

WHAT DID SU CHE SEE IN THE NORTH? PUBLISHING REGULATIONS, STATE SECURITY, AND POLITICAL CULTURE IN SONG CHINA

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Throughout its two-thousand-year existence the imperial Chinese state and those who served in its bureaucracy harbored an ambivalent attitude towards the circulation of written texts. The Legalist insistence upon secrecy in political decision making first shaped the body politic and political practice during the formation of the Qin Empire in the third century BCE; it continued to inform political culture at court in subsequent dynasties, including the Song, on which this article focuses. According to Legalist logic, information about court politics and the geopolitical and military situation of the empire constituted strategic information that could be exploited both by external and internal forces. Such information, along with other private texts such as prognostications, astrological works, or histories, posed an intrinsic threat to the rule of the reigning dynasty if it was allowed to circulate freely.

By Song times, court policies towards the circulation of texts were equally informed by a contrary logic of limited openness. This logic of openness was based on a belief in the need for unbiased consultation between the emperor and the upper echelons of the bureaucracy. Both the literate elites of imperial times and modern scholars have typically considered this belief, authoritatively articulated in the *Essentials of Government from the Zhenguan Reign* (*Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要, 705), as central to Confucian political thought. For court officials, unbiased consultation justified their access to and possession of court documents and archival materials. Both logics operated in sync, but their combined use in Song politics experienced stress when the desire for access reached beyond the circles of court officials.

The increase in the number of students preparing for the civil service examinations between the eleventh and mid-thirteenth century and the concomitant spread of commercial printing added new urgency to the question of the circulation of materials that the court defined as state secret. This article argues that the anxiety of the Song court and officials about the smuggling of state documents into the surrounding empires was, first, an expression of their concern over the circulation of state documents among the literate elite in Song territory. I reach this conclusion based on an investigation of two kinds of publishing regulations: those governing the cross-border smuggling of written texts, and those on texts related to border affairs (section two). My discussion of cross-border smuggling focuses on alleged smuggling “to the north,” that is, to the empires bordering on the Song’s northern frontier. In order to substantiate the systematic connections I am making among Song publishing regulations, official and elite constructions of “the north” (section one), and elite political culture, I contrast the regulations on the cross-border smuggling of texts with those governing other prohibited goods (section three).¹

The Ambivalent Meanings of “the North”

North and south have been widely deployed in twentieth-century historiography as explanatory categories. In the case of middle-period Chinese history, twentieth-century historians have presented the changing relationship between north and south (understood as the territories north and south of the Yangzi River) as a determining factor shaping the course of history from the Tang Dynasty onwards. On this macrohistorical stage north and south appear as the main protagonists whose differential environmental, demographic and economic development provided the source material for Chinese social, political, and cultural history.

Within this framework, the political field in late imperial Chinese

¹ This article originated as a paper presented in the panel, “The Problem of North and South in Middle and Late Imperial Chinese Politics,” the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, IL, April 2, 2005. I am indebted to Han Seunghyun for organizing the panel and Robert Hymes, who was the discussant, for his questions and comments. I also thank the two anonymous reviewers for their stimulating comments on the original draft.

history is perceived as dominated by southern elites. By and large, research addressing the tensions between north and south in late imperial politics has centered on the representation of southerners and northerners in the bureaucracy and on their performance in the civil service examinations. Southern elites replaced the military and aristocratic elites of the north as the dominant power in the Chinese empires of the second millennium. In support of this paradigm, historians of Song China, for example, have shown that top positions at court as well as in the middle rungs of the bureaucracy were increasingly filled by southern men.² Likewise, the work of John Chaffee has shown that the ascendancy of southerners was as much evident in the civil service examinations.³

In Song times, officials considered the replacement of northerners (or, in the Southern Song, northern immigrants) by southerners to be a problem. Politicians called for equal opportunity policies for northerners (beiren 北人) throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴ Such calls did not halt the growing dominance of southerners in imperial politics, however. In this article I propose that we may be able to find reasons for these failed attempts, or at least gain a broader understanding of the tensions between north and south, by shifting our attention from the performance of northerners in the bureaucracy to the representation of the north in Song political discourse. The marked decline in the political fortunes of the

² According to a recent study by Wu Songdi, southern politicians were already outnumbering northerners in the first decades of the twelfth century. This trend continued after the Song court was forced out of its northern territories in the 1120s. In the course of the second half of the twelfth century the percentage of councilors and vice-councilors of northern descent declined from 42.5 % to 15.4 %. This percentage continued its downward trend in the thirteenth century. Similarly, the percentage of northerners among circuit intendants for the Southern Song period as a whole was 30%. See Wu Songdi 吳松弟, *Beifang yimin yu Nan Song shehui bianqian* 北方移民與南宋社會變遷 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1993), 164-165.

³ The percentage of degrees awarded at the capital to candidates from southern, especially southeastern, circuits and prefectures began to outnumber that of their northern counterparts by the late eleventh century. See John W. Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: A Social History of the Examinations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995 [1985]), chapter 6.

⁴ Wu Qian 吳潛 (?-1262), for example, proposed changes in the examinations to recruit more northerners from the routes bordering on Jin territory. See Huang Kuan-chong 黃寬重, "Cong hezhan dao nan bei ren" 從和戰到南北人, in *Shishi, wenxian yu renwu: Song shi yanjiu lunwen ji* 史事·文獻與人物: 宋史研究論文集, ed. Huang Kuan-chong (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 2003), 23.

northerners was linked to a repertoire of stereotypical representations of the north, a conglomerate of diverse elite perceptions that rendered the north deeply ambivalent. The Song political elite's ambivalent perceptions of the north were closely intertwined with changes in imperial Chinese political culture.

From the eleventh century onwards, the concept of the north carried political overtones that can only be understood in the context of Song relations with their northern neighbors. "The north" not only referred to the northern parts of the Song Empire, its geographical coverage also extended beyond Song boundaries into the territories of the Song court's most powerful neighbors, the Liao Empire in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries and the Jin Empire thereafter. We find evidence of this usage in embassy records and travel accounts written by Song men sent as envoys to or held as captives in Liao and Jin territory. Su Che 蘇轍 (1039-1112) referred to his mission to the Liao in 1090 as his "northern mission" (*bei shi* 北使). Hu Jiao's 胡嶠 account of his stay with the Liao between 947 and 953, included in Ouyang Xiu's 歐陽修 (1007-1072) *New History of the Five Dynasties* (*Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史) was titled "Account of My Captivity in the North" ("Xian bei ji" 陷北記). In extant records Song embassies to the Jin were similarly termed "northern" missions. Lou Yue's 樓鑰 (1137-1213) 1169 report was titled *Diary of a Trip North* (*Bei xing rilu* 北行日錄); Zhou Hui's 周輝 (1127-?) 1177 report was known as *Record of a Northern Voyage* (*Bei yuan lu* 北轅錄).

The generic quality of "the north" expressed the ambivalent attitude of the Song envoys and travelers and contrasted with more specific references that conveyed political sovereignty, such as "Liao" or "Jin," or ethnic difference, such as "Khitans" and "Jurchens" (the names of the ethnic groups that established the Liao and Jin Dynasties, respectively). The ambivalence was borne out of two conflicting tendencies in the Song political elite's perception of the north. On the one hand, the north stood for the territory, the people and the cultural tradition of the Central Plains. The establishment of non-Chinese empires covering parts of the Central Plains evoked memories of loss. In the eleventh century the Song court acknowledged the Liao occupation of the so-called "Sixteen Prefectures," which were administratively and culturally considered part of the Chinese territory. In the 1140s it acknowledged the Jurchen occupation of all territories north of the Huai River. In the imagination of travelers to the Liao and Jin Empires, the lost territories were inhabited with

memories of Chinese rule, especially with those of the Han and Tang Empires, to whose grandeur and longevity the Song aspired.⁵

