo Shi Zhi" 綦崇禮除太學博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.166, pp.151.	<i>Bao Qing Si Ming Zhi</i> , Juan 8, in <i>SYZJFZ</i> , Vol.7, pp.3249.
37. Huizong	Sun Di 孫覲 (1081-1169)	Chen Nan, "Chen Dong Xing Zhuang" 陳東行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.182, pp.330.	Sun Di, "Yu Da Guan Zhong Yu Xi Ming Deng Shi Tong Wei Tai Xue Zhu Sheng, Bie Hou Er Shi Liu Nian, Yu Nan Qian Dao Jiang Qing, Xi Ming Ni Yu Xin Gan Zhi Zhou Shang, Cang Yan Bai Fa Da Lue Xiang Si. Gan Tan Zhi Yu, He Jiu Fu Shi Yi Wei Xiao Le. Xi Ming Bi Dao Xiong Shan Cao Zhi Li Jiu Fan Liu Shi Qi Bi Yong Qian Yun Yu Wei He Zhe Shi Er Pian Yun" 余大觀中與襲明登仕同為太學諸生，別後二十六年，余南遷道江清，襲明逆于新淦之洲上，蒼顏白髮大略相似。感歎之餘，飲酒賦詩以為笑樂。襲明筆刀雄膽操紙立就凡六十七必用前韻。余維和者十二篇云， in <i>QSS</i> , pp.16925.
38. Huizong	Zu Xiushi 祖秀實 (?-1127)	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Xuanju</i> 20/3; <i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 64, pp.503.	Li Zhengmin 李正民, "Ying Zhao Ju Guan Zhuang" 應詔舉官狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.163, pp.102; <i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 49.
39. Huizong	Zhang Gang 張綱 (1083-1166)	Hong Zheng 洪葳, "Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang" 張公行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.220, pp.248-249.	Hong Zheng 洪葳, "Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang", in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.220, pp.248; Zhang Gang, "Fen Huang Wen San" 焚黃文三, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.168, pp.411.
40. Huizong	Zhang Tao 張燾 (1092-1166)	Zhou Bida, "Zhang Zhong Ding Gong Chou Shen Dao Bei" 張忠定公燾神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.232, pp.315.	Zhou Bida, "Zhang Zhong Ding Gong Chou Shen Dao Bei" 張忠定公燾神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.232, pp.315; Li Gang, "Song Gu Long Tu Zhang Gong Fu Ren Huang Shi Mu Zhi Ming" 宋故龍圖張公夫人黃氏墓

