

represented by Lin Guangchao), such as Cheng Yi or later Zhu Xi, the *daoxue*-tradition as well as scholarship as a whole remained primarily local. To say it in Clark's own words, "as the worlds of politics and philosophy pulled apart, their [the local elite's] real interest stayed with the former" (p. 254).

"Kinship lies at the cusp between religion and secularized literati culture" (p. 255). In this context, the worship of one's ancestors (in shrines) and the definition of a common ancestor (in genealogies) constituted basic elements in the self-definition of kin groups. As the sudden influx of outsiders during the Tang-Song interregnum constituted a challenge to the identity of the indigenous families of the valley, and, in addition, at the end of the Tang most of the old families had reached their 5th generation, beyond which mourning obligations ceased, this gradually led to new practices of self-definition. One such practice has to be seen in the building of ancestral shrines: independently of a concrete religious context, kin groups started to build shrines in which they could worship their former ancestor(s). Obviously, what was needed was a place where the collective ancestral line could be worshipped apart from individual graves. Another practice was the composing of genealogies: local kin groups sought to position themselves within the changing social order following the interregnum by "up-dating" their genealogical roots. Until the Southern Song, kin group genealogies developed not only into an increasingly orthodox exercise, but they were used for defining a common identity at an increasing local level. But with progressing socio-economic development, as experiments in corporate welfare and landholding increased, it became more important to define who was entitled to share the benefits and who not. Consequently, genealogies in the Mulan river valley gradually evolved from tools of preserving identity to tools for limiting identity (p. 287).

Local shrines in the Mulan valley, Clark emphasizes, were quite different from Zhu Xi's model of an ideal ancestral shrine. Thus, rather than regarding Zhu Xi's famous *Family Rituals*, or the works by Fan Zhongyan, Ouyang Xiu *et al.*, as points of departure, "historians should regard them as resolutions, the reification of diverse practices into a standard body of orthodox kinship" (p. 261). In this context, Clark once again argues in favour of paying more attention to local histories without neglecting "the whole" – the Mulan river valley is not China, yet it is "not separate from the larger concept" (p. 318).

Angela Schottenhammer

LINDA COOKE JOHNSON. *Women of the Conquest Dynasties: Gender and Identity in Liao and Jin China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011. xxxiii + 254 pp. ISBN 978-0824834043.

The era between the 10th and 13th centuries marks one of the most decisive ruptures in the history of China. With the Song 宋 (Northern Song 960–1127, Southern Song 1127–1279) success to reunify the Central China Plain, China experienced under the Song dynasty another economic and cultural apex in its history. During the same time period, which was a time when "barbarian" incursions renewed, the menace from the north and northeast became progressively grievous, resulting to the establishments of the successive non-Chinese empires of the Khitan Liao 遼 (907–1125) and the Jurchen Jin 金 (1115–1234). During this period of time, "no single orthodoxy prevailed" (p. xxi) and there existed no "China" as it was understood before or since, but rather a territory divided among different

ethnic states.<sup>3</sup> However, these non-Chinese peoples have been largely overlooked by the traditional sino-centric historiography until very recently.

In *Women of the Conquest Dynasties*, Linda Cooke Johnson surveys the lives of the Liao and Jin women as they negotiated the tension between “self” and “other” which characterized both intercultural and gender relations. In this volume, Johnson endeavors to distinguish between the ethnic Khitan, Jurchen, and Han-Chinese peoples (*han'er* 漢兒), to “discover their salient customs and practices” (p. xvii), and to examine how these cultures “interacted in women’s realms and how each affected the other” (p. xix). In archiving that, Johnson locates the power and agency of these women in the “unique pattern of preservation and adoption” (p. 172) of cultures, in particular the selective adoption of new customs (Khitan and Jurchen cultures from the Han-Chinese and vice versa) and the preservation of indigenous practices and values of each group of people.

