AMERICAN ORIENTAL SERIES

VOLUME 85

THE STELE INSCRIPTIONS OF CH’IN SHIH-HUANG:  
TEXT AND RITUAL IN EARLY  
CHINESE IMPERIAL REPRESENTATION

AMERICAN ORIENTAL  
SERIES

VOLUME 85

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AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY  
New Haven, Connecticut

2000

THE STELE INSCRIPTIONS OF CHIN SHIH-HUANG:  
TEXT AND RITUAL IN EARLY  
CHINESE IMPERIAL REPRESENTATION

By

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AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY  
New Haven, Connecticut  
2000

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ISBN 0-940490-15-3

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Preface

The beginnings of the present study go back to the early spring of  
1997, soon after I had arrived in Seattle with the idea of spending some half  
a year - which turned into eighteen productive and joyful months - at the  
University of Washington. In daily exchange with Professors David  
Knechtges and William Boltz I revised my 1996 German dissertation on  
early Chinese state sacrificial hymns for publication. I. vividly recall when  
one morning in David Knechtges^ office - where I went **every** morning -1  
found myself asked whether the Ch4n imperial stele inscriptions could be  
seen as possible models for the early Western Han ancestral hymns. Ch’in  
stele inscriptions? That morning, I did not stay long: embarrassed about my  
ignorance, I wished to read chapter six of the **Shih-chi,** and was eager to add  
a few, doubtless important footnotes to my book on the hymns.

Four months later the first version of the present study was completed;  
in consequence of the continuous discussions with my two teachers and  
friends, it had grown from some footnotes to article length and then to  
monograph format, and its basic ideas had stood the test of a graduate  
seminar on ''Ritual in Ancient Chinese Texts,n co-taught by the three of us in  
the spring quarter of 1997.

In the meantime, I revised that portion of my dissertation where I in-  
cluded a brief discussion of the stele inscriptions to argue for the (contested)  
early date of the Western Han ancestral hymns. I think that the Ch^in  
inscriptions and Han hymns are separated from each other by only about a  
decade, that they belong to the same culture of imperial ritual, and that they  
were composed by largely the same group of ritual and textual experts who  
had moved from the **Ch'in** to the Han court. As a result, my interpretation of  
the inscriptions bears directly on the understanding of the hymns and vice  
versa, and I consider my 1997 book **Die Hymnen der chinesischen Staats-  
opfer** and the present study as a complementary pair, though each work  
stands on its own. The twofold endeavor is now completed, achieving its  
final phase during the summer of 1999, after I had arrived at my new  
institution, supported by a grant from the Columbia University Council for  
Research in the Humanities.

Since spring 1997, the present study went through several revisions.  
First, Professors David Knechtges, William Boltz, and Lothar von Falken^  
hausen (UCLA) provided a wealth of meticulous corrections; at the same  
time, Matthew Carter, Ph,D. candidate at the University of Washington,  
took care of stylistic problems in a manuscript with its fair share of  
Germanisms. After I thought the manuscript was already finished, Professor  
Michael Nylan (Bryn Mawr) favored me with densely printed pages of  
strong suggestions, in particular on the final chapter; and Professor  
Christoph Harbsmeier (Oslo), swiftly looking through my translations,  
**stante pede** delivered a series of rectifications too acute to be ignored.  
Finally, Professor Paul Kroll (University of Colorado, Boulder) copy-edited  
the complete text with utmost care and sensitivity.

The impact these scholars have had on the present book and my work  
in general goes far beyond the numerous notes that I received from them.  
Without David Knechtges, the whole project would never had been started;  
once it was on its way, those mentioned above were untiring in their  
enthusiastic support, I am humbled by their erudition and generosity, and I  
am grateful for their friendship. With all their help, only the remaining  
mistakes are entirely mine.

At the end of the day, my gratitude goes to those nearby who allow me  
to do my work and, every once in a while, to leave it aside: Keiko, my wife,  
and Daniel Masao, our son, who is younger than this book.

**MX**

New York, December 29, 1999

L Introduction

According to the "Basic Annals of the First August [Thearch] of  
Ch，i!i”（“Ch’in Shih~huang pen»chi” 秦始皇本記）in Ssiwna Ch，ien，s 司馬  
遷（145 L ca, 85 B,C,) iJeawis c?/汍e 史記)，Ch’in

Shih-huang-ti 秦始皇# (i\ as emperor 221 - 210 B.C.)，accompanied by  
his high officials, made a series of excursions through the eastern comman-  
deries of the newly unified empire between 219 and 21.0 B.C.1 Climbing to  
the top of various mountains or otherwise elevated sites, most of them close  
to the coast，he had his officials “erect stones”（W 从汸立石)，“eulogize the  
virtuous power of Ch>in>, **{sung Ch'in te** and finally cut these

eulogies into the stone stelae. Both the texts and the calligraphy of these  
inscriptions later became attributed to the **Ch'in** Chancellor to the Left **(tso**左丞相）Li Ssu李斯（d. 208 B.C.p The及沉仍也才执石  
**Historian** seems to mention altogether seven inscriptions, though at least two  
accounts appear slightly disordered: with regard to Mt. T’ai 泰[[2]](#footnote-3) [[3]](#footnote-4) [[4]](#footnote-5) [[5]](#footnote-6) it is said that

2 INTRODUCTION

the emperor “erected a stone’，（ZZ s/u./z)，then offered the 封 sacrifice and  
then descended the mountain. Again, he offered the **shan** P sacrifice on Mt.  
Liang-fu 梁父 and “inscribed the erected stone”（to 仍 //-s/nTz 刻所立石)[[6]](#footnote-7)-on Mt. Liang»fu or again back on Mt. T[[7]](#footnote-8) [[8]](#footnote-9) [[9]](#footnote-10) [[10]](#footnote-11) [[11]](#footnote-12)ai? The following inscription text,  
however，refers in line 8 to “this Mt\* T’ai，，’ and the parallel narratives in  
both **Shih-chi** an [[12]](#footnote-13)d **Han-shu[[13]](#footnote-14)** both unmistakably state that the inscription was  
made on the top of Mt. TJai; later accounts also refer to the stele there.?  
Thus, there was probably no inscription on Mt. Liang-fu. In another  
passage,[[14]](#footnote-15) an inscription on Mt. Chih-fu is mentioned in the context of  
219 B.C., but actually, the emperor toured to that place in 218 B.C. and had  
two stones erected and inscribed (one of them on the "eastern vistat?]^  
**[tung-kuan** ^S] of the mountain; **^** the **Shih-chi** preserves both inscrip-  
tions.11 Thus, the first **Shih-chi** note on Mt. Chih-fu may simply be  
misplaced but not refer to another earlier inscription\* The underlying  
assumption that the present chapter of the **Shih-chi** is not entirely reliable can  
be further corroborated by obvious evidence of - albeit minor ~ damage and  
corruption in several instances of the recorded texts. Moreover, only six of  
the seven inscriptions are preserved in the **Shih-chi;^** the text of that on Mt,  
I mentioned by the **Records** as chronologically first, was well known  
in T^ng times[[15]](#footnote-16) and appears in inscription collections since the early  
fourteenth century.[[16]](#footnote-17)

INTRODUCTION 3

Although the textual history of this last-mentioned inscription may  
raise doubts about its authenticity, some evidence from the rhymes allows us  
to accept it as genuinely of the late third century B.C，16 The stele itself, like  
those of most of the other inscriptions, was lost early in the course of  
history; 17 a copy from A,D. 993 is preserved in the “Forest of Stelae”（peZ-  
Zz>z 5卑林）of the Shensi Provincial iuseura in Hsi~an 西安.Ssu-ma Ch’ien  
provides the following chronology for the inscriptions: 219 B‘C. on Mt, I，  
Mt. T’ai，and Mt\* Lang-yeh 璃邪;w 218 B.C. on Mt, Chih-fu and on its  
^eastern vista^ (Chih-fu **tung-kuan)\** 215 B.C. at the **"gSLte"** of Chieh-shih  
(Chieh-shih-men 碣石門）i9; and December 211 or January 210 B.C, on Mt, [[17]](#footnote-18) [[18]](#footnote-19)

4 INTRODUCTION

K，uai"chi 會稽.20 To my knowledge, the only challenge to this sequence has  
been raised by Ch’en Chih-liang P東志良，21 recently supported anci extended  
by Tsuruma Kazuyuki 鶴間和象22 Ch’en argues that the inscription on ML  
**Tm** is not by the First Thearch but by his son and successor, the Second  
Generation [Thearch] (Erh-shih 二世，r. 210 - 207 B.C〇 who in 209 B.C.  
had traveled to all the stelae erected by his father to have their sides inscribed  
with supplementary records, in particular naming the officials who had  
originally accompanied the founding emperor. According to Ch'en, the First [[19]](#footnote-20) [[20]](#footnote-21) [[21]](#footnote-22) [[22]](#footnote-23) [[23]](#footnote-24)

INTRODUCTION 5

Thearch at the occasion of his/eng **H** and **shan** # sacrifices in 219 B.C.  
erected not an inscribed stele but an uearth-altar stone,? **(she-shih** %h〇  
without any inscription. With this interpretation, concluded from a highly  
speculative discussion, **Ch'en** solves part of the textual problems mentioned  
above. However, since there are several other instances of textual disorder  
in the “Ch，in Shih-huang pen-chi”（to be addressed below) one might as  
well assume that the text simply is not in the best shape here. Ch^n does not  
solve the obvious problem that the above quoted phrase, ^inscribed the  
erected stone”（灸b 仍 /Zw/zi/z 亥[|戶斤立石)，seems to imply the First Thearch  
as its subject and to refer to a previously erected stone. If Ssu-\*ma Ch^en  
indeed consciously meant what Ch'en understands from the received text -  
which implies that the passage is intact in its original form - would he have  
expressed himself in such an ambiguous way?

Tsuruma has further argued that the inscription on Mt. I also was  
composed by Erh-shih during his tour of 209 B.C.; building to some extent  
on Chin's arguments he adds considerations on the overall structure of the  
two texts as well on some of their particular phrases that he believes were  
not used by Ch^in Shih-huang himself. According to Tsuruma, the sequence  
of the remaining five inscriptions that were original to the First Thearch  
would remain the same, now with that of Mt. Lang-yeh as chronologically  
the first, I hesitate to follow these conclusions, since the issues raised by  
Ch^en and Tsuruma can be resolved otherwise. Given the relative paucity of  
sources for the early imperial period, there will always remain numerous  
uncertainties in the received **Shih-chi** text. Attempts to t4iron them ouf in  
order to arrive at a plain reading must draw on clear evidence - which is  
lacking in the cases of the two inscriptions. Nevertheless, some of Ch5en5s  
and Tsuruma^s arguments will be taken into consideration at various points  
of the present study.

Of all the stelae, the only certainly authentic fragments that have  
survived are from that on Mt. Lang-yeh, though without any text from the  
First Thearch's inscription; another fragment from Mt. **Vm** is of ques-  
tionable authenticity. The characters both fragments bear come from the  
inscriptions added by the Second Generation [Thearch].[[24]](#footnote-25) Despite the loss of

6 INTRODUCTION

the original inscriptions over the centuries, there is no indication that the  
texts from the seven stelae have suffered severe damage, spurious interpola-  
tions, or later editing. Apart from a string of minor textual problems which  
must be addressed individually, there is not a single line that is fundamental-  
ly different between the **Shih-chi** transmission and that of the inscription  
collections.

In any case, attempts to decide individual problems conclusively are as  
hopeless an enterprise as the reconstruction of the original calligraphy.  
Although rubbings or drawings exist for all the inscriptions, all of these are  
from post-Sung times and their origins are unclear; moreover, where  
different rubbings or descriptive reports for a single stele exist, as in the case  
of the Mt. T^i inscription, they tend to contradict each other\* In the present  
study, I will therefore refrain from unfolding the individual historical  
circumstances (usually speculative) regarding when and how a certain stde  
was lost; I also will not discuss their calligraphy, their original arrangement  
on the stones, or their transmission in various inscription collections. These  
topics cannot be handled with any reasonable degree of confidence, and their  
discussion must perforce end in idle speculation. Moreover, these questions  
do not bear on the historical understanding of the texts proper.

Since these stone engravings are the most substantial set of official  
documents[[25]](#footnote-26) received from the first decade of Chinese imperial history - and  
fortunately enough received in a most conscientiously preserved shape - one  
would expect them to have been wellstudied and carefully integrated into our  
picture of the first years of the Chinese empire and the official ideology  
under which this great beginning in world history was made. And since  
these texts are organized along the poetic devices of rhyme and meter, one  
would again expect to find them meticulously treated in discussions on early  
Chinese literature, in particular within the traditions of **Shih-ching**hymns and Chou bronze inscriptions. Surprisingly, none of this is the

INTRODUCTION 7

case.25 That the inscriptions of the 4tFirst August Thearch,? are habitually put

1. The inscriptions were first translated by Edouard Chavannes in his uLes  
   Inscriptions des Ts?in^ 473-521, and are also included in his Les Memoires historiques de  
   Se-ma Ts'ien, 2:140\*89, 551-53, English translations of the six inscriptions preserved in  
   the Shih-chi include those by Burton Watson, Records of the Grand Historian: Qin  
   Dynastyy 46-61, Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, Records of the Historian, 169-84,  
   Raymond Dawson, Sima Qian: Historical Recordsy 67-83, and William H, Nienhauser et  
   The Grand Scribe\*s Records^ 1:139-53; in a number of difficult details, Chavanne$,meticulous reading still remains unsurpassed. Scholarship on these texts has been  
   conducted within the field of Shih-chi studies, especially as part of the extensive  
   commentaries\* In addition to the Chinese scholarship, Takigawa Kametaro^ Shiki kaichu  
   kosho, together with the collation notes and supplements by Mizusawa Toshitada (Shiki  
   kaichu kosho koho), must be consulted. The best modem studies are Jung Keng^ ^Chin  
   Shih-huang k^-shih and Wu Fu-chu^ Ch'in Shih-huang k'o-shih k\*ao\ for more  
   recent annotations, apparently directed to the general public yet thoughtfully done, cf.  
   Huang Kung-chu, Chou CWin chin-shih wen-hsUan pHng-chu, 145-65. Although the  
   texts had been originally carved in stone and thus at least once existed in a definite and  
   unchangeable version, and despite the unification of the script under the Ch'in, there is a  
   considerable amount of minor textual differences between the texts as they are preserved in  
   the Shih-chi, in the various compendia of inscription texts, or in the ^Ch^uan Ch'in wenn^nan shang-ku san-tai CWin Han san-kuo liu~chyao wen) 1.1 Ob-13a. The  
   discrepancies include (graphical) variants of the same character, lexical variants, i.e.,  
   differences of words, and the number of characters in a single line, thus affecting the  
   metric pattern. It should be kept in mind that none of the received versions represents the  
   original stone carving; as a book, the Shih-chi is certainly the oldest one containing six of  
   the inscriptions, but we must take seriously traditional claims that the actual stone stelae  
   did survive for centuries and may have served as the basis for the versions in the extant  
   inscription collections, although none of these compendia dates earlier than the fourteenth  
   century. On principle, I compare the versions collated by Jung Keng and Wu Fu-chu, the  
   modern Peking Chung-hua edition of the Shih-chi and its commentaries, the Takigawa and  
   Mizusawa versions including the variants noted there, the version collated in the ^Ch^iian  
   Ch^n wen/' and Wang Shu-min's phonological glosses. To each text, I give the page  
   numbers in the Chung-hua edition, in Jung Keng's study, and in the “Ch’tian Ch’in  
   wen/' The graphical (and in some cases even the lexical) variants do not entail significant  
   semantic consequences, and often I do not have anything relevant to contribute in favor of  
   one choice or the other. (Many of these variants appear in Mizusawa\* s notes.) Since these  
   variants are conveniently at hand through comparison of the versions noted above, I refrain  
   from listing them. Thus, in the notes I will discuss only those variants that result in clear  
   semantic differences, or where I have concrete reasons to argue in favor of a certain choice.  
   (In a considerable number of cases, the variants in Jung Keng^s version are too odd to be  
   considered seriously, and sometimes can be definitely proven as being nothing but  
   misprints,) I also refrain from arguing about the details of existing translations; the

aside may be due to the predominant view that they are just boastful  
propaganda and hence of little “factual” significance and less literary value.  
The second part of this assumption may at least be arguable - the first is  
certainly not. With regard to early Chinese imperial history, whether  
political, institutional, literary, intellectual, religious or, broadly, "culturar'  
history, we pay a price for neglecting the only substantial corpus of texts  
immediately connected with the First Thearch^ official ritual activities.

The following study begins with an annotated translation of the seven  
texts 26 Wherever possible> I try to locate the expressions employed in the  
inscriptions within the (mostly late Eastern) Chou literary tradition, and  
occasionally also point to Han texts on ritual when they betray striking  
coincidences. With the exception of a restricted number of venerated texts  
transmitted from the Western Chou, especially the supposedly early parts of  
the **Book of Songs** and the **Book of Documents,** I will not propose,  
however, that a later text A is actually quoting from an earlier text B; rather,  
I prefer to suggest that they might share, and at the same time enhance, a  
common tradition of thought and expression. That an expression in text A is  
also found in text B, of course, does not mean that it must have been quoted  
directly from B. The working premise is that we should allow texts to  
surprise us, time and again, by unexpected references. The next step in the  
study is devoted to the ritual context of the inscriptions, and here I try to  
unfold the various strings of Chou ritual tradition that are amalgamated in the  
very act of erecting inscribed stelae on mountain tops» The key problem here  
is the need to explain this amalgamation as a historical phenomenon: as the  
textual annotations seek to contextualize the inscriptions, the investigation  
into the **Ch'in** ritual system is meant to historicize them. The following study

INTRODUCTION 9

of these texts is intended to decipher the structure and language of the  
inscriptions and to mediate theoretical conceptualizations of ritual language  
vis-^-vis the actual historical phenomena of Chou and ChMn texts. The  
question to pursue is not “What is a ritual text?” but rather “How and why  
do the stele inscriptions adhere to historically developed textual patterns for  
ritual use?”

The conclusion of the present study is not exactly that, but, on the  
contrary> just a beginning: as the textual analysis of the inscriptions brings  
new evidence to large issues concerning the early history of the Chinese  
empire^ the problems with Han historiography, the status, diffusion, and  
scholarship of the early textual canon in Eastern Chou and early imperial  
times, it also raises various problems in our understanding of the early  
empire that would require not a chapter but a series of substantial  
monographs to be dealt with responsibly. I shall therefore confine myself to  
suggesting some of the preliminaries essential to a comprehensive historical  
interpretation of the ChJin stele inscriptions - and to a re-interpretation of  
early Chinese imperial history that would be able to integrate the evidence  
collected from these sources.

A major problem of early Chinese inteilectual history is the division of  
thought into distinctive “schools,” following a misreading of Ssu-ma T’an’s  
司馬談（d ca. 110 B.C.) classificiation of pre-Ch’in thinkers into six  
different groups.[[26]](#footnote-27) [[27]](#footnote-28) I will deal with this issue in chapter five, arguing that  
even the political philosophy of the **ju M** scholars - who constitute one of  
the two recognizable scholarly lineages of pre-imperial China - cannot be  
clearly distinguished from other currents of thought, especially from the one  
we habitually call “Legalism.” The stele inscriptions and their historical  
context suggest that these labels are problematic and misleading. As I argue  
in chapter five, the^w scholars of Warring States and early imperial times  
were essentially professionals in the ritual and textual **tradition.Their**esteemed knowledge, for which they were given salaried positions under  
various rulers, was independent from issues of any specifically uConfucian,?morality. Except for a few occasions of ironic usage, I therefore avoid terms  
like “Confucian / Confucianism” or “Legalist / Legalism” on the whole.

1. Annotated Translation

Text 1: The inscription on Mt I：1

The August Thearch has established the state;[[28]](#footnote-29) [[29]](#footnote-30) [[30]](#footnote-31) [[31]](#footnote-32) [[32]](#footnote-33) [[33]](#footnote-34) [[34]](#footnote-35) [[35]](#footnote-36) [[36]](#footnote-37) [[37]](#footnote-38) 皇帝立國

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 11

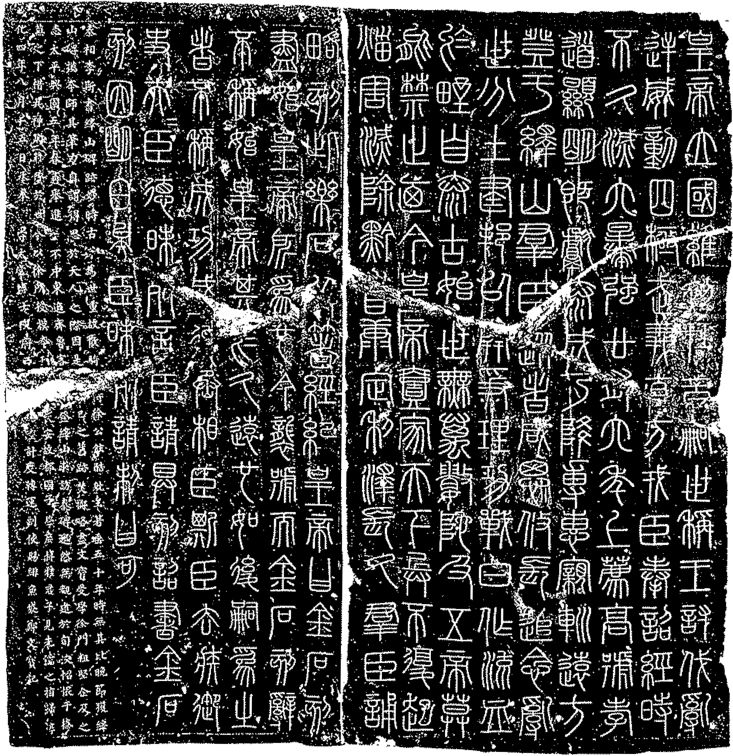


Figure 1: The Mt. I inscription carved in A.D. 993  
(after Ledderose and Schlombs 1990, plate 191)

1. ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

Originally in times past 維初在昔

1. He inherited the throne and was designated king.[[38]](#footnote-39) [[39]](#footnote-40) 嗣世稱王

He launched punitive attacks against the rebellious and 討伐围L逆  
recalcitrant,

His might shook the four extremities;[[40]](#footnote-41) [[41]](#footnote-42) 威動四極

1. Martial order and rightness stood upright and straights 武義直方

The mi!itary officers received the imperial orders,[[42]](#footnote-43) 戎臣奉言g

Through a passage of time not long, 經時不久

9 They exterminated the six cruel and violent ones.[[43]](#footnote-44) [[44]](#footnote-45) [[45]](#footnote-46) 滅六暴強

In His twenty-sixth years 廿有六年

He presents the lofty designation to those above^ - 上薦高號

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 13

12 The way of filial piety is brilliantly manifest and shining!孝道顯明  
As soon as He has presented the grand accomplishment, 既獻泰成  
He sends down spreading grace, 乃降専惠

15 And personally tours the distant regions. 親〈遠方

He ascends Mount I, 登于嶂山

And the multitude of officials attending 群臣從者

1. All meditate on the long duration [of the past efforts]. 咸思攸長

They recall and contemplate the times of chaos: 追念亂世

When they apportioned the land，established discrete states,分土建邦  
21 And thus unfolded the impetus for struggle.^ 以開爭理

Attacks and campaigns were daily waged;n 功戰曰作

How they shed their blood in the open countryside - 流血於野

24 This had begun in highest antiquity. 自泰古始

Through untold generations 世無萬數

One [rule] followed another down to the Five Thearchs, 陀及五帝

27 And no one could prohobit or stop them. 莫能禁止

Now today, the August Thearch 迺今皇帝

Has unified all under heaven under one lineage^ ^ 壹家天下 [[46]](#footnote-47) [[47]](#footnote-48) [[48]](#footnote-49) [[49]](#footnote-50)

1. Warfare will not arise again![[50]](#footnote-51) 兵不復起

Disaster and harm are exterminated and erased, 《甾害滅除

The black-haired people live in peace and stability^[[51]](#footnote-52) [[52]](#footnote-53) 齡首康定

33 Benefits and blessings are lasting and enduring.^ 矛|j'澤長久

The multitudes of the officials recite [this] epitome 群臣誦略

And carve [it] into this musical[?] stone[[53]](#footnote-54) 刻此\_石

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 15

36 To manifest the constant guidelines [of the empire].17 以著經紀

Chang Shou-chieh in 2.57, basing himself on the T’ang text c/izTi 括地志）

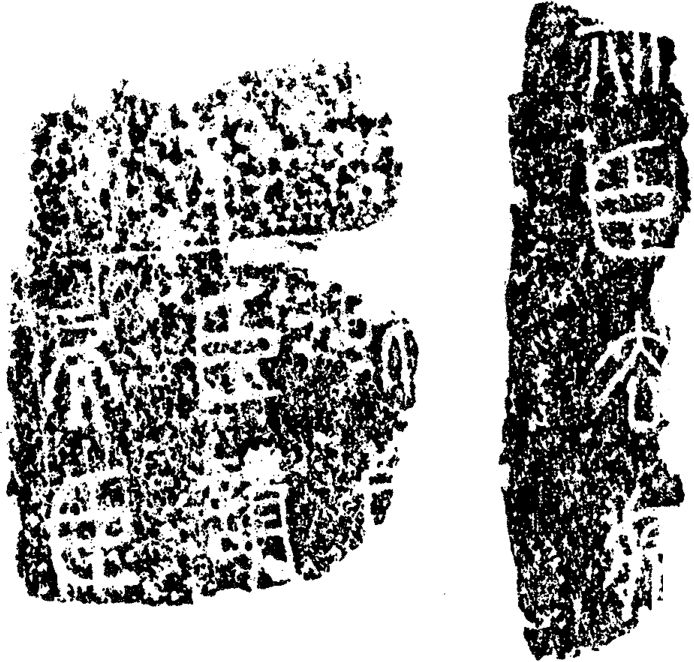
confuses two different mountairis: Mt. I in Tsou 芻g county (cf, the entry in  
28B. 1637) where the inscription was placed，and Mt. Ko-i 葛蟬（southwest of P’i ®  
county in modern Kiangsu, cf, Han-shu 2BA.1527» 1588) to which the Shang-shu -  
according to its early, and most of the ChMng, commentators - most probably refers.  
(This problem becomes further complicated by the question where the Ssu river and its  
tributaries actually took their course in pre-Han times; for the details of the whole  
discussion, which I cannot pursue here, cf, Wang Hsien-ch'ien, Han-shu pu-chu 28A1.5b,  
28A3.9b»I0a, 28B2.36a'37b. Again, all major Ch'ing Shang-shu commentators with  
their works included in the Huang-Ch'ing ching-chieh and the Huang-Ch'ing

皇清經解纊編 have made contributions to the issue.) Despite all  
these efforts (and geographical confusion) on the side of traditional scholars, one may  
wonder whether yueh-shih, which is not attested in any other early text, indeed means  
^musical stone\*'; conceivably, the character ^ here could represent a different word, e.g.,  
^brillianf' (usually written shuo M)> If H here indeed refers to music, the term may not  
point to the ch'ing of the Ssu river but to the particular material of the stele, i.eM a  
particularly valuable and hard variety that could be used for lithophones. After all, ordinary  
stone was not recognized as possessing any intrinsic value, and it became popular as a  
material for inscriptions only after the First Thearch (see section 3.1. below,) Chime-  
stones, on the other hand, together with bells and drums belonged to the ^venerated line of  
the ritual instruments proper\*1 (Martin Gimm, Das Yileh-fu tsa-lu des Tuan An-chieh:  
Studien zur Geschichte von Musik, Schauspiel und Tanz in der Tang-Dynasde, 126); the  
material itself was highly prestigious, and not infrequently the lithophones bore  
inscriptions; one example of a set of inscribed chime-stones actually comes directly from  
the pre-imperial ChMn court (see section 3.2. below). When these inscriptions were cut  
into stone, the characters were aesthetically modelled on those cast in bronze. This transfer  
of form into an entirely different material required substantial efforts of craftsmanship and  
testifies not only to the normative value of a script that was ultimately directed towards  
the spirits but also to the particular value of chime-stones. If we can trust the later copies  
and rubbings of the stele inscriptions, these again ~ Chough now in small seal script -  
indeed continued the tradition of a particularly exalted script for messages to the spirits.  
(Both the Shang oracle bones and the later bamboo slips testify to the ready availability of  
much simpler forms of writing contemporary with the bronze and chime-stone  
inscriptions; a possible conclusion might be that these forms were not used when  
addressing the spirits.) In chapter 3 below I will argue that the texts of the imperial stele  
inscriptions were indeed modelled on those of the earlier bronzes and chime-stones; from  
this perspective, I would not rule out the possibility that the stelae were indeed conceived  
as sonorously resounding with the First Thearch^ merits.

17 Ching-chi (^constant guidelines^) is a contemporary cosmological term  
denoting the continuing course of nature. Cf. its use in the ^monthly ordinances1\* (yueh-  
"rtg 月令）in cfe’w/z-dWw 1.2 and

16 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

Figure 2: The extant Mt. T^ai inscription fragments  
(after Pei-ching t'u-shu-kuan 1989,1:7)



ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 17

Text 2: The inscription on Mt, T?ai^

皇帝臨位  
作制明法

The August Thearch assumed His position,  
Created the regulations and illuminated the laws;^ [[54]](#footnote-55)

3 The officials below [received their] insignia and order. 臣下修飭

In His twenty-sixth year2〇 廿有六年

He first unified All under Heaven - 初並天下

6 There was none who was not respectful and submissive.21 罔不賓月艮  
He personally tours to the distant multitudes,[[55]](#footnote-56) [[56]](#footnote-57) [[57]](#footnote-58) [[58]](#footnote-59) 窺輕遠\_

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 19

Ascends this Grand Mountain^ 登兹泰山

9 And all around surveys the [world at the] eastern extremity.周覽東極  
The attending officials meditate on His feats,24 從臣思迹

Trace the roots and origins of His deeds and achievements% 本原事業  
12 And respectfully recite His merits and virtuous power.2^ 祗誦功德 [[59]](#footnote-60) [[60]](#footnote-61) [[61]](#footnote-62) [[62]](#footnote-63)

The way of good rule is advanced and enacted; 治道運f?

The various professions achieve their proper place, 諸產得宜

15 And all find rule and model.27 皆有法式

His great principle is superb and shining^s 大義休明 [[63]](#footnote-64) [[64]](#footnote-65)

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 21

To be passed on to later generations[[65]](#footnote-66) [[66]](#footnote-67) [[67]](#footnote-68) 垂于後世

18 Who accept this obediently and will not change it\*3〇 順承勿革

The August Thearch embodies sagehood, 皇帝躬聖

And after having pacified all under heaven 既平天下

21 He has not been remiss in rulership. 不懈于治

He rises early, retires late at night;3i 夙興夜寐

He establishes and sets up enduring benefits,[[68]](#footnote-69) 建設長利

24 Radiates and glorifies His teachings and instructions,[[69]](#footnote-70) 專隆教誨

His precepts and principles reach all around, 訓經宣達

The distant and the near are completely well-ordered 遠近畢理

27 And all receive His sage will 咸承聖志

The noble and the mean are distinguished and made clear，M 貴賤分明  
Men and women embody compliance,^ 男女體順

30 Cautious and respectful to their professions and duties•奶 慎遵職事 [[70]](#footnote-71) [[71]](#footnote-72) [[72]](#footnote-73)

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 23

Distinctly demarcated are the inner and outer spheres,37 昭隔內夕f

Nothing that is not clear and purees 糜不清淨

33 Extending down to the later descendants.39 施及後嗣

His transforming influence reaches without limit: 化及無窮

May [later ages] respect and follow the decrees He 遵奉遺詔

bequeaths4^

36 And forever accept His solemn warnings![[73]](#footnote-74) [[74]](#footnote-75) [[75]](#footnote-76) [[76]](#footnote-77) [[77]](#footnote-78) 永承重戒

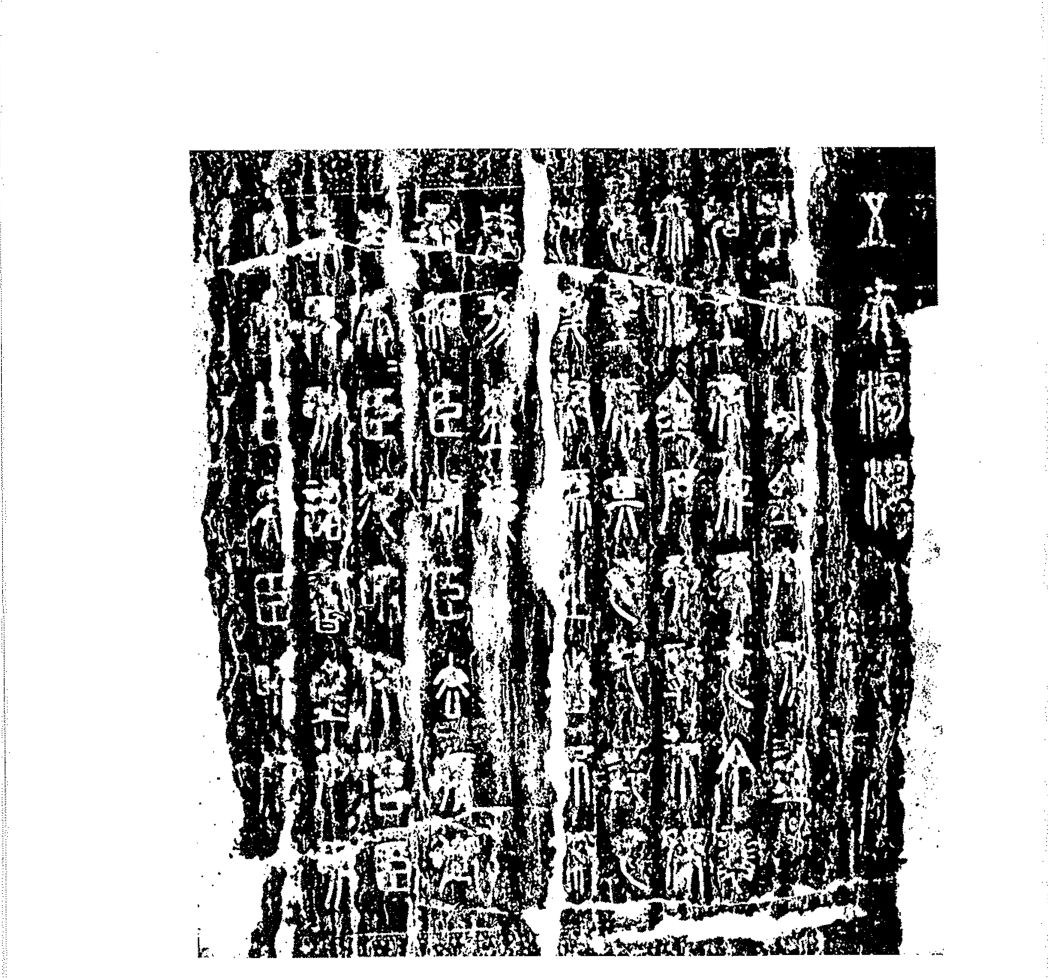


Figure 3: The Mt. Lang-yeh inscription fragment  
(after Shin Taizari kokuseki \* Royadai kokuseki^ 36)

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 25

Text 3: The inscription on Mt Lang-yeh42

Now, in His twenty-sixth year,43 錐廿六年

1. This inscription rhymes on every second verse and has the following rhyme  
   sequences: c/nTi 之 〇, 12 rhymes)，6 rhymes)，陽（\*-〇(；，6 rhymes),  
   eWA 職（\*-没/:，6 rhymes), and 魚（\*-a, 6 rhymes); note that this structure is a  
   correction of what I had initially given in Die Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer, 166.  
   For the text, see Shih-chi 6.245, Jung Keng, ^ChMn Shih-huang k^-shih 137-38,  
   and uCh'lian Ch\*in wen^ l.ila-b. There is considerable confusion about the textual  
   borders of this inscription, since it is followed first by an enumeration of the officials who  
   accompanied the emperor on his tour to Lang-yeh, and this enumeration, again, leads to  
   another metrically structured passage of twenty-eight verses with irregular meter and  
   rhyme. Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 2:149-51, and \*Xes Inscriptions des Ts'in^  
   500-502, Nienhauser, Grand Scribe's Records, l:141-42? Dawson, Sima Qian: Historical  
   Records, 70-71, as well as Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, Records of the Historian,  
   172-73, regard these parts as belonging to the original inscription. Tsuruma, ^Shin  
   Shikotei no toho junshu kokuseki ni miru kyokosei/' 7, notes that the Sung work Tai-  
   p'ing huan-yu chi mentions six hundred characters for the whole stele, which

would encompass the rhymed eulogy, the unrhymed parts, as well as the Second  
Generation [Thearch's] additional inscription. Yen K'o-chlin, on the other hand, accepts  
only the first seventy-two verses as the inscription proper ( ^Ch^an Ch?in wen^ LI Ia»b)»  
and takes the following unrhymed and rhymed passages as a 4\*Discussion on carving metal  
and stone" (4\*I chin-shih,, 1.9a-b), Yen further extracts the longer part of the

unrhymed lines as the supplementary inscription ordered by the Second Generation  
[Thearch] (Llib-12a). Yea's understanding is supported by Jung Keng, ^ChMn Shih-  
huang k^-shih 139-41, who notes that the final passage is too irregular in rhyme  
and meter to be regarded as part of the original inscription, and that there was no space left  
to include it on the stone, according to the presumed size and the few known fragments of  
this stele\* Like Wu Fu~chu, ChHn Shih-huang k'o-shih k'ao, 41»44} I agree with Jung's  
conclusion and accordingly take only the first seventy-two lines as the original  
inscription, but there remains a problem unsolved: some of the pieces of information that  
seem to be structural core elements of every inscription are now excluded, since they are to  
be found in the final irregular rhymes: viz,, the precise mention of the place of the stele,  
the remark on the accompanying dignitaries, and the closing formula that these officials  
first recited the emperor^ merits and virtuous power and then carved them into the stone.  
(This final element, however, is also missing in the T'ai-shan inscription\*)

Some Shih-chi editions and inscription collections write ^twenty-eighth year7'  
instead of \*\*twenty-sixth year/' see Xh'uan Ch'in wen^ 1,11, Shih-chi 6.245, Takigawa,  
Shiki kaichu Jcosho 6.36, and Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-cheng, 2:209, The twenty-  
eighth year (219 B,C.) would be the date of the inscription, but the first lines seem to  
refer to the founding of the dynasty. Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 137,  
on the basis of received stone rubbings, accepts ^twenty-sixth year.'1

26 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

1. The August Thearch created a beginning: 皇帝作始

He rectified and balanced the rules and measures44 端平法度

1. As the guidelines for the ten thousand beings,4^ 萬;物之紀1

In order to illuminate the human affairs 以明人事

6 He united and led to concord father and son,\* 合同父子

Sage, wise, humane, and right：47 聖智仁義

1. He made manifest and clear the Way and its inner pattern!顯白道理  
   Eastwards He tours the eastern land, 東撫東土

10 To inspect the common soldiers and officers.48 以省卒士

His achievements already greatly completed, 事已大畢

12 He now looks down on the [lands by the eastern] sea.49 乃臨于海

The August Thearch, He has merit: 皇帝之功

1. Diligently He labors on the principal tasks. 勤勞本事

**He exalts agriculture，eliminates peripheral [occupations**]，上農除末

1. On the term/a-m 法度（“rules and measures”）see the note on T.2\_
2. Whereas in 幼a 叫 </2如 s/m 3.6, 14.24, andi8,30 the sagq ruler 聖

君）knows the “essentials of the ten thousand beings”（waw-ww duTj 萬物之要；for

the same term, see Kuan-tzu 10,166), in the Li-chi 38.308a-b it is the correct music  
(again of the ruler) that manifests the 4<internal patterns of the ten thousand beings11 (wan-  
wu chih li these slightly varying formulae appear to be interchangeable,

conveying the meaning of an all-encompassing cosmic rulership.

1. According to Li-chi 37.301c it is the ritual music that unites father and son in  
   their relation to each other.
2. Jen-i iZM is a standard compound omnipresent in Warring States political  
   literature; for a succinct discussion of jen and z, cl William G. Boltz, review of  
   Knoblock: Xunzi, vol.l, 416.
3. Unlike Chavannes, I do not follow Chang Shou-chieh's phonetic gloss that the  
   character ^ should be read sheng 〇4to restrict^ or ilto suppress7'); I see no reason for  
   rejecting the more common pronunciation hsing, representing the word \*'to inspect/> The  
   first part of the couplet appears almost verbatim immediately after the inscription in the  
   Shih-chi (in the passage that also has been interpreted as part of the inscription proper);  
   here, the text runs:乃撫東土至于璃牙[5 (“Then 合e toured the eastern lands and arrived at  
   Lang-yeh/’）
4. The line is closely parallel to CF.6 and CFTK.6; see below.
5. Stressing the importance of agriculture (frequently, as in the present text, denoted

as “principal” [pen 本]or “principal tasks” 本事])and thinking little of

commerce (tcperipheralT, [mo ^]) was a political topos since Eastern Chou times. First  
promulgated in Ch'in in about the mid-fourth century B.CM the doctrine was eventually  
adopted by ju authors. The first and most important source is the ^Agriculture and  
War”（“Nung chan” 農戰）chapter of the 幼冰w ascribed to Shang Yang 商鞅（d

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 27

16 The black-haired people, these he enriches! 齡首是富

Everywhere under vast heaven51 普天之下

18 He unifies the minds and integrates the wills.52 搏心揖志

Vessels and implements have their identical measures, 器械\_量

1. One uniformly writes the refined characters.53 同書文字

338 B,C〇, the most influential statesman and political reformer of Ch'in between 359 and  
338 B.C. The aggressive statement of the present couplet, that the peripheral occupations  
should be erased, fits with a statement in Shang Yang^ biography (Shih-chi 68.2230)  
according to which the statesman wanted to enslave those engaged in the peripheral  
occupations. Again, also as a reference for the present lines, cf\* Han Fei-tzu 4.71  
(reflecting on Shang Yang\*s success in ChMn): <4He made difficult the peripheral works and  
benefitted the principal tasks.,T The idea of stressing agriculture while denigrating  
commerce may be frequently encountered in a variety of texts, e.gM in the Kuan-tzu  
calendar chapter “Yu-kuan” 幼官（3.37-50) and the ch叩ter “Ruling the State”（“Chih  
治國，15,261\_63)，in chapter 26 of the WwWA c/i’wn-cft’z’w (including the paragraph  
“Shang nimg” 丄農[“Exalting Agriculture”])，as well as in 历5.110, 8.1^3,  
11.205, and later in one of Chia I’s 賈證（200 -168) memorials (H伽24A.1128), On  
the related question of social classes, see Derk Bodde, uThe Idea of Social Classes in Han  
and Pre-Han ChinC 26»4I.

This line is taken from Mao shih [# 205] 13-1.195b, quoted also in Meng-tiu  
9A.71c, Tso chuan [Chao 7] 44.345c-346a, and Han Fei-tzu 7.128 (again in 20.359): uAU  
under vast heaven / there is nothing which is not the land of the king. / Within the sea-  
boundaries of the land / there is none who is not the king^s subject.,r Of these four lines  
from the Mao shih hymn, the second is closely parallel to line 62 of this inscription, as is  
the fourth to line 68.