The northern territories were therefore not foreign. As Christian Lamouroux has argued in an article on records of embassies to the Liao Empire, Song representations of the northern territories differed from earlier accounts on the peoples and political entities located to the north of the Chinese territories in that they assumed cultural and administrative similarity as well as difference. Song authors described Liao and Jin territories like Song territories in terms of their administrative organization. They still applied some of the cultural stereotypes about northern peoples (for example, the representation of non-Chinese peoples as animal and not entirely human), but, overall, the description of northern societies was based more on the cultural categories deployed in the regional descriptions of Song territory (the *tujing* 圖經 and *fangzhi* 方志) than on those formerly used in ethnographic descriptions of non-Chinese peoples.⁶ The use of similar categories in the description of Song and non-Chinese territories conveyed a sense of cultural continuity that lay reflected in the concept of “the north” as encompassing Liao or Jin territory on the one hand and expressing Song attachment to the same territory on the other.⁷

The north carried ambivalent meanings because it was the carrier of historical memory, and because it was at the same time perceived as a potential source of threat to the existence of the Song Empire. The north was both desired and rejected. It was desired for its historical relevance—the lost north represented to southerners what it meant to be part of the Song Empire—but it was simultaneously rejected for its

⁵ Such memories pervade Zhou Hui’s *Record of a Northern Voyage*. See, for example, his account of a temple dedicated to Emperor Guangwu, the founder of the Eastern Han Dynasty, as translated by Chavannes: Édouard Chavannes, “Pei yuan lou. Récit d’un voyage dans le Nord par Tcheou Chan,” *T’oung Pao* 5 (1904), 183. See also Herbert Franke, “Sung Embassies: Some General Observations,” in *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th–14th Centuries*, ed. Morris Rossabi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 138.

⁶ Poo Mu-chou discusses the representation of foreigners as animals in *Enemies of Civilization: Attitudes toward Foreigners in Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 83–84.

⁷ Christian Lamouroux, “De l’étrangeté à la différence. Les récits des émissaires Song en pays Liao (XI^e s.),” in *Récits de voyages asiatiques: genres, mentalités, conception de l’espace. Actes du colloque EFEO-EHESS de décembre 1994*, ed. Claudine Salmon (Paris: École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1996), 109.

tainted and uncertain loyalties. The literate elite desired information about the north and the court's policies towards the polities located there. Their desire for information was typically motivated by the aspiration to regain territories that formerly belonged to the Chinese Empire. Court officials represented the north as the threat that legitimated restrictions on the circulation of political and military information. As we will see below, Song publishing regulations expressed the ambivalent meanings of the north.

Song Publishing Regulations

The north was in several respects represented in the same fashion across the Northern-Southern Song divide. Even though social historians have considered it a major break in the history of imperial China,⁸ as far as perceptions of the north and publishing regulations are concerned the relocation of the Song court south of the Yangzi River was not a watershed. From the early eleventh through the early thirteenth century, the Song court consistently issued publishing regulations that bore on its relationship with its northern neighbors—the Liao, Xi Xia, Jin, and Koryŏ Dynasties.

Regulations directly bearing on Song international relations were of two types. Firstly, there were regulations dealing with cross-border trade in books and documents; secondly, there were prohibitions on materials touching upon border affairs.⁹ One of the earliest publishing laws issued under the Song was the prohibition, promulgated in the year 1000, on cross-border trade in any textual material other than the nine classics.¹⁰ This prohibition was repeated in 1006, just two years after the conclusion of the Song's first peace treaty with the Liao.¹¹ The Song court occasionally presented foreign envoys with the classics. Such gifts and the early exemption of the classical canon from prohibitions on cross-border trade in written texts suggest that

⁸ For an authoritative articulation of this view, see Robert Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-Chou, Chiang-Hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁹ They are detailed at the end of this article in Appendixes A and B, respectively.

¹⁰ *Songshi* 宋史 (Academia Sinica ed.), 186:4562-3.

¹¹ Li Tao 李燾, *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Academia Sinica ed.; hereafter *XZZTJCB*), 289:7068.

the Song consistently considered the classical texts of Antiquity—as opposed to reports on current affairs—as the embodiment of legitimate politics and constituting a shared political language for both the literate elite in Song territory and foreign courts.

Subsequent regulations were more specific about the kinds of materials that were targeted by the ban on cross-border trade. Acting on a report submitted in 1027, the central administration ordered that materials on border defense should not be traded abroad.¹² The report charged that printed editions of the literary collections of court officials were circulating on the market in Xiongzhou 雄州 Prefecture (Hebei East Circuit). Xiongzhou bordered on the Liao Empire and was officially recognized by both Song and Liao as a legitimate place for the exchange of goods and diplomatic correspondence. According to the 1027 report, collected writings included secret information about border defense and should therefore be banned from circulation.

A similar report reached the court in 1040.¹³ It stated that unemployed men and booksellers in the capital of Kaifeng were collecting and printing documents on border affairs and spreading them abroad. In this case Kaifeng Prefecture was ordered to take action and report back. In these occurrences, although the memorialists alleged that materials on border affairs were traded abroad no titles were mentioned and no instances of transactions were documented. This was not necessarily in accordance with reporting practices in the eleventh century, however: other reports on violations of publishing laws do include the titles of confiscated materials. For example, a report dating from 1042—about the same period as the two prohibitions just cited—stated that the *Commentary on the Laws in the Legal Code* (*Xingtong lü shu* 刑統律疏) had been printed in Hangzhou under the title *The Correct Meaning of the Golden Rules* (*Jinke zhengyi* 金科正義).¹⁴ In this case the court ordered the local Fiscal Commission (*zhuanyun si* 轉運司) to apprehend those responsible for violating the prohibition on the private marketing of legal materials and to have the woodblocks destroyed.

Subsequent reports concerning the illegal sale of books and

¹² Xu Song 徐松, *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (ca. 1809) (Academia Sinica ed.; hereafter *SHY*), *Xingfa* 刑法 (hereafter XF) 2:16.

¹³ *SHY*, XF 2:24.

¹⁴ *SHY*, XF 2:26.

documents to the Song's northern neighbors similarly targeted materials on border affairs, but most did not list specific titles. Where titles were mentioned (see the discussion of the 1122, 1202, and 1213 prohibitions below), the materials were confiscated domestically; they were related to domestic political feuds and, typically, sales to "northern guests" (*bei ke* 北客) or "non-Chinese" (*huawai ren* 化外人) were not documented.¹⁵ Indeed, the reports concerning Song-Liao relations contain clues suggesting that Song publishing regulations may have been motivated by reasons other than the alleged security threat from the north.

The two best-known reports on cross-border trade in books may serve as examples. In 1055 Ouyang Xiu, then a Hanlin Academician, submitted to the court a report entitled "Memorial on the Printing of Documents" ("Lun diaoyin wenzi zhazi" 論彫印文字劄子). Together with Su Che's 1090 set of five reports "On Issues Concerning the Northern Border—Submitted Upon My Return from a Mission to the North" ("Bei shi huan lun beibian shi zhazi" 北使還論北邊事劄子), to be discussed later, Ouyang's account has been frequently cited as evidence not only of the increased use of print in the eleventh century, but also of a sizable trade in printed materials between Song and Liao. The brief report read as follows:

Recently I learned that someone printed a collection of texts in twenty chapters in the capital. The collection was titled *Song Texts* (*Song wen* 宋文). The texts were mostly discussions of current administrative issues. The first piece was Fu Bi's 富弼 (1004-1083) memorial on transferring office written years ago. *In it there are detailed descriptions of affairs relating to the caitiffs of the north.*¹⁶ These words should not circulate. However, those who printed it do not know the essence of these matters. I am afraid that [these materials] will circulate increasingly widely and *be transmitted to the northern caitiffs*. This would be a

¹⁵ See *XZJTJCB*, 289:7068.

