

Detail of the *Qingming* scroll, showing the encounter of two probable *shi* candidates—one on horseback accompanied by a groom and servant, and another walking on foot accompanied by a servant.

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Detail of the *Qingming* scroll, showing three parties—two sedan chairs and a man on horseback—in tension.



Detail of the *Qingming* scroll, showing a *shi* official dressed in a windbreaker and traveler's hat accompanied by a retinue of nine men.

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Decorum in *Qingming shanghe tu*: A Moralized Vision of Northern Song Kaifeng

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Abstract: This article studies the *Qingming shanghe tu* from the vantage point of decorum (*li* 禮), the notion in historical China that denotes the tangible regulations and theoretical concepts governing a social actor's interaction with others in a given situation. Given the multiple interpersonal encounters depicted in the *Qingming* scroll, decorum offers a particularly pertinent angle for analysis that has not yet been fully exploited. Utilizing textual and pictorial sources, this study aims to reconstruct the foundational principles of decorum relevant to street encounters in the eleventh century, providing a framework for analyzing the incidents depicted in the scroll. The analysis focuses first on depictions of giving-way and crisis situations, and then on the portrayal of members of the *shi* class, in an effort to elucidate decorum's multiple mediations of pictorial representation. This study contends that by shaping the many visual choices made by the painting's artists and commissioners, decorum provides an essential lens for understanding the painting's purpose and its moral and philosophical depth.

Keywords: Decorum, realism, giving-way, street encounter, *shi* class

Along the River on a Clear and Bright Day (Qingming shanghe tu 清明上河圖, hereafter the *Qingming* scroll, **Fig. 1)** depicts a cross-section of social classes high and low as they meet in the streets of the Northern Song capital city of Kaifeng (Bianjing 汴京). Its depiction of incessant social encounter never ceases to mesmerize its viewers and has prompted extensive scholarly inquiry into the painting's narrative and significance.[1] When one approaches the

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1. For summaries of scholarly discourse on the *Qingming* scroll's narrative and meaning, see Pan An-yi 潘安儀, "'*Qingming shanghe tu* xue' de qishi 「《清明上河圖》學」的啟示 (Reflections on the Scholarship on the *Qingming shanghe tu*)", in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (The Palace Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu xin lun* 清明上河圖新論 (New Perspectives on the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe 故宮出版社 [The Forbidden City Publishing House], 2011), pp. 23–34;

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depicted city as a social space, the concept of decorum (*li* 禮) emerges as particularly relevant. In Northern Song China, decorum was the concept that denoted the tangible regulations and theoretical concepts that jointly guided social actors' interactions with their own kind and those they regarded as socially other in a given situation—factoring in place, time and audience—in order to maintain order in society. Although decorum was a fundamental and pervasive concept that underpinned all aspects of human interrelationships in Northern Song society, the sensitivity to decorum that informs paintings of the time has largely escaped modern scholarly awareness. This study aims to regain some of that sensitivity and reveal an important yet latent dimension of the *Qingming* scroll.

While decorum referred itself to the Confucian classics, it should not be understood merely as a set of fixed protocols. The behaviors deemed appropriate were contingent upon the perception of a specific context and one's *relative* position within it. In its application, rather than being static, decorum was a dynamic resource that one exploited in response to changes in time and place. Shifts of social situation were bound to happen, and could occur at a pace beyond one's control. Moreover, the degree of elaboration required in the performance of decorum also varied according to the situation. The *Qingming* scroll, with its wide ranging and dynamic representation of people from all walks of life in urban interaction, offers an opportunity to study how decorum was depicted. The painting likely embodies an understanding of decorum that can be linked to the *shi* 士 class, the educated elites of the time holding significant influence in the government who were drawn from more modest and diverse backgrounds than their Tang Dynasty counterparts.[2] Recent scholarship concerning the painting's date, authorship and context of commission indicates the involvement of *shi* of different kinds in its creation process.

Alfreda Murck, "Xi fang xuezhe dui *Qingming shanghe tu* de sikao yanjiu 西方學者對《清明上河圖》的思考研究 (Western Scholarship on the *Qingming shanghe tu*)," in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (The Palace Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu xin lun* 清明上河圖新論 (New Perspectives on the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe 故宮出版社 [The Forbidden City Publishing House], 2011), pp. 356–362; Itakura Masaaki 板倉聖哲, "Riben dui *Qingming shanghe tu* yanjiu zhi zhuangkuang 日本對《清明上河圖》研究之狀況 (Japanese Scholarship on the *Qingming shanghe tu*)," in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (The Palace Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu xin lun* 清明上河圖新論 (New Perspectives on the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe 故宮出版社 [The Forbidden City Publishing House], 2011), pp. 363–368; Yang Lili 楊麗麗, "*Qingming shanghe tu* yanjiu shu ping 《清明上河圖》研究述評 (An Overview of the Scholarship on the *Qingming shange tu*)," in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (The Palace Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu xin lun* 清明上河圖新論 (New Perspectives on the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe 故宮出版社 [The Forbidden City Publishing House], 2011), pp. 369–379.

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Among the most illuminating work in this regard has been that of Jonathan Hay. Rejecting the traditional attribution to a single Huizong-period painter, Zhang Zeduan 張擇端, Hay persuasively argues on the basis of internal visual evidence and textual analysis that the *Qingming* scroll was painted during the early reign of Renzong (r. 1022–1063), circa mid-eleventh century, by a cohort of collaborating artists composed of three separate specialists of architecture, figures and landscape, with the possible participation of a specialist calligrapher as well.[3] Hay also tentatively suggests that the painting may share a commission

2. Scholarship on the origins, family, career strategies, self-regard, and values of the *shi* is abundant. Some important references are as follows. For an overview touching on all of the above, see Robert P. Hymes, "Sung Society and Social Change," in John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 5, Part 2: Sung China, 960–1279* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 526–664, 621–626, 638. For the Northern Song *shi's* career and family strategies, see Robert P. Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-Chou, Chiang-I, in Northern and Southern Song* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.82–123; see also Beverly J. Bossler, *Power Relations: Kinship, Status, & the State in Sung China (960–1279)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp.129–175; Tao Jin-shen 陶晉生, *Bei-Song shi zu: jiazu huinyin shenghuo* 北宋士族：家族・婚姻・生活 (*Shi* Clans of the Northern Song: Family, Marriage, and Life) (Taipei: Zhongyanyuan shiyu suo 中研院史語所 [Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica], 2001), pp. 65–135. For a discussion of transformation in *shi* values, see Peter K. Bol, *"This Culture of Ours": Intellectual Transitions in Tang and Sung China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 32–75. For a discussion of the increasing involvement of *shi* in the production of pictorial art in the eleventh century, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2023), pp. 6–7.
3. See Jonathan Hay, "Bei-Song *Qingming shanghe tu* juan wei heren suo hua 北宋《清明上河圖》卷為何人所畫 (Who Painted the *Qingming shanghe tu*)," in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (The Palace Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu xin lun* 清明上河圖新論 (New Perspectives on the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe 故宮出版社 [The Forbidden City Publishing House], 2011), pp. 95–102; "Collaborative Painting at the Early Song Directorate of Construction," in Zhejiang daxue yishu yu kaogu yanjiu zhongxin 浙江大學藝術與考古研究中心 (School of Art and Archaeology of Zhejiang University) ed., *Song hua guoji xueshu huiyi lunwen ji* 宋畫國際學術會議文集 (Proceedings of the International Conference on Song Painting) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe 浙江大學出版社 [Zhejiang University Press], 2017), p. 470, also see note 63. In the earlier article on authorship, Hay proposes that Gao Yuanheng 高元亨, a court painter active in the early eleventh century, is the most probable candidate for the painting's authorship. But the later article adopts the view that, rather than having a single author, such a complex work involving various specialties and sub-specialties of painting would probably have been a collaboration among a number of artists, including Gao Yuanheng. Hay has recently returned to the question in "Historicity in the Plural: The Song Reenactment of a Southern Tang Painting," note 17 (in *From Tang to Song: Transmissions and Inventions in China's Middle Period*, forthcoming), where he distinguishes the hands of three painters employing distinctively different kinds of pictorial craft. In a personal communication, Hay has suggested that the painting's twenty-three instances of depicted calligraphy in different styles may have entailed the participation of a specialist calligrapher as well.

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context similar to that of an earlier work, in the same tradition, *Watermill (Zhakou panche tu* 閘口盤車圖, **Fig. 2)**, with both works visualizing contemporary architectural undertakings endorsed by the state that also represented mechanical advances of their time. Specifically, it was the construction of a watermill in Kaifeng in 974 intended for flour production for courtly consumption that inspired the commission of the *Watermill*, and in the present case, it may have been the building of a Rainbow Bridge at the capital in the 1040s.[4] Hay notes that commissioning paintings of architectural projects had a variety of purposes, sometimes visualizing how a structure would look when built, sometimes commemorating a technological success, and sometimes documenting architectural details for potential future reconstruction, all of which required exhaustive rendering of structural detail in both paintings (including of boats in the *Qingming* scroll).[5] If the commission of the *Qingming* scroll indeed shared a similar context to *Watermill*, it is likely to have come from the court or an arm of government. Considering also the dexterity in the depiction of buildings, boats and figures that required the finest painters of the time, this writer is inclined to see the plausibility of government or court involvement in the making of the *Qingming* scroll.

One implication is that *shi* officials were necessarily involved in important supervisory roles. A second is that the notable artists recognized for their work in pertinent genres who were summoned for the commission had their own claims to *shi* status. As we read from artist biographies in *Shengchao minghua ping* 聖朝名畫評 and *Tuhua jianwen zhi* 圖畫見聞志, leading artists of the time such as Gao Yuanheng 高元亨, Wang Duan 王端, Chen Yongzhi 陳用志, or Gao Keming 高克明 had varied if not contentious claims to be *shi*.[6]

Although the *shi*, like other classes, lived in a world with expectations of decorum in their daily lives, their relationship with decorum was unique because, being embodiments of Confucian value, it was also their claimed area of expertise. They learned decorum from the classics, studied it as an intellectual interest, professed it to make a career, and took pride in using their adherence to decorum to distinguish themselves from commoners and even

4. Jonathan Hay, "Bei-Song *Qingming shanghe tu* juan wei heren suo hua," p. 100. For the technological and economic significance of the watermill in the tenth century, see Heping Liu, "*The Water Mill* and Northern Song Imperial Patronage of Art, Commerce, and Science," *Art Bulletin*, vol. 84, no. 4 (2002), pp. 572–580. The Rainbow Bridge was also a technological breakthrough that came to the attention of the court in 1017 during the Zhenzong period; see Zhou Baozhu 周寶珠, *Songdai dongjing yanjiu* 宋代東京研究 (A Study on the Eastern Capital of the Song Dynasty) (Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe 河南大學出版社 [Henan University Press], 1992), pp. 192–196.
5. See Jonathan Hay, "Collaborative Painting at the Early Song Directorate of Construction," p. 463.
6. For a detailed discussion, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 35–40.

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other members of their own class. The argument of this article is that an understanding of decorum shared by the eleventh-century *shi* supervisors, the artists, and any audience sharing *shi* values informs the way social encounters are depicted in the painting and that, conversely, the *Qingming* scroll offers an emic perspective on eleventh-century decorum. While this may at first seem like a circular argument, specific and extensive correspondences between textual sources and what we see in the painting support it. Unlike the abundant literature that exists on decorum in the formal settings of court assembly and state ritual, fewer writings are available to show how the decorum of quotidian interactions in the streets was supposed to operate in the period concerned.[7] Even in the Northern Song, the *shi* complained about the absence of a guide outlining in satisfactory detail for *shi* and commoners the decorum covering aspects of everyday life.[8] Nevertheless, a number of extant texts outline broad principles of street decorum and illuminate the practices of the time.

