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The Consolidation of Official Historiography during the Early Northern Song Dynasty

Johannes L. Kurz (Universiti Brunei Darussalam)

Introduction

The first three Northern Song emperors Taizu (r. 960–976), Taizong (r. 976–997), and Zhenzong (r. 998–1022) and their administrations undertook a number of initiatives to create one unified empire after the period of the Five Dynasties. Following the successful military campaigns of the first emperor, the second emperor who was a less able military leader, turned his attention towards the preservation of literary traditions. He was especially interested in three of the so-called four books of the Song, namely the *Taiping yulan* 太平禦覽 (*Imperial Digest*), *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (*Extensive Records of the Reign of Great Tranquillity*), and the *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 (*Finest Flowers of the Preserve of Letters*).¹ Zhenzong complemented the set by ordering the compilation of a work which came to be used as an administrative handbook and ultimately received the title *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (*Models from the Archive*).

Taizong's compilations projects as well as the one initiated by Zhenzong served to create a sense of unity by enlisting scholars from both the south and the north. All of these scholars shared basic ideas about the acquisition and preservation of China's cultural heritage.

The emperors whom they served shared these ideas and additionally strove to remake the new dynasty in the image of the Tang. The official agencies managing history – these agencies were inherited from the Later Zhou dynasty (951–960) – had deteriorated since the end of the Tang dynasty and had further eroded during the Five Dynasties due to the political conditions of the time. The practice of using history as a bureaucratic and ritual guide during the early decades of the Song was similarly affected by the lack of well-stocked libraries.²

At the start of the Song dynasty the palace libraries were almost depleted and it took major efforts to get them into a workable state in terms of both personnel and holdings. This

1 See Johannes L. Kurz, "The Politics of Collecting Knowledge: Song Taizong's Compilations Project", *T'oung Pao* 87.4–5 (2001), pp. 289–316.

2 An illustrative example for the great demand for books is emperor Taizu himself. When he was still commander in the Later Zhou army, he helped himself to several cartloads full of books out of the palace library of the Southern Tang state, but got away with his loot thanks to the esteem the Later Zhou emperor Shizong (r. 954–959) had for him. See Li Tao 李燾, *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992; hereafter *XZZTJ*), 7.171.

was done by incorporating the libraries of conquered states and offering rewards for submission of missing titles from the start of Taizong's reign in 976 until the late 980s.³

In the following sections I will focus on the creation of the official historiographical agencies in the early decades of the Northern Song dynasty and describe the processes involved in creating 'history', such as administrative decisions, discussions and personnel.⁴

The main sources for this study are the *Lintai gushi* 麟臺故事 (*Historical Precedents from the Pavilion of the Unicorn*) by Cheng Ju 程俱 (1078–1144)⁵, the *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (*Long Draft of the Continuation of the Zizhi tongjian*) by Li Tao 李燾 (1115–1184), the *Yuhai* 玉海 (*Sea of Jade*) by Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223–1296), as well as the *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (*Draft of the Institutions of the Song*).⁶

Rather than treating the history-producing agencies and their evolution under the early Song in a topical order, I will describe them in a chronological way to avoid creating the wrong impression that at any time there was a clear and planned process for implementing different kinds of official historical writings.

Official Historiography under Taizu

One of the noteworthy histories compiled during the early years of the Song was the *Wudai tonglu* 五代通錄 (*Comprehensive Record of the Five Dynasties*) by Fan Zhi 范質 (911–964). Fan Zhi was a grand academician in the Institute for the Glorification of Literature (Zhaowen guan 昭文館) and he obviously had started writing the work as a private enterprise. The source material for his text were 360 *juan* of Veritable Records (*shilu* 實錄) of the rulers of northern China during the Five Dynasties which he condensed into a record of 65 *juan* that were submitted by Fan Hao 范昊 in 967.⁷

Several years earlier Wang Pu 王溥 (922–982)⁸ had first submitted a work entitled *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (*Institutions of the Tang*) in 100 *juan* that basically was a digest of earlier

3 See Li Geng 李更, *Songdai guange jiaokan yanjiu* 宋代館閣校勘研究 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2006), pp. 46–49.

4 For this study I have relied on the detailed work of Cai Chongbang 蔡崇榜. See Cai Chongbang, *Songdai xiushi zhidu yanjiu* 宋代修史制度研究 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1991).

5 Of the two major extant editions of the *Lintai gushi* (hereafter *LTGS*) I have chosen the *Lintai gushi canben* 殘本 for its being allegedly based on an original, but fragmented, Song edition in three *juan*. This edition together with the *Lintai gushi jiben* 輯本 in five *juan* – reconstructed during the eighteenth century from the *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 – is contained in the *Lintai gushi jiaozheng* 麟臺故事校證. See Cheng Ju, *Lintai gushi jiaozheng*, edited and annotated by Zhang Fuxiang 張富祥 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000).

6 Wang Yinglin, *Yuhai* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), hereafter *YH*; *Song huiyao jigao*, comp. by Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), hereafter *SHY*.

7 *YH* 48.12a–13a (p. 306). This work is no longer extant.

8 See Herbert Franke (ed.), *Sung Biographies* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976), pp. 1131–1137.

works.⁹ In 963 Wang followed up on this with the *Wudai huiyao* 五代會要 (*Institutions of the Five Dynasties*) in 30 *juan*.¹⁰ The earlier work had been started during Wang's tenure as supervising compiler (*jianxiu* 監修)¹¹ of the Dynastic History (*guoshi* 國史) of the Later Zhou; the latter work in hindsight appears to have made a confident statement about the end of a period that as yet had to be confirmed by later political events. However, the further political developments proved that Wang, and the first emperor of the Song, were completely right in their views and decisions.

In 973 after consolidating the new state and gradually subjugating, or even eliminating, those polities which had threatened the stability of Song, such as Later Shu and Southern Tang, Taizu ordered the compilation of a definitive history of the Five Dynasties, the *Wudai shi* 五代史. Xue Juzheng 薛居正 (912–981), the official in charge of this project, served as vice grand councilor (*canzhi zhengshi* 參知政事).¹² He directed a group of seven officials who in the following year came up with the finished product.¹³

Shortly before the submission of the history in 974, one of its compilers, Hu Meng 胡蒙 (915–986), presented a memorial to the imperial throne in which he explained the necessity to 'streamline' the production of historical records for the ruling dynasty. Furthermore, he called for the re-introduction of administrative conventions that would ensure the correct and regular recording of court proceedings.

Hu's memorial reads:

In the past, every time emperor Wenzong 文宗 (r. 827–840) of the Tang opened the Yanying Hall (*Yanying dian* 延英殿) for discussions with his high officials, court diarists¹⁴ were ordered to grab the recorder's brush (*zhibi chitou* 執筆螭頭)¹⁵ and write down cur-

9 YH 51.58b–59a (p. 384).

10 Note that *A Sung Bibliography*, in the entry on the Institutions of the Five Dynasties, incorrectly states that this work was submitted in 961 as well. See Étienne Balázs and Yves Hervouet (eds.), *A Sung Bibliography* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1978), p. 177. The *XZZTJ* gives early 961 for the submission of the *Tang huiyao*, and mid-963 for the submission of the *Wudai huiyao*. See *XZZTJ* 2.39 and 4.97, respectively.

11 On the position of supervisor compiler see *SHY* "zhiguan" 職官 18.75–76 (p. 2792).

12 *LTGS* 1.3, pp. 226–227.

13 On the compilation of the work see Wang Gung-wu, "The *Chiu Wu-tai shih* and History-Writing During the Five Dynasties", in *Asia Major* 6.1 (1957), pp. 1–22.

14 These were also referred to as Imperial diary drafters. Those coming from the Imperial Secretariat bore the title *qijulang* 起居郎, and those from the Imperial Chancellery were called *qiju sheren* 起居舍人. For more on these and the Imperial Diary, see below.

