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Abstract

Between 450 A.D. and 750 A.D., China was characterized by a self-sufficient agrarian economy with constant per-capita GDP, relatively constant population, and political institutions that showed little fundamental change. A major civil war during the 755 – 763 A.D. period initiated a period of transition. Throughout China, local commercial markets appeared, developed and interconnected, even creating national markets in some cases. Commerce and industry appeared on an unprecedented scale and the pace of technological innovation increased. These developments continued and accelerated in the 1000 – 1300 A.D. period, during which time per-capita GDP and population roughly doubled and China emerged as the world's technological leader. This raises an important question in political economy: “What caused the onset of Song China's early economic growth?”

This year's research has identified changes in political institutions after the An-Shi Rebellion (755 – 763) as being a possible cause of China's early economic growth. After the An-Shi Rebellion, regional military governors were politically accepted throughout China and changed the power structure of Chinese society. My thesis is that this caused a change in the property right system, protecting commercial and industrial interests, which led to China's early economic growth. The identification of this institutional change is already an excellent start for research on this topic and offers much potential. The historical research of this project requires a comprehensive study of China's regional institutions from 750 to 1000.

As a result of the An-Shi Rebellion, during this period, military governors were established throughout China. In their domains military governors established military garrisons (鎮) throughout their domains and collected taxes and raised troops. These regional governments were a line of authority independent of the traditional regional governments under the central government – the prefectures (州) and counties (縣). Tension between the central government (along with its subordinate prefectures and counties) and the military governors (and their subordinate garrisons) allowed regional military administrations to collect commercial taxes, encouraging the appearance and growth of commercial and market activities. These activities intensified in the Five Dynasties period and commerce expanded on an unprecedented scale throughout China. It was during the early Song Dynasty that these military governors and their administrations were removed and all regional authority returned to the central government and its prefectures and counties. The early Song Dynasty thus inherited a commercial economy which grew even faster thereafter. It is my

contention that these regional military governments changed the local power structure and in doing so protected commercial and industrial property rights. After unification, I argue the Song state continued protecting these property rights.

Keywords: Institutions, Property Rights, Political Economy, Economic History, China

摘要

西元 450 至 750 年間，中國是一個自給自足的農業經濟體，有相對穩定不變的每人 GDP 與人口，以及幾無大改變的政治制度。但是在西元 755 至 763 年間的內戰（安史之亂）開啟了一個轉變期。整個中國開始出現地方商業市場，並且發展與互相連結，在一些案例中，甚至發展出全國市場，商業與工業出現前所未有的規模並且技術創新的腳步更快了。這些發展在西元 1000 至 1300 年這段期間，持續且加速進行。在這段期間中，每人 GDP 與人口大約成長為兩倍，中國成為世界的技術領導者。而這，引發了政治經濟上一個重要的問題：「是什麼原因造成了宋代中國早期的經濟成長？」

對此問題，個人之初步研究發現在安史之亂後，整個中國對地方節度使在政治上的接受，造成了中國社會權力結構的改變。我認為這個變化，改變了財產權制度，保護商業與工業利益，進而導致中國早期的經濟成長。這個中國制度改變的發現，是一個很好的研究開始，因為時間是對的，制度改變發生在經濟成長開始之前，所以此研究計劃很有希望能對前述問題提出一個很好的答案。因此本三年研究計劃，要對西元 750 至 1000 年間中國之地方制度，做一廣泛之歷史與經濟研究。

在此時期（750-1000）由於安史之亂，整個中國都設有地方節度使，在其領域中，節度使建立了「鎮」負責收稅與募兵。這些地方政府自成一權力路線，獨立於傳統受中央政府直接管轄的地方政府（州、縣）外。節度使（包括其下屬之鎮）與中央政府（包括其下屬之州縣）互相抗衡，節度使可以收集商稅，其鼓勵了商業與市場活動的出現與成長。這些活動在五代時期更為成長，商業在中國擴展到前所未有的規模。到了宋朝初年，這些節度使與其行政系統被移除，所有地方權力回歸中央政府與其州縣。宋朝初年因此繼承了一個活躍的商業經濟體，其在宋朝時期更是加速成長。在此我的論點是：節度使的出現改變了地方權力結構，並且因此保護了商業與工業之財產權，而宋朝中央集權後，政府亦繼續保護商人之財產權。