7. For court-related decorum in the Northern Song, one may consult the entries under "past cases" (*gushi* 故事) in Shen Gua's 沈括 *Meng xi bi tan* 夢溪筆談; Hu Daojing 胡道靜, *Meng xi bi tan jiaozheng* 夢溪筆談校證 (Collation and Annotation of *Meng xi bi tan*) (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe 上海人民出版社 [Shanghai People's Publishing House], 2016), pp. 42–108. And for state ritual, the best account so far is the recent study by Zhu Yi 朱溢; see Zhu Yi, *Shi bangguo zhi shenqi: Tang zhi Bei-Song jili bianqian yanjiu* 事邦國之神祇—唐至北宋吉禮變遷研究 (Offering Sacrifices to the Deities of State: The Propitious Rituals in Tang and Northern Song China) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社 [Shanghai Guji Publishing House], 2014). Apart from writings on courtly and stately contexts, Fang Jian 方健 has written an article that summarizes some of the protocols applied to interrelationships that concern *shi* officials in the Song period, but the scenarios he discusses are mostly of formally planned official gatherings among *shi* men, traditionally falling within the category of "shi xiangjian li 士相見禮", rather than the more dynamic street encounters. See Fang Jian, "Songdai de xiang jian, dai ke yu jiaoyou fengsu 宋代的相見、待客與交游風俗 (Social Customs regarding Gatherings, Guest-Hosting and Socializing during the Song Dynasty)," *Zhejiang xue kan* 浙江學刊 (Zhejiang Academic Journal), no. 4 (2001), pp. 123–128.
8. See Yan Fu's 顏復 (1034–1090) memorial to the throne, in the capacity of Erudite of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*Taichang boshi* 太常博士), dated 1078, in Huang Huai 黃淮 (1367–1449) and Yang Shiqi 楊士奇 (1365–1444) et al. eds., *Lidai mingchen zouyi* 歷代名臣奏議, in *Jingyin Wenyuan ge siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (reprint, Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan 臺灣商務印書館, 1986), vol. 436, pp. 379–380. In the memorial, Yan lamented the fact that "The emperor in governing his people always set up penal measures to complement decorum. Today even the change in a word in legal codes will be circulated and become known in the counties. [In contrast,] the daily decorum of the *shi* and the people does not even have a text." (王者牧民，設刑以輔禮，今律民之書，一字有易，則置郵而下郡縣；士民常禮，以至無書) He thus urged the state to initiate the compilation of a "Five Rituals for the *Shi* and the People" (*shi min wu li* 士民五禮).

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Concretely, studying decorum as it is depicted in the *Qingming* scroll entails analyzing the relational positioning (*weizhi* 位置) of figures. This includes taking into account each depicted individual's posture and gesture, the physical and social distance between figures, and the relationship between humans and their surroundings. As early as the fifth century, "proper planning in relational positioning" (*jingying weizhi* 經營位置) was recognized by Xie He 謝赫 (active ca. 479–502) in his *Six Laws* as a key to mastering the art of painting, in particular figure painting; the principle continued to be invoked by Northern Song writers on painting.[9] Xie's compositional principle shares the same relational logic as decorum. While this convergence of pictorial and social principles provides a theoretical basis for interpreting the pictorial depiction of social decorum as a reenactment of real-life practice, we shall see that it is often the ideal performance of decorum that is depicted. This feature in turn alerts us to the operation behind the scenes, so to speak, of largely unwritten painterly protocols (painterly decorum) that were observed by the artists.

I. Time and Place in the Qingming Scroll

Before identifying the sorts of decorum depicted in the scroll, two questions first need to be answered. What do we know about the time and place depicted in the scroll? And what are their socio-historical implications as understood in the eleventh century?

It is widely believed that the temporal setting of the scroll is the Qingming festival period in early spring, as implied in its traditional title;[10] there are many reasons to believe this to be correct, among them that the Qingming festival was a national holiday throughout the Northern Song. During this time, ranked officials were granted three days off, with only

9. Xie He 謝赫, "Guhua pin lu 古畫品錄," in Lu Fusheng 盧輔聖 ed., *Zhongguo shuhua quanshu* 中國書畫全書 (Compendium on Chinese Painting and Calligraphy) (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe 上海書畫出版社, 2009), vol. 1, p. 1. For example, *Six Laws* was directly cited in *Tuhua jianwenzhi* under "lun qiyun fei shi 論氣韻非師"; see Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (active 11th century), *Tuhua Jianwen zhi* 圖畫見聞志, in Lu Fusheng 盧輔聖 ed., in *Zhongguo shuhua quanshu* 中國書畫全書 (Compendium on Chinese Painting and Calligraphy) (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe 上海書畫出版社, 2009), vol. 1, p. 468.

10. For an argument for the Qingming festival, see Yu Hui 余輝, *Qingming shanghe tu jie ma lu* 清明上河圖解碼錄 (Decoding the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshu guan 商務印書館 [The Commercial Press], 2016), pp. 166–167. For a summary of debates over the season set in the *Qingming* scroll, see Pan An-yi, "'*Qingming shanghe tu* xue' de qishi," pp. 25–27.

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junior essential staff required to remain on duty.[11] This helps to explain the absence of figures dressed in official dress (*gongfu* 公服 or *changfu* 常服), which would otherwise have clearly indicated ranked official status.[12]

As regards place, there is a general consensus among art historians and historians that the scene depicted in *Qingming* scroll refers to the Northern Song capital of Kaifeng.[13] However, there are ongoing debates regarding the specific location or route within the city that the scroll depicts. Various attempts have been made to pinpoint an exact route in historical Kaifeng, but, without exception, these efforts come into contradiction with what is known about the city's historical geography from textual and limited archeological sources.[14] The depicted Rainbow Bridge, arguably the painting's raison d'etre, has been related to the fact that multiple bridges of similar "legless" design were eventually ordered to be built along the Bian river from

11. Zhu Ruixi 朱瑞熙, "Songchao de xiujia zhidu 宋朝的休假制度 (The Official Leave System of the Song Dynasty)," *Xueshu yuekan* 學術月刊 (Academic Monthly), no. 5 (1999), pp. 87–94. Note that in the early Song the Qingming festival was included in the seven-day holiday of *hanshi* 寒食, which preceded the Qingming festival by one to two days. Only after Shenzong reorganized the official holidays in 1082 was the Qingming festival (nominally) given its own holiday. During times of political crisis or foreign aggression Essential officials, however, those of the highest and lowest ranks, were required to be on duty. Yet the *Qingming* scroll, as I believe, depicts neither scenario.
12. *Gongfu or changfu* usually entails a *putou* 襆頭 hat with perpendicular extensions (lit. legs, *jiao* 腳) on its left and right sides, a round-collared long robe of color that indicates rank and a belt with a buckle made of a type of material also indicative of rank. We find examples of *gongfu/changfu* in *Watermill* in the depiction of the supervisor in green robe seated behind a writing desk and his seniors in red shown drinking indoors in the wineshop on the lower right.
13. See Pan An-yi, "'*Qingming shanghe tu* xue' de qishi," pp. 27–28. A notable exception is Valerie Hansen who sees the *Qingming* scroll to be a totally idealistic and nostalgic imagination painted after the Northern Song dynasty ended—bearing a close connection to Meng Yuanlao's 孟元老, *Dongjing menghua lu* 東京夢華錄 (*Record of Dreaming of Hua in the Eastern Capital)*. She renounces the painting's connection to historical Kaifeng. See Valarie Hansen, "The Mystery of the Qingming Scroll and Its Subject: The Case Against Kaifeng," *The Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*, no. 26 (1996), pp. 183–200. For reviews and responses, see Pan An-yi, "'*Qingming shanghe tu* xue' de qishi," pp. 23–34; Yu Hui, *Qingming shanghe tu jie ma lu*, p. 32.
14. Yu Hui makes a convincing case that the geography in the painting's pictorial world—such as the twists and turns of the streets as well as the relative distance between the landmarks of gates and bridges—does not match any particular route in Northern Song Kaifeng as understood in modern scholarship, see Yu Hui, *Qingming shanghe tu jie ma lu*, pp. 134–152. Also see Hang Kan 杭侃 and Song Feng 宋峰, "*Qingming shanghe tu* zai yanjiu 《清明上河圖》再研究 (Revisiting the *Qingming shanghe tu*)," in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (The Palace Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu xin lun* 清明上河圖新論 (New Perspectives on the *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe 故宮出版社 [The Forbidden City Publishing House], 2011), pp. 177–186.

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Kaifeng all the way to Sizhou 泗州.[15] Within Kaifeng, three were built: one in the outer city 7 *li* 里 from the outer city gate (*wai cheng qili wai* 外城七里外) and named "Rainbow Bridge", which presumably was the prototype in the Capital region; and two within the inner city (*li cheng* 裏城) called *shang tuqiao* 上土橋 and *xia tuqiao* 下土橋.[16] Their respective locations have been marked in the map of Northern Song Kaifeng reconstructed by Zhou Baozhu **(Fig. 3)**. The earliest of the three, built outside the city, can be dated to the Qingli reign (1041–1048).

Scholars have debated which of the three legless bridges is the one depicted in the *Qingming* scroll and so far, none of them has been able to reach a definitive conclusion.[17] However, taking a step back, such a line of inquiry may not be appropriate at all because it assumes that the artists took a *cartographic* approach in depicting Kaifeng, which is not necessarily applicable here.

Referring to the map drawn by Zhou Baozhou, the significance of the three legless bridges is that they map out the water route to enter the city from its southeastern corner, the very route that cut into the heart of one of Kaifeng's busiest business districts around Daxiangguo Temple 大相國寺. This district was the most significant water-bound commercial hub in Kaifeng throughout the Northern Song.[18] The *Qingming* scroll depicts a

15. Zhou Baozhu traces the history of this type of bridge: this design had come to the court's attention in as early as 1017, during the Zhenzong reign, when it was proposed to be built along the Bian River, but it did not come to fruition because of the high cost. During the period from 1034 to 1041, when Xia Song 夏竦 was magistrate at Qingzhou 青州 in Shandong, he successfully built one such bridge there with the help of a soldier guard. Soon after, the same method of building was adopted by Chen Xiliang 陳希亮 during the Qingli reign (1041–1048) at Suzhou 宿州 (in present-day Anhui), through which the Bian River flowed, where he served as magistrate. Only then had the court decided to propagate the design in areas covering the Capital and Sizhou. See Zhou Baozhu, *Songdai dongjing yanjiu*, pp. 192–196. Tsao Hsingyuan 曹星原 thinks that the Rainbow Bridge is not an effective marker for the Bian River as it could represent other cities where the same type of bridge was built. See Tsao Hsingyuan, "Unraveling the Mystery of the Handscroll 'Qingming shanghe tu'," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, no. 33 (2003), p. 162. However, considering other evidence, she is convinced that the geographical reference in the painting remains to be Kaifeng.
16. Zhou Baozhu, *Songdai dongjing yanjiu*, pp. 192–196.
17. For a summary of related debates, see Hang Kan and Song Feng, "*Qingming shanghe tu* zai yanjiu," pp. 177–180.
18. Equally vibrant was the commercial hub located north in the city around Mahang jie 馬行街, which was not as dependent on the Bian Canal as the one near Daxiangguo Temple. In eleventh-century court discussions the two districts were referred as "river market in the south, land market in the north" (*nan he bei shi* 南河北市); see Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848), *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社, 2014), vol. 11, p. 6809.

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similar progression from a suburban zone of scarcely populated little settlements to a river-bound commercial hub with more human activity where the landmark of a Rainbow Bridge was built, before finally reaching a city gate that leads to the fully urban area of a city (and is very likely to refer to this route). If the priority of the painting's creators was to dramatize that narrative progression from suburban to urban, taking a cartographic approach to depict that progression would have resulted in repetitive appearances of identical bridges and city gates that would have been counterproductive to the concise conveyance of such drama found in the present arrangement. To assume that the painters of the scroll took a cartographic approach is actually to fall for the painting's intense realistic visual effects. In this light, one begins to realize that what we see in the *Qingming* scroll is Kaifeng artfully abridged and rearranged, based on the experience of entering Kaifeng from its southeastern water route while maintaining the real-life distinctions between the more suburban and the fully urban areas, and capturing the essence of the respective zones in terms of commercial activities and demography. Despite its strong reference to contemporary Kaifeng, therefore, the *Qingming* scroll is far from being a mere transcription of reality, instead creating a space that accommodates both site specificity and creative reimagination.[19]

The southeastern area of Kaifeng in Northern Song had a very irregular city plan that was not seen anywhere in the older capital cities of Luoyang and Chang'an.[20] When the ward system no longer functioned, the Later Zhou (951–960) government allowed new settlements to be built facing towards the streets (*linjie* 臨街) rather than being built inwards within a ward, decidedly increasing the chance of city dwellers from varied classes would encounter one another. The Later Zhou made two other important decisions that had impacted the city plan of Kaifeng before the Song inherited it in 960. One was to build an outer city wall (*luocheng* 羅城) and move all essential but hazardous functional settlements 7 *li* miles away from that outer wall; and to encourage private initiatives to rebuild the area between that outer wall and the imperial city, which resulted in urban development that happened at great speed.[21] The other decision was to encourage private initiative to develop, within the inner

19. Julia K. Murray articulates a similar view; see "Water Under a Bridge: Further Thoughts on the *Qingming* Scroll," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*, no. 27 (1997), pp. 99–107.

20. On the cityscape of Kaifeng, and the ways it was different from Chang'an and Luoyang, see Heng Chye-kiang, *Cities of Aristocrats and Bureaucrats: The Development of Medieval Chinese Cityscapes* (Singapore: University of Singapore Press; Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press), pp. 67-96, 117-182, 205-209.

21. Wang Pu 王溥 (922–982), *Wudai huiyao* 五代會要 (reprint, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1998), p. 320, citing the imperial edict dated 955 issued by Emperor Shizong of Later Zhou. For a discussion, see Hang and Song, "*Qingming shanghe tu* zai yanjiu," in Qingming *shanghe tu xin lun*, p. 181.

