

Édifier dans la vérité
La fonction de l'histoire dans la Chine classique
selon Liu Zhiji (661-721)
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Abstract

In his Generalities on History (Shitong 史通), which he wrote to show his contemporaries and posterity how history should be written, Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661–721) repeatedly emphasizes the function of history and the mission of the historian. Seen as the ultimate tool for edification, the historical text is for him the place where the historian is able to influence the conduct of his readers, by providing them with precedents, models to follow or, on the contrary, to avoid. The denunciation of evil and the promotion of good can only be conceived for Liu only if the historical record is faithful to the truth of the facts, a fundamental element to which Liu devotes many pages. The aim of this article is to identify the various elements in Liu Zhiji's work that answer the fundamental question "What's the point of history?"

Keywords: China; historiography; Liu Zhiji; truth in history.