The general theme of the book resonates with one particular piece of artwork, a Jin dynasty scroll from around 1200 called *Wenji gui Han* 文姬歸漢,<sup>4</sup> which has also been chosen as the cover plot for the book. The scroll depicts the story of Wenji (“cultured lady”), a Han-Chinese woman who was abducted, carried off to the steppe, and forcibly married to a chieftain of the Xianbei 鮮卑 in the end of the 2nd century A.D. Although despondent, she eventually returned home twelve years later. To the Chinese, the legend of Wenji vividly highlights her loyalty to China. The scroll is in this respect particularly interesting, because on it Wenji is dressed in Jurchen warrior attire and is riding a horse, affirming the warrior culture of the Jurchen and their values of courage (p. 171). Her “barbarian” companions, on the other hand, take the appearance which matches the descriptions of the “raw Jurchen” (*sheng Nüzhen* 生女真), the wild and uncivilized Jurchen, reported by Xu Mengxin.<sup>5</sup> Shown in a Jurchen context, Wenji is here understood as a heroine of the civilized south and she is returning to the civilized Jurchen court in the south (pp. 59–60). Through this interpretation, Johnson identifies Wenji as a “culture bearer.” Indeed, the story of Wenji and its double message encapsulate the book’s primary motif, and Johnson employs Wenji as a point of reference, since the many women that she examines lucidly reflect in various ways the story of Wenji.

Structurally, Johnson undertakes a synchronic exposition of the Liao and Jin feminine ideals (Chapter 1), of the daily lives of Liao and Jin women (chs. 2–3), and of specific practices and institutions defining the lives of Liao and Jin women (chs. 4–7). The first chapter surveys the historical accounts of models of virtuous women provided in the official dynastic histories of *Liaosbi* 遼史 and *Jinsbi* 金史. By putting the feminine ideals in the Liao and Jin periods under scrutiny, the author tries to show how

3 See also John W. Dardess 2003 [“Did the Mongols Matter? Territory, Power, and the Intelligentsia in China From the Northern Song to the Early Ming.” in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, ed. by Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University, 2003): 111–134], 112; Dieter Kuhn 2009 [*The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University, 2009)], 5.

4 The scroll, size 29 x129 cm, was painted on silk in ink and color. It was probably created in the early 13th century and was traditionally attributed to a certain Zhang Yu 張瑀. The scroll is now kept in the Jilin Museum in Changchun. For the scroll, see Shen Congwen 沈從文 1959 [“Tantan ‘Wenji gui Han tu’” 談談“文姬歸漢圖,” *Wenwu* 1959.6, 32–35]; Guo Moruo 郭沫若, “Tan Jinren Zhang Yu de ‘Wenji gui Han tu’” 談金人張瑀的“文姬歸漢圖,” *Wenwu* 1964.7, 1–6]; Susan Bush 1995 [“Five Paintings of Animal Subjects or Narrative Themes and Their Relevance to Chin Culture,” in *China Under Jurchen Rule: Essays on Chin Intellectual and Cultural History*, ed. By Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Stephen H. West (New York: SUNY, 1995), 183–215], 194–196.

5 See *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟匯編 (Compilation of Documents on the Treaties with the North During Three Reigns), ed. by Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (Wenyuange ed.; repr. Taipei: Wenhai, 1962), *juan* 3, 2a–b.

feminine virtues defined by the Khitan and Jurchen either cohered with or incorporated the values of other cultures. The pastoral lifestyle and martial values of the Khitan and the Jurchen did not coexist comfortably with the traditional Chinese conception of dutiful daughters and faithful wives. Stories of Liao and Jin women in the *Liaoshi* and *Jinshi* present “a series of negotiation between Han-Chinese values and values of the steppe and forest” (p. 3). The biographies of five Liao noble women (pp. 4–16) are praised for their literacy and education, their filial devotion and their observance of the steppe tradition of following their husbands in death. The twelve Jin women (pp. 16–23) are honored for displaying their martial skills, and widows are praised for committing acts of suicide to preserve their husbands’ names or to defend their own chastity. These stories illustrate how each group of women tried to conserve their own traditions, but at the same time also demonstrate how new values diffused across the frontier zone. It becomes obvious that both indigenous customs and Confucian virtues are at play. These women are exemplary in the sense that they, as Johnson argues, “mediate between shifting steppe and Confucian values” (p. 24).

The following two chapters, chapters 2 and 3, investigate the daily lives of Liao and Jin women as can be gathered from tomb artifacts, tomb murals, and other extant materials of the period. After a careful examination of the scroll *Fanma tu* 番馬圖<sup>6</sup> which reflects both the landscape of the grasslands and the distinctiveness of Khitan clothing and customs (pp. 27–33), Johnson concentrates on important excavated Khitan tombs, such as the tomb of the Liao Princess Chenguo and her husband (pp. 35–37) and the tomb discovered in Kulunqi (pp. 37–39).<sup>7</sup> Whereas much knowledge about the Liao daily lives comes from the elaborate archaeological excavations during the last decades, the meager Jurchen interments can only offer limited information on the Jin daily lives. Apart from brief discussions of three examples of Jurchen tombs (pp. 60–65), more emphasis is put on the examination of textual sources, in particular the chapters of exemplary women (*lienu zhuan* 烈女傳) and empresses (*houfei zhuan* 后妃傳) in the *Jinshi* (pp. 65–67).