15 Imperial diary drafters in the Tang were referred to as dragon heads (*chitou*). See Zhao Yanwei 趙彥衛, *Yunli manchao* 雲麗漫鈔 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), 7.120.

rent government [affairs]. It is for this reason that the *Veritable Records of Wenzong* (*Wenzong shilu* 文宗實錄) are very detailed.¹⁶

During the reign of Mingzong 明宗 (r. 926–933) of the Later Tang, academicians of the Duanming Hall (*Duanming dian xueshi* 端明殿學士), as well as academicians provisionally assigned to the Bureau of Military Affairs (*shumi zhi xueshi* 樞密直學士), were ordered to take turns in compiling the *Daily Calendar* (*rili* 日曆) and to transfer these [notes] to the Historiography Institute.¹⁷

Under the present dynasty all of this has been abandoned. Even though for every season there is an Inner Court Calendar (*neiting rili* 內廷日曆) compiled by the Bureau of Military Affairs and forwarded to the Historiography Institute, it does not register much more than words of thanks at audiences, but none of the words and actions of the emperor are collected and written down.

This was caused by the grand councilors' anxiety of [confidential information] leaking out, hence they would not speak unless they had a good reason. The Historiography Institute is so far removed from [the audiences], how would they be able to make [confidential matters] known!

It is my hope that from now on, when matters arise that deserve recording and compassionate speeches emanate from the throne, these shall be written down. At the same time grand councilors and vice grand councilors should take turns in preparing a monthly record of all matters related to imperial decisions and noteworthy written edicts, and [these notes] should be transferred to the Historiography Institute, to provide historiographers with material for compilation and collection.” This was followed and hence Lu Duoxun 盧多遜 (934–985), a vice grand councilor, was ordered to record these matters.¹⁸

Obviously, no records of state administration had been kept since the start of the dynasty, and the Historiography Institute had not implemented regular procedures for preserving important documents. With the imperial permission to reinstate the recording of words and events, historiographical matters seemed to improve, but Lu Duoxun did not finish the record.¹⁹

16 The *Wenzong shilu* were completed in 854. See Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 155–156.

17 Zhao Xi 趙熙, senior compiler in the Historiography Institute, in 927 had asked the emperor for the compilation of records dealing with matters that were not recorded by the Secretariat. The emperor consequently appointed an academican from the Bureau of Military Affairs to produce these records which were submitted monthly to the Historiography Institute. See Xue Juzheng et al. (comps.), *Jiu Wudaishi* 舊五代史 (Taipei: Hongshi chubanshe, 1977), 38.526. The involvement of the academicians of the Duanming Hall in producing Records of Current Government – and not Daily Calendars – also began during Mingzong's reign, as is evident from a memorial sent to the throne of the Later Jin in 939. See Wang Pu 王溥, *Wudai huiyao* 五代會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1978), 18.304.

18 *XZZTJ* 15.326.

19 See *SHY* “zhiguan” 6.30 (p. 2511). Interestingly, the *SHY* refers to the work as “Draft of the Record of Current Government” (*shizheng ji cao* 時政記草), but not as a Daily Calendar.

The imperial councilors definitely were worried that at a time when the dynasty was still striving for territorial integration, state secrets might leak out and obstruct the further expansion of Song. For the time being no Daily Calendars were compiled.²⁰

Official Historiography under Taizong

The Records of Current Government (*shizhengji* 時政記), which were another source for the Veritable Records and consequently for the dynastic history, had also been neglected during Taizu's reign. In 983, Hu Dan 胡旦 (fl. 976–1008)²¹, an official assigned to the Historiography Institute, addressed the pressing need for Records of Current Government in a memorial to the emperor. Hu Dan referred to the more recent past by explaining how records were kept during the Five Dynasties:

Since the [Later] Tang of the Five Dynasties the Imperial Secretariat and the Bureau of Military Affairs both had instituted Records of Current Government. The Secretariat assigned to this task grand councilors that had not yet been appointed, whereas the Bureau of Military Affairs commissioned provisionally assigned academicians to it, and every month they delivered what they had compiled to the Historiography Institute. During the Xiande era (954–960) of the [Later] Zhou, the grand councilor Li Gu 李穀 (903–960) in a memorial asked that the Bureau of Military Affairs should produce an Inner Court Daily Calendar (*neiting rili* 內廷日曆).²² This was followed, but later discarded and the historiographers did have nothing to base their compilations on. It is my hope that the Bureau of Military Affairs will be given a command to re-introduce the compilation of the Inner Court Daily Calendar. Literary officials can be called upon as deputies and, together with the academicians, they can take turns in writing the records which then can be transferred to the Historiography Institute.²³

Whatever changes in the management of historical record-keeping Hu Dan had advocated, he must have been left disappointed with Taizong's response:

20 As a matter of fact, in 1022, Li Wei 李維 (fl. 985–1034) and Song Shou 宋綬 (991–1040), both senior compilers, asked for the appointment of additional personnel for the preparation of the Daily Calendars, as the practice of doing this had been scrapped after 1008. See *LTGS* 3.22, p. 329.

21 Hu Dan (*jinsbi* of 978) had a great interest in history and expressed that interest in a number of works now lost, among them the *Han chunqiu* 漢春秋, *Wudai shilüe* 五代史略, *Jiangshuai yaoliue* 將帥要略 and others. See his biographies in Wang Cheng 王稱, *Dongdu shilüe* 東都事略 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1979; hereafter *DDSL*), 38.595–596 and Tuotuo 脫脫 et al (comps.), *Songsbi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977; hereafter *SS*), 432.12827–12830.

22 This occurred in late 954 when Li was also in charge of the Dynastic History. See *Wudai huiyao*, 18.304. For more on history-writing during the Five Dynasties and Ten States, see Xie Baocheng 謝保成, *Sui Tang Wudai shixue* 隋唐五代史學 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2007), pp. 385–474.

23 *XZZTJ* 24.550–551.

The post of historiographer goes way back in history. Historiographers inevitably noted the orders issued by the administration, whether important or insignificant, and they recorded all words and actions of rulers.

Through successive dynasties many events occurred, but the old books are deficient [in recording them]; the words recorded in the historical works (*ceshu* 策書) have become incomplete and were lost. From now on, the planning of military matters and state affairs will be made known by the grand councilors.

Li Fang 李昉 (925–996), the minister of works and vice grand councilor, shall be ordered to compile records which at the end of each season he will submit to the Historiography Institute. For the recording of the matters of the Bureau of Military Affairs, similarly, one deputy commissioner shall be appointed as supervisor and to submit the records to the historiographers.²⁴

Ignoring Hu Dan's hint at Five Dynasties practices, Taizong remained evasive and uncommitted. The vagueness of the imperial command provoked a response by Li Fang who used the discussion to gain the favour of the ruler. He suggested that before the records were sent to the Historiography Institute, the drafts should first be examined by the emperor himself, giving him the final say in the depiction of his own reign.²⁵

These records were not referred to as actual Records of Current Government, but rather as “events to be transferred to the Historiography Institute” (*song shiguan shijian* 送史館事件).²⁶

The term Records of Current Government nevertheless was used by the authorities such as in the tenth month of the second year of the Duangong era (989), when the Secretariat-Chancellery informed the throne:

Every time the emperor is approaching the main [audience] hall, [officials from] the Military Affairs Office and subordinate offices are the first to present matters to the emperor, and the Grand Councilors have no way to hear the imperial proclamations and statements, sanctions and commending remarks, and they are lost for the Records of Current Government that are being compiled. We should like to hope that in the future two vice commissioners of the Bureau of Military Affairs will be assigned to produce records and transfer them to the Historiography Institute.²⁷

Accordingly two vice commissioners of the Bureau of Military Affairs were appointed to compile a record, and from then on all records of matters concerning the Bureau were forwarded to the historiography officials. The importance with which the records were treated

24 Qian Ruoshui 錢若水, *Song Taizong shilu* 宋太宗實錄, ed. by Yan Yongcheng 燕永成 (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 2005), p. 8.

