READINGS IN HAN CHINESE THOUGHT

Edited and Translated by MARK CSIKSZENTMIHALYI

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FOREWORD

The way you approach another culture is invariably influenced by the vehicle you use. A long train ride will bring an appreciation of distances and the "wrong side of the tracks" and will introduce both city and countryside. By contrast, a plane trip will give a panoramic but distanced overview, a sense of the totality, and land you near a large urban area. In this effort to build a different kind of vehicle to introduce students to Chinese Thought, I have assembled a set of topically arranged translations of primary documents that shed light on some of the core philosophical and religious issues of the Han period (206 B.C.E.–221 C.E.).

Whereas there are numerous excellent sourcebooks available in English that have translated documents over the millennia of Chinese history, *Readings in Han Chinese Thought* narrows the focus to four centuries that saw the formation of many of the structures of the Chinese empire. By arranging the readings chronologically within each topic, I have tried to show the spirited debates and different perspectives that thrived even during this relatively narrow time frame.

This project grew out of my experience teaching about early China and my frustrations trying to assemble English-language primary-source materials for students with little or no background in Chinese studies. The vehicles that are currently available are in many cases excellent works of scholarship but are often in genres not particularly suited to the task of introduction.

The first barrier I encountered was the circumstance that much of the literature available in translation is in the form of monographs focused on particular Han thinkers or titles. Many entire or partial Han works have now been translated into English, including chapters of the *Masters of Huainan* (Huainanzi 淮南子), translated by Roger Ames and D. C. Lau, John Major, Benjamin Wallacker, and Charles LeBlanc, and two separate partial translations of the *Records of the Historian* (Shiji 史記), by Burton Watson and William H. Nienhauser Jr. In addition, Donald Harper's *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, a translation of the second-century B.C.E. *materia medica* excavated at the Mawangdui 馬王堆 archaeological site, and David

Knechtges' Wenxuan: *A Translation and Annotations*, an English edition of Han literary works found in the sixth-century C.E. *Literary Selections* (Wenxuan 文選), are excellent scholarly treatments of excavated medical texts and transmitted belles lettres from the Han, respectively. These monographs, as well as others in the Further Readings at the end of this book, are of tremendous value, though the above list only begins to hint at the depth of recent scholarship on the period. Despite its value, the focus on single authors or titles creates some problems in the classroom. One is that each monograph uses different conventions and equivalences, making it difficult to know, for example, if what one work translates as "god" or "ghost" is the same as what another translates as "spirit" or "demon." This problem is exacerbated by the romanization problem, so that even if an author specifies that the Chinese term to which he or she is referring is *ching-ch'i*, it may only occur to the most attentive student that this would be the same thing that another author labels *jingqi* (each spelling relies on one of the two most widely used systems for writing the sound of the Mandarin Chinese pronunciation of 精氣 [essential pneuma] in the English alphabet). A final issue is style of translation, which might sound like a minor point until one actually begins to sample the varieties of approaches to ancient Chinese texts—who knew that "Sir Motley of Southurb" was really "Tzu-ch'i of south wall" and "Tzû-ch'i of Nan-kuo"?[1]

The second barrier I encountered is that the Han was a period of intense integration, one in which many writers attempted to synthesize previously separate points of view using an encyclopedic format. This phenomenon is fascinating for me, but students often commented that they had to wade through pages and pages of extraneous material to get to the section that had to do with the topic at hand. The issue was again one of mismatched genres.

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1. These are all renditions of the personal name that begins Chapter 2 of the classic *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (also known as *Chuang Tzu*), Nanguo Ziqi 南郭子綦, in the translations of Victor Mair, Burton Watson, and A. C. Graham, respectively. Nanguo Ziqi seemed "bereft of soul," "as though he'd lost his companion," and "as though he had lost the counterpart to himself" (*sang qi yu* 喪其耦), in the respective translations.

The goal of *Readings in Han Chinese Thought* is to introduce the student with little or no background in Chinese studies to the kinds of religious and philosophical conversations that he or she might have encountered in the classrooms or hallways of Han dynasty China. Each chapter is devoted to a different topic and contains a general introduction to that topic, followed by three or four translations of Han texts, with short prefaces, arranged chronologically. Presenting a cross-section of readings on each topic is meant to allow the reader to discover both the common assumptions and the contentious issues that surround it in a way that would be impossible to do by simply reading the writing of a single author. In addition, adopting relatively uniform terminology and style conventions for translation and employing a single romanization system also addresses some of the problems that arise in the classroom.

This work is divided into three sections. The first section, "Ethics and Statecraft" (Chapters 1–3), contains ten selections on the topics of "Self-Cultivation and Education," "Law and Punishment," and "Governing by Nonaction." These writings explore the intersection of ethics, government, and law, drawing on earlier currents that are often labeled "Confucian," "Daoist," and "Legalist." The next section, "Knowledge" (Chapters 4–6), is divided into three parts: "The Way," "Kongzi," and "Laozi." It treats epistemology, canons and hermeneutics, historiography, and the developing traditions around Kongzi (the figure who would later become known to many as "Confucius"), Laozi, and, in a cameo appearance, Buddha. The final section, "The Natural World" (Chapters 7–10), contains thirteen translations addressing "Demons and Spirits," "Death and Transcendence," "Protective Talismans," and "Medicine and Divination." It looks at conceptions of life and death and their expressions in burial practices, the worlds of the natural and supernatural, causation and healing, and the anthropology of belief. As an extension of courses dealing with earlier stages of Chinese philosophy, the first six chapters would be useful for tracing the development of Warring States debates into the early imperial period. For courses that focus on the evolution of Chinese religions, Chapters 4 through 10 address many of the concerns that continue into the Six Dynasties, Tang, and Song periods. More specifically, Chapters 3, 4, and 6 through 10 touch on the prehistory of institutionalized

Daoism, whereas Chapters 1 through 5, 7, and 10 deal with issues that bear on the history of Kongzi and Confucianism.

There are, of course, drawbacks to this arrangement. Short excerpts from multiple sources make it more difficult to appreciate the viewpoints of particular individuals or the shadings of difference between particular works. In addition, relying on primary sources alone makes it impossible for this book to be as comprehensive as an expository prose introduction to Han Thought might be. Naturally, no single collection can encompass the diversity and complexity of this richly documented period of innovation and consolidation. And every instructor who approaches the period would find a different set of themes and texts important or interesting.

What principles governed my selection of topics and sources? Some important topics, like Han administrative theory, gender, the *Classic of Changes*, and disciplines such as mathematics or pharmacology, are not well represented, because of my lack of competence in those areas coupled with the presence of (and therefore my reliance on) some excellent resources that already exist. For these and other topics that come up in the course of this book, readers are invited to turn to the "Further Readings" section and follow up by reading the specialized treatments listed there by chapter. At the same time, my own principle of selection was not to create a comprehensive and representative sampler of Han literature, but to choose issues that would be useful and appealing because of their historical or comparative resonances, and to allow Han writers to speak about them from a number of different perspectives.

Of course, the quality of such a presentation is determined by the selection and translation of the primary sources, and in these areas *Readings in Han Chinese Thought* reflects subjective choices. Although I have included several recently excavated texts, for the most part the essays reflect the "literati" tradition that disproportionately influenced the historical reception of the Han. On one hand, this reproduces the biases of traditional history; on the other, it better describes the version of Han China germane to understanding its influence on later periods. Regarding the translations, most of the important terms are rendered in English, with the necessary discussion of their range of meanings appearing in a Glossary of Key Concepts at the end of the book. I have tried to be consistent in

translation choices, but, of course, a fixed mapping of Chinese characters onto English words makes for stilted prose. Some of these choices are not those of standard sinological translations, in part because this book is designed to be accessible to the more general reader.

Although this book has been prepared for the nonspecialist, many of the texts here are translated either for the first time or for the first time in a long while. For this reason, I have included a set of terse "Translation Sources" for specialists, and have tried to include footnotes making connections to issues of interest to more advanced students.

I hope that, to the extent that this book holds together as a cross-section of a vital and important stage in Chinese Thought, it will serve as a general introduction in the same way that two other sourcebooks once did for me. The first was my mother's worn copy of Henry Steele Commager's eighth edition of *Documents of American History*, published in 1968, which well illustrates how the voices of primary-source materials can convey things that those of summaries cannot. The second was *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, by Wing-tsit Chan (Chen Rongjie 陳榮捷), which was first published in 1969 and is a model for balancing translation with authorial analysis. Although *Readings in Han Chinese Thought* covers only the formative centuries of the early empire, I hope that this period will serve as a microcosm that draws more people into the rich and compelling world of Chinese Thought that it represents.

Turning from books to people, there are a host of individuals who deserve thanks for their help in this project. The graduate students in my "Readings in Chinese Philosophical Thought" courses and in the UW-Madison Chinese Thought Reading Group have been of tremendous help to me in revising these translations. These include my students Scot Brackenridge, He Ping, David Herrmann, Tan Mei-ah, Wang Jing, Wang Yun-ling, and Chang Ching-hui. In particular, Chen Ji, Guo Jue, Lee Yongyun, and Zhang Zhenjun have given me useful comments on particular pieces, not hesitating to offer different interpretations. My colleagues at Davidson College, where this book began as a spiral-bound course packet of copied articles and typescript translations, and my colleagues at the

University of Wisconsin continue to be a source of encouragement. In addition, a number of kind colleagues have given me feedback on particular chapters. P. J. Ivanhoe (Chapter 1), Robin D. S. Yates (Chapter 2), Ted Slingerland (Chapter 3), David Schaberg (Chapter 5), Rob Campany (Chapter 6), Michael Nylan (Chapter 7), Miranda Brown (Chapter 8), Stephen Bokenkamp (Chapter 9), and Paul Goldin (Chapter 10) have all made helpful comments that have greatly improved the book. The comments of anonymous readers aided in the tasks of reconceptualizing and revising. Finally, there is no question that this project would not have come to fruition without the patience and encouragement of two sources. The first is Hackett Publishing, in the person of Deborah Wilkes. To Ms. Wilkes, Meera Dash, and the others who maintained their confidence in the project through the various storms of tenure, family illness, and new children, I express my gratitude and appreciation for their hard work. Both Kate Lawn and Isabella Selega Csikszentmihalyi have read the manuscript and given me excellent editorial suggestions. On the other side of that coin are my family members, who have put up with my extended sojourns in the library and at the computer and supported my career. Annie, Emily, Henry, Kinga, Aschalew, and Zofia will ascend with me if I ever manage to recreate Li Shaojun's infernal procedures for summoning a dragon.