關鍵詞：制度，財產權，政治經濟，經濟史，中國

1. Introduction

Over the past year, my research has been supported by a grant from the NSC (NSC 96 – 2415 – H – 032 – 007). Much progress has been made. My theory relates political institutional changes to changes in the property right system with the onset of economic growth of the Song Dynasty. My proposal was a 3-year research plan. The first year was to research political institutional changes of the period 750 – 1000 AD. The second year was to research the link between the state and local elite during the Six Dynasties. The third year was to research various economic, technological and scientific aspects of development during the Song Dynasty. The grant awarded to me only covered the first year of my research plan. Much progress was made this past year on the political institutional changes during the late Tang Dynasty to early Song Dynasty. Most of the key sources were Japanese sources. Indeed without access to a full-time research assistant who can read Japanese to assist in accessing this literature I would not have been able to conduct this part of the project. For this I am very grateful to the NSC for its support. I would like to mention that it will be very difficult to finish this major project without similar support for the second and third years of the plan, as much of the sources on these topics is also in Japanese. I hope that future requests for support would consider this situation. In what follows, I report mainly on the progress made on Year 1 of my research plan.

My research project is entitled, “Political Institutions and Property Rights During the Tang-Song Transition.” This research addresses an important question in political economic theory – “What caused the onset of Song China’s early economic growth?” Over the past 30 years much research has been done on the economic, technological and scientific progress of the Song Dynasty. Much of this work has been done by experts in a particular topic, e.g. agriculture, tea, iron. A summary of these recent advances in the Chinese, English and Japanese literature informed by knowledge of economic growth and development will be an important contribution itself. This remains the third year of my research plan and has yet to be completed. With the onset of the economic growth of the Song Dynasty documented and dated, one can search for causal factors. My research project proposes political institutional change of the late Tang and early Song period as the main causal factor. Based on this past year’s research, I can say with much confidence that there is very strong circumstantial evidence that the onset of economic growth – which actually began in the late Tang period – was related to the military governors and their regional governments during the late Tang / early Song period. The military governors encouraged commercial development and taxed it. The early Song government inherited the incipient commercial economy that the military governors had developed

and the Song state encouraged further growth and development. A major part of my three year research plan is to introduce a theory that links the institutional changes of the late Tang / early Song period to changes in long-run growth rates. Little is known about such mechanisms and my theory offers a potentially important contribution to this important question in political economy. Note that this theory includes a link between the state and the local elite, which is the topic of the second year of my research project. A strong foundation for an explanatory theory has been laid during the past year with my detailed analysis of the military governors of the late Tang / early Song period. I hope to be able to complete this project in the future.

This final report presents descriptions of aspects of my research as well as the results and conclusions reached this past year. The remainder of this report is organized as follows. Section 2 presents a the question and background, section 3 presents an outline of the research project's goals, section 4 describes the research methodology used and section 5 presents the results and conclusion.

2. Question and Background

During the period 450 A.D. to 750 A.D., China was characterized by a self-sufficient agrarian economy with per-capita GDP and population remaining roughly constant, and political institutions that showed little fundamental change. A major civil war during the 755 – 763 A.D. period initiated a period of transition. Throughout China, local commercial markets appeared, developed and interconnected, even creating national markets in some cases. Commerce and industry appeared on an unprecedented scale and the pace of technological innovation increased. These developments continued and accelerated in the 1000 – 1300 A.D. period, during which time per-capita GDP and population roughly doubled and China emerged as the world's technological leader. This raises an important question in political economy: "What caused the onset of Song China's early economic growth?" I argue that from the civil war period (755 – 763 A.D.), the political acceptance of regional military governors throughout China changed the power structure of Chinese society. This led to a change in the property right system, protecting commercial and industrial interests, which led to China's early economic growth.