25 *Song Taizong shilu*, p. 8.

26 *SHY* “zhiguan” 6.30 (p. 2511).

27 *XZZTJ* 30.691.

is evident in the selection of the officials who produced them. After Li Fang had become grand councilor, Su Yijian 蘇易簡 (958–996) replaced him and this turned out to become the rule, i.e., a vice grand councilor who had not yet been called upon would look after the “events”.²⁸ The intimate and very often sensitive nature of the records being produced called for great discretion and could not be handled by a lowly ranked official who would have found it difficult to gain access to the emperor such as councilors had. For the same reason, the number of officials involved in compiling official records was limited to a few only.

The Records of Current Government consisted of all the proceedings at court, but until 989, many of these had been lost due to a lack of communication between the government agencies and the grand councilors.²⁹ The new system now made it possible for the grand councilors to directly refer to a source of information that was regularly compiled.

The Three Institutes and the Archive under Taizong

Right after the inception of the new dynasty in 960 the Historiography Institute together with the Academy of Scholarly Worthies and the Institute for the Glorification of Literature were established as the Institute for the Veneration of Literature, also commonly referred to as the Three Institutes (*sanguan* 三館). Added to these was the Imperial Archive (*bige* 祕閣), established in 988, and the four together were collectively known as the Institutes and the Archive (*guange* 館閣). The Institutes and the Archive compiled historical records and also kept records of former dynasties. They differed, however, from certain individual archives, for example the Taiqing lou 太清樓, which had to look after the private collections of various emperors.

Under the Tang the Institute for the Glorification of Literature had been called Institute for the Advancement of Literature (*Hongwen guan* 弘文館), but as the Song founder’s father bore the name Zhao *Hongyin* 趙弘殷, it had to receive a new label. The actual Department of the Palace Library was defunct and positions within that Department were all sinecures until the reform of the bureaucratic system in the Yuanfeng period starting in 1080.³⁰

28 According to *LTGS* the *shijian* were renamed *shizhengji* in 988. See *LTGS* 3.16, p. 312. This contradicts the *SHY* and *YH* descriptions which refer to the years 1004, or 1006 respectively, as the date when the Records of Current Government were officially re-introduced. See *SHY* “zhiguan” 6.30 (p. 2511) and *YH* 48.44b (p. 322). The exception to the rule was Lü Mengzheng 呂蒙正 (946–1011) who continued as supervising compiler even though he had been promoted to grand councilor. See *SHY* “zhiguan” 6.30 (p. 2511).

29 Interestingly, the *LTGS* again deviates from the *SHY* and the *YH* since it refers to the Records of Current Government as ‘historical matters’ (*shishi* 史事) only, which in the context makes more sense. Moreover, the *LTGS* specifies that the historiography officials editing the information were working within the Secretariat. See *LTGS* 3.16, p. 312.

30 On the bureaucratic reforms and their impact on all levels of the administration, see Paul Jakov Smith, “Shen-tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-shih, 1067–1085”, in Denis Twitchett and Paul

Even though the Institutes and the Archive were not part of the higher and decision-making agencies in the empire, access to positions there was strictly controlled and limited. In order to qualify for an appointment as grand academician of the Academy of Scholarly Worthies (*Jixian yuan da xueshi* 集賢殿大學士), chief compiler of the Dynastic History (*jianxiu guoshi* 監修國史) within the Historiography Institute, or grand academician of the Institute for the Glorification of Literature (*Zhaowen guan da xueshi* 昭文館大學士), an official had to hold the position of grand councilor.

The appointments to the first two Institutes certainly involved a certain degree of work while an appointment to the Institute for the Glorification of Literature appears to have been less work intensive.

While the chief compiler possessed mainly supervisory functions, the second position available in the Historiography Institute was that of compiler of the Dynastic History (*xiiu guoshi* 修國史). Usually vice grand councilors were called upon to fill this post which they held concurrently with their regular positions.

Court officials were appointed senior compilers (*xiuzhuan* 修撰), but other positions in the Institute were open to all metropolitan officials. Officials received positions such as examining editor (*jiantao* 檢討) and junior compiler (*bianxiu* 編修) on an irregular basis to deal with the compiling of histories and calendars as well as managing the book holdings.

The permanent position of director was reserved for officials who had to be at least rank 5 and above and either were from the Department of State Affairs or the Chancellery.³¹

The first major challenge for the Historiography Institute came in the form of the *Veritable Records of Taizu* (*Taizu shilu* 太祖實錄). Writing this work was a delicate task because the compilers had to deal with the sensitive issue of the takeover of power by Taizu from the Later Zhou in 960. Furthermore, since the succession of Taizong had been problematic as well, the delay of two years in the compilation process indicates that Taizong himself had certain reservations about the Veritable Records of his older brother and predecessor.

Originally Li Fang, Hu Meng, Li Mu 李穆 (928–985), Dong Chun 董淳 (*jinsi* of 951), and Zhao Linji 趙鄰幾 (921–979), compiled the *Veritable Records of Taizu* starting in 978. Two and half years later, in late 980, the Historiography Institute presented the work in 50 *juan* to the throne, and all compilers, including grand councilor Shen Lun 沈倫 (909–987) who had been appointed supervising compiler, were conferred presents consisting of suits of garments, golden belts, brocades and silver vessels.³²

Jakov Smith (eds), *The Cambridge History of China*. Volume 5, Part One: *The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), especially pp. 457–464.

31 *LTGS* 1.3, pp. 226–227.

32 *YH* 48.13a (p. 306).

Fifteen years after their completion, in 995, Taizong pointed out that when his predecessor's Veritable Records were made, the scholars in charge of the work had to rely to a large degree on hearsay as they had no access to any written records. For this reason the text suffered from many omissions and mistakes.³³

Su Yijian was quick to remark that it was not so much the lack of material, but rather the attitude of Hu Meng – who conveniently had died some years before and thus could not defend himself – that had made the *Veritable Records of Taizu* such an inferior historical work. In Su's opinion, Hu Meng had only pursued his own selfish goals and therefore had avoided using the 'upright brush' of the historian. Taizong replied to Su's statement, saying: "The position of the historiographer consists in unconditionally reporting good and evil without restrictions. In the past emperor Xuanzong of the Tang (r. 712–756) wanted to burn the history of Empress Wu's reign (r. 690–705), but his advisors argued that this was not permissible, for they wanted later generations to learn about it using it as a lesson."³⁴

How much this can be taken as factual information is questionable since Taizong himself was strongly influencing the final text, but the entry is illuminating in that the negative historical precedent he alluded to comes from the Tang dynasty again. This is clearly an indication of the importance the Song emperor gave to the Tang as a model for his own dynasty. The ensuing revision of the *Veritable Records of Taizu* was entrusted to four scholars – Li Zhi 李至 (947–1001), Zhang Ji 張洎 (937–997), Zhang Bi 張泌 (?–after 994) and Fan Gao 范杲, who were also involved in compiling the Dynastic History. After Li Zhi and Zhang Bi had left the group Song Bai 宋白 (933–1009) replaced them. The compilers were under explicit imperial orders to emphasize that Taizu at no time had had any plans to take over the throne from the Later Zhou and that the incident at Chenqiao, where the army had 'made' him emperor, had completely taken him by surprise.³⁵

33 SHY "yunli" 運歷 1.29 (p. 2142). Cf. also the different speech by Taizong in *LTGS*: "Written history is extremely complicated. I have perused the *Veritable Records of Taizu* and they are quite lacking. Everyone knows about the interactions between Heaven and Man, omens manifesting [Taizu's] Mandate of Heaven, the lengths of years and months; moreover, I have personally witnessed these events. [Li] Zhi and his colleagues shall be ordered to revise and re-edit [the work]." See *LTGS* 3.17, p. 318.