One particular focus of these two chapters is put on the contrast in daily activities and roles of women between the Khitan and the *han'er*, as well as between the Jurchen and the *han'er*. Based on a careful survey of extant tombs of elite *han'er* women, especially the tombs of the Zhang family in Xuanhua,<sup>8</sup> Johnson notes that the nomadic elements of Khitan are confined to the outer chambers

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- 6 The *Fanma tu*, traditionally attributed to Hu Gui 胡瓌, dates back to the late Five Dynasties or the early Liao. The scroll was created on silk with light coloring and ink and it is now kept in the National Palace Museum in Taipei. To my knowledge, there have been no studies in Western languages published. For a discussion of the scroll and its authorship, see Cao Xingyuan 曹星原 1995 [“Chuan Hu Gui ‘Fanma tu’ zuozhe kaolue” 傳胡瓌“番馬圖”作者考略, *Wenwu* 1995.12, 80–89].
- 7 For a profound study of the tomb of Princess Chenguo, see Neimenggu zizhiqu wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 內蒙古自治區文物考古研究所 and Zhelimu meng bowuguan 哲里木盟博物館 1993 [*Liao Chenguo gongzhu mu* 遼陳國公主墓 (Tomb of the Liao Princess Chenguo). Beijing: Wenwu]. On the Kulun qi Liao tomb, see Jilin sheng bowuguan 吉林省博物館 and Zhelimu meng wenhuaju 哲里木盟文化局 1973 [“Jilin Zhelimu meng Kulun qi yihao Liaomu fajue jianbao” 吉林哲里木庫倫旗一號遼墓發掘簡報, *Wenwu* 1973.8, 2–18]. The paintings are analyzed and interpreted in Wang Zeqing 王澤慶 1973 [“Kulun qi yihao Liaomu bihua chutan” 庫倫旗一號遼墓壁畫初探, *Wenwu* 1973.8, 30–35]; Linda Cooke Johnson 1983 [“The Wedding Ceremony for an Imperial Liao Princess: Wall Paintings from a Liao Dynasty Tomb in Jilin,” *Artibus Asiae* 44.2/3, 108–135].
- 8 On the tombs of the Zhang family which expand the period from early Liao to middle Jin, see the archaeological reports of the tombs in Hebei sheng wenwu yanjiu suo 河北省文物研究所 2001 [*Xuanhua Liao-mu: 1974–1993 nian kaogu fajue baogao* 宣化遼墓: 1974–1993 年考古發掘報告 (Excavation Report of the Liao Dynasty Frescoed Tombs at Xuanhua: Reprint of Archaeological Excavation from 1974–1993). 2 vols. Beijing: Wenwu]. The book also contains photos and detailed illustrations of the murals.

while central female figures dressed in traditional Chinese silks appear in the inner chambers. In addition, she argues that these *han'er* women negotiated the tension between Khitan and Han-Chinese cultures and therefore “acted as culture conservators in preserving Han culture in the home” (p. 48). It is quite interesting to observe that relatively many *han'er* tombs dating back to the Jin period demonstrate a kind of role reversal between the ruler and the ruled, with *han'er* women in Chinese styles depicted as upper class, and their servants appearing in Jurchen attire (pp. 69–71). In this sense, class distinctions were portrayed through dresses and activities in which the Han-Chinese, who were the ruled in the Liao and the Jin dynasties, appeared as masters within the family whereas the members of the lower class were always distinguished by Khitan or Jurchen dress (p. 78). However, Johnson does not further expand on the possible reasons of this exceptional role of *han'er* women. Although additional detailed elaborations on these reasons may fall beyond the scope of this text and drawing such inferences is indeed difficult because of the lack of sources available, some preliminary discussion on these questions would contribute to the broader themes of the book.