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city wall, the southeastern area centered on the Bian Canal into a commercial hub, a process that started with the dredging of the Bian Canal and the construction of the Thirteen-Bay Building (*Shisan jian lou* 十三間樓) facing the River, a freight shop complex, which attracted and facilitated people from all over the empire to travel to Kaifeng to do business.[22] The Bian Canal-centered economy thrived because of these decisions, making the southeastern area the most convenient, desirable and expensive region to live in: there, residences of the aristocracy adjoined those of the *shi* and military elites.[23] People with means competed to own a piece of land there. The hustle and bustle and diversity of the crowd depicted in the *Qingming* scroll is a reflection of this historical reality.

II. Decorum in Action

To the commissioners and painters of the scroll, what was street decorum in this setting supposed to look like? If order was to be maintained within such a highly urbanized environment, what (moral) values were deemed important?

In texts, we read of the repeated attempts initiated by *shi* officials to introduce sumptuary laws, often by reviving written codes of older periods, that limited the colors, cut and materials that people could wear in public, with a declared purpose of reestablishing moral order; the

22. General Zhou Jing 周景, responsible for undertaking the dredging project, was sharp to spot the lucrative opportunity and in his own capacity started to build the Thirteen-Bay Building. Emperor Shizong was satisfied with what Zhou did and bestowed on him wine and a handwritten official edict of appreciation. Some records state that the building was in twelve-bay. See Wenying 文瑩 (active 11th century), *Yuhu qinghua* 玉壺清話, in Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 1 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 1) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2003), vol. 6, pp. 109–110. Also see Wang Pizhi 王闢之 (1031–?), *Shengshui yantan lu* 渑水燕談錄, in Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song Biji* 全宋筆記 2 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 2) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2006), vol. 4, p. 92.

23. See the list of some thirty notable officials and members of the aristocracy who lived in this region compiled by Liang Jianguo 梁建國, "Bei-Song dongjing zhaiyuan weizhi kao 北宋東京宅園位置考 (A Study of the Locations of Residences and Gardens of Prominent Figures in the Eastern Capital of Northern Song)," in *Chaotang zhi wai: Bei-Song Dongjing shiren jiaoyou* 朝堂之外：北宋東京士人交游 (Outside of Court: The Social Interactions centered on the *Shi* at the Eastern Capital of Northern Song) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe 中國社會科學出版社 [China Social Sciences Press], 2016), pp. 324–331. Liang's study quotes Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954-1001) (see *Xiao chu ji* 小畜集, in *Jingyin Wenyuan ge siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 [reprint, Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan 臺灣商務印書館, 1986], vol. 1086, p. 154) for a *shi*'s comment on land price.

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regulations were, however, repeatedly infringed.[24] In the *Qingming* scroll, the range of colors that figures wear is rather limited, today confined mostly to black and white tones. Though in its original state other colors may have been applied that have faded over time, the rather extensive use of ink in the costumes of figures resonates with the ideal vision of an ordered society that Li Fang 李昉 (925–996) proposed during Taizong's reign, in which people who recently passed the *jinshi* examination, alongside official clerks, technicians, artisans and merchants, were expected to dress solely in black and white. Although Li's proposal was reportedly unsuccessful in its implementation, the palette observed in the scroll may reflect a similar ideal of decorum.[25]

More certainly relevant is a law concerning decorum in public street encounters proposed by a conservative ritual specialist, Kong Chenggong 孔承恭 (929–990), recorded in an edict dated 983/4:

> The *Biography* says, "If a man is able to govern a state by observing the rites, what difficulties will he have in public life?"[26] It is so that the old do not have to wander in the

24. Liu Fusheng 劉復生 has compiled a list of memorials to the throne lamenting the same problem throughout the Song. Liu Fusheng, "Songdai 'yifu bian gu' ji qi shidai tezhen: Jian lun 'fu yao' xianxiang de shehui yiyi 宋代「衣服變古」及其時代特徵—兼論「服妖」現象的社會意義 (The Phenomenon of "People Dressing in Ways that Differ Significantly from the Past" during the Song Dynasty: With a Discussion on the Social Significance of "Exotic Dressing")," *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 中國史研究 (Journal of Chinese Historical Studies), no. 2 (1998), pp. 85–93.
25. Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077–1148), *Shilin yanyu* 石林燕語, in Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 2 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 2) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2006), vol. 10, p. 84: "Since the present dynasty the colors red and purple have been designated to be worn by officials; when one has not yet reached the ranks that correspond to those colors, even in private leisure settings one is not allowed to wear purple. This has been the rule since the Tang. During the Taiping xingguo reign [976–984], Li Wenzheng [Li Fang] cited cases of the past to urge the court to pose a ban on [colored] official dresses that indicate ranks, on the white linen clothes worn by *jinshi* examination candidates, and on the color purple to be worn by people below them; people who passed the *jinshi* examination should wear black, official clerks, artisans and merchants, technicians should all wear black or white. During Zhidao reign [995–997], this ban was relaxed…" (國朝既以緋紫為章服故，官品未應得服者，雖燕服亦不得用紫，蓋自唐以來舊矣。太平興國中，李文正公昉嘗舉故事，請禁品官綠袍，舉子白紵，下不得服紫色衣；舉人聽服皁，公吏、工商、伎術，通服皁白二色。至道中，弛其禁令……). Yuwen Shaoyi 宇文紹奕 of Southern Song in his review (*kaoyi* 攷異) of Ye's text, however, thinks that it was the emperor rather than Li Fang who wanted a change in dress code in the first place.
26. The quote comes from Confucius' *Analects*; translation by D. C. Lau, *The Analects* (reprint, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2002), p. 74. It is quoted as *zhuan* 傳 because it was written at a time when the *Analects* was still not canonized with *jing* 經 status.

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> market streets that hawkers give way to one another in the road, [just as] farmers from Mount Li deferred ownership of boundary lands of their fields out of courtesy, and those entering the territory of Zhou were able to have their disputes mediated. In a place as densely populated as this, among them are many commoners indeed. It is best to reiterate the old laws, and to wash away customs of decadence. *The Decorum Code* states:"the inferior gives way to the noble, the younger gives way to the senior, the less important gives way to the more important, those departing give way to those arriving." It is best that these words be carved and shown. Violators should be punished accordingly.[27]

The four clauses are cited from the eighth-century *Da Tang kaiyuan li* (Kaiyuan Rites).[28] Upon Kong's proposal, it was mandated that wooden plaques carved with these four clauses be erected at important traffic junctions in the two capitals (Kaifeng and Luoyang) as well as in all prefectural cities.[29] The ideal scenario described in the edict, where the old do not have to wander in the market streets, is reflected in the *Qingming* scroll: the only visibly decrepit old figures appear outside the city gate, such as the fortune teller holding a staff, captured in a transaction with a client **(Fig. 4)**, and another elderly man holding a staff shown in profile **(Fig. 5)**. This demographic allocation carries the implication that the younger generation had already relieved the old of the labor and responsibility to run all the errands in the city, thereby demonstrating and embodying the moral value of filial piety (*xiao* 孝).[30]

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27. 《傳》云:「能以禮讓為國乎?何有?」故斑白不游於市井,負販相避於道塗,耕歷山者有讓畔之風,入周境者成息訟之美。浩穰之地,民庶實繁。宜申明於舊章,用激清於薄俗。《儀制令》云:「賤避貴,少避長,輕避重,去避來。」宜刻其字,違者論法。 From Anonymous ed., *Song chao da zhaoling ji* 宋朝大詔令集, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社, 1995), vol. 456, p. 500. An abbreviated version of the edict is found in Li Tao 李燾 (1115–1184), *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (reprint, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 2008), p. 538, quoting Wang Cheng王偁's (active 12th century) *Dong du shi lue* 東都事畧. For Wang Cheng's original text, see Qilu shushe 齊魯書社 ed., *Er shi wu bie shi* 二十五別史 (reprint, Jinan: Qilu shushe chubanshe 齊魯書社出版社, 2000), vol. 13, p. 17.

28. See Xiao Song 蕭嵩 (660–749) et al., *Da Tang Kaiyuan li* 大唐開元禮, in *Ru zang* 儒藏 2 (reprint, Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe 四川大學出版社, 2014), *shi bu* 史部, vol. 249, p. 113.

29. Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, pp. 537-538.

30. 陳宓 (?–1230) during the Southern Song interprets the reason for the old not having to wander in the market streets to be that "younger men are taking up the responsibility to carry heavy things and run all the unwanted errands so that the old are relived of such labor" (子弟負重執冷役不令老者擔擎); see Chen Mi, *Fuzhai xiansheng longtu Chengong wenji* 復齋先生龍圖陳公文集, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社, 1995), vol. 1319, p. 512.

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Most importantly, from this edict we learn that the most fundamental protocol in interpersonal encounters in street situations involved knowing when to give way (*huibi* 迴避, the two characters *hui* 迴 and *bi* 避 literally meaning "to go backwards" and "to evade," respectively). This code was not only internalized by the *shi* but was also externalized through signposts in prominent areas of the capital and other cities, making it known to a broader audience.[31] Although such plaques are not depicted in the *Qingming* scroll, it is reasonable to assume that the painters and the imagined populace depicted in the painting were aware of this code of conduct.

Yet, we read from an anecdote that prior to Emperor Taizong's agreeing to implement Kong's proposal, he had doubts over the meaning of the last of the four clauses, as recounted in the following conservation:

> Taizong asked Kong Chenggong, "According to the code, after having the noble and inferior, the junior and senior, and the less important and the more important give way to one another, why is there still the extra rule asking those going to give way to those coming? What is that for?" Chenggong replied, "It exists because those going and coming must be *warned* to give way to one another." His Majesty said, "That's wrong. If those coming and going give way to one another, just as the [shadows of the] population moving constantly in the thoroughfare are as dense as swarming ants, how is it possible that each

31. These plaques were reportedly still to be seen during the Zhenzong reign, and the practice of erecting plaques continued into the Southern Song, as we read from reports written by Qing antiquarians of excavated plaques of this kind in stone form carved with Southern Song reign names and dates. Yang Yi 楊億 (974–1020), "bang ke yizhi ling si tiao" 榜刻儀制令四條 (plaques carved with the four-clause laws of decorum), *Yang Wengong tan yuan* 楊文公談苑, in Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 8 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 8) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2017), vol. 9, p. 78. Yang Yi was active during the Zhenzong reign. There are Qing dynasty reports of excavations of plaques carved with these clauses in stone. One bearing a date of 1181 was found in Lueyang 略陽 county in Shaanxi, see Wu Yi 武億 (1745–1799), *Shoutang jinshi wenzi xu ba* 授堂金石文字續跋, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (reprint, Shanghai Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), vol. 892, pp. 742–743. Another was excavated in Changsha which did not bear a date, see Li Hanzhang 李瀚章 (1821–1899), Bian Baodi 卞寶第 (1824–1893), Zeng Guoquan 曾國荃 (1824–1890), and Guo Songtao 郭嵩燾 (1818–1891) et al., *(Guangxu) Hunan tongzhi* （光緒）湖南通志, in *Zhongguo difang zhi jicheng* 中國地方志集成 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe 鳳凰出版社, 2010), vol. 12, pp. 148–149. We may also consider the fact that literacy among commoners during the Song had grown significantly aided by commerce and printing, see Robert P. Hymes, "Sung Society and Social Change," pp. 526–561; on the growing literacy among women in the period, see pp. 575–591.

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and every one will perform giving-way? I'm afraid the designer of the code must have meant something else." [32]

From this episode we see Taizong had concerns over the code's practicality in the Song capital of Kaifeng, then already designated as a commercial hub with a layout far less rigid than the old capitals organized into wards. His familiarity with Kaifeng, stemming from his tenure as its Governor prior to ascending to the throne, likely influenced his apprehension.[33] It should be noted that implied in his query is an understanding that the practice of giving way did not simply mean to dodge in a split second but was in fact a space-consuming and time-consuming exercise.

The degree of temporal-spatial consumption in a proper performance of giving way is described in Lü Dajun's 呂大鈞 (1029–1080) *Community Decorum* (*Xiang yi* 鄉儀), written in the 1070s. Although this text is dated slightly later than the *Qingming* scroll, it remains the text extant closest in time to the scroll that offers prescriptive detail regarding the ideal bodily movements of giving way, making it an invaluable point of reference. However, it is crucial to emphasize that this work was tailored not for an urban commercial hub but for rural localities. In the section titled "Encounters in a Roadway" (*Daotu xiangyu* 道途相遇) under the category "Courting decorum" (*Bin yi* 賓儀), Lü Dajun articulates his ideal vision of how members of the *shi* class should conduct themselves when encountering one another in the streets:

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32. 太宗問承恭曰:「令文中貴賤、長少、輕重各有相避並訖,何必又云『去避來』,此義安在?」承恭曰:「此必戒於去來者,互相回避爾。」上曰:「不然。借使去來相避,止相憧憧,於通衢之人密如交蟻,烏能一一相避哉?但恐設律者別有他意。」其精悉若是。Wenying, *Yuhu qinghua*, pp. 159–160. Another version in *Xindiao huangchao leiyuan* 新雕皇朝類苑, citing *Yuhu qinghua*, has some different wordings. Most notable among them is that *jie* 戒 is replaced with *shi* 試, meaning the respective parties must *try* to give way to one another. However, I believe this is a typo because the character 戒 may be easily mistaken for *shi* 式, and another way of writing the character 戒 is *jie* 誡, which is easily mistaken for *shi* 試. For this other version, see Jiang Shaoyu 江少虞 (active 12th century) ed., *Xindiao huangchao leiyuan*, in *Yuwai han ji zhenben wenku* 域外漢籍珍本文庫 (reprint, Chongqing: Xi nan shifan daxue chuban she 西南師範大學出版社; Beijing: Renmin chuban she 人民出版社, 2011), 2 *zi bu* 子部, vol. 9, p. 504. Zhou Mi's 周密 (1232–1298) *Gui xin zashi houji* 癸辛雜識後集 in citing this anecdote adopts the character *jie* 戒; in *Jingyin Wenyuan ge siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (reprint, Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan 臺灣商務印書館, 1985), vol. 1040, p. 42. Moreover, Zhou Mi found an alternative answer from an old official who worked at the justice department: that this phrase means giving way to people coming from behind oneself. Qing scholars, however, found Kong's interpretation more convincing.