34 *LTGS* 3.17, p. 318.

35 SHY "yunli" 1.29 (p. 2142). Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 cleverly avoided dealing with the Chenqiao incident. His entry for that fateful day in his *History of the Five Dynasties* simply reads: "On the day under the cyclical characters *jiazhen* of the first month of the spring of the seventh year of the Xiande era [the Later Zhou emperor] abdicated the throne. The Song dynasty was established." See *Xin Wudai shi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 12.125. The *Old History of the Five Dynasties* by contrast takes into account the accepted version of events. See *Jiu Wudai shi* 120.1596–1597. On the differing depictions of the Chenqiao Incident see also Johannes L. Kurz, "Empereur à la surprise: The Making of Song Taizu", in *Measuring Historical Heat: Event, Performance and Impact in China and the West*, Symposium in Honour of Rudolf G. Wagner on his 60th Birthday (Heidelberg, 2001), pp. 107–117. This paper is accessible at <http://sun.sino.uni-heidelberg.de/conf/symposium2.pdf>.

After only six months, in autumn of 995, Li Zhi and his colleagues had completed a draft in one *juan* only, with the passages that the emperor had contributed written in vermilion ink to distinguish them from the text written by the compilers.³⁶ For unknown reasons the work entitled *Annals of Taizu* (*Taizu ji* 太祖紀) was never finished and Taizong seemed not to have cared about its completion in any way. It is doubtful whether the *Veritable Records* was changed much because the final product, judging from the title, fell under the category of Dynastic History.

Official Historiography under Zhenzong

The work still posed problems in its unfinished state as a historiographical ‘construction site’. When Emperor Zhenzong came to power in 998, he immediately realized these shortcomings and decided to overcome them once and for all. Shen Lun again was put in charge of the revision just as he had been in 980. This time the compilation was organized much more stringently, which shows that the bureaucratic system including the Historiography Institute had matured since Taizong’s reign.

Shen appointed Lü Duan 呂端 (935–1000) and Qian Ruoshui 錢若水 (960–1003) as supervisors, and Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954–1001), Li Zongze 李宗諤 (965–1013), Liang Hao 梁顥 (963–1004), Zhao Anren 趙安仁 (958–1018), and others as joint compilers. It took these officials less than a year to complete the revision and to submit the work in 52 *juan* (50 *juan* text; 2 *juan* ‘listing events’, or *shimu* 事目) in 999.³⁷

Li Hang 李沆 (947–1004) who had assumed the role of supervising compiler after Lü Duan had retired,³⁸ sent in the work with an accompanying memorial:

The records previously compiled include an investigation into the origin of the name of the imperial family at the start of the dynasty, but this was incomplete and lacking in order. We have corrected this with material from old texts. To the names of ninety-two civil and military officials listed in the old records, we have added those of one hundred and four men [originally] missing [in these texts].

As for rites and music, and the management of civil and military officials, the outline of the august administration, and the changes in official tasks, we have presented them as the most important regulations to be handed down as a rule.

There is nothing that is not completely recorded.³⁹

The emperor, highly impressed with the new work, praised it and said to Li Hang and his compilers:

36 *LTGS* 3.17, pp. 318–319.

37 *YH* 48.14a (p. 307).

38 *LTGS* 3.19, p. 322.

39 *SHY* “yunli” 1.29 (p. 2142).

In former days historiographers (*shiguan* 史官) have not made wholehearted efforts [to produce suitable texts], and I [even] heard that Zhang Ji, when compiling the Dynastic History, only produced one *juan*.⁴⁰ This definitely has been surpassed now.⁴¹

Consequently the officials involved in the revision received presents and promotions with the exception of Li Hang, who had only joined the team at the very end and therefore had declined any rewards.

Wang Yucheng was not rewarded as well, but for different reasons; he had been accused of taking the compilation task too lightly and was commissioned to manage a district in the remote south.⁴²

Despite his own positive statement in 999, Zhenzong brought up the issue again, in 1016, but I have not been able to identify the reasons for this move.

In all likelihood, there were still some doubts in regard to the inclusiveness of the *Veritable Records of Taizu*. For instance, in 1007 Ma Zhijie 馬知節 argued that certain events of Taizu's reign were not recorded. Ma then compiled a list – since lost – of those events that should enter the *Veritable Record*.⁴³ In the same year the emperor issued an edict ordering the submission of all private copies of the *Veritable Records of Taizu* still kept by the families of officials. The copies received went to the Historiography Institute and it was no longer allowed to retain duplicates.⁴⁴ Apparently previous editions of the work had been copied by officials from the texts held in the Three Institutes and the Archive. Taking books out from the libraries was a common practice and this had led to a considerable drain of written material.⁴⁵ The imperial edict also shows that the emperor thought to eradicate all versions of the *Veritable Records of Taizu* which had not met with his approval.

In 1016 Wang Dan 王旦 (957–1017) supervised a compilation team consisting of Zhao Anren, Chao Jiong 晁迥 (951–1034), Chen Pengnian 陳彭年 (961–1017), Xia Song 夏竦

40 This refers to the 995 revision of the *Veritable Records of Taizu*. See above.

41 *XZZTJ* 44.946. The *XZZTJ* only mentions 50 *juan* of text and not the extra 2 *juan* as the *SHY* and the *YH* do. See *SHY* “yunli” 1.29 and *YH* 48.14a (p. 307).

42 The commentary in *XZZTJ* alleges that he may have either fallen victim to tensions between the two grand councilors Zhang Qixian 張齊賢 (943–1014) and Li Hang, or to his own negligent editing in early 999. See *XZZTJ* 43.923.

43 The *YH* lists this under the day with the cyclical characters *gengyin* of the fifth month of the fourth year of the Jingle era. See *YH* 48.14b (p. 307). For the same date, the *XZZTJ* records a statement by Zhenzong that Feng Dao 馮道 (882–954) because he had served under ten emperors of four dynasties could not be called a model official. See *XZZTJ* 65.1461. There is no mention, however, of Ma Zhijie.

44 *XZZTJ* 66.1488.

45 In 998, for instance, Zhu Ang 朱昂 (925–1007) reported that many books had vanished from the Three Institutes and that at the time of his report, court officials had borrowed books in the amount of 460 *juan*. To make up for the loss, copies of the books that had disappeared were made from texts held in the private libraries of imperial princes. See *LTGS* 2.10, p. 259.

(985–1051) and Cui Zundu 崔尊度 (954–1020) and in 1017 the re-revised *Veritable Records of Taizu* were finally completed.⁴⁶

The *Veritable Records of Taizu* thus had gone through several editorial stages involving a number of high ranking officials. In addition, emperors Taizong and Zhenzong took interest in personally examining the text and, when necessary, interfering with the work of the compilers and overruling their decisions. They could do this because they maintained independent positions vis-à-vis their advisors in a much more vigorous way than their successors, who were increasingly handled and controlled by the bureaucratic apparatus.

The major problem that had plagued the compilers of the *Veritable Records of Taizu* continued to haunt those of the *Veritable Records of Taizong* (*Taizong shilu* 太宗實錄) as well. Other than his predecessor, Zhenzong gave orders for the compilation of the *Veritable Records of Taizong* right after he had assumed the throne in late 997.⁴⁷ He appointed Qian Ruoshui for this task. Qian, who had already worked on the revision of the *Veritable Records of Taizu*, suggested that Chai Chengwu 柴成務 (934–1004), Zong Du 宗度, Wu Shu 吳淑 (947–1002), and Yang Yi 楊億 (974–1020) be admitted as joint compilers and lodged at the Academy of Scholarly Worthies.⁴⁸ This became one of the standard conventions associated with the compilation of major works such as the Daily Calendars and Veritable Records: With the start of an official project, a temporary office was established where the participants could work, and once the work was accomplished, the office would be dissolved again.