¹⁶ Fu Bi's work is for the most part no longer extant, with the exception of a poetry collection included in the Song series, *Short Collections of Famous Worthies from the Two Song Periods* (*Liang Song mingxian xiaoji* 兩宋名賢小集). He wrote a report of his 1042 mission to the Liao. See Fu Lehuan 傅樂煥, *Liaoshi congkao* 遼史叢考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 201. Several editions of this report and of Fu Bi's collected works (including memorials and official communications) are listed in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century private catalogs of Chao Gongwu 晁公武 (*ca.* 1104-1183) and Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (*ca.* 1186-*ca.* 1262). See Chao Gongwu, Sun Meng 孫猛 and Wang Lixiang 王立翔, *Junzhai dushuzhi jiaozheng* 郡齋讀書志校證 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 7:283, 19:984, supplement: 1130-1131; Chen Zhensun, *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題 (*ca.* 1249) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 7:203, 17:493, 22:635.

great inconvenience to the court. As for the other texts, later generations do not need them. *They are rather deficient as models for others. Included side by side in this anthology, they will mislead students.* I therefore ask now that a clear order be issued to Kaifeng Prefecture asking that they confiscate and destroy all copies and stop booksellers selling it. Hereafter, if there are those whose titles do not pass official inspection and who print collections of texts illegally, they are not to be allowed to sell them. Other booksellers and people of all standing are permitted to report them and will be given a reward of two hundred strings of cash. The amount is to be paid from the family property of the violator. Both printers and sellers are to be judged severely.¹⁷

In this report, Ouyang Xiu presented the discussion of northern affairs in one of the memorials included in the printed anthology in question as his main reason for concern. He feared that in case this anthology was traded across the northern border the Song court would face a diplomatic crisis. The hypothetical case is noteworthy: Ouyang Xiu had seen the anthology in Kaifeng, but there is no evidence—and Ouyang, who served on a mission to the Khitan around this time,¹⁸ does not suggest—that it was aimed at a northern market. Rather, Ouyang suggested that, as this type of anthology found more buyers domestically, it might also reach the northerners in the end.

In my reading, the second part of the report expresses a greater concern, namely, that anthologies featuring recent discussions of contemporary court policy would mislead students within the Song Empire. Ouyang's advocacy of strict governmental supervision of printed materials may come as a surprise to those familiar with his defense of factional politics and a reformist political agenda.¹⁹ Nevertheless, his support for state censorship of commercially published materials deemed unfit models for Song students represented a consensus on this matter among Song court officials.

Su Che's observations on cross-border trade in books illustrate this

¹⁷ See Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Ouyang Yongshu ji* 歐陽永叔集, 3 vols., *Guoxue jiben congshu* ed. (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1933), *zouyi ji* 奏議集, 114-115 (italics added).

¹⁸ He was nominated towards the end of 1155 and returned to Kaifeng in early 1156. According to his chronological biography, Ouyang Xiu submitted a report of the mission entitled *Record of a Northern Mission* (*Beishi yulu* 北使語錄), but it is no longer extant. See Fu Lehuan, *Liaoshi congkao*, 3, 207; Chen Ming 陳銘, *Ouyang Xiu zhuan* 歐陽修傳 (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998), 125-128. See also James T.C. Liu, *Ou Yang-Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 69.

¹⁹ For a discussion of Ouyang Xiu's discourse on factionalism, see Ari Levine, "A House in Darkness: The Politics of History and the Language of Politics in the Late Northern Song, 1068-1104" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2002), 334-354.

fact and suggest some answers for the rationale behind it. Su Che submitted a set of five reports in 1090 after he returned from an official mission to the Liao court. His observations on book smuggling can be found in the first piece and were presented, along with his observations on the export of copper coins, as “Matters I Observed at the Northern Court Inconvenient to Our Court” (“Lun beichao suojian yu chaoting bubian shi” 論北朝所見於朝廷不便事). This report is frequently referred to as evidence that large amounts of books were illegally smuggled into Liao territory. In Hok-lam Chan’s reading, for example, Su Che “reported he *saw* a profusion of Song works in the north,” “many of which contained information about court affairs and border defense,” and “which he feared might seriously endanger state security.”²⁰

What did Su Che see in the north? Upon a close reading of his text it turns out that he did not report to have seen any Song works on his mission. The opening sentence of the report reveals its tenor:

As for the texts carved on blocks and circulated in print by the commoners of our dynasty, we *suspect* (*liao* 料) that there are none that are not available on the northern side.²¹

Su Che recounted three anecdotes to support his sweeping inference. He related that upon his arrival in the auxiliary capital Yanjing 燕京, Vice-Regent Xing Xigu 邢希古 related through an assistant that Su Shi’s collected works were available in Liao territory and asked why Su Che had not had his own collected works printed and exported as well. The report did not specify whether *Meishan’s* [*Su Shi’s*] *Collection* (*Meishan ji* 梅山集), the edition mentioned by Xing Xigu’s assistant, was a collection of Su Shi’s poetry and prose, or his poetry only. It is also unclear whether it was a manuscript or a printed edition.²²

²⁰ See Hok-lam Chan, *Control of Publishing in China, Past and Present* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1983), 6, 14 (my italics). For a similar reading, see Zhang Xiumin 張秀民, *Zhongguo yinshua shi* 中國印刷史 (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1989), 197; Liu Pujiang 劉浦江, “Wenhua de bianjie—Liang Song yu Liao Jin zhi jian de shujin ji shuji liutong” 文化的邊界——兩宋與遼金之間的書禁及書籍流通, *Chūgoku shigaku* 12 (2002), 1-2; Lin Ping 林平, “Lun Bei Song jinshu” 論北宋禁書, *Sichuan daxue xuebao* (*zhexue shehui kexue ban*), 128 (2003), 132. My thanks to Ari Levine for sending me the last article.

²¹ Su Che 蘇轍, *Luancheng ji* 欒城集, ed. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Ma Defu 馬德富 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 937 (italics added).

²² Wang Anshi wrote a series of five poems on the collection which suggest that it

Later, upon Su Che's arrival in the Central Capital (Zhongjing 中京, or Dading 大定 Prefecture, in present-day Inner Mongolia), another high-ranking Liao official, Commissioner of Funds Zheng Zhuan 鄭顥, revealed in Su Che's view his familiarity with the work of his father Su Xun. He expressed his admiration for Su Xun's prose during a banquet, and specifically mentioned Su Xun's marvelous ability to expose the twists and turns of historical events. Finally, as he reached the imperial abode, Hostel Escort Commissioner²³ Wang Shiru 王師儒 asked him for the recipe of Poria Cocos (*fuling* 茯苓), a fungus-like substance found on the roots of fir-trees and used in Chinese medicine. Su Che interpreted Wang's reference to this commonly used ingredient as evidence that he was familiar with a rhyme-prose poem he had written on the benefits of *fuling* for nourishing long life, entitled "On Taking *Fuling*" ("Fu fuling fu" 服茯苓賦).²⁴

Taken together, the evidence presented in Su Che's report suggests that at the very most three Song textual sources of information may have been circulating in Liao territory: 1) copies of Su Shi's collected works, under the title *Meishan ji*; 2) copies of some of Su Che's rhyme-prose poems; 3) copies of Su Xun's expositions on historical subjects. Whether the last two texts or collections of texts

may have been a collection of poetry. Zhu Shangshu argues that a printed edition dating from the late Xining reign was exported to Liao territory, but does not provide corroborating evidence for this conclusion. See Zhu Shangshu 祝尙書, *Song ren bieji xu lu* 宋人別集叙錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999), 1:402. The text of Su Che's report can be read as a request not for a printed edition of his own works, but for another edition of those of Su Shi. Xing Xigu's assistant asked for a printed edition of the collected work "of the Hanlin Academician." At first sight this seems to be a reference to Su Che, who had become Hanlin Academician in the late 1080s. For this reading, see also Ronald Egan, "Book Printing and Resistance to It in Song Dynasty China," paper presented at the workshop "The Early Development of Chinese Print Culture" (Cambridge, MA: Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, April 29, 2005). It could, however, also refer to Su Shi, who had been nominated to the same position in 1068. In this case, the Liao request for a printed edition of Su's work might be read as a request for a printed edition of his prose. Alternatively, it might be read as an indication that only manuscript copies of Su's collected writings (including prose) were circulating in Liao territory.

²³ The Hostel Escort Commissioner received the Song envoys in the hostel for foreign envoys in the capital and escorted them to the imperial audience hall. See Franke, "Sung Embassies: Some General Observations," 126.