1. 搏 is to be taken as a loan character for c/zw伽縳（“to unify”). See Wang  
   Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-cheng, 2:209. The same character is used in several passages of  
   the Shang-chun shu, e.g., in the chapterAgriculture and War1' 3\*8; in this chapter (and in  
   various contexts throughout the whole book) the idea is reiterated that the ruler should  
   make his people single-minded in order to have them concentrate on agriculture (see  
   previous note). The graph po M which is found in some Shih-chi editions (see Mizusawa,  
   Shiki kaichu kosho koho 6.188d) seems to be incorrect.
2. Maybe the term 文字（“script”）should be understood m the meaning

that it has in the title of the Shuo-wen chieh-tzu, with wen denoting simple (i.e.,  
indivisible) and tzu denoting composite characters. See Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-  
cheng, 2:205, and Chavannes, remark: aCe texte est important parce qu'il est le plus  
ancien dans lequel on trouve etablie la distinction entre les caract^res primitifs (wen) et les  
caracteres derives (tse) (M^moires historiques, 2:146, also 135). On the  
standardization of measures and the script in 221 B.C,，see 6\*237-39, and Bodde，

<8The State and Empire of Ch'in^ 56-60. Weny however, does not necessarily denote  
characters or the script itself; in the third century B.C. its standard meaning is still  
“accomplished，” or “refined.” See my “Ritua丨，Text，and the Formation of the Canon:

Wherever the sun and moon shine on 日月戶斤照

22 And wherever boats and carriages carry their loads - 舟輿戶斤載  
All people live out their full lives, 皆終其命

24 And there is none who does not achieve his ambitions.54 莫不得意

Historical Transitions of wen in Early China.M The standardization of weights and  
measures was in fact a renewal and extension of the same policy carried out more than a  
century earlier by Shang Yang (cf. Shih-chi 68.2232), and it can be traced to some  
certainly earlier, i.eM non-4<legalist^ sources as well as to the contemporary ^monthly  
ordinances^ where the duty to unify the measures is assigned to the times of both the  
vernal and the autumnal equinox (Lii-shih ch'un-ch'iu 2.13, 8.76, Li-chi 15.134a,  
16.146c); the ideal of standard weights and measures, as well as of a uniform script is also  
expressed in Kuan-tzu 10,165-66. For a comprehensive analytic survey on the  
archaelogical evidence, including seven color illustrations of Ch'in measuring instruments  
(one of them the famous方升\* bearing Shang Yang’s name)，see Ch’iu Kuang-  
ming, Chung-kuo lUtai tu-liang heng-k'ao, 8-11, 140-49, 188-205, 336-97; for a  
convenient tabular survey of the ChMn pre-imperial and imperial weights and measures see  
Nienhauser, Grand Scribe's Records, i:xxxi-xxxiv (also in 7:xxi-xxiv); for the inscription  
on the so-called Shang Yang Hang cf. Kuo Mo-jo, Liang-Chou chin-wen-tz\*u ta-hsi  
k'ao-shih, 250b~251b> Liang-Chou chin-wen-tzfu ta-hsi fu-lu, 2915-2923, and Shirakawa  
Shizuka, aKinbun tsushaku^ (hereafter. KBTS) 34 (1971), 28-31; for a comprehensive set  
of rubbings taken from the measuring instruments inscribed with edicts by the two Ch'in  
emperors, see Jung Keng, Ch'in Han chin-wen lu. The most comprehensive Chinese  
study on inscribed Ch'in bronzes - including the measuring instruments - is Wang Hui,  
Ch'in t'ung-ch'i ming-wen pien-nien chUshih\ for a translation of the edicts that were  
copied on a great variety of instruments, see Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 2:549-51.  
Again, the legal regulations mentioned in line 3 of the present inscription were also  
subject to the overall pre-imperial standardization, as the bamboo strips excavated in Shui-  
hu-ti 睡虎地（in Ylin-meng 雲夢 county, Hupei province) in 1975 attest; on these  
documents, which do not really support the cruel image of the Ch'in regime as outlined  
by Han authors (see the discussion below), see Shui-hu~ti Ch?in mu chu-chien cheng-li  
hsiao-tsu, Shui-hu-ti Ch}in mu chu-chien, and A.F.P. Hulsewe, Remnants of Ch'in Law:  
An Annotated Translation of the Ch'in Legal and Administrative Rules of the 3rd Century  
B.C. Discovered in Yun-meng Prefecture, Hu-pei Province in 1975, together with Bodde's  
remarks in “The State and Empire of Ch’in/’ 49-52.

1. A parallel expression appears in a panegyric a high official offered to the emperor  
   in 213 B.C, (see Shih-chi 6.254). Again, the four lines are parallel to several sentences  
   from the uWu-ti chapter of the Ta Tai Li-chi (see the note on T.6 above), all praising  
   the achievements of the legendary emperors of high antiquity, and all in tetrasyllabic  
   meter: ^Wherever sun and moon shine on, / and wherever wind and rain reach - / there is  
   none who would not be compliant and obedient (7,121); <4Within the four seas, /  
   wherever boats and carriages reach - / there is none who would not be joyous and at ease1\*  
   (7.122); uWithin the four seas, / wherever boats and carriages reach - / there is none who

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 29

To execute the tasks by responding to the times55 ~ 應時動事

1. This is realized only by the August Thearch! 是維皇帝

He straightens and rectifies the aberrant customs^^ 匡飭異俗

28 [His influence] traverses the rivers, penetrates the lands.57 陵水經地

He worries for and takes pity on the black-haired people, 憂恤龄首

30 From daybreak to dawn He is never remiss.58 車月夕不懈-

He eliminates uncertainties, fixes the laws,59 除疑定法

would not be respectful and submissive” (7\*125). These passages，like the present lines of  
the inscriptions, are stock formulae common to both “legalist” and “ritual” texts; for the  
former, see Han Fei-tzu 8.156 (^wherever sun and moon shine on1'), for the latter Li-chi  
53 \_406c (“Chung-yiing”)，eulogizing Confucius himsdf who is loved “wherever boats aiid  
carriages reach，’ and Wherever sun and moon shine on.” Again，even 2.43 includes

the phrases ^wherever sun and moon shine on, wherever boats and carriages reach/'

1. The notion of ^responding to the times>, (ying shih SB#) has two dimensions:  
   on the one hand, it is linked to the seasonal duties that have to be observed by the ruler in  
   order to synchronize the agricultural and ritual activities with the natural cycle of time;  
   this basically cosmological notion is fully expressed in the yueh-ling, with its early  
   versions (the version in chapter five of the Huai-nan tzu 淮南子 represents a later  
   development of thought) in Lu-shih ch'un-ch'iu and Li-chi. On the other hand, the notion  
   of ^responding to the times'\* is a historical, hence more ideological one: here it means to  
   synchronize one's political actions with the needs of the present time and to reject the  
   venerated models of ancient rulership. (In fact, the convincing point is made that the  
   culture-heroes of antiquity were succesvsful precisely because each one acted in his own  
   way\*) This historical notion is a recurrent theme in “legalist” thinking (see

shu Ll-2, 9.18-19, or Li Ssu^ argumentation in Shih-chi 6.254), but again has diffused  
into the Zi-c加（37,302c) and the argumentations of Shu-sun Tung 叔孫通（see  
99\*2722-23, Han-shu 43\*2126-27, and the discussion below).

1. Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 138, has 0 畢（“complete”）for f  
   異（“aberrant”)； I cannottrace the source of this variant which may be a simple misprint  
   here, since in his proposed arrangement of the text on the stele (141) Jung writes /.
2. Chang Shou-chieh reads "叩陵 as "叹凌 in the sense of "歷（“to traverse”).  
   See Shih-chi 6.246.
3. A nearly verbatim quotation from Mao shih [# 234] 13-1.195b (chao-hsi pu hsia

朝夕不暇).See also M如妖认[# 205] 15-3.233c A/A 朝夕從事，

occuring again in Shang-chun shu 8.18 with a significant addition: chao-hsi ts'ung shih  
坤 呀朝夕從事於農)；similar expressions may be found in T如 Aw训[Chao 3]

42.328c (c/2如朝夕不倦）and L仏c/fwtt-e/Ti’w 5,53 (/认-砂日  
夜不懈；describing the legendary Ytl)，25,316 and 14.143 (似-ye/z pw

/wzWz 夙夜不懈，describing the “Martial King” of the Chou)\*

1. This seems to be the only instance in the present cycle where fa ^ can be  
   narrowly read as \*'penal law." See the discussion on T.2 above.

30 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

32 And all know what to avoid^o 咸知所辟

The chiefs of the regions are assigned separate duties^1 方{白分職

34 The various rulings are measured and smooth\*62 諸治，經易

Whatever one undertakes or rejects is invariably proper， 舉錯必'當

36 There is nothing that does not conform to the scheme. 莫不如畫

The August Thearch, He brightly shines, 皇帝之明

38 He looks down on and inspects the four quarters.63 臨察四方

The honored and the humble, the noble and the mean, 尊卑貴賤

40 They never exceed their position and rank.^4 不输次行

1. According to Chang Shou-chieh, pi Jgf should be read as pi C4to avoicT); the  
   reading is confirmed by the rhyme of this word here.

The designation fang-po is anachronistic; in the idealized administrative  
system of the Chou, it denoted the appointed chiefs of the regions beyond the kingly  
domain of 1000 li square. See Li-chi 11.97a. The notion of 4<separate duties'1 or ^dividing  
the duties\*1 (fen chih is particularly prominent in the ritual bureaucracy of the Chou-  
li itlHi where it appears programmatically already in the very first paragraph of the book  
(l.lc; cf\* again 17,114b，28\*192a, 34229b，in 15.104c also as/從 分職

事）\_ The term may also be traced to 尺10，163，166，16.273, 没 7.139,

8\*157-58, 12.28, Han Fei-tzu 15.270 and Li-chi 4.32a, always in the sense that the ruler  
divides the duties in his state and thus achieves social order.

1. The couplet seems to refer to the division of the country into thirty-six  
   commanderies (chiin), each of them headed by a governor (shou who was assisted by a  
   commandant (wei j^f) and an inspector (chien See Shih-chi 6\*239.
2. Lh 臨（“to look down”), like 察（“to inspect’’)，is a status verb appropriate  
   to the ruler. See Yen Shih-ku^s commentary in Han-shu 22\*1050. The formula lin-chya is  
   again close to chao-lin (CF.6) and lin-chao (CFTK-6), since <4to inspect1' is  
   semantically related to the meaning (ito illuminate,> in the usual sense of uto clarify, to  
   bring light into/\* The present line is therefore a variation of a stock formula that can be  
   encountered in many early texts, always denoting the ruler illuminating and looking down  
   on his territory. See, e.gt> Mao shih [# 207] 13»1.196a, Han Fei-tzu 4.71, LUchi 50382,  
   Tso chuan [Wen 12] 19B149b, [Chao 3] 42.328c, [Chao 20] 49.389c\* According to Tso  
   chuan [Chao 28] 52.417b, the ruler^ ability 4<to illuminate and look down on the four  
   quarters is called <shining^,^ On the 4<four quarters^ (ssu-fang E3^), see the note on 1.5  
   above. In the received text of the Shih-ching, ssu-fang appears no less than thirty-one  
   times, symptomatically only in the “Eulogia” and “Elegamiae” sections.
3. See the note on T.28. It is instructive to realize that in the thirteen canonical

books of the Confucian tradition, the binome tsun-pei (uthe honored and the

humble>,) occurs altogether only nine times: once each in the Erh-ya, the Tso chuan, and  
the Kung-yang chuan, but no less than six times in the Li-chi (e.gM 39.313a), the text par  
excellence that is concerned with social division and order. A vivid example that illustrates

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 31

Evil and depravity are not tolerated,^ 蟲邪不容

42 All are committed to honesty and goodness\* 皆務貞良

To all affairs tiny or great they dedicate their utmost effort,細大盡力  
44 No one dares to be idle or negligent% 莫敢怠荒

Distant and near, down to [regions] remote and obscure,^ 遠邇辟隱  
46 They are single-minded in their efforts, 專務肅莊

reverential and respectful.

They are upright and straight, solid and loyal - 端直敦忠

48 Duties and responsibilities have constancy's 事業有’常

The August Thearch, He has virtuous power, 皇帝之德

50 He secures and consolidates the four extremities. 存定四極

He punishes rebellion and eliminates calamities, 誅屬L 除害

52 He causes benefits to flourish and attracts blessings.^ 興利致福

the doctrine of staying within one’s duties is given in 丑以/2 2.28 (see also

Makeham, 4The Legalist Concept of Hsing-ming^ 95): a ruler, having fallen asleep, was  
covered with a cloak by the official in charge of capping\* Although glad to have been  
protected against the cold, the ruler punished both the official in charge of clothing and the  
one in charge of capping - the first for having missed his duties, the second for having  
transgressed them, tcIt is not that he did not hate the cold; but the harm caused by  
transgressing the [boundaries of] office is considered more severe than [the harm caused by]  
the cold.”

1. Cf. Hsiln-tzu 6.124; 4tThe evil and the depraved do not stand up; thieves and  
   robbers do not arise.”
2. Like Tso chuan [Hsiang 26] 37.289b and [Ai 5] 57.457b, the present line seems

to draw upon the line 二Awung 不敢怠遑（“[Our king] did not dare to be idle or

negligent"〇 in Mao shih [# 305] 20-4.4.360b. Tai-huang (in the present line) and tai-  
huang (or M-B., in Shih-ching and Tso chuan) appear to be the same words.

1. I read 辟隱 as an inversion of the more famUiar 隱僻\* This

phrase is used twice in Hsiln-tzu (5.102, 7,145-46) where it denotes the most remote  
regions that are nevertheless reached by the ruler's ordering influence. Another possible  
reading is given by Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 2:147, who understands p'i-yin as a  
verb-object clause: <4Au loin et au pr^s il a dissipe le$ obscurites,>,

^ See the note on T.l L

1. The two lines seem to be an extension of the basic formula ^eliminate calamities  
   and cause benefits to flourish”（c/i’m Am\* K 除害興利）that appears in Jfw伽々w  
   15.262; the inverse form hsing li chyu hai appears in Kuan-tzu 1L174, while the variant  
   “attract benefits and eliminate calamities”（e/wTz " cft’w Am 致利除害）can be found in  
   Kuan-tzu 15.261 and 17.289; Han Fei-tzu 17.299 has t4promote benefits and eiiminate  
   calamities”（c/nVz /zWm 六山’進利除害)，whereas 历伽-如 7.147 and 12,216 note that the

32 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

He regulates the tasks according to the times^o 節事以時

54 The various professions prosper and thrive. 諸產繁殖

The black-haired people are peaceful and tranquil,齡首安寧  
56 And do not use weapons and armor.” 不用兵革

Within the six kin relations, they protect each other 73 六親相保  
58 So that ultimately there are no bandits and robbers. 終無寇賊

Joyously and merrily they receive their instructions 驩欣奉教

60 And completely understand the rules and models. 盡矢口法式

Within the six combined [directions], 六合之內

62 This is the land of the August Thearch：74 皇帝之土

culture-heroes of the past 4<caused to flourish what are common benefits for all under  
heaven, eliminated what are common calamities for all under heaven/\* In Mo-tzu 4.76,  
5.98, 6.106, 7.125, 8.155, and 9,177 the formula reads acause benefits to flourish for all  
under heaven, eliminate calamities of all under heaven•”

1. Shih B# may be the historical times as well as the seasons; see the note on line  
   25 of this inscription. For a parallel passage, see Han Fei-tzu 7.123: ^[The sage] follows  
   the times to conduct the tasks.”
2. The line appears verbatim in Lii-shih ch'un-cWiu 5.53,
3. See the note on L30.
4. Tz'u-yuan i?® notes no less than five different early definitions of the i4six kin

relations^ (liu-ch'in f\^), and it seems impossible to decide which specific one is  
employed in the present text. The term, however, is used as synecdoche, i.e^ inclusively  
for all relationships. Accordingly, Han Fei-tzu speaks once of ^ruler and subjects  
protecting each other^ {chun-ch'en hsiang pao 1.12) and elsewhere of ^father

and son protecting each other”如父子相保，4,72)\*

1. 六合（“six combined [directions]”）does not appear in any of the thirteen

canonical books of the Confucian tradition; since late Warring States times the term  
denotes the four directions, heaven above» and earth below. See, e.gM the commentaries to  
C/iw郎容屯w 莊子（Kuo Ch’ing~fan，C/mang-泛w 1B.83-85, L泛-c/fwtt-cA’i以

17,200，纥w 1.1，and the 楚辭 text “Ai shih ming” 哀時命（Hung

Hsing-tsu 洪興祖[1090 - 1155】，CAWm pwdrn 楚辭補注)，14.26L In the present  
couplet, the cosmological dimension of the term is employed for the imperial  
representation to denote the extension of the empire. In accordance with the political  
definition of liu-ho given in this inscription, the term becomes a standard formula in Han  
texts of imperial ritual and representation, for example twice in Han Wu-ti，s 漢武帝(r\*  
141 - 87 B.CJ “Songs for the sacrifices at the suburban altars”（“Chiao-ssu ko” 郊祀系，  
see /fon-sAw 22.1054, 1069) as well as in a number of the great panegyric jfe 賦.For the  
present line, which is closely related to a Shih-ching verse (again quoted in Meng-tzu, Tso

and FdVzw)，see the note on line 17 of the present text.

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 33

To the west it ranges to the flowing sands,75 西涉流沙'

64 To the south it completely takes in where the doors 南盡北戶

face north

To the east it enfolds the eastern sea, 東有東海

66 To the north，it goes beyond Ta~hsia.77 北過大夏

Wherever human traces reach, 人迹所至

68 There is none who does not declare himself [the Thearch’s]無不臣者  
subject.7^

His merits surpass those of the Five Thearchs, 功蓋五帝

70 His favor extends to oxen and horses\*79 澤及牛馬

1. Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-cheng, 2:210, notes that the early T^ng compen-

diumi3扭♦-f’angs/m-cA’如北堂書鈔 has cWft 至（“to reach”）for 涉（“to range to”);  
indeed, chih seems to be the better reading. ^Flowing sandsn (liu-sha as referring to  
the western (central Asiatic) deserts is a stock formula of political language taken from the  
Shang-shu (6.39c, 41c) where it belongs to the geography outlined by YU S; his domain  
is described as follows: uTo the east, it reaches the sea; to the west, it covers [the worldj  
to the moving sands.1' In late Warring States and early Han times, liu-sha appears  
particdarly in texts of the southern tradition，like “Li sao” 離騷1.44^^  
t4Chao hunn (Ch'u-tz'upu<hu 9.200), and in various passages of the mythological

geographies of Shan-hai ching and Huai-nan tzu. The second of Han Wu^ti's

sacrificial hymns on the ^heavenly horses'1 (tJien-ma obtained from Ferghana begins  
with the lines: ^The heavenly horse comes here, / from along the western extremity. / It  
crosses the flowing sands /【■«-沾以）-/ the nine barbarian tribes submit!”（/fort-说w

22.1060; cf. also the different version in Shih-chi 24.1178,)

1. In drawing the Ch’in borders，6.239 is more clear:南至北嚮戶，Tso

Ssu 左思（ca, 250 ~ 305)，describing the far south (probably the Han commandery Jih-

nan 日南 and later Annamite province Quang-nam，south of the Tropic of Cancer)，writes  
in his “Rhapsody on the Capital of Wu”（“Wu-tu fu” 吳都賦)：“[The people] open their  
doors north to face the sun.”（開北戶以向日；see dzw W肌如如n六盍注文選

5,15b); cf. also Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 2:136, and David R. Knechtges, Wen  
xuan or Selections of Refined Literature, 1:392-94\*

1. As Chavannes，施，2:148-49, points out，Ta-hsia 大夏 here  
   is not Bactria in the far west (as it is in the Shih-chi chapter 123) but the area between the  
   Yellow River and the Fen ii& river in present western Shanhsi [ij®. As such, Ta-hsia is  
   already mentioned in Tso chuan [Chao I] 41.321c.

The line is again reminiscent of Mao shih # 205, quoted twice above (cf. the  
notes on lines 17 and 62 of the present text). Moreover,the whole passage (lines 63-68) is  
closely parallel to the description of Yao's possession of the realm in Mo-tzu 6.102.

This line relates to a similar statement in Shang-chiin shu 1129, according to  
which the founding kings T'ang ^ (of the Shang) and Wu M (of the Chou) extended their  
rewards even to oxen and horses.

34 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

There is none who does not receive His virtuous power,  
72 Everyone finds peace in his own abode^o [[78]](#footnote-79)

莫不受德  
各安其宇

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 35

Text 4: The inscription on Mt Chih-fu^i

Now, in His twenty-ninth year,8^

維廿九年  
時在中舂  
陽和方起  
皇帝東游  
巡登之罘  
臨照于海  
從臣嘉觀  
原念休烈

According to the season of mid-spring,&

1. The mildness of **yang** has just arisen\*84  
   The August Thearch travels to the east^s  
   On His tour He ascends [Mt.] Chih-fu,

6 Looks down on and illuminates [the lands by] the sea.^6  
The attending officials gaze in admiration,

Trace back and contemplate [His] excellence and brilliant  
accomplishments，

始治度紀  
本作法綱  
誦聖定箸  
追大建顯

1. Recall and recite the fundamental beginning.^

The Great Sage creates His rule.

Establishes and fixes the rules and measures,

12 Makes manifest and visible the line and net [of order] ^8

1. This inscription rhymes on every third verse and has two rhyme sequences, chih  
   之（\*-3) and dwTz 職（\*■#)，each of six rhymes. The text is in S/nTi-dW 6,249, Jung Keng，  
   “Ch，in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 144, and “Ch’Uan Ch’in wen” 1.12a.
2. Again, I follow the reading nien ~bt\* for erh-shih H-f-; see the note on line T\*4.

S3 Chang Shou»chieh (Shih-chi 6.250) notes that in ancient times, emperors

regularly carried out their inspection tours in the middle month of a season.

1. The line refers to the mild spring winds revitalizing the natural world.
2. Here, the direction ^east^ seems to be emphasized as the direction appropriate to  
   the season, following the yileh-ling cosmology. According to Kuan-tzu 10.155, yu  
   (^traver1) is the technical term for the ruler7s spring tour of inspection during which he  
   controlled whether there were activities in agriculture that were 4<not essential/\* i.e., not  
   concerned with the principal tasks,
3. Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k^o-shih k’ao,” 144, gives c/i伽-你照臨 instead  
   of lin-chao My interpretation here is parallel to that of the corresponding lines in  
   the following inscription; see the notes on lines LY.38 and CFTK.6).
4. Mizusawa, Shiki kaichu kosho koho 6.189(1, notes the variant chi

(“principle”）for 始（“beginning”）in a Sung edition. The terxn /wwr/w■本紀 in the  
meaning of “fundamental principles” is attested in the first line of the chapter “Wen” 問  
(“Inquiries”) of the (9.146): “\Vhenever one establishes a court，one inquires

about the fundamental principles/'

1. In Mao shih [# 238] 16-3.247a, it is the king who gives the \*'controHine and  
   net”綱紀）to the “four quarters•” As in the metaphor of “warp and woof ’

wei employed in line 29 of this inscription, the semantic classifier ^silk'1 in both  
characters of kang-chi betrays that the compound originally denoted some kind of textile  
order. The more important part in the binome is obviously kang which appears as the

36 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

Abroad He instructs the feudal lords;的 外教諸侯

Brilliantly He spreads culture and grace, 光施文惠

1. Enlightening them through rightness and principle. 明以義理

The six kingdoms had been restive and perverse, 六國回辟

Greedy and criminal, insatiable^o - 貪戾無厭

18 Atrociously slaughtering endlessly. 虐殺不已

The August Thearch felt pity for the multitudes, 皇帝哀眾

And consequently sent out His punitive troops, 遂發討師

1. Vehemently displaying His martial power.9i 奮揚武德

Just was He in punishment, trustworthy was He in acting,義誅信行  
His awesome influence radiated to all directions\* 威焊旁達

24 And there was none who was not respectful and submissive%莫不賓月艮

He boiled alive and exterminated the violent and cruel, 烹滅疆暴

Succored and saved the black-haired people,筘 振救齡首

1. And all around consolidated the four extremities.^ 周定四極

“coritrol-lirie” for the “four quarters” again in M如 s/hTi [# 249] 17-3\*273a and [# 252] 17-  
4.278c\* Again, Hsun-tzu (6\*116), who also quotes Mao shih # 238, uses the term kang-  
chi to denote political order (1.7, 3.59). According to LUchi 39.312b, the sage <4defines  
[the positions and relations ofl father and son，and ruler and subject, and takes these as the  
net and control-line (chi-kang). When the net and control-line are rectified, the world under  
heaven is greatly consolidated.

1. This is an anachronistic phrase of traditional political rhetoric, since Ch'in Shih-  
   huang-ti, following the advise of Li Ssu, rejected the installation of feudal lords. See the  
   note on line L21 above.
2. Cf. Confucius' direct speech in Tso chuan [Ai 11] 58.465c: uIf [a ruler] does not  
   measure [himself] at the rites but, being greedy and grasping, is insatiable {t'an-mao wu-

貪冒無厭)，then although he takes the taxes on the fields，he will not be satisfied.”

1. I follow the version in 57u7z-cW and “Ch’Uan Ch’in wen”； Jung Keng, “Ch’in  
   Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” I44, gives the line with two verb-object clauses:奮武揚德.
2. See the note on T.6. For the variant mo pw h奠不從服（“none who was  
   not compliant and submissive^), see Hsiln-tzu 3.61, 4.77» 5\*108, 7.132, 7.143, 10.185,  
   14.253.
3. CTzen-c/n’w 振救（“succors and saves”）may be traced back to [Chao

26] 52.412a.

1. The line displays the cosmic dimension of the emperor\*s notion of rulership,

when read together with the parallel formula in Lil-shih ch'un-chHu 13.126: uAt the time  
of the winter solstice, the sun moves along its remote way and moves all around the four  
extremities (chou-hstng ssu-chi It is called 4dark $hining\,>

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 37

He universally promulgates the shining laws^5 普施明法

Gives warp and woof to all under heaven^ - 經緯天下

30 Forever to serve as ritual norm and guideline. 永為儀則

Great, indeed, is [...]![[79]](#footnote-80) [[80]](#footnote-81) [[81]](#footnote-82) [[82]](#footnote-83) [[83]](#footnote-84) 头:矣□哉

Within the universe and realm% 宇縣之中

33 One follows receptively His sage intent.99 承順聖意

The multitude of officials recite His merits, 群臣誦功

Ask to carve [this text] into stone, 請刻于g

36 To express and transmit the constant model i〇〇 表垂常式

Text 5: The inscription on the eastern vista of Mt, Chih-fu1。呈

Now，in His twenty “ninth year，收 維廿九年

The August Thearch undertakes spring travd， 皇帝舂游

3 To survey and inspect the distant regions [of His empire],覽省遠方  
He reaches the [utmost] comer by the sea;i°3 逮于海隅

Thereupon He ascends [Mt.] Chih-fu, 遂登之眾

6 Illuminates and looks down on the eastern lands.104 昭臨朝陽

Gazing and ranging over the vast beauty觀望廣麗  
The attending officials are all in contemplation^^ 從臣咸念

9 Tracing the origins of the most shining way: 原道至明

Since the Sage’s laws had begun to flourish,聖法初興  
He cleansed and ordered the land within the borders, 清理疆內

12 And abroad punished the cruel and violent\* 外誅暴彊

His military awesome influence radiated to all directions， 武威旁暢

The inscription rhymes on every third verse and has two rhyme sequences, yang  
陽（\*-叫/) and dWA 之（\*w)，each of six rhymes. The text is in 6\*250, Jung Keng，

“Ch’in Shih七uang k’o-shih k’ao，” 145, and “Ch’Uan Ch’in wen” U2a-b. "

!〇2 Again, I follow the reading nien tf for erh-shih H+, see the note on T.4.

103 Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 2:159-60, cites Shang-shu 5.31a, where hai-  
yii denotes the utmost border of the land by the sea (which coincides with the  
locality of Mt. Chih-fu); in the respective passage Yti declares to Thearch Shun: <40  
Thearch, illuminate all under heaven, down to the green grassy corners by the sea

i〇4 i follow the interpretation given by Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 2:160-  
61, who has noted the references to Shih-ching: Mao shih [# 207] 13-1.196a, which reads  
^shining, shining heaven above / illuminates and looks down (chao-lin on the earth  
below'1; and Mao shih [# 252] 17-4.279a, where chao-yang 15^, in accordance with its  
definition given in the Erh-ya, denotes the eastern regions\* Thus, the present lines do not  
show the emperor passively gazing at the rising morning sun over the sea; instead, he  
actively illuminates and looks down on the eastern parts of his empire. On the meaning of  
cf also the note on LY‘38, According to the references pointed out by  
Chavannes, the present rhyme (II. 4-6) is closely affiliated to the ritual passages - and the  
ritual language - of Shih-ching and Shang-shu,

奶 Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，’’ 145, writes /<2 發（“to open”)  
instead of li (^beauty^); this would result in the reading: uThe view into the distance  
opens vastly•”

106 Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao»” 145, has wd 威（“awesome  
influence\*1) instead of hsien Cairo； this variant is obviously nothing but a misprint\*

Both Shang-chiin shu 8.18 and Han Fei-tzu 8.149 have the phrase aThe sage  
[or: sage king] established the iaw [•“]，’

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 39

〇f. the note on LY.20.

Shook and moved the four extremities,振動四極

15 Seized and extinguished the six kings. 禽滅六王

Far and wide He unified all under heaven, 闡並天下

Disaster and harm were cut off and stopped, 螯害絕息

18 Forever halted were clashes of arms. 永偃戎兵

The August Thearch, with His shining virtuous power 皇帝明德、

Regulates and orders all within the universe - 經理宇內

21 In inspecting and listening, He is not idle. 視聽不怠、

He creates and establishes the great principle作立大義  
Brilliantly arranges the preparations and implements, 日召設備器

24 So all have their insignia and banners. 咸有章旗

The officials in service respect their divisions,no 職臣遵分

Every one understands what he should do,出 各知戶斤行

27 And tasks are without doubts or uncertainties. ^2 事無嫌疑

The black-haired people are transformed and civilized, 龄首改化

Distant and near share unified measures，i 〖4 遠邇同度 [[84]](#footnote-85) [[85]](#footnote-86) [[86]](#footnote-87) [[87]](#footnote-88) [[88]](#footnote-89) [[89]](#footnote-90) [[90]](#footnote-91)

30 Viewed agairist the old，[Our times] are definitely superior.臨古絕尤

40 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

The constant duties are now fixed, 常職既定

Later successors will continue the achievements, 後嗣循業

33 Permanently receiving the Sage’s good rule.出 長承聖治

The multitude of officials praise His virtuous power, 群臣嘉德  
Reverently recite the Sagers brilliant accomplishmentsn6 g誦聖烈

36 And ask to carve [this text] on [Mt.] Chih-fu. 請刻之翠 [[91]](#footnote-92)

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 41

Text 6: The inscription at the gate of Chieh-shihi^

Thereupon He raised regiments and battalions n 8 遂興師旅

To punish and behead the lawless119 - 誅戮無道

12 Those who defied authority were exterminated and halted.為逆滅息

1. In all probability, this inscription, which rhymes on every third verse and has

two rhyme sequences, chih and yu is incomplete and moreover corrupt

at least in the case of one rhyming character. The received text consists of three chih  
rhymes, one keng ^ rhyme, and five yu rhymes. Yen K^-chiin, ^Ch^an Ch^in  
wen” 1.12b，and Jimg Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 146, have proposed to  
replace the character p'mg (the keng rhyme in the fourth position) by the graphically

very similar yu ^ (^universe^); I follow this emendation which results in a final sequence  
of six yu rhymes. Another problem is the three chih rhymes of the beginning. Yen K^o-  
chiin, Takigawa, Shiki kaichu kosho 6.46t and Jung Keng all have pointed out the abrupt  
beginning of the inscription and suggested that (at least) three chih rhymes are missing at  
the very beginning. This hypothesis is based on the assumption of a standard sequence of  
at least six rhymes and can be effectively substantiated by a structural analysis of the  
internal semantic sequence compared to those of the other inscriptions (with the exception  
of the Lang-yeh text): the central topoi assigned to the opening lines normally include the  
date, the destination of the emperor's journey (i.e., the locality of the inscription),  
mention of the emperor himself, and a remark on the accompanying officials. None of  
these can be found in the present inscription, thus the forma! incompleteness exactly  
coincides with the semantic one. The text is in Shih-chi 6.252, Jung Keng, 145-46, and  
uCh’(ian Ch’in wen” 1,12b, Consequently，I begin the enumeradon of lines with the  
number 10 (instead of 1). The fact that line 19 in my counting commences with t4The  
August Thearch,\* is additional evidence for the proposed stanza structure, namely the  
integrity of the last six rhymes; compare the same structure in the other texts of the  
series.

1. 師（“regiment”）and /沒旅（“battalion”）are military units of different sizes;  
   as synecdoche to denote the whole military formation, the pairing of shih and lU appears  
   already in several ^Elegantiae^ (Mao shih [# 263, # 227, and # 178] 18-5.308b, 15-  
   2,227b, 10-2.i58b). According to Cheng Hs(ian，s 鄭玄（127 - 200) commentary to Oz仙-  
   iff 11 \_73a，a ■s/w’/t - second to the ctoVz 軍（“army,” 12500 men) - consisted of 2500 men,  
   and a lii of 500 men (five lu formed one shih). It is difficult to decide, however, in which  
   states of pre-imperial China this system may have been actually applied; according to

8.123, e.g” in Ch，i 齊 a 敁 consisted of 2000 men, comprising ten 卒 of  
200 men each,

n9 ”ch’tian Ch’in wen” l.i2b has 滅（“to exterminate”）instead of Zw 戮（“to  
behead”)，This seems to be erroneous，since appears also in the following line. For  
the same reason one may question the repetition of ni W (<4the recalcitrant\*1) in the next  
two lines, which may further testify to the bad condition of the received text.

42 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

His military power obliterated the cruel and recalcitrant,  
His civil power rehabilitated the falsely accused;120And the hearts of the multitudes all became submissive.121With benevolence He reviews merits and achievements：122His rewards extend to oxen and horses,123His favor fertilizes the soil and land.

武殄暴逆  
文復無罪  
庶心咸服  
惠論功勞  
賞及牛馬  
恩肥土域

皇帝奮威  
德並諸侯  
初一泰宇  
墮壞城郭

15

18

21

The August Thearch displayed His awesome influence -  
His virtuous power brought the feudal lords together,

And for the first time He unified the great universe. 124

He tore down and destroyed the inner and outer city-walls, i25

1. It is also possible to understand fu tM in the concrete sense of 4<to exempt from  
   taxation^ (see the introduction to the Lang\*yeh inscription, quoted in chapter 1, note 11  
   above), but in view of the foregoing line I take the term in its broader sense. P^ei Yin  
   (Shih-chi 6.252) quotes Hsii Kuang (353 - 425), who notes a variant yu ® (urich,  
   abundant”； here possibly “to enrich”）for/w.
2. Cf. Li-chi 55.419b: aWhen [the ruler] is fond of the worthy [...] and hates the  
   wicked then even without easily bestowing ranks [to them) the people will be  
   reverential, and without using punishments, the people will all be submissive.^ Shun,  
   having toured the regions of his state in all four directions, and having rectified the  
   measures and established the provinces, finally set up his penal code, but only to use it  
   with compassion (hsii tt). After he had dealt strictly with the four foremost criminals of  
   the day，“ali under heaven became submissive”以天下咸月艮)，See 幼<3叹-  
   shu 3A6ct quoted again in Meng-tzu 9A.71a.
3. Xhe line refers to the meritocratic principle which looms large in Shang-chiin

shu (24.39: <4Rewards follow merits; punishments follow crimes. Therefore [the ruler]  
reviews the merits and investigates the crimes”）and Han F以二，zw (2.39: “[The ruler]  
reviews those with merits and achievements1' [lun yu kung-lao and also

appears in Kuan-tzu (e.g., 10.160, in a military context). The same idea figures  
prominently in Hsiin-tzu (5.108: u[The ruler] measures merits and achievements and  
reviews the felicitations and rewards11; and in parallel passages 7.146, 8.156), and in the

chapter “Kingly Regulations”（“Wang-chih” 王制，e.g” 11.100c), In the present  
inscription, however, the emperor is portrayed as the true impersonation of Confucian  
values, evaluating hi$ subjects with mild <\*benevolence>, instead of rigid harshness.

1. 〇f. the note on LY.70 above,

1241 emend 宇 for p’i’ng 平（see the introductory note to this inscription). If we  
accept this emendation，the variant c/T/n 秦（Ch’in) for •泰（“great”)，which has been  
noted in a Sung edition (see Mizusawa, Shiki kaichu kosho koho 6.190c), appears rather  
improbable.

1. Chang Shou-chieh notes that this line refers to the fortifications erected by the  
   feudal lords (as barriers to the Chin troops).

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 43

Broke through and opened the river embankments, 決通川防

**24** Levelled and removed the dangerous obstacles. 夷去險阻

Now, that the topography is fixed, 地勢既定

The numerous multitudes are free from corvee, 黎庶無畜系

**27** And all under heaven are pacified. 天下咸撫

Men find joy in their fields，G6 男\_其疇

Women cultivate their work: 女修其業

**30** Every task has its proper order.[[92]](#footnote-93) [[93]](#footnote-94) [[94]](#footnote-95) [[95]](#footnote-96) 事各有序

His favor covers all the professions, 惠被諸產

[Newly] divides and integrates the barley fields:12^ 分並來田

**33** There is none who does not find peace in his own place. 129莫不安所  
The multitude of officials recite His brilliant accomplishments 群臣誦烈  
And ask to carve [the text into] this stone, 言青刻此石

**36** To transmit and manifest the norm and standard. 垂著儀矩

44 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

Text 7: The inscription on Mt K5uai-chii3〇

The August Thearch，excellent and accomplished， 皇帝休烈

Pacifies and unifies all within the universe, 平一宇內

3 His virtuous power and favor is permanent and lasting.!3i 德惠脩長

In His thirty-seventh year,^2 册有七年

He personally tours the world under heaven 親巡天下

6 And all around surveys the distant regions. 周覽遠方

Thereupon He ascends [Mt.] K5uai-chi 遂登會稽

And in all directions inspects the customs and manners: 宣省習俗

130 This inscription rhymes on every third verse and has two rhyme sequences,  
：y郎g 陽（\*-叫）and hn容耕（\*-句)，each of twelve rhymes. For the text see  
6.261-62, Jung Keng, “Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 149, and “Ch’lian Ch’in wen”  
L12b-13a. "

⑶ /te’w 修 and yw 攸 are both known as variants for 脩（“permanent”). See  
Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang kVshih k’ao，” 149, “Ch’iian Ch’in wen” 1.12b，and Ssu-  
ma Chen’s 司馬貞（/?, 745) gloss in S7zz7i-dW 6.262, The variant % was，according to  
P'ei Yin (Shih-chi 6\*262), to be found in an early inscription collection compiled by a  
certain Chang Hui (dates unknown), K'uai-chi nan-shan Ch'in Shih-huang pei-wen  
會稽南山秦始皇碑文，and in turn quoted by Wang Shao 王勁（probably 4th century).  
The “Monograph on Literature”（“Ching-chi chih” 經籍志）in 隋書 32.945

records only an anonymous CA’/n-ZzMOTg 如叩-toi/rt TT如bc/z/ wen 秦皇東巡會

稽亥tl石文 in one dz必an. This is no longer mentioned in the bibliographic monographs of  
the two T^ng histories. Obviously, there was at least one book, circulating alongside the  
Shih-chi, containing the K^uai-chi inscription in pre\*T'ang times, and this fact seems to  
coincide with some significant variants on the lexical level, as noted below. With regard  
to the other six inscriptions, there is no entry in the early bibliographies indicating a  
separate textual transmission. Taking into account the definite, and by that time  
constantly growing problems in deciphering the characters on the original inscriptions (in  
consequence of the old script, the progressive weathering, and the interplay of both  
factors), together with the traceable history of forgeries of the stelae, the obvious textual  
problems of the Shih-chi versions, and the very late appearance of the received inscription  
collections, we can only speculate to what extent the circulation of earlier independent  
redactions would affect our understanding of the other inscriptions.

132 For the emendation of sa for san-shih H+, see the note on T.4. According  
to Shih<hi 6.260, the emperor, accompanied by Li Ssu, now his Chancellor to the Left\*  
set out to travel in the tenth lunar month of his thirty-seventh year, i.e.,  
November/December 211 BfC. The narration mentions several stations of his journey to  
the south during the eleventh month, before the emperor and his officials eventually  
ascended Mt. K'uai-chi. Thus, the date of the inscription may be December 211 or  
January 210 B.C.

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 45

9 The black-haired people are reverent and respectful.133 齡首齋莊  
The multitude of officials recite His merits, 群臣誦i

Trace the roots and origins of His feats^4 本原事迹

12 And recall His way，lofty and shining追邊高明  
The Sage of Ch’iri looks down on His state，136 秦聖臨國

Initially determines achieved forms and their claims,^7 始定刑名

15 Manifests and displays the old statutesJ38 顯陳舊章

m “Reverent and respectful”“叩齊[=齋]莊）appears usually in ritual  
contexts describing the correct behavior of a filial son when presenting a sacrifice in the  
ancestral temple, etc. See Li-chi 48.373a, 53.406c, 63.465c.

至34 On the reading c如‘迹（“feats”）instead of 似速（“rapidity”)，see the note on

T.10.

1. Ssu-ma Chen (Shih-chi 6.262) notes that the contemporary (i.eM T'ang) 4tstone

inscription text from K’uai-chi”（AT'i/aLc/u' wen 會\_石細文，which may be

understood as a book title) reads tao M. (^way^) instead of shou lii here. I follow this  
variant which has been substantiated by Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-cheng, 2:221.  
Another variant, noted by Takigawa, Shiki kaichu kosho 6.62, and included in Wang^  
discussion, is shou

1. Takigawa, iS/ziW 6.62, notes the variant fai 泰（“great”）for

秦；the reading “the Great Sage” would be parallel to line CF, 10. See also Mizusawa，  
Shiki kaichu kosho koho 6,193b.

1. The translation “achieved forms and their claims” for 开!j名 follows

the discussion by Makeham, uThe Legalist Concept of Hsing-mitig^ according to which  
ming ^ is the initial claim of purpose and ability and hsing ffij is the actual achievement  
according to the norm (see also Makeham, Name and Actuality in Early Chinese Thought,  
67-83)» With respect to the latter term, Makeham, 106, notes: uT〇 recognize hsing M as  
representing only that meaning which, from some time in the Eastern Han, came to be  
written as 0 is to fail to appreciate the full semantic import of hsing ffj as it functions in  
the Legalist adaption of the hsing-ming compound, where both the 'realized form\* of a  
completed job of work and the toutcome-cum-standard> against which the veracity of the  
original claim is assertained are equally implicit.>, Makeham argues in particular against  
Creels widely accepted translation of hsing-ming as ^performance and according to  
Creel，容 denotes the “behavior” or “form” in which an official carries out his  
administrative functions, while ming refers to the title of his office; see Herlee G. Creel,  
‘‘The Meaning of 茗刑名，，，m his 抓如红 79-91，summarized again in

his Shen Pu-hai: A Chinese Political Philosopher of the Fourth Century B.C., 119-24.

1. Here，the variant c/mrtg 彰（“bright”）for c/m叹章（“statutes”）exists. See  
   Chang Shou-chieh^ gloss in Shih-chi 6.262, and Jung Keng, 'dChMn Shih-huang k^o-shih  
   k’ao，” 149. Again, Chang notes that the “inscription text”碑文，which may or  
   may not be the abbreviation of one of the titles mentioned in the note on line 3 of the  
   present inscription) has hua<hang (^ornamented nephrite staff,n i.eM ^insignia^)

46 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

Initially He standardizes the rules and models, 初平法式

Meticulously distinguishes the tasks and duties 審別職任

18 To establish constancy and permanence. 以立恆常

The six kings were despotic and rebellious,139 六王專倍

Greedy and criminal, arrogant and wild, 貪戾慠猛

21 Leading the multitudes, they made themselves strong.140 率眾自®

Cruel and harsh, arbitrarily acting，mi 暴虐恣行

Relying on their strength，they became overbearing 負力而驕

24 And frequently set shields and weapons to action. 數動甲兵

They secretly exchanged agents 陰通閒使

In order to engage in a joint alliance [against ChUn]i42 以事合從

27 And to realize their wicked and unrestrained ways\*^3 行為辟方

Within their states they designed deceitful schemes, 內飾詐謀

Abroad，they came to invade our borders — 夕f 來侵邊

30 And consequently stirred up havoc and disaster: 遂起禍狹

With rightness and awesome might We have punished them,義威誅之  
Obliterated and extinguished crueky and revolt — 珍熄暴悖

instead of chiu-chang (uold statutes>,). Thus, the meaning of the present line remains  
difficult to determine. If, however, chiu-chang is the original wording, it can be traced  
bade to M如说z7i [# 249] 17-3.272c (again quoted in 夂w 7A‘53a),

屋391 read pd 倍 in its frequent sense as a loan character for pez•背（“rebellious”).

140 According to Chang Shou-chieh (Shih-chi 6\*262)s the inscription text has the  
line as shuai chung pang ch'iang (^they command the multitudes, the state

becomes strong^). This positive statement seems impossible to integrate here.

⑷ In [Hsiian 3] 21\_l66c，暴虐（“cruel and harsh”）is the

epithet proper for the notorious last Shang ® king Chou M, denoting the reason why the  
king lost the key symbol of political legitimation, the tripods {ting ®) the Shang had  
originally inherited from the Hsia, In this famous passage pao-niieh labels the behavior of  
a “last king” driving the country and his rulership into ruin. The positive coimterpart of  
pao-ntieh is hsiu-ming (^superb and shining''), describing the virtuous power of the Chou  
founder - and the new inheritor of the tripods - King Wu. As the present line employs  
pao-niieh to describe the t4six kings/\* T.16 applies hsiu-ming to Ch^n Shih-huang; see  
the respective note above. Pao-niieh appears again in Tso chuart [Chao 20] 49.390c where  
it serves as part of an exemplary description of a wicked and excessive ruler.

!42 This line may refer to the concrete situation of 256 B.C. when the other states  
formed an alliance against Ch\*in; in Shih-chi 4\*168 and 5.218 the term used is yiieh-  
ts'ung in Chan-kuo tsfe (see Ho Chien-chang, Chan-kuo ts'e chu-shih)

5.192, as in the present line，it is to-Ay’wrtg 合從（“joint alliance”），

(“unrestrained”).