Chapter 4 and 5, which examine the attitudes of Liao and Jin societies towards premarital sexuality, marriage practices, widowhood, and chastity, apparently constitute a highlight of this book. In contrast to their contemporary Song sisters who were separated from men and were sequestered inside the inner quarters,<sup>9</sup> Liao and Jin women enjoyed a relative sexual freedom and a higher degree of choice in marriage, through methods such as abduction and wife stealing (pp. 88–90). This was mainly due to the fact that the birth of a girl was cherished by a Khitan or Jurchen family, because instead of paying a dowry, which was the traditional Chinese practice, the family of the bride would receive a bride-price as a kind of compensation and in some cases even the suitor service of three years offered by the groom. However, once married, the woman became the private assets of her husband's family. When the husband died, his family would try to keep the woman within the family to ensure the economic resources of a widow, most commonly through the practice of levirate (p. 109). Divorce and remarriage was not taboo among the Khitan and Jurchen, yet widows were held to strict rules regarding remarriage.

A predominant part of the accounts in the two chapters are devoted to the Khitan women. Johnson comprehensively studies the exclusive Liao model of imperial intermarriage between the Yelü clan and the Xiao clan (pp. 92–93) and gives the reader a vivid picture of the scene of the wedding of a Liao imperial princess (pp. 94–96). The dramatic story of an affair between the Liao Empress Yide, wife of Emperor Daozong (r. 1055–1101), and a singer is adopted to reveal some of the customs and ethnical standards of the period (pp. 113–115). Unfortunately, neither literary sources nor material evidence can provide modern scholars with such detailed information on the Jurchen women. On one hand this is due to the sparse archaeological excavations of Jurchen tombs. On the other hand it is also caused by the fact that though some written records indeed offer insights into the topics of marriage customs and status of women in the Jin, yet most of these records, as Herbert Franke points out in his seminal article “Women under the Dynasties of Conquest,” do not clearly distinguish between Khitans and Jurchens.<sup>10</sup>

9 Patricia Buckley Ebrey 1993 [*The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period*, Berkeley, Cal: University of California]. In this work (esp. in ch. 1) Ebrey studies extensively Song women and suggests that from childhood women and men were separated in Chinese households and that women increasingly confined their activities to the inner quarter over the course of the Song dynasty.

10 See Herbert Franke 1980 [“Women under the Dynasties of Conquest,” in *La donna nella Cina imperiale e nella Cina repubblicana*, ed. Lionello Lanciotti (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1980), 23–43], 26. This applies chiefly to the important book *Songmo jiuwen* 松漢紀聞 by Hong Hao 洪皓 (1088–1155). Not few accounts in *Songmo jiuwen* have been taken by

Chapter 6 focuses on three exceptional warrior women who display their martial spirit and the political perspicacity of the Khitan and Jurchen women. The Liao Empress Yingtian (878–953) had helped her husband, the first Liao emperor, Abaoji (r. 907–926), in consolidating the power and in establishing the empire (pp. 122–126); Empress Dowager Chengtian (953–1009), mother of Emperor Shengzong (r. 982–1031), acted as regent for over thirty years and had even once led Liao troops to fight the Song (pp. 126–132); Yang Miaozhen, a *han'er* woman under Jin rule, led her troops variously for and against Song and Mongol forces at the end of the Jin dynasty (pp. 133–138). By recounting the stories of these women, Johnson argues that Confucian concepts of literary education and filial piety were largely absent in the lives of Liao and Jin women, whereas “military skills, martial arts, and horse riding were highly valued” (p. 139).

In the continuing chapter, Johnson endeavors to portray the private affairs of Liao and Jin women with respect to education, religion and romance. During the Liao and Jin, to be educated meant learning Chinese language and studying Chinese classics. However, there is an obvious difference in how Khitan and Jurchen women were educated, as the former were taught together with men whilst the latter were educated separately in accordance with Confucian practice (pp. 146, 148). That elite Khitan and Jurchen women made considerable donations to Buddhist constructions indicates that they had adopted conventions of the Tang society rather than that of the contemporary Song. All these can be understood as the ways the Khitan and the Jurchen women “negotiated” between steppe and Confucian societies (p. 163).

The concluding chapter provides a chronological account of the individuals discussed throughout the book, reviewing how each acted as intermediate between their original traditions and Han-Chinese culture. The issue of the lack of women’s voices is again raised, but Johnson still concludes that “these women offer an alternative model of womanhood” (p. 179), in particular in comparison to the concept and role of gender in Song China.