INTRODUCTION

Readings in Han Chinese Thought is a collection of primary-source materials from the formative four-century period known as the Han 漢 dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.). This period was the pivot for the transition from the culturally and politically diverse kingdoms of the Warring States period (Zhan'guo 戰國, 403–221 B.C.E.) to a relatively homogeneous empire that, over the intervening centuries, has become the actual or imagined ideal of a unified China.

Less than two decades prior to the start of the Han, the state of Qin's 秦 221 B.C.E. conquest of its rivals marked the first successful attempt to unite the previously distinct Warring States courts. Aided by the real-life counterparts of the terra-cotta warriors discovered at his underground tomb complex near modern Xi'an, the Qin ruler declared himself the First August Emperor (*Shihuangdi* 始皇帝) of the Qin. Emerging from the contentious political fragmentation of the aptly named Warring States, the Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.E.) briefly imposed highly centralized control and a measure of cultural standardization over its previously autonomous adversaries.

The Qin, however, barely outlasted the death of its First August Emperor in 210 B.C.E. Capitalizing on widespread dissatisfaction with Qin hegemony, Liu Bang 劉邦 (248–195 B.C.E.) was able to wrest unified authority from the Qin and defeat competing rebel groups, and he became known as the founding Emperor Gao (*Gaodi* 高帝, literally, "High Emperor," r. 206–195 B.C.E.) of the Han dynasty. Emperor Gao and his successors were able to realize the Qin's intention to integrate the diverse regions of China. It is worth noting, however, that historians often divide the Han dynasty into two distinct segments. Because emperors named Liu ruled a unified empire from Chang'an (modern Xi'an) in the west from 206 B.C.E. to 9 C.E. and, following a brief usurpation, again from Luoyang in the east from 23 to 220 C.E., the Han dynasty is sometimes subdivided into "Western" (or "Former") and "Eastern" (or "Later" or "Latter") Han periods. This interruption notwithstanding, it was not until the Tang 唐 dynasty (618–906) that China again saw a period of comparable political continuity.

The sustained and unified empire of the Han established the pattern for everything from political institutions to historical writing throughout later Chinese dynastic history. From the perspective of religion and philosophy, the Han intellectual synthesis was no less significant. The Han was the first period in which the "three teachings" (*sanjiao* 三教) of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism existed together in China. The establishment of a "Confucian orthodoxy" by the Emperor Wu (*Wu* 武, "Martial," r. 140–87 B.C.E.) beginning in 136 B.C.E. led to the institutionalization of an examination system that made a knowledge of classics related to Kongzi a requirement for an official career. The introduction of Buddhism coincided with the rise of autonomous religious communities like that of the Celestial Masters (*Tianshi* 天師), who formed the earliest institutionalized Daoist movement, in the second century C.E. In addition, theories of natural cycles (based on the dualism of *yin* 陰 and *yang* 陽 and the transformation cycle of the "five phases" [*wuxing* 五行]), and other classifications of phenomena, became the basis for the growth of a plethora of technical disciplines in areas from divination to astronomy to medicine. The Han has long been seen as the period during which the cornerstones of many of the edifices of dynastic China were laid.

Yet the view of the Han as the blueprint for subsequent dynasties is also responsible for later misreadings of that period. In tracing phenomena back to their first occurrences at that time, there is a natural tendency to project later understandings and connotations back onto the formative period. Indeed, distinctions like those mentioned above between the "three teachings," or between astronomy and history, were never drawn as clearly in the Han as they were in subsequent periods of Chinese history. Although there is no question that the period was foundational in areas such as history, government, science, and religion, these pursuits were so intertwined that the imposition of later categories risks anachronism. One example of this overlap is how the *Records of the Historian* (Shiji 史記), universally acknowledged as the prototype for Chinese historical writing, was compiled by an astronomer named Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145–c. 86 B.C.E.), whose holistic understanding of what unified the realm of the Cosmos and the realm of human beings, the Way (*Dao* 道), was shared by the Celestial Masters in the Sichuan area now identified

as the forerunners of organized Daoism. Another example is how the *Masters of Huainan* (Huainanzi 淮南子, c. 140 B.C.E.) draws heavily on works today identified as "Daoist" but also contains many sections that might just as easily be labeled "Confucian" or "Legalist." Post-unification China is most notable for the cross-fertilization of older worldviews and traditions that were located in particular regions and social groups but were mixed into the soup of the newly integrated empire. As a result, a dominant intellectual trope was the development of synthetic structures that allowed the integration of these different influences. Although the image of the Han dynasty as the era of cornerstones is inviting, the alternative image of a single cornerstone for a building that was later divided into several separate dwellings would perhaps be more accurate.

This Introduction will address two important questions about the selections from Han texts that follow: Are there particular "schools" of Han Thought, and are Han authors better described as philosophers or as religious writers? The third section of this Introduction provides a brief overview of Han history and locates the selections in a chronological summary of the period's social, institutional, religious, and philosophical developments. Finally, a fourth section locates the genres of writing represented here by considering both the conditions of production and the social contexts in which these selections were read.

It would be impossible to introduce here all of the cultural and historical background that a student needs to make the best use of the selections in *Readings in Han Chinese Thought*. However, a number of accessible introductions to the society, economics, and politics of the Han are listed in the Further Readings section for readers wanting to learn more.

Confucianist, Daoist, or Legalist?

Writers often approach early China with categories already in hand to neatly label and classify each text or thinker that they encounter. Although the terms "Confucianism" (*Rujia* 儒家), "Daoism" (*Daojia* 道家), and "Legalism" (*Fajia* 法家) were invented in the Han, they are, oddly enough, not very useful for describing Han writers. The

terms are meaningful and will be used in restricted senses in this book, but they are often misused to describe different writers as if they summed up the entire religious or philosophical position of each writer. Even a casual reader will soon realize that most of the writings included here draw on multiple approaches and, with several notable exceptions, are generally more interested in synthesizing diverse viewpoints than in championing a single orthodox interpretation.

The creation of these categories in the early Han was actually an exercise in dividing up the world of early Chinese Thought along a single dimension, that of government administration. When Sima Qian's father, Sima Tan 司馬談 (d. 110 B.C.E.), first wrote his discussion of the "six experts" or "six schools" (*liujia* 六家) in the *Records of the Historian*, he described groups of specialists who applied their technical knowledge to governing, and his intent was to advocate for the sixth of them, because it was the one that was able to absorb the beneficial methods of the other five. The six schools were *Yin* and *Yang*, Confucian, Mohist (*Mo* 墨), Names (*Ming* 名), Legalist, and Way and Virtue (*Daode* 道德).[1] Sima Tan might well have arrived at a different set of categories had he asked a different question, such as how should criminal penalties be decided, what is the importance of history, or what is the nature of life and death? Add to this that the typology was created on the basis of the world of Chinese Thought through the Warring States period and, at most, through the first century of the empire, and its applicability to Han writers is cast further into doubt.

Still, the category "Confucian" did have meaning for Sima Tan in the context of governing and that looked back at the concern with ethical action by rulers and state officials in the writings associated

1. *Shiji* 130.3288. For a fuller discussion, see Kidder Smith, "Sima Tan and the Invention of Daoism, Legalism, et cetera," *Journal of Asian Studies* 62.1 (2003): 129–56; and Mark Csikszentmihalyi and Michael Nylan, "Constructing Lineages and Inventing Traditions through Exemplary Figures in Early China," *T'oung Pao* 83 (2003): 59–99. A translation of Sima Tan's essay, by Harold Roth and Sarah Queen, is included in William T. DeBary, ed., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 278–82.

with the historical figure Kongzi 孔子 (traditionally dated to 551–479 B.C.E.). Certain Han writers, such as Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 B.C.E.–18 C.E.), directly identified themselves with the ethical tradition of Kongzi as portrayed in the *Analects* (Lunyu 論語; see selections 1.3 and 4.3). The utility of this type of Confucianism was recognized by Emperor Wu when he took measures in the second century B.C.E. to make the classics associated with Kongzi the basis for the government training system, reforms that had tremendous consequences throughout Chinese imperial history. However, at least two other traditions that traced themselves to Kongzi are well represented in the Han. One was a school of interpretation of the historical chronicle *Spring and Autumn Annals* (Chunqiu 春秋) that read the text as a primer for understanding Kongzi's perfect theory of government (see Chapter 5). Another saw Kongzi as an interpreter of omens, omen interpetation holding the key to understanding the proper way to live and govern (see 6.3 and 7.2). There were also hybrid systems such as those of Lu Jia 陸賈 (fl. 210–157 B.C.E.), who accepted the importance of the virtues promoted by Kongzi for governing but justified them using the theory of natural cycles of *yin* and *yang* (see 4.1), and Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179–104 B.C.E.; see 1.1), whose application of natural cycles to society and politics was even more complex. In the Han, the authority of Kongzi was no longer associated with a single philosophy or set of techniques, and several different kinds of Confucianism thrived. For this reason, the term *Ru* 儒 will be translated as "Classicist" when it connotes an expert in the exegesis and methods of the classics associated with Kongzi.