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 47

33 Rebellion and banditry are wiped out and gone\* 亂賊滅亡

The Sagers virtuous power is vast and dense: 聖德廣密

Within the six combined [directions] 六合之中

36 [All are] covered by grace without limit! 144 被澤無疆

The August Thearch unifies the universe, 皇帝並宇

Impartially listens to the ten thousand affairs - 兼聽萬事

39 The distant and near are completely cleansed. 遠近畢清

He wields order over the multitudes of beings， 運理群物

Examines and verifies the truth of matters, 考驗事實

42 And everything bears its proper rmnie. 145 各載其名

The noble and the mean are equally reached, 貴賤並通

The good and the bad are arranged before Him - 善否陳前

45 There is none who would have hidden intentions. 糜有隱 1青

He rectifies faults, promulgates rightness飾省宣義  
To those [widows] who have children and marry [again] 有子而嫁

^4 Lu-shih ch^un-chHu L8: 'The ten thousand beings are all covered by grace and  
receive the benefits [of heaven and earth]\*^ Cf\* also Hsun-tzu 9.170, Han FeUtzu 4.69 and  
6.114. To be ^covered by grace'\* (pei tse appears to have been a stock formula of  
Eastern Chou political language; the phrase was fixed enough even to be rhetorically  
efficient in its negative form C4not covered or <4[even if] not covered in three  
passages in Meng-tzu (7A.53a, 9B.74c, 10A.76c), with two of them mentioning the grace  
of Yao and Shun. The tetrasyllabic formula wm c/w■伽g 無疆（“xy whhout Hmit”)  
appears no less than eleven times in the ^Elegantiae^ and ^Eulogia^ of the Shih-ching; of  
these, three times in the hymn ^Lieh-tsu1' fMS. (<lRadiant [or: Accomplished] ancestor/'  
Mao shih [# 302] 20-3.353b-c). It is typically employed at the end of a poem or stanza, as  
in the present inscription,

145 These two lines read like a concrete explanation of the term 开多名

from line 14; see the note above. Concern for the “truth of matters”（57h7m/e认事實）may  
aiso be found in Han Fei-tzu 1.12-13, 20\*367.

M6 p’ei Yin quotes Hsii Kuang who notes the variant知’非（“mistake”）for 冰ewg  
省（see also Mizusawa,幼沿 始妨to 6，i93b"c). This last ch紅acter，in turn，is

glossed as 女似過（“mistake”）by Chang Shou-chieh. Takigawa，紙6,63,  
substantiates this reading in a long gloss providing sound evidence for sheng as a loan  
character for 冰挪发眚（“mistake”）in pre-Han texts\* Again，he notes 友W/2 飾 as a loan  
character for chfih Wi regulate, to rectify"). According to this understanding, the  
variant 似寡（“poor，lacking”）for 宣（“promulgate”)，which Mizusawa has traced

in six different editions, can be rejected. It would bet on the other hand, coherent with  
reading the character ^ as hsing ((ito inspect): \*(He rectifies and inspects those lacking  
rightness.”

48 ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

48 While turning their back on the dead and being unfaithful, w 倍死不貞

He demarcates and separates the inner and outer spheres, ^8 防隔內夕f  
Prohibits and stops the lewd and licentious - 禁止'淫佚

51 Men and women are pure and sincere J49 男女絜誠

If a husband becomes a hog put out to stud，mo 夫為寄锻

To kill him is not a crime，is〗 殺之無罪

54 And thus men adhere to the rules of rightness\* 男秉義程

If a wife runs away to remarry, 妻為逃嫁

The children no longer take her as their mother，152 子不得母

57 And then all are transformed to become honest and pure.⑶咸化廉清  
His great rulership cleanses the customs, 大、治濯俗

All under heaven receive [imperial] influence, 天下承風

60 Are covered and clothed with the superb guidelines. 蒙被休經

All respect measures and rules, 皆遵度軌

147 As in Hue 19, 倍 is a loan character forpa•背（“to turn one’s back on”).

〇n the spheres of women and men, see T.29 and T31 above.

CTuWi 絜，here as in line 64 below，is to be read as c/hWz 潔（“pure”)，which  
appears also as a variant in other editions. See Wang Shu-min, ^Ch^in Shih-huang k'o-  
shih k'eLOy' vol. 2., 221, and Mizusawa, Shiki kaichu kosho koho 6.193c.

150 In this line, the translation in Nienhauser, Grand Scribe\*s Records, 1:153» is  
unbeatable; according to P^ei Yin^s commentary, the line denotes married men sleeping  
with other married women.

The line appears verbatim in Chou4i 35\*240c.

152 I follow Takigawa, Shiki kaichu kosho 6.64.

Ku Yen-wut 顧炎武（1613 ~ 1682) has noted that the preceding twdve lines are  
unique in all the Ch\* in inscriptions; nowhere else do we find such concrete concerns about  
the manners of the common people, in particular with regard to sexual transgressions.  
Quoting both the ^國語 and the Ww 吳越春秋，Ku observes that

in pre-Ch'in times the region of K'uai-chi was notorious for the licentious behavior of its  
inhabitants. The inscription text\* he concludes, thus reflects the ChUn emperor^ efforts to  
rectify the people of Ylieh 越，Ku Yen-wu’s final considerations deserve verbatim  
quotation since they touch directly on the ideology the Ch^in inscriptions exhibit - and  
the problems they impose on an ardent Confucian all too ready to condemn an alleged  
ChUn tyranny:64Although the Ch'in exceeded in executing punishments, their intentions  
to deal precautionarily with the common people and to rectify customs certainly did not  
begin to stray from those of the three kings [of antiquity]. From the days when the Han  
rose to power down to the present time，the [rulers] who accepted and used the Ch’in laws  
have been many. When today’s Confudans talk about the Ch’in and just take [their penal  
code] as laws of a perishing state, is it not also that they have not thoroughly enough  
considered the matter?” See Jf/i-dnTz /m 曰知錄，3:318\*49.

ANNOTATED TRANSLATION 49

Calm and peaceful, honest and hard-working, 和安敦勉

63 There is none who does not obey orders. 莫不順令

The black-haired people cultivate purity; 齡首脩絜

The people enjoy the unified standards, 人樂同貝1J

66 Praise and protect the great peace. 嘉保太平

Later generations will respect the received standards, 後敬奉法

The constant rule is without limit, 常治無極

69 And carriages and boats will not turn over.^54 輿舟不傾

The attending officials recite His brilliant accomplishments 從臣誦烈  
And ask to carve [the text into] this stone, 請刻此石

72 To glorify and transmit it in the superb inscription. 光垂休銘

至54 in “Ch’tian Ch’in wen” 1.13a, the text has dW 車（“carriage”）for 舟  
(“boat”)\*

3\* The stele inscriptions in Ch^in Shih-huang's ritual system

1. L The notion of the stone inscription

When the ChJin emperor, now vested with a divine title, initiated his  
series of inscriptions he established a new form of political representation.  
The archaeological record, overwhelmingly rich on the side of inscribed  
ritual bronzes, provides not a single precedent for these remarkably long  
stone stele inscriptions. Prior to the imperial stelae, the notion of umetal and  
stone^ **(chin-shih** #5), as referring to the media of ritual inscriptions,  
seems to have been confined to two specific kinds of material: bronzes,  
especially bronze bells, and chime-stones.1 The phrase ‘‘metal and stone，’  
can be traced back to Eastern Zhou texts, but not to the earliest layers of the  
Confucian canon. Within the **Thirteen Canonical Books,** it appears only in  
the relatively late texts **Chou4U Tso chuan,** and **Li-chi.** In the **Chou4U chin-  
shih** refers to treasures of the state, that is, jade and precious metals; ^ in the  
four other instances of **Tso chuan** and **Li-chi,** it denotes musical instruments,  
that is, bells and chime-stones\*3 The same is true for the - together with **Tso  
chuan -** possibly earliest text where the phrase **chin-shih** appears, the **Kuo-  
yiiA** An interesting passage may be found in **Mo-tzu** where Master Mo  
argues that although he did not live in the days of the legendary rulers (like  
the Great YU 大禹）and so could not listen to their words directly，he still  
can know their way of rulership, since it has been ''written on bamboo and

1. It is especially in Han times that the meaning of chin-shih changes in order to  
   denote funerary objects and to function as a metaphor for immortality or enduring post-  
   mortem fame; see K\* E. Brashier, ''Longevity Like Metal and Stone: The Role of the  
   Mirror in Han Burials/1 Although there is no direct relation between the ritual objects used  
   in Chou ancestral services and the Han (especially Eastern Han) funerary objects, it seems  
   clear that the latter are the result of a gradual transformation of the former. The principal  
   difference may be seen in a shift of emphasis from a notion of lineage permanence to that  
   of individual immortality.
2. See Chou-li 36,244a.
3. ^LUchi 37.302c, 38.308c; Tso chuan [Hsiang 9] 30,241c, [Hsiang 11]  
   31,249b,

^ See Kuo-yU *[Chfu-yu]* 17.7b. [[96]](#footnote-97)

THE NOTION OF THE STONE INSCRIPTIONS 51

silk, cut into metal and stone, polished on basins and vases, to be  
transmitted that the sons and grandsons of later generations may know  
them,”5 Here，the commentator Sun I-jang 孫言台讓（1848 ~ 1908) cites the  
earlier commentator Kao Yu 高誘（c. 168 \_ 212) on 这 passage in the  
**ch'un-ch'iu^** where the inscribing of merits on umetal and stonen - again  
projected into the times of the Great Yu ~ is mentioned. According to Kao  
Yu, **chin-shih** refers to abells and tripods?, **(chung ting** iS#f, as for the **chin)**and “memorial stelae”豐碑，as for the 沾认).However，the L沒-  
**shih ch'un-ch'iu** was completed in 239 B.CM two decades before the first of  
the imperial stele inscriptions was erected, and hence we do not know of any  
example of inscribed stelae the authors of the **Lii-shih ch'un-ch'iu** could  
have referred to; Kao Yu’s - and，following him, Sun I-jang’s — assumption  
appears anachronistic.

Judging ~ problematic as this always is - on the basis of a lack of  
positive evidence，it seems likely that in pre-imperial times，“stone” in this  
sense was generally recognized as denoting specifically the chime-stones  
that together with drums and bells served as the principal rhythmic  
instruments in Chou ancestral rites. Stone inscriptions that in length and  
contents would match those on bronze ritual paraphernalia are so far missing  
in the archaeological record of Chou times. The only known inscribed stone  
monuments of pre-imperial China that bear a substantial amount of text are  
the impressive set of ten so-called "stone drums^ dating probably to the fifth  
century B.C.7 and the hw C/z’w wen 詛楚文（“Imprecations against Ch’u”)  
probably of 313/312 B.C.s Interestingly enough, both groups of stone [[97]](#footnote-98) [[98]](#footnote-99) [[99]](#footnote-100)

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inscriptions are from the old state of Ch^n, and both seem to be related to its  
ritual center at Yung 雍9 where Duke Te 德公（r. 677 - 676 B.C\*) had  
established the Ch^in capital in 677 B.C.10 Moreover, the earliest Chinese  
stele inscriptions are again those of the state of Ch^in, yet now of the  
imperial state and erected on the mountains of his eastern **new territories**within the unified empire. Indeed, it has been suggested that stone as a  
material for sculptures and as a carrier of inscriptions has been introduced  
into Chinese culture from regions beyond the western borders of the Chou  
polity, n Judging from our present archaeological evidence, this cultural  
transfer substantially postdates the musical use and textual inscription of  
chime-stones under the Chou; however, in the light of a stele-like stone - to  
be discussed below - that is inscribed with a short text of nineteen characters  
and has been fround near the tomb of King Ts’o 譽 of Chimg-shan 中山（r.  
323 - 313 B.C.), the concept of ordinary stone as a medium for inscriptions  
apparently had already spread eastwards by the times of the “Imprecations.”

different locations, i.eM on three different stones addressed to three different spirits. The  
original stones found during the Sung dynasty have been lost but the text is preserved in  
various sources (Chavarmes reproduces the version included in the Ming work Chin-hsieh

g金薤琳璃2.10b-13a [•S/uTii’ocWa-pkrt石刻史料叢書甲  
編 ed\_】). The two earliest extam rubbings in the •以絳帖 and Jwv’zVA 汝帖

inscription collections are not from the original stones but from recarvings. They are  
reproduced, accompanied by a study on the text and its historical transmission, in Jung  
Keng，/zVig-A/A 古石刻零拾；another important study is that by Kuo Mo-jo,  
“Tsu Ch’u wen k’ao-shih” 詛楚文考釋 in his F/m-" /z城伽-A—ig 天地;k黃，606-25;  
for short yet sometimes instructive notes, cf. Huang Kung-chu, Chou CWin chin-shih  
wen-hsuan p'ing-chu, 141^44,

1. The assumed location (cf. Mattos, The Stone Drums, 40) of the \*lstone drumsMwas some 15 km south of Yung (south of modern Feng-hsiang 鳳翔 in Shensi province  
   [see T\*an Ch'i-hsiang, Chung-kuo li^shih tUfu-chi, 2:5-6]), and one of Tsu Ch'u wen  
   versions was discovered in a temple in Feng-hsiang (see Li Xueqin, Eastern Zhou and Qin  
   Civilizationsf 239).
2. Cf. Shih-chi 5.184, 28,1360; Yung remained the capital until about 383 B.C.

See Wu Hong, Monumentality in Early Chinese Art and Architecture, 121-42.

In his chapter on "The Chinese Discovery of Stoned Wu curiously fails to mention any  
of the pre-imperial and then imperial Ch'in stone inscriptions, although they would  
strongly support the case he tries to make for Han religious and funerary art. Be that as it  
may, without any concrete evidence we unfortunately have to refrain from speculation that  
the practice of inscribing stones may have been introduced from a western culture to the  
pre-imperial state of Ch'in, even though that would explain why we know of no pre-  
imperial stone monuments in the eastern region of the Chou world.

THE NOTION OF THE STONE INSCRIPTIONS 53

It is probably significant that the pre-imperial Ch?in stone inscriptions  
are not just single texts at single places but in both cases sets of texts: the  
“stone drums” consist of ten different texts inscribed on ten different stones  
that are grouped together and probably served in a ritual context. The  
“Imprecations” are basically one text，though inscribed on - as far as we  
know - three stones placed at three different locations, one of them Yung,  
The text of each stone is identical with the others, except that each addresses  
a different spirit, suggesting that a particular spirit was conceived as  
invocable only at a particular locale (which it may have been regarded as in  
charge of). The possibility that the true nature of ritual writings was seen in  
a series or cycle of texts rather than in a single independent text will be  
addressed below. Suffice it now to observe that all known pre-imperial and  
imperial ChMn inscriptions of any significant length were composed in  
series: the “stone drums，” the “Imprecations，” the stelae，the ritual bronzes，  
and finally the "tiger tallies5' **(hu-fu** and various measure instru-

ments.[[100]](#footnote-101)

Still, beyond the simple nature of the material, the assumed (different)  
ritual contexts, and the phenomenon of the textual series, there is no direct  
relation between the “stone drums,” the “Imprecations，” and the steie  
inscriptions. Without doubt, the ustone drums^ are written in the style of the  
**Shih-ching** tradition, as can be easily seen in features like the tetrasyllable  
line, the frequency of reduplicatives, the use of rhymes, and various  
grammatica! characteristics.^ At the same time, the **Shih-ching** songs they  
resemble - in fact without sharing a single whole line - are definitely  
different from those to which the stele inscriptions are indebted. The “stone  
drum^ texts, which certainly relate to the nobility of their time, describe in  
vivid images a hunting setting and refrain from overtly political statement;  
they differ from contemporary or earlier sacrificial and banquet hymns by  
not being explictly concerned with issues of political praise and legitimation,

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although the old and venerated practice of hunting implicitly expressed  
spatial sovereignty.

The “Imprecations against Ch’u，” on the other hand，is a prose  
document which, despite its occasionally formulaic wording, appears to be a  
rather sober and factual historical account. The text sets out to inform the  
spirits about the various crimes of the King of Ch’u whom it accuses of  
having broken the alliance between Ch，in and Ch’u. Considering the serious  
threats Ch'in now has become exposed to} the document asks the spirits for  
support against the troops of The nature of this text directed to the  
spirits, obviously differs from the boastful stele inscriptions which are  
replete with programmatic slogans; the single outstanding feature by which  
we may relate the uImprecations>, to the stele inscriptions is the formal  
macrostructure (see below).

Neither the ‘‘stone drums’，nor the “Imprecations” are mentioned in any  
transmitted writings of pre-imperial China. The only early text that mentions  
the phenomenon of inscribed stones is the Mu fien-tzu chuan  
This short account, found in a tomb in A.D. 281 but probably dating from  
the fourth century B.C., relates the legendary journey of the Chou King Mu  
S (956 ~ 91B B.C.) through mythological lands in the west, far beyond the  
Chou realm. On this journey, described as a sovereign's tour of inspection.  
King Mu is said to have inscribed his deeds on the top of two different  
mountains.14 Although the fanciful record of King Mu’s ritual journey  
appears highly fictional, the idea of a stone inscription is a reality, and it  
matches exactly the First Thearch's stelae: King Mu undertakes a tour of  
inspection and inscribes his merits on the top of mountains, that is, close to  
the spirits above. Stepping out of the narrative itself, we may further note  
that the Mu t'ien-tzu chuan is a document relating to the far west; in the mind  
of the author(s), the material of stone may indeed have been associated with  
these regions, and only in this geographical context appropriated by a Chou  
king.

Finally, there is one piece of inscribed stone that in its physical form  
looks like an early precursor of the imperial stelae: this is the almost

^ Mu t\*ien-tzu chuan 2.11a, 3.15b. The first passage mentions an inscription  
銘)，while the second explicitly refers to stone\* The commentator Kuo P’u 郭璞  
(276 - 324) explains the first inscription as a stone stele and cites the example of the First  
Thearch, yet there is no specific evidence to substantiate this claim, especially with  
respect to the form of the stone as a stele (pei

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Figure 4: The Chung-shan stele  
(after Ho-pei sheng wen-wu yen-chiu-so 1996, 2: monochrome plate 1)

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rectangular stone near the tomb of King Ts'o of Chung~shan which was  
excavated in the 1970s,i5 Stele-like in its shape - being 90 cm high, 50 cm  
wide, and 40 cm thick - and of a smooth surface that betrays its age-long  
lying in a river, the stone seems to have been deliberately moved to and  
erected at the elevated tomb site. The inscription of nineteen characters (with  
an additional reduplication) in two verticai lines runs as follows:

Supervising the [King's] fishing and hunting enclosure was Minister  
Kung-ch'eng. Kung-ch^ng was ordered to protect the [King's]  
mound. His former General Man dares to announce this respectfully to  
the later exalted worthies.[[101]](#footnote-102)

監罟有園]臣公乘=守丘丌[其]臼[舊]牆[將]曼謁後米[俶]賢

Despite this so far solitary example and the **Mu Vien-tzu** early  
narrative, it remains difficult to assume an established and developed  
“ge継’’ of “stone inscriptions’’ prior to the stelae of the first Ch，in emperor.  
Too diverse are the examples of inscribed stoneS) and too few; they display  
neither the development of a certain type of text, nor of a certain type of  
textual arrangement. Accordingly, for all later historians of Chinese literature  
it was the imperial stelae that constituted the genre and served as a model for  
later pieces.[[102]](#footnote-103) However, as the annotations above have revealed, the stele  
inscriptions are highly conventional and anything but detached from the  
overall Chou cultural tradition. Not in the form of direct references but on  
the level of their inherent ritual concepts, we may identify some features  
common to the imperial stelae and to the **Mu t'ien-tzu chuan** account) as well  
as to the Chung-shan stele, the “stone drums，” and the “Imprecations•，’ We  
are not informed about the physical space in which the “stone drums” were

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originally embedded; for the other examples we can safely assume that this  
space was in the open air. The imperial stelae, the Chung-shan stele, the  
'Imprecations/' and the inscriptions by King Mu are related to defined  
places within a cosmic order; their very meaning and efficacy rests on their  
physical adhesion to these places, and the subject inscribing the texts needs  
to cross geographical space to **place** the inscriptions, binding text and locale  
to one another: the inscriptions are assigned to their proper sites, and these  
sites, geographically real and cosmologically meaningful, are literally  
inscribed with texts. King Mu’s ritual ascent of Mt. BC’uii-lmi 昆侖—a true  
cosmic center in the Eliadean sensed »»and other mountains at the western  
end of the cosmos，among them Mt, Hslian-p’u 縣圃（the site of his first  
inscription) and Mt. Yen # (the site of the second inscription and according  
to Kuo P’u’s commentary the place where the sun “enters，” i\_e.，sets) are  
stages in a cosmic journey, as are the eastern mountains and locales of the  
stelae on the First Thearch^ imperial tour of inspection. In both cases, the  
act of inscribing the local stone is a performance both of defining and  
appropriating cosmic position, and of imprinting the mark of conquest.

The spacial significance of the "Imprecations^ locales is, although on a  
smaller scale, closely related to this notion. According to early Chinese ritual  
and political doctrine, the invocation of natural spirits is strictly limited to  
those of **one's** own territory; a ruler can sacrifice only to the powers within  
his own territory\* Addressing the spirits of various locations that lie far  
beyond the capital region by definition implies territorial sovereignty and the  
legitimacy of power over space - the very idea at the core of the tour of  
inspection.[[103]](#footnote-104) [[104]](#footnote-105) As briefly indicated above, the hunting inscriptions on the ten  
“stone drums” are again embedded in the overall context of rulership by  
implicitly advancing the notion of spatial sovereignty. Since Shang times, as  
we know from numerous oracle-bone inscriptions, hunting was a major part  
of the king^ ritual duties and prerogatives. Intimately connected to the  
sacrifices towards both ancestral and cosmic spirits - for which the hunt  
provided the sacralized victims - hunting was at the same time the symbol

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and ritual practice of warfare, that is, of killing, capturing, and conquest.  
Although again on a smaller territorial scale, the “stone drums” bespeak  
authority as it was embodied in the ruler^s physical move through his, and  
only his, territory\* Finally, the Chung-shan stele is related both to the kingly  
tomb and to his former fishing and hunting enclosure; as such, it marks  
sovereignty over a political space that had been transformed into a ritualized  
liminal sphere between life and death.

The form of the erected and then inscribed stone stele may not have  
been a genuine innovation by the First Thearch's ritual specialists but  
developed out of a pre-existing practice for which the Chung-shan stele is  
our only definite evidence so far. Moreover, both the act of inscribing one5s  
merits on a lasting material carrier and the physical move through space  
under one's control followed established models. The imperial ritual setting  
of inscribed stelae on mountain peaks did not arise in a void but appears as  
the amalgamation of different time-venerated ritual activities of political  
representation: the tour of inspection (including the hunting excursion) and  
the announcement of merits in the ancestral temple. The stelae's persuasive  
force was developed out of the effective use and variation of well-estab-  
lished values and their proper expression, deeply rooted in the Chou ritual  
tradition. In order to reconstruct the ritual setting of the inscriptions and at  
the same time to explore the mechanisms of their - at least originally  
intended - rhetorical power, we need to consider more closely Ch?in Shih-  
huang's ritual system and its inherent values, especially with regard to the  
traditional nature and function of bronze inscriptions and to the notion of the  
imperial tour of inspection. [[105]](#footnote-106)

1. The bronze and chime-stone inscriptions of the Chin

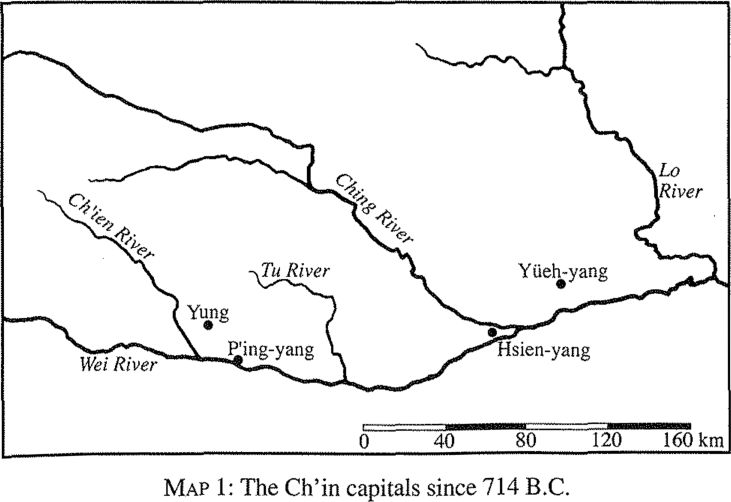
ancestral temple

At the time when the First Thearch unified UA11 under Heaven>, he was  
ruling in his twenty-sixth year as the King of Ch^n and was familiar with  
the traditional ritual duties. Unlike later founders of imperial dynasties who  
frequently began as leaders of rebellions, to win legitimation only retrospec-  
tively through their final victory, the first Ch'in emperor was strongly  
backed by centuries of hereditary rulership. Since Yung had become the  
Ch’in capital in 677 B.C it developed into an elaborate ritual center and was  
used as such even when the ChJin moved their capital around 383 B.C. to  
YUeh-yang 櫟陽 and finally，in 350 B,C” to Hsien-yang 咸陽,21 By thefall  
of the Ch'in empire in 207 B.C., more than one hundred shrines had been  
established to cosmic, mostly astral, spirits in Yung alone.[[106]](#footnote-107) [[107]](#footnote-108) [[108]](#footnote-109) [[109]](#footnote-110) Sacrificial

services at this locality were maintained under the Han until 38 B.C.23

Immediately after having accepted his new title, the First Thearch  
exalted his deceased father formally with the new title <4Most High Augus-  
tus”太上皇).24 While calling h丨mself the “First August  
Thearch/5 by this representative act of filial piety the emperor rhetorically  
localized the origins of the final success less in his own military force than in  
the lineage he was continuing. He explicitly reinforced this notion of

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Fing-yang (714 - 677 B.C.) Yung 雍（677 - ca. 383 B.C.)

YUeh-yang 櫟陽（ca, 383 - 350 RC,) Hsien-yang 咸陽（350 - 206 B,C.)

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rulership first in his initial proclamation after the unification and again in  
another formalized speech where he traced the final consolidation of the  
empire to the power he had received from the ancestral temple.25 in the first  
three lines of the I-shan inscription, it is noted that he had "inherited the  
throne，” and in lines KM2 of the same text he is eulogized for the act of  
having presented his “lofty designation” in the ancestral temple as ‘‘the way  
of filial piety/' Again, the bells and bell-stands cast from the collected and  
melted-down weapons of the former enemies were probably for use in the  
temple.26 A “discussion”（/ 議，probably by the high officials) on the  
question of inscribing stones, which in the **Shih-chi** immediately follows the  
text of the Lang-yeh inscription^ is informative:

As for the thearchs of old, their land did not exceed a thousand **U.** The  
feudal lords each protected his own fief; sometimes they came to the  
audience [at the Chou king's central court], sometimes not. They  
encroached upon each other with violence and chaos, their slaying and  
assaulting did not come to an end, and yet they inscribed metal and  
stone to record their deeds …Today，the August Thearch has unified  
the world within the seas and organized it into commanderies and  
counties. All under Heaven is in harmony and peace. He glorifies and  
illuminates the ancestral temple, embodies the Way and enacts virtuous  
power: His venerable designation is greatly fulfilled. The multitude of  
officials join together and recite the August Thearch's merit and  
virtuous power, and carve [the eulogy] into metal and stone to set up  
the model and norm.

Although composed in a looser metric form and with some irregular  
rhymes, the ''discussion^ reads very much like the closing lines that are [[110]](#footnote-111) [[111]](#footnote-112) [[112]](#footnote-113)

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typical of these stele inscriptions (and exactly such closing formulae are  
missing in the Lang-yeh inscription); on the other hand, this semi-poetical  
diction may well have been common in highly ritualized speeches on  
elevated matters. Moreover, the officials do not refer to the stele inscription  
itself but to the ancestral temple about which they are concerned, with  
inscriptions on “metal and stone”（cWm/uTz 金石)，i.e.，the ritual bronze  
paraphernalia (maybe more specifically, the bells) and chime-stones used in  
the traditional ancestral sacrifices\*28 Also the Second Generation [Thearch],  
visiting the stone stelae to add a second inscription, speaks of umetal and  
stone^ inscribed by his father.2^ These various accounts and quotations point  
to a strong traditional element involved in carving the inscriptions, apparent-  
ly derived from ancestral ritual.

The inscriptions on ritual paraphernalia - bells, vessels, axes, chime-  
stones, etc, - used in the ancestral temples of rulers and nobles all over the  
Chou realm represented one of several levels of textuality in the sacrificial  
services to the spirits; the others were prayers, songs, and formal announce-  
ments offered at the various stages of the performance,3〇 Although we are [[113]](#footnote-114) [[114]](#footnote-115) [[115]](#footnote-116)

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not at all clear about how and in which specific moments the various texts,  
present in different media, were actually joined to the sequential ritual order  
of a given ceremony, the general principles of placing inscriptions on  
different paraphernalia have led to the likely assumption that the messages of  
the inscription texts were carried to the spirits by the fragrances and sounds,  
the sensual emissions of the offerings and the musical performance.  
The inscriptions are usually found inside the sacrificial vessels, which  
means that during the ritual they were covered by the offerings placed in the  
vessel The bell inscriptions were on the outside of the bells, but not facing  
the human participants of the ritual. This seems to allow the conclusion that  
the inscriptions were not directed to the human eye or transported by the  
human voice but were communicated to the descending spirits as a  
synaesthetic experience, a balanced blend of offerings, sounds^ and  
carefully written words.[[116]](#footnote-117) On the other hand, there is no doubt that the  
sacrificial hymns preserved in the **Shih-ching -** as well as their later imperial  
successors — were sung.

The Eastern Chou state of Ch’in had inherited the central areas of the  
former Western Chou cultural and political realm - basically in modern  
Shensi province - and the archaeological record leaves no doubt that the  
Ch?in, while regarded as semi-barbarian by the eastern states of the Chou  
world, actually preserved the practices and inherent values of the Chou ritual  
legacy with at least the same eagerness as their eastern neighbors did. The  
remarkable and ever-increasing amount of discovered Eastern Chou bronze  
paraphernalia from the area by then belonging to Ch'in testifies to its full  
absorption of the culture that originally arose from the soil now trod by the  
people of Ch^in. Despite some recently proposed possibilities of stylistic  
peculiarities - which do not entail any significant deviation from the overall  
principles shared throughout the Chou **oikumene -** it is difficult to attribute

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specific bronze artifacts, especially of the Spring and Autumn era, to the  
court and ancestral temple of Ch^n unless an inscription unmistakably  
allows for this.32 The few inscribed Eastern Chou ritual bronzes now known  
that are definitely associated through their texts with the pre-imperial  
“dukes” or “commonlords”（famg 公）of Ch’in date from the Spring and  
Autumn era and seem to follow by and large the same normative patterns as  
their counterparts from the eastern cultural and ritual centers within the Chou  
world; and where they closely adhere to Western Zhou forms, an ongoing  
workshop tradition may have spanned political changes. The early bronzes  
that carry references to the dukes of Ch’in include: a) one 餺 bell that was  
found in Shensi during the era of the Northern Sung Emperor Jen-tsung **{Z**宗（r- 1022 - 1063);[[117]](#footnote-118) [[118]](#footnote-119) [[119]](#footnote-120) b) one 殷（簋）vessel found in 1919 west of  
T’ien，shui 天水（Kansu province) and mentioned in 1923 by Wang Kuo-  
wei and c) a set of five **yung-chung** and a set of three **po**

bells found together 1978 in T’ai-kung-miao 太公廟 village，Pao-chi 寶雞

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county (Shensi province).[[120]](#footnote-121) [[121]](#footnote-122) Another **hu** M vessel from Li M county, Kansu  
province, bearing a brief inscription of six characters which identifies a  
Duke of Ch’in as its donor was published in October 1994.36 Finally，there  
is a set of four tripods **(ting** M) and two **kuei** vessels, probably also from Li  
county in Kansu that appeared for sale in Hong Kong in 1993 and are  
now in the Shanghai Museum; again, these pieces carry only very brief  
inscriptions of five (the **kuei)** and six characters (the **ting),** identifying a  
Duke of Ch^in as their donor.[[122]](#footnote-123) [[123]](#footnote-124)

The whole group of eight bells discovered in 1978 bears only one  
single text of 135 characters which is inscribed five times: on each of the  
three **po** bells and again running over one set of two and another set of what  
originally were probably four **yung-chung** bells of which three have been  
found.3B Nearly half of this text, although with many variations of expres-  
sion, can be identified with respective passages on the First Ch5in-po and

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the **Ch'm-kuei** which again, while also not strictly identical, seem to present  
two different versions of one and the same basic text, with the **po** text  
representing a longer version (142 characters) compared with that of the **kuei**(104 characters), of which text it includes nearly eighty per cent (eighty-one  
characters). It should also be mentioned that all three different texts - better  
yet: different versions - are rhymed and basically follow the tetrasyllable line  
form that accounts for more than ninety per cent of the received **Shih-ching.**

The inscribed chime-stones，[[124]](#footnote-125) found in Nan-chih~hui 南指揮 village，  
Feng-hsiang county (Shensi province), have been excavated in thirty-  
two fragments, some of which could be fit together resulting in the reduced  
number of altogether twenty-six pieces. These bear 206 characters,  
including some reduplicatives, yet a comparison of all fragments shows that  
they belong to at least three apparently completely identical sets of inscrip''  
tions; most of the scattered text sections are represented twice or even three  
times，reducing the single text as a whole — if we allow for the assumption  
of one single text on at least three sets of stones - to 122 characters (again  
including the few reduplicatives). The fragments are of different length, with  
the longest comprising thirty-seven characters; almost all complete lines  
display the coherently tetrasyllable meter which in the longer fragments can  
be unambiguously proven by the rhymes. The features in common with the  
Ch^n Kung bronzes do not end in the structural parallels of the texts and the  
phenomenon of a textual series; the chime-stones even share a number of  
lines and particular expressions with their counterparts in bronze, as will be  
discussed below.

The dating of the bronzes has been a problem discussed since the Sung  
dynasty discovery of the First **Chyin-po,** and the new finds have complicated  
rather than simplified a conclusive argument: the different internal textual  
references to the genealogical order of the Ch^in rulers are concrete enough  
to open up a discussion yet not specific enough to close it with certainty. A  
tentative conclusion may be that the First **Ch'in-po** and the Ch^in-^^z date  
from the reign of Duke Kung 共（r. 608 - 604 B.C,) or Duke Huan 桓（r. 603  
-577 B.C) and the Eight bells from the reign of Duke Wu 武公（r, 697 -  
678 B.C.)\*[[125]](#footnote-126) These dates are also in accord with recent considerations from

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an art-historical perspective 4i The chime-stones, on the other hand, mention  
the immediate successor of Dukes Kung and Huan and hence can safely be  
dated to the following reign of Duke Ching 景（r. 576 - 537 B，C.).42

t'ung-ch'i ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 13, 18, 27-28, 30-32, dates the Eight bells to the  
early years of Duke Wu^s reign and both the First po and the kuei to the early years of  
Duke Ching; hence, arguing from different perspectives, Mattos and Wang have reached  
roughly the same results. The rather safe dating of the Eight bells in the reign of Duke  
Wu is based on the mention of three former dukes in the text. The concrete clue to the  
dating of the First po and the kuei is the past ^twelve dukes^ mentioned in their texts -  
but it is not clear with which duke we should begin to count and which one(s) we  
probably need to exclude\* Li Ling, ^Ch^n-chMu Ch^n chM shih-t,an,,, 516, has noticed at  
least four possible ways of counting the twelve dukes (and thus of arriving at four different  
possibilities for the thirteenth as the donor of the inscription). He dates the First po and  
the kuei to the reign of Duke Kung and the Eight bells to the reign of Duke Wu. Mattos,  
Stone Drums, 367, who has addressed the problem in relation with the dating of the  
ustone drums^ accepts the date for the Eight bells (which are now frequently called the  
“bells of Duke Wu of Ch’in”)，but proposes the reign of Duke Huan as the date for the  
First po and the A：Md. Wu Chen~feng，“Hsin-ch'u Ch’in Kung chung-ming k’ao-shih yii  
yu-kuan wen-t,iZ, 92, has even proposed to date the latter to the reign of Duke Ai % (r.  
536 - 501 B,C.), thus setting the two groups apart from each other by nearly two  
centuries. Contrary to this, Shirakawa, Li HsOeh-ch'in, and Wu Shih-chMen, ^Ch^in Kung  
chung k,ao-shih,n 105-6, suppose that all objects should date from roughly the same  
period. Shirakawa, KBTS 34 (1971), 17~2〇, who discusses the whole string of earlier  
opinions since Sung times places them in the reign of Duke Ai; Li Hslieh-ch'in, ^Ch^n-  
kuo wen-wu ti hsin jen-shih^ 26-27, on the other hand, dates the Eight bells to the reign  
of Duke Wu and the First po and the 々wd to the reign of Duke Ch’eng 成（n 663 - 660  
B.C.); Wu Shih-ch'ien locates ail the bronzes in the reign of Duke Te. However, grouping  
the bronzes together, especially at the late date, does violence to the texts and is based on  
the assumption, grounded in the art historian^ stylistic method, that similar pieces should  
be placed side by side. To accept this argument - which in some cases may effectively  
outweigh the textual evidence - we would need a substantially larger body of data.

1. Okamura Hidenori, 4<Shin bunka no hennen，” 56-57, has dated the Ch’in-

around the turn of the sixth century on the grounds of its formal characteristics; see also  
von Falkenhausen, ''Ritual Music/' 1057-59. Complementary to this, Wang Hui, who  
dates the First CWin-po and the only slightly later, has used a stylistic

analysis in the case of the First Ch'in-po. See Ch'in t}ung-chfi ming-wen pien-nien chi-  
shiK 27-28. Assuming some kind of a workshop tradition that could easily continue  
through two or more generations, the different datings by Mattos, Li Ling, Okamura, and  
Wang Hui may all fit within a reasonable range.

1. See Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng, and Ma Chen-chih, "ChMn Kung ta-mu shih-  
   ch’ing ts’an-ming k’ao-shih.” Note that Wang Hui，as mentioned above，also dates the  
   First po and the kuei to the early years of Duke Ching. However^ the textual relations

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Previous studies on the Ch5in Kung bronzes have pointed out that the  
Eight Ch，in bells were excavated at the old site of P’ing-yang 平陽，the  
Ch’in capital from 714 to 677 B.C[[126]](#footnote-127) [[127]](#footnote-128) The bells were probably cast when the  
Ch^in rulers still resided at P^ing-yang, and one may assume that this place,  
for some reason, was kept as a ritual center, and that the bells were never  
moved, except, at an unknown date, to the sacrificial pit where they have  
been found. This observation helps to reconstruct the possible historical  
setting of the bells, yet it is even more stimulating for considerations about  
the very nature of these (and other) bronze inscriptions: as the striking  
intertextual relation between the Eight bells on the one hand, and the later  
First **Ch'in-po, Ch'in-kuei,** and chime-stones on the other hand, clearly  
demonstrates, the textual transmission from the earlier to the later inscrip-  
tions was not interrupted by the move of the capital to Yung. Even if we  
concede that the bells found in 1978 never went the approximately 20  
kilometers north to Yung, their texts certainly did, in one form or another -  
that is, on other bronze paraphernalia, chime-stones, or on perishable  
materials that may have constituted a kind of lineage archive; or they may  
even have been preserved, completely or in part, through oral transmission  
(see section 4.1. below for further discussion).

This concrete case of textual continuity - to be addressed in some  
detail below, with respect to the notion of the textual series - prompts us to  
consider a possible relation between the pre-imperial bronze inscriptions and  
the stone stelae erected by Ch^n Shih-huang. For the moment, the  
remarkable textual coherence between bronze artifacts separated from each  
other by a century as well as by location may remind us of the very  
ideological basis of all Chou ancestral rites, that is, the concern for  
genealogical permanence: emulating the ancestors as ultimate models, the  
offering descendant became in turn the new model ancestor for the following  
generations of descendants^ Although the pre-imperial Ch^n ritual bronzes  
were made four or five centuries before Ch^in Shih-huang, it seems fairly  
conservative to assume that the First Thearch was well acquainted at least  
with their texts or later continuations of them - if not with the objects we can  
see today. And maybe the Ch^n Kung bronzes known so far are not the

THE BRONZE AND CHIME-STONE INSCRIPTIONS 69

only ones that originally shared substantial portions of the same text(s); it  
should be remembered that we have no examples of other bronzes bearing  
different texts of comparable length from any of the “Dukes of Ch’in.”  
Again, down to imperial times, there was never a Ch?in capital conquered by  
external powers, and never was an ancestral temple of the ruling lineage  
looted; and however “legalist” the state managed by Shang Yang may have  
been, the very basis of the traditional ancestral ritual, namely the principle of  
hereditary monarchy, was at no time at issue - even for Ch5in Shih~huang.  
It is therefore not too surprising to learn that Ch^in Shih-huang paid serious  
attention to the ancestral temple, and that his high officials in their discussion  
on the stone stelae consciously recalled the former rulers? examples (even  
from other states) who had displayed their achievements in ''metal and  
stoneZ, From this perspective of ritual continuity, it is not anachronistic but  
imperative to consider the possible function of the Ch^n Kung bronze  
inscriptions as models for the imperial stele epigraphical texts. Finally, the  
hypothesis that the ChMn Kung bronzes may have actually been available to  
the First Thearch is substantiated by a small yet fascinating detail from the  
archaeological record: on the outside of both the **kuei** and its lid we find  
engravings concerning the capacity of the vessel - short texts that where  
most probably carved no earlier than in imperial Ch^n or even in Han  
times.[[128]](#footnote-129)

For reference I include here translations of the three different texts  
found on the First **Ch'in-po,** the **Ch'm-kuei,** and the Eight Ch5in bells.[[129]](#footnote-130)

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Their particular affinities to the stele inscriptions will be separately weighed  
in the following ^structural analysis'5 section. To illustrate the proximity  
between the bronze and the chime-stone inscriptions, I also include  
translations of the excavated fragments of the Iatter.46 [[130]](#footnote-131) [[131]](#footnote-132)

THE BRONZE AND CHIME-STONE INSCRIPTIONS 71

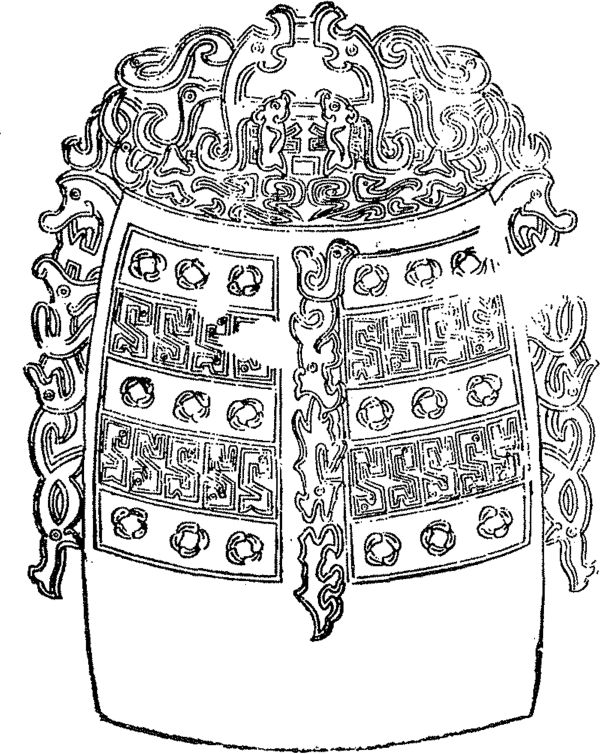


Figure 5: The First Ch’in-jw  
(after Yen I-p’ing 1983,9:4145)

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y系轉

今鍊气一一1

十今二布

Mr!

义成^^^ il  
n& 0^ox

A^m

% ^ ^ 70

$ ^ § MM

■繁笙幾  
Miie w ^ $

i M

鋼不&續鐵气  
f 0MV

我迦4t

又名 y智抒  
笑f鑛蜂。^

.woi 70

s OG If A®-

5尊璩豢翁  
1嘰|十i  
^

气一f热參蠢

Rgure 6: **Sung hand-copy of the First Ch'in-po inscription**(after Shang-hai po-wu-kuan 1987,2:919)

THE BRONZE AND CHIME-STONE INSCRIPTIONS 73

Text 1: The First Ch^in-po:^

秦公日  
不[王]顯朕皇且[祖]

趣八

笑大叩

寵[奄圃[有]下國  
十又[有]二公  
不■墜]才[在]上

嚴觏[恭]夤天命

保義[業]毕[厥]秦  
虢事纖[蠻]夏

The Duke of Ch’in says:

2 uGreatly radiant is my august ancestor!