			誌銘, in 李綱全集, Vol.170, pp.1569.
41. Huizong	Zhuang Anchang 莊安常 (1072-1146)	Zhong Bing 仲并, "Gu Zuo Zhao Qing Dai Fu Quan Fa Qian Fu Zhou Zhuang Gong Xing Zhuang" 故左朝請大夫權發遣撫州莊公行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.192, pp.329; Wang Zao, "Zuo Zhao Qing Dai Fu Zhu Guan Tai Zhou Chong Dao Guan Zhuang Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 左朝請大夫主管台州崇道觀莊君墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.157, pp.348.	Zhong Bing 仲并, "Gu Zuo Zhao Qing Dai Fu Quan Fa Qian Fu Zhou Zhuang Gong Xing Zhuang" 故左朝請大夫權發遣撫州莊公行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.192, pp.328-329; Wang Zao, "Zuo Zhao Qing Dai Fu Zhu Guan Tai Zhou Chong Dao Guan Zhuang Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 左朝請大夫主管台州崇道觀莊君墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.157, pp.347-348.
42. Huizong	Guo Dunshi 郭敦實	Murong Yanfeng, "Cong Shi Lang Xin Chu Tai Xue Bo Shi Guo Dun Shi Ke Yi Qian Shi Pi Yong Bo Shi Zhi" 從事郎新除太學博士郭敦實可依前試辟雍博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.136, pp.8.	Murong Yanfeng, "Cong Shi Lang Xin Chu Tai Xue Bo Shi Guo Dun Shi Ke Yi Qian Shi Pi Yong Bo Shi Zhi" 從事郎新除太學博士郭敦實可依前試辟雍博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.136, pp.8.
43. Huizong	Chen He 陳禾	<i>Qian Dao Si Ming Tu Jing</i> , Juan 2/16b; <i>SS</i> , Juan 363, pp.11349.	<i>Qian Dao Si Ming Tu Jing</i> , Juan 2/16b; <i>Bao Qing Si Ming Zhi</i> , Juan 8, in <i>SYZJFZ</i> , Vol.7, pp.3241.
44. Huizong	Chen Gao 陳高	<i>Bao You Xian Xi Zhi</i> , Juan 4, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.8, pp.167.	<i>Bao You Xian Xi Zhi</i> , Juan 4, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.8, pp.167; Yang Shi, "Yu Weng Zi Jing Shu" 與翁子靜書, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.124, pp.166.
45. Huizong	Chen Yuyi 陳與義 (1090-1138)	Zhang Nie, "Chen Gong Zi Zheng Mu Zhi Ming" 陳公資政墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.187, pp.227; <i>Chen Yuyi Nian Pu</i> , pp.68.	Zhang Nie, "Chen Gong Zi Zheng Mu Zhi Ming" 陳公資政墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.187, pp.227; Ge Shengzhong, "Chen Qu Fei Shi Ji Xu" 陳去非詩集序, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.142, pp.343.
46. Huizong	Chen Jian 陳戢 (1081-1133)	Zhang Shou, "Hui You Ge Dai Zhi Zeng Zuo Zheng Yi Dai Fu Chen Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 徽猷閣待制贈左正議大夫陳公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.174, pp.40.	Zhang Shou, "Hui You Ge Dai Zhi Zeng Zuo Zheng Yi Dai Fu Chen Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 徽猷閣待制贈左正議大夫陳公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.174, pp.39.

47. Huizong	Chen Ji 陳驥	<i>Bao You Xian Xi Zhi</i> , Juan 2, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.8, pp.68.	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 72, pp.713.
48. Huizong	Zeng Ji 曾幾 (1084-1166)	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Xuanju</i> 20/1.	<i>Nan Song Guan Ge Lu</i> , <i>Xu Lu</i> , Juan 7, pp.84; Lu You, "Ceng Wen Qing Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 曾文清公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.223, pp.187.
49. Huizong	Cheng Kejun 程克俊 (1089-1157)	<i>XAWXZ</i> , Juan 94b "Cheng Ke Jun Jia Chuan" 程克俊家傳, pp.2366; Qi Chongli, "Jian Cha Guan Zha Zi" 薦察官劄子, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.167, pp.366.	<i>XAWXZ</i> , Juan 94 xia "Cheng Ke Jun Jia Chuan" 程克俊家傳, pp.2366.
50. Huizong	Cheng Zhen 程振 (1071-1127)	Wang Zao, "Shang Shu Xing Bu Shi Lang Zeng Duan Ming Dian Xue Shi Cheng Gong Shen Dao Bei" 尚書刑部侍郎贈端明殿學士程公神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.157, pp.296.	Wang Zao, "Shang Shu Xing Bu Shi Lang Zeng Duan Ming Dian Xue Shi Cheng Gong Shen Dao Bei" 尚書刑部侍郎贈端明殿學士程公神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.157, pp.296.
51. Huizong	Yang Xiaoben 陽孝本	<i>SS</i> , Juan 458 pp.13448.	Zou Hao, "Jian Yang Xiao Ben Zhuang" 薦陽孝本狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.131, pp.133.
52. Huizong	Huang Baoguang 黃葆光 (1068-1125)	<i>Chun Xi Xin An Zhi</i> , Juan 7, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.8, pp.218; <i>SS</i> , Juan 348, pp.11028.	<i>Chun Xi Xin An Zhi</i> , Juan 7, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.8, pp.218.
53. Huizong	Qi Chongli 綦崇禮 (1083-1142)	<i>Chen Yuyi Ji Jiao Jian</i> , pp.494; <i>Chen Yuyi Nian Pu</i> 陳與義年譜, pp.70; Song Huizong, "Chu Tai Xue Bo Shi Zhi" 除太學博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.166, pp.151.	<i>SS</i> , Juan 378, pp.11680; <i>Nan Song Guan Ge Lu</i> , <i>Xu Lu</i> , Juan 8, pp.126.
54. Huizong	Liu Anshang 劉安上 (1069-1128)	<i>SHY</i> , <i>Xuanju</i> 19/21.	Xu Jingheng, "Xuan Yi Liu Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 宣義劉公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.144, pp.99; Xue Jiayan 薛嘉言, "Liu An Shang Xing Zhuang" 劉安上行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.181, pp.256.
55. Huizong	Liu Jue 劉珏 (1078-1132)	Zhang Shou, "Song Gu Zeng Tai Zi Shao Shi Liu Gong Shen Dao Bei" 宋故贈太子少師劉公神道碑, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.174, pp.50.	<i>Jia Tai Wu Xing Zhi</i> , Juan 17, in <i>SYZJFZ</i> , Vol.6, pp.2753; <i>SS</i> , Juan 378, pp.11665.
56. Huizong	Pan Lianggui 潘良貴 (1094-1150)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 376, pp.11633.	<i>SS</i> , Juan 376, pp.11633, Pan Lianggui, "Jing Sheng Zhai Shuo" 靜勝齋說, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.185, pp.418.