"Daoism" is a category in Sima Tan's typology that refers to techniques for governing associated with the Warring States *Laozi* 老子, and to those who used the text's concept of an overarching "Way" to synthesize other approaches. It is also a word that today is used to talk about an institutionalized religion that developed during the second and third centuries C.E. around the Celestial Masters. There are connections between such early texts and later Daoist movements, but the two traditions are not the same.[2] To understand these

2. There is a long history of sometimes acrimonious debate about the proper use of the term "Daoism." Several key works on the issue are listed in the Further Readings.

connections, one has to look at how the strategies and techniques associated with *Laozi* were among those that became the basis for the latter group's practices of healing and transcendence. In particular, terms from the *Laozi* such as "knowing sufficiency" (*zhizu* 知足; see the introduction to Chapter 6), "the Way" (see Chapter 4), and "preserving the one" (*shouyi* 守一; see 6.2 and 6.3) came to be associated with specialists who claimed personal longevity and the ability to help others achieve spiritlike transcendence (see Chapter 8). This association of the text with the specialists happened gradually, over the four centuries of the Han. One work in particular, the *Masters of Huainan*, compiled at the court of Liu An 劉安 (197–122 B.C.E.), provides a snapshot of an early stage in this process (see 4.2). Because the transition in the meanings of these key terms is so important, chapter introductions will avoid the term "Daoism" in favor of precise references to the *Laozi*, to the holistic use of the term "Way" to talk about the pattern of the Cosmos, or to later institutional Daoism.

"Legalism" as used by Sima Tan refers to a theory of administration based on the application of a uniform legal code that was developed in several Warring States texts. The category of Legalism is more precise than the others, and, in the context of discussions of government and law, Han sources came to treat Legalism as an alternative to the methods of the Classicists. However, despite the rhetorical opposition of these camps, it became commonplace to reconcile these theories with the bureaucratic realities of the imperial state, and this opposition in turn gave rise to strategies for reconciling Classical and Legalist theories of government (see Chapter 2). This is one reason that Michael Loewe, the eminent historian of the Han, coined the categories of "Reformist" and "Modernist" to refer to the officials who adapted these classically-justified and Legalist theories to the Han system, respectively.[3] Han writers also developed a political discourse that combined Legalist techniques with the notion of the "Way" as the pattern of

3. Loewe describes these categories in what is still the best introduction to this period: Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, eds., *The Cambridge History of China: The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C.–A.D. 220* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 104–5.

the Cosmos. This allowed them to redeploy the notion of "non-action" (*wuwei* 無為) in the bureaucratic setting of the Han (see Chapter 3).

Whereas the judicious use of these widely accepted categories allows us to see the relationships between Han Thought and what came before and after it, the categories also hold the potential to obscure some of the important developments of the period. One development, which is seen clearly in the writings of Dong Zhongshu, for instance, is the rise of what A. C. Graham has called "correlative cosmology." Correlative thinking not only was included in the discussion of government but also played an important role in omen interpretation (see Chapter 10).[4] Other important developments include the dispensational scheme in writing about history (e.g., 3.2 and 5.2), and the epistemological tool of the overarching Way (see Chapter 4), both strategies for reconciling the divergent approaches inherited from the Warring States period. For this reason, when the Han is sometimes derided as an uninteresting period philosophically, it is usually by people mourning the lack of pure examples of "Confucianism," "Daoism," and "Legalism" rather than looking at the interesting ways these categories were being combined and adapted to the realities of the time.

Philosophy and Religion

Scholars in Europe and Asia have portrayed the impact of Qin and Han political unification on philosophy and religion as a negative one. Karl Jaspers identified a global "Axial Age" that stretched from 800 to 200 B.C.E., and in *The Origin and Goal of History* he wrote: "The most extraordinary events are concentrated in this period. [When] Confucius and Lao-tse were living in China, all the schools

4. See A. C. Graham, *Yin-Yang and the Nature of Correlative Thinking* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Institute of East Asian Philosophies, 1986); Nathan Sivin, "State, Cosmos, and Body in the Last Three Centuries B.C.," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 55.1 (1995): 5–37; and Wang Aihe, *Cosmology and Political Culture in Early China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

of Chinese philosophy came into being, including those of Mo-ti, Chuang-tse, Lieh-tsu and a host of others."[5] More recently, Heiner Roetz, in *Confucian Ethics of the Axial Age*, wrote that the unified empire ended the free exchange of opinion that characterized the Warring States period, and replaced it with a "quasi-official state ideology with a monopoly on opinion."[6] The European criticisms are based on the replacement of diversity and competition with the controls of state monopoly. A related but somewhat different negative characterization came from Chinese writers in the twentieth century whose criticism of Han Thought was based on a privileging of philosophy over religion. The great intellectual historian Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962) attributed the death of Chinese philosophy in the Han to the rejection of Confucianism in favor of the superstitions of the "masters of methods" (*fangshi* 方士).[7] The contemporary scholar Leng Dexi 冷德熙 has observed that "until now, both in China and abroad (including both Japanese and Western Sinology), Han dynasty thought and scholarship has been seen as a corruption of the thought of the pre-Qin Masters."[8] Leng's comment captures Hu's view of Confucianism as a properly rationalist philosophy that became subject to the corruption of Han "superstitions."

There are reasonable bases for these critiques, even if they do not recognize that there were many diverse viewpoints represented in the Han. In the case of Jaspers and his modern-day defenders such

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5. Drawing parallels between these Chinese thinkers and other foundational figures such as Buddha, Zarathustra, Isaiah, Homer, and Plato, Jaspers argues that these thinkers "ran the whole gamut of philosophical possibilities." See Chapter 1 of Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1953), 2.

6. Heiner Roetz, *Confucian Ethics of the Axial Age* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 276. Roetz cites a number of factors, including the abolition of birth privileges and the establishment of the examination system, as means of controlling intellectuals.

7. *Zhongguo zhexue shi dagang* 中國哲學史大綱 (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1926), 398.

8. "Yueshi yu 'Ru' zhi wenhua qiyuan" 樂師與儒之文化起源, *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大學學報 (1995.1): 102.

as Roetz, their model of synchronous philosophical fluorescences requires the poverty of Han discourse to exist in inverse relation to the richness of Warring States discourse. There is no question that, considered in isolation, the early imperial period in China saw both state coercion and cultural homogenization. Yet this observation must be tempered by two important considerations. First, much of what we know today about the "axial age" is seen through Han materials. Therefore, the perceived contrast between the two periods may to some extent derive from the way that preimperial intellectual history was used as a template for imperial writers to argue issues they could not otherwise address; some of the lively debates of the axial age were simply proxies for actual debates conducted later. Second, to the degree that unification did influence Han Thought, many scholars were conscious of the blending of differing cultures and intellectual traditions, and they developed new discussions about epistemology and historical change precisely to discuss and debate the nature of this synthesis. Hu's criticism of the presence of superstition is hard to refute, but, as this volume makes clear, there were numerous writers in the Han, such as Wang Chong 王充 (27–100 C.E.; see 5.3, 7.3, and 8.2) and the author of the "Far-Reaching Discussions" (Fanlun 氾論) chapter of the *Masters of Huainan* (see 7.1), who provided nuanced critiques of popular beliefs, whereas others sought to preserve and extend the legacy of Kongzi. It is even arguable that the version of Kongzi sanitized of superstition that Hu admired was invented during the revival of Zhou institutions in the first century B.C.E.

Whether or not this was the case, the category of "superstition" itself reflects a particular twentieth-century view of religion—as potentially polluting a purer philosophy—that has been widely called into question. In part, this questioning is occurring because definitions of religion are generally no longer based on the presence of supernatural beings but have moved on to experiential factors (as with Emile Durkheim), or more general notions of the sacred (as with Mircea Eliade). The distinction between religion and philosophy is not only one that developed long after the Han dynasty, but it is one that developed in a completely different cultural milieu. It might be possible to read materialistic explanations such as Wang Chong's alternative explanation of demons as a result of external

projections of pneuma (*qi* 氣; see 7.3) as being somehow more "rational" than the popular beliefs in demons that it criticizes (see Chapter 9). Yet, as Paul Unschuld has pointed out, "neither the belief in demons or ancestors nor the acceptance of the validity of the yin-yang and five-agents doctrines was based on experimentation."[9] On which side of the divide between religion and philosophy should each of these explanations be placed? Similarly, when Yang Xiong talks about Kongzi's miraculous transformations of his disciples, he is not talking about something that he considers ordinary or profane. In sum, this is not to say that the words "religion" and "philosophy" cannot be applied to these texts, but rather that it would be a mistake to look for some writers who are "religious" and others who are "philosophers," since they all shared elements of both.

Whereas it is false to see the Qin unification as a border between ideological diversity and uniformity, or between periods of philosophy and religion, there is no question that the new empire catalyzed real changes in the development of Chinese Thought. The nature of these changes, however, was more complex than the simple and slighting verdicts above admit. A side effect of this type of judgment on the study of Chinese Thought has been a neglect of Han materials at the expense of those from the Warring States period.

A Brief Historical Overview

Dividing history into discrete periods often masks discontinuities, and the carving of Chinese history into "dynasties" is no exception. There are many ways that one might divide the Han, beginning with the break between Western (to 9 C.E.) and Eastern (after 23 C.E.) Han periods mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction. Whereas the Eastern Han modeled itself administratively on the Western Han, its founder, Emperor Guangwu 光武 (r. 25–57 C.E.), was at most distantly related to the ruling house of the Western Han.