He received the heavenly mandate  
4 broadly possessing the state below 4B  
The twelve dukes，

6 they do not let fall [their mandate] in their high  
position;

solemn and reverential, in awe of the heavenly  
mandate,

8 they protected and ruled our [state of] Ch^in/^  
cautiously caring for the Man tribes and the Hsia  
[central states] .”5〇 [[132]](#footnote-133) [[133]](#footnote-134) [[134]](#footnote-135) [[135]](#footnote-136)

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10 [The Duke] says: 曰

“I am the little son: 余雖小子

12 Respectfully, respectfully I obey and adhere to the 穆=帥秉明德  
shining virtuous power,  
brightly spread the clear punishments, 歡専[敷]明井[刑]

14 gravely and referentially perform my sacrifices 虔敬朕祀

to receive manifold blessings. 目[以]受多福

1. I regulate and harmonize the myriad people, 協齡萬民

gravely from early morning to evening, 唬[虔]夙夕

18 valorous, valorous, awesome, awesome -刺[烈]=趣桓]=  
the myriad clans are truly disciplined! 萬生[姓]是敕

20 I completely shield the hundred nobles and the 咸畜百辟胤士

hereditary officers;

staunch, staunch in my civilizing and martial [power],51 ^

22 I calm and silence those who don’t come to the court 銀[鎮]靜不廷

[audience].

I mollify and order the hundred states[[136]](#footnote-137) [[137]](#footnote-138) [[138]](#footnote-139) [[139]](#footnote-140) [[140]](#footnote-141) 釋[柔]燮百邦

24 to have them strictly serve the Ch’in. 于秦執事

I have made [my] brightly harmonizing [bell]：53 乍[作]蛋[淑]毹口

26 Its name is ‘Regulating the State，’54 毕[厥]名曰磬[協]邦

its sound t'ung-Vung is greatly clear,55 其音鍺=離==孔煌

**to invoke [the spirits] to arrive at [our]**

**sacrificial offerings%**

**to [let us] receive accumulated happiness,  
multiple favors!^**

**-“Extended longevity without limit!** 眉壽無鹽**[**疆**]**

**[May the Duke] for long remain in [his] position,57 ffl**允楚分**[**左**]**立**[**位**]  
high and vast may be [his] rewards,58** 高弘又**[**有]慶

**[may he] extensively possess the four quarters!** 匍**[**敷**]**又**[**有]四方  
**[May he] forever treasure [this bell]!”** 永寶

Emblem [?].59 宜

notion of ^filial piety\*\* to the living parents appears to have been derived, testifying to a  
transfer from ritual practice to moral philosophy. Even in Lun-yii [8\*21] 8.32a-b hsiao is  
still used in its original sense. On the early meaning of hsiao - substantiated by  
paleographic analysis (cf. Chou Fa-kao 周法高 et al” C/n>z-wen 如-如金文話林，vol.  
10, 5289-92) - see Ikezawa Masari, “Chilgoku kodai no ‘kd，shisd no shis5teki imi: ‘k5’  
no shukyogaku, sono go,,} Nomura Shigeo, uJukyoteki ^ko1 no seiritsu izen: Shosho o  
tegakari toshite,” and Cha Ch’ang-kuo, “Hsi-Chou 4hsiao\* i shih~t’an,”

1. In this problematic passage as well as in the parallel lines of the following

inscriptions I tentatively follow Shirakawa - see KBTS 34 (1971), 9, and 50 (1979), 407  
-who reads the first character as Bjt und interprets it as or ^enduring^; for the

second character he assumes the meaning 4<to remain/> Most other scholars read the first  
character as 峻[峻](“high”). See, e.g” Li Ling，“Ch’un-ch，iu Ch’in ch’i shih-t’an，” 518,  
Wang Hui, ChHn t^ung-ch'i ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 25-26. Neither reading offers a  
convincing solution for the second character.

1. The second character may be ;yh 引 with the meaning of “enduring•” See Wang

Hui，C/i’k mz’ng-wen ，25-26- However，cf. the note below

on lines 8-9 of the first chime-stone fragment.

1. The interpretation of the final graphic element, which can be read as i here  
   and in the parallel CWiti-kuei inscription is uncertain\* It occurs in the same position in a  
   short inscription on a halberd and a spear known as the Ch’in Tzu-^9 秦子戈 and Ch’in

2B

32

34

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目[以]邵[昭]雪[袼]孝享

巨[以]受屯魯多釐

Ch’ang-hstl，“Ch’in Kung chi wang-chi chung，po ming-wen k，ao-shih，” 17, takes the  
characters here as t'o-Vo HfS of the to m {^-ak) rhyme; the sequence fo-t'o yung-yung  
appears several times in Chou epigraphic texts. See von Falkenhausen, <4RituaI Music'\*,  
1340 (Table 19). Wang Hui» Ch\*in t'ung-ch'i ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 17,  
reconstructs it as tuan-tuan In whichever (in any case tentative) phonetic  
reconstruction, the four characters, indicating the sound of the belKs), are to be read not in  
the structure “xx yy’’ but as 4‘xy xy，” hence not “t’o~t’o yung-yung” but “t，img4’ung，”  
fusing the two syllables into a single sound.

56 I translate hsiao-hsiang as ^sacrificial offerings/' as a technical term  
for the ancestral sacrifice. Here, hsiao is used in its pre-Confucian meaning of the  
^sacrifice to the deceased ancestors^ or ''to sacrifice to the ancestors^ from which the

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Figure 7: The O^m^kuei  
(after Mizuno 1959, plate 174c)



Figure 8: The Ch'in-kuei inscription (on the vessel)  
(after Shang-hai po-wu-kuan 1987, 2:655)

THE BRONZE AND CHIME-STONE INSCRIPTIONS 77

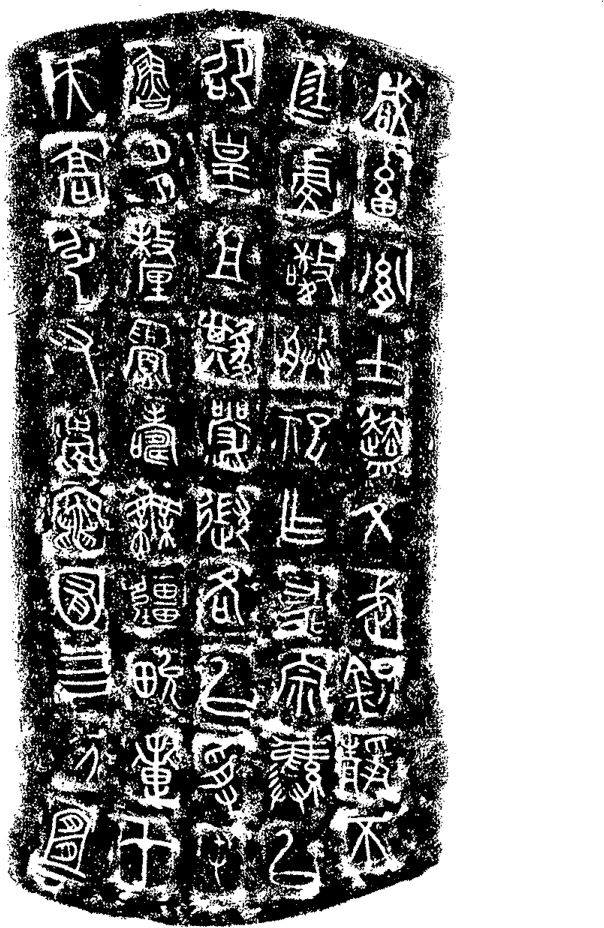


Figure 9: The Ch'in-kuei inscription (on the lid)  
(after Shang-hai po-wu-kuan 1987, 2:654)

6LcoNOLUmuooMI 3M0HS\_3sIHuaMV 3ZMOHPQ3HH

«【！«■

账 EffslilPK}  
钽H<«【#】礙龌

•【sass I2G8】

.2sffi95勺一Icasqpl ucds^fuoj 閒 UPBoXJSnopncio

cKqoLfoBas〕Jno P<DI2 PUBPsosOJd A<Dlp00

(DWBP—

XISASqQlp J0<DAVcdcpl.2JSJ<uAaI p§ UUI9P00

【玫£^胺【进\*ks,专二智爹sfi名 JO si>.pl{^011 U一 QPIS2 9

s$np QAIQg oqx

l9dAl

g〕w雖祕【钧】鷗 Jfjfo曰 Isslp US1IM】 8S3SH SSPH30S 寸  
隹^制^BPUBUI xtsAsq J pQAp〇9J  
【！：〕¥ 刪裝一ltK\*l】lfiJS—snsnB Aui si X 一IP z  
冚句條 ：1s UK6 Js当a名1

S^VMJd I ^ 1H

搬lB 账s  
hh七缙张

0

HHlwMEls

镔ws»鹱

=【®lrii

tsJQOIso /OB:llp<DJ<ul{<D\*splf<D2s xoJQfduIOOl—H  
ip3.sfdpslfp(DJB x<ulp^d§d pcdpxm<Dlp

—(u日 os;<l>M^(DmoVD<l)MG3(>fnoJO13A<«noJO{BA  
\*J9A\0d snonylA gauulfqs

<Dlp 0}<DJQI{PC3PUB x<Dqo j XHnJPQdse^lsJpodsQ'a

:uos oplll otp uib i

2

<nt

寸i

,9 \*(U6T)寸esH95r^\^^!x;s p§ tcsl,Ic<lrs^i芳 §\*s-§^

w^Mio.ss >lp^ww」.s,s \*3ffiboc:c«M<u<D</Jw<Dp2 负一P】SB1oql uooou.2ssnos;6JoiI<N9

dsrtouse #1 唸令 §§7319  
\*9Z:P§ >°iz<Ns<u.aJ uo QUIAXIJ (。？\*)醯勿WRct3s5(9CN\*勾 SU3  
§lpo>s f§y3qxo<N.6I 8.S1 uo (々？\*)»0; p§ (？\*)礙？？3qcr0^m>>qJ  
pousUIOO„ B>>q P9MOICJ s! Slflpt/J-寸一cnl \*1101 SUH iujspdulooX4?\*)盤名Vo pc扣

^\*,)\*?vso</}<upow)o^uo^JOS<L)^^^p^.aCIUIO,ucdxql>BB3mo^sTfptots9ull)uolp<l>s  
puou<Ds<DqH\*(.s--x-) M ww!/ox jo 如BUOQ6UJCDmxqJ lJXBsno>3Jd(l>lp ufowjf —oopu«Jt>  
s9u=/!aooUI9qos<DmKqJ Jqnclo(L>.I Xub Mollsou s<uop (CN-I SQ.SI) U.2POS^.ly 31IH09

\*^摇 i.s?w57

PQncdohl^GOPUQAUOooq P30M SJqrl£<Dlqm9 UBP-HplcaJtDq b<Dqsnooluomopolqdcd&sl-s  
匀占 ssou 01{M 二 s „cuvq2s lXJo u 广 qunrllvu 戶 qo'gun ri MqoJ 01 poulloul urn  
「JBS 奶 o 9ZUOJq 9ip jo am^u^ssqj Qqsnoo i 一 ss 一 uons ”n \*(I/,6t)寸cnOQl^MJ彡C3¥2lfx:0r3  
\*(£T2^s7、¥o§c.§^£t々M-》.ss7i:?<50ww」w;io^M slcciOQeou^u s«JId  
«J$B w? SPUBWSJQPUnrnoq nqs-rnd OB^octfmo:^-nlsul^u,,r\*-YU9AV OJUqop OBmov  
-nz》uliun^cCGnw,,) 一 nJJ^tm^oog'dUBS 0gpQdscd9ou9pHnoqs qds«>oSJq:nBlp pangp扣  
SBqr-Tnd OB^o«JUI \*o:；f nzYdJ《qo,二 so«I^o<riso:!i nSJvu 广 qooSu 一^u^qoiuodBoM  
4>s<DqJ gulssno^Q.SUIP uul3nv p§ scpds ujojj Su 一货力 xsBqoid \*^CJ<3w/-n2x

PM3XSAS Ivnlls SCOMVnHhsHS MLHOMl s^olxalsuslsll anSLLS HHX



00

(9^«9:°1£61 §n^nM-od 一 Bq^UBlIS 矣JB)

(S3P) PSSOA pu"y^3{ uo 浮一—0 I§osPPB\*s^-uso^xoI 3H§1

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staunch, staunch in my civilizing and martial [power], \_[藹]=文武  
16 I force and silence those who don’t come to the court 銀[鎮]靜不廷

[audience]，

gravely and respectfully perform my sacrifices. 虔敬朕祀

18 I have made [my] vessel for the temple of […]63 乍[作]益宗彝

to invoke the august ancestors 巨[以]邵[昭]皇且[祖]

20 that they solemnly and austerely arrive^ 嚴期I其]僦[徵]各[袼]

to [let us] receive accumulated happiness, 巨[以]受屯魯多釐

multiple favors!”

22 - "Extended longevity without limit! 眉壽無彊[疆]

[May the Duke] for long remain in [his] position#5 SI允楚才[在]天[?位]  
24 high and vast may be [his] rewards, 高弘又[备]慶

[may he] broadly possess the four quarters!” 竈[奄]囿[有]四方

26 Emblem [?]. 宜 [[141]](#footnote-142) [[142]](#footnote-143)

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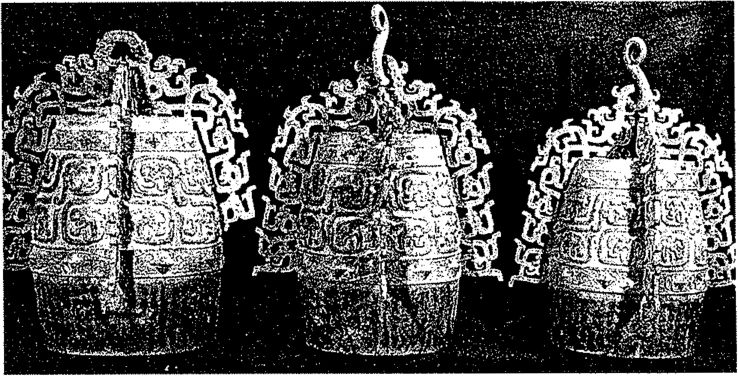


Figure 11: The three po bells  
(after Ledderose and Schlombs 1990, plate 85)

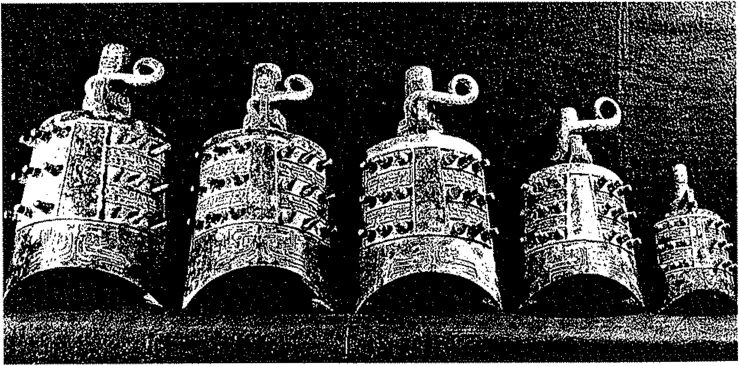


Figure 12: The fxwtyung-chung bells  
(after Ledderose and Schlombs 1990, plate 84)

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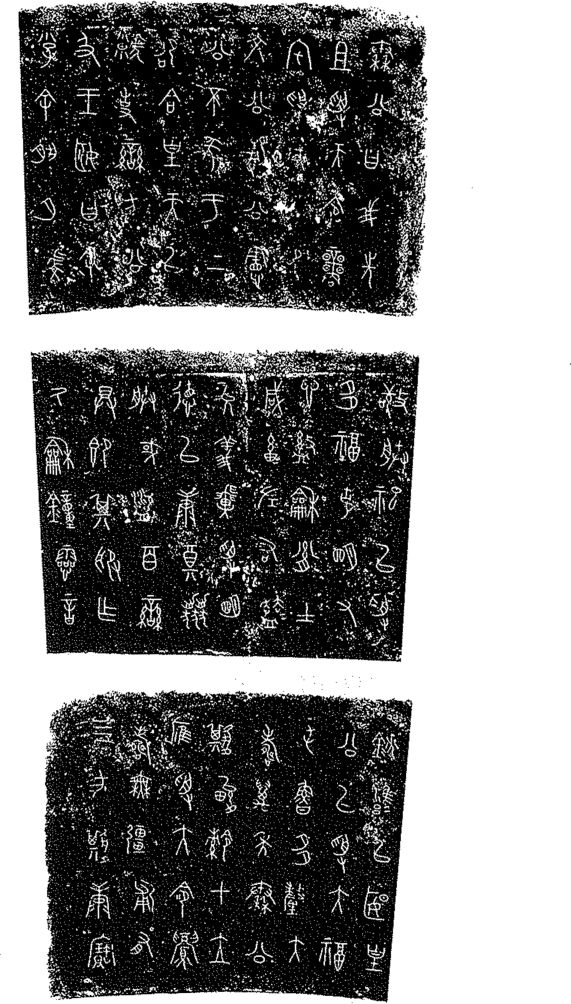


Figure 13: The inscription on each of the three po bells  
(after Shang-hai po-wu-kuan 1987,2:918)

THE BRONZE AND CHIME^STONH INSCRIPTIONS 83

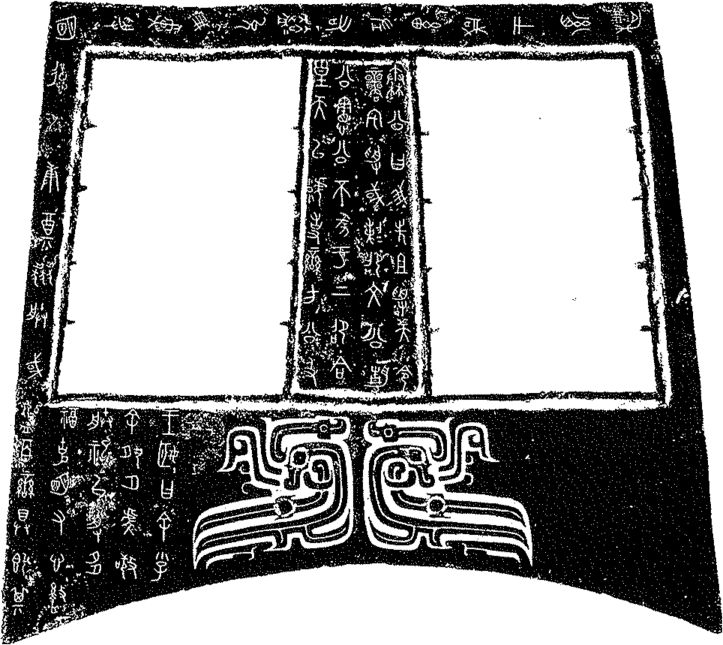


Figure 14: The complete inscription on two of the **yung-chung** bells, part I  
(after Shang-hai po-wu-kuan 1987,2:917)

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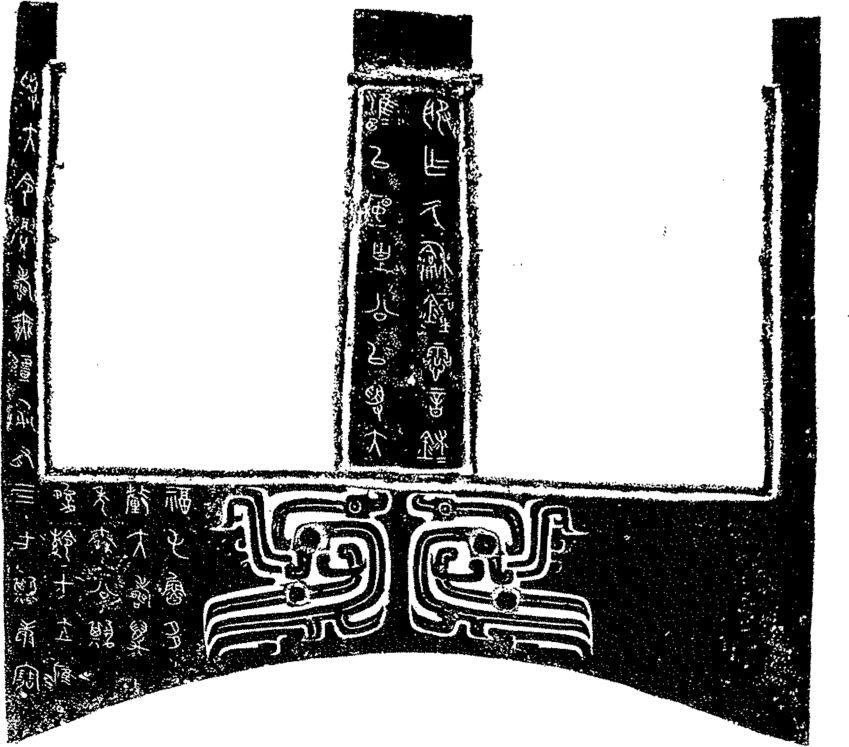


Figure 15: The complete inscription on two of the yung-chung bells, part II  
(after Shang-hai po-wu-kuan 1987, 2:917)

THE BRONZE AND CHIME-STONE INSCRIPTIONS 85

6 their brilliance matches august heaven， 召P [昭]合皇天

Text 3: The Eight Ch，in bells如

The Duke of Ch^in says: 秦公日

2 “My foremost ancestor has received the 我先且[祖]受天[令]命

heavenly mandate,  
was rewarded with a residence and received his 商[賞]宅受或[國]

state.

4 Valorous, valorous the brilliant Duke 剌[烈]=卻[昭]文公靜公憲公  
Wen, Duke Ching, Duke Hui!

They do not let faH [their mandate] in their high position，不家[墜]于上

to care cautiously for the regions of the Man 目[以]黼事纖[蠻]方

tribes.”

8 The Duke, together with the kingly wife, says: 公及王姬曰

UI the little son, 余小子

1. I，from early morning to evening, 余夙夕

gravely and respectfully perform my sacrifices 虔敬朕半已

12 to receive manifold blessings. 巨[以]受多福

Greatly I clarify my indulgent mind, 克明女[有]心

14 restrain and harmonize the hereditary officers, 盩[戾]M胤士

completely shield those left and right. 咸畜左右

16 Staunch，staunch，faithful and appropriate， 盩[藹]=允義

reverently I receive the shining virtuous power^7 冀[翼]受明德

18 to consolidate and regulate my state for long,目[以]康奠協朕或[國]  
rectify the hundred Man tribes 盜百纖[蠻] [[143]](#footnote-144) [[144]](#footnote-145)

**I have made my harmonizing bells,  
with their numinous sound fung-fung,  
to delight the august duke(s),**

**to [let us] receive great blessings,  
accumulated happiness, multiple favors!1**

一 **‘‘Great longevity for ten thousand years!**

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20

22

24

26

28

30

**and let them all take up their duties.**

**May the Duke of Ch'in for long remain  
in his position,^  
receive and obtain the great mandate,**

具即其服

乍[作]早[厥應鐘  
靈音鍺=離=  
目[以偃[宴]皇公

g[以]受大福  
屯魯多釐

大壽萬年  
秦公规[其赚鶄才[在]立[位]

雁[膺]受大命

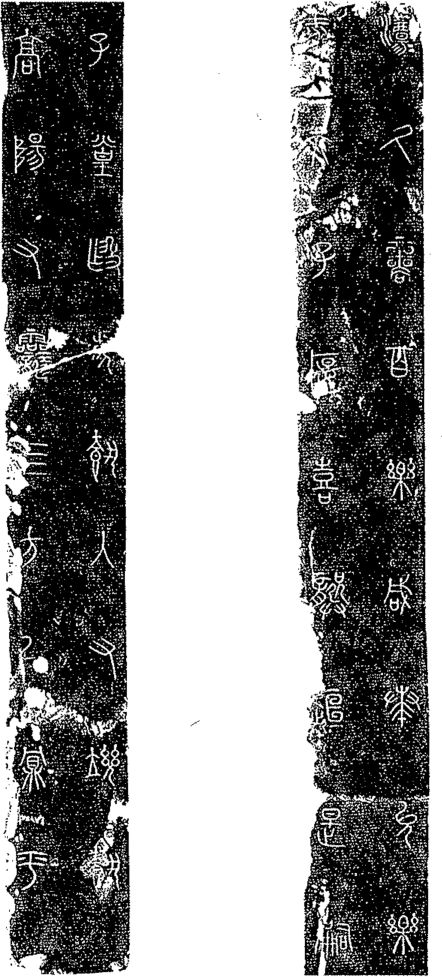
**[with] extended longevity without limit,** 眉壽無彊**[**疆**]**

**[may he] extensively possess the four quarters!** 匍**[**敷]有四方

**These [bells，may he] keep them for long as treasure!”** 欺**[**其]康寶

68 My translation follows Shirakawa,

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Rgure 16: The chime-stone fragment 85 Ml:300 (Fragment 1)

(after Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng, and Ma Chen-chih 1996, plate 1)

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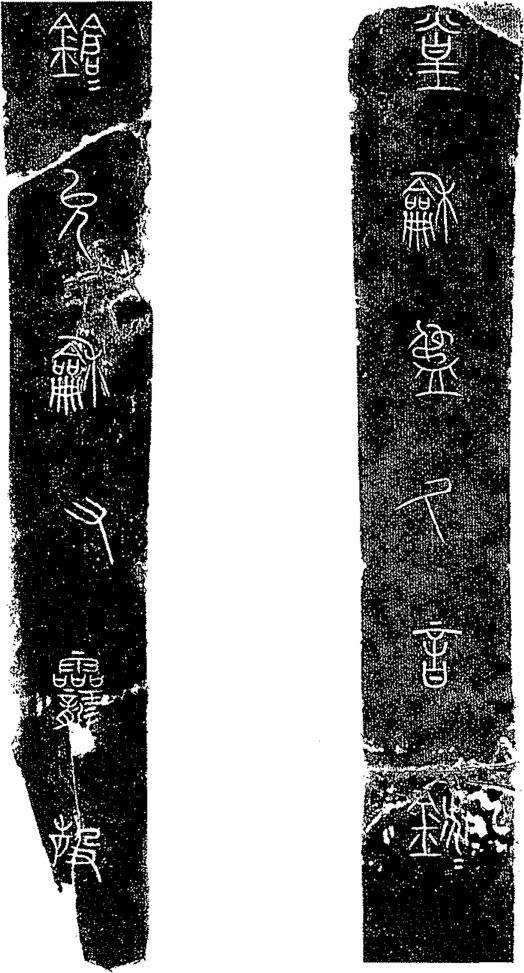


Figure 17: The chime-stone fragments 85 鳳南 Ml :550十579 (Fragment 10)  
(after Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng, and Ma Chen-chih 1996, plate 24)

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Text 4: The chime-stone fragments^

Fragment l:7〇

Streaming, streaming is our 从ang[-mode music]，” 藤[湯]早[厥]商  
2 the hundred instruments are completely performed, 百樂咸奏

The sonorous music is greatly clear. 允樂子[孔]煌

4 The music stopper is then struck^^ 钱虎[組鍩]翻I載]入

the dosing piece then fades out. 又[有]盧翻猜載]羨[\*]

6 The Son of Heaven is feasted and delighted, 天子匱[宴]喜

Dukes Kung and Huan，they are succeeded 龔[共]趙[桓]是嗣

8 Kao-yang has numinous power” 高陽又[有]M[靈] [[145]](#footnote-146) [[146]](#footnote-147) [[147]](#footnote-148) [[148]](#footnote-149) [[149]](#footnote-150)

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may the four quarters be led to security and peace![[150]](#footnote-151) [[151]](#footnote-152) [[152]](#footnote-153) [[153]](#footnote-154) 四方以鼎[您]平

Fragment 2：7^

隨紹]天命  
曰

寵‘[奄博[敷]纖[蠻]夏

極[亟]事于秦  
即服

[I? ...] reaffirm the heavenly mandate  
2 and say:

Broadly [I] spread out over the Man tribes  
and the Hsia [central states],

1. [let them] hurry to serve the **CWin**and take up [their] duties [...]

Fragment 3:76

In the fourth year，eighth month, 隹[惟]四年八月初吉甲申

beginning auspiciousness, **chia-shen**

Fragment 4:”

Repeatedly use without limit. 顯[申]用無疆

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[in his?] residence revered and honored. 窬[寢]龔[恭]誰[雍]

**2 May [he?] attain endurance as companion to Heaven,**乍**[**作?]楚配天

4 The four quarters are respectful, respectful, 四方穆：

[…]rmminous force of jade […]邛  
**Fragment 5:79**

[…]hundred dans 百生[姓]

2 [...] residential palace 害[寢]宫

Fragment 6：[[154]](#footnote-155) [[155]](#footnote-156) [[156]](#footnote-157) [[157]](#footnote-158) [[158]](#footnote-159) [[159]](#footnote-160)

[…]caring rule， 宜政

2 those who don’t come to the court [audience] are 不廷錄[鎮]瀞[靜]

calmed and silenced.

God on High is truly watching^i 上帝是睽

4 assisted by numinous powers and spirits. 左[佐]以靈[靈]神

Fragment 7:u

Some receive instruction from [God on?] High. 或教自上

Fragment 8:们

The august ancestors are […] 皇且[袓]以

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Fragment 9:84

Receive extended longevity without limit, 受醫[眉〗壽無疆

2 accumulated blessings, auspicious prosperity! 屯魯吉康

Remaining […]% —

Fragment 10：86

[...] brilliant, harmoning, and bright, 煌龢蛋[淑]

2 with their sound **fiang-fiang^** 毕[厥]音鍺=鎗=

Sonorous and harmonizing are the 允鱗又[有]—[靈]靜[磬]

numinous chime stones

Fragment ll：88

Regulating 割協]

1. For the text on fragment 85 鳳南 M 1:258 we have only one short parallel  
   fragment (85 鳳南 M 1:308) of two characters. Lines 1 and 2 both rhyme in the category  
   卿g陽（\*，).

Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng» and Ma Chea-chih, ^Ch'in Kung ta-mu shih-ch^ing  
ts^n-ming k'ao-shih^ 299, transcribe the one character in this line as however, the  
very little detail that can be obtained from the rubbing (this particular character is barely  
recognizable) seems identical with the character^ in line 27 of the Eight Ch'in bells  
inscription\* Moreover, the context of the preceding lines is precisely the same. I therefore  
readhere, not#.

1. For this text, consisting of the pieces 85 鳳南 Ml:550十579, one may note two  
   parallel fragments, each of one character: fragment 85 JEM M 1:313 includes the (in itself  
   fragmentary) ;yz>z 音（“sound”), fragment 85 贏南 Ml :504 shows the character S which is  
   generally interpreted as 協.Since this character appears in line 26 of the First Ch’in-  
   po within an almost identical context, Wang Hui, Chiao Nan^feng, and Ma Chen-chih^  
   “Ch’in Kung ta~mu shih-ch’ing ts’arwning k’ao-shih，’，300, assume that it belongs to the  
   present passage. Although this is highly probable, from the standpoint of textual criticism  
   one should keep this fragment separate，since it does not appear in 85 鳳南 M 1:550+579  
   or another parallel piece but is simply one isolated character.
2. On the question of how to identify the first character of these onomatopoeic  
   reduplicatives, and on the principle of the contraction of the two syllables into one sound,  
   see the note on line 27 of the First Ch'in-po above. While the finals of these sounds - for  
   the bells ^urj, for the stones ^iarj - are relatively certain, the initials are not.
3. See the note on fragment 10 above.

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To different degrees, the three bronze inscriptions display evidence  
that they comprise different modes of speech and more than a single voice.  
These structural patterns are probably not unique to the present sets of  
bronzes; they have parallels in sacrifical ritual hymns preserved in the **Shih-  
ching,** and some remote traces can be identified in the imperial stele inscrip-  
tions, showing them again as highly traditional texts. As can be demonstrat-  
ed by a detailed structural analysis of the famous **Shih-ching** hymn ''Ch'u-  
tz'u^ **{Mao shih** # 209)[[160]](#footnote-161) [[161]](#footnote-162) [[162]](#footnote-163) and some related texts, the sacrificial hymns  
of Eastern Chou times are not limited to prayers **or** narratives of the ritual act  
**or** eulogies, but can contain all these elements within a single text. More-  
over, they can, as true performance texts, contain the speeches of several  
participants in the sacrificial act who respond to each other according to their  
ritual roles.^o The strongest evidence of these phenomena may be found in  
particular distributional patterns of rhyme changes, personal pronouns, and  
formal designations of the ritual participants, including the ancestral spirits.  
Again，the dramatic ritual act，as we can reconstruct it from “Ch’u-tz’u，” is  
confirmed by various passages from the in particular the following one  
in which the spirits are addressing their descendant. The text begins in prose  
and ends with four tetrasyllable rhyming lines:

[The priest] delivers the blessings **(ku** to the principal descendant  
**(chu-jen):** 'The august impersonator **(huang-shih** has command-  
ed the officiating priest **(kung-chu** to present and proffer mani-  
fold blessings without limit to you, the offering descendant **{hsiao-sun**孝孫)• Come，you，the offering descendant — [The spirits] let you

以嘏于主人曰皇尸命工祝承致多福無疆于女孝孫來女孝孫使女

受祿于天  
宜稼于田  
眉壽食年  
勿替引之

receive the fortune from heaven,

[let you] enjoy the grains from the fields!  
Extended longevity for ten thousand years  
do not fail to continue these [sacrifices

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The close relation between the **Mi** speeches and those of **Mao shih** # 209  
is too coherent to be accidental; and within this sacrificial hymn, the altema-  
tion of different voices is too carefully composed to represent a unique  
textual anomaly.92 Instead, we should assume that many other texts, even  
though usually less transparent in their multivocal structure, are not to be  
read as soliloquies. And if this is the case, the often noted proximity in  
diction, form, vocabulary, and ideology between the Chou inscriptions and  
their poetic contemporaries, the ritual hymns of the **Shih-ching,** may encou-  
rage us to look for traces of multivocality in the bronze inscriptions as well.

What does the proximity between hymns and inscriptions actually  
mean for the use of these texts in their original contexts? We assume that  
both types of texts had their place in the ancestral sacrifices and were  
conveyed to the spirits by different means - the hymns were sung, while the  
inscriptions were carried forth with the sound (in the case of bells and  
chime-stones) or fragrance (in the case of food or beverage vessels) to  
which they were materially attached. Apart from the well-known correspon-  
dences of the ritual-political vocabulary, meter, rhyme system, poetic  
features like reduplicatives and onomatopoeia, and perhaps prosody,^ the  
common nature of hymns and inscriptions is also evident from the relation  
between the inscription texts and their material carriers. In section 4.1.  
below, we will address this issue from the perspective of the textual series;  
here, we may point out that those linguistic features common both to hymns  
and inscriptions are not reflected by the latter^ visual representation on a  
given material carrier. Inscriptions are not arranged according to the intrinsic  
aesthetics of the text, e.g., meter and rhyme; these textual aesthetics and  
those of the visual representation of the text operate independently of each  
other. Assuming that Chou poetic texts in general, and sacrificial hymns in  
particular, were never silently read but publicly sung or recited, we may  
identify the intrinsic aesthetics of the inscribed texts as fundamentally oral -  
precisely because they were not represented visually, leaving this basic  
aspect of the text to oral representation only. Although the hymnic poems  
that we now see on bronzes were not necessarily orally composed or [[163]](#footnote-164) [[164]](#footnote-165)

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transmitted, they certainly were orally performed, before or after their  
application to particular bronze paraphernalia and chime-stones.

The distinction between oral composition, oral transmission, and oral  
performance of texts is crucial in order to avoid a simplistic and gravely mis-  
leading comparison between the largely contemporary poetry of early Greece  
and early China. Since Shang times, the poetry of the Chinese ancestral  
temple sacrifices, formulaic as it was, did not depend on the mechanics of  
oral composition and oral transmission. As the bronze inscriptions prove,  
writing - in fact, consciously stylized writing - was readily available for the  
ritual texts, yet at the same time, the aesthetics of oral performance were  
carefully maintained and, judging from the regularity of rhyme distri-  
bution,^ even further refined through many centuries.95 As will be  
discussed below, even the Ch4n imperial stelae preserve traces of oral  
performance texts, inherited as traditional structures of ritual expression.

The structure of the longer inscriptions, like those translated above,  
shows them indeed as eulogies and prayers. The differences from the [[165]](#footnote-166) [[166]](#footnote-167)

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sacrificial hymns of the **Shih-ching** may be found in three elements: first, in  
the self-referential statement by which the donor - represented by the  
principal voice of the inscription - declares that he has made this particular  
artifact in order to invoke and to please the spirits; second, in references to  
specific dates and events that let the inscription appear as some sort of  
historical record, albeit a highly idealized and religiously motivated one; and  
third, in phrases that actually introduce and thereby identify the speaker of  
the inscription (and donor of the artifact) by his name or title. These concrete  
references to a specific occasion, a specific object, and a specific subject are  
related to the usually much longer parts of praise and prayer that are shared  
not only with other inscriptions but also with sacrificial hymns of the **Shih-  
ching.** In particular, the praise and prayer parts of Chou bronze inscriptions  
clearly draw on a common, generally recognized and accessible pool of  
ritual language that was preserved not only (and maybe much less) in  
writing but also through a continuously cultivated oral practice; and it is this  
hallowed language of a fundamentally performative tradition wherein the  
concrete references to “historical facts” are embedded. Therefore，the  
inscriptions - or those of a certain type - cannot be identified simply as  
inscribed hymns, since they differ from the **Shih-ching** pieces by the element  
of specific references; yet they **are** hymnic pieces. Taking both aspects into  
account, we may define an inscription as a hymn within which the general  
paradigms of praise and prayer were materially localized, actualized,  
individualized, and historicized. (And from this perspective, the untiring  
efforts of the earliest commentators to [re«]historicize the songs of the **Shih-  
ching** may appear as a reasonable, or at least a conventional, strategy.)

With these assumptions in mind, we may attempt to examine the pre-  
imperial Ch^n inscriptions for possible shifts in modes and perspectives of  
speech, including, but not restricted to, the phenomenon of multivocality\*  
Fortunately, the pre-imperial Ch?in Kung bronze inscriptions are long and  
substantial enough to allow us to test this hypothesis and to look for explicit  
evidence of performance residues. The chime-stones, on the other hand, are  
too fragmented to be helpful here; we do not even know how to arrange their  
sequential order, and beyond the one relatively long piece of thirty-seven  
characters, we cannot say much about the rhymes, i.e., one of the crucial  
elements in the formal analysis of early Chinese performance texts. The  
following analysis is therefore confined to the bronze inscriptions. In the  
three texts, the final five (Text 1), four (Text 2), and six lines (Text 3) are

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marked as speech apart from the preceding words of the Duke of ChMn\* If  
the preceding text is indeed addressed to the ancestors as a prayer for  
blessings, the final portion appears to be based on a shift in perspective; the  
closing lines are not uttered by the Duke but directly addressed to him  
(ultimately by the spirits, though mediated through the utterance of the  
impersonator **[shih** P] and conveyed by the officiating priest **[kung-chu** X  
**M])** 〇r spoken on his behalf (towards the spirits, by the priest or another  
ritual official). Both voices are actually present in Chou ancestral sacrifices,  
as we know from both **Mao shih** # 209 and the /-//» Since in our structural  
analysis we are going to confront the closing formulae of the stele inscrip-  
tions with those of the pre-imperial texts presented here, it is necessary to  
digress for a moment to clarify the character of the closing formulae on these  
bronze inscriptions.

In the /"/ passage quoted above，the concluding exhortation 勿替弓 1 之  
(<4do not fail to continue these [sacrificesl]^) is identical to the final line of  
**Mao shih** # 209.96 Although the line is addressed to the offering descendant  
in the **I4i** but, optatively, to his descendants in the **Shih-ching** hymn, it may  
be uttered by the officiating priest. In **Mao shih** # 209, this final speech  
comprises four lines which are separated from the foregoing text by a new  
rhyme on the even lines:

Greatly compliant, greatly timely, 孔惠孔時

is how you complete [the rites]! I隹其盡之

Sons and sons, grandsons and grandsons, 子子孫孫

let them not fail to continue these [rites]! 勿替引之

Such closing formulae, which appear in a number of **Shih-ching**hymns, are ubiquitous in Chou bronze inscriptions and have been addressed  
in several studies that help us to understand the implicit perspective of  
speech\* In 1936, HsU Chung-shu 徐中舒 published his seminal “Chin-wen  
ku-tz’u shih-li” 金文暇辭釋例 where he identified the final portions of  
seventy to eighty per cent of all bronze inscriptions as “auspicious words’，  
玟’w 锻辭)，a technical term that is used in According to Hsii，

the final parts of the inscriptions comprise two distinct parts: the prayer for [[167]](#footnote-168) [[168]](#footnote-169)

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blessings, presented by the descendant, and - as a direct response - the  
bestowal of blessings expressed by the spirits. These two utterings can be  
virtually identical; their hieratic efficacy was apparently thought to rely just  
on their perfect matching, leaving no space for the slightest doubt about the  
success of the sacrificial ritual Taking into account a certain amount of  
bronze inscriptions, one may easily realize that they vary considerably in  
their closing lines: some appear to end with the prayer, others add to this  
another statement, identified by Hsu Chung-shu as the answer of the spirits,  
and some even attach another short confirmation by the descendant that he  
will certainly adhere to his duties. One does not need to follow Hsu's  
argument in all its details in order to see the potential significance of his  
observation that bronze inscriptions, especially in their final portions, can  
represent more than a single voice; indeed, it is barely possible to force the  
obvious variety of the ku-tz'u portions into a single structural scheme, and it  
is definitely impossible to read them invariably as continuation of the  
foregoing voice. There is no shortage of inscriptions that can only be read as  
dialogical or multivocal if they are to make sense at all.

More recently，Hayashi Minao 林已奈夫 has raised a crucial issue% if  
the final ku-tz'u formulae routinely claim that the bronze artifacts were  
intended to be used "forever^ by generations of later descendants, why were  
these routinely buried with their donors? According to Hayashi^s analysis,  
the formulae may in fact refer to the continuous sacrificial use of the bronze  
paraphernalia even in the afterlife: the donor would continue the sacrifices  
from the realm of his tomb, and he would await his descendants to join him  
after their own subsequent burials in the family tomb\* Both Hsii and  
Hayashi address fundamental structural problems of bronze inscriptions and  
suggest solutions on the pragmatic, i\*e., functional level of the texts within  
their concrete ritual contexts. These approaches to the final portions of the  
inscriptions may be effectively embedded in an overall analysis of the textual  
macrostructure of bronze inscriptions, and may be further refined by close  
textual examination. The macrostructure of texts like the pre-imperial Ch^in  
Kung inscriptions is best described as a tripartite Upast-present»future  
pattern,” as has been proposed by von Falkenhausen.卯 According to this [[169]](#footnote-170) [[170]](#footnote-171)

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pattern, a typical Chou bronze inscriptions is composed in the sequential  
order of a) an idealized historical narrative relating the accumulated merits  
(“the past”)，b) a statement of dedication (“the present’’)，and c) a prayer for  
blessings (uthe future?,). Although the past-present-future macrostructure is  
obvious in our inscriptions under discussion, Hsu Chung-shu's suggestions  
should be considered to differentiate the final part into at least two distinct  
units, and to identify two different voices.

The three Ch'in Kung bronze inscriptions adhere to the same macro-  
structure and employ similar, probably interchangeable formulae at  
corresponding positions among the texts; however, they allow us to refine  
the tripartite scheme. Following the introductory phrase “The Duke of Ch’in  
says/5 the first nine (Texts 1 and 2) or seven (Text 3) lines praise the  
ancestors who are the addressees of the sacrifice. In the middle part  
comprising lines 11-24 (Text 1), 10-17 (Text 2), and 9-20 (Text 3), the  
Duke of Ch’in praises himself，in a “statement of merits” presenting his  
achievements towards the ancestors in a boastful harangue; in Texts 1 and 3  
this part is clearly separated from the foregoing by the new introduction  
“[The Duke] says”（Text 1，line 10) or “The Duke，together with the kingly  
wife，says”（Text 3, line 8). The direction of his speech is clear from his  
self-designation as “the little son’’ in all three texts - a formula meaningful  
only towards the ancestral spirits. The following part of the texts includes a  
“statement of purpose，” directly leading to a prayer for blessings:

I have made [my] brightly harmonizing [bell]

Its name is ‘Regulating the State，’

its sound **fung-fung** is greatly clear,

to invoke [the spirits] to arrive at [our] sacrificial offerings,

to [let us] receive accumulated happiness, multiple favors!

(Text 1, lines 25-29)

I have made [my] vessel for the temple of [.\*.]

to invoke my august ancestors

that they solemnly and austerely arrive,

to [let us] receive accumulated happiness, multiple favors!

(Text 2, lines 18-21)

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I have made my harmonizing bells,  
with their numinous sound **fung-fung,**to delight the august duke(s),  
to receive great blessings,  
accumulated happiness, multiple favors!

