

culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, returns to the volume's main themes. Yingcong Dai then describes the development of military finance during the High Qing, something that allowed the Chinese state to project power in entirely new ways. The volume closes with Peter Perdue's broad consideration of the different practices for dealing with barbarians on the land frontier in the north-west versus the maritime frontier in the south-east.

This is an extremely valuable study of Chinese military culture that I fear this review does insufficient justice. My only regret is that more volumes on this subject and of this quality are not currently available.

Peter Lorge

MARK EDWARD LEWIS:

China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty.

viii, 356 pp. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009. £25.95. ISBN 978 0 674 03306 1.
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The days when a narrative history of China could be written by a single individual who had research experience of most of the periods covered, as in the still useful work of Jacques Gernet, is probably gone for good now, and the rise of the multi-volume history dependent on different specialists at home only with more narrowly defined stretches of time must therefore be welcomed. In the case of the new series of works on imperial Chinese history under the general editorship of Timothy Brook it is therefore remarkable to find that the first three volumes have appeared under the name of the same scholar – and a scholar who has made his reputation on an impressive collection of studies of pre-imperial China, to boot. Mark Edward Lewis is not so well known for his research-based contributions to post-Han history, but an article in this area is justifiably listed in the bibliography of the volume under review, and it must be said that even at the chronological limits of the more than millennial span of historical expertise he has now contributed to this series he shows no signs of his reach exceeding his grasp. This is impressive work indeed.

Unlike the preceding volume on the Age of Disunion following the Han, where he was covering territory untouched so far by the *Cambridge History of China*, the Tang period is one where a solid account of the political history of the period has been produced as part of that standard narrative, even if there is as yet no sign of the long-promised companion volume from Cambridge on Tang history beyond the unifying thread of political events. His paired chapters on the first and second halves of the Tang that provide the main chronological information, following a deft sketch of the geography of the Tang empire, do rely to some extent on the Cambridge volume, though not uncritically so: the Empress Wu, for example, is dealt with more sympathetically, with reference made to Dora Shu-fang Dien, *Empress Wu Zetian in Fiction and in History: Female Defiance in Confucian China* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2003). Nor does political narrative dominate in these chapters: plenty of room is left for consideration of broader issues of historical change. These broader issues are again addressed in another pair of chapters, on urban life and on rural society: the rise of the entertainment industry features engagingly in the first, while the second – drawing notably on Chinese research – contains much solid information on important changes in agricultural

technology. The remaining four chapters, on the outer world, kinship, religion and writing, cover other areas still missing from the *Cambridge History of China*, and give an excellent account of Tang culture that will put this on to student reading lists for some time to come. There have clearly been some constraints of space: the rise of printing is (quite justifiably) incorporated into the chapter on religion, but it might have been possible – if necessary by redefining religion in a less conventional and Eurocentric way – to bring in here other innovations, for example in astronomy (through the Buddhist monk Yixing) or in alchemy, and thus in the development of gunpowder.

For a future edition, there are some minor issues that could be addressed. In the main text, on p. 176 it seems slightly misleading to assign Xuanzang to the early Tang and Yijing to the “later Tang” when their lives overlapped for almost three decades. The generous provision of references can create puzzles: in n. 50, p. 294, to a translation by the author on p. 83, the reference should be to fascicle 489 of the *Wen yuan ying hua* in the Beijing, Zhonghua shuju reprint of 1966. On p. 136 the source cited does not actually give any support for the idea that the Tang government published printed agricultural manuals, and one would like to know where this information is to be found. On p. 198, the reference that should apparently be to the Zheng (rather than the Zhang) clan of Rongyang is not clarified by the secondary source given, which mentions no clan names. On p. 240 the secondary source cited for the printing of the Daoist canon in 940 is in error: the passage is in fact reworded in the latest Chinese translation. On p. 258, where the problematic genre *chuanqi* is introduced, a cautionary reference to Glen Dudbridge, “A question of classification in Tang narrative”, in his *Books, Tales and Vernacular Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 192–213, might be useful – though again one appreciates the constraints of space. As it is, the volume under review is already a *multum in parvo* from which it is possible even for those relatively familiar with the Tang to glean fresh knowledge. Whether it is revised or not, it will undoubtedly be widely read, and deservedly so.

T. H. Barrett

DIETER KUHN:

The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China.

(History of Imperial China.) ix, 356 pp. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009. £25.95. ISBN 978 0 674 03146 3. doi:10.1017/S0041977X09990516

Despite the considerable scholarly output in the field of Song studies since the 1980s, a survey of the history of the Song Dynasty (960–1279) in English has, until now, been lacking. In addition to the first of two long-awaited volumes on Song history in the Cambridge History of China series, the Song volume in the more recent series of Chinese dynastic histories published by Harvard University Press appeared in 2009. Like the grander Cambridge volume, Dieter Kuhn’s survey of Song history is subdivided into two parts: a chronological survey of court political history followed by topical chapters addressing developments in the intellectual, socio-economic, and cultural history of Chinese society (and some of the neighbouring non-Chinese polities) between roughly 960 and 1279. This work is at once a digest of some of the more significant achievements in European-language