57. Huizong	Cai Shen 蔡伸 (1088-1156)	Cai Kan 蔡戡, "Da Fu Xing Zhuang" 大父行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.276, pp.323.	Cai Kan 蔡戡, "Da Fu Xing Zhuang" 大父行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.276, pp.323.
58. Huizong	Wei Tia 衛闡 (1090-1151)	Wei Jing 衛涇, "Xian Zu Kao Tai Shi Wei Guo Gong Xing Zhuang" 先祖考太師魏國公行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.292, pp.44.	Wei Jing 衛涇, "Xian Zu Kao Tai Shi Wei Guo Gong Xing Zhuang" 先祖考太師魏國公行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.292, pp.44.
59. Huizong	Zheng Xiu 鄭修	<i>San Chao Ming Chen Yan Xing Lu, Hou Lu</i> 6/2, in <i>ZZQS</i> , Vol.12, pp.555.	<i>Yu Di Ji Sheng, Juan</i> 188/9b, in <i>XXSKQS</i> , Vol.585, pp.446.
60. Huizong	Xie Fu 謝孚 (1067-1120)	<i>SHY, Xuanju</i> 19/21, Hu Yin, "Zhao Qing Lang Xie Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 朝請郎謝君墓誌銘, in <i>Fei Ran Ji</i> '斐然集', <i>Juan</i> 26, pp.581.	Hu Yin, "Zhao Qing Lang Xie Jun Mu Zhi Ming" 朝請郎謝君墓誌銘, in <i>Fei Ran Ji</i> '斐然集', <i>Juan</i> 26, pp.581.
61. Huizong	Han Jin 韓謹	<i>BMTZ, Juan</i> 67, pp.592.	<i>BMTZ, Juan</i> 67, pp.592.
62. Huizong	Wei Xian 魏憲 (1068-1140)	Ge Shengzhong, "Gu Xian Mo Ge Zhi Xue Shi Wei Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 故顯謨閣直學士魏公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.143, pp.57-58.	Ge Shengzhong, "Gu Xian Mo Ge Zhi Xue Shi Wei Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 故顯謨閣直學士魏公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.143, pp.58; <i>Zhong Wu Ji Wen, Juan</i> 5, pp.117.
63. Huizong	Su Yuanlao 蘇元老	<i>SS, Juan</i> 339, pp.10836.	Su Yuanlao, "Song Cheng Du Shi Xi Jin Zhong Xu" 送成都師席晉仲序, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.130, pp.388.
64. Huizong	Quan Bangyan 權邦彥 (1080-1133)	Yang Wanli, "Shu Mi Jian Can Zhi Zheng Shi Quan Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 樞密兼叅知政事權公墓誌銘, in <i>Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao, Juan</i> 124, pp.4806.	Yang Wanli, "Shu Mi Jian Can Zhi Zheng Shi Quan Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 樞密兼叅知政事權公墓誌銘, in <i>Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao, Juan</i> 124, pp.4806.
65. Huizong	Li Jian 李健 (?-1144)	<i>Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan, Juan</i> 7.	<i>Jing Kou Qi Jiu Zhuan, Juan</i> 7.
66. Huizong	Li Xijing 李熙靖 (1075-1127)	<i>SS, Juan</i> 357, pp.11228.	<i>Xian Chun Chong Xiu Pi Ling Zhi, Juan</i> 11.
67. Huizong	Li Zhi 李鷺	<i>SHY, Xuanju</i> 19/22.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan</i> 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.890.
68. Huizong	Xin Bing 辛炳	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan</i> 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.884.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan</i> 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.884.
69. Huizong	Zhou Yin 周因	<i>SHY, Xuanju</i> 19/22.	<i>BMTZ, Juan</i> 49.
70. Huizong	Zhou Zhigao 周執羔 (1094-1170)	Sun Di, "Fu Zhou Yi Huang Xian Cheng Ting Ji" 撫州宜黃縣丞廳記, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.160, p.353, <i>SS, Juan</i> 388, pp.11897.	Sun Di, "Fu Zhou Yi Huang Xian Cheng Ting Ji" 撫州宜黃縣丞廳記, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.160, p.353.