(Text 3, lines 21-25)

For the remaining textual portion that follows these ''statements of  
purpose” and prayers I propose to identify a shift of speech that is marked  
by positive evidence, in particular the distribution of rhymes. Semantically  
the three inscriptions may be structured into eight distinctive steps, some of  
which are marked by distinctive rhymes. In the following table, thicker  
horizontal lines indicate the points where rhyme changes coincide with  
semantical junctures; the broken horizontal line in the column of Text 1  
indicates that the rhyme continues across two distinct semantic portions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Text 1 | Text 2 | Text 3 |
| Introductory phrase | LI | U | 1. 1 |
| Praise of the ancestors | n, 2-9 | 11. 2-9 | IL 2-7 |
| Second introductory phrase | I. 10 | —— | 1. 8 |
| Statement of merits | 11. 11-24 之/職rhyme | 11. 1047 之/職rhyme | 11. 8-20 之/職rhyme |
| Statement of purpose | 11 25-26 東 rhyme | 1L 18-20 魚/鐸rhyme | il, 21-23 東 rhyme |
| Prayer | H. 27-29 陽 rhyme | L 21  no rhyme | 11. 24-25 之/職rhyme |
| Response to the prayer | 11. 30-34 陽 rhyme | il 22-25 陽 rhyme | 11. 26-28 真 rhyme 11. 29-31 陽 rhyme |
| Emblem | 1. 35 | I 26 | **—** |

TABLE 1: The structure of the pre-imperial Ch^n Kung bronze inscriptions

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In all three texts, the initial portion that praises the ancestors does not  
show any particular rhyming pattern. It is only with the middle portions of  
the ^statements of merits,after the second introductory phrase (left out in  
Text 2), that rhyme seems to be consciously employed, although - and this  
is characteristic of bronze inscriptions in general - not as regularly as in the  
**Shih-ching** songs.l〇〇 In all three texts, this first rhyme sequence is  
constituted by a “combined” rhyme 合韻）of the categories c/i汸之

and **chih** The absence of rhyme in the initial praise of the ancestors and  
its unquestionable density in the statement relating the Duke^s own merits  
formally distinguishes the two parts of the eulogy which in the tripartite  
macrostmcture would both belong to “the past.”

Again in all three texts> the next rhyme sequence begins at precisely the  
same juncture, that is，with the “statement of purpose•，’ Moreover, in Texts  
1 and 3 the “statement of purpose” is also demarcated from the subsequent  
prayer which begins with a new rhyme; in Text 2, the prayer is not rhymed.  
And although the ''statements of purpose^ of Texts 1 and 3 are different,  
they share the same rhyme category **tung** The remarkably uniform  
distribution of rhymes across the three inscriptions changes slightly with the  
prayer sections: while in Text 2 the prayer does not bear any rhyme, in Text  
3 it has its own distinct rhyme, and in Text 1 its rhyme continues through  
the remaining part of the text. In Texts 2 and 3, a new rhyme begins  
immediately after the prayer, thus closing the "statement of purpose and  
prayer^ portion. While Text 2 includes only one rhyme for the rest of the  
text - which is the same **yang ^** rhyme that in Text 1 already begins with  
the prayer - Text 3 includes another **chen M** rhyme before closing with a  
**yang** rhyme.

Such minor differences notwithstanding, the overall coherence  
between semantic divisions and rhyme changes across all three texts is too  
strong to be merely accidental In view of these inscriptions, one cannot but [[171]](#footnote-172)

conclude that already by mid-Ch'un-chUu times, rhymes were a carefully  
chosen and therefore important textual device - and it should go without  
saying that they represent a device not of the written but of the oral  
dimension of ritual language.

Up to the final portion of all three inscriptions, rhyme changes  
unambiguously support semantic shifts of the texts. However, the rhyme  
changes do not seem to indicate different voices; only the introductory  
formulae are located outside the Duke5s speeches proper. This situation  
changes with the final portion, which in the table above is designated as  
“Response to the prayer” and might be best understood as a new speech that  
is obtained from the ancestral spirits\* It is Text 3 that furnishes the critical  
piece of evidence: while none of the three final portions includes the first-  
person pronoun, in line 27 of Text 3, the ctDuke of Ch^n^ is mentioned  
himself. At first glance, this may appear as a minor detail. Yet, since  
traditional Chinese ritual is deeply concerned with expressing and enhancing  
social distinctions, the correct formal designation of the ritual participants is  
not trivial but instrumental. It seems highly unlikely that the person who first  
refers to himself as 6<the little son), - the proper formal designation when  
addressing his ancestors - may call himself in the very same speech a uDuke  
of Ch’in” vis"^\*vis those spirits who are in fact all “Dukes of Ch’in,” In this  
case, the formal designation must reflect a different perspective of speech,  
and the only question to resolve is that of the identity of the concluding  
voice.

We are fortunate to find the Duke of Ch?in mentioned in Text 3, since  
otherwise we would not possess any concrete key to reconstruct the  
inscription as multivocal. Indeed, when looking for explicit markers of  
shifts of ritual speech in early Chinese hymns and inscriptions we should  
not expect always to be rewarded. On the contrary, we may assume that the  
ritual participants had no difficulties in distinguishing between their various  
voices; the problem of reconstructing them is mainly ours as readers of  
isolated ritual texts. Given the overall identity of the three texts under  
discussion, we therefore do not need to see the uDuke of Ch'in95 mentioned  
in all three final passages to conclude that they share the same perspective.  
We also should not ask for rhyme changes with every shift of perspective,  
as long as we have sufficient evidence from parallel versions. In our present  
case under discussion, the overall coherence of the three inscriptions  
strongly suggests that the final portion of Text 1 - despite its different

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rhyming pattern - should be placed on the same plane with those of Texts 2  
and 3, that is, as a speech directed towards the Duke.

We can conclude that the earliest of the three inscription texts, Text 3,  
provides the most complete information: it not only displays rhyme changes  
at every critical juncture but also mentions the Duke of Ch5in in the final  
portion. Furthermore, it furnishes two introductory formulae (in lines 1 and  
8), thus leaving no doubt about the speaker(s) of the earlier sections of the  
text. By comparison, each of the two later versions drops some of these  
markers, though both also maintain some of them.

Who, then, is (or are) the speaker (or speakers) of the final portion?  
Following Hsli Chung-shu, these lines would record the spirits^ response to  
the foregoing prayer. As a matter of fact, the spirits were believed to speak  
in Chinese ancestral rites, and their speeches are significant parts of the  
ceremony, instantaneously confirming the correctness of the offerings and  
the success of the sacrificial act. Given that the ritual paraphernalia were  
intended to be continously used by later generations, it is fair to assume that  
this confirmation and bestowal of blessings was indeed seen as a significant  
element of the message, in this case particularly with regard to the future  
descendants. However, one might ponder different alternatives. In **Mao shih**# 209, the officiating priest addresses various speeches towards the offering  
descendant, though only some of these directly convey the messages  
obtained from the spirits while others may be understood as uttered towards  
the spirits on behalf of the descendant, repeating and thereby enhancing his  
prayer Although they are less explicitly marked, similar structures can be  
identified with some confidence in two related texts, the sacrificial hymns  
**Mao shih** **#210** and # 211,^^ in all three of the inscriptions with which we  
are concerned here, the final portions can be identified as **ku-tzyu** and are  
clearly uttered not by the descendant himself but by a high ritual official or  
priest who acts either on the command of the impersonator (who transmits  
the messages from the spirits in the first place) or speaks in his own voice as  
the leading ceremonial authority. In both cases, the exhortative final lines of  
Texts 1 (1，35: “[May he] forever treasure [this bell]!”）and 3 (1. 31: “These  
[bells, may he] keep them for long as treasure!^) must be directed towards

仙 See my y/rtg 詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of ‘Chu ci’  
楚茨（‘Thorny Caltrop’).”

See Mao shih 13-2.202b-203c, 144.205b>208a.

the Duke, obliging him to perform his sacrificial duties - if we follow  
Hayashi Minao’s analysis - “forever，” i.e.，even beyond his own life span.

Completing the formal discussion of the three inscriptions, we shall  
turn to the two introductory formulae “The Duke of Ch’in says” and “[The  
Duke] says” or “The Duke，together with the kingly wife，says: Obviously，  
these cannot be part of the Duke5s speech but represent a situational and  
textual frame in which the speeches proper are embedded. As such, these  
formulae may have come either directly from the sacrificial act where they  
would have been uttered by a ritual official, or they may have been added  
just for the inscription to identify unambiguously the donor of the bronze  
artifact as the subject of the praise and prayer speech. In either case, these  
formulae enhance the dramatic performative dimension of the inscriptions,  
introducing a text that is primarily not a memorial inscription but a sequence  
of direct speeches.

The foregoing analysis should suggest that those elements marking the  
ritual language of the Chou bronze inscriptions as closely related to a  
fundamentally oral performance of the texts, like the introducing formulae as  
well as rhyme and meter, were not chosen at random but were consciously  
employed - a finding that cannot surprise, if placed in a broader anthropo-  
logical perspective. In ritual and ritual language, form matters. The Ch^n  
Kung inscriptions support the hypothesis that distinctive formal devices and  
semantic structures were intentionally joined together.

Of course, the whole ritual setting and ideology which served as the  
basis for the Ch^in Kung inscriptions had markedly changed by the time of  
Ch'in Shih-huang; the imperial stele inscriptions were detached from the  
ancestral temple and not meant to address the ancestral spirits in order to  
obtain blessings and longevity. Again, to further widen the gap, the wording  
of the three inscriptions has been identified as particularly conservative even  
in their own times, representing Western Chou rather than Spring and  
Autumn forms of ritual expression. The Ch^n **Kung-yung-chung** bells in  
particular are almost atavistic in their material form, their textual arrange-  
ment, and their tone distribution **pattern,and** one is immediately reminded [[172]](#footnote-173)

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of the famous speech delivered by Prince Chi Cha 季札 from Wu 吳 who  
during his visit in Lu # listened to the songs from the various states and  
concluded about those from Ch’in: “These are called the melodies of [the  
central states of] Hsia!1^ Since [the Ch^n] are able to become Hsia, they  
will be great - great to the utmost\* Is this because they [occupy] the old  
[lands] of **Chou?”As** noted above，the early Spring and Autumn period  
Ch^n bronze vessels from Kansu are likewise traditional in their appearance  
and would probably be dated to Western Chou times if they did not bear  
their brief “Chin Kung” inscriptions. However，while deliberately archaic in  
their material appearance, the Ch^in bells bear inscriptions that are very  
unusual for their own times - and closer to the much later political ambitions  
towards political sovereignty - in claiming that the Ch^n rulers received  
their mandate not from the King of Chou but directly from heaven. **^** It is  
this claim for universal power, together with the formal devices employed to  
transmit the political promulgation, that provides the basis for a closer  
comparison of the bronze texts with those of the stones. Yet before  
undertaking this comparison, we must consider the second traditional ritual  
complex involved in the erection of the stele inscriptions. [[173]](#footnote-174) [[174]](#footnote-175)

1. The tour of inspection and the sacrifices to cosmic spirits

The seven inscribed stelae were erected at locations only in the eastern  
**new territories** of the Ch?in empire. From the capital Hsien-yang} the nearest  
of these places - all of them mountains, probably with the exception of  
Chieh-shih - was Mt. I some 800 km away; Mt. T5ai was another 100 km  
north of this. Mt. Lang-yeh was at a distance of more than 1000 km from  
Hsien-yang, Mt. Chih-fu about 1100 km, and both Chieh-shih and Mt  
K^ai-chi some 1200 km. With the exception of Chieh-shih when the  
emperor continued his tour some way further to the northern borders, the  
mountains at the seashore (Lang-yeh, Chih-fu, K^ai-chi) were his final  
destinations in each region and the outermost points - relative to Hsien-yang  
**-for** him to visit. Actually, the emperor also went west and south, albeit  
without setting up stone inscriptions: his initial tour, which dates from the  
first year after unification (220 B.C.), led him from Hsien-yang some 470  
km northwest to the border commandery Lung-hsi (|II§, then back east to  
Pei-ti 北地（180 km northwest of Hsien-yang) before he finally — on the  
same tour (?) - moved westwards again to climb Mt. Chi-t’ou 雞頭（270 km  
northwest of Hsien-yang); the whole tour was thus kept within the borders  
of the old state of Ch^n.^7 To the south, down to the area of Lake Tung-  
t^ng PM (nearly 700 km southeast from Hsien-yang), the emperor went at  
least once in 211 B.C.; from here he proceeded east to Mt. K'uai-chi.

Both the first imperial circuit within the Ch'in core regions and the  
journey to the south were probably different in nature than the progress  
through the newly conquered eastern regions, and this may explain why the  
stelae were confined to the latter locations. The tour around the northwest  
can be understood as the initial thanksgiving and celebrating announcement  
of the unification to the people and - more importantly - the cosmic spirits  
of the old Ch，in state. By contrast, the monumental and subtly menacing [[175]](#footnote-176)

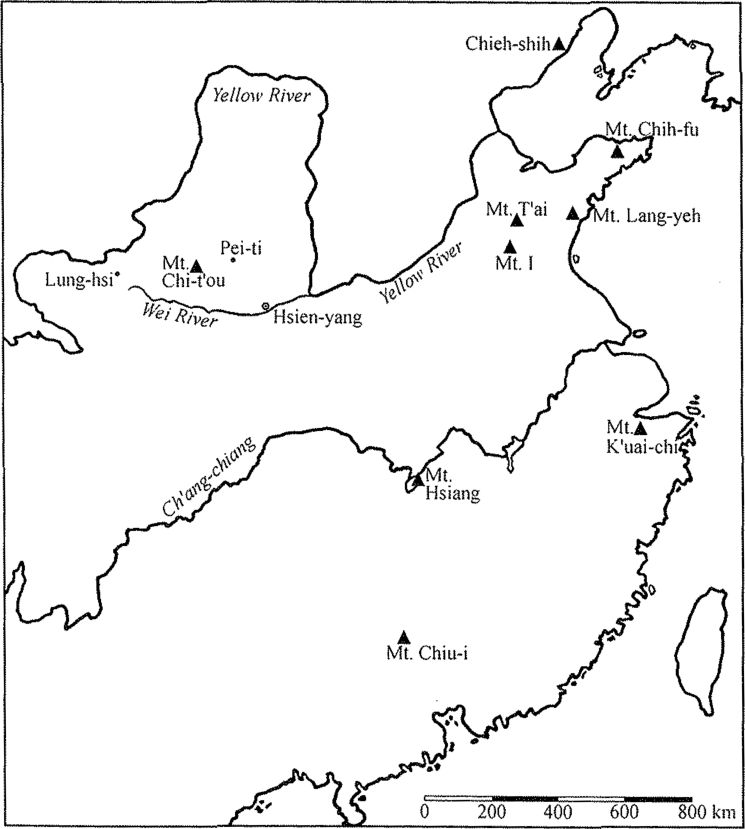
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inscriptions to be erected in the east were part of a different ritual agenda: the  
proclamation of the conquest, issued towards the conquered people and their  
spirits. The much later tour to the south was again of a different character. In  
211 B.C., the emperor and his entourage travelled to Yun-meng **9W,** north  
of Lake Tung-fing,[[176]](#footnote-177) [[177]](#footnote-178) [[178]](#footnote-179) [[179]](#footnote-180) where he offered a **wang** M ("viewing from the  
distance”）sacrifice to the legendary Shun 舜 at Mt. Chiu-i 九疑•咖 He then  
sailed down the Ch^ang-chiang, which he crossed at Tan-yang At

Ch’ien-t’ang 錢唐，the famous tidal bore of this place forced him again  
some 120 **li** back west before he could cross the Che-chiang MtC and  
finally - after another turn east - reach Mt. K^ai-chi.[[180]](#footnote-181)

By the sum of his tours, all of them finally directed to mountains,  
Ch，in Shih-huang obviously measured out his new imperium. The emperor，  
in the literal as in the symbolic sense, went to his limits; any substantial  
move further would have led him straight into the dangerous **term incognita**of non~Chinese lands. (In this sense, to realize the terminal points of the  
imperial progress may provide a more precise picture of the actual territory

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Map 2: **The mountains of the First Thearch’s journeys and sacrifices**

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controlled by the Ch'in emperors than any of their boastful claims or even  
the provincial divisions.) Especially Mt, K^ai-chi, where the capital of the  
old state of Yiieh S had been located, appears to have been recognized as  
the borderline of the unrestrained and uncontrollable world of barbarian  
people, as the uniquely strict and exhortative inscription erected there  
betrays: no other text in the series expresses a comparable concern about the  
social behavior of the common people, i\*e., imposes similar threats on  
them.u3 What at first glance appears as “legalist” 诉法）harshness here may  
have been nothing else than the attempt to subjugate the border population of  
the southeast under the common rules of northern Chinese civilization. It is  
therefore revealing that this kind of “legalism” was not at all paraded from  
the northeastern peaks located in the venerated homelands of “propriety”（//  
禮）-and from this starting point we will, in the concluding remarks of this  
study, have to consider again the relations between the political concepts of  
**li mdfa** in the late third century B.C.

To Ch'in Shih-huang, the actual places where he erected his stele  
inscriptions were both old and new: old in the cultural sense that they  
belonged either to the northeastern areas of the former Chou **oikumene**where the ritualist **ju** tradition was at home or, in the case of K^uai-chi,  
represented an important symbol of political mythology (see below); new in  
the political sense that these territories were now, for the first time in  
history, conquered by the Ch'in. The inscription text$> with their references  
to the Chou tradition on the one hand and to the military success of Ch5in on  
the other, are concerned with both factors - and their political message, as  
the concrete textual references betray, lies in mediating the one to the other.

When the “August Thearch” conducted his progress through the east，  
he was undoubtedly aware of the traditions attached to his various destina-  
tions and probably even more to the very act of utouringn newly conquered  
regions. It was not just that the inscriptions, with their emphasis on the  
overall conquest, the foundation of the state, and the enforcement of social  
order, were basically political - the very act of erecting and inscribing stones  
constituted the fulfillment of the tour of inspection which was already well-  
established as a most noble demonstration of sovereignty,!^ it is to this [[181]](#footnote-182) [[182]](#footnote-183)

political ritual that the carefully chosen terms **hsiin** M and **yu** # in the  
inscriptions referxhe venerated model of a cosmic ruler who had  
mounted the peaks of the four directions, measured out the empire, and  
established an all-embracing order was the cultural hero Shun as he is  
described in the “Yao tien” 堯典 chapter of the 从w. The significance

of this famous passage already in Han times is testified to by its inclusion in  
the monographs on imperial sacrifices both in **Shih-chi** and **Han-shuX^** The  
record of Shun5s initial tours of inspection matches in many details all too  
perfectly what we are told about Ch’in Shih-huang:

In the second month of the year^7 [Shun] went east to visit [for inspec-  
tion] those under his protection and arrived at [Mt.] Venerable Tai.

He made a burnt offering [to heaven] and performed **wang** sacrifices in  
the correct sequence to the mountains and streams. Then he gave  
audience to the lords of the east, regulated the [calendar of the] seasons  
and months, rectified the [designations of the] days, and made uniform  
the pitchpipes and the measures of length, capacity, and weight.11^

Having perfected the different rites according to the ranks of nobility  
and hence established the correct social order, Shun went home; in the same  
year he performed the identical set of rites and regulations during subsequent  
tours to the south，the west，and the north; no each time，his destination [[183]](#footnote-184) [[184]](#footnote-185) [[185]](#footnote-186) [[186]](#footnote-187) [[187]](#footnote-188) [[188]](#footnote-189)

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proper was the main peak of the respective direction. Prominent features in  
the **Shang-shu** account are the recurring initial sacrifices to heaven and to the  
important mountains and streams of the region. As a prerogative of the ruler，  
the ordered - and ordering ~ sequence of sacrifices formally structured and  
demarcated the world under control:

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The son of heaven sacrifices to the famous mountains and great  
streams All under Heaven, regarding the five peaks as his three high  
ministers，regarding the four streams as his feudal lords. The feudal  
lords sacrifice to the famous mountains and great streams within the  
borders of their territory.[[189]](#footnote-190) [[190]](#footnote-191)

Modern scholarship on the **Shang-shu** has established that an origi-  
nally earlier ctYao tien,5 chapter has evidently undergone a redaction in Ch^in  
imperial times, leading to significant textual changes and additions, among  
the latter being Shunts tour of inspection. The transmitted Han version of  
the **Shang-shu** - i.e., the aNew Text^ version provided by the former Ch?in  
erudite Fu Sheng 伏勝（born 260 B **•€；•)-** is essentially the Ch’in version of  
the text, prepared by the officialiy appointed erudites **(po-shih** t#±) at the  
imperial court. 122 The complex issue of Ch’in classical scholarship shall  
concern us in the concluding chapter; at this moment, I wish to register that  
the First Thearch not only in his most **solemn feng** ^ and **shan** # sacrifices  
(see below) but also in the design of his tours of inspection might have  
created the very tradition that he purported to revive. While the pre-imperial  
bronzes were true bearers of ChJin cultural memory, the textual scholarship  
that furnished references to Shun as well as to **the feng** and **shan** sacrifices

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of high antiquity served to produce an imperial memory in order to  
traditionalize what was actually without precedent. Nothing can demonstrate  
more clearly the First Thearch’s quest for tradition than the Ch’in imperial  
invention of it

When Ch'in Shih-huang arrived at a mountain, he faithfully emulated  
the allegedly old pattern and probably presented sacrifices before the  
officials inscribed the stele. The **Shih-chi** ^Book on the **feng** and **shan**Rituals”（“Feng shan shu” 封襌書）relates as follows the initial visit to Mt. I  
where the emperor erected the first stele:

In the third year after having taken the throne, the emperor conducted a  
tour of inspection through the commanderies and counties of the east;  
he sacrificed at Mount I in Tsou and eulogized the merits arid  
achievements of Ch，in.⑵

From here，the text moves straight to the erudites’ discussion of the  
**feng** and **shan** rituals which, according to the version of the "Basic Annals/7also involved the ''services of the **wang** sacrifices to the mountains and  
streams.”[[191]](#footnote-192) [[192]](#footnote-193) [[193]](#footnote-194) At Mt. T’ai，again according to the “Basic Annals，’’ the emperor  
first erected the stele, then performed **the feng** ritual on Mt. T?ai and the **shan**ritual on the adjoining Mt. Liang-fu, and then inscribed the erected stele. ^5  
The complementary version of the 4iBook on **the feng** and **shan** Rituals55makes the stele inscription part of **the feng** ritual:

[The emperor] opened a way for the carriages, went up the sunny  
[i.e., south] side of Mount T^i and reached the summit. He erected a  
stone and eulogized the virtuous power of the First August Thearch of

Ch’in，to make brightly manifest that he had obtained the

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Although the act of erecting a stele and inscribing it with a eulogy  
appears to be embedded in a ritual context designed after the model received  
from - or perhapts more exactly, invented for - Shun, there remains a  
difference to note: unlike the venerated Shun, the Ch5in emperor did not  
transform chaos into cosmos but obtained control over already ordered  
regions which only had to be re-ordered to constitute again the unified world  
under heaven. As a consequence, in choosing the places for the stele  
inscriptions, the emperor did not attempt ostentatiously to define a whole  
new set of sacred locations; instead, he purported to revive the sacrifices of  
old and attach himself to the culture-heroes of antiquity. Unfortunately, after  
centuries of political disunion there was not much of an actual ritual practice  
for a new universal ruler to draw upon. The rhetorical solution to this  
problem was a simple claim, based on the assumption that the inherent  
meaning of the rites did not reside in their outward shape: although the  
forms of the ancient rites had dimmed and faded, their names and supposed  
meanings were still clear and comprehensible and could be revitalized by a  
new or even improvised set of formal devices.[[194]](#footnote-195) [[195]](#footnote-196) The most prominent case  
in which to apply this formula was, of course, that of the **feng** and **shan**rituals on Mt. T^ai and Mt. Liang-fu. Almost certainly a genuine invention of  
the day, this complementary pair of rituals was nonetheless presented as a  
reconstruction of tradition，[[196]](#footnote-197) The same is true for the sacrifices at Mt, Chih-

fu and Mt. Lang-yeh，the next two localities favored with stele inscriptions:  
these were regarded as links in a chain of eight peaks located in the former  
state of Ch’i where the “eight [cosmic] spirits” 申）received their

offerings. According to **Shih-chi** and **Han-shu,** the "eight spirits^ existed of  
old, but the remote origins of their cults, probably from the times of the  
Martial King of Chou, lay in obscurity; the sacrifices had been discontinued  
at some time in the past. Again allegedly reviving lost tradition, the ChJin  
emperor sacrificed to the ruler of the **yang** Hr cosmic force at Mt. Chih~fu  
and to the ruler of the four seasons at Mt. Lang-yeh，thus integrating the  
two places into an overall cosmic ritual system. In sum, of the four  
mountains on former ChM territory to bear an inscribed stele, it is only Mt. I  
-located in the home county of Mencius and not far from Confucius^  
birthplace - for which the historiographical sources fail to provide us with a  
significant real or Active ritual tradition. But they do not fail to note that the  
emperor actually sacrificed to Mt. I, thereby distinguishing the place with a  
superior status in the ritual geography of the empire. A location for an  
inscription was never just somewhere.

Ch5i, it should be recalled, had been subjugated in 221 B.C» as the last  
of the former six states conquered by Ch^in, and this recent historical  
background may help to answer the question why Ch’in Shih~huang  
concentrated his first series of stele inscriptions - 219 / 218 B.C. - just in  
this area, combined with a series of different sacrifices to all four mountains  
and additional offerings to the other “famous mountains and great streams”  
wan 名山大川）.no Complementary to the focalization of [[197]](#footnote-198)

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history in the concentrated space of the lineage temple, the **wang** sacrifices  
served to manifest the spatial extension of legitimate sovereignty. The **wang**sacrifices were by definition directed not to outlying regions in general but to  
demarcated space under control, and only a universal ruler like Shun  
enjoyed the ritual prerogative and actual power to perform them during his  
far-flung tours of inspection;⑶ that Ch^in Shih-huang consciously  
recognized this model, furnished by his own official erudites, is obvious  
from the fact that he honored Shun himself with a **wang** sacrificed32 Against  
this background, the concentration of stele inscriptions and related sacrifices  
on the most recently conquered territories must have been self-evident:  
presenting his offerings to the mountains and rivers of the east and  
incorporating the former sacrificial sites of Ch’i into his own now cosmic  
ritual system, Ch^in Shih-huang officially - both to the humans and to the  
spirits — integrated the former territories of Ch’i into the empire, Ch，i, in  
turn, was ritually transformed from a subject of its own history into an  
object of Ch’in history - and this was the fundamental message to be  
deciphered from the stelae，written in Ch’in script.i33 in Mark Lewis’s  
words: “In placing these inscriptions on peaks in the newly-conquered  
Eastern states, the First Thearch completed his conquest by inscribing the  
reality of his power, in the newly created imperial script, into the sacred

landscape of his new subjects.”1^ [[198]](#footnote-199) [[199]](#footnote-200) [[200]](#footnote-201) [[201]](#footnote-202)

Again, the overall sequence of Ch’in Shih~huang’s tours of inspection  
allows one to recognize a certain logic: immediately after the unification, he  
first looked down on his inherited lands of Ch^in in the west, ensuring the  
constancy of his established rule, and probably announcing his achieve-  
ments to the spirits of his homelands. Then he went to the core lands of  
Eastern Chou culture, the most recently subjugated area of Ch^i, which by  
then included the ritual centers of the old state of Lu. Having secured - and  
also ritually absorbed - this symbolically central part of the empire，he  
finally departed for the most distant points, the liminal spheres separating the  
empire of Ch'in from the northeastern and southeastern ^barbarians/' The  
sheer distance that he had to cover as well as the probably much less  
developed infrastructure of these peripheral regions certainly turned these  
two journeys into most ambitious undertakings. This may reasonably  
explain why the progress to Chieh-shih was conducted as late as 215 B.C,  
and that to Mt. K’uai-chi another four years later, in 211 B.C. These  
relatively late dates and also the historical significance of the locations  
obviously distinguish the mountains of Chieh-shih and K^ai-chi from those  
of I，T’ai，Lang-yeh，and Chih-fu, The historiographical records，as  
unfolded above, support us with enough evidence to reconstruct the  
traditional ritual framework of the emperor's tours to these latter four peaks.  
But just why did he set out for Chieh-shih and K'uai-chi?

Again we must turn to a rather late layer of political mythology, as  
created in the **Shang-shu,** this time in the uYii kung^ chapter. Although  
under some suspicion of deriving from ChJin imperial times, this chapter,  
relating the merits of the culture»hero Yli the Great, probably dates from the  
mid-third century i.e.? some decades before the imperial unifica-  
tions^ it is to Yii's idealized geography of the world that some of the lines  
of the Lang-yeh inscription (61-66) refer» denoting the western and eastern  
limits of the empire. Mt. Chieh-shih is part of YU^s geography: here it marks  
the outermost point of the first，i.e.，geographically central，province Chi，  
chou 冀州，apparently the easternmost part of a mountain range leading to [[202]](#footnote-203)

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the sea.136 in both contexts where Chieh-shih is mentioned it closes the  
initial section of YU’s geographical order. Mt. K’uai-chi，on the other hand，  
denotes an ultimate border only secondarily in a geographical sense:

In the tenth year, Thearch Yii conducted a tour of inspection in the

east. He reached K^ai-chi and passed away,!37

I am not sure whether we should go so far to assign to Ch^n Shih-  
huang a notion of Chieh-shih and K’uai-chi as the alpha and omega of YU’s  
efforts，but the mythological significance at least of Mt\* K’uai-chi in relation  
to Yu is beyond any doubt, as a whole string of pre-Han and Han references  
may illustrate. In the **Kuo-yii** (^Lu-yu^ it is Confucius who notes that  
t(in times of old, Yti summoned the multitude of spirits on Mt. K'uai-chi^;[[203]](#footnote-204) [[204]](#footnote-205) [[205]](#footnote-206)according to **Han FeUtzuy** Yu held audience with the nobles of the feudal  
lords on Mt. K^uai-chi.^^ According to the spurious **Kuan-tzu** passage of  
unknown origins which is included in the "Book on the **feng** and **shan**Rituals/[[206]](#footnote-207) [[207]](#footnote-208) Yu performed **\htfeng** at Mt\* T^ai and the **shan** at Mt. K'uai-chi.^o  
Both **Mo-tzu** and **Huai-nan tzu** mention that Yti was buried here;[[208]](#footnote-209) [[209]](#footnote-210) the **Yiieh**c/x如/z 越絕書 and especially the c/z’狀**-c/xW** 吳越春秋，

claiming that it was YU who initially had named Mt. K^ai-chi, again  
elaborate extensively on the circumstances of the graved location.1^2 The  
dose identification of Mt. K^ai-chi with the burial place of Yti was well  
known to Ch'in Shih-huang. When, after a long journey through the south,  
he finally reached his final destination, he

climbed Mount K?uai»chi, sacrificed to Yii the Great, gazed over [the

land by] the southern sea> and erected an inscribed stone to eulogize

the virtuous power of Ch’in\* 143

Here again, the act of erecting the stele is embedded in a broader ritual  
framework. In this case the mountain spirit is distinguished from the ever-  
growing crowd of natural spirits acknowledged by the Ch^n emperor. **Shih-  
chi** and **Han-shu** include whole catalogues of sacrifices addressed to the  
mountains and streams of all directions and mention more than one hundred  
shrines to nature (including all the major astral spirits) alone, at the old  
sacrificial center of Yung: 144 Yti the Great，like Shun at Mt. Chiu-i，was as  
much a part of the cosmos as he was part of history. As human heroes  
transformed into nature spirits, Shun and Yu were political ancestors of old,  
yet resided on mountain peaks. The strictly observed principle of the Chou  
ancestral temple that the spirits would only accept the sacrifice of their  
legitimate descendant carried equal weight in the open air: as only the  
emperor was entitled to sacrifice to the mountains and streams of the realm,  
it was again exclusively he who could rightfully adopt Shun and Yti as his  
political ancestors, sacrifice to them, and present himself as their blessed  
descendant\* As human spirits, they represented the political model to  
emulate; as mountain spirits, they were approachable by the **wang** sacrifice  
that distinguished the universal ruler. Through his offerings to Yii and  
Shun} Ch'in Shih-huang linked the historical to the cosmic dimension of  
imperial legitimation J45 It is in this context, I believe, that the stone stelae  
placed on lofty heights played their role ™ submitting the same long litany of  
historical merits as their typological antecedents, the bronze bells and vessels  
of the ancestral temple, but now to the cosmic powers.

1. Shih-chi 6\*260.
2. p〇r the whole overview, see Shih-chi 28.1366-77, Han-shu 25A, 1201-9.
3. xhe very same idea governed the Chou and later imperial practice of elevating  
   the foremost ancestor to be the companion (pVz.酉己）of heaven in the suburban sacrifice.
4. A structural analysis of the inscriptions  
   4.L The ritual text as a textual series

The stele inscriptions are not seven individual or “original” texts，but  
rather a series of variations of what might be considered one basic text. In  
the following comments on the sequential topical structure, it will be  
demonstrated that more or less identical formulae appear in different  
inscriptions at the same place; they were probably not movable within a  
single text, and precisely because of being fixed in this way they were  
interchangeable between two or more texts. The texts are composed in a  
modular design. We are, of course, accustomed to read at least the six  
inscriptions preserved in the **Shih-chi** as a kind of series, and a study like the  
present one further enhances this manner of reception. But actually the texts  
were not placed side by side but separated from one another by vast  
distances of space and years of time. The basic identity between the seven  
texts becomes evident only in their secondary collection and juxtaposition,  
yet reading them as a joined chain obviously is more revealing than  
regarding them as isolated writings, each one autonomous in its own right.  
It appears that the secondary grouping of the texts in the **Shih-chi,** arranged  
more than a century after they had been written, actually restores their  
original correlation, and this observation indicates in turn that the inscrip-  
tions were originally exactly this: secondary, not primary textual products,  
each one imposed on a single location, not developed out of it.

The phenomenon of a textual series or cycle as we witness it on the  
stelae can be explained as a traditional device in the context of ritualized  
political representation. As the bronze and chime-stone inscriptions  
demonstrate, the notion of an "original^ text being attached in a one-to-one  
relation to a certain situation，place, or material carrier seems to be actually  
misleading in the ritual setting of ancient China. On the contrary, conscious-  
ly designed repetition and variation may have been a significant part of the  
message, endowing the text with an aura of being standardized, that is,  
normative\* For inscribed texts, the series or cycle may well have been a  
regular phenomenon rather than an exception. The notion of a textual series [[210]](#footnote-211)

spanning remarkable distances in time and space demands explanations on  
various levels. How is it possible - and why is it reasonable - to conserve  
and repeat the same or a closely related text several times? What is the  
historical relation between a given text (or a given version of a text) and its  
situational use? Where, when, and by whom were texts like the stele  
inscriptions composed, if we can almost certainly rule out any idea of  
spontaneous extemporization? It appears that the Ch'in imperial stele  
inscriptions confirm to some degree the conclusions recently drawn about  
the very nature of Chou bronze inscriptions: <c[T]he bronze inscriptions are  
not primary texts, but secondary versions of the documents stored in the  
donor’s family archives …It cannot be overemphasized that no bronze  
inscription was a unique document that preserved the only version of an  
investiture record. It was, instead, one of several existing versions of such a  
record, which had been inscribed in the bronze medium for the specific  
purpose of communication to the ancestral spirits,’[[211]](#footnote-212)

One of the apparent historical truths that again turn into questions as  
soon as we relate the observation of the textual series to some type of  
institutionalized memory is the attribution of the K^ai-chi inscription text to  
Li Ssu: this assumption about his authorship - which became later applied to  
the whole series of the inscriptions - is based exclusively on the respective  
**Shih-chi** account, according to which Li Ssu was in the emperor's entourage  
on his final tour of inspection. Now the notion of an archive, or of another  
imperial institution in charge of the ritual and textual tradition> where the  
inscription texts were formulated or at least roughly drafted well in advance  
of the imperial tours, undermines the relevance of this account since it  
dissociates, at least to a certain degree, text and event, including the  
participants involved in the latter. In this perspective, which emphasizes the  
ritual institution rather than the individual, the question of personal  
authorship is simply suspended\* Almost certainly, the texts were composed  
by the officially appointed erudites at the imperial court who drew on their  
expertise in ritual and textual learning (see chapter 5 below).

The phenomenon of the textual series and its assumed mode of  
composition carries further implications - on the ideology of the texts, on  
the possible nexus between the inscriptions and other texts preserved in  
written and oral memory, as well as on the tension between a textual

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tradition and the factual, non-textual history. To unfold the problems and  
perspectives involved we must again return to the pre-imperial ChMn bronze  
and chime-stone inscriptions translated above.

The relation between a ritual bronze and its text, as the Ch^in examples  
(and many others) reveal^ is relatively loose: we see a single text - identical  
or in the form of obviously related versions - completely occurring several  
times on identical or different paraphernalia, and again we notice instances  
of one text cut into portions and spread over a series of bronzes. Moreover,  
there are close relations between different texts, or groups of texts. The  
repetition of one text on several items or its distribution across them, binding  
the material objects into a unified set, may be particularly true for chime-  
bells[[212]](#footnote-213) and chime»stones that by their very nature existed in structured  
groups, but the principle also applies to other ritual paraphernalia, as the  
example of the kuei vessel is able to confirm. (Even the situation of one text  
spread over two or more carriers is applicable to the inscriptions on Mt. I  
and Mt, T'ai, as we shall see.) With the text being either spread across or  
repeated on several material carriers, it is conceived as a relatively indepen-  
dent entity in its own right, initially not bound to or limited by a single  
material carrier. Telling in this respect is a feature already briefly mentioned  
in section 3,2, above: the arrangement of the inscriptions on the ritual  
implements, the visual representation of the texts, does not at all follow  
the internal textual structure indicated by their contents and formal features  
(especially rhymes and meter): the form of the text and the form of the  
inscription are two different and independently operating aesthetic entitieSj  
the one being located on the visual level, the other on the acoustical.

Again, there was apparently no defined relation between textual  
content and the form of the carrier: in the case of the Ch^in bronzes, two  
versions of basically the same text appear on a bell and on a vessel, and in  
the self-referential statement of the text one simply had to change the  
designation of the implement, e.g., from UI have made [my] brightly  
harmonizing [bell]” to “I have made [my] vessel for the temple of […].”  
This exchange of modular textual pieces at defined positions parallels exactly  
those lines on the stone stelae where the date and place of the respective  
inscription are mentioned: these lines were easily inserted or adjusted to any  
given occasion, once or twice or a hundred times. Strictly speaking, an early

text of this nature is largely independent from its material carrier and  
concrete historical or ritual events; it potentially even allows for varying  
textual subjects according to the actual context of the individual inscription.  
The text is an objective reality of institutionalized ^cultural memory95 - a term  
that I use in the sense developed by the Egyptologist Jan Assmann^ - that  
transcends individual beings and occasions; it is actualized as an inscription  
on an individual carrier and as a message to the spirits within a particular  
ritual performance - but it is composed and preserved somewhere else.

With regard to Chou lineage temples the complex relation between  
texts and their respective ritual locality - in terms of place, time, medium, or  
performance - is not yet sufficiently explained. The basic uncertainty about  
the obvious phenomenon of textual mobility on various levels cannot be  
overemphasized, since it challenges our present understanding of how and  
why texts functioned in the various ritual contexts. The fact, for example,  
that we may trace a single inscribed bronze bell or vessel to a certain person  
or a certain tomb tells us nothing about where else the very same text was  
used，and for what purpose. The pre~imperial Ch’in bronzes，probably  
separated from one another by a full century and yet by their inscription texts  
closely related, compellingly substantiate the assumption of some kind of an  
institutionalized memory behind the “individual” texts. They confirm that  
there was one text which, probably at the same place and under the same  
ruler, was inscribed in two different versions on two different ritual  
bronzes, and that this text again included large portions of another one,  
inscribed a century earlier.

Although a prerequisite to approaching the potential meaning of a text,  
especially of a text that takes its material form in bronze and is attached to a  
ritual setting, the reconstruction of its specific historical setting allows for  
only limited conclusions. The remarkable intertextual relations between  
bronze inscriptions show that the meaning and form of a single text, in  
addition to its historical anchoring, are indebted to a textual framework that  
transcends the borderlines of a presumed single “original” setting and  
appears continuously to undermine the ground where the historical anchor [[213]](#footnote-214)

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originally rested. To locate a text in its historical circumstances, therefore,  
we have to identify its textual relations; and it seems clear that  
“historicization” and “contextualization” often run contrary to each other，  
The meaning of the single text - and I am ready to defend this old-fashioned  
notion against the various turns of postmodern textual theory - may only  
gradually become transparent through carefully balancing the history of  
events with the history of texts.4

It is difficult to prove the actual existence of early Zhou archives  
which, assumedly kept on perishable materials, have vanished; so far, the  
archaeological record does not provide any hard evidence. As noted in  
section 32, above, the close textual relation between the [[214]](#footnote-215)Eight bells^ on the  
one hand, and the later kuei vessel, the po bell, and the chime-stones on the  
other, dearly point to some kind of a textual transmission that was  
independent from the transmission of the bronze artifacts; this textual  
transmission overspanned not only about a century in time but also the move  
of the capital in space\* Yet revealing as the correspondences between the  
earlier and the later inscriptions are, their differences are no less suggestive.  
The texts are close enough to each other to be identified as drawing on a  
common source - with either the later texts drawing on the earlier ones, or  
all of them drawing on a third source - and in their individual formulations  
they are diverse enough to be seen as distinct versions in their own right.  
The need to assume an underlying archive of writings is therefore less  
pressing: in designing a new inscription, a ruler and his ritual officials may  
have turned to their records for the - relatively few and in any way highly  
idealized - historical details that provide the prayer and praise with their  
individual focus; yet the actual phrasing, as we may conclude from the Ch'in  
examples, was relatively open. Traditional as they are, the inscriptions show  
themselves as not canonical in the strict sense in which one needs to remain  
faithful to the single word. Therefore, the latter inscriptions could be  
phrased and varied according to a more general, not a verbatim model, and  
even contemporary inscriptions could differ from one another. For the actual  
choice of words, in particular for those of the praise and prayer parts, a

ritual specialist could in fact draw on numerous examples from the  
traditional and common pool of Chou liturgical and eulogizing language; a  
pool that was available not only in form of other inscriptions but - and  
certainly to a much larger extent - through the repertoire of orally performed  
eulogies and hymns which may have been as much a form of institutional-\*  
ized memory as any written text. The assumption of an underlying textual  
blueprint of which the individual inscription was but one secondary  
realization and variation does therefore not necessarily, or only to a limited  
degree, require the notion of written archival records. Conspicuously,  
neither the Mi nor the Chou-li, while full to the brim with circumstantial and  
tedious accounts of ritual duties and offices, mention the ritual archivist

Whether partly written or completely oral, the institutionalized - and in  
ritual performances actualized - cultural memory of Chou times provided the  
basis to compose a bronze inscription, and it continued to serve in this  
capacity for the imperial stele inscriptions at a time when written archives  
were definitely maintained. Considering what needs this memory presum-  
ably satisfied, we are directed back to the ideological core of the Chou  
ancestral temples, the notion of prototype and replica, oriented to lineage  
permanence. The cultural memory, it appears, preserved not only informa-  
tion, i.e., historical memory, but also the models of verbal expression\*  
Composing an inscription, one was not free to choose randomly whatever  
expression one wished but, operating within a limited code, one was certain  
to continue the ritual legacy: grounded in memory, one had access to  
history, knew how to compose an inscription that represented the sacralized  
distillate of the historical records, and was able to arrange the new record  
true to the model of the past, reaffirming the legitimizing force of the ritual-  
historical continuum. The high degree of redundancy and intertextuality so  
obvious in Chou bronze inscriptions hence reflects the very program of the  
ancestral ritual, that is, the true setting of the bronzes and their texts. All too  
naturally, again, the overwhelming majority of bronze inscriptions conclude  
with the suprapersonal topos of longevity and lineage (even dynastic)  
permanence.

The imperial stele inscriptions, set up over the time span of nearly a  
decade, are exemplary of how the phenomenon of the textual series worked  
as the true formal manifestation of this program: the single text is not  
attached to the isolated historical event but its variations run along a  
continuous thread through a whole sequence of events and places. Placing

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texts very similar to one another - now in the newly standardized script - in  
a number of localities all over the recently conquered eastern parts of the  
empire performed and expressed on the linguistic level exactly what the  
accompanying wang sacrifices realized on the level of ritual action: the  
absorption of the individual historical site into the common suprahistorical  
frame of the new empire, designed for eternity. In the texts on the stelae we  
can hardly detect any trace of a historical development that may have taken  
place between 219 and 210 B.C. History, it appears, has come to a standstill  
since 221 B.C.; history, now inscribed into chosen sites of nature, has  
reached its final petrifaction.

