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# D011 - Religion, Literati Culture, and Technocratic Capacity in the Song State (960–1279)

 Friday, March 15, 2024

 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

 Room 212 (Level 2, Convention Center)

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Historical and cultural narratives of the Song dynasty (960–1279) have long been monopolized by perspectives shaped by Confucian scholars. However, recent scholarship, especially the “technocratic-Confucian continuum” model proposed by Charles Hartman, has opened the door to a more comprehensive discussion. Our interdisciplinary panel aims to further contest the Confucian-oriented narrative of Song dynasty literati culture and history by emphasizing the pivotal roles that the marginalized technocrats—including religious figures and eunuchs—played in shaping the complex interplay of power between literati and technocrats, and between the central government and local forces in Song society.

In particular, Jiangnan Li examines how technocrats in the Song dynasty, especially palace eunuchs and other inner court personnel, liaised between Buddhist clerics and their powerful patrons in the imperial family. Wanmeng Li studies how the Song literati adapted aspects of Daoist inner alchemy to refashion their attitudes toward the physical body and how these new attitudes helped them address the cultural and political crises. Hanruo Zhang investigates the significant role of literati social networks in the propagation and integration of Pure Land Buddhism among the literati during the early Song Dynasty. Ting Cheung Wong discusses the cooperation and conflict between eunuchs and scholar-officials during the first major environmental crisis of Renzong's reign in the Northern Song Dynasty.

Collectively, we aim to contribute to the broader discourse about the interplay between social classes, religious ideologies, and cultural narratives in the Song dynasty, paving the way for a more multifaceted understanding of this pivotal turning point in Chinese history.

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## Organizers



Wanmeng Li  
University of Southern California



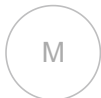
Jiangnan Li  
University of California, Berkeley

## Chair



Charles M. Hartman  
University at Albany, State University of New York

## Discussant



Thomas Mazanec  
University of California, Santa Barbara

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## Presentations

The Neglected Liaisons: Technocrats and Buddhist Clerics at the Imperial Court in Song China (960-1279)

*Jiangnan Li*, University of California, Berkeley

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**Song Literati's Daoist-Inspired Writings on the Physical Self**

**Wanmeng Li**, *University of Southern California*

 *Room 212 (Level 2, Convention Center)*


**Spreading Pure Land Teachings: The West Lake Lotus Society and Literati Networks in Early Northern Song**

**Hanruo Zhang**, *Princeton University*

 *Room 212 (Level 2, Convention Center)*

**Structure of Governance Culture in Northern Song: Emperor Renzong and Eunuchs during the 1048-1057  
First Attempt at Restoring the Yellow River's Lower Course**

**Ting Cheung Wong**, *State University of New York, Binghamton*

 *Room 212 (Level 2, Convention Center)*

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