# A B S T R A C T S

DOI 10.3868/s020-012-023-0022-0

1. Chang Yuenan. Concept of official governance during the period of Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong: On the election and evaluation of officials. *Social Sciences of Beijing* 3 (2021): 59–68.

**Abstract** Official governance and system improvement were important governance concepts in ancient China. During the reign of emperors Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong, such issue was often discussed and applied to the election and evaluation of officials. Officials' morality, ability, achievement and age were considered when they were elected and evaluated. Morality was emphasized and the ability of selecting qualified personnel was required too. Different qualities were required for different positions. The practice of civil official management mirrored the emperors' concept of official governance. Officials were required to be loyal to the emperor. They should elect qualified staff and monitor the illegal ones. Morality and ability were both important. Officials in various positions had their own duties and responsibilities. Though the emperors' concept of official governance played positive role during the reign of Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong, it was in fact subject to the practice of civil official management.

2. Ge Yong. From failed candidates to list of adequate: The formation, practice, and impact of supplementary list system of civil service examination in the Yuan Dynasty. *Journal of Social Sciences* 10 (2022): 47–61.

**Abstract** After the Yuan Dynasty resumed civil service examinations in 1314, the precedent by grace intended to appease those who failed in the metropolitan examination gradually escaped the influence of the facilitated candidate system of the Song Dynasty. By the Zhizheng period, provincial examination began to admit some failed candidates by the supplementary list system to serve as education officials in local schools. The metropolitan examination later on also adopted the supplementary list system in its actual operation. Despite the fact that both of them were supplementary list systems, there were some significant differences in their specific practices. Those who were admitted to the supplementary list

system of provincial examinations had a certain degree of Confucianism literacy and received training of the civil service examination agenda, and they were used to replace the sub-official functionaries and offspring of rich and powerful families as education officials in local schools, which could improve the standard of talent training. The supplementary list system of metropolitan examination was only for the national university students; Although the final admissions of the supplementary lists did include a few Southerners, influenced by the special ethnic policy of the Yuan, it nominally included only three categories: Mongols, Sermons, and Northerners. The supplementary list system of civil service examination created by the Yuan Dynasty was not only the inheritance of the facilitated candidate system of the Song Dynasty, but also influenced the supplementary system of the Ming and Qing dynasties, with its distinctive characteristics of the times and functions promoting social mobility.

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3. Li Jinxiu. On the system of the prestige titled officials being on duty by turns in the early Tang period. *Historical Research* 1 (2023): 73–98.

**Abstract** The Tang Dynasty Sanguan Fanshang system, or the system of the prestige titled officials being on duty by turns, was established in the eleventh year (631) of the Zhenguan period, with all the prestige titles only below the rank of six. In the second year (662) of Emperor Gaozong's Longshuo (fell) reign-period, the system was improved. During the early Tang Dynasty, turns and terms of duty differed between the civil and military officials with titles above the fifth rank and below the sixth rank. On the one hand, the system helped with the training of backup officials. On the other hand, it partly alleviated the pressure brought by the expanded number of elected officials on the official electing system. This early Tang Dynasty system played a positive role in ensuring the transmission of orders from the national government, reducing the financial burden on the state and relieving pressure on government affairs.

4. Liu Shejian. The analysis of imperial censors' selection mechanisms in the Qing Dynasty. *Journal of Social Sciences* 3 (2020): 150–61.

**Abstract** The Qing Dynasty attached great attention to the selection of Imperial Censors. After the early evolution, the selection mechanism tended to be matured in the 29th year of the Qianlong Dynasty. In terms of the class origin, many of Imperial Censors were *jinshi*, and most were *jinshi* and *juren*. In terms of the original job position, although differences existed in different period, many of Imperial Censors were from Hanlinyuan *Bianxiu* and Liubu *Langzhong* since the Qianlong Dynasty. There were Hanlinyuan *Jiantao* and Buyuan *Yuanwailang*, but they were much less than *Bianxiu* and *Langzhong*. A series of measures were taken, such as limiting the qualification of examinations and obeying the strict selection process, which ensured loyal, smart, excellent, and principled candidates to be chosen. This is the reason why the supervision mechanism has taken great effects on the anti-corruption in the Qing Dynasty.

5. Yang Enyu. Evolution of upper rank of nine—Rank system and entering the official career system during the Wei and Jin dynasties. *Journal of Social Sciences* 2 (2020): 160–70.

**Abstract** Due to the changes of society and political system, the meaning of upper rank has a process of evolution. It refers to the first rank to the third rank during Cao Wei and early stage of Western Jin. It refers to the first and second rank in the late stage of Western Jin, Eastern Jin and South dynasties. The government issued the regulation of "as the qualification in the second rank" in the middle of Yuankang of Emperor Hui of Western Jin. Namely, important offices need the second rural rank. Since then, the third rank had gradually been excluded from upper rank, only the first and second rank belong to upper rank. In the Wei and Western Jin dynasties, the gentry with different family status did not have the same second rank; the gentry with the higher family status had the corresponding higher rural rank and the corresponding higher rank of entering the official career; the gentry with the lower family status had the corresponding lower rural rank and the corresponding lower rank of

entering the official career. Aristocrats family status, rural rank and rank of entering the official career were basically consistent; this is the social rules and regulations at that time.