When Shun, according to the Ch^n imperial version of the Shang-shu,  
set out to integrate the series of mountains of the four directions into a closed  
system of political geography, he performed the identical rites on each of the  
peaks; when Ch5in Shih-huang followed his model, he inscribed the  
locations - not just some stones - with variations of basically one and the  
same text. The contents of the inscriptions, as will be apparent, present the  
single ideal history; the form of the inscriptions, the ideal text. Of this text,  
the imperial archives may have actually preserved a single blueprint or  
prototext, yet the unifying force of ritual, as we know from the anthropolog-  
ical record, becomes fully realized not by blind overall uniformity. Only  
through its phenotypic series of concrete variations, the prototext could be  
readily adjusted to the variety of singular locations, each of them laden with  
its own geographical-historical significance. The serial materializations of  
the prototext into stationary inscriptions - which we may call phenotexts -  
served the true ritual order of imperial geography: with his inscriptions the  
emperor recognized each of the locations as a discrete entity of marked  
significance and, by the very nature of the textual series and its implied  
prototext, transformed them synchronically from scattered spots formerly  
dissociated by political fragmentation into their proper places within the now  
unified spatial organization of the empire - topoi in a meaningful cosmos.

4.2. The sequential topical structure

The formal organization of the seven inscriptions follows a relatively  
uniform pattern: most likely, all lines are tetrasyllable,[[215]](#footnote-216) [[216]](#footnote-217) and the texts consist  
of either thirty-six or seventy-two (Lang-yeh and K’uai-chi) lines. The  
irregular form of the Chieh-shih-m^n inscription (twenty-seven lines) clearly  
reflects an incomplete text, with the initial nine lines missing. With the  
exception of the Lang-yeh inscription, which rhymes on every other line, all  
texts rhyme on every third line. The rhymes are extremely regular, strictly  
adhering to the reconstructed pre-Han rhyme categories without any  
“combined rhymes”The rhyme sequences may be summarized as  
follows, with the Lang-yeh sequence separated^

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I | 6 陽〇) | **6 Mh** 之**(M** |  |
| T | 6 **chih M (^k)** | **6 chih** 之**(h)** |  |
| LY | 12 cWA 之（\*-2〇 | | 6夕卿陽（**\*-**即） |
|  | **6 chih** 支 | | 6 dUA 職（\*-从) 6 **yu ^ (^-d)** |
| CF | **6 chih** 之**(**考**-9)** | 6 ■職〇兩 |  |
| CFTK | 6卿茗陽（**\*-**即） | **6 chih** 之 |  |
| CS | 3 dWA 職（\*-辦 | 6坤魚 |  |
| KC | 12 y卿陽 | | 12心邶耕（\*却) |

Table 2: The rhyme schemes of the stele inscriptions

All five texts of thirty-six lines comprise two rhyme sequences with  
six rhymes each, assuming that the missing first three rhymes of the Chieh-  
shih~men inscription also adhered to the same scheme. The unambiguous

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rhyme division in the texts of Mt. I, Chih-fu tung-kuan, and Chieh-shih-  
men further indicates that the coherent distinction of yin-sheng and ju-  
sheng A§ rhymes in the texts of Mt\* T9ai and Mt. Chih-fu was indeed  
consciously observed; there is no case of a mixture of yin-sheng and ju-  
sheng rhymes. The two texts of doubled length (seventy-two lines) also  
include exactly doubled rhyme sequences of equal perfection. Finally, again  
without exception, the rhyme words not only follow what has been  
reconstructed as normative categorical distinctions, they even belong to the  
same tone within a given rhyme category.[[217]](#footnote-218) As such, the stelae, as early as in  
the late third century B.C. and better than any other contemporary or earlier  
corpus of texts, compellingly testify to the conscious perception of those  
tonal - or initially morphological - distinctions that many centuries later  
became explicitly determined in the ChHeh-yun SJli (601) and Kuang-yun  
廣韻（100&) tradition.[[218]](#footnote-219)

In all pre-Ch^in and early imperial literature there is no other corpus of  
texts that would include an unbroken sequence of one hundred seventeen  
rhymes without the slightest irregularity, not to speak of the perfect  
adherence to tonal distinctions. In addition to literary expertise and rigor,

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this unique achievement required a strong ideological impulse towards the  
cultural tradition, and it raises various questions. Are the inscriptions  
composed with unparalleled formal conscientiousness? Why is such  
aesthetic perfection encountered precisely - and only - under a rule that soon  
after its downfall was characterized as violently anti-traditional and hostile to  
textual scholarship? Another issue that needs consideration here is the actual  
age of the Shih-ching rhyme system in the sophisticated form in which it  
appears in the Ch'in inscriptions. Although most of the basic rhyme  
distinctions can be traced back to early Chou bronze inscriptions, they never  
come close to the relative perfection of the Shih-ching rhymes which in turn  
are inferior to the regularity of the stele inscriptions^ Outside of the Shih-  
ching itself, a strict adherence to its rhyme system can be found only in the  
early parts of the CTzWw 楚辭，notably the “Chiu ko” 九歌，in the  
Ch^in stele inscriptions, in six shorter songs from the early years of the  
Western Han that are preserved in Shih-chi and Han-shu, in the corpus of  
early Western Han ancestral hymns that postdate the inscriptions by about a  
decade, and, though already with some significant deviations, in the Huai-  
nan tzu (submitted to the throne in 139 B.C.). Later texts, even state  
sacrificial songs, increasingly depart from the Shih-ching rhymes.11

If therefore the texts that follow these rhymes are all clustered within  
one century (with 139 B.C. as the terminus and with the tentative conjecture  
of a late third century B.C. date for the uChiu ko,5) one is tempted to ask  
how old the Shih-ching rhymes in their received elaborated system can  
possibly be: would they have remained stable through centuries of political  
and cultural diversity only to fall rapidly into oblivion from mid-Western  
Han times on, despite the stabilizing cultural conditions of the unified empire  
-and despite all Han efforts towards the final canonization of the Shih ^r?  
The evidence from the stele inscriptions seems to suggest a different and  
somewhat more complex scenario: on the one hand, the received Shih-ching  
rhymes probably do not predate the stelae by centuries; on the other, the  
rhymes were preserved perfectly only where they were engraved into stone. [[219]](#footnote-220)

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Only the stele inscriptions as literally petrified texts were relatively immune  
to a scholarly Han redaction that transcribed the Shih and the early Han  
ancestral hymns into the gradually emerging Han orthography while  
probably already lacking a clear understanding of the earlier sounds (note  
that the Han hymns are preserved only in the Han-shu, not in the Shih-chi);  
only for the inscriptions, a written original version continued to exist as a  
useful corrective alongside the transcriptions in the literary tradition\* The  
remaining textual variants between the transmitted Shih-chi and the  
inscription collections (which also are not primary sources but at least were  
compiled to preserve earlier calligraphic forms) tend to attest to the  
superiority of the latter over the former; in addition, the fragmentary  
transmission of the Chieh-shih-m^n inscription and especially the case of  
CS.21 shows precisely the kind of orthographic error that results from  
imperfect transcription.

In short, the evidence from both the stelae and early Han texts i2 leads  
me to assume two chronological layers of early imperial Shih-ching  
redaction that have affected the rhymes: a late third century B.C. layer -  
perhaps from the hands of the same Ch'in imperial erudites who composed  
the stele inscriptions - in which the Shih-ching rhymes were fixed, and a  
following layer from mid-Westem or later Han times in which these rhymes  
were again corrupted by a new transcription. This tentative conclusion rests  
partly on the received form of the early Han ancestral hymns, which  
probably were composed by Han erudites who had been directly connected  
with the Ch^in imperial court (see chapter 5 below): the fact that the hymns  
share with relative strictness but not with utmost perfection the rhyme  
system of their immediate models, the Ch^n stelae, may more likely be due  
to problems of transcription and transmission than of composition. The  
Shih-ching, the stelae, and the early Han hymns may all have been on the  
same plane of formal achievement but only the inscriptions, at least to some  
extent, escaped the more serious operations of later redaction.

^ The stelae alone, including only six of the traditional rhyme groups that have  
been reconstructed for pre-imperial texts, do not provide sufficient evidence to date the  
perfection of the Shih-ching rhyme system. However> the early Western Han hymns show  
much more complex rhyming patterns. As such, they share with the Shih-ching not only  
the standard rhymes but also peculiar irregularities while lacking any of the deviations that  
became common in later Western Han rhymes; see my Die Hymnen der chinesischen  
Staatsopfer, 161-68.

One is easily tempted to identify in the rhymes of the stele inscriptions  
a formal poetic device that would mimetically represent what the texts  
express on their propositional level: the exalted image of perfect order. There  
is indeed one common interpretation that relates the regular sequences of six  
or twelve rhymes to the alleged Ch^in imperial adoption, immediately after  
the unification in 221 B.C，of the “Phase” or “Potency” of ‘Water” Cy/mif必  
and its correlated number usix^ according to the cosmological theory  
of the Five Phases (wu-hsing StT)\*13 Apart from the fact that the historicity  
of the adoption of “Water” under the Ch’in remains doubtful，14 this  
speculation seems difficult to accept: first, there are other early texts  
structured in groups of six rhymes; second, in no other known case in early  
Chinese history was the number of rhymes employed as a cosmological  
emblem of the dynasty. Yet these considerations notwithstanding, the seven  
inscriptions certainly exhibit a very tight structure that conveys the birthmark  
of ideological normativity; the same sense of order that governs the rhymes  
also determines the sequence of themes and topoi seen in the texts, in  
particular with regard to their opening and closing parts. A number of  
semantic caesuras are not marked by changes of rhyme but by the use of  
formulaic expressions related to distinctive topoi. The following table notes  
the distribution of what may be regarded as a discrete set of almost  
obligatory opening topoi which actually serve to establish the situational  
context of the respective inscription. [[220]](#footnote-221) [[221]](#footnote-222)

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Under the heading “emperor looking down” I include the terms "n 臨  
(“to look down，” occurring four times)，省（“to inspect,” three times)，  
and fc/i 仙7 丨仰周覽（“t〇 survey [all around]，” three times) .“Officials  
meditating” comprises min 念（“to contemplate，’’ three times)，y沿2/1 原（“to  
trace the origins，’’ four times)，c/zw/ 追（“to recall，’，three times)，pen 本（“to  
trace the roots/5 twice), and ssu (uto meditate/' twice). The numbers  
indicate the line where a topos appears in the respective text:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | emperor | emperor  looking  down | date | tour of inspection | place | officials | officials  medita-  ting | officials  reciting |
| I | [1] |  | 10 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |  |
| T | I | 9 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| LY | 2 | 10,12 | 1 | 9 | **—** | — | \_ | — |
| CF | 4 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| CFTK | 2 | 3,6 | 1 | 2,3 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 一 |
| CS | — | 一 | — | 相™ | — | \_ | 一 | — |
| KC | 1 | 6,8,13 | 4 | 5,6 | 7 | 10 | 11 | 12 |

Table 3: The distribution of the opening topoi in the stele inscriptions

The table illuminates a common scheme as well as the different  
deviations. To begin with what may be identified as the normative pattern:  
the inscriptions of Mt. T'ai, Chih-fu, Chih-fu tung-kuan, and K^uai-chi  
show a very similar distribution of the topoi within the first nine (Chih-fu,  
Chih-fu tung-kuan) or twelve (T'ai, K'uai-chi) lines. The hypothesis that  
this set of topoi is usually restricted to the first lines of an inscription  
becomes substantiated by a comparison with the Lang-yeh and the Chieh-  
shih-men inscriptions. The latter only mentions the emperor at the beginning  
of the second rhyme sequence (line 19), but this is again a normative device  
employed in all other texts except the Mt. I inscription (and hence not  
included in the table). Only the received Chith-shih-men text does not  
mention him at the very beginning of the whole text, and neither does it  
include the other opening topoi ~ a situation which suggests that these were

actually in their proper place originally, i\*eM in the first nine lines of the text,  
which have now been lost\*

The case of the Lang-yeh text is more difficult: it mentions only the  
emperor，his “looking down，” the date, the tour, and, indirectly (hence the  
brackets), the place. On the other hand, the passage which in the Shih-chi  
immediately follows the inscription and which, at least in part, cannot  
conclusively be ruled out as belonging to the inscription proper, mentions  
again the tour as well as the precise location Lang-yehJ5 Apart from these  
points, I cannot account for the Lang-yeh text inconsistencies.

A final anomaly that the table displays is the position of the opening  
topoi in the Mt. I inscription. Here, the emperor is mentioned in the first  
line, yet most of the set - leaving out only the emperor and, as in the Chih-  
fu tung-kuan inscription, the "officials reciting^ - fills neatly the second half  
of the first rhyme sequence (lines 10 to 18). Considering that the text has not  
been transmitted in the Shih-chi but only in much later inscription collec-  
tions, and that all known versions are based on obscure recarvings of the  
original, we cannot rule out the possibility that some editor, by neglect or  
intention, may have reversed the original textual order, that is, within the  
first rhyme sequence, he might have put lines 1-9 after 10-18.

The position of the idealized narration of the military conquest, another  
important textual element, supports this conjecture. This element is  
completely absent in the Mt. T5ai inscription and is shortened in that of  
Lang-yeh (lines 50-52). In the K^uai-chi text it is reduced to three lines (31-  
33)，following — rhetorically as the “solution” 一 a long retrospective  
narrative that relates the crimes of the “six kings”（lines 19-30). The cases of  
Lang-yeh and K^uai-chi here show that the longer inscriptions do not just  
enlarge every single part of the shorter ones. The account of the extermina-  
tion of the urebellious and recalcitrant,M the 'Violent and cruel/5 the ''greedy  
and criminal，，，or of the “lawless” gains its full expression，now shaped as  
an elaborate harangue, in the remaining four inscriptions. In the Chih-fu  
text, this martial element fills the first half of the second rhyme (lines 19-  
27), whereas in the Chih-fu tung-kuan inscription it follows immediately the  
series of opening topoi, filling the second half of the first rhyme (lines 10- [[222]](#footnote-223)

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18); the same can be assumed for the Chieh-shih-men text where the account  
runs through lines 10-15 (assuming that the first nine lines with the opening  
topoi are missing so that the first line of the received text is actually line 10).  
Compared to these inscriptions, it is only the Mt. I text where the sequences  
of the opening topoi (lines 10-18) and the martial account (lines 4-9) are  
transposed. In other words: to reverse the order of lines 1-9 and 10-18  
would make the first rhyme of the Mt. I text exactly parallel to those of  
Chih-fu tung-kuan and Chieh»shih»men (allowing for the most probable  
reconstruction of the initial nine lines) and almost parallel to that of Chih-fu.

The emendation would also adhere to the basic logic of the sequential  
order as it is evident from these three shorter inscriptions: they begin with an  
account of the circumstances of setting up the inscription (the set of opening  
topoi), then give the announcement of historical military and civil achieve-  
ments and finally, again stepping out of this eulogy proper, return to the  
self-reflexive mode to state that now the eulogy is to be carved into stone\*  
Chronologically, the opening and the final accounts are on the same  
temporal level, i.e., the situational present when the inscription stele is  
erected. Relative to this time, the embedded narrative relates to the historical  
past and present, recalling the times of chaos, the military victory, and the  
civil achievements. Although the two narrative levels are skillfully faded in  
and out to fuse the past and the present, we still have to realize the implied  
break after the opening passage: the historical account that follows it will  
relate the substance of the officials, meditation\* According to this basic  
structure, it is only logical that the extensive descriptions of the former  
enemies and their consequent extinction should appear at the beginning of  
this account\* Chronologically, that is, according to the logic of political  
history, the victory over chaos comes first, followed in a second step by the  
establishment of civil order.

In the idealized historical account of the inscriptions, the military  
conquests are consistently presented not as offensive but as punitive  
expeditions: it was not brute force, the message resounds, that has led to the  
unification, but legitimacy derived from justice - political or moral, not legal  
justice, to be precise\* The above-quoted designations for the enemies do not  
refer to any specific misbehavior but are generic (therefore frequently  
binomial) terms of malignity. Fundamental viciousness or “cruelty”（the  
term pao # appears six times) had to be prosecuted not by the measured law  
but by general upunishmentM (chu occurring five times) or £4extermina-

tion,? (mieh six times). ^ Whereas in the T?ai-shan text the account of the  
enemies and their radical extinction is completely suspended, both the Mt. I  
(lines 19-33) and the K^uai-chi inscription (lines 25-30) include substantial  
additional remembrances of the former times of chaos. On Mt. I, the  
officials^ thoughts roam the entire history up to high antiquity, lamenting the  
aeons of unceasing warfare and constant streams of blood; in this all-  
encompassing historical vision, the Ch5in emperor receives recognition on a  
cosmic scale as the first true unifier of the world, the final redeemer after  
whom "warfare will not arise again,n The K^ai-chi account, by compari-  
son, narrows the historical perspective radically: referring to the immediate  
past of the “six kings” who endangered the state of Ch’in，it presents the  
emperor in his more concrete historical role as the protector of his own state  
who finally unified the empire. Both retrospective narratives may be  
regarded as facultative elaborations on the almost obligatory theme of pre-  
imperial chaos, but in opposite directions: the Mt. I inscription expands the  
theme into universal prehistory, whereas the one on Mt. K'uai-chi shrinks it  
down to the actual history of the recent decades. Despite these fundamental  
differences in their historical scope, they both culminate in the topos of the  
eternal peace and blessings that the common people from now on will enjoy  
as a result of the sage’s efforts.

Within the idealized historical account that the officials recall and  
memorialize in the inscription, the end of chaos is logically followed by the  
order of the now unified cosmos. The First Thearch of the stele inscriptions  
embodies both aspects of virtuous power: the martial (wu ^；) and the civil  
(wen JC), as they had been personified by the shining models of the Chou  
dynasty，King Wen 文（“The Civilizing King”）and King Wu 武（“The  
Martial King?,). In the inscriptions, the catalogue of civil achievements is [[223]](#footnote-224)

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granted considerably more space than that of the martial success - a typical  
phenomenon of early Chinese culture for which C.H. Wang has coined the  
formula ''ellipsis of battle/\*[[224]](#footnote-225) The two exceptions are the texts on Mt. I and  
Mt. T^ai which by their very close chronological and geographical relation  
appear to have been composed as complementary to one another, albeit in  
chronological and also hierarchical gradation: on Mt I, certainly subordinate  
to Mt. T5ai, the emperor first presented his martial conquest of chaos - the  
power of wu - whence he proceeded to the still nobler heights of Mt. T^ai to  
announce his ultimate establishment of cosmic civil order - the power of  
wen. Pushing this interpretation only a single step further, we arrive at the  
phenomenon of one text divided into two halves and placed on two different  
yet closely related material carriers, reflecting once again the most typical  
feature of Chou bronze inscriptions. The following five stelae} like all  
Warring States texts of political philosophy, except perhaps parts of the  
Shang-chUn shu, parade the military conquest not as an end in itself but as  
the necessary precondition to reestablish social order; it is the latter that  
fulfills and hence retrospectively legitimizes the former. The text of Mt I,  
considered from this perspective, is therefore not complete in itself.

The essential topoi in the announcement of civil achievements may be  
summarized as follows:

-the final termination of warfare and universal submission;

-the unification and consolidation of the empire;

-the fundamental beginning;

-the shining brilliance of the emperor and his accomplishments;

—the emperor’s untiring efforts;

-the stable social order with everybody in his proper place;

-the spread of universal norms and standards;

一the common people living in peace and receiving the emperor’s grace;

-the boundless spatial and temporal extension of the emperor^ rule.

Within the announcement of the emperor's civil achievements, there is  
hardly a line that cannot be assigned to at least one of these eight basic

semantic categories. Not one of these political ideals is new or beyond the  
traditional Chou notion of sage rulership, as the annotations of the texts  
should have sufficiently illustrated.^ The vocabulary of some of these topoi  
will be discussed below (a complete tabular survey encompassing all of  
them would result in almost a concordance to the inscriptions); here, we  
mention only those two features that occupy a defined place within the  
sequential structure of the inscriptions: the initial topos of fundamental  
beginning and the closing /apos of permanent duration.

The recurrent vocabulary denoting the fundamental beginning consists  
of five different words: li il (uto establish/[[225]](#footnote-226) [[226]](#footnote-227) [[227]](#footnote-228) [[228]](#footnote-229) occurring three times), chyu ^  
(“to begin; beginning，” five times),作（“to create，” four times)，s/zjiTz $台  
(“to begin; begirming，” three times)，and dWen 建（“to establish，，’ twice). As  
one might expect, these words are always related to the grammatical subject  
of the emperor, which invariably marks a semantic caesura. The following  
table lists all instances where the emperor is mentioned expressis verbis:^[[229]](#footnote-230)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | I | T | LY | CF | CFTK | CS | KC |
| 黃帝:“August Thearch” | 1,28 | 1,19 | 2,13,  26,37,  49,62 | 4,19 | 2,19 | 19 | 1，37 |
| 大聖•• “Great Sage” |  |  |  | 10 |  |  |  |
| 血邶聖"‘Sage” |  |  |  |  | 10,33,  35 |  | 34 |
| CVk-忒^^ 秦聖:“Sage of Ch’in” |  |  |  |  |  |  | 13 |

Table 4: The designations of the emperor and their distribution

The possible places where the emperor might be explicitly mentioned  
are a) at the beginning of the text, or b) at the beginning of the second rhyme  
sequence, or c) at the beginning of the second half of a rhyme sequence, or  
d) \_ oniy in the Chih-fu tung-kuan inscription - towards the very end of the

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text; and these various possibilities are freely combined throughout the  
series. Almost certainly, the emperor was also mentioned in the missing first  
lines of the Chieh-shih-m^n inscription. In the received text he appears only  
once, that is, in the highly conventional position of the first line of the  
second rhyme sequence. In the K^uai-chi inscription, he is again mentioned  
at the beginning of the second third of the first rhyme sequence and towards  
the end of this sequence, that is, the end of the first half of the text. The two  
additional appearances in the first rhyme sequences of the two longer  
inscriptions are due to the extended opening sequences of these inscriptions  
and are relatively parallel to the shorter ones. This is especially obvious in  
the case of the K^uai-chi inscription where the opening sequence, closing  
with the officials meditating, covers the first third of the long first rhyme  
sequence (which encompasses thirty-six lines). The emperor appears  
immediately after this first third, parallel to the two texts of Mt. Chih-fu  
(where the opening sequence covers lines 1-9). The notion of the fundamen-  
tal beginning, now, is in all cases but one directly linked to the explicitly  
mentioned active subject of the emperor, where it appears in the first lines of  
the text or after a caesura; the exception is CF.9 where the “fundamental  
beginning^ is what the officials meditate about. This closing line of the  
opening sequence, however, directly leads to the following one, which is  
the beginning of the second half of the first rhyme sequence (<4The Great  
Sage creates His rule”).

Structurally, the counterpart of the initial topos of fundamental begin-  
ning is the closing topos of constancy and duration. Based on a broader  
range of standardized vocabulary,^ this topos appears in the closings of all  
the shorter inscriptions and in that of Mt. K^ai-chi. The exception is the  
Lang-yeh text - deviating both in its opening and its concluding sequences  
from the rest of the series - with the topos of constancy only in the closing  
line of the fourth rhyme sequence (line 48). The other texts include it  
obligatorily at the end of the embedded historical narrative (Mt. T’ai and [[230]](#footnote-231)

Chih-fu tung-kuan) or in the final account on erecting the stele (Chieh~shih),  
or in both of these (Mt, I, Mt. Chih-fu, Mt. K^uai-chi); and in addition, but  
only facultatively, at the end of the first rhyme sequence (ML I，Mt. T’ai，  
Chih-fu tung-kuan, Mt. K'uai-chi). Again, the K^ai-chi text includes the  
notion of pemrnnence atthe end of the first half of the first rhyme sequence  
(line 18), clearly indicating a textual caesura, and, curiously enough, also at  
the beginning of the whole text, in line three. This last occurrence is  
certainly anomalous, not only in comparison with all the other stele inscrip-  
tions but also, maybe more importantly, according to the textual tradition of  
the bronze inscriptions\* In this tradition the quest for permanence (and longe-  
vity) is almost axiomatically placed at the end of a text, not at its beginning\*  
Before proceeding to the concluding structural element of the texts, the  
self-referential statement, it is useful to summarize the structural details  
discussed above in a simplified scheme. Beyond all their differences, I  
propose that the seven texts are still transparent in their common prototext or  
deep structure. This prototext, to be sure, is not perfectly realized in any of  
the actual phenotexts we are dealing with; they all betray circumstantial  
deviations, here as additions, there as omissions. It may be fairly conserva-  
tive to take all those features that are recurrent through at least five of the  
seven texts as the principal (prototext) structural elements; this assumption  
results in the following reconstruction:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| situational present: | L The opening setting:  -the emperor touring and ascending the mountain -the date and designation of the progress -the officials meditating and reciting |
| historical past and present: | II. The embedded historical narrative  -the fundamental beginning 一 the military conquest -the civil achievements  -the constancy and permanence of rule and blessings |
| situational present: | III. The final self-referential statement  一 the officials reciting and asking to carve the eulogy into stone to manifest and transmit the emperor^ merits |

Table 5: The proposed prototext of the stele inscriptions

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Everything beyond this basic scheme can be regarded as optional,  
circumstantial elements that may be explained by the specific historical  
requirements of the respective location. This seems to be particularly true in  
the case of the long and unique sequence in the second half of the K^uai-chi  
inscription, dwelling in considerable detail on social - basically sexual -  
misbehavior and the proper measures to deal with it As noted above, these  
elaborations have been historically linked to the allegedly notorious semi-  
barbarian habits in the areas of the former states of Wu and Yueh M  
where Mt. K’uai-chi was located.

With regard to some of the omissions from the proposed scheme, it is  
probably impossible to evaluate their significance in every case. The  
suggested reconstruction of the Mt. I inscription and its possible relation to  
that of Mt. Ted, for example, can solve some of the inconsistencies but does  
not answer the question why the latter text is devoid of the final self-  
referential statement. I have also no explanation for the significant omissions  
in the Lang-yeh inscription or for its different rhyme scheme. If anything,  
then, this text could be considered outside the proposed scheme, although it  
still shares a number of basic features with the other texts of the series.

1. The phenomenon of self-reference

A common and therefore significant feature of ancient Chinese ritual  
texts lies in the element of self-reflexiveness: in uCh?u tz'u^ **(Mao shih**# 209)，for example，the first person pronoun 腸我，which probably  
denotes not a single speaker but the whole ritual community headed by the  
foremost descendant of the addressed ancestor, occurs five times in the first  
stanza and again at the beginning of the fourth, promulgating <4our,? efforts to  
please the spirits. And although this famous text appears to be a splendid  
description - or prescription - of a whole ceremonial sequence, voiced from  
an auctorial narrative perspective, it was probably also an integral part of the  
very ceremony it synchronically relates to.[[231]](#footnote-232) In “Cheng min” 蒸民  
**shih** # 260), the speaker closes the song with the following statement:

I, Chi-fu, have made this recitation;[[232]](#footnote-233) [[233]](#footnote-234) [[234]](#footnote-235) 吉甫作言甬

may it be as gentle as the clear wind! 穆如清風

Chung Shan-fu bears enduring sorrows; 仲山甫永懷

may he take it to soothe his mind!2^ 以慰其心

Other **Shih-ching** songs contain similar examples where the speaker in  
the closing lines of the text refers to himself, noting the reason for compos-  
ing the song^4 Again, the three above-translated Ch?in bronze inscriptions

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all contain structurally similar passages in the final lines of the prayer  
directed to the ancestors. On the First Ch'in-po we read:

I have made [my] brightly harmonizing [bell]:

Its name is “Regulating the State，’，

its sound fung~t\*ung is greatly clear,

to invoke [the spirits] to arrive at [our] sacrificial offerings

to [let us] receive accumulated happiness, multiple favors!

The parallel part of the closely related CWxn-kuei inscription is just  
more laconic with respect to the ritual instrument involved:

I have made [my] vessel for the temple of […]

to invoke the august ancestors

that they solemnly and austerely arrive,

to [let us] receive accumulated happiness, multiple favors!

The earlier text on the Eight Ch'in bells, certainly used as a model for  
the po and kuei inscriptions, resounds:

I have made my harmonizing bells,  
with their numinous sound t'ung-Vung,  
to delight the august duke(s)，  
to receive great blessings,  
accumulated happiness, multiple favors!

Again，the Ch’in stone inscription “Imprecations against Ch’u，”  
predating the stele inscriptions only by about a century, concludes with an  
apparently highly formalized speech to the supreme spiritual judges:

We dare to accuse the King of Ch^, Hsiung-hsiang, of having turned  
his back on the [former] oaths and having committed a violation  
[which is punishable with] imprecation. We make [the foregoing  
report] manifest on various stone memorials in order to swear it  
towards the awe-inspiring divinity of the great spirit!^ [[235]](#footnote-236)

This kind of self-referential statement within an inscription is, of  
course, not limited to ChJin inscriptions but belongs to the salient character-  
istics of pre-imperial bronze epigraphic texts all over the early Chinese  
world. Also, pre-imperial and early imperial ritual hymns are essentially  
self-referential in praising the ritual efforts (to which the hymnic perfor-  
mance itself belongs) and registering - or, more exactly, prescribing -  
positive responses from the spirits\*26 In bronze inscriptions, the reference to  
the umaking,> and dedicating of the respective ritual implement has even been  
identified as the probably most fundamental part of the text ^7 As a standard,  
the “dedicatory statement”（“So-and-so has made this such-and-such”）is  
followed by the expression of the expected blessings the donor hopes to  
receive in exchange from his ancestors.

Obviously, this very pattern, recurrent on bronzes at least since early  
Western Chou times, applies to the quoted lines of "Cheng min^ and to  
similar passages in other Shih-ching songs, to the ^Imprecations against  
Ch’u,” to the Ch’in bronzes \_ and, finally, also to most of the Ch’in stele  
inscriptions. The final three lines of the stelae on Mt, I, Mt. Chih-fu, the  
“eastern vista” of Mt\* Chih-fu，Chieh-shih，and Mt\* K’uai-chi，as well as the  
“discussion” following the Lang-yeh inscription，all display the same shift  
from the internal voice of the eulogy proper to an outward voice now  
speaking about the text.

By this shift, according to the proposed prototext scheme, the  
inscription text returns to the situational present of the emperor and the  
officials erecting the stele on the respective mountain»In their final three  
lines, all texts except those of Mt. T^i and Mt\* Lang-yeh take up the notion  
of the accompanying officials recalling and reciting the emperor^s merits; the  
word sung fl C'to recite^) occurs in the five final passages as well as in the  
last lines of the opening parts in the inscriptions of Mt, T^ai,[[236]](#footnote-237) [[237]](#footnote-238)^ Mt. Chih~fu,  
and Mt. K'uai-chi. It should be recalled that this is exactly the structure of  
the pre-imperial bronze inscriptions，with their first line (“The Duke of Ch’in  
says:,?) and the final dedicatory statement both on the logical and chronologi-

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cal level of the situational present, framing a first-person historical narrative.  
The same structure can also be found in the “Imprecations against Ch’u.”

The verb sung li employed in the stele inscriptions is perfectly  
homophonous and therefore likely interchangeable with swn尽頌（“to  
eulogize'O； the latter is employed several times within the historical narrative  
of the Shih-chi when introducing the process of making an inscription;  
according to these remarks, the officials carved the stones in order to  
eulogize the virtuous power of Ch^in.[[238]](#footnote-239) [[239]](#footnote-240) [[240]](#footnote-241) The Shuo-wen defines the words  
sung mdfeng Id by each other, both meaning grosso modo uto recited  
and glosses 頌 as mat?兒[貌](“appearance”). According to the “Great  
Preface”（“Ta-hsli” 大序）to the Mao 说成 the 似呢頌（“Eulogia”）served to  
Upraise the outward appearance (hsing-jung of flourishing virtuous  
power, in order to announce its accomplishments and merits towards the  
spirits.5>3〇 In his commentary to the ChouM, Cheng Hsiian explicates: uThe  
meaning of sung M is sung li, or jung ^ ('to bring into appearance5it  
therefore seems that both characters stood for the same word, uto eulogize  
by means of recitation/^ Considering the strictly observed formal features of  
rhyme and meter, I see no reason to doubt that the texts engraved on the  
stones - more precisely, the lines I identify as the embedded historical  
account \_ were actually recited and not just silently carved; Tsuruma  
Kazuyuki even goes so far to speak of the “originally musical nature” of the  
engraved imperial eulogies.[[241]](#footnote-242) [[242]](#footnote-243)

As illustrated above, the panegyrical or commemorative ''stele  
inscription” (pd 碑)was most probably unknown as a discrete genre of  
literary expression in the days of Ch^in Shih-huang; apparently this series of  
seven texts became the progenitor and model for the respective genre that  
actually began to flourish in Han times.3〗 It is therefore anachronistic to

perceive this set of stele inscriptions within the later notion of a literary genre  
called “stde inscription”； in the first instance, they were nothing other than  
eulogies which then were carved and turned into “inscriptions,” This basic  
character of the Ch'in stele inscription texts as eulogies was still recognized  
by Liu Hsieh who in the Wen-hsin tiao4ung discussed these writings under  
both categories ming 銘（“inscription”）and 似ng 頌> Furthermore，there is  
evidence that inscribed texts were still recited by late Western Han times: in a  
letter to Liu Hsin, Yang Hsiung (53 B.C. - A.D. 18) mentions that his  
earliest literary works, one eulogy {sung SI) and three inscriptions (ming  
銘)，had all been recited to Emperor Ch’eng 成（r. 32 - 7 B.C.).35 in the  
same way in which the magical efficacy of the “Imprecations against Ch’u”  
was certainly believed to increase when carved into three different stones, to  
inscribe a eulogy on a stele was meant to enhance its efficacy rather than to

chung” 定之方中（M郎从认[# 50] 3-1.48b)，here with 成en友 to?升高 instead of 如这  
ka In 故in 以认 韓詩外傳[7.25] 7.15b，Confucius addresses his disciples

during a mountain tour (N.B〇: 4<When the gentleman climbs high, he must present [his  
intentions] (teng kao pifu Here, the word/w is used in its more general sense

of “to spread, to display，” interchangeable with phonetically related words like/w 敷，

布 or p’w 鋪（see David R\_ Knechtges，TTze 办：A 办 〇/汸e Fw 〇/ yicm茗

协m岈（53 RC. - 7幻，1243). In the Eastern Han dictionary 肋达 mfng 釋名，as

weU as by Cheng Hstian and Liu Hsieh，“to spread，to display” is understood as the  
fundamental meaning of the literary genre tem/w (for a full discussion  
Wen-hsin tiaoAung i-cheng 8.270-71). This meaning neatly matches the use of sung li in  
the Ch'in inscriptions: the officials trace and recite the emperor^s merits, that is, display  
the historica! account of his achievements, and finally, after the recitation^ carve the  
eulogy into stone in order to “manifest”（cA« 著，06 and CS.36)，to “express”表，  
CF.36)，to “glorify”（ban容光 KC.72)，and to “transmit”（d，⑷•垂，CF.36, CS.36,  
K,72) the model set by the emperor. The equation of sung IS on the one hand with sung  
and on the other with fu is thus not contradictory: the terms fu and sung are  
virtually synonymous in Han times - well attested by texts that are called/w in one source  
and sung in another - and appear also together 2ls fu-sung (e,gt) in Han-shu 64A,2790);  
again, Pan Ku 班固（32 - 92)，in the preface to his “Two Capitals Rhapsody，’（“Liang-tu  
fu 兩都賦”)，places the jfc in the tradition of the eulogies 1,1b), Considering

these various crossing lines, and juxtaposing the //an ■y/nTi passage quoted

above with the stele inscriptions, it is striking to realize that both fu and sung li are  
employed in the sense of 4tto present oneself' when on the top of a mountain.

1. Cf. Chan Ying, Wen-hsin tiao-lung i-cheng, 9.322 and 1L40I.
2. See Ch’ien I 錢繹（1770 - 1855), 方言篦疏 13.53a; on the

authenticity of this letter, see David R\* Knechtges, 'The Liu Hsin / Yang Hsiung  
Correspondence on the Fang Yen'" 318-20.

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abandon its original character and significance. In these cases, the medium  
does not define the genre.

What is achieved by the apparently pervasive practice of integrating the  
situational context of the eulogy, i.eM its recitation and carving, into the  
ritual text itself which hence becomes self-referential? What is the semantic  
effect of this transition into an auctorial perspective? It seems that ritual self-  
reference is ultimately based on the traditional Chou ideological notion that  
ritual activity is as much an expression of as a means of rulership. In other  
words, to display one^s merits - or those of the ancestors, in Chou ritual -  
in the proper way is itself meritorious and should therefore be included in  
one^ historical record. In this sense, the inscription text by its concluding  
self-reflexive shift dramatizes (or ritualizes) and historicizes itself, in that it  
includes the ritual act of inscribing the stele as the final step into the whole  
foregoing idealized historical narrative. At the very moment the inscription is  
carved it is already turned into history - a history, of course, to be received  
by posterity.

The concern with permanence and posterity that the stele inscriptions  
betray in their closing formulae cannot but be traced directly to the model of  
the Chou bronze inscriptions.36 it is their original context of the ancestral  
ritual, with its ruling principle of reciprocity, where exalting the model  
ancestors in the appropriate filial manner was the road to fame: he who acted  
as the model pious descendant could expect his own descendants, again, to  
praise him for being the model of filial piety. The Li-chU although reflecting  
a rather late attempt to rationalize the inherited tradition, provides a succinct  
understanding of the multidirectional purpose of an inscription，  
synchronically addressed to the ancestral spirits and to what we may call the  
<4ritual public,^ i.e., the participants at the occasion of the ceremony and in  
addition an optional number of later readers:

The tripods have inscriptions. He who makes the inscription makes  
himself a name. He makes himself a name by praising his ancestorsJexcellence and making them clearly known to later generations He  
who makes the inscription reviews and eulogizes his ancestors’ [[243]](#footnote-244)

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virtuous power and goodness, their merits and brilliant achievements,  
their efforts and labors, their received congratulations and rewards,  
their glory and name. [These] he displays to All under Heaven and  
weighs them on the sacrificial vessel. He naturally achieves his own  
name just there and hence [appropriately] sacrifices to his ancestors.  
Glorifying the ancestors is the means to cherish filial piety. That he  
places himself equally by their side is his obedience. That he makes the  
model radiant to the later generations is his instruction When a  
gentleman looks at an inscription he praises those who are exalted in it,  
and he praises the one who has made it^7

Considered against this account, Ch'in Shih-huang, although  
exploiting the traditional rhetorical structure, has obviously taken a short cut:  
instead of praising the ancestors9 accomplishments and by this, indirectly,  
accumulating his own merits, he goes straight ahead and presents his own  
achievements. This, in the last consequence, would have suspended the  
whole notion of hereditary ralership based on the exchange of ancestral  
service for blessings and virtuous power, but such a conclusion was  
obviously avoided by the Ch^n emperors. Most ironically, the Second  
Generation [Thearch] turned back to the model of ancestral worship when he  
conducted a full imperial progress to inscribe all the stelae with his additional  
edict in order to immortalize his father^ accomplishments, together with the  
names of the officials that had accompanied him^s - a solemn act of filial  
piety that unfortunately did not earn him better press by later Confucian  
historians, although it is in line with other ritual measures he took: for  
instance，he ordered that the use of sacrificial victims in his father’s ancestral  
temple be extended and that the ritual services to the mountains and rivers be  
increased.39 And in addition to the stelae, he also had his father^ bronze  
measures inscribed with an edict praising the First Thearch's achievement in  
having standardized them.4。

Yet if we recall the notion of the textual archive as the basis of the stele  
inscriptions, we may allow for the possibility that Ch^n Shih-huang had  
other texts designed for the ancestral temple where he may have embedded [[244]](#footnote-245) [[245]](#footnote-246) [[246]](#footnote-247)

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parts of his boastful self-praise into a more conventional framework; but we  
know nothing about the texts through which he addressed the spirit of his  
deceased father，the “Most High Augustus.” There is no actual need to  
pursue this kind of speculation to recognize the basic structural proximity of  
the imperial stele to the pre-imperial bronze inscriptions. Although stripped  
of the notion of reciprocity and hence of the prayer for blessings, the seven  
texts still follow the fundamental tripartite “past-present-future pattern”  
discussed in section 3.2. above: an idealized historical narrative relates the  
accumulated merits (“the past”)，is followed by a statement of dedication  
(“the present’’)，and finally by a prayer for blessings (“the future”). The  
prototext of the stele inscriptions represents essentially a transformation of  
this scheme: the “statement of merit，” mteruled as the lineage-centered  
account of history, has grown almost beyond recognition, perhaps reflecting  
a new dimension of achievement. Unlike former regional potentates who  
cast great numbers of competitive versions of history, the now universal  
Ch^in emperor held the monopoly on presenting the one and only normative  
account. The prayer for blessings, on the other hand, had become obsolete  
in the new ritual context dissociated from the ancestral temple. Therefore,  
the statement of dedication - the officials asking to carve the recited eulogy  
into the stone - leads to another wishful expression directed into the future,  
namely that the model set by the emperor may become manifest and endure  
for all times. Since there was no need to address the spirits with a complete  
prayer, the concern for the future could be shrunk even to a single line, as in  
the case of the Chieh-shih-me/2 inscription. Nevertheless, the topos of  
permanence, as illustrated above, is maintained in its old textual position,  
although it has outlived its original ritual context and even the specific  
ideological significance attached to it.

1. The force of redundancy and restriction:  
   manifestations of ritual language

Understanding the stele inscriptions as "ritual texts,^ that is, texts used  
in rituals, it is necessary to address their formal structure that contributes to  
the overall aesthetics of the ritual performance. Such an analysis needs to be  
informed by the notion of ''ritual language^ as it has been developed in  
linguistic and anthropological studies over the last two decades. In order to  
reconstruct the ritual nature of the stele inscriptions within their autochtho-  
nous ritual tradition, such considerations must again start from the evidence  
of the bronze inscriptions. These inscriptions exhibit a precarious relation to  
their actual history: by explicitly naming their donor and frequently including  
a date, they were apparently meant to appear as historical artifacts, made at  
an important moment in time to commemorate, fix, and finally communicate  
a specific historical event to the spirits. Yet the fact that the date is often not a  
strictly historical but rather an auspicious one4^ betrays that we are dealing  
with a sacralized and normatively “made” version of history: as such，the  
bronze inscription embodied the artifact of history - a history less narrated  
than defined, and ^true^ in the sense that myth, meaning, history trans-  
formed into cultural memory, is true: 'Through remembrance, history turns  
into myth. By this, it does not become not unreal but, on the contrary, and  
only then, reality in the sense of a continual normative and formative  
force,”42 As Shaughnessy has pointed out，“more than fifty Western Zhou  
bronze inscriptions refer> in greater or lesser detail, to military activity ...  
Not one of the inscriptions commemorates a defeat.”43 Fortunately enough,  
there were many lineage temples in the Chou oikumene, and many versions  
of history that may be juxtaposed with one another in order to reconstruct  
the blind side of history, that of the defeats and of the defeated.

The coerciveness of the sacralized version of history is derived from  
the process of condensing an individual situation into a standardized model [[247]](#footnote-248) [[248]](#footnote-249)

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of a situation\* The ultimate distillate of history may be seen in the posthu-  
mous name (shih attributed to an ancestor. This name was meant to  
embody the one primary quality for which the ancestor should be remem-  
bered. Since the repertoire of possible names, actually epithets, was  
restricted, the "process of transforming a human being into an ancestor55^  
may be adequately understood as a final de-individualization of the ancestor  
who is now turned into a mode! of behavior. The very same process is at  
work in the bronze inscriptions, as we can see in the Ch^n examples  
translated above.

Polemically put: presenting the sacralized distillate of history, the  
bronzes functioned primarily not to relate but to erase nearly the entire actual  
history: what they preserved are those infinitesimal slivers which from that  
time on would be remembered as the very historical essence. Maybe the  
archives - if they existed - with all their bamboo strips now gone were  
obliged to keep a more comprehensive and thus less partial record of history;  
but this record was certainly not passed on to the ancestors. Not uWhat has  
happened?'1 was the question answered in the ancestral temple, but 4<What do  
we want to remember?，” “How do we want to remember?,” and, implicitly，  
uWhat do we want to forget?M Ideally the sacralized version of history as it  
was communicated to the spirits - who, as the original historical protago-  
nists, should know better - left no options for a second truth and hence no  
doubts about the first. Bronze inscriptions, in general, provided little to  
ruminate on.

The same is certainly true of the stelae erected by ChMn Shih-huang,  
The most important point that finally gave them an entirely new quality is the  
plain fact that they no longer competed with other texts. The self-conscious  
act of unification, conducted on all levels of administration and repeatedly  
praised in these inscriptions by terms like i — / ft, ping and fung |W|,  
all meaning uto unify^ must also be related to the historical record: the  
historical narratives of the inscriptions annihilated the multiperspective  
records of the various potentates and replaced them with the single central  
perspective of the universal ruler. They silenced the many voices of history  
and monopolized memory> and the normative version of history promulgat-  
ed from the sacred mountains of the former enemies was now a single and [[249]](#footnote-250)

unified one. Li S$u?s infamous proposal to bum all historical records except  
those of Ch，in45 - intending to wipe out all competing memories - appears  
only as a logical step when read within the tradition of the bronze inscrip-  
tions and their supposed function.