71. Huizong	Lin Jieqing 林介卿	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.892.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.892.
72. Huizong	Hu Shi Jiang 胡世將	<i>SHY</i> , Zhiguan 28/23.	<i>Xian Chun Chong Xiu Pi Ling Zhi</i> , Juan 11.
73. Huizong	Sun Zongjian 孫宗鑑 (1077-1123)	Xu Han, "Chao Feng Dai Fu Chong You Wen Dian Xiu Zhuan Sun Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 朝奉大夫充右文殿修撰孫公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.145, pp.1.	Xu Han, "Chao Feng Dai Fu Chong You Wen Dian Xiu Zhuan Sun Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 朝奉大夫充右文殿修撰孫公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.145, pp.1.
74. Huizong	Zhang Pu 張樸	<i>SS</i> , Juan 356, pp.11219.	<i>Kang Xi Jiang Xi Tong Zhi</i> , Juan 49.
75. Huizong	Chen Yusi 陳汝錫	Murong Yanfeng, "Jiang Shi Lang Shi Pi Yong Lu Chen Ru Xi Ke Pi Yong Bo Shi Zhi" 將仕郎試辟廡錄陳汝錫可辟廡博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.136, pp.9.	<i>Zhi Zhai Shu Lu Jie Ti</i> , Juan 18, pp.536.
76. Huizong	Chen Yang 陳暘	<i>SS</i> , Juan 432, pp.12848. <i>SYXA</i> , Juan 98	<i>SS</i> , Juan 432, pp.12848.
77. Huizong	Chen Xun 陳詢	Murong Yanfeng, "Cong Shi Lang Quan Pi Yong Zheng Chen Xun Ke Pi Yong Bo Shi Zhi" 從事郎權辟廡正陳詢可辟廡博士制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.136, pp.8.	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 50.
78. Huizong	Lu Zhen 陸震	Yang Shi, "Lu Shao Qing Mu Zhi Ming" 陸少卿墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.125, pp.80.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.889.
79. Huizong	Hui Roumin 惠柔民	<i>SHY</i> , Chongru 2/16.	<i>Xian Chun Chong Xiu Pi Ling Zhi</i> , Juan 11.
80. Huizong	Zeng Mao 曾楸	<i>SHY</i> , Xuanju 19/21.	<i>Kang Xi Jiang Xi Tong Zhi</i> , Juan 49.
81. Huizong	Huang Xuan 黃宣	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 71.	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 53.
82. Huizong	Yang Dunli 楊惇禮	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.890.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.890.
83. Huizong	Ye Chang 葉常	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 65.	<i>BMTZ</i> , Juan 49.
84. Huizong	Ye Yu 葉預	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.887.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.887.
85. Huizong	Cheng Yu 程瑀	<i>SHY</i> , Xuanju 20/1.	Hu Quan 胡銓, "Hu Zeng Zuo Tong Feng Dai Fu Cheng Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 戶贈左通奉大夫程公墓誌銘, in <i>XAWXZ</i> , Juan 78, pp.1900.
86. Huizong	Zhao Zidao 趙資道	<i>SHY</i> , Xuanju 19/21.	<i>Yong Zheng Zhe Jiang Tong Zhi</i> , Juan 124.
87. Huizong	Liu Fangyi 劉方翼	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.890.	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.890.