Historical evidence indicates that during the 1000 – 1300 period, China experienced the onset of economic growth. Consider iron output data based on tax records.¹

¹ See Hartwell (1966), p. 34 for the figures reported in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1
*China's Iron Output Per-Capita
and Population*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Iron Output Per-capita (pounds per-capita)</i>	<i>Population (millions)</i>
806	0.5	54
998	1.2	54
1064	2.9	62
1078	3.1	81

Table 1 indicates a rapid increase in iron output per-capita during the 800 – 1100 period. This unprecedented industrialization was not due to a decrease in population; indeed, during this century China's population was experiencing unprecedented increases. From 800 to 1000, iron output per-capita roughly doubled, while during the 11th century it nearly tripled. This is a large rate of growth when compared to Western Europe's iron output per-capita growth rate during the 18th century. Table 2 indicates that China's rate of growth in this important sector was about ten times that of Western Europe's in their respective periods.

Table 2
*China vs. Western Europe:
Increases in Iron Output Per-Capita*

<i>Region</i>	<i>Century</i>	<i>Percentage Increase (during the century)</i>
China	11 th	250 %
Western Europe	18 th	26 %

Another important factor to consider in long-run economic growth is the rate of technological innovation. There is broad consensus among economists that the onset of economic growth was accompanied by an increase in the pace of technological innovation. At least during the early phases of economic growth, the shift in product and resources employed away from agricultural activities toward industrial activities is associated with an increase in the pace of technological innovation. Among historians of China, it is generally agreed that the 1000 – 1300 period was one of remarkable technological progress. During this period, China was the world's technological leader. The figures based on data of significant inventions reported in

Table 3 indicate that during the 1000 – 1250 period the rate of technological innovation doubled relative to the previous two and a half centuries.²

Table 3
*China's Rate of
Technological Innovation*

<i>Period</i>	<i>Innovations Per Century</i>
600 – 750	5
750 – 1000	8
1000 – 1250	15

As in the West, China's unprecedented industrialization and technological innovation was accompanied by other features of economic growth, including unprecedented increases in population, degree of urbanization, commercial activity and the pace of social change. Although interpretations vary, it is commonly agreed that from the 9th through the 13th centuries China experienced dramatic social change – also commonly associated with the onset of economic growth and the structural shifts it entails.³

These indicators strongly suggest that during the 1000 – 1300 period experienced unprecedented changes including growth in GDP per-capita and population as well as increases in industrialization, technological innovation and urbanization. Some current quantitative estimates support the claim of Song China's growth in GDP per-capita and population. Table 4 presents recent estimates by Maddison.⁴

Table 4
*Maddison's Estimates of Song China's
GDP Per-Capita and Population Growth*

<i>Year</i>	<i>GDP per-capita (1990 international dollars)</i>	<i>Population (millions)</i>
1000	\$450	60
1300	\$600	100

² Two sources of dated significant inventions are used to construct the innovation rates reported. Temple (1986) dates 111 significant innovations in a variety of sectors. Li (1981) dates 80 significant agricultural tool inventions. These innovations are first dated by century. When calculating the reported figures for the periods considered, a constant rate of innovation is assumed within each century.

³ See Liu (1964) and Twitchett (1973), p. 47.

⁴ See Maddison (2003), p. 249, Table 8 – 3.

This proposed study aims to account for the onset of China's early economic growth.

Background

The specific question, "What caused the onset of Song China's early economic growth?" has been addressed in a very limited fashion. Social historians in China and Japan have been relatively active in studying this period. Modern political and economic analysis has been focused mostly on the history of America and Western Europe. This project aims to use theories related to the methodology commonly used by modern Western political and economic scholars in studying Song China's political and economic history.