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9. Paul U. Unschuld, Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen: *Nature, Knowledge, Imagery in an Ancient Chinese Medical Text* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 324.

The state that he inherited was both politically fragmented and economically devastated, and as a result the centralization and control of the Luoyang government was on the whole much less effective than its predecessor in Chang'an.

Beyond this basic division, historians often differentiate three stages in the development of the Western Han: founding, consolidation, and decline. It took several decades for the Liu clan to secure political control, through the reigns of Emperor Gao, his son Emperor Hui 惠, and then Emperor Hui's mother, Empress Dowager Lü 呂 (206–179 B.C.E.). When the Qin dynasty unraveled after the death of its founding emperor, Liu Bang emerged as the founder of a new Han state in the west, and he ended up defeating another rebel who led a confederacy of regional leaders in the south and east that styled itself after the former state of Chu. In the Western Han's first decades, the Liu clan tried to reinstate the centralized administrative policies of the Qin, establishing principalities in the east and commanderies in the west, which it distributed to its powerful vassals. During the reigns of another son of Emperor Gao called Emperor Wen 文 and his son Emperor Jing 景 (180–141 B.C.E.), the Liu clan took greater control over the high offices of the empire and gradually placed their own members in charge of each principality.

The Han inherited the Qin system of establishing academic positions for experts in important classical texts. It also continued the long-standing system of presenting sacrifice to the five powers (*wudi* 五帝) at Yong 雍, west of the capital. Thus the most important trope in the writings of the founding period is often the unstated tension between the Qin model and the Han's potential reforms of it. This tension is well represented by the synthetic memorials to the throne by Lu Jia 陸賈 (d. 178 B.C.E.; see 3.1 and 4.1), Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–168 B.C.E.; see 1.2 and 2.2), and Chao Cuo 晁錯 (d. 154 B.C.E.; see 3.2). The recently excavated Qin case incorporated into a book of Han legal precedents written around 186 B.C.E. is an example of an administrative continuity between Qin and Han (see 2.1).

The reign of Emperor Wu (141–87 B.C.E.) saw unprecedented exploration, expansion, and eventually overexpansion, to the west, south, and northeast. Whereas Loewe calls this period the high point of Modernist policies, at the same time many of the writings look back to adapt ideas from the pre-Han period. It was a period of administrative reforms, including the establishment of an examina-

tion system whose curriculum included the five Confucian classics: the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Classic of Odes* (Shijing 詩經), the *Classic of Documents* (Shujing 書經, also known as the *Writings of the Predecessors* or Shangshu 書), the *Classic of Changes* (Yijing 易經), and the *Records of Ritual* (Liji 禮記).

For his part, Emperor Wu patronized specialists from the areas of Qi and Yan who claimed to be centuries old and promised to teach him methods for transforming himself into an immortal (see Chapter 8). He also expanded the imperial pantheon to include sacrifices to the Empress of Earth (*Houtu* 后土) and the Great Unity (*Taiyi* 太一) in the 110s B.C.E. Changing ideas about sources of divine authority during this period are well illustrated in sections from the collections the *Masters of Huainan* (see 3.3, 4.2, and 7.1) and the *Records of the Historian* (see 5.2, 6.1, and 10.2). The period's intense systematizing can be seen in the syncretistic tendencies in the writings of Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (see 1.2 and 10.2) and Gongyang Gao 公羊高 (fl. 150 B.C.E.; see 5.1), two writers who were experts in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.

The reigns of Emperors Zhao 昭 (87–74 B.C.E.), Xuan 宣 (74–49 B.C.E.), Yuan 元 (49–33 B.C.E.), Cheng 成 (33–7 B.C.E.), Ai 哀 (7–1 B.C.E.), and Ping 平 (1 B.C.E.–5 C.E.) constitute the period of decline of the Western Han. The brevity of their reigns is in part a product of court intrigues, and these emperors were often puppets of powerful families in Chang'an. These families were able to secure tax exemptions for their estates, and so the tax burden on those without political influence increased even as the tax collections by the government declined. Problems with state revenues prompted discussion of the nationalization of important industries such as salt production and mining, which was the occasion for the imperially sponsored debate preserved in the *Discourses on Salt and Iron* (Yantielun 鹽鐵論), in 81 B.C.E. (see 2.3).

This period of decline saw a major change in the imperial cult in 31 B.C.E. when Emperor Cheng established a sacrifice to Heaven (*Tian* 天) that displaced the imperial sacrifice to the five powers.[10]

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10. See Michael Loewe, "K'uang Heng and Reform of Religious Practices—31 B.C.," in *Crisis and Conflict in Han China, 104 B.C. to A.D. 9* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974), 154–92.

The first century B.C.E. also witnessed an explosion of interest in portents and the spirits. According to the treatise on sacrifices in Ban Gu's 班固 (32–92 C.E.) *History of the Han* (Hanshu 漢書), there were thirty-seven thousand shrines to spirits constructed in a year at the beginning of the brief reign of Emperor Ai.[11] Two years later, Emperor Ai changed the name of his reign after being presented with the *Classic of the Great Peace That Preserves the Primordial* (Baoyuan taipingjing 包元太平經), a spirit text that had been revealed to a master of methods named Gan Zhongke 甘忠可 by a transcendent named Master Red Essence (*Chijingzi* 赤精子).[12] At court, the success of Reformists led to a new emphasis on Kongzi and the *Analects*. Two very different approaches to Kongzi during this time are Yang Xiong's view of him as a teacher (see 1.3) and Liu Xiang's 劉向 (77–6 B.C.E.) view of him as an early expert in interpreting omens (see 7.2).

Calling the Western Han and the Eastern Han "the Han dynasty" covers up the missing decades between those two periods. That era was actually not known as the Han at all, but as the New (*Xin* 新) dynasty, which was ruled by a former Western Han official named Wang Mang 王莽 (46 B.C.E.–23 C.E.). Wang's family had been the power behind the throne since the widow of Emperor Yuan had appointed members of her family to key government posts and enthroned her son as Emperor Cheng in 32 B.C.E. Ruling first through regency and then outright, Wang attempted to fix the taxation problem by nationalizing several areas of the economy, but the New dynasty's eventual failure was sealed by a famine caused by a switch in the course of the Yellow River in 11 C.E.

During the New dynasty, Wang continued many of the practices of the late–Western Han emperors, including patronizing masters of methods in the hope of attaining immortality. Through his last year, he sacrificed over three thousand animals from the categories of the Three Animals (cows, sheep, and pigs) and the "birds and beasts," at over seventeen hundred locations, for the benefit of Heaven

11. *Hanshu* 25b.1264.

12. *Hanshu* 11.340.

(*Tian* 天), Earth (*Di* 地), the Six Ancestors (*Liuzong* 六宗), and even the minor demons and spirits.[13]

The Eastern Han grew out of a bitterly contested power struggle among regional factions, many of which sought to install a Liu as emperor in order for the reintroduced dynasty to be able to claim authority as a continuation of the Western Han. After an epidemic in 23 C.E., a confederation of southern armies took control of Chang'an and installed Liu Xuan 劉玄 as the "Beginning of Reform" (*Gengshi* 更始) emperor. However, he was replaced in 25 C.E. by Liu Penzi 劉盆子, the "Building the Age" (*Jianshi* 建世) emperor championed by a shamanistic religious rebellion from the east whose members were called the "Red Eyebrows" (*Chimei* 赤眉). Almost a year later, Liu Xuan's former vassal Liu Xiu 劉秀 defeated the rebels and reunited China. Now known as Emperor Guangwu, he attempted to restructure the Eastern Han along the lines of Liu Xuan and repair the damaged infrastructure of the state. However, the system was prey to some of the same structural problems responsible for the decline of the Western Han, such as the influence of the powerful Luoyang families. Three clans competed to have their daughters marry into the Liu clan and get their members appointed to high office, a situation that continued through the reigns of Emperors Ming 明, Zhang 章, and He 和 (58–105 C.E.).

During the Eastern Han, Ban Gu 班固 and members of his family composed the *History of the Han* (see 8.1), the successor to the *Records of the Historian*. This is also when Wang Chong wrote his collection of critical essays, the *Balanced Discussions* (Lunheng 論衡), which is another good source for descriptions of the popular practices of the period. In the capital, Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192 C.E.), a poet, musician, and official, erected stone slabs inscribed with an official version of the Five Classics in 183 C.E. Although officials such as Cui Shi 崔寔 (d.c. 168 C.E.) continued writing about government using traditional tropes (see 2.4), many others such as Xiang Kai 襄楷 (fl. 166 C.E.; see 6.3) were much more interested in omen interpretations of the kind that had first become popular in the declining years of the Western Han and in the Wang Mang period

13. *Hanshu* 25b.1270.

(see Chapter 10). Related to omen interpretation were the classical hermeneutics of exegete He Xiu 何休 (129–182 C.E.), who systematized Western Han forms of *Spring and Autumn Annals* interpretation in a way that effectively used it as a guide for reading events in his own time.

The insularity of the capital grew after the first years of the second century C.E., when members of the eunuch faction at court were allowed to hold and pass on landed noble titles. Eunuchs, whose disability was seen as a qualification for working in areas of the palace with access to the imperial harem, had amassed considerable political power. The next century saw the contest between the eunuch faction and the great families occasionally erupt into massacres in the capital. Meanwhile, the weak central government failed to respond to natural disasters, and conditions grew more chaotic across China. As a result, rebellions of many different kinds arose, including religious ones similar to that of the Red Eyebrows a century earlier. After the death of Emperor Ling 靈 in 189 C.E., the central government effectively ceased to have political influence once the emperor left Luoyang for points west.