33. For Taizong's experience of governing Kaifeng, see Tuotuo 脫脫 (1314–1356) et al., *Song shi* 宋史 (reprint, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1985), p. 53.

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> When you encounter a man of senior age [note: by Lü's definition, at least ten years older than you] and both of you are on horseback, if you cannot match him in status, give way, then pull your horse to the side of the road. When the senior bows, you bow in return. When he passes, then you go. When the senior is walking on foot [and you are on your horse], having given way, seeing him coming from a distance, get down from the horse, go towards him, and bow. After he leaves, then get back on the horse. If the senior bows to you [which might be a sign that you can go], get on the horse and take your leave.
>
> When you encounter a man of similar age [note: by Lü's definition, someone who differs by no more than ten years of age from you], and both of you are riding a horse, go in separate lanes, bow to each other, and pass. When he is walking on foot [and you are on your horse], having given way, when you see him, get down from the horse and bow, then get back on. When the road is too muddy and filthy to stand on your feet, [ask your servant to] pass a message of apology.
>
> When you encounter a man of junior age [note: by Lü's definition, someone who is younger than you by ten years or more] who is riding on horseback [and you are walking on foot], if he pulls his horse to the side of the road, you bow while going towards him, and when he comes toward you then you bow while taking leave. When he is walking on foot [and you are riding], if you have already given way, you need not get down from your horse; if it is already too late to give way, get down from your horse and bow to him, just as you would act when encountering a man of similar age.
>
> Whenever you encounter someone you know who is riding on horseback while you are walking on foot, the first thing to do is to give way. [34]

Were one to adhere strictly to all the steps prescribed in *Community Decorum* for each of the three scenarios, it would necessitate not only a lot of time, effort, and focus, stopping here and there, making one's travel quite inefficient, but also a lot of open space as implied by the acts of walking back and forth while bowing (*qian yi* 前揖, *yi jin* 揖進). Spatially this would

34. 遇長者，皆乘馬。若不敵則回避，其次則立馬于道側，長者揖之則揖之，俟長者過乃行。若長者徒行，雖已回避，遠見之則先下馬，前揖，既過乃上馬。若長者揖，上馬，則辭之。遇敵者，皆乘馬，則分道而行，揖之而過。若徒行，雖已回避，見之則下馬，揖之，遂上馬。若道有泥濘及煨雜不可駐足，則傳謝之。遇少者乘馬，若立馬于道側則揖進之，既及前，則揖行遂過。若少者徒行，已回避，則不下馬；避不及，則下馬，揖之，如敵者儀。凡徒行遇所識者乘馬，皆先回避。Lü Dalin 呂大臨 (1044–1091), Lü Dajun 呂大鈞 (1029–1080), Lü Dafang 呂大防 (1027–1097), and Lü Dazhong 呂大忠 (c. 1020–c. 1096), *Lantian Lü shi ji* 藍田呂氏集 (Xi'an: Xibei daxue chubanshe 西北大學出版社, 2015), vol. 2, p. 806.

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require one to be able to differentiate an imaginary central lane (*zhong* 中) and side lanes (*dao ce* 道側)—three or a minimum of two lanes—in the roadway, while also allowing for the visibility of a person coming from afar, provided he is not obstructed by anything or anyone, and if the weather allows. Such conditions suggest that Lü's set of decorum prescriptions could work better in places with lower population density than the commercial hub of Kaifeng, where, rather than conducting commercial activities and human travels at high speed, people formed close-knit communities of irregular settlements, or in less populated zones of the capital. However, even in more rural areas, one wonders how often Lü's rather ideal prescriptions were actually put into practice.[35] A comparable depiction of relatively space-consuming decorum performed in a semi-rural zone can be found in the scene of "Sending Ding Xiucai to the Capital Examination" **(***Song Ding xiucai fu ju* 送丁秀才赴舉, **Fig. 6)** in *Illustrations to Ten Poems* (*Shi yong tu* 十詠圖) commissioned by Zhang Xian 張先 in 1072 in reminiscence of life stories of his late father, Zhang Wei 張維, set in the 1040s. It is a scene that also takes place in a roadway, which involves two parties dismounting, pulling of horses to the side of the road, and creating a central lane for the protagonists to approach one another. But the occasion depicted is bidding farewell, which involved more planning ahead and took longer than any street encounter described in *Community Decorum*.[36] The space and time consumed in performing such decorum was a luxury that could not be afforded by someone caught in a bustling crowd, as in the *Qingming* scroll.

Northern Song sources inform us that the land in Kaifeng was classified by the government into "tight zones" (*jin chu* 緊處) and "slack zones" (*man chu* 慢處), with settlements in these areas referred to as "close-together buildings" (*jin wu* 緊屋) and

35. In light of our contemporary understanding, Lü's somewhat elaborate advice should not be taken simply as real-life practice in the rural areas due to the peculiarity of his beliefs. The school of thought to which he was affiliated, *Guan xue* 關學, the school of the Guanzhong region, was closely related to the beliefs of Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–1077) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), and demanded uncompromising conformity with absolute ethical standards, a view not shared by the majority of the *shi* population.

36. Lü Dajun's *Community Decorum*, in the section of "Bidding Farewell" (*jiansong* 餞送), states: "For someone with whom you can match his status…when there is no food and wine being served, pull your horse to the side of the road. When he arrives, bow, then follow him for over a hundred steps. When the leaving person excuses himself, you bid him farewell, yet you refuse to leave but make further steps ahead of him. When the leaving person again firmly excuses himself, then you bow, bid him farewell and leave (敵者……無酒食則立馬于道側，俟其至，揖之，更送百餘步。去者辭之則告別，其送者亦推去者先行，去者堅辭，則遂揖別而退。); in Lü Dalin, Lü Dajun, Lü Dafang, and Lü Dazhong, *Lantian Lü shi ji*, vol. 2, p. 807.

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"comfortably separated buildings" (*xianman wu* 閑慢屋), respectively.[37] The terms *jin* 緊 and *man* 慢 encompass both temporal and spatial meanings, effectively differentiating the conditions for human activities in the densely and loosely built-up zones. Decorum would therefore, as Taizong recognized, create tension within the fast operations of the busy commercial zone of Kaifeng depicted in the *Qingming* scroll. The degree of tension would vary with the different speed zones in Kaifeng and necessitate varying levels of elaboration in the performance of decorum. In the "tight zones" of Kaifeng, the performance of decorum would ideally be kept economical and precise. That is probably why the deep *bai* 拜 bowings, where all four limbs are drawn to the ground, that we find in other Song paintings, like the example in *River Boats and Mountain Town* **(***Jiang fan shan shi* 江帆山市, **Fig. 7)**, are rarely found in the *Qingming* scroll, where a shallow *yi* 揖 bowing is more frequently depicted **(Figs. 8 & 9)**, being quicker and more practical for the fast-paced context.[38]

Also noteworthy is the 984 law's call for respect toward all criteria of status in the commercial zone—toward the privileged 貴, the senior 長, the important 重, and indiscriminately anyone coming in one's way. Different sociogeographic zones normally called for different criteria of respect: in the inner city it was rank in the bureaucracy,[39] while in the rural community it was seniority in age.[40] In the case of a commercial zone, a complicated densely populated space operating at relatively high speed, to call for respect for all criteria of status meant that the respect supposed to be afforded to individuals was likely to become diluted and tentative in practice. In practice, agility and pragmatism may have proved to be even more essential qualities for navigating decorum in such a dynamic setting.

37. Li Hequn 李合群, "Bei-Song dongjing buju yanjiu 北宋東京布局研究 (A Study on the Cityscape of the Eastern Capital of the Northern Song)," (Ph.D. diss., Zhengzhou Daxue 鄭州大學 [Zhengzhou University], 2005), p. 117; quoting edicts dated 1026 and 1028.
38. The exception in the *Qingming* scroll is the figure kneeling outside the city gate performs a ritual to bid the rider farewell; he is kneeling to the gods, not to the rider. Yu Hui, *Qingming shanghe tu jie ma lu*, p. 120.
39. In the inner imperial city, give-way described as to "evade and stand to the side" (*huibi ce li* 回避側立), see the edict issued in 1008 titled "Jieyue wen wu guan churu ju pinzhi huibi mingfu chedan yu wen wu xiangyu yi xu huibi zhao 誡約文武官出入據品秩回避命婦車擔與文武相遇亦須回避詔" (Edict exhorting civil and military officials to give away according to rank, and carriages of official wives when encountering civil and military officials also to give way) in Anonymous ed., *Song chao da zhaoling ji*, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, vol. 456, p. 501.
40. "To privilege age over rank" (*shang chi bu shang guan* 尚齒不尚官) is the principle stated in Sima Guang's 司馬光 (1019–1086) " Luoyang qiying hui xu 洛陽耆英會序 (Preface to The Gathering of the Elders at Luoyang)", a non-governmental gathering in Luoyang. In the Preface, Sima claims that this practice in Luoyang could be traced back to Bai Juyi's time when the latter held his gathering there; in Sima Guang, *Wenguo wenzheng gong wenji* 溫國文正公文集 (reprint, Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan 臺灣商務印書館, 1965), vol. 3, p. 486.

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Although Lü Dajun's prescription may not be a reliable guide to real-life eleventh-century practice, it does help us to visualize giving-way decorum in spatial and pictorial terms, which is crucial for the analysis of figures in the *Qingming* scroll. We learn from the text that a scene of giving way is essentially a change in spatial relationships between two parties in an encounter—to divide ("go in separate lanes"), to vary in distance ("you bow while going towards him, and when he comes toward you then you bow while taking leave") and in height (getting on and off of horses), and to yield space ("pull your horse to the side of the road"; "the first thing to do is to give way"). It reminds us that arrangements in relational positioning and spacing carried implications for decorum and social significance, and when we analyze the narrative scene in the *Qingming* scroll, such arrangements are what we should pay attention to.

Giving way. At one of the major crossroads are depicted several neatly organized small groups of figures, separated at intervals, each consisting of affiliated men or a combination of individuals with different affiliations or occupations **(Fig. 10)**. We find some delicately handled distancing between groups that are going in opposite or intersecting directions—between the Buddhist monk accompanying another figure, perhaps a merchant patron, going east and the Daoist associates going west; between these two Daoist associates and the man riding on a horse, depicted from the back, going north; and between the man on the horse and another walking on foot followed by a servant, who shields his face from the gaze of the man he encounters.

At the near side corner on the right, two *shi*-looking men are performing *yi* bowing with another man, indicating a slowdown in momentum that immediately creates a potential for friction as a cart pulled by two donkeys approaches from around the corner in an intersecting direction. This scenario highlights a moment when decorum is in tension with the rapid flow of traffic in the commercial zone. Fortunately, a servant from one of the bowing parties raises his right hand in a gesture of apology or warning to signal the cart driver, asking him to slow down and control his animals (as animals are hard to control and are prone to unruliness). The significant distance maintained between the bowing groups and the donkey cart suggests that an accident may still be averted. The careful placement of each group in the painting implies each individual's attentiveness to his surroundings and his timely, controlled movements, exemplifying the economical performance of the stricture "those departing give way to those arriving" in a tightly knit, interlocking space. Not to be overlooked is that this orderly manner of encounter in the depicted scene is upheld not just by *shi*, but also by Buddhist monks, Daoists, men who appear to be merchants, and servants.