²⁴ This poem is included in Su Che's collected works. Su Che, *Su Che ji* 蘇轍集, in *San Su quanshu* 三蘇全書, ed. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Shu Dagang 舒大剛 (Beijing: Yuwen chubanshe, 2001), 46-7.

were circulating is questionable, since none of Su Che's conversation partners referred to specific titles of written texts or editions of Su Xun's or Su Che's collected works. Moreover, Su Che's mission did not find any evidence that any of the materials his informants may have had access to contained sensitive information. (Existing Song law primarily defined sensitive information as materials related to border affairs, maps, and current court policy discussions.) Su Xun's expositions on historical subjects and Su Che's rhyme-prose did not fall within this category; and Su Che could not ascertain whether editions of Su Shi's collected works circulating in Liao territory contained such information—it is noteworthy that he did not claim that such editions contained sensitive information.

Irrespective of the rather unimpressive evidence, Su Che drew sweeping conclusions from what he had *heard*:

Therefore we *think (liao)* that copies of texts *printed* during our dynasty have already reached the other side in great numbers. Among those texts there are *officials' memorials and scholars' examination expositions and policy response essays*. These texts, in no small number, discuss the gains and losses of our court, and the strengths and weaknesses of our army and territory. In addition, petty folk and stupid mean people only have regard for profit. They print irreverent words and stop at nothing. If we allow everything to be distributed across the northern border, then we will end up leaking state secrets on the one hand, and expose ourselves to the ridicule of the northern barbarians on the other hand. These things are all of great inconvenience.²⁵

And so, even though Su Che had not seen nor heard of any evidence of the circulation of Song *printed* materials in Liao territory, he surmised that large numbers of printed texts were traded abroad. He further opined that traders in printed materials could increase their profits tenfold in the north. He demanded even stricter regulations on the domestic commercial production of printed materials than Ouyang Xiu. He proposed that all proofs of commercial editions be forwarded to local inspectors before they were transferred onto woodblocks and printed. Only those proofs that did not violate Song publication laws were to pass inspection and to be returned to the printers.

Su Che's concern over the widespread circulation of memorials by officials and examination essays by scholars in Song territory suggests that there were reasons other than the alleged large-scale export of Song texts to the Liao behind his proposal to change Song

²⁵ Su Che, *Luancheng ji*, 937-8 (italics added).

publishing regulations. Lurking behind the accusation that Song materials were exploited by external enemies was a concern over the widespread discussion of current affairs in Song literati writings. The heart of the Song's security problem lay in the commercial publication of materials pertaining to current state affairs for the escalating number of students preparing for the examinations.

The larger significance of the alleged threat of the north becomes clear when the reports of Ouyang Xiu and Su Che and the publication regulations that resulted from them are put within the broader history of Song publishing law. Starting in the eleventh century, regulations on cross-border smuggling and prohibitions on the printing of materials on border affairs largely overlapped with regulations on the publication of Song official documents and materials on current state affairs. Acting on the report of Su Che, the Ministry of Rites issued an order in 1090 stipulating that documents touching upon current state and military affairs could not be copied and distributed.²⁶ This order also included a ban on the copying and printing of Song archival materials such as the draft dynastic history (*guoshi* 國史), the veritable records (*shilu* 實錄), and the collected statutes (*huiyao* 會要). Such orders increased in frequency in the twelfth century, and during this period they were supplemented with repeated prohibitions on the printing of examination essays on current affairs.²⁷

The prohibitions on book smuggling and on the dissemination of materials on border affairs listed in Appendixes A and B below

²⁶ *SHY*, XF 2:38.

²⁷ For a listing and discussion of regulations on the domestic circulation of court archival and historical compilations and other official documents, see Hilde De Weerd, "Byways in the Imperial Chinese Information Order: The Dissemination and Commercial Publication of State Documents," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* (forthcoming, June 2006). For lists of prohibitions on the circulation of examination essays and manuals, see Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit: the Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th-17th Centuries)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 121-123; Liu Hsiang-kwang 劉祥光, "Yinshua yu kaoshi: Songdai kaoshi shiyong cankao-shu chutan" 印刷與考試——宋代考試用參考書初探, *Song shi yanjiu ji* 31 (2001), 151-200, and "Printing and Examinations: The Circulation of Study Aids in Song China," paper presented at the workshop "The Early Development of Chinese Print Culture" (Cambridge, MA: Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, April 29, 2005). For a discussion of twelfth- and thirteenth-century regulations in the context of the competition over the definition of examination standards, see Hilde De Weerd, *Competition over Content: Negotiating Standards for the Civil Service Examinations in Imperial China (1127-1279)*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, forthcoming, esp. chapter 5.

further illustrate the continuing concern among court officials over the domestic consumption of materials on current policy. This concern helps explain, firstly, the lack of corroborating evidence in reports on smuggling activities, and, secondly, the increased focus in decrees issued after 1090 on such political news genres as memorials, court gazettes, and examination policy essays, which were sold individually, generally cost less to publish and were therefore seen as widely circulating among the literate elite as a whole, including those who did not hold office.

The orders issued in 1108 and 1175 prohibited the export of collected writings and the smuggling of examination essays and geographical sources, respectively.²⁸ The 1108 order repeated the suspicion, voiced earlier by both Ouyang Xiu and Su Che, that collected writings were widely circulating in the north. Neither order supplied evidence for the alleged smuggling operations, however.

Two decrees that cited specific titles, issued in 1122 and 1213 respectively, targeted the domestic commercial publication of private works discussing Song military and foreign policy.²⁹ The 1122 order demanded that private diaries of court officials be banned from commercial publication. It was based on a report that Wang Anshi's diary was circulating commercially. Allegedly, the diary, which was at the time being used for the drafting of the official history of the reign of Emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1068-1085), contained information on military decisions and other recent policy decisions. The report argued that a ban was justified on the grounds that such material ought not circulate outside of the court and that it would prevent the leakage of information about the Song court to its neighbors. In this case, dissemination beyond the court was explicitly equated with leakage abroad.

Similarly, the 1213 decree reminding Song officials of the prohibition on the sale of items touching on current policy and border affairs cited potential export to the north as a principal reason for the ban on two collections of memorials and policy proposals. The collections, Gong Rizhang's 龔日章 (fl. 1190s-1200s) *Sincere Discussions of the Northern Campaign* (*Beizheng dangyi* 北征讜議) and Hua Yue's 華岳 (fl. 1200s-early 1220s) *Remedies for Achieving Security* (*Zhi'an yaoshi* 治

²⁸ *SHY*, XF 2:47, 118.

²⁹ *SHY*, XF 2:86, 138.

安藥石), contained military policy proposals and thus violated past regulations banning such materials. It is very likely, however, that these titles were singled out because of the authors' criticism of Han Tuozhou's 韓侂胄 (?-1207) military campaign against the Jin Empire in 1206 and of the court's military policy more generally. Hua Yue had been ousted for his criticism of Han Tuozhou and submitted his collection to the emperor from his place of exile in Jianning 建寧, a known center of commercial printing, around 1208. The request for the destruction of all woodblocks carrying any work of both authors, a punishment not warranted by prior legislation, further suggests that there were political motivations behind the original report on the circulation of these titles.³⁰

The sole exception to the general lack of evidence concerning the smuggling of sensitive materials across Song borders in reports and publishing regulations is the decree issued on July 29, 1202.³¹ This decree addressed local government officials across the Song Empire and reminded them of their responsibility to screen all texts for

³⁰ Hua Yue's *Remedies for Achieving Security* was long deemed lost, but a Yuan manuscript including this title was rediscovered in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. This manuscript (now at Beijing Library), entitled *Record of a Northern Mission* (*Beizheng lu* 北征錄), and another Yuan manuscript (now at Nanjing Library) were the source texts for the punctuated edition included in a combined edition of Hua's extant works published in 1993 under the title *Cuiwei nanzheng lu, beizheng lu heji* 翠微南征錄,北征錄合集 (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1993). This edition includes a short biography of Hua Yue, a textual history of the two titles it incorporates, and transcriptions of prefatory and other bibliographical materials. For further discussions of Hua Yue and this work, see Li Chuanyin 李傳印, "Lun Hua Yue" 論華岳, *Chizhou shizhuan xuebao* (1996:2), 63-69; and Wang Lianbin 王聯斌, "Songdai bingshu ji qi junshi lunli sixiang" 宋代兵書及其軍事倫理思想, *Junshi lishi yanjiu* (1996:2), 173-175. For a similar interpretation of this decree, see Rao Gong 堯公, "Songchao duiyu shubao de guanzhi" 宋朝對於書報的管制, *Wenxian* (1979:1), 276.