In the vacuum created by the waning authority of the central government, alternative institutions tried to recreate the order of earlier times. The Eastern Han saw a fluorescence of new religious movements, whose practices can be discerned from evidence in Eastern Han talismans (133 C.E., 147 C.E., and c. 200 C.E.; see Chapter 9) and stele inscriptions (c. 165 C.E. and c. 169 C.E.; see 8.3 and 6.2). Some of the practices in these sources were adapted by the Yellow Turbans (*Huangjin* 黃巾), who rose up in northern China beginning in 184 B.C.E., and the Five Bushels of Rice (*Wudoumidao* 五斗米道), who arose at the same time in the southwest and later became the nucleus of the Celestial Masters tradition of institutionalized Daoism.

Han Readings in Multiple Contexts

The institutional contexts in which the works presented in this book were created reflect several different features of Han society. Many of these works were crafted by Han scholar-officials in a court setting,

as either memorials presented to the emperor (e.g., 1.2, 2.2, 2.4, 3.2, and 6.3), records of court-sponsored debates (2.3), or state-sponsored histories (8.1). These officials were generally Classicists, often erudites (*boshi* 博士) with a specialty in a particular classical text or texts. As primarily persuasive documents, these are arguably the most rhetorically developed and formally complex documents in the volume. It is important to realize that these deliberative works are not always historically accurate, and that they favor rhetorically effective allusions and generalizations that support the policy or argument being advocated. Formally, this genre is in many ways a continuation of the Warring States political-philosophical essay, and it features the same verbal patterns that David Schaberg has identified as "organized around the problem of defending judgments, substantiating principles, and justifying citations from received texts."[14] Other documents produced in a government context include legal documents (2.1) and imperial stele inscriptions (6.2), both examples of genres with very particular formal features that functioned as records but also reflected on and supported the legal and sacrificial systems of which they were a part.

Readings in Han Chinese Thought also includes writings that were largely the product of the private reflection and initiative. Selections written in such nonofficial contexts tend to be more iconoclastic and skeptical, and both the *Records of the Historian* (5.2, 6.1, and 10.2) and the *Balanced Discussions* (5.3, 7.3, and 8.2) fit into this category. Rather than accepting the classics as the primary source to use in developing arguments, the examples from these two works draw on a broader range of noncanonical texts. While they draw on different authoritative sources and range more widely in content, these works incorporate the political-philosophical essay into their universal worldview. Their sometimes iconoclastic viewpoints were less reflective of either received wisdom or the constraints on court speech. The more hybrid *Masters of Huainan*, compiled in a regional

14. David Schaberg, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University East Asia Center, 2001), 55.

Huainan court that was at odds with that of the capital, does appear to reflect a court ideology, albeit one at odds with that of the national Han government (3.3, 4.2, and 7.1).

The third major genre, the technical-arts text, is different from the previous two primarily because of its subject matter. Many of these texts were excavated from tombs during the last few decades, and in general these texts appear to have been transmitted at a lesser rate than the public and private works that included the traditional political-philosophical essay. Technical-arts texts were produced in the network of private academies of the Western Han and the nascent medical and religious institutions that thrived in the Eastern Han period. Examples of these works are family stele inscriptions (e.g., 8.3), protective talismans (9.1–3), and medical manuals (10.4). Formally, these texts have the fewest rhetorical features and are more likely to incorporate diagrams, tables, and other aspects that are "nontextual" in a narrow sense. Both the lack of official transmission and the close relationship of these texts to documented practices related to spirit transcendence, protection, and healing indicate that these texts were seen as efficacious themselves, or as containing effective techniques that could be employed by their users. The steady devolution of the central government's authority over the course of the Han dynasty is reflected in this book's general pattern of representation of public, semiprivate, and private writings aligning with the early, middle, and late subperiods of the dynasty.

This Introduction has briefly sketched some of the core methodological and historical issues in the background of the conversations that range across the chapters of this book. It also allows the reader to imagine alternative ways to organize the translations here. The discussions of "schools of thought" and "religion and philosophy" show how the selections might be rearranged according to the intellectual landscapes of pre-Han China, or an important contemporary dichotomy. Alternatively, the writings might also be resequenced chronologically to illustrate some of the philosophical and religious trends in the subperiods of the Han dynasty as in the brief historical overview. All of these approaches have their merits, emphasizing different perspectives on the diverse and rich world of Han Thought.

ETHICS AND STATECRAFT

1

SELF-CULTIVATION AND EDUCATION

Since at least the time of Kongzi 孔子 (i.e., Confucius, traditionally dated to 551–479 B.C.E.), the itinerant teachers and royal advisers of early China immersed themselves in a debate about the best way to cultivate one's potential. The goals of this self-cultivation were personal development and effective government. These two goals were linked because a good ruler did not act out of desires or vengeance, but instead relied on cultivated dispositions that led to considerations such as the potential impact of any action on the population or the state's resources. In the early imperial period of the Qin and Han dynasties that began in 221 B.C.E., however, certain approaches to the issue of how to be good took precedence while others dropped out of the conversation. Many Han writings on self-cultivation practice differed from their Warring States precursors in emphasizing *education* over speculation about the original content of *human nature*. Prior to the Han, and again from the Song dynasty (910–1279 C.E.) on, the category of "human nature" (*xing* 性) played a pivotal role in Chinese discussions of ethics and society. Although that category was also important in the Han, for many writers the crux of the discussion shifted from nature to nurture, and specifically to the critical role of education and teaching in shaping moral behavior and training a good ruler.

To understand the discussion of self-cultivation in the Han, however, it is necessary to understand the role that education played in earlier periods. Two works compiled in the late–Warring States period have provided the backdrop to most subsequent discussions of human nature and how to cultivate it. Because both of these works

acknowledge their debt to Kongzi, they and subsequent works on similar themes are often called "Confucian" texts.[1] The *Mengzi* 孟子 (i.e., *Mencius* or *Meng-tzu*), a collection based on the conversations of the thinker of the same name (Meng Ke 孟軻, c. 372–c. 289 B.C.E.), holds that the essence of being human is the possession of four dispositions: those toward the virtues of benevolence (*ren* 仁), righteousness (*yi* 義), ritual propriety (*li* 禮), and wisdom (*zhi* 智). Since the opportunity for self-cultivation may be limited by environment, these innate dispositions may or may not develop into full-fledged moral virtues. The *Xunzi* 荀子 (i.e., *Hsün-tzu*), containing essays connected with the scholar of that name (Xun Kuang 荀況, c. 313–c. 238 B.C.E.), holds that the strongest innate motivation is that of desire. However, the rites and music that were developed by the ancient sage kings may restrict and rechannel desires so that one may eventually acculturate oneself to desire to act out of moral virtues. These works are often portrayed as representing two sides of a debate over whether people are by nature good or bad, although their actual positions are much more nuanced than this. In practice, there was a good amount of overlap between the methods of self-cultivation promoted in the two works, even while there was disagreement about whether these methods developed preexisting embodied tendencies (in the case of the *Mengzi*) or reformed more rudimentary cravings through culture (in the case of the *Xunzi*).[2]

Often, treatments of the topics of education and morality that center on the Warring States period dwell on the difference between the views of the *Mengzi* and the *Xunzi* about what is innate, an issue

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1. By the time of the Han dynasty, many traditions identified Kongzi as their founder, and so they are loosely called "Confucian" today. To better distinguish the historical personage from his later portrayals by members of those Confucian traditions, this book uses the Chinese appellation "Kongzi" instead of the Latinized label "Confucius."

2. A good discussion of these thinkers, introducing their "development" and "re-formation" models of human nature, is found in the chapters on Mengzi and Xunzi in *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation*. See Philip J. Ivanhoe, *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000), 15–42.

key to both of their pictures. From the point of view of Han writers, however, it is their agreement on the importance of environmental influences that ended up being the most important legacy of these texts. Despite its innatist model, the *Mengzi* admits that one's internal pneumas (*qi* 氣) are affected by outside influences. Observing the son of the king of the state of Qi from a distance, Mengzi observes: 居移氣 養移體 大哉居乎 夫非盡人之子與 "A dwelling alters one's pneumas just as nourishment alters one's body. Dwelling is significant. Things are not completely a matter of being the child of a particular person."[3] In the *Mengzi*, the notion of dwelling includes the moral environment to which one is exposed, and so there is little question that nurture plays a significant role in the text's self-cultivation picture. Similarly, the crucial role of learning (*xue* 學) in self-cultivation is outlined early in the *Xunzi*: 故木受繩則直 金就礪則利 君子博學而日參省乎己 則知明而行無過矣 "It is once a plumb line is applied to wood that [wood] may become straight, once a grindstone is applied to metal that [metal] may become sharp. It is once a gentleman learns broadly and each day examines himself in three areas that his wisdom may become clear and his actions may become faultless."[4] By invoking the imperative of Kongzi's disciple Zengzi 曾子 (c. 505–c. 435 B.C.E.) that a person should examine him- or herself on three counts every day, the *Xunzi* argues that the beneficial influence of an outside force is a necessary condition for self-cultivation. Although the *Mengzi* and the *Xunzi* disagree about the mechanisms by which external factors influence self-cultivation, they both accept that morality is not "inborn" in a strict sense.

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3. This quotation comes from section 7A36 of the *Mengzi*; cf. D. C. Lau, *Mencius* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1970), 190. The passage includes the phrase "vast dwelling" (*guangju* 廣居), a reference to *Mengzi* 3A2 (cf. Lau, *Mencius*, 107), where the ritual imperative to impart parental instruction on coming of age leads to living in a "vast dwelling" of virtuous behavior.

