

療疾、懲罰與報應：宋代社會中「食穢」的多重意涵

Putting Filth to Work as Medicine, Punishment, and Retribution: What it meant to “Eat Shit” in the Song Dynasty (960-1279)

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本場演講將探討宋代食用穢物的現象。這種行為在歷史文獻中常被稱為「食糞」或「食穢」，演講中將展示人們實際吞食糞便的相關記載。本研究引用了豐富的宋代文獻，包含筆記、志怪小說、醫方典籍，以及保存在類書中的歷史軼事。將這些史料交織起來，展現了一幅關於極端行為的多元圖景。在某些案例中，人們主動要求食用糞便；有些則是違背意願被迫吞食；還有些情況下，糞便被當作公認的解毒劑來服用。在宋代，人們食用人類排泄物的原因似乎至少可歸納為三種：受人脅迫、遭受報應（天譴）以及醫療用途。本次演講所呈現的案例，揭示了宋代社會中一種獨特的「潔淨觀」（logic of purity）。在這種觀念下，「食穢」得以具備多重功能：它既是治病解毒的方法、一種具脅迫性的懲罰，也是遭受神明報應的具體表徵。

This talk is about the consumption of filth in the Song dynasty. Sometimes referred to as “eating shit” (食糞) or “eating filth” (食穢) this talk presents accounts of people literally eating feces. It uses a wide selection of Song sources including biji, records of the strange 志怪, medical prescription texts, as well as historical anecdotes preserved in leishu 類書. Taken together, these excerpts form a diverse mosaic of extreme behaviors. In some cases, people demand to eat feces, in others they are forced to consume it against their will, and in others it is administered as a known antidote to poisoning. There appear to be at least three different reasons people consumed human excrement in Song China: coercion, divine retribution, and medicine. The cases presented here reveal a logic of purity in the Song that allowed eating filth to function as a method for healing (an antidote to poison), a coercive punishment, and a symptom of divine retribution.

主講人簡介：

蘇文彬 (Benjamin AK Sinvany) 是哥倫比亞大學歷史系與東亞研究系的博士候選人，主要研究中國宋代 (960 - 1279) 的社會史。廣義而言，他的研究興趣涵蓋科技、知識傳遞，以及社會對「廢棄物」與「厭惡感」的建構。蘇文彬運用非傳統史料，如筆記小說與志怪小說，並結合技術手冊，來探討歷史上的社會變遷。在早期的研究中，蘇文彬提出：在十二和十三世紀的東亞，不同國家對硝石 (potassium nitrate or saltpeter) 和硫磺等關鍵資源的獲取，是推動火藥發明的主要驅動力。目前他的博士論文暫名為《化廢為用：宋代中國 (960-1279) 的糞便與知識》 (Putting Waste to

Work: Feces and Knowledge in Song (960-1279) China)。西元 900 至 1300 年間的中國經歷了史無前例的人口增長，新技術層出不窮，且社會高度商品化。透過記錄這段時期人們對人類糞便的使用與看法，為了解自然界實用知識的累積與傳遞，提供了一個獨特的視角。該計畫拓展了科學史中傳統的比較問題（例如：東亞是否與歐洲一樣，利用人畜糞尿來製造硝石？），將人類糞便歷史化，視其為一種既有用又令人厭惡、既強大又危險的物質。蘇文彬的論文計畫反映了他熱衷於運用社會史與文化史的研究方法，來解答中國研究與知識史交匯處的諸多問題。

在進入哥倫比亞大學之前，蘇文彬取得了埃默里大學（Emory University 亞特蘭大，2015 年）的學士學位，以及約翰·霍普金斯大學與南京大學（Johns Hopkins and Nanjing University 南京，2020 年）的碩士學位。他出生於美國俄亥俄州。在學術研究之外，他經常參加「接觸即興」（Contact Improvisation）的工作坊與交流活動，也會參加滑水（Waterski+Wakeboard）比賽。

Benjamin is a History-East Asia Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University researching the social history of Song (960-1279) China. Broadly defined, his interests include technology, knowledge transmission, and social constructions of waste and disgust. Benjamin uses non-traditional sources like collections of ghost tales and other strange stories alongside technical manuals to investigate historical social change. In earlier work, Benjamin argues that access to key resources like nitrogen salts (saltpeter) and sulfur by multiple states in twelfth- and thirteenth-century East Asia was a primary driver of the invention of explosives (e.g., gunpowder). His current dissertation project, tentatively titled “Putting Waste to Work: Feces and Knowledge in Song (960-1279) China” broadens traditional comparative questions in the history of science (e.g., was saltpeter made from human and animal excrement and urine in East Asia as it was in Europe?) to historicize human feces as something both useful and repugnant, powerful and dangerous. Documenting the uses and views of human feces in China from 900-1300 AD – a moment of unprecedented population growth, and abundance of new technologies, and a highly commodified society – provides a unique perspective on the accumulation and transmission of practical knowledge about the natural world. Benjamin’s dissertation project reflects his interest in mobilizing social and cultural historical methods to answer questions at the intersection of Chinese studies and histories of knowledge.

Before arriving at Columbia, Benjamin completed a BA at Emory University (Atlanta, '15) and an MA (International Studies) at Johns Hopkins University and Nanjing University (Nanjing, '20). He was born in Columbus, Ohio. He regularly joins Contact Improvisation workshops and jams. Occasionally, he competes in Waterski and Wakeboard competitions.