³¹ *SHY*, XF 2:132-133. For an alternative version, see Li Xinchuan 李心傳, *Jianyan yilai chaoye zaji* 建炎以來朝野雜記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), 149-150. This reading is adopted in An Pingqiu 安平秋 and Zhang Peiheng 章培恒, *Zhongguo jinshu daguan* 中國禁書大觀 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenhua chubanshe), 47-48; Liu Pujiang, "Wenhua de bianjie", 9, 15 n. 68. For a discussion of these alternative versions, see Zhu Chuanyu 朱傳譽, *Songdai xinwen shi* 宋代新聞史 (Taipei: Zhongguo xueshu zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, 1967), 235 n. 106. Ming-sun Poon reads the two versions as descriptions of two separate events: see "Books and Printing in Sung China (960-1279)" (Ph.D. dissertation, 1979), 61-62. For my part I read them as different but compatible versions of the same events. I take the view that Li Xinchuan emended the text of the report (with Dai Shiliu 戴十六 as the name of a merchant) to read "carrying sixteen cartloads of books" (*zai shiliu che* 載十六車).

content discussing state affairs, border issues and military policy before publication. Materials that violated earlier bans on the discussion of such topics should not circulate in print and should be forwarded to the Imperial College. The decree was issued in response to a report that a certain merchant, Dai Shiliu 戴十六, was caught with a copy of *Facts of Our Dynasty* (*Benchao shishi* 本朝事實) in Xuyi 盱眙 Prefecture.³² Situated near the convergence of the Huai and Bian Rivers, Xuyi (Huainan East, now northeastern Anhui) was the location of the principal government-supervised market for the exchange of goods between Song and Jin merchants on Song territory.³³ The report stated that Dai Shiliu intended to cross the Huai River with this book. Its content suggests that there may have been actually more than one title involved,³⁴ but it remains unclear how many copies the merchant transported and whether he was carrying on a business in books. In any case, it underscores the fact that books were among the many items private merchants illegally carried across the northern borders of the Song Empire, even though the trade in books is not as well-documented as the trade in other items like tea, livestock, and military supplies (see the next section). More importantly, the ensuing decree equally suggests that the existence of this trade was exploited by the Song court to control literati discourse domestically.

The latter interpretation gains further validity when read in the context of a ban on private accounts of contemporary history issued earlier in the same year. On March 23, 1202, Emperor Ningzong 寧宗 (1195-1224) gave his approval to a memorial proposing a ban on all unofficial accounts of Song history.³⁵ The memorial cited four works that were circulating in print, all of which were well-known titles and became source texts for commercial encyclopedias as well

³² For a short description of this title, see Yves Hervouet, ed., *A Sung Bibliography* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1979), 178-179.

³³ For Xuyi and other government-supervised markets, see Quan Hansheng 全漢昇, "Song Jin de zousi maoyi" 宋金的走私貿易, *Lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 11 (1944), 425-447; Hok-lam Chan, "Tea Production and Tea Trade under the Jurchen-Chin Dynasty," in *Studia Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, ed. Wolfgang Bauer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979), 111-114, slightly revised in Chan, "Commerce and Trade in Divided China: the Case of Jurchen-Jin Versus the Northern and Southern Song," *Journal of Asian History* 36:2 (2002), 158-167.

³⁴ The fact that two other titles are mentioned in Li Xinchuan's account also supports such a reading.

³⁵ *SHT*, XF 2:138.

as the draft dynastic history. The memorialist demanded that such sources be scrutinized by the Institute of Historiography, which should keep for its own use the titles that would serve in its work to compile a fair history of the Song past. He emphasized that even those histories that received the Institute's approval should not be allowed to circulate in print. This clampdown on private accounts of the Song past and present has been read as another example of the anxiety of an autocratic councilor over the representation of his regime, or his effort to stamp out opposition. This ban on private histories, issued under the rule of Han Tuozhou, is then read in the same light as the ban issued by Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090-1155) in 1144.³⁶ Regardless of whether the proposal is read as a sign of the paranoia of one councilor, or as the expression of a more common ambivalence towards the circulation of official documents and private discussions of court policy, the reliance on a report on the potential export of such materials to the north to reinforce the ban was not incidental. In short, the 1202 ban is another illustration of how the north could be construed to control literati discourse.

The concern among high officialdom over the expanding domestic discussion of court policy, especially regarding the question of war and peace with the dynasty's northern neighbors, also fueled the issuing of the second type of publishing regulations bearing on Song international relations, those that prohibited the publication of materials on border affairs. While the information targeted by these decrees remained the same from the eleventh to the thirteenth century, there was a marked change in the targeted media. The reports and decrees issued in 1027, 1055, 1090 and 1108, discussed above, demanded censorship of collected writings that included memorials touching upon military and border affairs. Decrees issued and policy proposals submitted in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries specifically outlawed the printing and dissemination of individual memorials (1140, 1193), commercial gazettes (1156, 1193), policy essays (1175, 1182, ca. 1202), and official documents (1193, ca. 1202).³⁷ As in the cases of the administrative encyclopedia carried

³⁶ For this reading, see An Pingqiu and Zhang Peiheng, *ibid.* For the ban under Qin Gui, see Charles Hartman, "The Making of a Villain: Ch'in Kuei and Tao-hsüeh," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 58:1 (1998), 86-117.

³⁷ See Li Xinchuan, *Jiānyān yǐlái xīnián yǎolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 (ca. 1208) (Academia Sinica ed.), 138:853; *SHY*, XF 2: 118, 121, 125; anon., *Qingyuan tiaofa shilei* 慶

by merchant Dai Shiliu (in 1202) and of the collected policy proposals compiled by Hua Yue and Gong Rizhang (in 1213), later decrees also targeted the larger collections of official documents which were increasingly circulating in commercially printed editions. More than collected works or general anthologies, small collections of policy essays, memorials, and other official documents appealed to students preparing for the policy essay session, the third in the civil service examinations and the one that determined the rank of the successful candidates. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries this session required familiarity with Song history and politics. Commercial and private publishers capitalized on the appetite for current information among the hundreds of thousands of students preparing for the examinations. This trend was accompanied by a more general interest in current affairs among Song literati, to which political commentaries in “random jottings” (*biji* 筆記), the shared reading of official court gazettes, and the commercial publication of the gazette all testify.³⁸ The regulations on cross-border trade in books and the publishing regulations on sensitive materials were aimed to exorcize the specter of a politically active and critical local elite—an elite that settled down locally but meddled with current court politics.

元條法事類 (ca. 1202, hereafter *QTFSL*), in *Zhongguo zhenxi falü dianji xubian* 中國珍稀法律典籍續編, ed. Yang Yifan 楊一凡 and Tian Tao 田濤 (Haerbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 2002), 17:365, 366; Zhou Linzhi 周麟之, *Hailing ji* 海陵集 (late 12th century) (in *Siku quanshu* [hereafter *SKQS*]), 3:2b-3b. The latter proposal was written in immediate response to an edict issued in 1156; see Bi Yuan 畢沅, *Xu zizhi tongjian* 續資治通鑑 (Hanquan ed., 1801), 131:3470.

³⁸ The most authoritative source on Song court gazettes and commercial gazettes is still Zhu Chuanyu, *Songdai xinwen shi*, chapters 1 and 2. This work as well as several more recent articles focus on government regulations and prohibitions of private gazettes; the history of how gazettes were read remains largely unexplored. See, for example, Rao Gong, “Songchao duiyu shubao de guanzhi.” For a preliminary inquiry into the reception history of the gazettes, see De Weerd, “‘Court Gazettes’ and ‘Short Reports’: The Blurry Boundaries between Official News and Rumor,” in “Constituting Social & Political Imaginaries—Three Analyses of News, Rumor & Hearsay in Imperial China,” panel at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies (San Francisco, April 9, 2006).