The claim to monopolize memory does not yet make a text a <6ritual  
text?> in state or lineage ancestral ritual. In ritual, normativity governs not  
only contents but also language. To preclude the potential for negotiation,  
linguistic propositions in ritual are required to be tightly fixed, clear enough  
to need no explanation, hieratic enough to allow no discussion. Bloch has  
characterized this kind of powerful ritual language as an artificially 'impover-  
ished language/1^ where Ahern speaks of a ^restricted codei，47 that operates  
effectively by means of intensified intertextual relations within a strictly  
demarcated body of texts: a strictly reduced vocabulary and limited modes of  
speech already determine not only how things can be said but, on a deeper  
level of control，what can be said at all. T随biah, in a “working definition of  
ritual，’’ holds that ritual is “a culturally constructed system of symbolic com-  
munication. It is constituted of patterned and ordered sequences of words  
and acts, often expressed in multiple media, whose content and arrangement  
are characterized in varying degree by formality (conventionality), stereoty-  
py (rigidity), condensation (fusion), and redundancy (repetition)^[[250]](#footnote-251) [[251]](#footnote-252) [[252]](#footnote-253) [[253]](#footnote-254) [[254]](#footnote-255) Viewed  
against such theories of ritual and ritual language, which are obtained from  
broad comparative anthropological work, the intensive monotony of Chou  
bronze inscriptions and hymns appears perfectly natural.4^

The stele inscriptions follow the same logic and mechanisms of ritual  
language. Like their bronze progenitors they are composed in the manner of  
a predesigned form filled out with stock expressions appropriate to the  
respective “columns.” The essentially formulaic andintertextuai character of  
the inscriptions is therefore realized on both the sequential topical structure  
and the lexical level of the language; the compositional process, based on the

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archives, by which these writings took shape, seems to have complied with  
the principle of a modular system: for each part of a text there is a defined  
and hence restricted repertoire of basically interchangeable expressions at  
hand. As a whole, the employed vocabulary represents a distinct lexical  
inventory of political language that serves a two~directional purpose: as it  
joins these, by their official status, highly exceptional texts closely together,  
it also sets them apart from other segments of the written tradition.

In addition to the repeated use of words like 永（“forever”）and  
hsiu (c\*superb") which are almost exclusively reserved for texts used in  
ritual settings, the inscriptions constitute a close rhetorical weave of lexical  
and syntactical elements both expressing and embodying the message of  
norxnativky and imification. Beyond the words meaning “to unify” already  
noted, the terminology of overall identity is pervasive throughout the texts in  
a most restricted and at the same time redundant way. In the following, this  
terminology is summarized under several headings (listing only repeatedly  
occurring expressions); the first group is that of words denoting comprehen-  
sive inclusion:

-wang / mo / mi / wupu ^ / M / (unone who does / is

not”): ten times;

—咸（“all”): seven times;

**-e/iw** 諸（“the various”): six times;

- cto/z 皆（“all”): four times;

-to 各（“each”): four times;

\_ 畢（“completely”): twice;

一 mo 莫（“none”)： twice.

A second lexical element denoting universal rulership consists of  
expressions of spatial extension:

一？天下（“All under Heaven”): nine times;

一％w-c/n■四極（“four extremities”): four times;

一 宇（“universe”)： four times;

—y兔饥/伽g 遠方（“distant regions’’): three times;

一 "w-M 六合（“six combined [directions]”)： twice;

-feiton 宣（“all around”)： twice;

**-dzaw** 周（“all around”)： twice;

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—p’伽g 旁（“all directions”): twice;

一細ng 廣（“vast”): twice;

一 so 戶斤[•••]，meaning “wherever”： twice.

These nouns are matched by a set of verbs denoting spatial extension:

- 及（“to extend to”): four times;

—A认施（“to spread’’): three times;

—pd 被（“to cover”): three times;

-扣達（“to reach”)： twice.

These words all contribute explicitly to the central theme of universal  
unification, yet - with the possible exception of the first group - this  
common semantic orientation is not what makes them part of a specific  
“ritualized” and “ritualizing” mode of speech. Such a mode is ultimately not  
to be traced to the lexical level of a text, although we may expect word  
groups exactly like those listed above in the texts of political liturgy.  
According to anthropological propositions, what actually distinguishes a text  
as fitting for ritual use is linguistic structure above the level of the word: that  
is, restriction and redundancy in the choice and arrangement of words, and,  
even more, the coercive force of word combinations that finally rule the  
overall syntactic structures. With respect to the selection and combination of  
words — in linguistic terms: (“vertical”）paradigmatic and (“horizontal”）  
syntagmatic relations - ritual language represents an extreme case. In  
addition to their modular structure and their redundant use of near synonyms  
from a very limited set of topics, the stelae display particular combinations  
of words and syntactical patterns that contribute to a speech distinguished as  
formally rhythmic and ideologically normative. The most concrete pattern  
for denoting an all-inclusive unification is the antithetical compound:

遠近 / 邇（“distant and near”): four times;

-**kuei-chien** (unoble and meanM): three times;

一 nanw沒男女（“men and women’，)： twice;

-內外（“inner and outer spheres”)： twice;

**-**以仙-坤舟輿 **/** 輿舟卜boats and carriages” **/** “carriages

and boats”)： twice;

一 m’w-m以牛馬（“oxen and horses’’)： twice\*

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The “oxen and horses，’，in the inscriptions occurring as the object of  
the emperor's grace and blessings, is clearly a pars pro toto phrase: not only  
'4oxen and horses^ are meant, but even oxen and horses, and with them the  
entirety of the ten thousand beings. “Boats and carriages” denotes the  
entirety of the human means of transportation. The other phrases refer to a  
continuous notion of polarity that is by definition comprehensive; none of  
these allows for a third element. In sum, all three different kinds of  
antithetical compounds denote totality, hence, normativity: in this language,  
no alternatives are left.

Yet these compounds, like the single words listed above, are embed-  
ded in an even more fundamental and embracing linguistic macrostructure  
that governs at least one-third of all lines of the inscription series. This  
structure I propose to call “categorical accumulation”： a mode of speech  
composed of phrases where two semantically closely related if not synony-  
mous nouns or verbs are joined together as a hendiadys to intensify one and  
the same semantic value. These terms are “categorical” since they are  
virtually interchangeable as belonging to the same set of a semantic ca^  
and hence reflect the modulai\* principle of composition; they all belong to the  
inventory of stock vocabulary which is divided into discrete semantic  
categories, to be exploited for the diverse columns that constitute the whole  
textual form. They appear in “accumulation” first on the level of the word -  
as a hendiadys proper - that is, forming a compound; second, on the level of  
the compound when related compounds are again arranged to textual  
sequences; third, on the level of the single text which is in large part  
governed by compounds and sequences of compounds enhancing and  
complementing each other; and finally on the intertextual level where we  
encounter additional variations and recombinations of the compounds and  
sequences of the individual texts. To recall just one example, the penultimate  
rhyme of the Mt. I inscription may serve to illustrate the effect of this mode  
of composition:

除定久

滅康長

害首澤

锱黔利

Disaster and harm are exterminated and erased,  
the black七aired people live in peace and stability，  
benefits and blessings are long and enduring.

Ten of the twelve words - the only exception being the term ch'ien-  
shou (t4the black-haired people^) - follow the principle of categorical

accumulation. In addition, these ten words embody a complete chronological  
sequence (past-present-future) and finally, the first and the third represent a  
clear antithetical structure. In these three lines, which are entirely composed  
of stock vocabulary, we are therefore presented with the very distillate of  
what the seven inscriptions are all about: the single and normative version of  
history in which everybody receives his proper name - hence the officially  
commanded designation uthe black-haired people^ - and proper treatment.  
But even before realizing this neat history in a nutshell, we may notice the  
rhetorical effect of the single compound. The hendiadys is certainly an  
instance of redundancy, yet it is more than mere repetition. Since each of the  
two words involved represents a full semantic value, their combination  
yields not just addition but mutual enhancement and therefore the sense of a  
definite and normative expression. To "exterminate and erase/5 as an  
example, obviously conveys more than the addition of two identical words,  
namely, a sense of irrevocability, and this distinguishes the hendiadys from  
two other classes of compounds in early Chinese poetic language, the  
reduplicative as well as the alliterative and rhyming binomes.5〇

Of the various semantic and syntactic features of which the inscriptions  
are composed, categorical accumulation is probably the most forceful in  
creating a normative language that not only expresses but also embodies the  
sense of unified order. In the tradition of the bronze inscriptions, the texts  
define rather than narrate history. Different from their progenitors, this  
version of history now could be imposed all through the new empire,  
defining the kings of the recently conquered regions as the tlcruel and  
violent'5 from the heights of what had been their own sacred mountains. [[255]](#footnote-256)

1. Towards a historical interpretation of the inscriptions  
   5.1. Between Ch^n history and Han historiography

Students of early Chinese history who have followed the present study  
to this point will be well aware of what I have deliberately ignored so far: the  
literary context of Shih-chi chapter six, in which the inscriptions are  
embedded. Here, carefully built around the inscription texts, Ssu»ma ChUen  
relates rtie strong influence of the “masters of methods” or “magicians”  
(fang-shih ^dr) on Ch'in Shih-huang as well as the emperors untiring  
quest for personal immortality or transcendence. Reading and interpreting  
the inscriptions, I have indeed tried to dissociate them as much as possible  
from these historiographical surroundings in favor of understanding them in  
what I assume to be their historical context，or its accessible fragments. With  
Ssu-ma Ch^ien^s Shih-chi, probably more than with later dynastic histories,  
one cannot evade the question to what extent the historical narrative accounts  
for uhow it really was/^ Within the Shih-chi, this problem is particularly  
urgent with chapter six, the "ChUn Shih-huang pen-chi^ which relates the  
end of the preceding dynasty\* Necessarily approaching Ch'in history  
through the perspective of Han historiography, one immediately faces the  
obvious: Western Han historical writing on the Ch^in looks too suspicious  
in perfectly matching the new dynasty1 s need for political legitimation - and  
it looks increasingly suspicious with every new archaeological find.

To weigh this issue in its own historical context, it is useful to recall  
the fundamental inequalities between the Ch'in and the Han, When the First  
Thearch unified the realm, he had reigned successfully over his powerful  
state as King of Qin for twenty-six years, since 247 B.C. At the time of the  
final conquest of the eastern states (which were equally rooted in the  
tradition of Chou China), his claim for dynastic authority was backed by  
centuries of hereditary rulership: the Ch5in were one of the oldest states  
‘‘under heaven，” enfeoffed in the ninth century B.C.，and with a legendary  
pedigree deeply embedded in the traditional mythology common to the Chou  
oikumene. According to the growing archaeological evidence^ even the very  
late pre-imperial Qin state, despite its administrative and legal reforms since

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the mid-fourth century, was a highly traditional political entity - certainly  
much more traditional - and much less violent - than the transmitted Han  
sources would have us believe. As the careful preservation of the Ch’in  
Kung kuei, the diction of the stele inscriptions, the First Thearch's concern  
for his ancestral temple, and the imperial edicts sufficiently demonstrate, the  
state of Ch^n not only possessed a remarkably long history, it also comme-  
morated this history as the legitimizing tradition that had led to its present  
rule over the realm, i By contrast, who were the Han? The first Han emperor  
Liu Pang had risen from low origins in the old state of Ch^u. Lacking any  
background of tradition, his single possible claim for political legitimacy  
rested in one historical fact: the Han were those who had overthrown the  
Ch^in. The validity of this claim rested entirely in the image of the latter as  
fundamentally immoral, not in conformity with hallowed tradition, and as  
having ulost the Way [of morality]^ and being <ccruel and harsh.9^ According  
to the early Han historians' account, the short-lived Ch'in empire collapsed  
essentially on its own, as an oppressive and uncivilized rule that had lost the  
support of its people and thus was finally thrown into turmoil by the  
rebellion of initially only a few hundred disorganized and poorly equipped  
garrison soldiers led by a petty bandit, Ch’en She 陳涉.3

Only a few names are instrumental for the major strokes of this picture:  
most prominently, Chia I 賈tl (200 168 B.C) in his “Kuo Ch’in lun” 過  
秦論（“Reproaching Ch’in with faults,” mcorporated in chapter six of the  
Shih-chi) and Ssu-ma Ch^ien as the author of the Shih-chi; to a lesser degree  
also Lu Chia 陸賈（c，228 - c. 140 B.C〇 in his 新語 and Chia

Shan 賣山（fl, c. 175 B.C) m his admonitions towards Han WerHi 漢文帝  
(r. 180 - 157 B.C〇.[[256]](#footnote-257) [[257]](#footnote-258) [[258]](#footnote-259) [[259]](#footnote-260) The simple fact that the Shih-chi, accompanied by a  
few Western Han texts of political discourse, is in many instances our only  
transmitted source and therefore our single master-key to the history of pre-

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imperial and early imperial China does not turn historiography into history,  
although we time and again have to accept the Shih-chi version of history  
simply because of the lack of alternatives. In the introductory remarks to the  
present study I have pointed to the situation that the inscriptions are barely  
recognized and badly understudied. The opposite is true with regard to the  
context into which Ssu-ma ChUen places them: for two millennia, the fanta-  
sies of generation after generation have been taken captive by those  
extremely powerful images of a sad Mt. Hsiang，now stripped of all its trees  
and rendered dirt-red (not to speak of “painted red”), of the several  
thousand boys and girls sent out into the open sea to arrive at the realms of  
the immortals，[[260]](#footnote-261) [[261]](#footnote-262) [[262]](#footnote-263) [[263]](#footnote-264) [[264]](#footnote-265) [[265]](#footnote-266) of the failure to obtain the old Chou tripod from the Ssu 泗  
River,7 etc. These fanciful stories, presented as history, serve as the historio-  
graphical context of the stele inscriptions, and there is virtually no basis left  
to reconcile the colorful and dazzling historiographical image of the First  
Thearch with his own self-portrayal in the inscriptions. By comparison, two  
other events that are often seen as paradigmatic of Ch^in rulership, i.e., the  
burning of the books in 213 B.C.s and the mass execution of scholars in  
212 B.C.^ are on a very different, namely immediately political plane and  
accordingly deserve separate consideration (see section 5.3. below).

The highly traditional stele inscriptions present the sacralized and  
normative version of history formulated - like all the lineage-centered bronze  
inscriptions of Chou ancestral temples - from the perspective of the victor.  
Recalling the chaos that had prevailed through the preceding centuries, and  
eulogizing the First Thearch^s achievements of pacifying 4<A1I under  
Heaven^ they furnish the founding myth of the Ch'in empire\* Moreover,  
the stelae are the essence of the single history left, after all archives except

those of the Ch^n were destroyed, as requested by Li Ssui0 and bemoaned  
by Ssu-ma Ch’ien,n leaving the Han historian only with the Ch’in version  
of history. In his view, the destruction of competing historical sources that  
would have allowed him a comprehensive and balanced understanding thus  
differs radically from any other historical event: ultimately, it defines the  
limits of his work and determines his basic assumptions. The burning of the  
archives - and I would suggest we trust Ssu-ma Ch^en that this was a  
historical reality^ has consequently led to precisely the opposite of what Li  
Ssu had intended: the Han historian had to reconstruct history both on the  
basis of aM咐似似，the tonsmitted “Records of Ch’in” (“Ch’in chi” 秦記  
As a result, the Ch'in imperial myth, eternalized in stone on the peaks of  
sacred mountains, was countered in early Han historiography by what must  
be called the founding myth of the Han: in Ssu-ma Ch’ien’s “Basic Annals”  
portrayal of the emperor, to some extent backed by the appendix of Chia Fs  
“Kuo Ch’in lun，” the First Thearch was turned from redeemer to demon. In  
a remarkable - yet highly effective - historiographical shift, the old state of  
Ch^n turned out to be fundamentally anti-traditional, that is, devoid of  
historical legitimation, while the new state of Han celebrated itself as  
gradually restoring the very tradition that the Ch^n were accused of having  
almost completely destroyed. To be sure: neither the inscriptions nor Ssu~ma  
Ch’ien inform us of Ch’in history “how it really was”； both are ideologically  
constructed narratives and as such provide only selected and limited  
information,[[266]](#footnote-267) [[267]](#footnote-268) [[268]](#footnote-269) [[269]](#footnote-270) That in the struggle for the monopoly on defining the past the  
historian turned out to be the winner tells us not much about Ch’in Shih-  
huang but quite a bit about some of the ideological functions of historiogra-  
phy in Han times and beyond.

While the historicity of some events in Ssu-ma Ch’ierTs narrative in  
chapter six of the Shih-chi has been questioned in more recent scholarship,  
the fundamental historiographical issue of why these diverse stories of  
cruelty and personal superstition are placed side by side with the imperial

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stelae in Shih-chi has barely been raised.The sharp, almost cinematographic  
cuts by which the historian juxtaposes the inscriptions and the stories noted  
above have been recently interpreted in terms of narrative rhetoric, that is, as  
a mainly literary phenomenon;^ but the issues at stake appear far more  
fundamental. Ssu-ma Ch^en was probably not in a position plainly to ignore  
the official state eulogies of ChMn transformed into monumental stele  
inscriptions; they must have been too well known to be left out of his  
universal history. But apparently the historian did not assign them to their  
proper place, which would have been, at least according to later  
historiographical practice, somewhere in the chapters on ritual and music,  
which represent the symbolic core of imperial rulershipJ6 instead, we find  
them in the ''Basic Annais,> of the First Thearch. This displacement of the  
inscriptions, and the surrounding stories which in their entirety, rhetorically  
speaking, are an argumentum ad hominem, reveals a historiographical  
conflict between the person and the institution of the emperor: presenting the  
unification as the result of both the First Thearch's personal vigor and the  
accumulated numen {ling S)[[270]](#footnote-271) [[271]](#footnote-272) [[272]](#footnote-273) of the Ch?in ancestral temple, the inscriptions  
and other imperial documents reflect the unity of the emperor as a person  
and the dynasty as an institution, Ssu-ma Ch'ien, however, dissociates the  
one from the other, in order to take primary aim at the person.

The single most salient feature of Ch’in Shih-huang’s personality that  
is systematically foregrounded by the historian and juxtaposed to the  
inscriptions is the emperor^ personal quest for transcendence\*[[273]](#footnote-274) Given that  
Ch^n Shih-huang was indeed obsessed by this idea, did it in any way affect  
his notion of rulership? The inscriptions indicate just the opposite: there is  
not a single word that can be read as expressing the quest for transcendence  
or individual apotheosis. On the contrary, the whole notion of endurance  
and continuity that looms large in these texts remains entirely within the

traditional Chou political notion of longevity and dynastic permanence,  
achieved by supra-individuai virtuous power 德)，The two notions of

personal transcendence and dynastic permanence are mutually exclusive: the  
first is narrowed to the individual yet transcends the social realm; the second  
is within this realm yet not restricted to the individual mler.^ When Ssu-ma  
Ch’ien repeatedly places the account of the emperor’s efforts to achieve  
personal transcendence immediately after the inscription texts, which stress  
dynastic continuity, he strives to play off the person against the institution of  
the emperor. The positive dynastic myth created by the First August Thearch  
一 “myth” in the above defined sense of normative cultural memory - is  
contradicted by the negative personal myth worked out by the Han historian.  
In the very same way the bronze inscriptions had turned the venerated  
ancestors and their achievements into positive models to emulate, Ssu-ma  
Ch’ien condenses the history of Ch’in Shih-huang’s rule into a handful of  
powerful images, now creating a negative model to shun. Most tellingly  
with regard to the early Han attempt to reverse the history defined by Ch'in,  
Chia I had turned the key phrase pao~nUeh (''cruel and harsh^), used in the  
inscription on Mt. K’uai-chi to label the “six kings，” now back against the  
First Thearch5s rule; and Ssu-ma ChUen, as quoted above, again adopted the  
by then emblematic formula 20

Although drawing on Chia I in more than just this formula, Ssu-ma  
Ch’ien’s portrayal of the Ch，in differs strikingly from the earlier criticism in  
focusing on the First Thearch as a person. The long “Kuo Ch’in lun” does  
not contain a single word on the emperor's alleged superstitiousness and his  
quest for transcendence; instead, all of Chia Vs arguments are located on the  
political plane, being concerned with violations of the correct way to govern  
the country as it was established by the sages of the past. According to Chia  
I, the Ch'in collapsed because the emperor refused to take advice from his  
officials, created multiple and narrow laws, exhausted the population by  
heavy burdens of labor and taxation, and so on. Ssu-ma Ch^en relieves  
himself of the burden to argue politically by simply incorporating Chia Fs [[274]](#footnote-275) [[275]](#footnote-276)

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essay into the 4tBasic AnnaLs^; his portrayal of the superstitious megalomani-  
ac that frames the inscriptions adds an entirely new element to the early  
political criticism. It is possible that Ssu-ma’s more fanciful stories had  
come from local folk traditions that developed during the early decades of  
the Western Han and were readily available to the historian during his  
extensive travels through the coastal regions. In addition, a good part of his  
motivation to confront the monumental inscriptions with these stories  
probably resulted from his well-known attempt to criticize his own ruler as  
superstitious and a naive listener to those fang-shih at the imperial court,  
most prominently the notorious Kung-sun Ch’ing 公孫卿 from the old  
region of Ch’i 齊，who not only promised transcendence to the emperor but  
also effectively monopolized the design of his new state sacrifices, again at  
the cost of scholars devoted to traditional ritualism.

Here it is noteworthy to recall the context in which Ssu-ma Ch^ien  
informs us how he，the filial son，received his father’s charge to complete  
what became the Shih-chi: Ssu-ma T^an addresses his son in a dramatic and  
tearful speech just when the emperor has excluded him, the proper official in  
charge, from participation in the solemn/eng and shan sacrifices of 100  
B‘C. and has left him behind in Loyang 洛陽 Against this background，  
Ssu-ma ChHen^s attack on the First Thearch, as has often been noted, might  
be regarded primarily as a criticism of Han Wu-ti; and what appears as a  
personal argument against the Ch^n emperor is at the same an institutional  
argument against Ssu-ma^s own rivals at court, namely, ihtfang-shih.

However Ssu-ma Ch'ien^ characterization of the First Thearch might  
have been shaped by his view of Han Wu-ti 22 Ch^in Shih-huang's new  
image as a ruler not merely “cruel and harsh，’ but also utterly deluded still  
maintains its original power. As such, it is not only more fundamental than  
Chia Vs political criticism, it also shifts the focus from the age-old ChJin  
rule to the First Thearch and his utterly incompetent son and successor\* By  
this, Ssu~ma Ch，ien no longer denies the legitimacy of Ch’in rale as such  
(another significant difference from Chia I) but merely takes aim at Ch’in’s  
“bad last rulers/’[[276]](#footnote-277) [[277]](#footnote-278) [[278]](#footnote-279) Writing at a time when the succession of historical

dynasties was interpreted in terms of Five Phases cosmology，for Ssiwna  
ChUen the Ch?in as a dynasty became an element not illegitimate but neces-  
sary in the cosmological chain that ultimately led to the Han: while the Chou  
had ruled under the Phase of “Fire，” they were overcome by the Ch’in to  
whom - perhaps not before early Han times, as noted above - the Phase of  
“Water” was assigned. The Ch’in，in turn，were conquered by the Han who  
officially defined their patron Phase of uEarthM as late as in 104 B,C, ~ a  
decision in which Ssu-ma ChUen as an astrological, ritual, and historical  
expert appears to have been closely involved.^ in other words, while shif-  
ting the focus of criticism from the legitimacy of the Ch'in as a dynasty to  
Ch^n Shih-huang as a person, the historian justifies the Han succession on  
both moral and cosmological planes. By this historiographical strategy, the  
original unity of the Ch?in dynasty with the person of the First Thearch has  
been successfully separated in two.

As a result of this complex historiographical strategy, the inscriptions  
occupy a curiously ambiguous position in early Chinese literary and political  
history. Recognized for their traditional elegance, they nevertheless stand in  
the dark shadow of an immoral rule. As early as in the first century, Wang  
Ch’ung’s 王充(27 \_ c. 100) Zim 論衡 sets the tone:

The Ch^n, although being a state without the Way, carved the stones  
to embellish their times\* Those who read and recite them see the beauty  
of Yao and Shun.[[279]](#footnote-280) [[280]](#footnote-281) [[281]](#footnote-282)

This dichotomy of immoral rule and traditional beauty was maintained  
in later discussions, as exemplified in Liu Hsieh5s Wen-hsin tiao4ungydiscussing the genre of inscriptions:

When the First Thearch carved the peaks, his rule was cruel but his  
literary embellishment was glistening, having also the beauty of  
penetrating understanding.2^

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However, in another passage, devoted to writings on the occasion of the  
solemn feng and short sacrifices, Liu Hsieh introduces the element of  
“Legalism” to discredit the style of the inscriptions:

When the Ch^n Thearch made an inscription on [Mt.] Tai, the writing  
came from Li Ssu, with a legalist diction and a style lacking broadness  
and gloss; yet it is clear and vigorous, and the most appealing of those  
days.[[282]](#footnote-283)

Such discussions testify to the traditional beauty of the inscriptions as  
well as to the efficacy of Western Han historiography - and Liu Hsieh’s  
second statement bespeaks the ultimate dominance of the latter over the  
former. However, as we have seen, the seven inscriptions appear as  
anything but dissociated from traditional and contemporary writings. The  
observation regarding their traditional beauty refers to the overall diction, the  
venerated topoi, and the numerous individual formulations through which  
the texts participate in the literary and ritual tradition. Both their contents and  
the very act of erecting them on the mountains reveal an official attempt to  
create an overall synthesis from different strings and threads of this  
tradition. As such, the inscriptions themselves, indited in the new unified  
script, serve well as a sublime symbol of the unification of political thought,  
embracing currents of thought that only retrospectively have become defined  
as antagonistic to each other. The aesthetic considerations of the literary  
critics are a reminder: as tradition has helped to fashion these texts, they, in  
turn, have taken their place in tradition.

5.2. The continuity of traditional thought and ritual practice

The stele inscriptions^ numerous textual references across the full  
spectrum of Chou writings suggest that we should reconsider the ideological  
boundaries between different “schools of thought” in imperial Ch’in and  
early Han times. As has been frequently noted, only the ju and the mo M  
can be identified as distinctive and self-conscious “schools” in Eastern Chou  
timeses while the term chia ^ as used by Ssu-ma TJan to classify other  
groups of different philosophical masters[[283]](#footnote-284) [[284]](#footnote-285) does not mean “schools” at all;[[285]](#footnote-286) [[286]](#footnote-287)instead, we should better understand it as ^scholastic lines5^! 〇f argumenta-  
tion. From this, it appears that we have become accustomed to (mis)read  
Ssu-ma’s retrospective classification in a much more dogmatic sense than k  
was initially conceptualized. With the notion of - evidentally rather blurred  
and often overlapping - scholarly lines, the question remains how sharply  
the actual demarcations among the various thinkers were indeed drawn.  
Although there is little doubt about some clearly identifiable differences  
between a Han Fei-tzu and a Hsun-tzu individual text, it would be simplistic  
-and grossly ahistoric, considering Master Hsiin^s visit to Ch'in and his  
role as the teacher of both Han Fei and Li Ssu - to regard them as represen-  
tatives of two strictly defined ideological camps, opposed to each other on  
basic terms\* Instead, the Ch^n inscriptions indicate some kind of a common  
political discourse, including flexibly developed positions that were  
gradually deviating from one another rather than separated by rigid

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divisions, Kanaya Osamu has argued that even in Ch^n imperial times, the  
ju scholars cannot be easily distinguished from others, in particular from  
those adhering to “Legalist” ideas; moreover, he argues, some of the key  
doctrines proposed by “Legalist” thinkers are by no means strictly opposed  
to those cherished by the ju.^

In support of Kanaya1 s argument, one should note that not only the  
stele inscriptions but also the excavated Shui-hu-ti 睡虎地 Ch’in legal  
documents, dating from the third century B.C., appear to blur and finally to  
dissolve these borderlines, in particular that between preconceptions of ju  
and/a 法 ideology. As has been often noted，these bamboo strips from YUn-  
meng 雲夢（Hupei province) do not support the image of an outrageous  
“legalist” totalitarian state;33 they include substantial portions that could  
easily be integrated into a text like the Hsun-tzu^ As a manuscript, the bam-  
boo strips are ^originar' in a decidedly different sense from the Shih-chi:  
they are remnants, not tradition, that is, not constructed to be transmitted as  
a meaningful part of the cultural memory. We can juxtapose the stele inscrip-  
tions and Ssu-ma Ch'itn's portrayal of the ChMn emperor as competing  
versions of history, but the bamboo strips from Yiin-meng are not similarly  
competing materials. What appears to us as contradictory within these slips,  
then, perhaps reflects misconceptions on our side rather than actual conflicts  
in the original materiaL Generalizing this observation, we also should note  
that all excavated pre-imperial or early imperial tombs with manuscripts  
show an astonishing variety of texts; so far，there is no “Confucian，”  
“Taoist，” or “Legalist，’ tomb. From this，we can further consider the relation  
between the original texts of the manuscripts and inscriptions on the one  
hand, and later conceptualizations of ideological demarcations, on the other.

Bodde has pointed to the problems that arise both from the inscriptions  
and the bamboo strips when read within the prevalent paradigms: "As to  
Confucianism its social and moral values seem to have succeeded  
remarkably well in coexisting with Legalism during the First Emperor^  
reign. This fact is demonstrated both by the excavated legal materials and by  
the grandiloquent statements engraved on the First Emperor’s stone [[287]](#footnote-288) [[288]](#footnote-289) [[289]](#footnote-290)

inscriptions ... There is no doubt that Confucian ideals were influential  
during the Ch，in empire, regardless of how they may have been viewed by  
such Legalists as Li Ssu, who in 209 urged the Second Emperor to

‘obliterate the path of “humanity”（/從）and “righteousness” 〇’)’•”％ a

remarkable conclusion when published only a few years after the excavation  
of the Yiin-meng legal manuscripts, Bodde's assessment still operates  
within the confines of perceived ^schools of thoughtZ, The stele inscrip-  
tions, eulogizing the First Thearch as "sage, wise, humane, and righf5(LY.7), suggest a more fundamental question: do we, on the level of such  
traditional ideas of good rule, indeed have evidence for defined and  
competing ideologies that, for whatever reasons, would still have peacefully  
coexisted at the Chin imperial court and in its most solemn monuments of  
dynastic representation, the stele inscriptions?

Turning to the stelae9 s context of intellectual history, a brief recapitula-  
tion of a few key issues of political thought might suffice to identify the  
problem. A ubiquitous theme throughout the inscriptions is the notion of  
social order, with everybody in his proper position, fulfilling his allotted  
duties without transgressing the predefined limits and therefore in ultimate  
safety. This vision of perfect (or terrifying) order is common to both ritual-  
centered and law-centered concepts of order in the political thought of late  
Chou and early imperial China; the key slogan ''everyone finds peace in his  
own abode,75 filling the closing line of the Lang-yeh inscription, can be  
traced through a large and diverse body of writings, as noted above. All the  
texts of political thought that are immediately concerned with the basically  
autocratic concept of social order - like Hsiln-tzu, Han FeUtzu, Kuan-tzu,  
and essential parts of the Li-chi - share a common set of basic assumptions  
that include the ideas of hereditary rulership, strictly observed social  
division, more or less emphasized meritocratic principles, and clear rules  
promulgated by the ruler in order to preclude uchaos/>36 From these texts,  
the perceived opposition between ritual»centered and law-centered models of  
political thought seems difficult to substantiate: whether the corpus of rules  
is called “law” or “ritual” does not result in radically different notions of  
rulership37 - let alone the elegantly parallel yet somewhat cynical dictum in [[290]](#footnote-291) [[291]](#footnote-292) [[292]](#footnote-293)

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Hsun-tzu that the ruler must regulate (chieh |^) the nobility by 4tmusic and  
ritual”禮樂）and restrain (c嫌制）the common people by “laws  
and measures^ (fa-shu a formula again echoed in the Li-chi^ It is

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this common ground of li mdfa in which the stele inscriptions are rooted;  
and symptomatically, as argued above,the texts always include the word  
fa not in its narrow meaning of "penal law" but in its broader sense of  
“regulations，” a notion that actually encompasses both " and/a and  
ultimately refers to the elevated standards of high antiquity.

We have already noted that the strictly hortatory tone of ulaw and  
order，’ seen in the K’uai-chi inscription is unique in the whole cycle，  
probably due to the fact that Mt. K^uai-chi was not situated in the lands of  
Eastern Chou ritualist traditions. One of the central traditional ideas of order  
in early China is that of hsiao # in its Warring States sense of filiality  
towards the living parents. A stunning, and well-known, legal case involving  
hsiao is contained in the Shui-hu»ti documents where a father denounces his  
son for being ^unfiliaf5 (pu-hsiao and requests his execution\* Bodde  
has interpreted this as “Legalist harshness” used to “uphold a deep-seated  
traditional (and by Ch?in imperial times, Confucian) value.,，4〇 Again, one is [[293]](#footnote-294) [[294]](#footnote-295) [[295]](#footnote-296)

left to wonder whether the use of these ideological distinctions clarifies or  
blurs the actual situation - shall we assume that the Ch'in official in charge  
of the case was aware of them? As a matter of fact，to be “unfilial” was  
officially regarded as a crime in Ch5in and Han times and subject to  
punishmentas indirectly also confirmed in the Huai-nan tzu: <4The law can  
kill the unfilial ones but it cannot cause people to act with the behavior of  
K’ung[-tzu] and Tseng[-tzu].”42 The “way of filial piety”（/m•如-欣）孝道)，  
mentioned in the Mt. I inscription above, in the LU-shih ch'un-chHu chapter  
“Filial Behavior”（“Hsiaohsing” 孝行)，幻 and in one of Han Kao"tsu’s “An-  
shih fang-chung has become liable to judicial enforcement. Further-  
more, its inclusion in texts of imperial representation as well as the legal  
rigor with which it is enforced suggest that hsiao as a primary standard of  
ethical behavior has assumed social and even political relevance. This  
dimension is fully developed in the Lu-shih ch'un-ch'iu:

In everything that serves for All under Heaven and in governing the  
state, [the ruler] must devote himself with the fundamental and put the  
peripheral last. The socalled “fundamental” does not refer to  
ploughing and planting; it is devoting oneself to human affairs.  
Devoting oneself to human affairs is not to enrich [the people] when  
they are poor or to increase them when they are few; it is devoting  
oneself to the fundamentaL In devoting oneself, nothing is more  
precious than filial piety. When the ruler is filial, his reputation will be  
brilliant and splendid; those below follow and listen, and UA11 under  
Heaven’’ praise him. When the officials are filial, they serve their lord  
with loyalty, occupy their office incorruptibly, and approach difficul-  
ties [without fearing] death. When the gentlemen and the people are  
filial, they are swift in ploughing and weeding and firm in protecting  
and fighting, not abandoning or turning their backs on [their duties].  
Filial piety was the principal devotion of the Three August Ones and  
the Five Thearchs [of antiquity] and the ordering thread of the ten  
thousand affairs. If [a ruler] wishes to grasp one method that liA\\  
under Heaven,? will follow to attract the hundredfold good and to [[296]](#footnote-297) [[297]](#footnote-298) [[298]](#footnote-299) [[299]](#footnote-300)

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dispel the hundredful wicked - this is filial piety!…Caring for his  
relatives, [the ruler] does not dare to hate others. Treating his relatives  
respectfully, he does not dare to despise others. Caring and respecting  
are fulfilled in serving his relatives; their radiance extends across the  
hundred families and penetrates the [land between the] four seas. This  
is the filial piety of the Son of Heaven.[[300]](#footnote-301)

The gradual transformation of filial piety into a doctrine of social  
responsibility and political loyalty as well as a principle of rulership has been  
traced through late Eastern Chou and Han writings-[[301]](#footnote-302) [[302]](#footnote-303) [[303]](#footnote-304) [[304]](#footnote-305) [[305]](#footnote-306) The process we  
witness here is one of ideological amalgamation: the apparently contesting  
concerns for the family (traditionally associated with “Confucianism”）and  
those for the state (seen as “Legalist”）become joined together to enhance  
one another. 47 〇nly in this political dimension does hsiao turn into the <efoun-  
dationar，48 and emblematic virtue of Han rulership, given as a posthumous  
epithet to all Han rulers except the dynastic founder. As is evident from the  
Lu-shih chyun-chyiu, the Han emphasis on hsiao as a political doctrine  
should be recognized as the culmination of a longer process, continuing  
from Eastern Chou times, which was not interrupted by the Chin, as we see  
from both the First Thearch^s concern with his ancestral temple and the  
Second Generation [ThearchJ's efforts to secure his father's fame by adding  
to the imperial stelae. Hsiao as a political ideal belongs to the ten most  
frequently employed epithets in Eastern Chou posthumous titles of rulers, as  
the genealogical tables of the Shih-chi reveaL4^ At the outset of the Western  
Han, the Hsiao-ching was a prominent and frequently quoted quasi-  
canonical text;5〇 moreover, the notion of hsiao looms large in Han Kao-tsu^

“An-shih fang-chung ko’，5 至 as well as in Shu-sun T’ung’s discussions with  
both Kao-tsu and Hui-ti 惠帝（r, 195 - 188 B,C.) on early Han imperial  
ritual# V/hat we see here is not a “Confucian” virtue gone “Legalist” but a  
traditional virtue, common to most of Eastern Chou political thought, in  
transformation.

Complementary to the issue of hsiao, one may consider a doctrine that  
is often seen as a benchmark of “Legalist” ideology，namely，“changing with  
the times” as opposed to “following the old/’ Again，“adapting to change” 一  
to use A.C Graham’s phrase here” - testifies not to any distinctive  
ideology but to the commonality of political thought; as such, it is closely  
related to questions of ritual practice, and it determines the very essence of  
the normative cultural memory underlying the inscriptions. In imperial Ch^n  
and early Han times，“changing with the times” is not understood as  
radically anti-traditional but as an inherent element of tradition itself. By  
convention, some of the most often quoted “Legalist” statements of the  
doctrine include the following three examples:

The three eras were different in their rites and achieved kingship; the  
five lord-protectors were different in their regulations and achieved  
protectorship,[[306]](#footnote-307) [[307]](#footnote-308) [[308]](#footnote-309) [[309]](#footnote-310)

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When the times move on but the rules do not change, [then there will  
be] chaos ... Therefore the sage, ruling the people, has the regulations  
move with the times.%

The five thearchs did not duplicate each other, the three eras did not  
copy each other; they [all] were ruled by their own respective way. It  
is not that they opposed one another but that the times were changing  
and different this is not what a stupid ju scholar understands.^^

These passages from Shang-chiin shu, Han Fei-tzu, and Li Ssu are often  
juxtaposed to statements like the following ones from Hsun-tzu:

Reckless persons say: uThe old and the present are different in their  
basis, and the way by which they are well-ordered or chaotic is  
different.” Now，the multitudes are confused by this.[[310]](#footnote-311) [[311]](#footnote-312) [[312]](#footnote-313)

All opinions which do not adhere to the former kings and that do not  
follow the principles of propriety should be called deceitful opinions.[[313]](#footnote-314)

However, the dichotomy between identifiable currents of thought is more  
apparent than real. Again in Hsun-tzu, it is noted that a "great ju^ adapting  
to the proper times, maintains the single Way although undergoing  
numerous transformations.[[314]](#footnote-315) [[315]](#footnote-316) The “Records of Music”（“YUeh~chi” 樂紀）of  
the Li-chi includes the following statement:

The five thearchs [ruled] different times, and they did not imitate each  
other in their music; the three kings [ruled] unlike epochs, and they did  
not copy each other in their rites 6〇

This passage is not exceptional in relating the political notion of  
changing with the times into the traditional issues of ritual and music. In an

edict of 123 B.C\*, Han Wu-ti claims that uthe five thearchs did not repeat  
each other in ritual, and the three eras did not have the same laws,M6i Han  
Hsiian-ti 漢宣帝（r. 74 ~ 49 B.C) is quoted with an angry outbreak against  
“the vulgar jw (服jw 俗儒）who do not accomplish what is appropriate to the  
times and who love to validate the past and to denigrate the present/5^ And  
K’uang Heng 匡衡（chancellor 36 - 30 B.C.)，when addressing Han Yiian-  
ti、漢元帝（r. 49 \_ 33 B.C.) in connection with the alarming omens of a solar  
eclipse and an earthquake, begins his memorial with the phrase that uthe five  
thearchs were not the same in ritual, and each of the three kings had different  
teachings/7^ Already in 202 B.C., Shu-sun T^ng, when designing the  
ceremonial music for Han Kao-tsu, had argued on ritual:

The five thearchs were different in their music, and the three kings  
were not the same in their rites. By the rites one follows the times and  
creates regulating patterns for the feelings of contemporaries. There-  
fore it can be known what was continuously subtracted and added in  
the Hsia, Yin, and Chou, and we say that they did not duplicate each  
other. Your subject wishes to choose roughly from the old rites and  
from the Ch?in ceremonies to present them in a mixed form.[[316]](#footnote-317) [[317]](#footnote-318) [[318]](#footnote-319) [[319]](#footnote-320) [[320]](#footnote-321)

Like Li Ssu just eleven years earlier^ Shu-sun T5ung, the Grand  
Master of Ritual {feng-ch'ang who in ritual matters "complied with  
the changes of the times and finally became the primogenitor of the Han  
also ridiculed the “foolish scholars” who “do not understand the  
changes of the times.5^? Acknowledged by the later classicist Yang Hsiung

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as an exemplary man acting in accordance with his times,[[321]](#footnote-322) Shu-sun T^ung  
stands less for a stubborn conservativism than for the flexible adaptation of  
the old rituals to the new political needs; and judged by the sheer number of  
his students,[[322]](#footnote-323) [[323]](#footnote-324) [[324]](#footnote-325) [[325]](#footnote-326) he was not an outsider but a model of scholarly pragmatism  
in the early empire. Both Li Ssu and Shu-sun T'ung do not attack ju  
scholars in general but uthe foolish juy - an expression that belongs to the  
broader discourse on “true”（c/^n 真）or “great”（m 大 or /urn容弘 / 鴻)  
versus “foolish”（/«•鄙 or 抑愚）or “vulgar”（似俗 or s/u•世)These  
differentiations, running from Hsun-tzu to Yang Hsiung,7〇 testify to certain  
tensions among those who called themselves ju. According to HsUn-tzu, the  
^vulgar ju" were those who gained status and income by mere outward  
imitation of the old forms while failing to grasp their true meaning;7i it is this  
type of formal conservatism that Li Ssu and Shu-sun T’lmg call “stupid”  
By contrast, the Utrue ju'' as we can understand from Yang Hsiung as well  
as from Shu-sun T^ung, were able to adapt to changing times even if this  
meant abandoning some outward accessoires like the traditional long-sleeved

robeJ2

The idea of changing with the times, although traceable to earlier texts,  
gained eminence alongside the political needs of the new imperial state. At  
the end of the third century B.C, the doctrine was common property among  
thinkers of different provenance. Completely absorbed into the system of  
ritual thought and practiqe, adapting to new circumstances now meant the

continuous self-renewal of the tradition.[[326]](#footnote-327) [[327]](#footnote-328) [[328]](#footnote-329) [[329]](#footnote-330) This concept had long-lasting  
effects on the practice of imperial ritual and representation. Following the  
Han, every new dynasty had to create its own distinct ritual and musical  
forms74 in order to represent - although in the spirit of antiquity - its own  
“new” times emblematically Still in Han times, a standard sequence of  
names of uold music^ (ku-yueh ^\*^1) was fixed, symmetrically applying  
one title to one legendary culture-hero each and thus creating an idealized  
cultural history parallel to the political one;7^ and enforced by this purported  
model of antiquity, formal representational change at the beginning of a new  
era remained a dogma throughout all of imperial China, valid across the  
boundaries of indigenous and foreign dynasties and destined even to outlive  
the empire by nearly three years when finally applied under the president of  
the young republic，Yilan Shih~k’ai 袁世凱（1859 \*\* 1916).[[330]](#footnote-331)

The examples of social order，“filial piety,” and “changing with the  
times>, not only testify to the broad dissemination of basic concepts of

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rulership and representation, they also, and in full accord with the texts of  
the imperial stelae, call into question the popular idea of a deep cultural  
disruption in imperial Ch'in times from which the textual and ritual tradition  
would have to recover only partly and gradually in the course of the Western  
Han. As argued in chapter 3 above, the stelae carry on, albeit in a new  
physical format, traditional expressions of political representation and hence  
testify to a principal coherence between imperial Ch?in and Eastern Chou  
ritual practice.