The situation of giving way involving the man riding and the man walking **(Fig. 11)** immediately calls to mind the similar scenario described in Lü Dajun's *Community Pact.* In

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this scene, the man walking raises a fan to cover his face, a gesture that has attracted different interpretations.[41] My reading of this gesture is that it served to avoid the full performance of giving way, which could entail quite an elaborate performance from both parties—at worst, requiring the rider to dismount and pull his horse aside, or at best, necessitating both parties to move to and fro to bow—that still cost time and inconvenience. Given the limited space around them, one can imagine that if the two were to perform the full procedures of giving way, it would trigger a *chain reaction* of disruptions to the surrounding people, at the very least provoking yelling from the four-donkey cart driver behind the man with the fan. In this way, this gesture of covering one's face can be interpreted as an act of generosity that facilitates efficiency and provides convenience for both parties, a civilized move to make each other's lives easier.[42]

41. This gesture has been interpreted as a gesture of cruelty, to signal the cutting loose of any relationship with the approaching party openly in the public eye. The reason for this interpretation is due to its semblance to an episode described in Shao Bo's 邵博 (?–1158) *Shaoshi wenjian hou lu* 邵氏聞見後錄, quoting Chao Yuezhi's 晁說之 (1059–1129) recounting of Li Gonglin 李公麟 (1049–1106) raising a fan to cover his face and not making the slightest gesture of courtesy bowing when he ran into two students of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) when Su was banished from central government in the 1090s. The present author thinks of this interpretation to be too hasty and disagrees with it. For the anecdote recounted by Shao Bo, see *Shaoshi wenjian hou lu*, in Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song Biji* 全宋筆記 4 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 4) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2008), vol. 6, p. 193. For a discussion, see Robert E. Harrist Jr., *Painting and Private Life in Eleventh Century China: Mountain Villa by Li Gonglin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 13; Harrist titled his first chapter "The Face behind the Fan: Li Gonglin and Northern Song Painting."

42. The fan itself, also termed *bian mian* 便面, was designed with the purpose to hide one's face for the sake of convenience. See Yan Shigu's 顏師古 explanation of an excerpt in the biography of Zhang Chang 張敞 in *Hanshu* 漢書: "*Bian mian* is made to shield one's face…In situations where a person prefers not to be seen, he shields his face with it for the sake of convenience, thus the name *bian mian* [lit. the face/surface that provides convenience]. It is also termed *ping mian* [lit. the screen for one's face]. The bamboo fans that monks carry with them today, featuring a flat top and rounded bottom [roughly resembling the shape of the human face] were used as *bian mian in older times* (便面，所以障面……不欲見人，以此自障面則得其便，故曰便面，亦曰屏面。今之沙門所持竹扇，上衰平而下圜，即古之便面也。)"; Ban Gu 班固 (32–92), *Han Shu* 漢書 (reprint, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1962), pp. 3222–3223. The text is partially cited in Han Shunfa 韓順發, "*Qingming shanghe tu* zhong de shanzi 《清明上河圖》中的扇子 (Fans in the *Qingming shanghe tu*)," in Liaoning sheng bowuguan 遼寧省博物館 (Liaoning Provincial Museum) ed., *Qingming shanghe tu yanjiu wenxian huibian* 《清明上河圖》研究文獻匯編 (Compendium of Research on *Qingming shanghe tu*) (Shenyang: Wanjuan chuban gongsi 萬卷出版公司 [Wan Juan Publishing Company], 2007), p. 645.

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Crises. The examples of giving way presented thus far illustrate relatively swift actions aimed at maintaining order. But the painters of the *Qingming* scroll chose to depict crises as well—riskier and more exciting scenarios that challenge the performance of giving way and test the limits of decorum. By examining these moments of real tension, we can glean further insights into the views on social order conveyed by the painting.

In front of the bowing groups discussed earlier, we encounter a queue of two sedan chairs, each carried by four bearers, followed by a man holding a sheathed fan riding on a horse, led by a groom and accompanied by a servant on his left; the laborer following him may also be part of the rider's retinue **(Fig. 12)**. Some scholars have regarded all three parties as belonging to a single entourage; however, the non-linear positioning of the three parties and the impatient gesture of the rider's groom—his mouth is open, which suggests yelling, and his hand-waving may be a gesture urging those in front to move faster—indicate that these groups are not aligned in absolute harmony. Instead, they are experiencing a moment of tension.

More than one narrative could explain this situation. One possibility is that the first sedan chair has hesitated or changed direction, causing a slowdown in travel speed, which in turn has brought the second sedan chair closer. Driven by curiosity, the lady seated inside looks out to investigate the cause of the halt. Meanwhile, the rider's groom, positioned third in line, expresses his frustration at the obstruction, yelling and waving his hand to urge those in front to move faster— much like a modern automobile horn signaling impatience. Alternatively, and perhaps more likely, the scenario could originate from the arrival of the male rider, being of higher status than the occupants of the two sedan chairs, one of whom is a woman. In this case, the groom may be shouting a request for the sedan chair to give way. The lady in the sedan chair looks out, intrigued by the commotion, while the bearers of the first chair scramble to change direction to accommodate the rider. The horse rider, dressed as a *shi* and holding a fan, appears calm and unaffected by the tension unfolding around him. This demeanor suggests that he may have been the catalyst for the others' need to change lanes. Regardless of the narrative in this *chain reaction*, it is evident that the first group in the queue has already begun to adjust their positioning. Additionally, there is ample space to the queue's left along the route toward the city gate, providing an opportunity for the ongoing tension to be resolved. The scene, therefore, is imbued with potential solutions.

A second instance of tension is found in a rather narrow passageway at the Rainbow Bridge, where two parties approaching from opposite directions find themselves at a standstill, on the brink of a quarrel if neither is willing to give way **(Fig. 13)**. The groom of the riders arriving from the far side of the bridge opens his arms wide, creating an obstruction akin to a gated barrier for the servants of the sedan chair arriving from the near side. His gaping

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mouth suggests frustration at the impasse.[43] However, judging by the direction towards which the sedan chair servant is pointing with his right hand, they are going to move to their right, allowing the opposing party to do the same. This gesture suggests that a possible remedy to the conflict is already pre-programmed into the painted scene.

At the near side of the Rainbow Bridge a third portrayal of crisis is depicted **(Fig. 14)**. Here, a man on horseback, led by his groom, turns his head to stare at two things at once. First, he is looking at a commoner or laborer carrying a pack, whose open mouth and pointing gesture suggest he is making noise. It is unclear whether this man is affiliated with the rider or the goat carriage, or if he is just a passer-by. Secondly, the rider's attention is drawn to an incompetent cart driver, who allows himself to be led by his beast of burden to swagger down the center of the road. Perhaps this has forced the rider, apparently of higher status than the cart driver, to give way earlier on—a situation that turns the protocol upside down. The rider's response—captured in his reflexive surveilling gaze—illustrates his attentiveness to those around him who are failing to uphold decorum. His overall temperamental distance kept from his surrounding people marked by calmness, coupled with his outfit of a dark-colored long robe and postural composure suggest the likelihood of him being a *shi*, as historically it was often the *shi* who criticized others for not abiding by decorum.

The painters' choice to include crises, sometimes even subversions of decorum, in the narrative landscape of the painting indicates an intention not to solely emphasize rigid adherence to protocols or performance of the blatantly ideal. Instead, they seem to have wanted to acknowledge the uncontrollable and unpredictable aspects of life. By depicting these moments of tension and the agility required to navigate them, the painters highlighted the importance of a pragmatic, flexible and timely application of giving-way decorum.

III. The Heterogeneous Image of the *Shi*

Another angle from which to study decorum in the *Qingming* scroll is the portrayal of a social class, in order to observe the degree of intra-class variety. This can reveal the artists' assumptions about setting and the social decorum deemed appropriate to it. It is depictions of the *shi* class that I have chosen to analyze here, in part due to the plausible involvement of *shi*

43. See Yu Hui, *Qingming shanghe tu jie ma lu*, p. 158, and p. 159 for a transcriptive bird's eye perspective drawing of activities going on over the bridge. Yu interprets the scene as a "farce" (*nao ju* 鬧劇) between a civil official seated in the sedan chair and a military official riding on horse, but there is insufficient visual evidence to support Yu's claim about the classes of men to which the two parties belong.

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in the painting commission of the *Qingming* scroll, but also because relevant textual sources about them are more abundant.

Were one tasked with identifying all the *shi* in the *Qingming* scroll, one might develop a set of visual-behavioral criteria based on dress and accessory, degree of movement and ease, and sensitivity to decorum and indecorum. These criteria would help capture the physical and psychological distance that the *shi* maintain from the crowd, ultimately allowing for the identification of several potential candidates. However, it is hard to definitively confirm the identifications because most candidates display a certain ambiguity in their presentation. One complication comes from the setting of the painting during the Qingming festival—a national holiday—when, as noted earlier, ranked officials were off duty, removing the possibility of relying on official dress to make the identification. A second complication comes from the prevalence of camouflage and pretense in self-presentation, which, as we learn from Northern Song anecdotes, was a shared practice across classes. It was not uncommon at the time for *shi* to underdress (dress like non-*shi* people), and for *shi*-aspirants from varied classes, who did not genuinely qualify as *shi*, to dress and behave as if they did.[44] One particular example of the latter is Gao Yuanheng, the painter whom Hay identifies as one of the most probable candidates for the *Qingming* scroll's authorship. Despite not qualifying a *shi* in real life, according to *Shengchao minghua ping*, he "adhered to the laws of propriety, and would often don his official robe and a wide sash as he led his servants; passerby thus recognized him as a scholar."[45]

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44. We read cases of high-ranking *shi* officials who deliberately underdress for reasons of comfort and convenience. Dress indicating high status did not only bring honour also carried with it a burden, forcing one to act in a certain way that avoid appearing in the leisure quarters of the city. Conversely, Sima Guang criticized "servants wearing *shi* clothes and farmers wearing silky socks" (近歲風俗尤為侈靡，走卒類士服，農夫躡絲履。) See Sima Guang, "Xun jian shi kang 訓儉示康" (Teaching on frugality for [Sima] Kang), in *Wenguo wenzheng gong wenji,* vol. 3, pp. 505–506. Even in local communities, as Lü Dalin described, "men in the villages wear clothes that *shi* men wear, and socialize with *shidaifu*—by that they also call themselves *shi*. Yet among them there are both the virtuous and the unseemly, so that it is hard to make a distinction" (鄉里服士衣冠，而與士大夫遊，皆名為士，而賢不肖混淆，莫之能辨。). See Lü Dalin, "Lun xuanju liu shi zou 論選舉六事奏," in Lü Dalin, Lü Dajun, Lü Dafang and Lü Dazhong, *Lantian Lü shi ji*, vol. 2, pp. 756–761. For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon and relevant anecdotes, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 52–58.

45. See Liu Daochun 劉道醇 (c. 1028–1098), *Shengchao minghua ping* 聖朝名畫評, in Lu Fusheng 盧輔聖 ed., *Zhongguo shuhua quanshu* 中國書畫全書 (Compendium on Chinese Painting and Calligraphy) (reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe 上海書畫出版社, 2009), vol. 1, p. 451. Translation modified from Charles Lachman, *Evaluations of Sung Dynasty Painters of Renown: Liu Tao-ch'un's Sung-ch'ao ming-hua p'ing* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), pp. 43–44.

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To illustrate this ambiguity, let us consider several *shi* candidates depicted in the scroll. The first candidate is a man wearing a windbreaker and traveler's hat riding on a handsome white stud surrounded by a sizeable retinue **(Fig. 15)**. While his outfit does not immediately indicate his official status,[46] the quality and size of his retinue—the nine of them all wearing similar uniforms that include putou 幞頭 hats, suggest their status as government employees. The man is portrayed as markedly different from his retinue not just by elevation and the color of his outfit but also body language. He is presented as a man of control—his mouth sealed, his expression calm, at ease without losing composure and appearing as if unaffected by his surroundings.[47] All these behavioral traits make him the least contestable candidate for a *shi* in the painting.[48]

In contrast, to the left of the rider's retinue stands a man in a half-translucent black long robe, engaged in conversation with others **(Fig. 16)**. We find two servant figures waiting on the side. Although his attire aligns with what one might expect of a *shi*,[49] it was not exclusively theirs. A similar robe was included in the portrait of the male occupant of a Northern Song tomb excavated in Hancheng 韓城, Shaanxi **(Fig. 17)**, who has been identified by scholars

46. Yet we learn in the case of Wang Pu 王朴 (905–959), the strategist closest to Shizong of the Later Zhou and arguably the master architect of Kaifeng in the century to come, that he often dressed in a traveler's straw hat in the city, then the capital of the Later Zhou, when visiting relatives and friends. See Liang Jianguo, "Bei-Song dongjing zhaiyuan weizhi kao," p. 336, citing Wei Tai 魏泰's (active 12th century) *Dongxuan bilu* 東軒筆錄; for Wei's text, see Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 2 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 2) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2006), vol. 8, p. 100. The same image was depicted in paintings such as *Seven Scholars Going through the Pass* formerly attributed to Li Tang (The Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art) and *Streams and Mountains Under Fresh Snow* attributed to Gao Keming (The Metropolitan Museum of Art). *Shi* in exile are often portrayed in such a way, see Peter Sturman's discussion of *Travelers in a Wintry Forest* (12th century) traditionally attributed to Li Cheng in the Metropolitan Museum of Art; "In the Realm of Naturalness: Problems of Self-Imaging by the Northern Song Literati," in Maxwell K. Hearn and Judith G. Smith eds., *Arts of the Sung and Yuan* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), p. 166.
47. This group is also involved in a scene of encounter—a man approaches the group on their right with his left arm stretched out perhaps in a welcoming gesture or pointing to a signboard located at the rear of an entrance as implied by the shops opposite. For a more detailed analysis of this group, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 63–66.
48. Yu Hui, *Qingming shanghe tu jie ma lu*, pp. 176–177.
49. See the portrait of Feng Ping 馮平 in *Five Old Men of Suiyang* (*Suiyang wulao tu* 睢陽五老圖), painted in ca. 1047–1050.