Prohibited Goods and Private Trade

Based on the above review of Song reports and decrees, it becomes clear that there was little or no evidence that sensitive materials fell into the hands of Liao or Jin merchants. Such lack of evidence is surprising. By the eleventh century the Song court had set up a permanent spying network along its borders and even into enemy territory.³⁹ While the official reports of Song envoys to the Liao and Jin courts provided little information on cross-border smuggling (Su Che's report being no exception in this regard), communications from border posts kept the court regularly informed about military developments as well as illegal smuggling along the borders.

Trade was permitted in a limited number of government-supervised markets. From the tenth to the thirteenth century the Song court agreed to open up sites for trade with Xi Xia, Liao, and Jin merchants.⁴⁰ In the mid-twelfth century, for example, Song-Jin trade was permitted in nine markets in Song territory. Small merchants were allowed to leave Song territory and trade in an equivalent number of supervised markets on the Jin side of the border.⁴¹ The instability of markets whose operations depended on amicable Song-Jin relations, government control over the volume of trade, the exactions imposed by government officials (the total levy for goods exchanged in Song markets was set at 22.4 %),⁴² the demand for goods that could not be raised or produced locally in satisfactory quantity or quality (e.g. tea, metals, and rice in the north, or wheat and horses in the south), as well as the vast size of the Song-Jin border—all of this created the right climate for large-scale smuggling.

Military governors charged with the supervision of the borders reported on repeated violations of the ban on unsupervised private

³⁹ Klaus Flessel, "Die Anfänge des staatlichen Geheimdienstes in China," *Nachrichten der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 125-126 (1979), 84-97; 40-67.

⁴⁰ For agreements on the border trade with the Xi Xia Empire, see Herbert Franke and Denis Crispin Twitchett, eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 6, *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 122, 170; for those with the Liao, see Tao Jing-shen, *Two Sons of Heaven: Studies in Sung-Liao Relations* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1988), 16-17, 31-32.

⁴¹ Quan Hansheng, "Song Jin de zousi maoyi," 425-426.

⁴² Based on the calculations in Hok-lam Chan, "Commerce and Trade in Divided China," 161.

trade. Their reports outline the main smuggling routes and the types, quantities, and value of the goods exchanged. The main routes ran across two border zones between the Song and Jin territories (along the Huai River, and overland across the borders between the two empires in the Sichuan-Shaanxi region) and between the coastal regions of Shandong in the north and Zhejiang-Fujian in the south. Song merchants exported foods (rice, tea leaves, and ginger), metals (bronze, iron, gold, and silver), textiles (cotton, silk, hemp), cattle, human beings, and specialty products such as fish skins and leather, feathers, lacquer, and books. Song sources reported that Jin merchants mainly exported cereals, salt and horses. The Song government was particularly concerned about the trade in hard metals and some of the specialty products because they could be used for the manufacture of military equipment.

Reports covering the trade in these goods informed the court about the size and value of confiscated stores or provided estimates of the scale of smuggling operations. For example, a report from Xuyi Prefecture submitted in 1165 stated that a merchant by the name of Xue Tai 薛太 was arrested for attempting to sell two hundred and twenty-five shark skins across the border.⁴³ The trade in shark skins was illegal because shagreen could be used for the manufacture of horse saddles and scabbards, or to coat sword handles.⁴⁴ An official who had served in Anfeng 安豐, another of the border prefectures with a government-supervised market, wrote in 1204 that he confiscated annually over one thousand cattle horns and pieces of leather that were destined for northern consumers.⁴⁵ Cattle horns were used, since Antiquity, in the manufacture of bows, the most widely used weapon in warfare during Song times.⁴⁶ Leather had multiple military applications, including making harnesses and horse saddles.⁴⁷

⁴³ *SHY*, *Shihuo* 食貨 (hereafter SH), 38:41.

⁴⁴ The use of shagreen in the manufacture of scabbards is documented in Xu Jing 徐兢 (1091-1153), *Xuanhe feng shi Gaoli tujing* 宣和奉使高麗圖經 (1124) (*SKQS* ed.), 29:3b, and Xu Bo 徐勣 (1570-1642), *Xu shi bijing* 徐氏筆精 (*SKQS*), 8:26b-27a. Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002-1060) mentions the use of small pieces of shagreen in decorating precious swords in *Wanling ji* 宛陵集 (*SKQS* ed.), 29:7b.

⁴⁵ *SHY*, XF 2:134.

⁴⁶ Joseph Needham and Robin Yates, eds., *Science and civilisation in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), vol. 5, part VI, 104, 109-110, 126, 134, 272.

⁴⁷ Wang Zengyu 王曾瑜, *Songchao bingzhi chutan* 宋朝兵制初探 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 275-279. Also *SHY*, SH 52:9.

In 1160 Wang Huai 王淮 (1127-1189), then Policy Monitor to the Right, submitted a report on the illegal sale of what he considered to be the most problematic goods in the trade between the Song and Jin along the Huai River.⁴⁸ He had surveyed the border region in Huainan East and Huainan West prior to this report,⁴⁹ and argued that the court was losing control over the trade in tea, cattle and coins. He estimated that seventy to eighty thousands heads of cattle were transacted in Zhengzhuang 鄭莊, a place in the west of Jiangzhou 蔣州 (alternate name for Guangzhou 光州, Huainan West, now in Henan Province). Most of this trade was unsupervised. Zhengzhuang had, according to the information Wang gathered on his fieldtrip, become one of the central nodes in the illegal private trade network. Private trade in coins was especially rampant as several dozens of people reportedly crossed the Huai with cash every day, knowing that one string was worth several in the north.

Comparable figures on the size of confiscated stocks and estimated transactions or descriptions of the trafficking routes are lacking in reports on the alleged smuggling of books. Neither are books mentioned in the lists of various types of contraband. In an 1171 report enumerating several goods that could be put to military use, for example, books are, contrary to claims of their strategic value to Jin informants, not discussed.⁵⁰ Still, despite the lack of detail on the illegal book trade, Song prohibitions and other sources suggest that books did cross the borders separating the Song, Xi Xia, Liao and Jin Empires. Xi Xia, Liao and Jin envoys 劉 received on occasion books from the Song court.⁵¹ Books written or printed in Liao and Jin territory were, despite reciprocal prohibitions, smuggled into Song territory.⁵² None of the titles mentioned appear to have fallen in the category of sensitive military or current policy materials, however. Song sources report on the success of Jin spies in acquiring intelligence on Song

⁴⁸ Li Xinchuan, *Jiannan yilai xinian yao lu*, 186:649.

⁴⁹ *SHY*, SH 38:38.

⁵⁰ *SHY*, XF 2:158.

⁵¹ Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, 231, 256; Kwang-tsing Wu, "Chinese Printing under Four Alien Dynasties (916-1369 A. D.)," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 13: 3-4 (1950), 452.

⁵² Zhang Xiumin, *op. cit.*, 267; Liu Mingshu 劉銘恕, "Songdai chubana fa jiu dui Liao Jin zhi shujin" 宋代出版法及對遼金之書禁, *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu huikan* 5:1 (1946), 105.

military and political decisions,⁵³ but this intelligence generally does not appear to have come from printed books. In one famous and rare instance, a Jin client reportedly offered a large sum for a privately printed edition of a letter of remonstrance. In this letter, written in 1138, Hu Quan 胡銓 (1102-1180), who had been appointed to the position of Compiler in the Bureau of Military Affairs the year before, offered a sharp criticism of the policies of Qin Gui, the architect of the peace negotiations between the Song and Jin in the 1130s and 1140s.⁵⁴ Whether the interested buyer obtained the letter remains unclear from the account.⁵⁵

In contrast to the lack of evidence on illegal foreign trade in books, there is plenty of evidence that commercial anthologies of official documents, memorials and examination essays were circulating among Song scholars. Extant private catalogues contain examples of transcripts and of commercial anthologies of the draft dynastic histories, veritable records and collected statutes, as well as commercial anthologies of memorials and examination essays, and Song legal materials. Such materials are indicative of the interest in current affairs among the Song scholarly elite.