The special value of the book is shown in two major aspects. First, Johnson has made enormous efforts to distinguish and identify different peoples, the pastoral nomadic Khitan from the Mongolian steppe, the semi-sedentary Jurchen who combined herding with basic agriculture, and the Han-Chinese living under foreign rule. This differentiation of groups of people is of special importance because the identities of various conquest people were constantly shifting and there were always “tensions between indigenous cultural characteristics and certain accommodation to ‘the other’” (p. xxii). While conventional historical scholarship concentrates primarily on the process of “sinicization” and “assimilation” of the foreign conquerors, Johnson explicitly points out that the process actually worked in both directions as Khitan and Jurchen women embraced in different ways Han-Chinese culture and the *han'er* also adopted certain aspects of their foreign rulers and therefore became more “barbarized.”<sup>11</sup>

Another strength of the book lays in Johnson’s comprehensive study of both literary sources and material evidence in her effort to incorporate individual stories within the larger social narrative and addresses a vast array of pertinent cultural elements. Aside from careful analysis of various historical

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later works such as *Qidan guozhi* 契丹國志, *Liaozhi* 遼志, *Da-Jin guozhi* 大金國志, and *Sanchao beimeng huibian*.

11 For detailed discussions on the terms “sinicization” and “assimilation,” see Pamela Kyle Crossley 1990 [“Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China,” *Late Imperial China* 11.1, 1–34]; Mark C. Elliot 2001 [*The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*. Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University, 2001], 20–35; Naomi Standen 1997 [“Alien Regimes and Mental States,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40.1, 73–89], 75–77.

records in both official histories, the *Liaoshi* and *Jinshi*, and unofficial histories such as the *Qidan guozhi*, *Songmo jiuwen*, and *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, important cultural relics as well as major Liao and Jin archaeological discoveries since the last decades are also extensively consulted. For instance, the scrolls of *Wenji guiban* and *fanma tu*, the tomb of Liao Princess Chenguo, the tombs of the Zhang family in Xuanhua, and the murals of the Yanshan temple. This endeavor is of special significance to the study of Liao and Jin history because literary sources on the two dynasties, in comparison to that on the Song, are extremely limited, whereas extant material culture can offer much more detailed information, especially in the case of the Liao.

Apart from occasional minor errors (e.g. pp. 82, 85: page number of their sources are wrongly given for the figures; p. 63: the later Jin principle capital Zhongdu 中都 is erroneously interpreted as Zhongjing 中京; p. 199, n. 75: the article of Holmgren does not have page 42 and 43, whereas it does have pages 142 and 143 but the original article does not mention the Khitan; p. 201, n. 43: the correct source should be *Liaoshi*, *juan* 10, 110, and *juan* 64, 1003, rather than *juan* 10, 109, and *juan* 65, 1001), *Women of the Conquest Dynasties* is in general an indispensable scholarship in the study of the women of non-Han peoples in the Chinese history and it is bound to appeal to readers from diverse fields of not only Chinese studies, but also gender studies, history, archaeology, art history, as well as cross-cultural studies and ethnography.

Hang Lin

HARRY MILLER. *State Versus Gentry in Late Ming Dynasty China, 1572–1644*. 220 pp. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. ISBN 978-0-230-61134-4.

In its last decades the Ming Dynasty suffered under dramatic factional struggles. While it is generally accepted that this constant unrest was one important factor among others that weakened the Ming and would eventually lead to the fall of the dynasty, so far there was no real explanation what this factional strife was really all about. Harry Miller, associate professor in the department of history at the University of South Alabama, offers a new interpretation on the background of this factional strife in late Ming China. The general thesis in his book is that below the struggle on questions of education, moral standards, court ritual and bureaucratic appointments lay a basic dissension on the origin of sovereignty. The fundamental disagreement was on the question of the proper locus of authority. Did it emanate from the court/state or from the landowners/gentry? As the involved parties all belonged to the gentry serving the state, Miller speaks of a conflict that was theoretical and symbolic. It was for the most part a conflict within the gentry itself, which has its origins in their double character. Members of the gentry were on the one hand landowners and on the other officials serving the bureaucracy. These are also the central points in defining gentry for the author. This inner tension is well captured in the generally applied English terms for them, such as landlord-officials, scholar-officials or gentry-bureaucrats.

In the introduction Miller traces the roots of this symbolic struggle for sovereignty back to the ancient dichotomy between Confucians and Legalists. While Confucians saw the authority with the Confucian gentleman (*junzi*) stemming from his moral superiority, Legalists held that all authority emanated alone from the emperor. The author then gives a brief survey on the historical development of this struggle. He states that with the establishment of the Qin up until the Song Dynasty it was the concept of the sovereignty of the state that prevailed. It was not until the crisis of the Song state, the rise of the gentry and the emergence of Neo-Confucianism, with Zhu Xi's ideology of the "succession to the Way" (*dao tong*),