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as either a physician or somebody in the drugstore business.[50] Such a vocation placed him in what might be termed the "lumpenliterati" or "sub-literatus" class at the time, whose members also preferred this manner of self-presentation.[51] In the tomb occupant's portrait, too, we find depictions of servants working for him. Thus, the *shi* status of the similarly dressed man in the *Qingming* scroll cannot be fully recognized beyond doubt.

We have seen that at the major crossroads a man covers his face with a sheathed fan, a gesture that was an act of decorum. His behavior suggests a degree of civility that aligns with that expected of a *shi*. However, his action of lifting his robe as he walks, indicative of urgency and haste, differs from the immobile posture found in the rider of the white horse, while still carrying a sense of gravity. The servant who follows him, on the other hand, does not convey the same professionalism found in the retinue of the white horse rider.

Another candidate is the rider at the near side of the Rainbow Bridge discussed earlier whose surveilling gaze suggests an acute awareness of (in)decorum, thus leading us to think of him as a *shi* **(Fig. 14)**. Yet, the rather modest cap and robe he is wearing gives pause for thought. Similarly, in another scene **(Fig. 18)**, a man standing in front of a booth selling crepes has turned his head with an observant gaze, his attention seemingly caught by a rushing and noisy individual who has just encountered a blockage in traffic in front of him (and may be clearing the way for the horse rider and retinue behind him). This observer, though attentive to indecorous behavior in his surroundings and holding a sheathed fan, has however lifted his robe at the waist, which allows him to walk more freely, and wears a rather modest cap; his servant is equally relaxed, sitting on the side waiting while his master shops. Compared with the preceding cases, to identify this man as a *shi* becomes much more speculative though not entirely impossible.

50. Jeehee Hong and T. J. Hinrichs, "Unwritten Life (and Death) of a 'Pharmacist' in Song China: Decoding Hancheng Tomb Murals," *Cahiers d'Extrême–Asie*, vol. 24 (2015), p. 243. The tomb is datable to the Xining reign (1068–1077).

51. For *shi* boundaries, see Robert P. Hymes, "Sung Society and Social Change," pp. 650–652. The term "sub-literatus" is from Hong and Hinrichs, "Unwritten Life (and Death) of a 'Pharmacist' in Song China: Decoding Hancheng Tomb Murals," p. 243. Hong and Hinrichs rightfully frame their discussion of the Hancheng tomb murals at the conjunction of social dynamics between the ruling *shi* elites and non-*shi* elites, but they argue further for the murals, painted in a style more exuberant than contemporary *shi* would prefer, being a celebration of a new non-*shi* elite culture. However, as the present authors sees it, a lot of the ways the commissioner chose to portray the deceased in that tomb actually either *resemble* the ways that a *shi* fashioned himself in real life or were derived from *shi* culture. See Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 55–58.

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These examples illustrate the complexities inherent in identifying *shi* within the *Qingming* scroll.[52] Each candidate may exhibit certain visual-behavioral qualities that align with the more typical *shi*, but may also fall short in other respects. This highlights the insufficiency of relying on singular markers of identity and status to draw conclusive distinctions. Even regarding attentiveness to decorum, we have seen some of that knowledge being shared by depicted members of other classes like the monk and certain servants. There is thus always a degree of ambiguity in the identification of *shi* in the *Qingming* scroll.

Looking at this ambiguity from a different angle, however, if we accept a majority of the above candidates to be *shi*, then the *shi*'s image as presented in the painting is rather heterogeneous, especially when we contrast it with how the *shi* class is portrayed in *Four Scenes of the Jingde Reign*, a court commission also from Renzong's reign. In the scenes "The Emperor Taking out his Carriage to Inspect Flooding at the Bian Canal" **(***Yujia guan bian zhang* 輿駕觀汴漲, **Fig. 19)** and "Receiving Khitan Envoys" **(***Qidan shi chaoping* 契丹使朝聘, **Fig. 20)**, we find *shi* officials, in the emperor's (implied) presence,[53] juxtaposed with one another in almost identical pairs or groups of three or four, captured in similar bodily postures. There is only minimal variance other than their dress colors indicating differences in rank. Minor variations in the facial features of these pairs and groups do little to suggest the interiority and individuality of these figures. Also significant is the choice to depict a lot of the figures from behind, leaving their faces unseen. The homogeneity in these images of *shi* figures presents a marked contrast to the heterogeneity found in the portrayal of *shi*-looking figures in the *Qingming* scroll.

Apart from being roughly synchronous in time, both works have a connection to either court or government production; moreover, both have Kaifeng as their geographical reference. To explain their different portrayals of the same class, we may turn to a characterization of the Northern Song social value system by Robert Hymes and Christian De Pee, who understand it as the coexistence of two competing systems, one being a pyramidally imagined emperor-centered system and the other a horizontally imagined system composed of multiple foci and dyadic ties. In the emperor-centered pyramidal vision, the only way to define one's status

52. Presented here is just a brief and partial analysis of all the *shi* candiates depicted in the *Qingming* scroll. For a more detailed analysis, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 48–85.

53. The presence of the emperor is implied here and I believe, in depiction, it was a convention at the time to hide away the visible image of the emperor on purpose. For a discussion, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 135–139.

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was by one's position in government, within which system "each member occupied one definable position in relation to others," whereas in the horizontal vision "hierarchies were multiple, power and status were ambiguous, debatable, and always under construction." [54] The latter had its basis in the culture of commerce, which saw "status competition through wealth and the purchase of valued material or symbolic goods, and human movement not dependent on official standing."[55] The commercial zone as depicted in the *Qingming* scroll, one would assume, is where the latter value system was most strongly felt. The heterogeneity and ambiguity found in the portrayal of a single social class aligns with their observation. Their understanding of the parameters of behavior deemed appropriate in commercial space was probably shared by the creators of the *Qingming* scroll, just as the latter's contemporary colleagues painting the *Four Scenes of the Jingde Reign* understood that the *shi should* look monotonous—enjoying less flexibility in the fashioning of the individual—in the strict court hierarchical setting, where they are shown observing the protocols of the emperor-centered hierarchy. Heterogeneity in the portrayal of *shi* within a pictorial world is no less a manifestation of decorum. The seemingly free, random, and realistic depiction of human interactions that we see in the *Qingming* scroll is likely to be a deliberate artistic choice that falls within the designated parameters for the bustling commercial setting. We are thus seeing decorum not only as it governs the expressivity of figures within the pictorial world but also the choices that the painters made in their portrayal of those figures.

A side effect of intra-class heterogeneity in the *Qingming* scroll is to give the impression of a more continuous society, blurring rather than clarifying the interclass boundaries between the *shi* and their others. However, the heterogeneity is not without boundaries. Falling out of the spectrum, perhaps, is the tax officer dressed in a *shi* manner **(Fig. 21)**,[56] required to be on duty on a national holiday, captured in a moment of toil in public, surrounded by passing crowd of laborers and heavy cargo. His traits and surroundings prevent our identification

54. Robert P. Hymes, "Sung Society and Social Change," p. 631.

55. Robert P. Hymes, "Sung Society and Social Change," p. 632.

56. The dress he wears is named "crane cloak" (*hechang* 鶴氅) with black lining, comparable to those worn by the *qin* player often identified as Emperor Huizong in *Listening to the Qin*. For more on the "crane cloak", see Yang Zhishui 揚之水, "Song ren jushi de dong he xia 宋人居室的冬和夏 (Household Interiors of the Song Dynasty in Winter and Summer)," in Yang Zhishui, *Songdai huaping* 宋代花瓶 (The Flower Vase in the Song Dynasty) (Hong Kong: Xianggang zhonghe chuban youxian gongsi 香港中和出版有限公司 [Hong Kong Open Page Publishing Company Limited], 2014), pp. 111-112.

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of him as *shi*.[57] Arguably, it is here that we find the threshold between *shi* and non-*shi* maintained. Barely passing by comparison would be the man standing next to the crepe store who is casually dressed yet has a *shi* awareness of indecorum, making an interesting contrast with the tax officer. The fluidity in defining status still has limits even in the space of commerce where the standards of measurement flow like the commodities. The *shi*, as in real life, are shown in various instances as withdrawing their generosity and reinstating the boundaries of upward social movement of others when confronted with threats to their exclusive interests and singularity.[58]

Conclusion: A Moralized Vision of Northern Song Kaifeng

In this study, I have tried to demonstrate that decorum is not only a relevant emic angle to study what is depicted in the *Qingming* scroll but is also an illuminating lens through which to understand the how and why of the painting. It was a powerful force of mediation that shaped many decisions of the painters.

Since decorum is, above all, ideological, this study serves as a reminder, once again, that we should not let ourselves be clouded by the intense realism in the *Qingming* scroll and take it as simply a "window" into Northern Song reality. However, the painting does

57. This figure can be contrasted with a *shi* supervisor depicted in *Watermill* dressed in green official robe. Like the tax officer in the *Qingming* scroll, this supervisor is seated behind a writing desk in a semi-outdoor office. Yet he is shown with a *shi* subordinate who is slightly bowing to him, accompanied by two strong men and a servant—all of whom are performing the decorous *chashou* 叉手 gesture. The supervisor is captured sitting up straight with his eyes fixed on his subordinate, and pointing with two fingers of his left hand as if issuing an order. The plantings growing from the water adds a sense of coolness, suggesting a level of leisure that the tax officer in the *Qingming* scroll does not enjoy. For a detailed comparison, see Shek On John Yiu, "The *Shi* and Their Others: *Shi*-Oriented Figure Painting in Northern Song China, c. 1040–c. 1090," pp. 58–61.

58. For the case of a *shi* opposing the entry of an imperial doctor into the Hanlin Academy despite the recommendation of grand councillor Lü Yijian 呂夷簡, see Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002–1060, attributed), *Biyun xia* 碧雲騢, in Shanghai shifan daxue guji zhengli yanjiusuo 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 ed., *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 1 (The Complete Collection of Miscellaneous Writings of the Song Dynasty, series 1) (reprint, Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, 2003), vol. 5, p. 78. For both councillors' and censors' disapproval of Renzong's desire to marry the daughter of a wealthy merchant, see Tuotuo et al., *Song shi*, p. 13656. For the *shi* reinforcing the quotas for military elites to change into the *shi* stream, see Tsang Shui-lung 曾瑞龍, *Bei-Song chong shi Jiangmen zhi xingcheng* 北宋种氏將門之形成 (The Formation of the Chong Clan of Generals in the Northern Song) (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局 [Zhonghua Book Company], 2010), pp. 136–144.

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have a very special relationship with the empirical realities of Northern Song Kaifeng. In the *Qingming* scroll, we find a certain degree of geographical specificity, certainly a socio-historical specificity about Kaifeng, and arguably architectural specificity as well in one of the several "legless bridges" in the city. Additionally, the painting incorporates psychological observations, including of unpredictability and uncontrollability, as well as of human weaknesses and needs (such as the desire for freedom)—real-life complexities that were programmed into its narrative landscape. In this sense, we can assert that the ideals that the painters envisioned for this painting were not so much detached from reality as tailored to it—a stance that resonates with that of the more pragmatic *shi* who sought to moralize their world based on existing realities, in contrast to those who pursued more drastic, idealistic measures.[59] These pragmatic thinkers—most notably Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086)—were more inclined to accept society as it was. They took the needs of the private sector and human weaknesses into consideration when formulating their plans for improving their world, unlike those who prioritized the remaking of the whole society to align with public interest through major institutional innovations as did Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052) in the 1040s

59. For example, Sima Guang expressed such a view in "Jin xi shu" 謹習疏, in which he considers "the feelings of the common people" (*shisu zhi qing* 世俗之情) and their "habituation to the existing custom" (*an yu suo xi* 安于所習) and them questioning and worrying about every unfamiliar practice as a major consideration when thinking about whether modern men should wear ancient costumes to make a better, more moral society. See Sima Guang, *Wenguo Wenzheng gong wenji*, vol. 2, pp. 218–220; also see the discussion by Lu Minzhen 陸敏珍, in *Song dai jiali* 宋代家禮 (Family Decorum of the Song Dynasty) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局 [Zhonghua Book Company], 2022), pp. 156–157. Zhang Lei 張耒 (1054–1114), a student of Su Shi's, in his "Yi guan pian 衣冠篇 (On Clothing)" also expresses such a view. Instead of advocating simple adherence to either practices of the Three Dynasties or the Sui and Tang, Zhang Lei argues that "sage kings of the past had laid down their rules based on preexisting practices in use by the people" (先王因民之所用而遂文之則) , and that the target followers would not have found those rules totally unfamiliar. Therefore, he said, "Were those sage kings born to our time, they would also have made use of customs and practices currently in use. Why must we learn from the remnants of their actual practices and not learn from their making use of existing customs and practices to build our own system?" (使先王而出於今，亦且因之矣。何能必師其既陳之餘迹，而不師其因名而為制也。) Applying this realization to his own time, Zhang Lei wanted to persuade the emperor to "review the current system regarding vehicles and dress enjoyed by different classes, covering that of the aristocrats, the *shi*, the commoners, the clerks, and the merchants, and to create a system of differences using materials that are already in use such that people will not find the distinctions confusing and the system difficult to follow." (故臣願陛下詔有司取今車服之制，上自公卿大夫而下達于士、庶人與胥史、工商之徒，皆因今之物而稍為之別，使不至于相亂而不可辨。) See *Zhang Lei ji* 張耒集 (reprint, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chubanshe 中華書局出版社, 1990), vol. 2, pp. 717–718.