Conclusion: “The North” and Song Political Culture

Regulations on publishing became increasingly numerous and systematic over the course of the Song Dynasty. This is readily apparent from a comparison between the regulations on the dissemination of confidential information and banned materials in the *Tang Code* of 737 (*Tang lü* 唐律, originally the *Code and Subcommentary* [*Lü shu* 律疏])—which were largely reproduced in the early Song code, the (*Song*) *Xingtong* (宋) 刑統 of 963—and the *Classified Laws of the Qingyuan Period* (*Qingyuan tiaofa shilei* 慶元條法事類), dating to ca. 1202. The *Tang Code* prohibited the private possession (and thus the private publication) of astrological works, maps, military treatises, esoteric materials, unofficial calendars, and some divination manuals. It also

⁵³ Zhu Chuanyu, *Songdai xinwen shi*, 101-119.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁵⁵ The original account in Hu Quan’s biography in *The History of the Song Dynasty* states that a person from Jin “searched” (*mu* 募) for it. Tuotuo 脫脫, *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 133:11583.

included a provision that the punishment for the dissemination of information either confidential (defined as relating to military and policing campaigns) or sensitive (defined as secret but not of major importance to state security, such as observations of anomalies) was increased one degree when the information was shared with foreign envoys.⁵⁶ The *Tang Code* thus forbade possession of types of materials that had been considered detrimental to the preservation of the sociopolitical order since the early imperial period.⁵⁷ Official documents and other literature relating to contemporary court policy and foreign affairs were not specifically targeted. The dissemination of such news abroad was a concern, but, as it was not disseminated in print at the time, the concern focused on foreign envoys visiting the court and the capital of Chang'an, where such information was concentrated. The *Code* did not differentiate between the dissemination of sensitive information orally, in manuscript, or in print.

In contrast to the limited discussion of publishing regulations under the section on administrative rules in the *Tang Code*, the *Classified Laws of the Qingyuan Period* added a subsection on the dissemination of sensitive information (under "administrative rules") and a separate section on official documents. In the former section, the sharing of secret information with all manner of foreigners (*Huawai ren* 化外人)⁵⁸ was outlawed. The section on official documents stipulated the punishments for the printing of policy essays touching upon foreign affairs and the printing of all official documents relating to border affairs. This section also specifically prohibited the printing

⁵⁶ Wallace Stephen Johnson, *The Tang Code* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979-1997), 2:77-79. Cf. Niida Noboru 仁井田陸, "Keigen jōhō jirui to Sōdai no shuppanhō" 慶元條法事類と宋代の出版法, in *Chūgoku hōseishi kenkyū* 中國法制史研究 (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai, 1981 [1935]), 446-448.

⁵⁷ Astrological and esoteric materials were outlawed in 267 under the Western Jin Dynasty. More bans on these materials followed between the fourth and sixth centuries. See An Pingqiu and Zhang Peiheng, *Zhongguo jinshu daguan*, 13-26. Hok-lam Chan (*Control of Publishing in China, Past and Present*, 2) writes that the *Tang Code* also banned the transcription and distribution of "government statutes" and "national histories" but does not cite relevant evidence.

⁵⁸ This was a legal term in use already in the *Tang Code* where it is glossed as "persons of those barbarian countries who have their own rulers and leaders." Johnson, 1:252. Whether or not "the northerners" (*beiren*) were systematically covered under those rules requires further inquiry. There are instances in the legal and historical literature where northerners are juxtaposed to and thus distinguished from the more general category of foreigners. See, for example, *XZZTCB*, 289:7068.

of documents on current affairs, imperial writings, legal codes, and collected statutes, as well as the copying and dissemination of other court archival compilations such as the draft dynastic histories and the veritable records.⁵⁹

The innovations of Song publishing law reflected the spread of commercial printing in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They also resulted from changes in imperial political culture. Literati discourse on the northern homeland provided both the impetus for the systematization of Song publishing regulations and the reason behind their limited effect. The court's attempts to control and legally curtail the dissemination of current information about the north and destined to it were directed first of all at the appetite for news among the growing number of Song literati and commercial efforts to satisfy this demand. Literati discourse about the northern homeland fed the appetite for news and was a key feature of the imperial identities of the Song literate elite. By the late twelfth century a vociferous group of literati called for the recovery of the northern territories and found themselves at odds with the prevailing court policy of appeasement with the Jin court. The twelfth-century expansion of print culture amplified the dissonance between court policies and literati opinion about the north, a dissonance that the court proved unable to contain despite the systematization of publishing regulations.

Allusions to the threat of the north in Song publishing regulations were motivated by tensions internal to Song political culture rather than by the documented ability of the Song's northern neighbors to engage in a sizable illegal trade in information. During Song times, the meaning of "the north" was contested and shaped by opposing tendencies in Song political culture. It was shaped by the political self-consciousness of the scholarly elite: elite political discourse was characterized by the desire to include the north in Song perceptions of itself. Politically aware scholars therefore took a special interest in current information about the Liao and Jin Empires and the Song's relations with them.

In reaction to literati interest in the discussion of current state affairs, an interest that was now prevalent among students and scholars who were not part of officialdom, court officials took political action to contain that self-consciousness. Action against the

⁵⁹ *QTFSL*, 8:145-148, 16-17: 333-379, esp. 146, 364-5.

unofficial publication of official and scholarly materials was justified by claims about the threat of the north. In their reports court officials represented the north as a major security threat that warranted official inspection of all materials commercially published across the Song Empire. In this sense, “the north” stood for an expanded political elite, increasingly dominated by southerners, who were intent on participating in the discussion of court affairs.

The dual images of the north expose a paradox in Song political culture—a paradox that characterized the lives of some of its greatest politicians. Take for example Su Shi. Su Shi supported the proposals his brother submitted in 1090. He followed up with a proposal for restricting the dissemination of written materials to Korea in early 1093. On the other hand, he took pride in the fact that some of his recent writings were in demand all the way up north.⁶⁰ As Yu Yingshi has recently argued, Song scholar-officials differed from their predecessors in that they made a claim and felt a responsibility for shared governance between the emperor and the court and bureaucracy.⁶¹ But even among those who exercised this responsibility for shared governance, the participation in policy discussions of students and scholars who were not part of officialdom remained an issue of great concern—a threat as great or even greater than the north itself.

Appendix A

Song Reports and Decrees Prohibiting the Cross-border Smuggling of Books to Liao and Jin Territory

Date	Content	Source
1000	Decree banning the export of all books except the nine classics	SS 186:4562
1006	Repeat of 1000	XZZTJCB 289:7068

⁶⁰ Su Shi, *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, ed. Gu Zhichuan 顧之川 (Changsha: Yuelu shu-she, 2000), 745-51. Zhu Chuanyu, *Songdai xinwen shi*, 190-2. For a discussion of Su Shi's three memorials expressing his opposition to the imperial gift of selected titles to the Korean court, see Egan, “Book Printing and Resistance to It in Song Dynasty China.”

⁶¹ Yu Yingshi 余英時, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie: Songdai shidafu zhengzhi wenhua de yanjiu* 朱熹的歷史世界: 宋代士大夫政治文化的研究, 2 vols. (Taipei: Yunchen, 2003).

