



The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 5 Part One: The Five Dynasties and Sung China And Its Precursors, 907-1279 AD

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This first of two volumes on the Sung Dynasty (960-1279) and its Five Dynasties and Southern Kingdoms precursors presents the political history of China from the fall of the T'ang Dynasty in 907 to the Mongol conquest of the Southern Sung in 1279. Its twelve chapters survey the personalities and events that marked the rise, consolidation, and demise of the Sung polity during an era of profound social, economic, and intellectual ferment. The authors place particular emphasis on the emergence of a politically conscious literati class during the Sung, characterized by the increasing importance of the examination system early in the dynasty and on the rise of the tao-hsueh (Neo-Confucian) movement toward the end. In addition, they highlight the destabilizing influence of factionalism and ministerial despotism on Sung political culture and the impact of the powerful steppe empires of the Khitan Liao, Tangut Hsi Hsia, Jurchen Chin, and Mongol Yüan on the shape and tempo of Sung dynastic events.

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