

Application of GIS: A New Tool to Explore the Administration and Life of the Local Officers of Tang-Song Dynasty

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Abstract: We propose to understand the general status of civilian society dated back to the Tang-Sung Dynasty on the basis of the interaction between officers and civilians through detailed exploration of local administrative affairs of Tang-Song Dynasty. Since history records the activity of people, we also attempt to study the life styles of the literati and officialdom of Tang-Song Dynasty. The true and fake images of the so called “civilian’s parents”, judging from the task, practice and social life of local officers are depicted in order to understand more about the relationship between intellectuals and normal people. Thus describes the vivid and vigorous history of the Tang-Song Dynasty. Geographic Information System (GIS) technology will be applied in this study. The life span and career of local officers of the Tang-Song Dynasty are used as main source of information. It will be processed and integrated through high-tech skill and research and provide the viewers with a new vision of analytical method in historic document. In order to analysis the life of local officers, the bulk of historical sources, such as epitaph, judgment, biography and CBDB, will be served as the historical GIS databases. The GIS database will contain the spatial data including modern and ancient maps, satellite images, natural environments, and artificial scenery, special event, communications network, natural disasters, difference between town and country and conflicting events between populace groups that took place during the Tang-Song Dynasty.

Key words: Tang-Song Dynasty, local officers, court verdicts, epitaph, criminal prosecution, census record

1. Introduction

This research is based on the historical sources of commemorative shrines and steles and then to further examine the dynamic states of inspecting achievement system, understanding the possibility of communication between the central and the local. The main points are two: first, to analyze and discuss the process of how the central power legislated the communication medium between the central and the local. In other words, to look at the relationship between official authorities and local powers from the view of issuing, applying for, and observing the verified cases of commemorative shrines and steles-erecting. Second, by understanding how central power controlled individual official and how to establish models as good local officials, we can discuss the practices of Tang laws.

In addition, the records of commemorative shrine and stele in the Song Dynasty (960-1278) indicate the mutual influence between administration law and practice of Confucianism. According to Confucian officials’ legal principle in the Song Dynasty, the regulations of commemorative shrine must be subordinate to the law of commemorative stele. Though building shrine for virtuous government gradually lost its joint function with inspecting achievements system as it did in the Tang Dynasty, the vocabulary used in the records reflected how government officials held responsibility and self-disciplined attitude in

the Song Dynasty, and the process of building stele demonstrated local official's principle when enforcing the law and their strategy to adhering to the law.

2. Research Methods and Procedures

Mapinfo11.5 was used as the software in this study. This article starts with the law in the Administrative Regulations in Book 11 of Tang Legal Code (section on professional regulations) and the Song epitaphs monument pass, a comprehensive review of the local officials of the executive and life in the Song Dynasty. By systemizing those cases of erections of commemorative shrines and steles in the Tang-Song Dynasty and analyzing the time, space, the official positions, and legitimacy of approaches, we can reconstruct the practice of "inspecting achievements" system in the Tang-Song Dynasty.

After the start of the execution plan, first read the fine historical and extant laws Tang and Song unearthed documents, the tomb biography novels, especially dealing with cases where the nature and significance analysis of the career structure Act. From a variety of case classes, compared to normative decrees, in-depth understanding of the principles of a final attempt to analyze the local government office of the trial, the verdict and the Words, observe traditional Chinese official, officials, civil and other duties, changes in living areas.

3. results

From the 114 cases of Tang Dynasty and 384 cases of Song Dynasty studies of commemorative shrines and steles approved by local officials show that the amount of shrine-erecting cases makes not much difference in the former and latter periods of the Tang Dynasty. Looking at the amount of shrine-erecting cases during each emperor's reign, we can see that the number of shrines for virtuous government increased after Emperor Gaozong and reached its peak during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong and Dezong. To look at the location for shrines, most of the shrine-erecting events took place in the north, centering around the Chang'an, Luoyang, and the most prosperous zones of downstream Huanghe River and Huai River; Wei Zhou is a special case. In the south part, most of the shrines were found in Xiang Yang and Yanzhou, which both were important cities at that time; the special case in the south is Guangzhou. For the official positions, Provincial Governor, Prefect, and Prefectural Magistrate were most easily to be elected to have a commemorative shrine, and then the County Magistrate. In the Late Tang Dynasty, a lot of shrines for virtuous government were erected by Jiedushi (regional military governor). For the approaches of erecting a shrine, more than 60 percent of the cases were legal, which shows the execution procedure and legal efficacy of shrines-erecting. But on the other hand, in the Late Tang Dynasty, the local officials, citizens, and monks of Buddhism and Taoism from border regions usually went to the central government in groups and requested commemorative shrines for the Jiedushi. This can be taken as an evidence of the rising local power and the increasing difficulty in practicing "inspecting achievement" system.

In fact, the central power of the Tang Dynasty reached deep into the localities by making the local officials to "declare the law" and "appreciate the law". By using "inspecting achievement" system, such as "reporting is the first policy" and "the achievement is the most important", the central power created models for officials. And by examining the cases of erecting commemorative shrines and steles, the central power was able to know the government of local officials. The government of local officials was reported from the local to the central, and finally being inscribed on the stone steles.

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