Many social historians of China, in Japan and China, characterize this period as an important turning point in Chinese history. Among Marxists the topic of periodization of Chinese history has received much focus. In the early 20th century Naito Tarajiro broke with the traditional view that China's modern period began with the arrival of Europeans. "Naito's hypothesis" contends that the late Tang-Song period marks the onset of China's modern period. Japanese Marxists of the Kyoto School and others continue to hold this view. The issue of periodization is of little importance for the question addressed here. Nonetheless, nearly a century after "Naito's hypothesis" appeared there is a broad consensus in Japan on the important qualitative economic, political and social changes that took place in the late Tang-Song period.⁵

It was not until the 1960s that more detailed descriptions based on modern analysis of the economic growth of this period appeared. Only very recently have rough estimates of China's output per capita for the Song period been produced.⁶ Therefore, the very question of Song China's economic growth is relatively new.

The perspective and methodology of the analysis proposed here more closely follows the modern Western tradition, rather than the traditional social analysis in Japan and China. Within this Western tradition regarding the particular question addressed, I am aware of only one scholar – Mark Elvin, a student of Yoshinobu Shiba, a famous Japanese scholar of Song China's economic history, who has attempted to explain the onset of Song China's economic growth. Elvin argued that the migration of the populace from north to south caused technological innovation and economic

⁵ See Miyakawa (1955) for a discussion of Japanese scholarship on this topic. See Liu (1964) for a brief discussion on the general agreement among scholars that the late Tang to early Song period was a major transitional period in Chinese history.

⁶ Modern economic scholarship for the Song essentially begins with Hartwell (1966) and Shiba (1968). See Table 4 for estimates based on Maddison (2003). Of course Joseph Needham also made important contributions.

growth during the Song period.⁷

The methodological approach to be applied in this project is related to recent research on political and economic institutions by Western scholars. Some notable examples include Greif (1998, 2006), North (1990, 2005) and Weingast (1995, 1997).

3. Research Goals

My research this past year has been the systematic study of the regional institutional changes from the An-Shi Rebellion (755 – 63) to the early Song Dynasty. Studying this institutional history was done in the context of theory. Before describing further the methodology and results, it will be helpful to first describe the theory.

Here I shall introduce a framework for analyzing property rights that I call the *chain of power*. It is relative to an average person in a typical location in the country. The chain of power includes the central government, the regional administration, county administration, the local elite and the individual as well as the relations among these groups. In the pre-industrial world, without the use of modern transportation and communication technology, the ability of the central government to have direct relations with the people was severely limited. For example, in a typical county during the Tang Dynasty only three state officials were charged with governing 40,000 inhabitants spread out over a vast countryside. The state was forced to rely on the local elite to collect taxes and maintain local law and order. Given the predominant role of the elite in local affairs in the pre-industrial world, I shall focus on the relationship between the state and the local elite. The state needed the support of the local elite in order to collect and forward taxes to the state and also to maintain order. In exchange, the state provided the threat of coercive force – a county police force – to help enforce certain claims. The state could also issue political pronouncements, extending privileges to the local elite.

I shall now introduce a thesis that can explain the onset of industrialization. For a typical person in a locality, the chain of power includes a hierarchy of groups – central government, regional administration, county administration and local elite. Groups lower down the chain support those higher through forwarding taxes and maintaining order, while in return upper groups offer the threat of force and the use of political pronouncements to improve the social position of the lower group.

I argue that the group that largely determines the property right system in pre-modern societies is the local elite. The state's ability to apply coercive force is limited. The state heavily depends on the local elite to collect taxes, enforce rules and

⁷ See Elvin (1973), pp. 203 – 34.

maintain order. A key element of my thesis is that the local elite, as a group, restricts the property rights of others in order to maintain their power. Here I shall elaborate on this thesis.