Originally Qian had also asked for the help of Li Zong, but Zhenzong intervened saying that Li Fang, father of Li Zong, had been in charge of the Imperial Secretariat since 983, and since the historical record required faithfulness, he did not want the son to be part of the compilation team.⁴⁹ Within a few weeks thereafter, Qian and his colleagues notified the emperor that no written records had been kept for any court proceedings before the eighth year of the Taiping xingguo era (983), and again after the fifth year of the Chunhua era (994). To solve the problem, they suggested one might gather all documents and official writings still held by former grand councilors and others and thus close the gap in the records.

One of the officials who had served at Taizong's court and kept a personal record is still known. This was a certain Wang Yande 王延德, most likely an eunuch, who presented a work in 3 *juan*. It bore the title *Taizong nangong shiji* 太宗南宮事跡 (*Deeds of Taizong at the*

46 YH 4.14b (p. 307).

47 On the *Veritable Records of Taizong*, see also the entry in *A Sung Bibliography*, pp. 84–85. Zong Du is misspelled there as Song 宋 Du.

48 YH 48.15a (p. 307).

49 XZZTJ 42.889.

Southern Palace) and was immediately transferred to the Office for the Compilation of the Veritable Record for reference.⁵⁰

That office certainly also had in its possession another privately compiled text in one *juan*, already submitted in 983, by Qian Yu 錢昱 (943–999), director of the Palace Library (*bishu jian* 祕書監). Its title was *Taiping xingguo lu* 太平興國錄 (*Record of the Taiping xingguo era*).⁵¹

In the late summer of 998 the compilers had finished their work. We do not know which other texts besides Wang Yande's and Qian Yu's they used, but the sources emphasize that Yang Yi contributed 56 of a total of 80 *juan* that were finally submitted to Zhenzong.⁵² The emperor approved the new compilation and following previous examples conferred presents on the compilers. After he had perused it from beginning to end, he ordered it to be entered into the imperial palace, and Qian Ruoshui had it printed in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies for distribution to all the princes.⁵³

Printing at this point in time did not automatically preempt a work from revision and this happened to the *Veritable Records of Taizong* in 1016. Wang Dan, who then was managing the revision of the *Veritable Records of Taizu*, had his colleagues Zhao Anren and Chao Jiong amend the contents of the *Veritable Records of Taizong*, and they finished it the next year.⁵⁴ Their revision, however, did not change the order of the *juan* of the original work.

The Compilation of the Imperial Diary during the Reigns of Taizong and Zhenzong

At this time a system should have been reinstated that had been created under the Tang to keep track of the emperor's words and actions, as well as almost every aspect of the proceedings at court. As is evident from Taizong's reign, this apparatus was not even in its infancy then, but it soon was re-initiated to guarantee the preservation of the historical record for the coming generations.

According to this system, the imperial diary drafters⁵⁵ recorded the actions and words of the emperor, as well as all orders, regulations and commands that were issued during court session. But during the first decades of the Song dynasty, Imperial Diaries were not regularly compiled, and the 'new' system only began to be applied more stringently during the later period of the Northern Song. Usually, the imperial diary drafters sent their material to the

50 YH 48.15a (p. 307).

51 *Song Taizong shilu*, p. 9.

52 YH 48.15a (p. 307).

53 YH 48.15b (p. 307). The Historiography Institute which since the start of the dynasty had been housed in the building of the Academy of Scholarly Worthies did not possess printing facilities.

54 YH 48.14b (p. 307).

55 They were also addressed as diary compilers (*xiuzhu guan* 修注官).

Office for the Imperial Diary (*qiju yuan* 起居院) where subeditors (*jiaoli* 校理) from the Three Institutes prepared the final version of the Imperial Diary. Sometimes additional officials were assigned to help the diary drafters, and these were commonly referred to as joint diary compilers (*tong xiuzhu guan* 同修注官).⁵⁶

In 994 Zhang Bi 張泌⁵⁷, a senior compiler in the Historiography Institute, asked to reintroduce the Imperial Diary (*qiju zhu* 起居注). He argued that record-keeping of audiences had been neglected:

The position of historiographer implies the responsibility of compiling the Dynastic History (*guoshi* 國史) and [in doing so] he does not exaggerate good nor conceal evil. Omina of Heaven and Earth and of the moon and the sun, the layout of mountains and streams and borderlands, the order of the successive spirit tablets arranged in the ancestral temple, and the administration of civil and military officials, are laid down in the Imperial Diary for the Veritable Records, and then for the annals and they assign praise and blame. I humbly observe that the annals of the present dynasty are called Daily Calendar and that these merely register official gazettes (*baozhuang* 報狀) and briefly sketch imperial edicts. If the historical writings do not make known the good words of the imperial administration, imperial plans and worthy actions, loyal, disloyal, good and evil officials, the tightening and relaxing of rules governing administrative matters, how will the tenets of the state be recorded?

I have carefully examined historical precedents in the *Liudian* 六典 where the imperial diarist (*qiju lang*) was in charge of compiling accounts of events. He recorded all relevant matters into a daily account, he then compiled the daily record by month, and compiled the monthly record by season, and the seasonal record by year, so that inevitably by noting the first days of the first month of the spring season, past calendars were established, and by noting ceremonies and refined objects, institutions could be examined. [He noted] promotions and rewards as encouragement for good deeds, and executions and dismissals as punishment for evil actions, and by the end of every three months he transferred all of this material to the Historiography Institute.

The imperial diarist (*qiju sheren*) was in charge of compiling accounts of words, and recorded orders and wise pronouncements of the emperor, just like the regulations for keeping track of events.

I would like to suggest the establishment of an Office for the Imperial Diary and to create the positions of left and right recorder (*zuo you shi* 左右史) to compile records and produce the Imperial Diary which, together with the records of current government, at the

56 See *SHY* “zhiguan” 2.25 (p. 2384) and *SS* 161.3780 and 3786.

57 The *YH* renders Zhang Bi’s personal name with the character 泌. The correct one is however given above. Zhang Bi was a former Southern Tang official taken over into Song service. He has a short biography in *SS* 265.9139.

end of every month shall be transferred to the Historiography Institute to provide the basis for the compilation of the Daily Calendar.

When this is done, the present dynasty, by examining old precedents, will illuminate ancient scriptures, and in trusting the recorders with the completion of the text, shall certainly surpass even the Zhou and the Han.⁵⁸

Taizong welcomed Zhang's suggestions and created the Office for the Imperial Diary within the palace, nominating Liang Zhouhan 梁周翰 (929–1009) and Li Zongze to positions of imperial diarists (*qiju lang sheren* 起居郎舍人). According to historical precedents, the text they produced was then investigated by an examining editor (*jiatao* 檢討) from the Historiography Institute.

Only a few days later Liang Zhouhan provided historical precedents from the Former Han as well as the Wei and Jin dynasties, according to which the imperial diarists passed on their notes to the emperor for his personal perusal first, before they were then, with his permission, given to the Historiography Institute.⁵⁹

Liang Zhouhan's suggestion was readily adopted by the emperor and became the standard procedure. The advantage of this practice was that the final Imperial Diary would certainly meet the approval of the emperor; the disadvantage was that he could change the record if he was inclined to do so.

In 1013, the Editorial Office (*xiangding suo* 詳定所) within the Office for the Imperial Diary was renamed Office for Procedures (*liyi yuan* 禮儀院). At this time Chen Pengnian, compiler of the Imperial Diary, directed the office together with Zhao Anren.⁶⁰

Apart from the Daily Calendar, the Imperial Diary, the Records of Current Government, and the Veritable Records, the historiographers had to deal with the writing of the Dynastic History for which the former presented a vast quarry of information. Hu Dan, whom we have met before, was the first to suggest a re-organization of history-writing in 987 when he was a scholar assigned to the Historiography Institute.⁶¹ Since his remarks are quite detailed I am quoting them here in detail from the *LTGS*:

From the first year of Jianlong (960) to the third year of Yongxi (986), our dynasty has not announced the completion of either Veritable Records or Daily Calendars. When the Daily Calendars ceases to be the basis for official gazettes (*baozhuang* 報狀), and all offices altogether have no access to [such] gazettes, it comes to the point where no news of ongo-

58 *XZZTJ* 35.778–779. A shorter version of this text is found in *YH* 48.41a–42b (pp. 320–321).