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6. Zhang Zhenguo, and Wang Yue. A Study of *juren* selection and being officials in the Qing Dynasty. *Journal of Historical Science* 6 (2023): 27–42.

**Abstract** After entering into the Shanhai pass, on the basis of inheriting the Ming system, the *juren* selection system was established, which included selection qualification, selection procedure, the scope of being an official and the frequency of filling vacancies. Because of official career stagnation, the Qing government adapted the system: Firstly, in the system framework, it increased interception and inspection links and appointed *juren* as county magistrate and instructor via the Ministry of Official Personnel Affairs' monthly selection, which changed the connotation and extension of the system; secondly, it reformed the rules and regulations of the system and changed the selection of the Ministry of Official Personnel Affairs to allocation and internship, and even appointment by governors when there was a vacancy, which caused the system of *juren* mass selection to appear and customize. However, restricted by the environment, institutional flexibility could only be adapted in the inherent system, and could not fundamentally solve the official career stagnation dilemma. As time went on, the multiple contradictions of a large number of officials waiting for position, the frequent interception by the Ministry of Official Personnel Affairs and no *juren* selecting procedure were intertwined, which slowly sapped the vitality of the officialdom and made the Qing Dynasty gradually come to an end.

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7. Zhou Jia. The change of meanings of "origin" from the perspective of emphasizing literati policy in the Song Dynasty. *Journal of Zhejiang University (Humanities and Social Sciences)* 6 (2021): 19–28.

**Abstract** This paper investigates the influence of the prosperity of the imperial examinations system in the Song Dynasty on the bureaucratic selection system as well as on the concept of the times by examining the change of the meaning of "origin" in the imperial examinations in the Tang and Song dynasties.

The original meaning of "origin" was "dedication" in the historical documents. In the Tang Dynasty, "origin" was widely used as an official term. One who had "origin" meant "having the qualification to be an official," but not a formal official. Official qualification could be obtained through different ways; therefore there were various origins. The debate on origin in the Tang Dynasty mainly focused on *enyin* (hereditary by grace) and *keju* (the imperial examinations). In the early Tang Dynasty, the "origin" status of *enyin* was much higher than that of the Imperial Examinations.

In the imperial examinations, the status of *jinshi* (presented scholar) was the lowest, above which there were *xiucai* and *mingjing*. In the middle and late Tang Dynasty, the origin of status of *jinshi* had ascended. In the late Tang and Five dynasties, the central government could not effectively implement the official selection system. The focus of the imperial court on "origin" was whether one had "origin" or not, as "having an origin" connoted having the official qualification recognized by the central government. Its purpose was mainly to control the appointment and removal of personnel and to prevent the cases of having no origin and forged origin. In the Northern Song Dynasty, the power of appointment and removal of personnel was retrieved by the central government, and "whether there was origin" was no longer a concern of the imperial court, resulting in a sharp competition between officials with different origins. The Song Dynasty was the key period for the change of the meaning of "origin." In the early Song Dynasty following the Tang and Five dynasties, "origin" generally referred to the qualification of being an official. In the Song Dynasty, the policy of emphasizing literati in ruling the country was established. Since the reign of Emperor Taizong, the imperial examinations became the main channel for selecting officials, and "origin" became the identity reference specifically referring to those who took the imperial examinations and gained official positions. After the reform of imperial examinations in the reign of Emperor Shenzong, the scope of "origin" had been limited to *jinshi* only from the reign of Huizong to the Southern Song Dynasty. In contrast to "having origin" in the Song Dynasty, there were "having no origin" and "miscellaneous origins." The emphasis on "origin" in the Song Dynasty was to distinguish

it from the *enyin* status.

The aim of focusing on the issue of "origin" by the emperors of the Song Dynasty was to prevent the formation of new political regimes in officialdom from threatening the imperial power. Therefore, the imperial policy focused on suppressing *enyin* and supporting the imperial examinations. There were three major means: Firstly, the number of origins was controlled, i.e., expanding the scale of imperial examinations and limiting the number of *enyin*; secondly, the officials who were appointed for the first time were controlled, *enyin* and *jinshi* having totally different treatment from the Tang Dynasty to the Song Dynasty; thirdly, the appointment and promotion of officialdom was controlled. In the early reign of Shenzong, it was a common phenomenon that the qualifications for senior positions in the central government required *jinshi* origin.

In the Song Dynasty, "origin" became a qualification factor affecting the official career all of one's life time. The concept behind it was that the official power could not be inherited, but must be held in the hands of moral and capable people. As far as civil servants are concerned, they could not change their "miscellaneous origins" while *enyin* origin had an opportunity to change into a better jinshi origin. There were two main ways to change the origin: Firstly, the officials with *enyin* origin could participate in the Lock Hall Test of the imperial examinations, and obtain the *jinshi* origin after passing the examinations; secondly, the emperor directly granted them with *jinshi* origin. These officials, who were promoted by the emperor personally, formed a closer personal relationship with the emperor so that the most important positions in the imperial court would never be out of the emperor's control.