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and Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086) in the 1070s.[60] It appears that the commissioners and painters of the *Qingming* scroll favored the more pragmatic and human path in their vision of social order.

Viewed through the lens of decorum, one of the painting's underlying themes can be seen to be the quality of governance—the relationship between *guan* 官 and *min* 民, or government officials and their subjects. In the depicted city, the stone or wooden plaques erected historically in the busy thoroughfares stating the four rules of street decorum are absent. No soldiers patrol the streets, except for a few guards resting outside the yamen, as Valerie Hansen has pointed out.[61] We do not find associations with punitive methods or external stimulus to maintain order. Instead, both *shi* and non-*shi* automatically behave and adjust their movements to maintain the distance required by decorum. The *shi* official wearing the windbreaker on his way to (or back from) the outskirts, flanked by nine servants, maintains a distance from the crowd without inflicting resentment or interfering in the lives of commoners. His rather modest attire also offers a balance to his elevated status in reality. The *shi*-looking figures in the *Qingming* scroll nevertheless assume the role of surveillance, as they are depicted watching over others' breaking of decorum or loss of control, yet they make no proactive intervention. In scenarios of crisis, as noted earlier, the potential for remedy or resolution is assured without the need of a third-party mediator.

One may understand the painting as an urban "landscape" that develops along the Bian River, where the people and commerce, both metaphorically and in actuality, flow in resonance with good governance. The unobstructed circulation and continuous flow of water—a metaphor immanent in nature—was considered by Northern Song *shi* theorists to be vital for any living body to sustain life and function healthily. So popular was this concept that it was widely applied in contemporary discussions of medicine, hydraulic management,

60. For a summary of the opposing views on ordering state and society, as epitomized in the argument between Sima Guang and Wang Anshi, see Conrad Schirokauer and Robert P. Hymes, "Introduction," in Robert P. Hymes and Conrad Schirokauer ed., *Ordering the World: Approaches to State and Society in Sung China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 31–32.

61. Valerie Hansen, "The Mystery of the Qingming Scroll and Its Subject: The Case Against Kaifeng," p. 187.

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financial management, and even political governance.[62] In this light, the potential conflicts in human interaction discussed above can be interpreted as blockages or constipations that disrupt the interlocking traffic and commercial operations taking place in the depicted world. Despite these challenges, due to internalized protocols among the population, the depicted populace seems capable of automatically self-regulating whenever there are crises, quite naturally maintaining the flow of traffic and commerce. Overall, the depicted scene conveys a sense of unimpeded movement, encompassing people and the surrounding environment, water in particular, and even temporality, achieving a state of unobstructed flow, or *tong* 通. Among the depicted populace, considering the satisfactory relationship between *guan* and *min*, it is apparent that individuals of varying social status coexist peacefully (*he* 和), with hierarchical differentiation and order preserved without reliance on oppressive force. In light of this demonstration of unobstructed flow and peaceful coexistence, it is fair to assert that the painting's pictorial world depicts a state of good governance.

The *Qingming* scroll thus presents a thoughtful and nuanced design that conveys a sense of order on multiple levels—in its narrative content on the representational level, in the quality of governance implied on the socio-political level, and in the healthy circulation implied on the socio-economic level. Both directly depicted and indirectly connoted, this sense of order carries moral and philosophical depth. By employing a mode of intense realism and maintaining a significant degree of real-life specificity, the painters and commissioners sought to convince their audience that this is how the world they lived in *could* look, fostering the impression that such a moralised vision was not only desirable but also attainable.

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62. Christian de Pee, "Circulation and Flow: Immanent Metaphors in the Financial Debates of Northern Song China (960–1127 CE)," *History of Science*, 56:2 (2018), pp. 183–184. De Pee points out that in their epistemology, by grasping this immanent pattern of circulation and flow, one would know how to maintain order in all of the mentioned areas, such that they could use, as he eloquently puts it, "their understanding of water control to stem inflation and to prevent crime," and rely "on their medical knowledge to build irrigation systems and eliminate harmful dams." The understanding of the principle of how things should circulate and flow became a set of transferrable skills.

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III. Internet Resources

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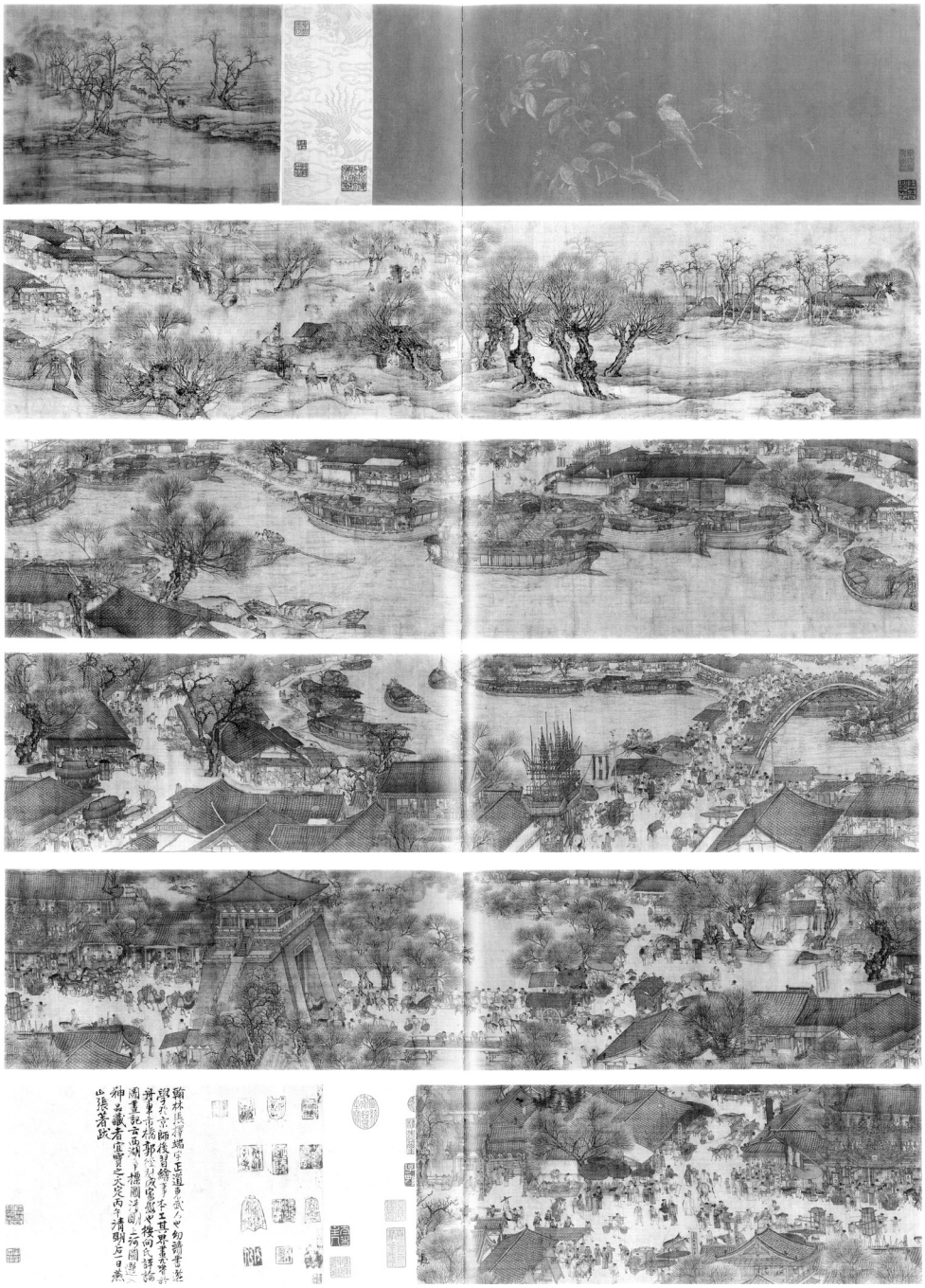


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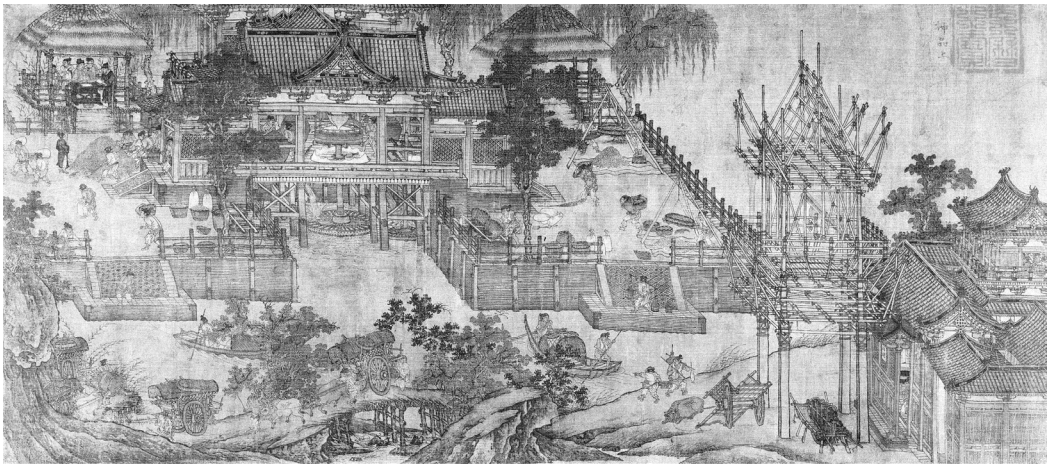


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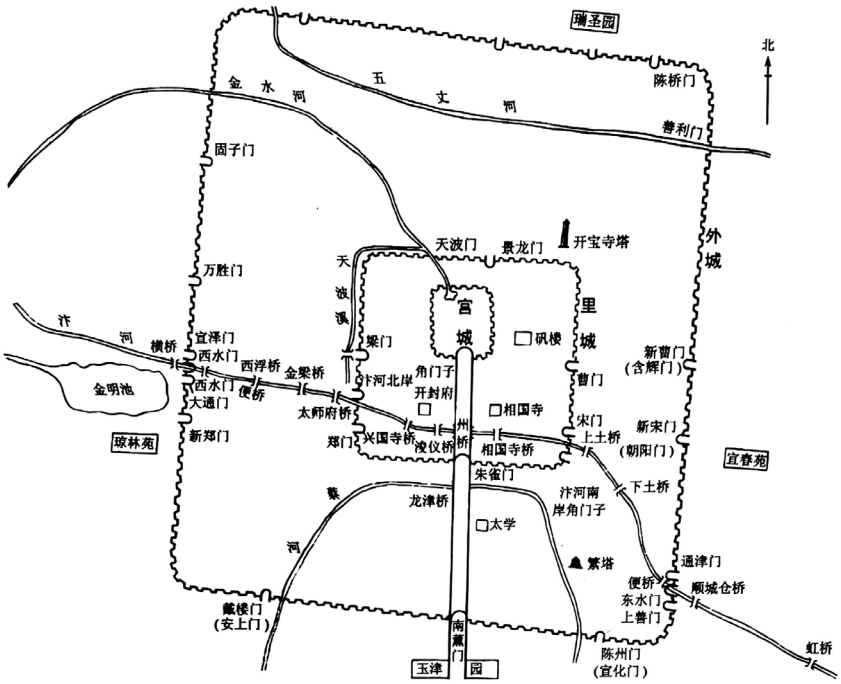