59 An abridged version of Liang Zhouhan's memorial is found in *XZZTJ* 35.779. For a longer version – that does not give Liang as the author – see *SHY* where it forms the start for the entry on the Office for the Imperial Diary. See *SHY* “zhiguan” 2.10 (p. 2376) and *YH* 48.42a–b (p. 321).

60 *XZZTJ* 81.1845.

61 The *XZZTJ* does not record Hu's suggestion.

ing matters in the Secretariat and the Bureau of Military Affairs can be accessed, and when the Office for Audience Ceremonies (*gemen* 閣門) and the Memorial Forwarding Office (*tongjinsi* 通進司) have no records of the documents and memorials they received, then words and actions of emperors will not be compiled. Moreover, if promotions of civil and military officials are not made known, and Accounts of Conduct (*xingzhuang* 行狀) of those who received rewards and those who were buried, are not recorded, then the historiographers consequently have nothing to rely upon for compiling [historical records].

I have examined the reign of Emperor Mingdi of the Han (r. 58–75) who had the *Guangwudi ji* 光武帝紀 (*Annals of Guangwudi*) compiled, as well as Tables (*biao* 表), Treatises (*zhi* 志), Biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳), and Contemporary Records (*zaiji* 載記), and forthwith under each [successive] reign these were compiled as well, so that during the reign of Lingdi (r. 168–189) already one hundred and seventeen *juan* were completed. Even though these were not the complete events of the whole dynasty, at all times records were continuously written, and these form now the *Dongguan Hanji* 東觀漢記 (*Eastern Watch Records of the Han*).

During the times of Taizong of the Tang (r. 626–649) records were also existent from the very start of the dynasty, assembled in Annals, Biographies, and the Ten Treatises, and as under each [successive] reign records were compiled, during the reign of Daizong (r. 763–779) already 130 *juan* were completed, which now form the *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (*sic*) (*Old History of the Tang*).

I hope the historical precedents of Han and Tang will become the standard and forthwith orders will be given for the compilation of Imperial Annals (*diji* 帝紀), Tables, Treatises, and Biographies. When these are gathered as records, in my opinion, they will provide [the basic material] for the Dynastic History in the future.⁶²

Hu formulated two concerns in his text, one of which referred to the flow of information between different government offices. He argued, the regular collection of material would make this flow more efficient and benefit the compilations of official works. His second concern was the creation of the dynastic record in the form of a Dynastic History for which the Veritable Records and the Daily Calendars were an absolute necessity. Evidently it made no difference to him that the *Tang shu* referred to above was of lesser quality because its compiler, Liu Xu (888–947), only had access to some Veritable Records of the Tang period and to Liu Fang's 柳芳 version of the Dynastic History, which recorded events until 756. Therefore, Hu had to be creative in making up for those Veritable Records which he lacked, employing “less authoritative private sources”, in the words of Denis Twitchett, for the period from 847 to the end of the dynasty in 907.⁶³

62 *LTGS* 3.16, pp. 313–314.

63 Twitchett, *Official History*, p. 202. Twitchett deals with the *Jiu Tang shu* in detail on pp. 191–236.

To Hu this was a serious matter and perhaps an emotional one as well, which transpires from his list of ‘historical events’ (*shijian* 事件). In addition, he tried to make use of the ‘up-right brush’ – for example, by providing information on the sons of Taizu who had been sidelined by Taizong’s usurpation of the throne. Among other things, Hu suggested the following:

The conferral of [posthumous] titles on the four imperial ancestors and consorts, and the prince of Yong 邕 [Zhao 趙] Guangji 光濟 of the imperial family and three more people; the grand princess of Chen 陳國⁶⁴ and another person; [Zhao 趙] Dezhao 德昭 (?–979), Prince of Wei 魏, son of Taizu, and another person; the royal relative Du Shenqiong 杜審瓊 (897–966) and two more individuals; the former Grand Councilor Li Gu 李穀 (903–960) and two others; the Grand Councilor Fan Zhi 范質 (911–964) and three more people; the former military official Han Tong 韓通 (?–960) and thirty-four others; the founding general Murong Yanjian 慕容延釗 (?–963) and four more persons; the commanding general Zhang Guanghan 張光翰 and fifteen others; the meritorious official Li Chuyun 李處耘 (920–966) and two further individuals; the border general He Jijun 何繼筠 (921–971) and four more people; the important official Ju Tingzuo 具廷祚 and five others; the civil official Zhao Shangjiao 趙上交 (895–961) of the previous dynasty and six more persons; and also Dou Yi 竇儀 (914–966) and eight more people, the regular official Zhang Xi 張錫 (?–961) and ten others; the (imperial) promoted official Lü Yuqing 呂餘慶 (927–976) and four more people; the official Yang Zhongxiong 楊重熊⁶⁵, who submitted to enlightened rule, and five additional persons; the official Li Hao 李昊 (892–after 965), who surrendered, and nine more people; the evil official Zhang Qiong 張瓊 (?–963) and two further persons; the rebel Li Jun 李筠 and another person; the rebellious official Lu Duoxun 盧多遜 (934–985); the specialist Wang Chune 王處訥 (915–982); the hermit Wang Zhaosu 王昭素 and another person; the hegemon Gao Baorong 高保融 (920–960) who accepted the rule (of the Song)⁶⁶ and three more people; the order receiving barbarian Ding Xuan 丁璿⁶⁷ and [again] three others; the usurper Li Jing 李景 (916–961)⁶⁸ and nine more people; Yutian 于闐 (Khotan) from among the Four Barbarians and twelve additional countries.

64 The Grand Princess of Chen was a sister of Taizu. See *SS* 242.8606.

65 No person with this name is found in *DDSL* or in *SS*. ‘Submission to enlightened rule’ (*guiming* 歸明) according to Zhao Sheng 趙升 (?–after 1236) was a subaltern official title given to people belonging to ethnic groups in the southwest of the empire. See Zhao Sheng, *Chaoye leiyaoyao* 朝野類要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 3.67.

66 Gao Baorong ruled over the tiny state of Jingnan on the middle Yangzi from 948 to 960, and submitted to the Song in 960. See *SS* 483.23952–13953.

67 Ding Xuan served as an envoy of the ruler of Jiaozhou 交州, in modern day north Vietnam, to the court of Taizong. Originally the position as military governor of Jiaozhou had been Ding Xuan’s, but he lost it due to his youth. See *SS* 488.14058–14062.

68 Li Jing had ruled the state of the Southern Tang since 943, and died shortly after he had submitted to

He arranged [details concerning the administration of] Jiangnan, Guangnan, Hedong, Xichuan, Jingnan, Liang Zhe, Zhang[-zhou and] Quan[-zhou] as well as Xiazhou into Tables (*biao* 表)⁶⁹, and Calendar (*lilì* 律曆), Astronomy (*tianwen* 天文), Geography (*dili* 地理), Five Elements (*wuxing* 五行), Rites (*liyue* 禮樂), Penal Law (*xingfa* 刑法), Economy (*shihuo* 食貨), Field Irrigation (*gouxu* 溝洫), Books (*shuji* 書籍), Buddhism (*shi* 釋) and Daoism (*dao* 道) into Treatises.

