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Nota di contenuto	Part One. Culture, Politics, and Gender in the Northern Song. 1. Courtesans and the Northern Song elite ; 2. The courtesan as concubine ; 3. Prose, politics, and prodigies -- Part Two. Markets, Mayhem, and Morality in the Southern Song. 4. Performance anxiety ; 5. Entertainers to ancestors ; 6. Loss, loyalty, and local leverage -- Part Three. Conquerors and Culture in the Yuan. 7. Exemplary entertainers ; 8. Performers, paramours, and parents ; 9. Entertaining exemplars.
Sommario/riassunto	This book traces changing gender relations in China from the tenth to fourteenth centuries by examining three critical categories of women: courtesans, concubines, and faithful wives. It shows how the intersection and mutual influence of these groups -- and of male discourses about them -- transformed ideas about family relations and the proper roles of men and women. Courtesan culture profoundly affected Song social and family life, as entertainment skills became a defining feature of a new model of concubinage and entertainer-concubines increasingly became mothers of literati sons. Neo-Confucianism, the new moral learning of the Song, was in turn

significantly shaped by this entertainment culture and the new markets in women it created. Responding to a broad social consensus, Neo-Confucians called for enhanced ritual recognition of concubine mothers and expressed increased concern about wifely jealousy. The book also details the sometimes surprising origins of the Late Imperial cult of fidelity, showing that from its inception the drive to celebrate female loyalty stemmed from a complex amalgam of political, social, and moral agendas. By taking women -- and men's relationships with them -- seriously, Beverly Bossler demonstrates the centrality of gender relations in the social, political, and intellectual life of the Song and Yuan dynasties.