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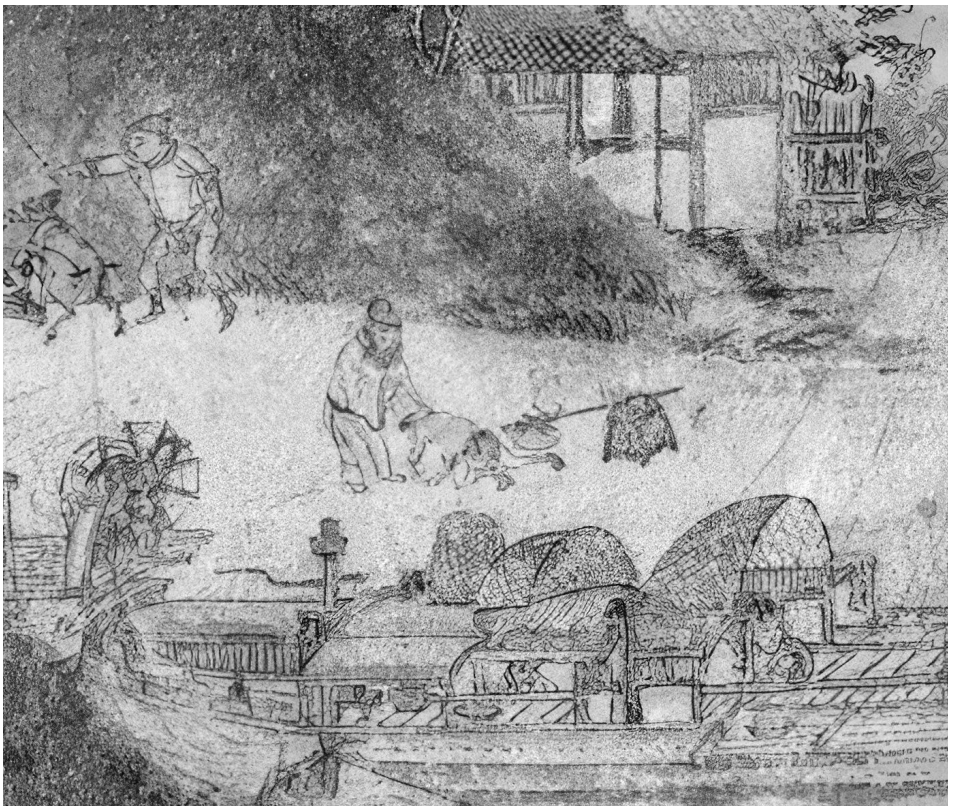


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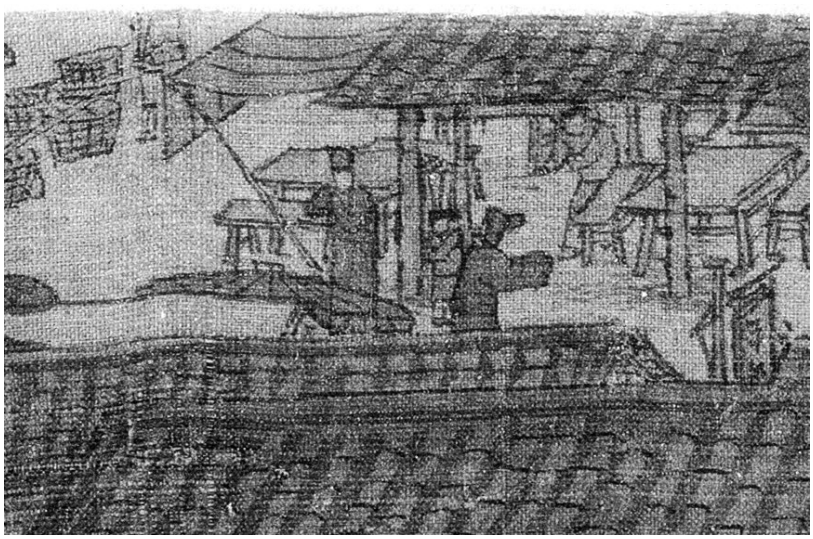


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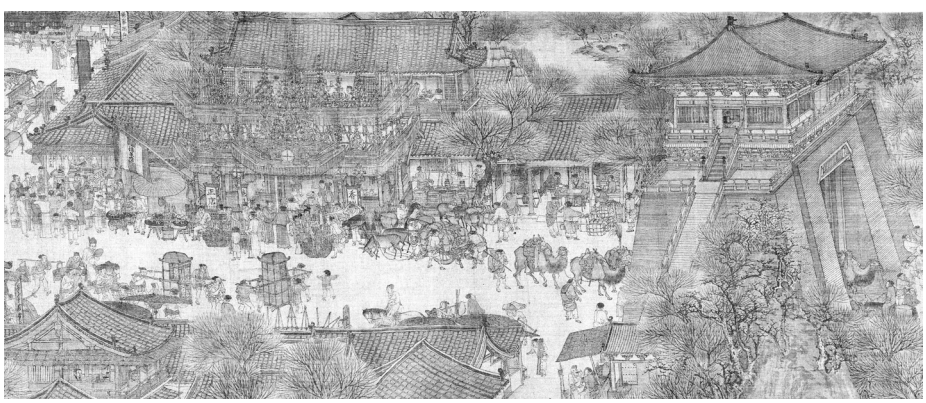


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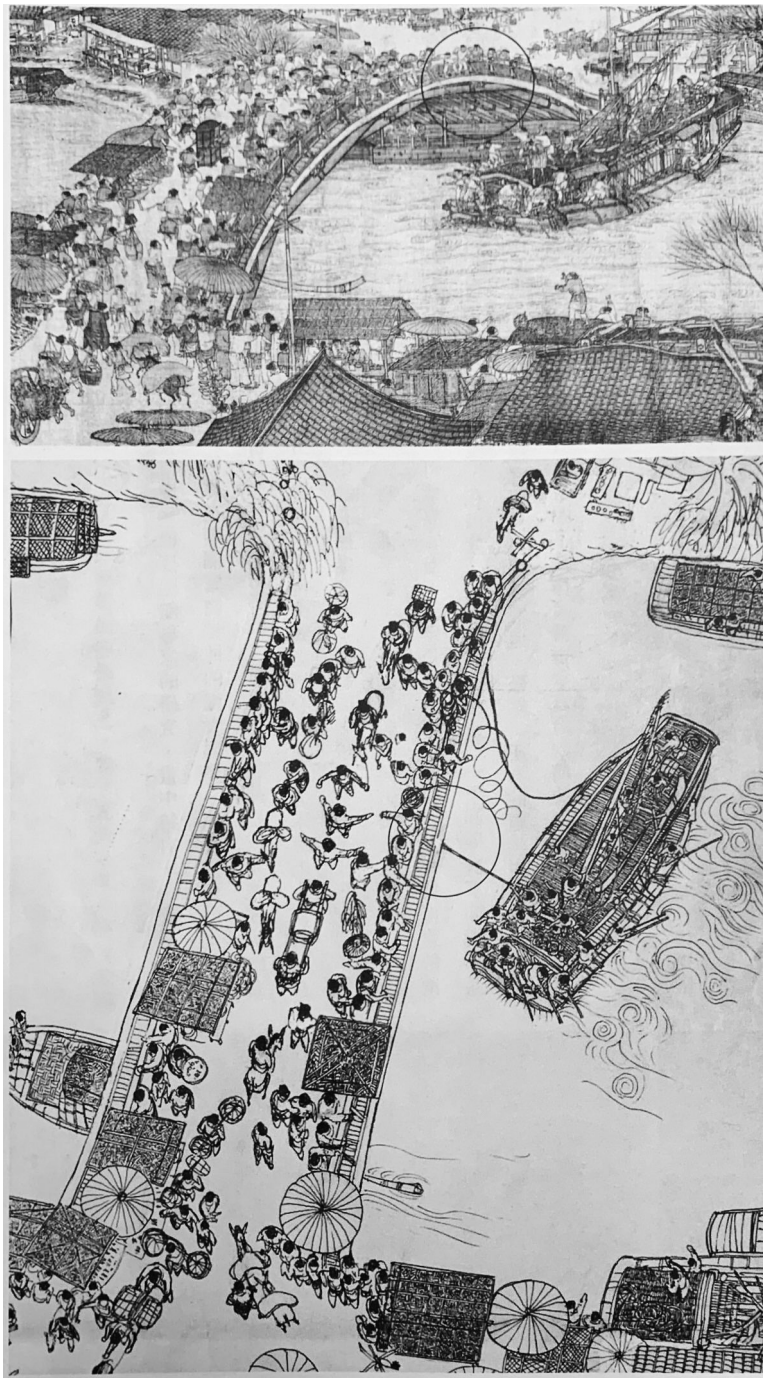


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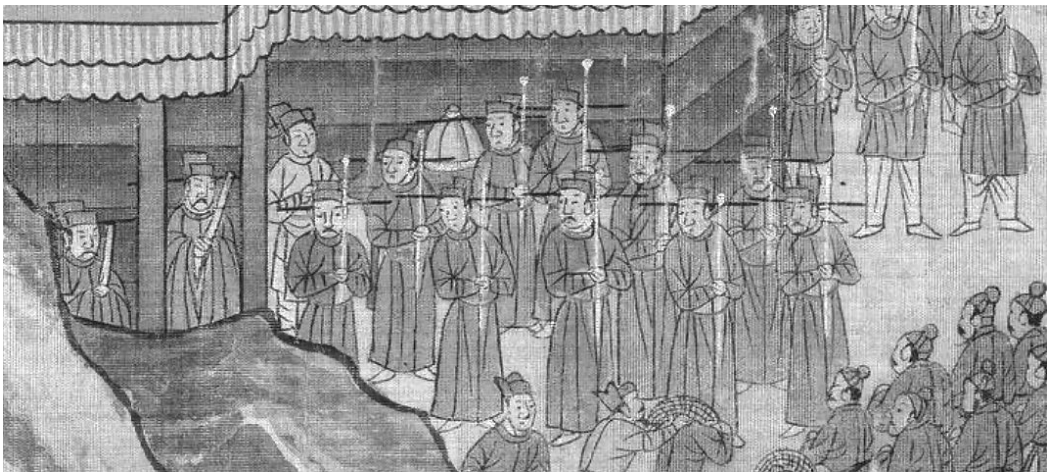


Fig. 19 Detail showing *shi* officials. Unidentified painter, "The Emperor Taking Out His Carriage to Inspect Flooding at the Bian Canal" (*Yujia guan Bian zhang* 輿駕觀汴漲) from *Four Scenes of the Jingde Reign* (*Jingde si tu* 景德四圖), Renzong reign (1022–1063). Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 33.1 × 252.6 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

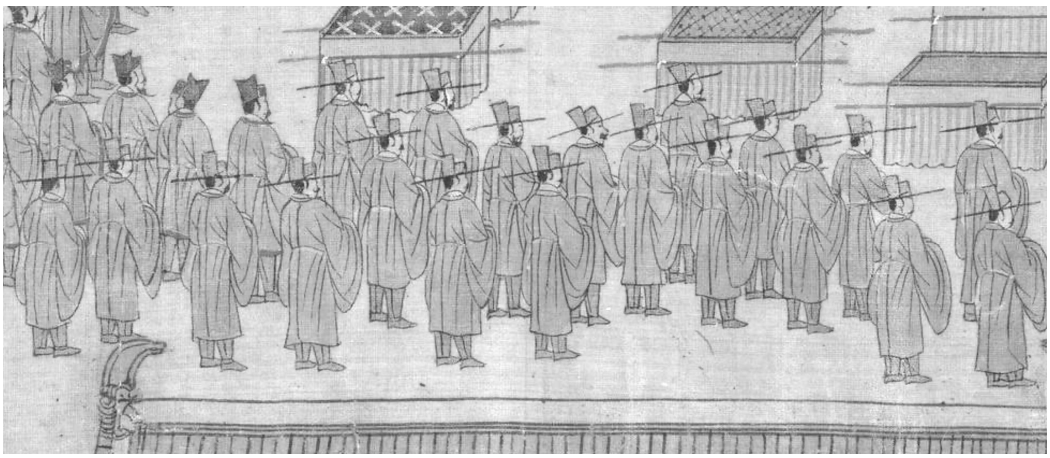


Fig. 20 Detail of "Khitan Envoys Visit the Court" (*Qidan shi chaoping* 契丹使朝聘) from *Four Scenes of the Jingde Reign*, showing *shi* officials.

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Fig. 21 Detail of the *Qingming* scroll, showing a tax officer.

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《清明上河圖》與禮：
繪畫北宋開封城的道德視域

姚錫安

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本文從禮的視角考察《清明上河圖》，而所謂禮，乃指古代中國社會在特定情境中指導其參與者與他人互動的一套具體規範和理論概念。《清明上河圖》刻畫了不同階層之間的相遇和互動，因此禮是與此畫極其相關的研究角度，然而至今尚未為學界充分發掘。本文結合文獻和圖像資料，嘗試重建十一世紀街道禮儀的基本原則，為解讀圖中各種人際互動提供分析框架。研究首先聚焦「避讓」與「危機」情境的描繪，又探討士階層人物的姿態與行為，進而揭示禮在畫境再現過程中不同層次的調節作用。本研究認為，禮影響了《清明上河圖》的創作者和訂製者諸多繪圖視覺上的選擇，也是我們了解此畫創作意圖以及其倫理哲學深度的關鍵性視鏡。

關鍵詞：禮、寫實主義、迴避、道途相遇、士階層

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