4. From Chapter 1 of the *Xunzi* (cf. Burton Watson, *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1963], 15), quoting *Analects* 1.4 (cf. D. C. Lau, *The Analects* [Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1979], 59).

Moving from the Warring States period to the early imperial writings of the Qin and Han dynasties, the focus shifts from inborn nature to the training of dispositions through processes such as habituation, acculturation, and education. Han writers developed nuanced theories about the effect and importance of external guidance for proper self-cultivation, and ways to control negative environmental factors. Although there are exceptions, the once-controversial question of human nature was either bracketed or finessed through a variety of concessionary positions. Rather than identify their positions with those in the *Mengzi* and the *Xunzi*, some writers tried to locate themselves as heirs to alternate traditions, such as that of Kongzi's disciple Gongsun Nizi 公孫尼子. In the essay "Basic Nature" (Benxing 本性), Wang Chong 王充 (27–c. 100 C.E.) describes several of Kongzi's disciples (Shi Shi 世碩, Mizi Jian 宓子賤, Qidiao Kai 漆雕開, and Gongsun Nizi) as having promoted a neutral view that 性有善有惡 "nature has both good and bad in it."[5] A short time later, Xun Yue 荀悅 (148–209 C.E.) described Gongsun Nizi's position as 性無善惡 "nature is without good or bad." He likens this to the positions of several Han writers. Yang Xiong 楊雄 (53 B.C.E.–18 C.E.), Xun Yue says, held that 人之性善惡渾 "human nature was a mixture of good and bad." Xun Yue himself liked the position of Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 B.C.E.): 性情相應, 性不獨善, 情不獨惡 "Nature and affective dispositions respond to each other. Nature is not solely good, and affective dispositions are not solely bad."[6] Whether or not such positions were actually as venerable as they were believed to be in the Han, these writings reveal an interest in bypassing the "nature" views of Mengzi and Xunzi and linking their "nurture" theories of self-cultivation directly to Kongzi.

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5. In *Balanced Discussions* (Lunheng 論衡); cf. Alfred Forke, *Lun-Hêng*, vol. 1 (New York: Paragon, 1962), 384.

6. In *Extended Reflections* (Shenjian 申鑒); cf. Ch'i-yün Ch'en, *Hsün Yüeh and the Mind of Late Han China: A Translation of the "Shen-chien" with Introduction and Annotations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 187–88. See especially Ch'en's discussion of what *qing* 情 and *xing* 性 meant to Xun Yue (188, n. 57).

It is possible to read this emphasis on education as consistent with the political ends of socialization under the newly unified Han empire, and with its imperative to homogenize rather disparate regional cultures. Certainly, the emphasis on environment at the expense of endowment might be seen as more favorable to the institution of imperial hereditary succession because the crown prince could be guaranteed an optimal educational environment, no matter what his specific endowments. At the same time, a focus on the inculcation of virtues may have functioned to check the excesses of those in authority, and in this way changes in the self-cultivation discourse might be seen as antithetical to the coercive interests of the state.

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The three readings that follow all emphasize the importance of the influence of the good teacher and virtuous sage on self-cultivation, and they reflect versions of the above-mentioned neutral position on human nature. A common theme that instruction is necessary for self-cultivation pervades these selections: Dong Zhongshu's 董仲舒 (198–104 B.C.E.) use of the metaphor of the dependence of the rice kernel on environmental factors in order to grow, Jia Yi's 賈誼 (200–168 B.C.E.) idealized description of the moral training received by the ancient crown princes, and Yang Xiong's celebration of the transforming influence of the sage and the teacher. Yet each writer has a unique basis for proving this importance. Dong Zhongshu's argument is based on etymology and buttressed by analogies to the natural world. Jia Yi's evidence is for the most part historical and depends on the authority of canonical texts and practices. Yang Xiong's claims are based on the almost supernatural authority of Kongzi and his transformation of his disciple Yan Yuan 顏淵. Many Han writers share a view in which education is paramount, but their justification for this position is a reflection of the periods in which they wrote and of their individual worldviews.

The first selection was written by the Classical Studies scholar Dong Zhongshu, as part of a longer essay called "An In-Depth Investigation into Names" (Shencha minghao 深察名號). In that

essay, Dong places human beings into a hierarchy with the Son of Heaven at the top, followed by feudal lords, high officials, low officials, and common people. Examining the origins of these terms for types of people allows him to attack the position of the *Mengzi* that people have an innate disposition to goodness. Yet, as this selection from the essay makes clear, it is not the case that there is no goodness in human nature either. Dong begins by making an etymological connection: the word for "people" is related to the word for "asleep." From this unlikely beginning, he draws parallels between these like-sounding terms, concluding that individual potential needs outside nourishment to develop morality, and that the need to "awaken" people is confirmation that human nature is not originally good. Where the *Mengzi* uses the metaphor of a seedling to emphasize the importance of developing preexisting tendencies, Dong uses a contrast between a kernel of rice and the plant that develops out of it to emphasize how external influence is equally important. Later in the essay, Dong develops his theory that human nature has a dual aspect (along the lines of the balance between the feminine and masculine principles of *yin* and *yang*): affective dispositions (which need to be regulated) and human nature (which may be good, but needs to be awakened). As a result, the imperative to curb desires, something that takes on cardinal importance in Han discussions of ethics, is integrated into the discussion of self-cultivation.

The second selection, "Protecting and Tutoring" (Baofu 保傅), is a memorial to the throne by the poet and statesman Jia Yi. An idealized re-creation of a bygone system for educating the crown prince, the text locates the process of self-cultivation in his orderly progression through a series of "studies" (*xue* 學), each one inculcating a different virtue. Jia's writings reveal the influence of both the *Mengzi* and the *Xunzi*, and synthesize their opposing perspectives on human nature to portray a malleable nature without innate dispositions to good or evil. He is generally unconcerned with original nature, arguing that the excesses of the Qin dynasty were the fault of the unprincipled education of the crown prince.

The third selection is the complete first chapter of Yang Xiong's *Model Sayings* (Fayan 法言). From its first sentence, beginning "Putting Learning into Action" (Xuexing 學行), it is dense with allusions to the *Analects*. The *Analects* begins with the phrase 學而

時習之 "To learn something and put it into practice at the right time," and learning and practice are also at the heart of the first section of the *Model Sayings*. Neither text develops by tracing a single argument, but rather each offers chains of associated ideas concerning learning, mostly in dialogue form. When Yang turns to the discussion of self-cultivation and education, he portrays Kongzi (identified as Zhong Ni 仲尼) as having an almost supernatural ability to transform others. Kongzi's effect on his disciple Yan Hui (called Yan Yuan 顏淵 in the *Model Sayings*) is also seen by Yang as a paradigm for the kind of inspiration that a student today may receive from the sages of the past. Yang is particularly concerned about the popularity of the idea that it is better to excel at technical arts or to be rich than to cultivate oneself. For Yang, Kongzi's Way was under siege from alternative systems of value. Yet he rarely discussed the content of moral action, and for this reason the chapter at times reads more like a reactionary defense of bygone values than a genuine revival of them.

1.1 Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (c. 198–c. 104 B.C.E.), from "An In-Depth Investigation into Names" (Shencha minghao 深察名號), Chapter 35 of *Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals* (Chunqiu fanlu 春秋繁露), c. 104 B.C.E.

Dong Zhongshu, whereas today identified with the resurgence of the study of the Confucian classics and with the rise of correlative thinking that linked events in the human and natural realms, was known in his day primarily as an exegete and devotee of the Spring and Autumn Annals *(Chunqiu* 春秋*), the terse chronicle thought to have been compiled by Kongzi, and its* Gongyang Commentary *(Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳*). The extant* Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals *(Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露*) has 17 parts containing 123 chapter titles, of which 79 chapters survive. Because of its reliance on the* Spring and Autumn Annals *(its title is a modest comparison of itself to the ornamental beads on a scholar's hat), Dong's text has much in common with loosely exegetical collections from the same century, such as the* Han's

Exoteric Transmission on the Odes *(Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳*) and the* Great Transmission on the Past Documents *(Shangshu dazhuan* 尚書大傳*). Many scholars cite the way the text elaborates underlying connections between Heaven and Earth and provides a cosmological explanation for the authority of the ruler, and on that basis identify Dong as the first writer to provide a religious rationale for the new governmental structures of imperial China. Because of its diverse content and its inconsistencies with historical descriptions of Dong's views in the standard histories, there is speculation that some chapters of the* Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals *may not have been written by Dong.*

Nature may be compared to the rice plant, and goodness may be compared to the rice kernel. The rice kernel comes out of the rice plant, but the rice plant cannot completely produce the rice kernel. Goodness comes out of a person's nature, but that nature cannot completely produce goodness. Both goodness and the rice kernel are things that humans have inherited from Heaven and are completed externally, rather than entirely being a matter of what Heaven has brought to completion internally.

What Heaven [*Tian* 天] creates reaches a limit and then stops. Everything prior to that point is called its "Heavenly nature," and everything past that point is called "human affairs." Affairs are external to a person's nature, but if you do not attend to them you will not develop virtue.

The designation for "the people" [*min* 民] is taken from the term "asleep" [*mian* 瞑]. If the people's nature is already good, then why are they designated as asleep? Speaking in terms of a person who is sleeping, without support he or she will stumble and fall or behave wildly. How could this be considered good? A person's nature has something resembling eyes. Lying down in the dark with closed eyes, one awaits awakening in order to see. When one is not yet awake, it is possible to say one has the potential for seeing, but it cannot be called seeing. Now, the nature of the myriad people is that they have the potential but have not yet awakened, and they may be likened to a sleeper who is waiting to be awakened. It is only after educating the people that they will become good. When not

yet awake, it is possible to say they have the potential for goodness, but they cannot be called good. The idea is comparable to a person's eyes when asleep and when awake.