I begin with the notion that an individual, if unrestricted, will seek to improve his livelihood by engaging in activities related to specialized production. Social constraints imposed by the local elite are instrumental in inhibiting efforts and investment related to large-scale specialized production. The local elite cooperates in order to maintain their power and position in society. Thus we need to focus on the factors that limit the ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of commercial and industrial interests.

In the long run, the movement of people associated with market activity limits the ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of others. Social relationships in a market-based economy are numerous, complex and fluid relative to a self-sufficient agrarian economy, which tends to be simple and stable. Generally speaking, as the degree of market activity intensifies, the number of social opportunities increases. Thus, when a group attempts to restrict the property rights of an individual, an increase in social opportunities limits the effectiveness of the attempt. The ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of others is then limited by the increased number of fluid and complex relationships associated with market activities. It is therefore in the interests of the local elite to restrict the property rights of those who wish to engage in specialized production and other market related activities.

The local elite restricts the property rights of others in order to maintain power. When others gain wealth and a popular following they gain the means to resist and challenge the power of the local elite. Commercial and industrial wealth thus poses a threat to the power of the local elite. Human behavior does not change with the development of a market economy. Power struggles continue in a market economy. However, power struggles in a market economy rarely result in the complete restriction of an individual's property rights. Other opportunities exist in a fluid market economy. This issue is one of degree in the effectiveness of the application of social constraints.

Thus far my thesis has argued that people, if unrestricted, will seek to improve their well being by making investments related to the development of specialized production. The primary restriction is the social constraint imposed by the local elite. In the long run it is market activity that limits the ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of others.

An important question that remains is, "Why do the local elite not engage in market activities themselves?" If they did so initial developments would be slow.

Small differences in wealth and social status among the local elite would begin to play an important role. Eventually it would become in the interests of some to defect from such an agreement, restricting the property rights of the local elite that continue market development. The incentives to gain power are great when an economy is self-sufficient and agrarian in nature.

These arguments can explain how a Malthusian economy persists and how industrialization continues. After an initial loss of control by the local elite, people will naturally seek to improve their livelihood by applying more effort toward specialized production and market related activities. Thus, once industrialization begins, this thesis can explain how it continues. What remains is to explain how industrialization is initiated. To address this important issue, we shall need to return to the chain of power and its relationship to the local elite.

Consider a country where political institutions are well developed with an established central government and where regional governments collect land-based taxes throughout the country. In a pre-industrial country, the central government could accomplish this by establishing chains of power countrywide, where officials at the lowest level depended on the local elite to collect taxes and enforce laws. To fix ideas, let us consider a relatively immobile agrarian economy that is largely self-sufficient, with few markets. For the typical person in the country, one clear, stable chain of power exists between him and the central government.

At each link the lower group supports the upper, usually collecting taxes and enforcing rules in exchange for the upper group's backing, which includes the threat of force and also political pronouncements that provide legitimacy to the lower groups. As mentioned earlier, the central and regional governments depend heavily on the local elite to collect taxes and maintain order. With the backing of the state, the local elite are in a position to heavily influence local affairs. With a single line of political authority emanating from the central government, a stable political and economic situation results. The local elite use their power to restrict the property rights of those who would challenge their interests and power. By maintaining their local position, they restrict the development of commerce and industry. A Malthusian economy results from this situation.

Consider the situation where a single chain of power exists between the resident and the central government, the local elite manages local affairs in their own interests and the economy is characterized as agrarian and self-sufficient. Let us call this chain of power traditional.

Under this hypothesis, a Malthusian economy results. The local elite restricts the property rights of those who could threaten their position in order to protect their power. As a result there is little investment in activities related to large-scale

specialized production, market development, capital investment or technological innovation.

According to my thesis, once the local elite loses power and people engage in commercial and industrial activities, the movement of people and complex relations that develop limit the ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of others. The problem then reduces to: how does the local elite lose power?

