Making Connections
Contemporary Approaches to the Tang Dynasty,
In Honor of the Opening of the Elling O. Eide Library

November 10-12, 2016, at the Eide Library, Sarasota, Florida

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2016 (Eide Library)

5:00-7:00 p.m. Welcome Reception & Introduction to the Elling O. Eide Foundation and Library, 8000 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, Florida
All participants and invited guests.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2016 (Eide Library)

8:00-8:15 a.m. OPENING REMARKS
Anna M. Shields, President, T’ang Studies Society;
Nicholas Williams, Editor, Tang Studies

8:15-10:15 NEW PERSPECTIVES ON TANG DYNASTY POLITICAL HISTORY
(Chair: Anthony DeBlasi, University at Albany)

Panel Abstract: Challenging the received narratives of Tang-era political institutions and their dynamics, the papers in this panel offer distinctive interpretations of the roles of the imperial family, eunuchs, scholarly elites, and factionalism in the late Tang period. Placing these papers against each other highlights the complex interplay that shaped political developments in the final century of the dynasty.

David McMullen, University of Cambridge: “The Changing Role of the Imperial Clan in the Middle Tang”

Lu Yang, Peking University: “The Shangguan Wan’er Moment in Tang Political Culture: Revelations from New Evidence”

Yue Hong, Kalamazoo College, “The State, the Family, and the Individual: An Analysis of Tang Debates on Revenge”
10:15-10:30  Coffee break

10:30-12:30  **Tang in the World** (Chair: Michael Drompp, Rhodes College)

**Panel Abstract:** Scholars regard the Tang Dynasty, particularly during the first half of its history, as an era of exceptional cosmopolitanism—a time of cultural confidence and receptivity in which Tang elites embraced foreign goods, ideas, and practices. This was also a period during which the Tang Dynasty projected its influence beyond its frontiers. This panel considers the impact of Tang military, political, and cultural influence on its neighbors. Such influence was an important component of the Tang “Golden Age” and is crucial to our understanding of “Tang in the World.”

- Tineke D’Haeseleer, DePauw University: "The Capitals of Bohai and State Formation in Medieval Manchuria"
- Jonathan Skaff, Shippensburg University: “The Recently Discovered Tang Tomb and Epitaph of Pugu Yitu (635-678) in Mongolia: New Light on the Tang-Tiele (Uighur) Alliance”
- Shao-yun Yang, Denison University: “Letting the Troops Loose: Massacre, Pillage, and Enslavement in Early Tang Warfare”
- Xin Wen, Harvard University, “The Tang Transformation of Central Asian Law”

12:30-1:30 p.m.  Lunch catered for registered participants on-site.

1:30-3:00  **Tales, “Notes,” and Anecdotes: Prose in the Tang**  
(Chair: Sarah Allen, Wellesley College)

**Panel Abstract:** Straddling the boundaries of hearsay, legend, and literary narrative, informal narratives were a key vehicle through which the Tang elite reflected upon events both occult and mundane. The papers on this panel highlight a range of recent approaches to this material. Carrie Wiebe’s paper focuses on a particular text, exploring a story recounted in the ninth-century miscellany *Youyang zazu* (Miscellaneous Morsels from Youyang) that is also found in a collection from several centuries earlier. Manling Luo’s paper examines the social context that lay behind the written texts that survive today, with a focus on Buddhist miracle tales. Xin Zou’s paper examines the ways in which Li Deyu’s *Ci Lushi jiuwen* (Jottings of tales heard from the Lius) both reimagines the High Tang and fashions an image of
himself through the anecdotes he records, as well as how his anecdotes were taken up by later anecdote writers.

- Carrie Wiebe, Middlebury College: “Expansions on Duan Chengshi’s Speculations on a Goosecage mise-en-abyme”
- Xin Zou, Princeton University, “Tang Anecdotes on Historical Figures: Li Deyu (787-849) and Anecdote Collecting in the Ninth Century”

3:00-3:15 Break

3:15-5:15 *Ritual Environments of the Tang Dynasty: Text through Context*

(Chairs: Amy McNair, University of Kansas; Tracy Miller, Vanderbilt University)

Panel Abstract: It goes without saying that objects designed for rituals used to facilitate encounters with the spirits were not created for “art’s sake” or museum display. Similarly, texts describing the design and function of objects used for such rituals were not written in isolation of those objects. As access to tombs and temples from the Tang period has increased, scholars are now better able to match context to text, and are consequently better able to reveal the way in which environments were designed, constructed, and used to facilitate ritual goals. The four papers of this panel match object to text in an effort to discover the mechanism by which the physical was believed to enable access to the spiritual.

- Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, Princeton University, “Report from the Field: How Taizong’s Imperial Tomb Zhaoling is Transformed into the Heavenly Court”
- Tracy Miller, Vanderbilt University: “Ta 塔 and Gongta 宫塔: Examining Pagodas in Light of ‘Vedic Buddhism’”
- Sijie Ren, University of Pennsylvania: “Revisiting the Tang Dynasty Inscriptions Found at Foguangsi’s Buddha Hall: The Symbolic Use of Architecture and the Physical Environment by Political Regimes”
- Michelle Wang, Georgetown University: “Situating the Thousand Buddha Motif in Time and Space”
- Discussant: Amy McNair, University of Kansas
Saturday, November 12 (Eide Library)

8:30-10:00 a.m.  **DOING THINGS WITH THINGS: RELIGIOUS OBJECTS OF THE PERIOD OF DIVISION, SUI, AND TANG**  
(Chair: Wendi Adamek, University of Calgary)  
Panel Abstract: This panel centers on the performative dimensions of religious objects in the Period of Division, Sui, and Tang. What is being accomplished or mediated by the manipulation, design, or arrangement of objects and images? Both pre-modern and contemporary contexts are considered in this exploration of how various kinds of things are made effective.

- Gil Raz, Dartmouth College: “Buddho-Daoist Stelae from Late Six Dynasties to Tang”
- Wendi Adamek, “Stone Inscriptions of the ‘Four Inversions’ from the *Nirvana sutra*”

10:00-10:15  Break

10:15-12:00 p.m.  **SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE TANG**  (Chair: Nicolas Tackett)  
Panel Abstract: In the past two decades, there has been a relative dearth of work on the social history of the Tang, especially in contrast to the great works of social history, by Denis Twitchett and others, produced in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. With the availability of new source materials (e.g., excavated tomb epitaphs), new foci of research (e.g., women’s history), and new methodologies (e.g., digital technologies), it is an opportune moment to begin to reexamine Tang society. This panel will include work by historians active in the field of Tang social history, and cover topics that include women, sociopolitical elites, and eunuchs.

- Nicolas Tackett, University of California, Berkeley: “The Changing Geography of Power from the Late Tang to the Tenth Century”
- Yao Ping, California State University, Los Angeles: “Rethinking Sutra Copying: A Gender Perspective”
- Penelope Riboud, INALCO Paris, “Material Culture and the Economics of Death in Medieval China”
Making Connections

12:00-1:00  Lunch catered for registered participants on-site.
Presentation: “The Chinese Biographical Database (CBDB) Project and Tang Studies”
Xin Wen, Harvard University

1:00-2:00  **NEW APPROACHES TO TANG POETRY**
(Chair: Christopher Nugent, Williams College)
Panel Abstract: The papers in this panel will challenge some of our traditional approaches to categories and types of Tang poetry, considering the ways that reading practices have shaped (and distorted) poetic meaning over time. Greg Patterson will examine some lesser-read poems of Du Fu’s late period, focusing on the domestic themes of that period’s verse. Anna Shields will investigate the ways that the values of “Tang poetry” were shaped in influential Northern Song poetry anthologies.

- Greg Patterson, University of South Carolina: “With These I Repay Your Respect and Caution: Housework and Value in Late Du Fu”
- Anna Shields, Princeton University: “Tang Tastes and Song Sensibilities: Two Collections of Tang Poetry from the Northern Song”

2:00-2:15  Break

2:15-4:15  **INFLUENCES OF RELIGION ON TANG STATE AND REGIONAL IDENTITY**
(Chair: James Robson, Harvard University)
Panel Abstract: The papers on this panel examine the complex relationship between religious doctrine, practice, and the Tang state, considering both the imperial state and regional sociopolitics. The papers span a wide range of Tang religious streams, including Daoism, Buddhism, and “popular” religious beliefs, moving from imperial patronage (Timothy Barrett’s paper) to regional patronage (Franciscus Verellen), and finally to specific local religious activities in regional shrines (Nathan Woolley). The discussant, Benjamin Brose, will elucidate the political and doctrinal strategies that unite these papers and also reflect on how this relationship changes in nature and form as it moves down the sociopolitical ladder and over the periods of the Tang.

- T. H. Barrett, SOAS, University of London: “Religious Norms and State Promulgation”
- Franciscus Verellen, Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient: “Prayers for a New Elite: Daoist Ritual in the Tang-Five Dynasties Transition”
• Nathan Woolley, Australian National University: “Local Shrines and Regional Identity Under the Tang”
• Discussant: Benjamin Brose, University of Michigan

4:15-4:30 Break

4:30-5:30 Final Round Table: Reflections on Past Paths and Future Directions in the Study of the Tang and the Role of the Tang Studies Journal
Senior scholars and past & current editors of Tang Studies.

6:30-9:00 Final banquet at The Francis, 1289 N. Palm Avenue, Sarasota, Florida