Date	Content	Source
1027	Report on the sale of printed copies of literary collections of court officials on the border market in Xiongzhou	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:16
1040	Report stating that booksellers in the capital collect and print materials on border affairs and spread them abroad. Kaifeng Prefecture ordered to take action and report back.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:24
1055	Ouyang Xiu's "Memorial on the Printing of Documents" warning against the potential spread to the north of printed literary collections with sensitive materials	<i>Ouyang Yongshu ji</i> 114-115.
1071	Decree prohibiting the transfer of maps to foreign emissaries in postal stations and along their route	<i>SHY</i> , ZG 22:9
1078	Repeat of 1000	<i>XZZTJCB</i> 289:7068
1090	Su Che's "Matters I Observed at the Northern Court Inconvenient to Our Court" alleging the large-scale smuggling to the north of printed materials with secret information	<i>Luancheng ji</i> 937-938
1093	Su Shi's memorials asking for a denial of a Korean request for Song books on the grounds that granting the request would make the ban on the sale of books to the Liao Empire ineffective. Koreans were suspected of transferring Song materials to Liao agents.	<i>Su Shi wenji</i> , 745-751
1108	Decree ordering that violators of the ban on carrying books across the border be punished according to the regulations on carrying copper coins across the border. The decree stated that many literary collections and books printed in Song territory had been found in the north. (For the regulations on carrying copper coins current in the late twelfth century, see <i>QTFSL</i> , 29:410-415.)	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:47
1122	Memorial asking that court diaries (<i>rilu</i>) be banned from circulation domestically and abroad because they contained security information	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:86
1126	Memorial asking that official communications dealing with border affairs not be made public to prevent information from being leaked to the enemy	<i>BMHB</i> 52:394
1175	Decree prohibiting the smuggling of examination essays and geographical sources	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:118
1182	Decree to be forwarded to all prefectures ordering that the ban on the printing and sale of examination policy essays be strictly implemented. The decree quoted from an official opinion stating that even though laws on the smuggling of books were strict, they were frequently violated by those intent on making a profit. It was therefore safer not to have policy essays on current policies circulate.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:121
ca. 1202	Law prohibiting the sharing of official documents and information on border defense with foreigners	<i>QTFSL</i> 8:146
1202	Decree prohibiting the unauthorized printing of materials on border affairs. A special appeal was made to border regions in response to a report on the capture of privately printed works on Song history in the possession of a private merchant in Xuyi Prefecture	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:132-133

- 1213 Endorsement of an official request for a prohibition on the sale of items touching on current policy and border affairs. This decree was issued in response to a report on the confiscation of two commercially printed collections of memorials touching upon military policy. The memorialist argued that much harm would ensue if these materials were leaked to the north. *SHY*, XF 2:138

Appendix B

Song Reports and Decrees Prohibiting the Circulation of Materials on Border Affairs

Date	Content	Source
1027	Report on the sale of printed copies of literary collections of court officials on the border market in Xiongzhou. The report stated that such collections contained secret information about border defense.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:16
1039	Decree stating that border affairs can be thoroughly discussed, but news about them cannot be spread	<i>Song ji sanchao zhengyao</i> 2:27b
1040	Report stating that booksellers in the capital collect and print materials on border affairs and spread them abroad. Kaifeng Prefecture ordered to take action and report back.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:24
1041	Decree warning examination candidates not to discuss border affairs and important state affairs as a tool for career advancement	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:25, also <i>SHY</i> , YZ 7:22
1042	Decree prohibiting petitions on border affairs from people of all walks of life. According to the report, most such petitions were based on materials sold by booksellers who culled them from authors' writings. Petitioners were accused of currying favor.	<i>SHY</i> , YZ 7:22
1043	Memorial referring to a recent decree prohibiting officials working in the Document Transmission Office to leak reports on the Jiang-Huai armies	<i>Ouyang Yongshu ji</i> , <i>Zouyi ji</i> 19
1071	Approval of a memorial asking for a prohibition on the reporting of news on border affairs and on the excerpting of related memorials in court gazettes	<i>SHY</i> , ZG 2:46
1078	Edict prohibiting the inhabitants of Hangzhou from selling books touching on border affairs to Koreans	<i>XZZTJCB</i> 303:7379
1078	Edict prohibiting the printing of the work of Imperial College student Zhong Shimei because some of it touched upon border affairs	<i>XZZTJCB</i> 294:7166
1081	Edict prohibiting the discussion of border affairs in private correspondence of border officials	<i>XZZTJCB</i> 306:7637
1090	Approval of a proposal prohibiting the copying and distribution of texts on borders affairs	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:38
1122	Decree prohibiting the discussion of border affairs in private correspondence of border officials	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:86
1125	Edict punishing the discussion of border affairs with exile	<i>BMHB</i> 20:147
1126	Memorial asking that official communications dealing with border affairs not be made public in order to prevent information from being leaked to the enemy	<i>BMHB</i> 52:394

Date	Content	Source
1133	Approval of a memorial asking for a prohibition on the excerpting of memorials discussing border affairs in court gazettes (cf. 1071)	<i>SHY</i> , ZG 2:48
1134	Decree stipulating that leaking information on border affairs will be treated according to martial law	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:148
1140	Decree stipulating that memorials that have not yet been implemented and that touch upon border affairs cannot be printed	<i>Yaolu</i> 138:853
1156	Imperial edict lashing out against the spread of false rumors and the discussion of border affairs among officials	<i>Yaolu</i> 172:418; <i>XZZTJ</i> 131:3470
1156	Examination graduate Liang Xun exiled for discussing Song-Jin military affairs in a petition	<i>Yaolu</i> 172:418 (different version in <i>BMHB</i> 128:1638)
1167	Approval of a proposal not to send the court gazette to border prefectures	<i>SHY</i> , ZG 2:51
1182	Decree to be forwarded to all prefectures ordering that the ban on the printing and sale of examination policy response essays be strictly implemented. The decree quoted from an official opinion stating that even though laws on the smuggling of books were strict, they were frequently violated by those intent on making a profit. It was therefore safer not to have policy response essays on current policy circulate.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:121
1193	Approval of a proposal banning the circulation of commercial gazettes. The memorialist argued that gazettes touching on state and border affairs could cause great damage if circulated.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:125
1193	Proposal demanding a prohibition on the unchecked printing of courts officials' memorials, censors' reports, sealed memorials, scholars' examination essays that touch upon state secrets (border and military affairs are not specifically mentioned, but implied)	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:125
ca. 1202	Law prohibiting the printing of materials on border issues	<i>QYTFSL</i> 17:364
ca. 1202	Law punishing the printing of examination essays with the penalty of eighty blows, and issuing the higher penalty of exile at three thousand <i>li</i> for policy essays discussing information about the enemy	<i>QYTFSL</i> 17:365
ca. 1202	Law prohibiting the sharing of official documents and information on border defense with foreigners	<i>QYTFSL</i> 8:146
1202	Decree prohibiting the unauthorized printing of materials on border affairs. A special appeal was made to border regions in response to a report on the confiscation of privately printed works on Song history in the possession of a private merchant in Xuyi Prefecture	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:132-133
1213	Endorsement of an official request for a prohibition on the sale of items touching on current policy and border affairs. This decree was issued in response to a report on the capture of two commercially printed collections of memorials touching upon military policy. The memorialist argued that much harm would ensue if these materials were leaked to the north.	<i>SHY</i> , XF 2:138

Appendix Sources:

- BMHB*: Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘, *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編 (*SKQS* ed.).
- QYTFSL*: Anon., *Qingyuan tiaofa shilei* 慶元條法事類, in *Zhongguo zhenxi falü dianji xubian* 中國珍稀法律典籍續編, ed. Yang Yifan 楊一凡 and Tian Tao 田濤 (Haerbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 2002).
- SHY*: Xu Song 徐松, *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Academia Sinica ed.). *XF*: *Xingfa* 刑法; *ZG*: *Zhiguan* 職官; *YZ*: *Yizhi* 儀制.
- SS*: Tuotuo 脫脫, *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977).
- XZZTJ*: Bi Yuan 畢沅, *Xu zizhi tongjian* 續資治通鑑 (Hanquan ed.).
- XZZTJCB*: Li Tao 李燾, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Academia Sinica ed.).
- Yaolu*: Li Xinchuan 李心傳, *Jiyanan yilai xianian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 (Academia Sinica ed.).
- Anon., *Songji sanchao zhengyao* 宋季三朝政要 (*SKQS* ed.).
- Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Ouyang Yongshu ji* 歐陽永叔集, 3 vols., *Guoxue jiben congshu* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1933).
- Su Che 蘇轍, *Luancheng ji* 欒城集, ed. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Ma Defu 馬德富 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987).
- Su Shi, *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, ed. Gu Zhichuan 顧之川 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2000).