In the early Tang Dynasty, the traditional chain of power begins with the central government, extends to the prefectures and their constituent counties and the local elite. I argue that the traditional chain of power was broken by the changes in political institutions that took place after the An-Shi Rebellion (755 – 63). From the beginning of the civil war, military governors were established throughout the country. These military governors had their own regional administrations, which were both parallel and independent of the central government and its constituent prefectures and counties. The military governors of the Tang Dynasty had their own interests and were in conflict with the central government. I argue that these political changes, the pace of which increased during the late Tang and Five Dynasties period, fundamentally changed the ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of others and in doing so set loose market activity throughout China. In theoretical terms, I argue that the political acceptance of the military governors and their administrations increased the local elite's *coordination costs* in restricting the property rights of others. Once the local elite have been sufficiently weakened in their ability to maintain their power, others can begin to engage in commercial and industrial activities. I argue that this is the way the industrialization began.

My thesis can be summarized in four parts:

THESIS

- 1. If unrestricted, people will direct their efforts towards large-scale specialized production, commerce, industry and other market related activities.**
- 2. The local elite cooperatively restricts the property rights of others in order to maintain their power.**
- 3. In the long run, the movement of people associated with market activity limits the ability of the local elite to restrict the property rights of others.**
- 4. Given a well-established traditional line of state authority, the political acceptance by the local elite of an independent and parallel line of state authority increased the coordination costs involved with restricting the property rights of others.**

4. Research Methodology

The method of study required systematically researching numerous books and articles that discuss aspects of Chinese institutional history during the Tang through Song Dynasties. This was an extremely labor intensive project and the help of a full-time Japanese reading research assistant was needed. I am grateful for the support provided by the NSC. The findings of this year's work will be outlined next.

5. Results and Conclusion

This past year's research has been very productive. I have studied in detail the regional governments of the military governors during the late Tang / early Song period and also their commercial tax systems. This research serves as a basis for the argument that these regional institutional changes were a main causal factor in the onset of Song China's economic growth. The key point being that the timing is right for a candidate answer. Below I shall outline the results of this past year's research on the regional institutional changes and the regional commercial tax system and then follow with my conclusion.

Research results

The key changes in China's political institutions were studied in detail this past year. Literature in Japanese was particularly helpful as many of the main experts on this topic are Japanese. However, the Chinese and English sources were also covered.⁸ In this section an outline of these historical changes is presented.

The key historical episode that initiated transition was the An-Shi Rebellion (755 – 763). Following the civil war new political institutions emerged and developed during the later Tang Dynasty (618 – 906). The pace of political change accelerated during the closing years of the Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties / Ten Kingdoms period (907 – 959). During the 10th century the rapid rise and fall of dynasties in northern China were accompanied with centralizing reforms. The degree of success of

⁸ The Chinese source 王壽南 (1969) and the English sources Wang (1963) and Worthy (1975) were very helpful. The Japanese literature was excellent and large – see Aoyama (1933, 1969), Hamaguchi (1930a, 1930b), Hino (1938a, 1938b, 1939a, 1939b, 1940a, 1940b, 1961, 1967), Katō (1952a, 1952b), Kurihara (1953), Miyazaki (1950, 1953, 1979), Sogabe (1958, 1965), Sudō (1950, 1951, 1952a, 1952b, 1953, 1962, 1965), Sudō and Nakajima (1981), and Umehara (1958).

these reforms varied and none was completely implemented. Nonetheless, a long run trend of centralization can be detected. Most conspicuously after the Khitan War of 943 – 946 the central government gained a measure of control over regional governments. It was during the reigns of the first two emperors of the Song Dynasty that this trend of centralization climaxed. From about 1000 to 1300 A.D. China's political institutions remained stable in their essentials. The political transition during this period is the focus of study.