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8. Zhuge Yibing. The evolution of the system of official recruitment by *keju* during the reign of the Emperor Zhenzong of the Song Dynasty. *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)* 2 (2021): 152–160.

**Abstract** The most important reform of the system of official recruitment by imperial examination (*keju*) in the Song Dynasty was to thoroughly implement the principle of fairness and justice in the examination practice.

These major reforms were initiated during the reign of the Emperor Taizong, and completed during the reign of the Emperor Zhenzong. Firstly, following the irregular practice from the reign of the Emperor Taizong, in how many years would a metropolitan examination be held was still uncertain, but it was gradually set to be held once every three years. Though the enrollment number fluctuated in different examinations during the reign of the Emperor Zhenzong, it remained roughly at the same level as that during the reign of the Emperor Taizong. The major measures to ensure the fairness and justice in imperial examinations were all finalized during the reign of the Emperor Zhenzong. There were three steps: sealing, copying out and laying out. Besides, in order to prevent cheating and plagiarism, a number of new measures were introduced to complement with the above-mentioned major measures. Under the reign of the Emperor Zhenzong, the imperial court also promulgated detailed rules and regulations for imperial examination, such as the Procedures for the Metropolitan Examination, and the regulations for the Examination Office under the Ministry of Rites. Thus, cheating and plagiarism which had been frequently seen in former imperial examinations were generally eradicated. The significance of the imperial examination system for selecting talents was then truly manifested.

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9. Zu Hui, and Fei Xikuan. The reform of the imperial examinations in the Northern Song Dynasty under civilian politics. *Journal of Zhejiang University (Humanities and Social Sciences)* 6 (2021): 5–17.

**Abstract** The selection of civil servants in the Northern Song Dynasty was mainly done through the imperial examinations (*keju*) system. In the early Song Dynasty, reforms of the imperial examinations that had been carried out since the Tang Dynasty could not adapt to the new political situations. New reforms mainly included three aspects as follows.

The reforms started with Emperor Taizu, who established palace examinations and thus had talent selection controlled in his own hand. The examinees who passed palace examinations were regarded as the disciples of the emperor, the Son of Heaven, and that greatly aroused the enthusiasm of scholars. However, the number of admissions in the

reign of Taizu had no significant change compared with that in the Five Dynasties because the national policy of emphasizing literati and restraining the military was still in the exploratory stage. In the reign of Emperor Taizong, upon the unification of the country, the establishment of a national government system with literati as the main body was put on the agenda. Based on the needs of civil politics, Emperor Taizong continuously expanded the number of admissions in the imperial examinations in order to supplement and update the bureaucratic team with new talents. As such, the proportion of officials selected through the imperial examinations was greatly increased in the bureaucratic system, which laid a solid foundation for promoting the formation of civil politics.

In order to select talents for the government, the subjects and contents of the imperial examinations were gradually adjusted. In the reign of Emperor Renzong, the systems of *shuoshuju* and *mingjing ke* were set up, which changed the concept of talent selection from focusing on poetry and memorization in the Tang Dynasty to emphasizing interpretation of classics. In the fourth year of Xining, Wang Anshi reformed the Imperial Examinations system and officially abolished various subjects, *mingling ke* and poetry and *fu* (lit), tie *jing* and *mo yi* and turned to the focus on classics interpretation, exposition and policy response essays. The selection of talents shifted from emphasis on literary skills to the candidates' practical ability. Literary talents selected through poetry and *fu* had little to do with national governance while classics interpretation, exposition, and policy response essays focused on governance in ancient and modern times and current politics. The classics exegesis required the examinees to quote from classics to deal with ideological and theoretical issues related to the people's well-being, politics, economy, morality and self-cultivation and so forth. Creative answers were of positive significance for selecting talents who were proficient in Confucian Classics and practical abilities to participate in the country's government. This was the fundamental reason for the reform of the imperial examinations which had been established and carried out since the Tang and Five dynasties.

In order to improve the overall quality of civil servants and their ability to govern the country as well as unify their thinking, the state began to attach importance to education and official schools were encouraged. During the reign of Emperor Huizong, based on Wang Anshi's Three Hall System, the reform of *sanshe gongshi* combined the selection of talents through the imperial examinations with school education. Local government schools at various levels were established to match with the contents of the imperial examinations. Thus, a set of management system

of talent training, selection and appointment was formed to better serve civil politics. From the third year of Chongning to the third year of Xuanhe, the *gongshi* examination had been carried out twelve times nationwide. It was a beneficial attempt to combine the selection of talents through the imperial examinations in alliance with school education, which had a far-reaching impact on future generations. In the Ming Dynasty, the imperial examinations must be carried out through the school system.

In short, the reform on the imperial examinations System in the Northern Song Dynasty has a positive historical significance in eradicating the dictatorship of the military officials, establishing civil politics and strengthening centralized rule.