He went on to explain: “Moreover, as none of the illegitimate states have left any written material apt for [new] compilations, and as there is Li Hui 李暉, adjutant of Xuzhou 許州 – formerly an illegitimate grand councilor of Hedong (Northern Han), [but] now of venerable age and no longer able to walk – I hope that a scholar provisionally assigned to the Institutes may be dispatched to the district in question to compile records (for the Northern Han) together with Li Hui. Xiao Cui 蕭崔, erudite of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices assigned to Xijing (Luoyang), once served the illegitimate Guang (Southern Han) as left vice director [of the Chancellery]. I again ask for his posting to the Institutes so that he can compile, together with the provisionally assigned scholars of the Institutes, the record of events (*shiji* 事跡) for that state (Southern Han). Furthermore, both the Veritable Records of the illegitimate Shu and the *Jiangnan lu* 江南錄 (*Record of Jiangnan*) do not record [events] faithfully⁷⁰; neither Jingnan, nor Hunan (Chu), nor Xiazhou kept any written records, and no one is informed about [their] history.” He then asked that court officials, who knew [enough] of these places, should work together with scholars at the Institutes and compile [new historical] records.

Many officials had been buried without their Accounts of Conduct (*xingzhuang*) having been submitted, and he hoped that from then on when civil and military official were buried, the Censorate (*yushitai* 御史臺) would be ordered to notify their families to provide

Song rule in 961. See Johannes L. Kurz, *China's Southern Tang Dynasty* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 41–90.

69 The geographical designations are synonymous with the states of Wu (902–936) and Southern Tang (937–976) (Jiangnan), Southern Han (917–971) (Guangnan), Northern Han (951–979) (Hedong), Former Shu (907–925) and Later Shu (934–965), Jingnan (924–963), Wu-Yue (907–978) (Liang Zhe), the autonomous territory of Qingyuan (Zhangzhou and Quanzhou), and the Xixia or Tanguts (Xiazhou). With the exception of the last, these states belong to what historiographers in the early Northern Song came to refer to as the Ten States. Descriptions of these are found in chapters 478–483 of the *SS*. The Xixia who founded their state in 954 are treated in *SS* 485.13981–14003 as a foreign country.

70 The *Shu shilu* most likely refer to the *Hou Shu Meng xianzhu shilu* 後蜀孟先主實錄 (30 *juan*), the *Hou Shu zhu shilu* 後蜀主實錄 (40 *juan*), and the *Hou Shu houzhu shilu* 後蜀後主實錄 (80 *juan*), compiled by Li Hao. The *Jiangnan lu* is the work commissioned by Taizong on the history of the Southern Tang state and compiled by Xu Xuan 徐鉉 (916–991) and Tang Yue 湯悅 (fl. 940–983), which they submitted to the throne in 979. None of these works are surviving. See Johannes L. Kurz, “A Survey of the Historical Sources for the Five Dynasties and Ten States in Song Times”, *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 33 (2003), pp. 221–223.

Accounts of Conducts, stelae inscriptions (*beiwén* 碑文), tomb inscriptions (*muzhi* 墓誌), family genealogies (*jiadie* 家牒), and clan genealogies (*pulu* 譜錄) and submit these to the Historiography Institute. From among the Inner Posts (*neizhi* 內職)⁷¹ the Court of Palace Attendants (*xuanhui yuan* 宣徽院), accordingly, should prepare this to be put in force. He furthermore requested that all memorials from inside and outside (the Imperial City) submitted by the Office for Audience Ceremonies and the Memorial Forwarding Office should be recorded in books which he asked to be forwarded to the Historiography Institute.

The routine dispatches from the State Department (*zhongshu*) and the Bureau of Military Affairs, he likewise asked to be sent down. As for the remaining government gazetteers and writings from the Institute of Academicians, the Document Drafting Office (*sherenyuan* 舍人院), and other agencies, [he suggested] to establish registers (*ji* 籍) with copies of confidential documents for checking.

Tribute brought from foreign countries that had entered the Foreign Relations Office (*libinyuan* 禮賓元) by and by should be reported to the [Historiography] Institute. The [Historiography] Institute should be given permission to ask officials serving as envoys to foreign countries and those assigned to punitive campaigns, on the day of their return, for submission of one official report each on conduct of affairs as well as on the customs of each country.⁷²

The emperor impressed by Hu's arguments and knowledge, arranged for a new office called the Historiography Office in a room in the western corridor of the Historiography Institute and a budget for the work to be done there. Hu became the director managing, among others, a staff of seven copyists. Unfortunately, Hu was promoted to a higher position and left the Historiography Office after he had compiled three *juan* only. His contemporaries criticized the choice of his successors saying that Kong Wei 孔維 (928–991)⁷³, director of Studies at the National University (*guozhi siye* 國子司業), and Li Jue 李覺 (?–after 991)⁷⁴, erudite of the *Liji* 禮記, were classical scholars (*ruchen* 儒臣) and therefore not suitable to join the Historiography Institute. The appointment of the two classical scholars appears strange, indeed, because the emperor certainly knew that they were not historians at all. Hu Dan possessed the expertise and vision necessary to write a major history that would uncover certain facts about the transfer of power from Taizu to Taizong, about some of their family members, and

71 The Inner Posts refer to Academicians from the Bureau of Military Affairs, the Court of Palace Attendants, the State Finance Commission, and subordinate agencies. Outer Posts referred to military personnel in the capital. See *SS* 161.3769.

72 *LTGS* 3.16, pp. 313–314.

73 Kong Wei was a specialist of the *Zhouyi* 周易. See *DDSL* 113.1740 and *SS* 431.12809–12812.

74 Li Jue had passed the Nine Classics examination in 980 and is known for his participation in the revision of the *Shijing* 詩經. See *DDSL* 113.1741 and *SS* 431.12820–12822.

about the original status of several states that Song had labeled illegitimate. With Kong and Li in charge of the compilation the result could never be in doubt – they did not complete the work.

The uncertain state of the Veritable Records of the two first emperors notwithstanding, Wang Dan in 1007 received an order to compile the Dynastic History spanning the reigns of Taizu and Taizong.⁷⁵ Under his supervision Wang Qinruo, Chen Yaosou 陳堯叟 (961–1017), Zhao Anren 趙安仁 (958–1018), Chao Jiong and Yang Yi began work on the history of the Dynastic History of the Two Reigns (*Liangchao guoshi* 兩朝國史) being supported in their efforts by the junior compilers Lu Zhen 路振 (957–1014) and Cui Zundu.

Prior to this, Zhu Xun 朱巽 and Zhang Fu 張復, under the supervision of Wang Qinruo, were given the task to compiling basic source material for the Dynastic History in the form of Daily Calendars, Records of Current Government, Court Diaries, Accounts of Conduct, and all other relevant and extant documents held by government agencies.

Progress was relatively slow compared to the work on the Veritable Records. The main reason for this was Zhenzong himself who, upon reading the first draft chapter, identified wrong passages and hence returned it to the Historiography Institute for corrections. He consequently demanded to examine all following chapters himself, which he routinely corrected very carefully. In 1011 Xia Song was added as another junior compiler, but the compilers were only able to submit the finished Dynastic History in 1016.

It consisted of a total of one hundred and twenty *juan* that were assigned as follows: 6 *juan* of annals (three for Taizu, three for Taizong), 55 *juan* of treatises and 59 *juan* of biographies. Zhenzong, pleased with the result, conferred promotions and presents on all of the participating compilers.⁷⁶

Apart from the routine work on official records and documents, the scholar-officials attached to the Three Institutes were also working on earlier dynastic histories.

In 994 Taizong ordered them to revise and edit the so-called three histories which at the time comprised the *Shi ji* 史記, the *Qian Han shu* 前漢書 as well as the *Hou Han shu* 後漢書. One group of scholars consisting of Du Hao 杜鎬 (938–1013), Shu Ya 舒雅 (before 940–1009), Wu Shu, Pan Shenxiu 潘慎修 (937–1005), revised the *Shi ji*, while a second group including Chen Chong 陳充 (944–1013), Ruan Sidao 阮思道, Yin Shaolian 尹少連, Zhao Kuang 趙況, Zhao Anren and Sun He 孫何 (961–1004) worked on the two histories of the Han. Zhu Ang 朱昂 (925–1007) corrected and edited the *Shi ji* again, after the end of the

75 For more information on this see also Suto Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之, *Sodai shi kenkyu* 宋代史研究 (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1969), pp. 515–520.