88. Huizong	Liu Bing 劉昺	<i>SS, Juan 356, pp.11206.</i>	<i>SS, Juan 356, pp.11206.</i>
89. Huizong	Liu Xun 劉詢	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan 27, in DFZCKJB, Vol.6, pp.887.</i>	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan 27, in DFZCKJB, Vol.6, pp.887.</i>
90. Huizong	Zheng Tingfen 鄭庭芬	<i>SHY, Xuanju 20/1.</i>	<i>Song Shi Ji Shi Bu Yi, Juan 34.</i>
91. Huizong	Lu Hang 盧航	Xu Jingheng, “He Lu Si Cheng Qi”賀盧司成啟, in QSW, Vol.144, pp.5.	<i>Kang Xi Jiang Xi Tong Zhi, Juan 49.</i>
92. Huizong	Xie Lianghan 謝良翰	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan 27, in DFZCKJB, Vol.6, pp.898.</i>	<i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi, Juan 27, in DFZCKJB, Vol.6, pp.898.</i>
93. Huizong	Xie Shi 謝澍	<i>SDZLJ, Juan 157, SYXA, Juan 30.</i>	<i>SYXA, Juan 30.</i>
94. Huizong	Su Yu 蘇棫	<i>SHY, Li 19/16.</i>	<i>BMTZ, Juan 53.</i>

Appendix 4: Location of the Imperial University

Extracted from Sheng Bo 盛博 bian, *Song Yuan Gu Di Tu Ji Cheng* 宋元古地图集成 (Beijing: Xing qiu di tu chu ban she, 2008), pp.342-343.

図2 『北宋開封概略図』(徽宗時代後期)

Extracted from the preface of Kubota Kazuo 久保田和男 cho, *Sōdai kaifū no kenkyū* 宋代開封の研究 (Tōkyō: Kyūkoshoin, 2007).

Appendix 5: List of Elite Graduates during 1103-1121

Graduation Year	Name	Sources
1105	1. Quan Bangyan 權邦彥 (1080-1133)	Yang Wanli, "Shu Mi Jian Can Zhi Zheng Shi Quan Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 樞密兼參知政事權公墓誌銘", in <i>Yang Wan Li Ji Jian Jiao</i> , Juan 124, pp.4806; <i>TPZJTL</i> , Juan 28/51a, pp.1973.
1105	2. Zhu Shengfei 朱勝非 (1082-1144)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 362, pp.11315, <i>SCBMHB</i> , Juan 213/9a, pp.1534a, <i>Nan Song Guan Ge Lu</i> , Juan 7, pp.77, <i>TPZJTL</i> , Juan 28/51a, pp.1973.
1105	3. Yu Li 俞橐	<i>SS</i> , Juan 354, pp.11169, <i>TPZJTL</i> , Juan 28/51a, pp.1973.
1107	4. Li Bangyan 李邦彥 (?-1130)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 352, pp.11120.
1107	5. Duan Fu 段拂	<i>Jing Ding Jian Kang Zhi</i> , Juan 32, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.2, pp.1486.
1109	6. Jia Anzhai 賈安宅 (1088-1140)	<i>Jia Tai Wu Xing Zhi</i> , Juan 17, in <i>SYZJFZ</i> , Vol.6, pp.2749.
1109	7. Li Mixun 李彌遜 (1089-1153)	<i>SS</i> , Juan 382, pp.11774, <i>Chun Xi San Shan Zhi</i> , Juan 27, in <i>DFZCKJB</i> , Vol.6, pp.894, <i>WXTK</i> , Juan 32, pp.306.
1110	8. Liu Rixin 劉日新	<i>TPZJTL</i> , Juan 28/51b, pp.1974.