By calming the mind and slowly examining such words, this all may be comprehended. Heaven creates people with a nature that is asleep, not yet awake. They are given a designation following the model of what Heaven created, and are called "the people." This is the way of speaking of the people [*min*] because they are as if asleep [*mian*]. It is only once we follow their designation and penetrate into the principle behind it that we may grasp it.

1.2 Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–168 B.C.E.), "Protecting and Tutoring" (Baofu 保傅), in "Traditions Surrounding Jia Yi" (Jia Yi zhuan 賈誼傳), Chapter 48 of Ban Gu 班固 (39–92 C.E.) et al., *History of the Han* (Hanshu 漢書)

*The classical scholar, philosopher, and poet Jia Yi served in the offices of erudite (*boshi 博士*) and palace grandee (*taizhong daifu 太中大夫*) during the reign of Emperor Wen 文 of the Han dynasty. After being slandered at court, Jia was sent away from the capital to serve as grand tutor (*taifu 太傅*) for the Prince of Changsha 長沙. A year later, Jia was rehabilitated and served briefly as grand tutor for the prince of Liang 梁 before dying at the age of thirty-three. According to his official biography in the History of the Han, Jia studied the classic* Spring and Autumn Annals *and its* Zuo Commentary *(Zuozhuan 左傳). Despite his early death, a great deal of his work is preserved in his biography and the fifty-five chapters of the* New Writings *(Xinshu 新書). The combination of emphasis on classical learning in these works and his record of service in government earned Jia a reputation as an exemplary Confucian official as early as in the writings of Liu Xin 劉歆 (46 B.C.E.–23 C.E.). However, Jia's metaphysical and poetical writings reveal the strong influence of texts such as the* Laozi 老子 *and the* Zhuangzi 莊子. *This underscores the fact that Jia was writing prior to the 136 B.C.E. establishment of the Five Classics as the material for the official examination. Consequently, his writings represent the*

apogee of the syncretistic and synthetic tendencies of the early decades of the Han dynasty.

The essay on "protecting and tutoring" the crown prince survives in several versions. It comprises the second half of section 5 of the transmitted New Writings, *is part of a chapter of the same name in the* Elder Dai's Record of Ritual *(DaDai liji* 大戴禮記*), and also is part of Jia's biography in the* History of the Han. *Whereas the last of those three texts is translated here, there are only minor variations between them. "Protecting and Tutoring" also appears to have circulated separately during the Han, and was seen as a uniquely accessible treatment of education during antiquity. We can infer this from a comment by Emperor Zhao* 昭 *in an edict of* 82 B.C.E. *included in another section of the* History of the Han. *The emperor says that he comprehends (*tong 通*) "Protecting and Tutoring," comparing or contrasting this (commentators disagree on how to parse the sentence) with texts like the* Classic of Filial Piety *(Xiaojing* 孝經*), the* Analects *(Lunyu* 論語*), and the* Past Documents *(Shangshu* 尚書*).*[7] *More recently, a partial version of the text was found in the tomb of a prince of the state Zhongshan*

7. There is a long-standing disagreement about whether the words *bao* 保 and *fu* 傅 are actually a reference to "Protecting and Tutoring" (see *Hanshu* 7.223). Wen Ying 文穎 (fl. 200 C.E.) understands the emperor to be comparing the "Baofu Transmission" with the other three works. Wen says that the emperor is well versed in, but does not completely understand, all four texts. Yan Shigu 顏師古 (541–645) reads the emperor's words as a contrast between the "Baofu Transmission" and the other three texts. Yan says that the emperor does not fully understand the latter three. Much later, Li Ciming 李慈銘 (1830–1894) understood the terms *bao* and *fu* to refer to the emperor's grand protector (*taibao* 太保) and grand tutor (*taifu* 太傅), and the word "transmission" to be the verb "transmit." As a result, Li's reading of the passage is along these lines: "I understand my teachers, but do not yet understand what they have imparted" about the three classics. Li argues that the "Baofu" chapter was not an independent work, and in any case would not have been listed in front of the three more venerable works (see *Hanshu buzhu* 漢書補注 7.4b). Li's perspective on transmission is contradicted both by the appearance of the essay in three different transmitted texts and by its independent discovery in a Western Han tomb in Ding County described in the following note.

who died in 55 B.C.E.[8] *Given its accessible rhetorical style, it is quite possible that Emperor Zhao and the prince of Zhongshan treasured this essay as a more comprehensible guide to antiquity than works written in more archaic styles.*

The [hereditary rulers of the] Xia were the sons of Heaven [i.e., *Tian*, whose "sons" were imperial rulers] for over ten generations before Yin succeeded them. The Yin were the sons of Heaven for over twenty generations before Zhou succeeded them. The Zhou were the sons of Heaven for over thirty generations before Qin succeeded them. But the Qin were the sons of Heaven for two generations and were destroyed. Since the nature of human beings is not so very different from one person to another, why did the rulers of the Three Dynasties have the durability that comes from possessing the Way, whereas the Qin suffered the setback of suddenly losing it? The reasons for this may be adduced.

The kings of ancient times, from the moment the crown prince was born, consistently raised him according to proper ritual forms. They employed officials to carry him on their backs, and managers for rituals of fasting and purification and for the wearing of sacrificial garments. They offered the prince at the southern temple, presenting him to Heaven. When passing the watchtowers of the imperial residence they descended from their carriages, and when passing the ancestral temple they walked quickly. This is how they guided him

8. The "Protecting and Tutoring" chapter of the *Elder Dai's Record of Ritual* contains text found in several chapters of the *New Writings:* "Protecting and Tutoring," "Tutoring and Managing" (Fuzhi 傅職), "Fetal Education" (Taijiao 胎教), and "Classic of Deportment" (Rongjing 容經). According to the site report, a set of texts that were part of the finds in a Ding County tomb contains passages from the "Protecting and Tutoring" chapter and a portion of the next chapter of the *New Writings*, "Attached Sayings" (Lianyu 連語), that develops the saying: "If the cart in front overturns, the cart in back should take warning" (see Hebeisheng wenwu yanjiusuo 河北省文物研究所, "Hebei Dingxian 40 hao Hanmu fajue jianbao" 河北定省 40 號漢墓發掘簡報, *Wenwu* 文物 1981.8: 1–10, and related articles in that issue).

in filial piety. Therefore, from the time the prince was an infant onward, his education was already firmly underway.

In ancient times, when King Cheng 成 was young and in swaddling clothes [at the start of the Zhou dynasty], the Duke of Shao 召 served as grand protector, the Duke of Zhou 周 served as grand tutor, and Duke of Tai served as grand teacher. Protecting entailed guarding his person, tutoring entailed assisting him in virtue and righteousness, and teaching entailed guiding him in his educational training. These were the duties of the Three Dukes. In addition, there were also established the Three Minors, each of which was filled at the level of high official. The Three Minors were called minor protector, minor tutor, and minor teacher. These officials accompanied the crown prince at leisure. Even when the crown prince was a small boy, he had some discrimination. The Three Dukes and Three Minors firmly made clear to him filial piety, benevolence, ritual propriety, and righteousness, and so guided him in his practice. They banished the depraved, and did not let him see evil actions. So in all cases they chose upright officials, those who cared for their parents and siblings, those of broad learning, and those with mastery of the techniques of the Way to defend and assist the crown prince. These people were employed to live with the prince, accompanying him wherever he went. Thus, from the moment the prince was born, he only saw correct affairs, only listened to correct words, and only traveled the correct ways. Those who were to the crown prince's left and right, those behind and in front of him, each one was a correct person.

Now, since he was accustomed to living alongside correct people, he could not but be correct himself, much like those who are born and grow up in Qi cannot but speak the language of Qi. If he was accustomed to living alongside incorrect people, then he could not but be incorrect himself, much like those who are born and grow up in Chu cannot but speak the language of Chu. Pick those things for which he has a taste, but first educate him before you let him try them. Pick those things that he enjoys, but first give him instruction before you let him partake of them. Kongzi said: "What is completed in youth becomes akin to Heaven-given nature, what is familiar through repeated practice becomes akin to the natural course of things."

When the time comes that the prince grows up and attains maturity, then he enters the studies. The "studies" are the rooms in which he studies. The *Study Rituals* [Xueli 學禮] dictates that when the emperor enters the Eastern study, he expresses esteem for close relatives and values benevolence, so that near and distant relatives will be treated in the correct sequence and so his kindness will reach to each one. When he enters the Southern study, he esteems the aged and values trustworthiness, so elderly and young people will be distinguished and the common people will not engage in trickery. When the emperor enters the Western study, he esteems worthiness and values virtue, so then the worthies and the wise will hold office and meritorious service will not be overlooked. When the emperor enters the Northern study, he esteems the nobility and values those of high rank, so then there will be gradations between the noble and the common, and those below will not overstep their station. When the emperor enters the Grand study, he receives his teacher's lessons and asks for instruction in the Way. Then he withdraws and practices, and is examined by the grand tutor. The grand tutor penalizes him when he does not meet the standard, and corrects his deficiencies. In this way, his virtue and wisdom mature and the Way of good government is attained. Once these five studies are completed by the ruler, then the officials and common people may transform and harmonize everything below.