After a centralizing reorganization of the regional governments during the Sui Dynasty, the early Tang Dynasty inherited a system of two-tiered regional governments. The country was administratively divided into prefectures (州), each of which was divided contiguously into numerous constituent counties (縣). In border areas and strategic military regions, military governors (節度使) were in some cases set up in locations that contained several prefectures. They were charged with military and security matters, but had no authority over fiscal, civil or legal matters in the local prefectures.

As the *fu bing* (府兵) system broke down, professional armies became the norm in the border regions. The Tang political and military institutions were thrown into chaos with the An-Shi Rebellion in 755. The Tang court was militarily weakened when most of its key border armies rebelled. The capital was sacked and the court was forced to flee. The central government faced imminent collapse. In this situation, the central government used its authority to establish regional military governors throughout much of China in order to raise armies to put down the rebellion. Given the urgent needs, the military governors established their own subordinate garrisons (鎮) in the areas placed under their jurisdiction. Each garrison was assigned a commander (鎮將) who answered directly to the military governor. These garrison commanders raised and organized troops for the military governors' army. After the rebellion was suppressed, the military governors and their regional garrisons remained. The central government had relied on them to save the dynasty and they were in a position of relative strength. The military governors usurped some of the authority of the central government. The regional governments of the military governors, including garrisons that collected taxes, were an independent and parallel regional government to the regional prefectures and counties. The military governors also encroached on the authority of the prefecture and county administrations. Regional fiscal and civil affairs came increasingly under the control of the military governors. In 780 the central government carried out a major tax reform, known as the two-tax system (*liang sui fa*, 兩稅法). In effect, this reform accepted the fiscal encroachment of the military governors. No longer would the court attempt to register households and collect land taxes based on these records, but simply required an annual tax quota.

By the late Tang and Five Dynasties period, the military governors and their regional officers had almost totally usurped the authority of the traditional prefecture and county administrations.

It was not until the Song Dynasty that these military governors were brought under the control of the central government. In effect the central government dispatched its own officers to slowly take over the authority of the military governors and their administrations. During the reigns of the first two Song emperors the two parallel regional governments were merged into one. Three main steps were taken to bring the military governors under control. First, the military garrisons were placed under the authority of the county magistrates. Second, in 977 the non-headquarter prefectures (支郡) under the military governors began receiving court appointed officials to manage affairs. Finally, the military governors themselves gave up the administration of their own headquarter prefectures by around 1000. The Song central government had reestablished a single clear line of political authority, which began from the central government and now extended to a new level of administration between the prefectures and the court – the province (*lu*, 路, or *dao*, 道). The key official was the Fiscal Intendant (轉運使), charged with collecting taxes and forwarding them to the court. Below the province was the prefecture, then the county, then the towns and cities that had developed since mid-Tang.

In sum, the appearance and development of the military governors and their regional administrations provided a second line of regional authority that encroached upon the traditional chain of authority. The military governors established military garrisons in their regions and based their support on commercial taxes. Commercial development in the late Tang and Five Dynasty period began in garrison towns and spread during the Song Dynasty. During the early Song, the power of the military governors was gradually reduced and the second line of regional authority was removed. Thus the early Song central government successfully reestablished the tradition chain of authority as the only line of legitimate authority. By the early Song, however, the central government had inherited a developing market based economy. The Song government taxed the market activities and encouraged their growth. From this observation we can see that the military governors played an important role in the onset of the commercial and industrial development of the Song Dynasty. It was these military governors who first encouraged commerce as a fiscal support base.

Conclusion

This year's research has been very productive in studying the regional institutional changes of the 750 – 1000 AD period. The political institutional changes

and the development of commercial taxes has been dated and documented in historical detail. This has laid the foundation for a potential explanatory theory of the onset of Song China's economic growth based on these political changes. It is my hope that in the future I can receive NSC support to finish this important and promising project, since the need of a full-time Japanese reading research assistant remains.

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