1112	9. Mo Chou 莫儔 (1089-1164)	Sun Di, "Song Gu Han Lin Xue Shi Mo Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 宋故翰林學士莫公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.161, pp.99.
1112	10. Shi Ji 師驥 (?-1142)	Chao Gongsu 晁公遯, "Shi Gong Chuan" 師公傳, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.212, pp.61, <i>WXTK</i> , <i>Juan</i> 32, pp.306.
1113	11. Hu Songnian 胡松年 (1087-1146)	<i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 379, pp.11697, Zhai Ruwen, "Chi Ci Shang She Ji Di Di Yi Ren Chen Gong Fu Chu Cheng Shi Lang Di Er Di San Ren Hu Song Nian Chen Yu Yi Bing Cong Shi Lang Zhi" 勅賜上舍及第第一人陳公輔除承事郎第二第三人胡松年陳與義並從事郎制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.149, pp.76.
1113	12. Chen Gongfu 陳公輔 (1077-1142)	Zhai Ruwen, "Chi Ci Shang She Ji Di Di Yi Ren Chen Gong Fu Chu Cheng Shi Lang Di Er Di San Ren Hu Song Nian Chen Yu Yi Bing Cong Shi Lang Zhi" 勅賜上舍及第第一人陳公輔除承事郎第二第三人胡松年陳與義並從事郎制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.149, pp.76, <i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 379, pp.11693.
1113	13. Chen Yuyi 陳與義 (1090-1138)	Zhang Nie, "Chen Gong Zi Zheng Mu Zhi Ming" 陳公資政墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.187, pp.227; Ge Shengzhong, "Chen Qu Fei Shi Ji Xu" 陳去非詩集序, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.142, pp.343, pp.13129; Zhai Ruwen, "Chi Ci Shang She Ji Di Di Yi Ren Chen Gong Fu Chu Cheng Shi Lang Di Er Di San Ren Hu Song Nian Chen Yu Yi Bing Cong Shi Lang Zhi" 勅賜上舍及第第一人陳公輔除承事郎第二第三人胡松年陳與義並從事郎制, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.149, pp.76.
1114	14. Cai Juzhong 蔡居中	<i>TPZJTL</i> , <i>Juan</i> 28/52a, pp.1975.
1114	15. Zhang Gang 張綱 (1083-1166)	Hong Zheng 洪葳, "Zhang Gong Xing Zhuang" 張公行狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.220, pp.248, Zhang Gang, "Fen Huang Wen San" 焚黃文三, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.168, pp.411
1115	16. He Li 何臬 (1089-1127)	He Li, "Ba Zhang Yuan Gan Ji Xian Zu Shou Ze" 跋張元幹輯先祖手澤, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.181, pp.234; <i>Yi Jian Yi Zhi</i> 夷堅乙志, <i>Juan</i> 7, pp.243.

1115	17. Fu Songqing 傅崧卿 (?-1138)	<i>WXTK</i> , <i>Juan</i> 32, pp.306.
1116	18. Cheng Yu 程瑀 (1087-1152)	Hu Quan 胡銓, "Hu Zeng Zuo Tong Feng Dai Fu Cheng Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 戶贈左通奉大夫程公墓誌銘, in <i>XAWXZ</i> , <i>Juan</i> 78, pp.1900, Cheng Ju 程俱, "Bao Shan Ge Ji" 飽山閣記, in <i>XAWXZ</i> , <i>Juan</i> 11, pp.323, <i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 381, pp.11742.
1118	19. He Dagui 何大圭 (?-after 1160)	<i>WXTK</i> , <i>Juan</i> 32, pp.306, <i>YLDD</i> , <i>Juan</i> 2948/10b, pp.1517.
1119	20. Wang Junyi 王俊義	<i>SS</i> , <i>Juan</i> 344, pp.10945.
1119	21. Wei Fumin 衛膚敏 (1081-1129)	Wang Zao, "Shang Shu Li Bu Shi Lang Zhi Shi Zeng Da Zhong Dai Fu Wei Gong Mu Zhi Ming" 尚書禮部侍郎致仕贈大中大夫衛公墓誌銘, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.157, pp.312.
1120	22. Zu Xiushi 祖秀實 (?-1127)	Li Zhengmin 李正民, "Ying Zhao Ju Guan Zhuang" 應詔舉官狀, in <i>QSW</i> , Vol.163, pp.102; <i>BMTJ</i> , <i>Juan</i> 49.
1121	23. Song Qiyu 宋齊愈 (?-1127)	<i>WXTK</i> , <i>Juan</i> 32, pp.306

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