When the time comes that the crown prince is capped, symbolizing his adulthood, he is no longer subject to strict protection and tutelage. He instead has scribes who record his errors, and kitchen stewards who take away his meals. Banners are flown, under which people make meritorious proposals. Wooden boards are erected, on which people might censure his errors. He is subject to the drums of remonstration. Blind musicians and scribes chant the [*Classic of*] *Odes*, and balladeers chant admonitions. High officials put forth proposals, and officers transmit the talk of the common people. Since his practice and wisdom have grown, he therefore is penetrating and unabashed. Since his transformation and mind have matured, therefore he follows the Way exactly as if it was second nature to him.

The rituals of the Three Dynasties were such that in the spring at sunrise the sacrifice to the sun was made, and in the autumn at

dusk the sacrifice to the moon was made. This is how the ruler made clear his respect. Each year he entered his studies, sat down with the elders of the state, set out the bean sauce, and personally served it to them. This is how he made clear his filial piety. When he journeyed afield he harmonized with his carriage bells, "when he ran he was in accord with the 'Caiqi' 采齊 song, and when he hurried with the 'Sixia' 肆夏 song."[9] This is how he made it clear that he had standards. Toward animals, "if he saw them alive he could not bear to see their corpses, if he heard their cries he could not eat their meat." Therefore he "distanced himself from the kitchen."[10] This is how he broadened his sympathy and made it clear that he had benevolence.

Now, the reason the Three Dynasties lasted so long was that they used means like these in order to aid and succor the prince. When the time of Qin came, however, they did not do it this way. Their customs certainly did not place value on yielding, but rather emphasized making accusations. Their customs certainly did not place value on ritual propriety and righteousness, but rather emphasized punishment. Zhao Gao 趙高 was employed to tutor Hu Hai 胡亥 [i.e., the crown prince of Qin], and instructed him in sentencing. Hu Hai grew accustomed to applying the penalties of execution and cutting off the nose, and when he did not do this, he applied the penalty of extinguishing the Three Clans.[11]

Thus, if a "Hu Hai" took the throne today, tomorrow he would begin to target people. Loyal remonstrators he would deem censurers, profound planners he would deem heretics. He would treat killing people as if it was simply a matter of mowing down thatching grass. Would this be solely because Hu Hai's nature was

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9. This is a quotation from the *Records of Ritual*, where it is part of a passage about creating an environment where there are not means by which "depraved" (*pi* 辟) thoughts can enter the mind of the ruler. See Chapter 30 of *Liji jijie* 禮記集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1989), 820; and James Legge, *Li Chi: Book of Rites*, vol. 2 (New York: University Books, 1967), 18.

10. These two sentences come from *Mengzi* 1A7; cf. Lau, *Mencius*, 55.

11. An even more severe punishment (see Chapter 2, note 28).

1.3 Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 B.C.E.–18 C.E.), "Putting Learning into Action" (Xuexing 學行), Chapter 1 of *Model Sayings* (Fayan 法言)

Yang Xiong's Model Sayings *is a collection of short dialogues explicitly patterned on the* Analects. *Historically, Yang has been both excoriated for his penchant for imitation and celebrated for his ability to craft elaborate works in a classical style. As a philosopher, Yang reacted against the eclectic influences that he saw as diluting the classical message of Kongzi. In his* History of the Han *biography, Yang explains that he wrote the* Model Sayings *to reestablish the primacy of the teachings of Kongzi in an age deluded by the heterodox teachings of the "many masters" (*zhuzi 諸子*).*[12] *As with the* Analects, *each chapter title of the* Model Sayings *is composed of the first two characters of the chapter itself, and both works are primarily concerned with self-cultivation and the exceptional characteristics of the sage.*

1. Putting learning into practice is supreme. Putting it into words comes next. Teaching it to others comes after that. Anyone who does none of these is simply an unexceptional person.

2. Someone said: "Some people covet longevity, in order to use [the extra time] for learning. May such people be said to 'delight in learning'?"[13]

[Yang] replied: "They do not yet delight in it. [Doing so requires that you] learn not to covet."

3. Was not the Way of Heaven located in Zhong Ni [Kongzi]? Once Zhong Ni's carriage came to a halt, was it not parked among these who do Classical Studies? If we would like to get his teachings

12. *Hanshu* 87b.3580.

13. The phrase "delight in learning" (*haoxue* 好學) appears numerous times in the *Analects*, often in questions similar to this one. For his part, Kongzi generally applied it only to his disciple Yan Yuan.

rolling again, nothing could be better than using the Classical Studies scholars [*Ru*] as metal mouths with wooden tongues![14]

4. Someone said: "Learning confers no advantage, for of what use is it to one's basic substance?"

[Yang] replied: "You have not thought about this enough. Now, a person with a knife grinds it, and a person with jade polishes it. If one neither grinds nor polishes these things, of what use are they? Their basic substance is a matter for sharpening and polishing. To do otherwise is to inhibit one's substance."

5. When the larval *mingling* 螟蛉 caterpillar dies and it encounters the *guoluo* 蜾蠃 wasp, the wasp prays over it, saying: "Become like me, become like me." After a while, it does come to resemble the wasp! How quickly did the seventy disciples come to resemble Zhong Ni![15]

6. One who can learn in order to cultivate it, think in order to refine it, make friends in order to sharpen it, gain a reputation in order to exalt it, be tireless in order to follow it to the end—such a person may be said to "delight in learning."

7. Kongzi studied the Duke of Zhou. Yan Yuan studied Kongzi. If [people legendary for their skills like] Archer Yi 羿 and Pang Meng 逢蒙 broke their bows, [Wang 王] Liang 良 put down his riding whip, and [Gongshu 公輸] Ban 般 set aside his ax, and all studied [Yan Yuan], who could gainsay them?

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14. *Analects* 3.24 quotes a border official as telling Kongzi's disciples: 天下之無道也久矣 天將以夫子為木鐸 "The world has been without the Way for a long while, but Heaven is going to use [Kongzi] as the wooden clapper of [its] bell." Yang combines this metaphor with that of Kongzi's carriage, which symbolizes the teaching of the master's doctrines.

15. Because the *guoluo* wasp uses the larvae of the *mingling* moth as food for its own young, it was long thought that the wasp transformed the *mingling* into its own species. The phrase "child of the *mingling*" (*mingling zhi zi* 螟蛉之子) even came to mean "adoptive child." Actually, the wasps sting the caterpillars, which are anesthetized and appear to die, and bring them back as food for their young. Here, Yang uses this as a metaphor for transformation of type, saying that Kongzi's disciples were transformed even more rapidly.

Someone said: "One set of people was famous for one thing, whereas the other was famous for another. Isn't it enough to be good at one?"

[Yang] replied: "Among rivers there are some that flow to the sea, among mountains there are tall peaks. To be tall and also great is something that the unexceptional person is not able to surpass."[16]

8. Someone said: "People today speak of casting gold. Is it possible to cast gold?"

[Yang] replied: "I have heard that 'those who have seen a gentleman ask about casting people, not about casting gold.'"

Someone said: "Is it possible to cast people?"

[Yang] replied: "Kongzi cast Yan Yuan."

Surprised, someone said: "How praiseworthy! I asked about casting gold, and heard about casting people!"

9. Learning is the means by which one cultivates one's nature. Seeing, listening, speaking, appearance, and thought are all parts of one's nature. If one learns, then [these faculties will] all become correct. If one fails, then they will all become bad.

10. The teacher! The teacher! [The teacher] is the fate of the child. To work at learning is not as good as working to find a teacher. The teacher is what molds and shapes people. Molds that do not mold, patterns that do not pattern—there are indeed many of these.

11. A market may only run along a single alley, but one will find different intentions there. A book may only run a single roll of bamboo slips, but one will find different explanations of it. In a market that runs along a single alley, one should set a single price. For a book that runs a single roll of bamboo slips, one should set up a single teacher.

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16. Yang uses geographical metaphors to explain his contrast between the classical statesmen (the Duke of Zhou, Kongzi, and Yan Yuan) and famous archers, a rider, and a craftsman. Whereas the latter figures are streams or mountains in their own right, they are the streams that flow into the larger sea-bound rivers, or the mountains that surround the highest peaks of the range. As a result, Kongzi's knowledge is more complete or profound than these other types of knowledge.


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LAW AND PUNISHMENT

The early dynasties of the Qin and Han are often treated as a single formative phase in China's imperial history, but are just as likely to be portrayed as opposites in a dialectical historical process. This is not only true of modern histories; even Han accounts differ over the degree and nature of the Qin's influence. Because many Han writers sought to justify the state's monopoly on violence and distinguish their own application of law from that of their predecessor dynasty, the degree of continuity between the Qin and Han legal systems has long been an issue in discussions of politics and government.

When the state of Qin completed its conquest of the previously "Warring States" in 221 B.C.E., many of the measures that it imposed were outgrowths of the system of organization that aided its successful military expansion. Besides measures to standardize what had previously been regionally distinct economic networks and cultural conventions, the Qin imposed a uniform penal system that was both exhaustive and dependent on the omnipresent threat of physical mutilation. These are factors that Han statesman Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–168 B.C.E.) pointed to in his famous "Discussion Finding Fault with the Qin" (Guo Qin lun 過秦論) as the reasons for the defeat of the Qin within two decades of its unification of China, and its subsequent transformation into a laughingstock. Jia said of the Qin: 仁義不施而攻守之勢異也 "It applied neither benevolence nor righteousness, even though the dynamics of attacking and securing [a state] are different."[1] Implicit in this criticism of the Qin's inability to adopt a different system once their military conquest was complete may well have been an implicit appeal for the Han government to reduce its reliance on some elements of the Qin legacy. Since the inclusion of Jia's essay in the *Records of the Historian* (Shiji 史記),

1. *Shiji* 6.245. See also Burton Watson's translation in *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 74–83.


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