76 *YH* 46.55a–56a (pp. 267–268).

original revision. After the texts were presented at an unknown date they were sent to Hangzhou to be printed.⁷⁷

In the year 1000, teams of officials were identified to revise the *Sanguo zhi* 三國志, *Jin shu* 晉書, and *Tang shu* 唐書. Huang Yijian 黃夷簡 (934–1011), Qian Weiyan 錢惟演 (962–1034), Liu Mengsou 劉蒙叟 (*jinsbi* of 967), Du Hao, Song Gao 宋臯, and Qi Lun 戚綸 (954–1021) worked together on the *Sanguo zhi*.

For the *Jin shu* only two officials were appointed, Xu Gun 許袞 (949–1005) and Chen Chong, while a group of six officials – consisting of An Deyu 安德裕 (940–1002), Ju Zhongzheng 句中正 (929–1002), Fan Yiyong 范貽孫, Wang Xiyi 王希逸, Dong Yuanxiang 董元享, and Liu Kai 劉鍇 (*jinsbi* of 999) – were assigned to revise the *Tang shu*. The two teams working on the *Sanguo zhi* and *Jin shu* examined the relevant texts and then submitted the results for a final check.

The officials responsible for the *Sanguo zhi* were Dong Yuanxiang and Liu Kai, as well as Du Hao and Qi Lun, who served as assistants. In the case of the *Jin shu* Huang Yijian prepared the final version of the text which was then carefully examined by Liu Kai, Du Hao, and Qi Lun. Two years later, in 1002, all three texts were completed and printed by the Directorate of Education (*guozijian* 國子監).⁷⁸

When Zhenzong read the newly printed versions of *Shi ji*, *Qian Han shu* and *Hou Han shu*, he found them incorrect in many places and ordered another revision of these three texts. For this, he proceeded along the established regulations by appointing special teams. The *Shi ji* group included Chen Yaozuo 陳堯佐 (963–1044), Zhou Qi 周起, Sun Jin 孫僅 (969–1017), and Ding Xun 丁遜. After Chen Yaozuo and Zhou Qi had left, Ren Sui 任隨 was called in to supervise the work. In early 1004, the final text was submitted together with a long list of corrected characters (in five *juan*).⁷⁹

The two Han chronicles were re-examined by Diao Kan 刁衍 (945–1013), Chao Jiong, and Ding Xun. When Chao Jiong was promoted, he was replaced by Chen Pengnian. Chen and his colleagues submitted the revised texts in 1005. The memorial accompanying the works reads:

Throughout history men of wisdom have tried to annotate the *Han shu* and both correct as well as incorrect entries crept into it. Their commentaries were distinguished by merits and faults, [certain] phrases did not correspond [to the facts], and names of people became confused. There being no common basis, their work was all lacking and doubtful.

77 LTGS 2.20, p. 281. Cf. also SHY “chongru” 崇儒 4.1 (p. 2230).

78 LTGS 2.21, p. 282. See the same entry for information on the re-editing of the *Zhouli* 周禮, *Yili* 儀禮, *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳, *Guliang zhuan* 穀梁傳, *Xiaojing* 孝經, *Lunyu* 論語, *Erya* 爾雅, and the *Qijing shuyi* 七經疏議.

79 LTGS 2.22, pp. 23–284.

Therefore scholars consulted a multitude of books and looked everywhere for all available copies. – If one does not understand the text, how can one dare to establish its wording! Even though we cannot claim to have understood the text completely, we have gained a rough insight [into its meaning], without subjective bias. We have corrected 349 [words] and verified more than 3,000 characters, listed in six *juan* for submission.

Apart from giving us a glimpse of the confidence with which scholars asserted the quality of their own work, the technical aspect is revealing too. They did not alter the print blocks but merely listed the errors that had occurred in the production of the first prints. Thus the original printed editions were preserved, while the corrections were listed in separate texts. The *SHY* confirms that the versions of the three histories printed previously remained largely unchanged.⁸⁰ In addition, scholarly efforts resulted in a complete destruction of earlier hand-written editions; only the imperially sponsored prints of 998 circulated among scholars.⁸¹ The *LTGS* remarks that official printing began during the Five Dynasties period and that scholars found it difficult to verify the accuracy of these early prints. Before that, texts had circulated in manuscript form and though errors did occur they were easily spotted by the learned. Once printing was adopted as a new medium for transmitting texts, manuscripts were discarded and thus the collation of authenticated texts became almost impossible for want of the variety of editions that had existed earlier.⁸² Zhenzong was acutely aware of the fallacies of historical texts and in 1006 he commented quite lucidly on the problem of historical authenticity in connection with the compilation of the *Lidai junchen shiji* 歷代君臣事跡 (*Deeds of Emperors and Officials in Past Dynasties*), later entitled *Models from the Archive*:

The imperial decrees and commands of previous dynasties were all being issued for [different] matters at the time, and certainly there were [good] reasons to prepare them. Now that these [documents] have all disappeared and the original circumstances can no longer be identified, we must distinguish between good and evil; therefore [the material in question] must be examined and verified. If former histories carried imbalances between praise and blame, imperial orders entailed changes in the [description of] contemporary affairs. At that time, influential ministers used their power at will, [thus] creating [written records according] to their [own] preferences and dislikes. We retrospectively inspect all this, and scrutinizing all available texts we can distinguish right from wrong. As to the compilation

80 *SHY* “chongru” 4.1 (p. 2230).

81 *YH* 43.19a (p. 191).

82 *LTGS* 2.30, p. 290. The evidence for this is found in the entry itself that describes the failed attempt to correct and reprint the three histories and the six classics during emperor Renzong’s reign in 1035. On problems concerning the change from manuscript to print culture in the Song dynasty, see Susan Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54.1 (1994), pp. 5–126.

of books, when they referred to persons of high rank, they were completed quickly, and this makes it certainly difficult to [discern] their essential facts (*jingyao* 精要). Towards the end of the Daye (605–617) era, there were an abundance of written works but rarely have they been transmitted, so how is it possible that they are not deeply jumbled? [...]⁸³

Conclusion

History-writing in the early Northern Song period came about in leaps and bounds and depended as much on the interest of the scholar-officials as on that of the emperors. Given the circumstances of the reigns of the three first emperors – the first one establishing the empire by force, the second attempting to legitimize his usurpation of the throne, and the third one having to cope with an armistice with a ‘barbarian’ state and heavenly omens – there was not much room for the bureaucratization of historiography like a number of officials demanded. Although Taizong and Zhenzong in particular were interested in history and in how their rule was to be judged by history, they were very reluctant to establish regular processes to keep records of all their activities. They kept the historical record and the officials in check by tightly controlling both, whereas their successors quite rapidly fell under the influence of their advisors.⁸⁴

Beginning with the reign of Renzong (r. 1022–1064) officials established a rigorous system of record keeping of which the emperors were in charge only nominally. The reforms of the Yuanfeng era in regard to the bureaucracy and their inherent impact on historiographical procedures represent the final step towards the bureaucratization of the state and the decline of the emperors as the ultimate arbiters of history.

83 *LTGS* 3.3, p. 294. For further thoughts of Zhenzong on the matter of editing and changing historical evaluation in earlier records, cf. also *XZZTJ* 65.1453.

84 On the decline of imperial power, see also Karl F. Olsson, “The Structure of Power under the Third Emperor of Sung China: The Shifting Balance after the Peace of Shan-yuan” (Ph. D. dissertation Chicago, 1974).