However, only fragmentary information is available for the ritual  
system of the imperial Ch’in dynasty，[[331]](#footnote-332) [[332]](#footnote-333) [[333]](#footnote-334) [[334]](#footnote-335) adding to the image of an anti-  
traditional state. While the Shih-chi uBook on thtfeng and shan Rituals5'  
provides an outline of Ch?in sacrifices to the cosmic powers, not much is  
known about the First Thearch’s ancestral rites，despite his references to the  
ChMn lineage temple on several occasions. And while the Han continued to  
use the old Ch’in sacrificial center at Yung until 38 B.C.，79 such a spatial  
identity was of course impossible to maintain for the ancestral rites. There  
is, however, some reason to be cautious about the lack of information  
regarding the Ch^in ancestral temple and its ritual program: the two Shih-chi  
chapters that could have preserved the information about the Ch'in ritual and  
music，the “Monograph on Ritual”（“Li-shu” 禮書）and “Monograph on  
Music”（“YUeh，shu” 藥書）are both among the famous “ten lost chapters”  
that already in Han times had only ua listing but no text^ (yu lu wu shu  
無書)8〇 and seem to have been replaced by later accounts compiled from  
pre-Han and Han sources^! Given the overall meaningful and economical  
organization of historical knowledge by Ssu-ma Ch^en, we must assume  
that his accounts on Ch^n ritual were in these two chapters, and only here.

This problem of our sources notwithstanding, sufficient evidence for  
the existence of a rather elaborate Ch^in ritual system comes indirectly from  
historical accounts on early Western Han state ritual Shih-chi and Han-shu  
contain explicit notes, all of them related to Shu-sun T^ung, that indicate  
how the Ch'in system of cosmic, ancestral, and court rites was transmitted  
into the Western Han - despite Pan Ku9s general lament (also in the Han-  
shu) that since the early fourth century B.C. Uritual and music had already  
vanished，When in 202 B.C，Shu‘sun T’ung was about to arrange the  
court ritual for the newly enthroned Liu Pang (the posthumous Han Kao-  
tsu), the Shih-chi notes that the emperor ^altogether dismissed the elaborate  
Ch’in standards of etiquette”C/i’in 々ir/a 悉去秦苛儀法）in  
favor of simpler forms;83 the parallel Han-shu version, although omitting the  
crucial word fe’o 苛（“daborate”), maintains this account•鉍 In his response  
to the emperor's concerns that he might not be able to perform complex  
rites, Shu-sun replies with the words quoted above, referring to the need to  
“change with the times” and proposing that he would “choose roughly from  
the old rites and from the Ch5in ceremonies to present them in a mixed  
form•”

The account of Kao-tsu9s continuation and expansion of the cosmic  
sacrifices at Yung includes the remark that he 4<summoned completely the  
former sacrificial officials of Ch’in”（/m\_ b CVin 悉召故秦

祀官)\*[[335]](#footnote-336) [[336]](#footnote-337) [[337]](#footnote-338) [[338]](#footnote-339) With respect to the rites of the ancestral temple，the  
“Monograph on Ritual and Music”（“Li-yiieh chih” 禮樂志）is far more  
complete than what is found in the Shih-chi uBook on Ritual'' and uBook on  
Music,adding further doubts about the authenticity of these two chapters.  
According to the Han-shu, when Shu-sun T^ung arranged the music for Han  
Kao-tsu’s ancestral rites he relied on Ch’in musicians. Moreover，it is  
reported that the Ch’in had inherited musical pieces and dances from the  
Chou ancestral temple, which they had renamed under the First Thearch,  
and that these were again taken over and partly renamed in early Han times.  
The account concludes with the note that "largely, [the Han orchestration of  
dance and music in the ancestral temple] all relied on the old matters of

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ChHn/^6 Also, the Shih-chi 4tBook on Ritual^ notes that for the Han ritual,  
aShu»sun T^ng roughly made some additions and substractions, [but] for  
the most part in everything he imitated the old [practices] of Ch’in.”87

The Han-shu information on ritual continuity from the Ch^n to the  
Han is coherent with the texts of Han Kaotsu’s “An-shih fang-chung ko”  
that not only share the rhyme system of the stele inscriptions but also their  
ideology and references to the tradition. The music played to these ancestral  
hymns had been inherited from the Chou through the Ch^n; under Kao-tsu,  
it was then adjusted to revere the new dynasty^ geographical origins:

Again, there was the uMusic for the sacrifice in the inner chamber^  
(“Fang-chung tz’u-ytleh” 房中祠樂)，composed by Kao-tsu，s Consort  
T，ang-shan 唐山• The Chou had a “Music of the inner chamber”  
(“Fang-chung yUeh” 房中樂)，which，when it came to the Ch’in, was  
named “Longevity to the man!”（“Shoujen” 壽人).In all music one  
finds delight in one^ place of birth; in ritual, one does not forget his  
roots. Kao"tsu was fond of the melodies from Ch’u and therefore the  
“Music of the inner chamber” consisted of melodies from Ch’u. In his  
second year (194/193 B.C), the Filial [Thearch] Hui ordered the  
director of the office of music，Hsia-hou K’uan 夏侯寬，to arrange  
completely the panpipes and flutes, and to change the name [of the

music] to “Music to pacify the era”（“An-shih ylieh” 安世樂)\*”88

To appreciate this laconic passage as a document of ritual continuity,  
we need to clarify some of its major points. First, it credits the otherwise  
unknown Consort T'ang-shan explicitly with composing music, not texts.[[339]](#footnote-340) [[340]](#footnote-341) [[341]](#footnote-342) [[342]](#footnote-343)

Most likely，the authors of the “An-shih fang-chung ko’，were among the  
court literati and ritual specialists led by Shu-sun T^ung^o Second, this is  
the only Han-shu passage where the office of music (yiieh-fu ^1®) is  
clearly mentioned before the time of Han Wu»ti, and it contradicts another  
Han-shu passage which claims that Wu»ti 46established?, (//1〇 the office^i  
Additional textual as well as archaeological evidence (with the official title  
yueh-fu cast into a traditional bronze bell) proves that this office in charge of  
ritual music already existed in Ch^n imperial times;[[343]](#footnote-344) [[344]](#footnote-345) [[345]](#footnote-346) this, in turn, testifies  
to the institutionalization of traditional ritual under the Ch^in, Third, the term  
知房中 refers not to the “bedchamber，” as iri medical texts，nor  
does it denote any connection with the palace ladies who would have  
presented the songs to the ruler.[[346]](#footnote-347) Instead, these Han hymns, with their  
musical arrangement further elaborated in the imperial yiieh-fu the  
former Ch?in institution), were most probably used in the ancestral  
sacrifices,[[347]](#footnote-348) Fourth, the notion of “melodies from Ch’u”（CTz’w 冰m发楚聲)

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cannot be verified through the transmitted texts of the hymns, either on  
formal or on semantic grounds.95 Here, the Han-shu, employing the topos  
of venerating one^s origins,^ touches on the cultural background probably  
of the music, not of the texts; and there is no way to reconstruct even a  
shadowy image of the musical reality of these hymns. It should be noted,  
however, that Shu-sun Tung's geographical origins lay only about thirty  
kilometers north of Han Kao-tsu’s home area in the old state of Ch’u;97 and  
one can safely assume that he would have had no problem in adding Ch’u，  
style elements to the music inherited from the Ch'in in order to accommodate  
the emperor^s predilections, in the same way he was able to lay down his  
traditional ju^sheng robe.

Unfortunately, there is no further explanation for the genealogy of  
ritual music, “Fang-chung ytleh”（Chou) - “Shou jen”（Ch’in) - “Fang- [[348]](#footnote-349) [[349]](#footnote-350) [[350]](#footnote-351) [[351]](#footnote-352)

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chung tz’u~ytieh，，（Han), and no hymns from the Ch’in ancestral sacrifices  
are preserved. One also cannot compare the early Han hymns to their lost  
counterparts of the Ch^in ancestral temple. This lack of direct evidence  
notwithstanding, we know for both earlier and later times that musical pieces  
and their texts were employed with high coherence across the various parts  
of state sacrificial and court ritual.^ One may therefore infer that the Ch^n  
eulogies inscribed into stelae may not have radically differed from their  
parallel texts used in the ancestral temple (though one still would expect a  
stronger emphasis on “filial piety，” the key value of the ancestral cult，and  
some praise of the ancestors). To a certain degree, such a coherence is  
suggested by the close affinities between the inscriptions and the uAn-shih  
fang~chung ko,^ in particular with regard to the series of topoi employed.  
The inscriptions, catalogue of the dominant topoi of civil achievement^ is  
very similar to the one that can be identified in the early Han hymns. To  
illustrate the proximity between the Ch'in inscriptions and the early Han  
hymns - while not repeating at length what I have published elsewhere - it  
might suffice to quote only one of the latter:仙

王侯秉德  
其鄰翼翼  
顯明昭式  
清明鬯矣  
皇帝孝德  
竟全大$  
撫安四極

The princes keep steadily their virtuous power,  
their neighbors are respectful, respectful  
They let the brilliant model radiate and shine,  
clear and shining, streaming  
are the August Thearch's piety and virtuous power  
All around [We] complete the great merits,  
mollify and pacify the four extremities. [[352]](#footnote-353) [[353]](#footnote-354) [[354]](#footnote-355) [[355]](#footnote-356)

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If we accept - and there is positive evidence that we should⑴2 一 the  
Honshu account that the seventeen <6An»shih fang-chung ko?, date from the  
reign of Han Kao-tsu, we face exactly the same historiographical problem as  
in the case of the Ch^in stelae: according to the traditional view, Kao-tsu^s  
reign was one of cultural and intellectual poverty - yet the hymns are replete  
with references to venerated works of the Chou tradition, in particular to  
Shih-ching and Shang-shu. If these books were suppressed and their  
scholars maltreated, where would this diction have come from? What would  
have been their immediate model? The answer to these questions is cut into  
stone: in view of the facts that (a) the chronologically last of the imperial  
stelae, the K^ai-chi inscription, predates the Han songs only by about a  
decade, (b) Shu-sun T^ng, the leading ritual erudite under Han Kao-tsu,  
had served at the ChJin imperial court, and (c) he now organized the Han  
state rituals with the help of traditional scholars and Ch^n musicians, we can  
see that the actual proximity between Ch?in inscriptions and early Han  
ancestral hymns is anything but surprising. As such, both sets of texts  
illuminate each other in their different yet closely related historical contexts:  
they are both poetically structured series of political eulogies, both relate to a  
founding emperor, both praise the emperor^ own achievements, and both  
are firmly grounded in the tradition of Chou ethical values and political  
rhetoric.

In sum, the inscriptions, regardless of their transmission in the Shih-  
chi, are a primary source dating a hundred years earlier than Ssu-ma  
Ch’ien’s retrospective account，and they are again closely followed by  
another primary source，the very similar series of Han Kaotsu’s “An-shih  
fang-chung ko.?> Read together, both textual cycles testify to the existence  
and continuity of traditional ritual form from Eastern Chou through imperial  
Ch’in into the early Han. It is not surprising that Kao-tsu’s ancestral hymns  
have been equally neglected in the historiography of the early Han, since  
they are equally irreconcilable with our transmitted standard accounts of  
early Chinese imperial history, in particular with the notion of a total  
collapse of traditional learning in Ch'in and early Han times. The assumed  
cultural catastrophe does not stand up to the primary evidence of the imperial  
inscriptions and hymns; it is a retrospective mid-Western Han fiction. Both  
textual cycles, therefore, still need to become fully integrated into the true

See my Die Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer, 100-111, 144-73.

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political and intellectual history of their time; towards this end, the final  
section of the present study will discuss the role of traditional scholarship at  
the Ch，in imperial court

53. Scholarship and authority in the early empire

The First Thearch?s alleged misdeeds are well known, and they  
continue to be reiterated in certain domains of modem scholarship，〇咖  
ally even as an unmasked analogy to contemporary communist rule. The  
image Han political thinkers provided of the state of Ch'in and its emperors  
served ideological needs far beyond the issue of dynastic legitimation that  
pressed their own state. Throughout imperial times, disparaging the Ch^in  
remained a popular device to bolster one’s own political agenda and claim  
for moral superiority. The popular, and historically flawed, formula  
''burning the books and burying the ^Confucians' alive" (fen-shu k'eng-ju  
焚書阮儒）is distilled not from the sources but only from their much later  
4tConfucian5> interpretation, and it served the interests of imperial scholars  
who envisioned - or, at least, liked to proclaim - themselves as members of  
a continuous (or timeless) community that represented a group of morally  
upright and uncompromised worthies against an immoral state, exemplified  
in their persecution by the arch-tyrant. This self-conscious and coherent  
image of victimized 4tConfucians/> as it emerged over the centuries, has  
remained at the mythological core of traditional scholarly identity and  
makes for a standard chapter in most modern accounts of Ch5in history.  
Most tellingly，even the “Legalist” campaigns in the People’s Republic of  
Chtoa during the 1970s relied entirely on the traditional image of the CM  
only to reverse the First Thearch’s fierceness against the “Confucians” into a  
positive model of how to deal with reactionary forces.[[356]](#footnote-357) [[357]](#footnote-358) The desire for a  
simple history easily transcends ideological borderlines

However, there is good evidence to reject the traditional account which  
holds that both the ju and their texts suffered badly under the Ch'in: from the  
famous examples of imperial erudites (po-shih W±), like the Shang-shu  
scholar Fu Sheng 伏勝 fbom 260 B.C,) or Shu4un T’tmg, as well as from  
the broad use of quotations from the traditional canon in the Ch^in imperial  
stele inscriptions, in Han Kao-tsu's ancestral hymns, and in early Western  
Han official documents,[[358]](#footnote-359) it can easily be seen that neither erudites nor  
canonical texts[[359]](#footnote-360) [[360]](#footnote-361) [[361]](#footnote-362) were seriously affected by the events of 213 and 212 B.C.  
But who where these scholars, and how did they work?

Although the historical sources mention the existence of erudites (po-  
shih) in some of the Eastern Chou pre-imperial states, they received  
appointment as court officials (灸以官)only in imperial Ch’in times,  
charged with the remarkable specialization of "comprehending the past and  
present”（，’wn发如 c/zm通古今)，阳 They were，in other words, experts in  
the cultural memory that rested in both ritual and textual tradition. The best-  
documented of the few Ch'in erudites whom we actually know by name is  
Shu-sun T^ung, yet information about even his life and career is limited. The  
parallel biographies in Shih-chi and Han-shu^ although not short,  
concentrate on only a few events and fail to provide any information about  
the dates of his birth and death (there is not a single word on his age at any

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time) or his family background. The information in the biographical accounts  
that interests us here, may be summarized as follows: Shu-sun T'ung was  
entitled an “erudite awaiting appointment”pos/uTz 待言召博士）  
under the Ch’in. After “a number of years，” in 209 B,C. he was among “the  
erudites and the various ju scholars^ (po-shih chu-ju-sheng  
summoned by the Second Generation [Thearch] to give their advice on how  
to suppress the initial rebellion by Ch’en She P東涉（d 208)\* In contrast to  
the other thirty-some scholars who voted for immediately raising troops,  
Shu-sun T'ung convinced the emperor with a flattering speech that praised  
the ideal “legalist” state，with an enlightened ruler above and with the laws  
controlling the people below who would all fulfil their proper duties and not  
dare to conduct a real rebellion; hence, the regional authorities should deal  
with the matter. The emperor, delighted by this proposal, appointed Shu-sun  
T'ung as erudite. After his home area of Hsueh had been taken by Ch'u  
troops during the struggles surrounding the fall of the Ch’in dynasty，Shu-  
sun T'ung served for some time the rulers of Ch5u before joining in 205  
together with more than a hundred ju scholars who were his students,  
the entourage of Liu Pang, King of Han, the eventual founder of the new  
dynasty. He again was appointed as erudite^^ and received the honorary title  
Lord of Chi-ssu (C/z/-饥i 以如稷嗣君)，In 202 B\*C,，assisted by  
traditional scholars and disciples, many of whom he had summoned from  
Lu, he designed the majestic court ritual during which Liu Pang received the  
title of August Thearch. After this success, Shu-sun was appointed as Grand  
Master of Ritual 伽g 奉常)丨丨〇 in 200 B.C. and two years later

became the Grand Tutor (t'ai-fu of the crown prince, the later emperor  
In 195 Hui-ti again entitled him as Grand Master of Ritual and  
put him in charge of ceremonial regulations for the ancestral temple (tsung-  
fjfo 宗廟儀法）to organize the appropriate sacrifices to the late  
founding emperor.[[362]](#footnote-363) [[363]](#footnote-364) [[364]](#footnote-365) [[365]](#footnote-366)

Shu，sun T’ung，a “man of books”（c/i’以i-yen 槧人)，u3 thus was a  
highly pragmatic ritual specialist from the Eastern Chou homeland of  
traditional culture.[[366]](#footnote-367) [[367]](#footnote-368) If his career in early Han times allows some retrospec-  
tive speculation, as an officially appointed erudite he probably was engaged  
in ritual matters already under the Ch^n. Shu-sun T^ung^s career is an  
exemplary case of how a ju-sheng not only survived at the Ch^n court but  
even was able to have a large number of students devoted to him, all of them  
eager to receive official employment at court."5 In sum，Shu-sun T’ung’s  
biography reveals not only a chronological continuity of traditional ritual that  
reaches from Eastern Chou times through the Ch'in; it also, synchronically,  
testifies to the application of traditional scholarship - far beyond matters of  
bookish learning - to a broad variety of political issues at the imperial court,  
including both ritual and military affairs.

In the brief Shih-chi account on the Mt. I inscription, these scholars  
are actually mentioned:

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In his twenty-eighth year, the First August [Thearch] went eastward  
and proceeded through the commanderies and counties. He ascended  
Mt. I in Tsou county and erected a stone. He conducted a discussion  
with the jw scholars from Lu and had them carve the stone to eulogize  
the virtuous power of Ch'in. They [further] discussed the matters of  
the feng and shan sacrifices and of the wang sacrifices to the moun-  
tains and rivers^ ^

The parallel passage in the Shih-chi monograph on the feng and shan  
sacrifices (“Feng shan shu’，封襌書）which is repeated almost verbatim in  
the Han-shu 4tChiao~ssu chih}, differs only slightly in mentioning

"seventy ju scholars and erudites (ju-sheng po-shihY from Ch'i and Lu with  
whom the emperor conferred on Mt. T'ai. Here, the scholars offered their  
deliberations on the feng and shan sacrifices but were unable to propose a  
practicable solution^ so the impatient emperor soon discharged them from  
the task\*117 In both accounts, the scholars make up an important group in the  
emperor's entourage and are consulted as ritual specialists; but only the  
“Basic Annals” informs us that they also were textual experts\*

As argued in section 4J.? the diction of the inscriptions suggests a  
process of systematic composition and, as the basis of this, a stable institu-  
tional environment of learning. In both their textual references and their  
formal perfection, these eulogies cannot have been extemporized at the  
individual occasion; they certainly were produced well in advance by learned  
court scholars of Shu-sun T^ng^s caliber, deeply familiar with the ritual and  
textual tradition. During the actual event when the stelae were erected and  
inscribed, the physical presence of these scholars might have been needed to  
finalize the particular ttlocalized>, version of the eulogy. But more important-  
ly, at this ritual performance the experts of official memory represented their  
profession as part of the imperial message: "comprehending the past and  
present^ by recalling the imperial achievements vis-a-vis the preceding times  
of chaos, they figure prominently within the inscriptions.

As the traditional scholars thus remained at the center of the solemn  
state rituals, their hallowed texts formed the core of imperial represention. In  
view of this situation, more recent scholarship on the imperial ChMn dynasty

shih-chi 6242.

H7 Shih-chi 6.242, 28.1366; Han-shu 25A.1201.

has cogently discredited the traditional account of the First Thearch^ rule as  
a mere terror regime, devoid of any cultural accomplishment. Transmitted  
historical sources have been read with a more critical eye, and the excavated  
legal and other documents from Shui~hu-ti have given rise to doubts about  
the notion of extreme “legalist” harshness for which the short-lived Ch’in  
dynasty has been notorious over two millennia\* Western scholars in  
particular have also argued against the historicity of the execution of more  
than 460 scholars in 212 B.C，，川 while differing about whether or not to  
accept the biblioclasm of 213 B\*C. as a historical fact.i^ To some extent,  
the present study falls into the same category of sceptical scholarship by  
agreeing that the commonplace perception of Ch?in history that has  
dominated for two millennia is now no longer tenable. As the stele  
inscriptions，better than any other evidence，reveal，the Ch’in dynasty was  
highly traditionalist in its quest for and expression of political legitimacy.

Nevertheless, I wish to suggest an alternative to what seems to be  
emerging as the new standard approach to Ch'in history. Specifically, I  
suggest we integrate into one coherent picture two apparently antagonistic  
assumptions: the historicity of burned books and executed scholars on the  
one hand, and the nature of the Ch^in imperial court as a place of traditional  
ritual and classical scholarship, on the other. Traditionalism and repression,  
if one wishes to recall the history of European Christianity, go well together;  
the invented image of early China where oppressive rule is related to anti-  
traditionalism is much less natural than it has been perceived. Polemically, I  
propose that the new rejection of both the mass execution and the  
biblioclasm still shares some of the most fundamental - and fundamentally  
questionable - presuppositions that have shaped the traditional view. [[368]](#footnote-369)

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There are，in fact，a few traditional and modern voices who have  
presented a more carefully argued position than simply rejecting the burning  
of the books and the execution of the scholars. As Wang ChJung in his Lun  
heng noted, "although the ChUn were without the Way, they did not bum  
the [books of the] philosophical masters (c/zu-泛w 諸子)/’120 And Cheng  
ChUao, an equally independent mind, included a polemical entry in his  
Tung-chih which deserves to be quoted at length:

The Second Generation [Thearch] summoned more than thirty of the  
erudites and the ju scholars and asked them about the reason [of Ch?en  
She^s rebellion]. They all drew on the meaning of the Spring and  
Autumn Annals to respond. Therefore, it is not that in ChMn times one  
did not use the Chou ju-sheng and canonical learning. Moreover, Shu-  
sun T^ung, when submitting himself to the Han, had more than one  
hundred disciples himself. The habits of the [old states of] Ch，i and Lu  
had also not been abandoned. Therefore, after Hsiang Yii had  
vanished, Lu was the country where ritual and rightness were firmly  
maintained; and hence one knows that in ChMn times, the ju were not  
discarded, and that those who were buried by the First August  
[Thearch] were simply those whose deliberations at one time did not  
match [the imperial reason] ... The books that were burned were just  
the matter of one occasion. Those who in later generations did not  
understand the canonical books all resorted to the [pretext of the] fires  
of ChMn ... That the official [Han imperial bibliographer Liu] Hsiang  
said that the Ch7in burned the books while the books [actually]  
remained, and that the ju scholars delved into the canonical works  
while the [transmission of the] canonical works was [allegedly]  
terminated was probably the beginning of this. If the Songs have six  
lost pieces, it is because the six pieces for the mouth-organ were  
originally without lyrics. If the Documents have lost chapters, they  
already existed no longer in the time of Confucius. All this is unrelated  
to the Ch^n fires. From Han times until the present day, not more than  
one or two of a hundred books remain\* It is not that the Ch^n people  
lost them; the scholars themselves lost them.^[[369]](#footnote-370)

Both Wang Cheung and Cheng Ch'iao do not deny the historicity of  
“burning the books and burying the scholars alive，’ but argue that the Ch’in  
emperor and his chancellor Li Ssu primarily attempted to ban those texts and  
speeches that were used to denigrate and criticize the new state. In modem  
scholarship, Hsiao Kung-chuan, keenly aware of the contradiction between  
Ssu-ma Ch^en^ version of ChMn history and the role of ju scholars at the  
Ch^n court, concludes that the First Thearch ''merely executed some four  
hundred or more scholars at Hsien-yang who had committed infractions of  
his interdicts; he did not slaughter all Confucians, nor did he wholly forbid  
their teachings. Even clearer proof that the First Emperor employed  
Confucians is found in the inscriptions that he had put on stone ... The act  
of burning the books was motivated solely by the fear that private learning  
would introduce confusion into [the stated] official teachings; it was not  
intended to eradicate Confucian learning as such,”122 Other scholars have  
come to essentially the same conclusion.12^ In the remaining pages of the  
present study, I wish to further develop this line of argument.

To question the events of 213 and 212 B.C. - as has become  
increasingly popular among Western scholars - because of the prominence  
of scholars and their traditional texts at the Ch’in imperial court is still，if  
indirectly, indebted to the myth of ^burning the books and burying the  
scholars alive^ by assuming that the ju scholars and their texts would indeed  
have been the target of these imperial measures. However, the early sources  
do not exactly say this and can therefore not be used to discredit the  
historicity of those two paradigmatic events of Ch^in imperial rulership. To  
begin with the biblioclasm: as is well known, Li Ssu asked to ban and bum  
“songs”（A/办詩）and “documents” 書）circulating outside the imperial  
court, along with the uncontrollable speeches {yil g§) of the "hundred  
lmeages^ (pai chia all the historical archives except those of the

Ch^n; the shih and shu studied and taught by the official erudites were  
exemptedin other words, the target of Li Ssu^s memorial were those

Hsiao, A History of Chinese Political Thought, 470.

See, Ch^en P^n, Chiu-hsueh chiu-shih shuo-ts'ung, 2:949-54; Kanaya  
Osamu, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu, 230-57; Petersen, "Which Books Did the First  
Emperor of Ch'in BurnM; Ochi Shigeaki, Sengoku Shin Kan shi kenkyu, 2:576-95; Ma  
Fei-pai, ChHn chi-shih, 2:893-98.

1. See Shih-chi 6.255, 87.2546-47. See also Peterson, ^Which Books Oidthe  
   First Emperor of Ch’in Burn.”

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works and speeches of 4<private learning^ (ssu-hsiieh that, on the one  
hand, served to ^criticize the present by invoking the past?, (i kufei chin  
古非今）and，on the other，rivalled the official learning conducted by the  
erudites at the Ch’in imperial court. The explicit emphasis in Li Ssu’s  
memorial that “songs” and “documents” used by the official erudites were  
exempted from destruction indicates not the suppression but the control of  
the inherited texts. Such a proscription of heterogeneous writings among the  
population and the promotion of a defined textual corpus under imperial  
control is a typical case of the interplay of canon and censorship known to  
all textual cultures.[[370]](#footnote-371)

From here, and before entering any discussion on particular books or  
chapters, one might consider whether the First Thearch and his learned  
chancellor (this student of Master Hsun is credited with a dictionary!) were  
indeed key figures in the early history of the ju canon: instrumental not for  
its destruction but for its formation. If I read the sources correctly, the Ch^n  
book burning and concurrent monopolization of traditional scholarship in the  
hands of imperial erudites is exactly equivalent to Han Wu-ti's celebrated  
measures of 136 B.C,: according to the Han-shu, this emperor not only  
appointed erudites for the five canons[[371]](#footnote-372) [[372]](#footnote-373) [[373]](#footnote-374) [[374]](#footnote-375) [[375]](#footnote-376) but in a complementary step also  
expelled the competing doctrines. ^7 it should go without saying that the  
elevation of erudites for the five canons and further consolidation through  
the establishment of the imperial university 太學）in 124 B.C，128

did not constitute the initial appointment of erudites for these books but the  
restriction of erudites only for them - which has more to do with censorship  
than with the inauguration of scholarship.

Scholars like Kanaya Osamu,^9 who made his massive and too often  
ignored^o contribution forty years ago, have indeed argued that substantial

parts of the traditional - habitually called “Confucian” — canon have been  
received through the Ch\*in redaction, i.e., from the hands of imperial court  
erudites⑶ and that particular chapters like the “Yao-tien” 堯典 and the  
“Ch’iivshih” 秦誓 of the 伽g-s/m as well as the “Chung-yung” 中庸 of

the LUchi^2 are most likely Ch^n imperial products, even if in part based on  
earlier texts.i33 in sections 3.3. and A2. above, I have argued in favor of a  
Ch'in redaction of the Shih and the Shu, One does not need to assume that  
any of the chapters under suspicion was actually completely composed  
under the Ch’in.

Instead，I would hold that the significance of these texts at the Ch’in  
imperial court was perhaps due to their inherited status\* As hallowed  
writings, they were, first of all, studied, edited, and taught by the officially  
appointed Ch^in erudites; and only on this basis, then, were they modified  
to serve the new political needs of representation. This more relaxed  
assumption vis4-vis the “Ch’in creation” hypothesis is not challenged by  
recently excavated manuscripts; and the extreme traditionalism of Ch^n  
ritual and political representation may speak at least equally well in favor of  
an official appropriation and monopolization of the written past as it might  
testify to its actual creation. Yet even we put aside the question which texts  
and imperial rituals (like the First Thearch^s feng it and shan sacrifices  
on Mt. TJai and Mt. Liang-fu, or his tours of inspection) were newly  
fabricated under the Ch^in, and which others were simply incorporated into  
the Ch’in repository of hallowed writings and practice，we still may register  
three significant points:

First, continuing of the strong traditionalism of pre-imperial Ch^n,  
documented in the design of and inscribed texts on bronze vessels and bells,  
Ch?in imperial representation was highly traditional, whether it was  
observing or inventing solemn traditions. Even as inventions, the texts and  
rituals of the Ch^n imperial court would have been disguised as following a  
tradition, and the textual scholarship that furnished references to Shun as  
well as to thtfeng and shan sacrifices of high antiquity would have served [[376]](#footnote-377) [[377]](#footnote-378) [[378]](#footnote-379)

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to produce an imperial cultural memory in order to traditionalize and ritualize  
what was actually new.

Second, and again regardless of whether it was being observed or  
invented, this tradition was formulated on the plane of traditional textual and  
ritual expertise，and for this，the imperial court needed to patronize and  
institutionalize the work of true professionals - the imperial erudites with  
their remarkable specialization of “comprehending the past and present.”

Third，the works that were used to learn and speak about the past，i,e.，  
“songs” and “documents，”[[379]](#footnote-380) [[380]](#footnote-381) needed to be monopolized for the official  
purpose of political legitimation. The burning of books floating freely  
among the population (including private scholars) did therefore not destroy  
but, on the contrary, strengthened the imperially defined canon.

The other, even more violent attack on scholarship, the mass execution  
of 212 B.C., is by now almost unanimously rejected in Western scholar-  
ship. Again, the textual details of its Shih-chi account deserve closer  
attention: the passage in question's does not mention any ju-sheng but  
speaks in general terms of executed “masters”（dm-咖叹諸生)• These  
amasters,?> although in general including the ju-sheng in charge of classical  
learning (wen-hsueh constituted a broad and highly heterogeneous

group of specialists in various disciplines, among them experts in medicine,  
astronomy, prognostication, dream diagnosis, etc. To be sure, the two  
^masters" who had stirred the First Thearch?s ire and let him decree the  
execution of “more than four hundred sixty” persons cannot be identified as  
ju-sheng (the group to which scholars like Shu-sun T5ung or Fu Sheng  
belonged). The Shih-chi does not furnish any information that the execution  
concerned any of the officially appointed 扣；and there is no early text  
naming even a single prominent ju-sheng who was executed or oppressed

during ChJin imperial times. On the contrary, as Kanaya Osamu has argued,  
the victims of the execution were most likely fang-shih and other specialists  
not at court but among the general population.1^7

Therefore, I do not take the suspicious silence of early Han sources on  
the burning of books and execution of scholars prior to Ssu‘ma Ch’ien’s  
account 138 as testimony against their historicity^ as some scholars have  
done,^^ We may ask instead: why should the official scholars of early  
Western Han times - true successors to the Ch?in erudites - complain about  
events that had ousted scholarly and political rivals outside the imperial  
court? Why should salaried court professionals be concerned about  
unemployed amateurs engaged in “private learning”私學），  
learning that may well have threatened the ''official leaming^ (kuan-hsiieh ^  
iP) of the canonical books in support for imperial needs? Again, it appears  
that the execution of the masters would have been only in the interest of the  
official erudites.

Such considerations do not shed the most favorable light on a group of  
scholars who are generally labelled <<Confucians>, and who are thought to  
have represented a moral opposition against an immoral state. One can  
understand why the coherent story of the original sources was rewritten in  
later accounts by self-conscious uConfucians,1 to forge their own tradition of  
moral nobility\* But the sources grant them a more prosaic role: professionals  
who offered their sober expertise to the early empire beyond any issues of a  
specific uConfucian’’ morality. Their institutionalized learning atthe Ch，in  
imperial court was in place under both Ch'in Shih-huang and his son, and it  
even outlived the dynasty itself when erudites like Shu-sun T^ng defected  
to the new strong man, the future Han Kao~tsu, under whom the scholarly  
elite was able to re-establish and then to maintain its former status.

1. Kanaya, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyil, 234-35. Of course, it cannot be ruled out  
   that among the umore than four hundred sixty,J there also were scholars designated as ju-  
   sheng who adhered to particular ritual practices or elements of traditional thought  
   associated with Confucius or Mencius. The early discussions on who would qualify as a  
   ^greaf' or Utrue,，7w scholar (see section 52. above) show that the designation ju applied to  
   many different individuals; however, if ju scholars were among those executed, they do not  
   seem to have belonged to the higher echelons of court officials.
2. The execution is not mentioned anywhere prior to the Shih-chi\ the burning of  
   the books is noted by Chia I in his Hsin-shu Iff® but the authenticity of the passage  
   remains contested.
3. See, e.g., Neininger, ^Burying the Scholars Alive/5

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To return finally to the panegyrical stelae, their intense references to  
traditional writings testify not only to the existence of scholarly learning but  
also to their imperially sanctioned use - to eulogize the First Thearch^s rule  
as one that was deeply embedded in venerated tradition. As such, the  
inscriptions show the Shih and the Shu as core elements of the imperial, not  
oppositional, canon; they present the early imperial canon in action,  
precisely in the way we would have inferred from Li Ssu^ memorial  
requesting appropriation and control of the textual tradition. It it this very  
veneration of the past - and the understanding of the actual political needs to  
exploit it - that asked for the proscription of private learning where the same  
or similar writings as those used for the stelae would have been used not to  
support but to attack the new empire. As the destruction of competing  
historical archives was a traditional measure to control, to define, and to  
unify the official historical memory, the ban imposed on unofficial  
scholarship secured the imperial authority over the written heritage, in  
particular of those “songs” and “documents” that could furnish unfavorable  
historical analogies. The proscription, in other words, was as much part of  
the overall project of unificationHO as the stele inscriptions were in their  
intensive reference to the tradition under imperial control. From this  
perspective, the composition of the highly traditional inscriptions and the  
burning of the books are no longer contradictory but complementary aspects  
of the same impulse towards political and cultural unification and imperial  
authority.

Moreover, in light of the evidence for the ChMn redaction of the  
traditional canon，[[381]](#footnote-382) one wonders indeed whether, according to the

mechanisms of canonization and censorship and in view of the relentless  
traditionalism of the imperial stelae, the burning of the books and the  
elimination of private learning may have contributed more to the definition  
and stabilization of the canon than its later elevation under Han Wu-ti» With  
these considerations, the present study has finally moved from the imperial  
stelae to much broader issues of early imperial history, and necessarily so:  
ultimately, one cannot undertake an analysis of the inscriptions without the  
reconstruction of a political, ritual, and textual history that is able to integrate  
them as meaningful expressions of their time.

situation has led Fukui Shigemasa to question the historicity of the notion of wu-ching  
under Wu-ti; see his aRikukei \* rikugei to gokei: Kandai ni okeru gokei no seiritsu^ and  
uShin Kan jidai ni okeru hakase seido no tenkai: Gokei hakase no secchi o meguru gigi  
sairon.^ According to Fukui, the term does not appear in any authentic source prior to 51  
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interested reader may easily compare my (sometimes rather different) readings with them;  
in terms of scholarship, the existing English translations do not go beyond he earlier  
works by French, Chinese, and Japanese scholars, (Nienhauser [l:xiv-xv] claims that he  
and his collaborators are the first to have used the Po-na and Chien-pen  
editions of the Shih-chi in preparing their text; in fact, both editions were effectively  
employed in Mizusawa’s collation notes.)

Because of the close intertextual relations between the seven inscriptions - a  
feature to be discussed subsequent to the translations - it will be necessary to refer back  
and forth within the whole cycle. For convenience, I will use the following abbreviations:

I (Mt. I), T (T^ai), LY (Lang-yeh), CF (Chih-fu), CFTK (Chih-fu tung^kuan), CS (Chieh-  
shih-men), and KC (K^ai-chi). Single lines are quoted in the pattern 'Abbreviation.line\* 1\*;  
thus, “T.3” is line three of the T，ai-shan inscription.

26 Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k，ao，’’ 136, gives swng (“to eulogize”）  
for sung 〇\*to recite^); this\* however, is not in accord with parallel phrases in the other  
inscriptions (see below), and it is not supported by the versions of the inscription  
collections (see "Ch'tian Ch'in wen^ Lila). The Chung^hua edition as well as Takigawa^  
version of the Shih-chi also read t4recite.,, The recurrent notion of te (''virtuous powef),  
appearing no less than nine times in the present cycle, is, of course, directly received from  
the Chou ritual language where it denotes the legitimate power of the king which, through

36 Being “cautious and respectful”…uw"慎遵）towards the “professions and  
duties^ chih-shih again implies the avoidance of transgressions beyond one's proper

120 Shun made his four tours of inspection all in the second month of the  
respective season: in the second month (spring) of the year to the east, in the fifth month  
(summer) to the souths in the eighth month (autumn) to the west, and in the eleventh  
month (winter) to the north. The Pai-hu t'ung 白虎通 notes that the second and the  
eighth month are those of the equinoxes, while the fifth and the eleventh months are those  
of the solstices; therefore, the ruler undertakes his tours of inspection always during these  
second months of the respective season; see Ch'en Li, Pai-hu t'ung shu-cheng 6\*290. The  
sequence of Shun’s tours clearly reflects the systematic pairing of seasons and 此  
according to the cosmology of the 4<five phases^ (wu-hsing S^T) and hence betrays a

1. Towards a historical interpretation of the inscriptions  
   5 J. Between Ch'in history and Han historiography

   1. The continuity of traditional thought and ritual practice
   2. Scholarship and authority in the early empire

   Bibliography

   Index [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For his routes, see Tsuruma Kazuyuki, 4<Shin teikoku no keisei to toho sekai:  
   Shikotei no toho junshu keiro no chosa o fumaete1'; Inaba Ichiro, t4Shin Shiko no junshu  
   to kokuseki,?; Wang Ching-yang, uKuan-yti Ch^in Shih-huang chi-tz^ ch^-hsiln lu-hsien  
   ti t’an-t’ao,” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. These formulae appear^ sometimes with slight variants, in the introductions to  
   three of the six inscriptions preserved in the 4<Basic Annals.n See Shih-chi 6,242, 244,  
   260, also 劭认-c、W 28.1366-67 and 丹漢書 25AJ201, The act of reciting and inscri-  
   bing these eulogies is again self-refendally stated within the inscribed texts themselves\* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. 5 The two earliest known writers ascribing the inscriptions to Li Ssu are Liu Hsieh  
   劉勰（ca. 467 - 522) in the Wm-ZmVi 容文心雕龍（see Chan Ying，n’如'

   /«呢 客 2L803) and Li Tao-ylian 酈道元（469 - 527) in the cAw 水經注

   (see Wang Kuo-wei, Shui<hing chu chiao 4.130, 25.810, 40.1256). Chang Shou-chieh  
   張守節（/?\* 725 - 735) states that both the text and the calligraphy of the fmal inscription  
   were by Li Ssu (see his commentary in Shih-chi 6.261); according to Shih-chi 6.260 and  
   87\*2547, Li Ssu had accompanied the emperor on his final tour to the southeast.  
   Challenging the traditional view (which in any case had gradually developed only since  
   Six Dynasties times)，Ch’en Chih-liang，“T’ai-shan k’o-shih k’ao (hsia)，” 4243, has  
   argued that the eunuch andlater chanceUor Chao Kao 趙高（d. 207 B.C.) is a more likely  
   candidate as the imperial calligrapher. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. North of modern T’ai-an 泰安 in Shantung province; see T’an Ch’i-hsiang，  
   Chung-kuo lUshih tl-t’u-chi，2:H [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Shih-chi 6.242. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. North of modern Yerv»t’ai 煙矗 in northeastern Shantung; see T’an Ch’i-hsiang，  
   Chung-kuo li-shih ti-t'u-chi, 2:78. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Shih-chi 6.249. The actual meaning of kuan here is uncertain and could also be  
   “terrace” or “observatiorUo wen” [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. n Shih-chi 6.249-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. ^ Shih-chi 6.242-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. In modern Tsou 芻county in southern Shantung province; see T’an Ch’i-hsiang，  
    Chung-kuo li-shih ti-t'u-chi, 2:78. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. See Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih~huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 126-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Shih-chi 28.1367, Han-shu 25AJ201. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Shih-chi 6.244. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. For an extensive discussion of the various - in part contradictory - early sources,  
    see Shih Che-ts\*un, Shui-ching chu pei4u, 261-1 A, and Ytian Wei-ch^n, CWin Han pei-  
    shuy 42-49 (including text-critical notes); for a survey on the later textual history, see also  
    Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 130-31，164-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. According to Jung Keng, “Ch’in Shih-huang k’o shih k，ao，” 165, the text

    appears first in Wu Yen’s 吾衍（1268 - 1311) 周秦刻石釋 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. (1308), The version of th^ inscription collections is that taken from a stone carved in  
    993 on the basis of a rubbing from an earlier stele obtained by Hsii Hstian 徐錢（916 -  
    991); however, it seems clear that even this rubbing was already taken not from the  
    original stele but from a re-carving in wood or stone. See the discussions by Shih Che-  
    ts^n and Yuan Wei-ch^n mentioned in the previous note,

    ^ See below. Despite the proposed authenticity of the whole text, I will argue that  
    the internal textual order seems to have been partly reversed by a later editor. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 126-31，has traced the history of  
    the stones. See also Shih Che-ts'un, Shui-ching chu pei-lu, 261-1A (for the stele on Mt.  
    1)，289-94 (Mt. Lang-yeh)，350-51 (Mt. T，ai)，430-32 (Mt. K，uai-chi)，and Yiian Wei-  
    ch'un, Ch'in Hanpei-shu, 30-53.

    夏8 Ca. 30 km south of modem Chiao-nan 膠南 on the eastern coast of Shantung;  
    see T'an ChM-hsiang, Chung-kuo li-shih ti-Vu-chi, 2:78. Most probably the stele was  
    erected on the famous ‘Terrace on Mt, Lang-yeh” (Lang-yelw’az\* i良耶臺)set up by Ch’in  
    Shih-huang; the text in Shih-chi 6.244 runs: 4tHe went south and ascended [Mt.] Lang-  
    yeh. He greatly enjoyed this [place] and spent three months there. Then he moved thirty  
    thousand households of the black»haired people (i,e., the common people; see note 29  
    below) to [live] below the Lang-yeh terrace, and exempted them from taxation and labor  
    service for twelve years. He built the Lang-yeh terrace and erected a stone inscription in  
    order to praise the virtuous power of Ch'in and to glorify its achievements. [The text on  
    the stone] reads: [,..]^ This introduction to the inscription text proper is permeated with  
    textual problems; see Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-cheng, 2:208-9, and Takigawa  
    Kametaro, Shiki kaichu kosho 6.35-36. Again, it is unclear whether the text speaks of  
    two different terraces here, with the original one perhaps dating back to the fifth century  
    B.C. See the traditional commentaries to this passage.

    ^ The scarce and contradictory information on Chieh-shih in some transmitted  
    texts (from Warring States times onwards) has provoked much discussion on the nature  
    and actual location of this place. T^an Ch'i-hsiang, Chung-kuo li-shih ti-tJu-chi, 2:9-10,  
    identifies the Ch'in location with the present-day Mt. Chieh-shih, north of modern  
    Ch’ang4i 昌黎 in Ho-pei 河北，yet recem archeological schol細hip suggests that ^  
    shih was actually a place-name denoting a site close to the shore some 140 km northeast [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. of Ch'ang-li in modern Sui-chung county in Uao-ning where the foundations of a  
    large Ch\*in palace have been excavated since 1982. Although the findings so far (including  
    bricks and tiles) do not show written evidence that would identify the place by its Ch'in  
    name, the actual site matches significant aspects of the traditional information; see (also  
    for a succinct summary of the earlier identifications) Hua Yli-ping, <4Shih-lun Ch^n Shih-  
    huang tung-hslin ti 4Chieh-shih' yii 4Chieh-shih kung,T,; for a full description of the  
    archaeological site and its remnants, together with additional references, see the three  
    articles by Liao-ning sheng wen-wu k?ao»ku yen-chiu-so Chiang-nli-shih kung-tso-chan,  
    ^Liao-ning Sui-chung hsien <Chiang-nti-shih, ChUn Han chien-chu ch^n-chih shih-pei4i  
    i-chih ti k\*an»fan yu shih-chlieh/' \*\*Liao»ning Sui-chung hsien shih-pei-ti Ch^n Han  
    kung-ch’eng yi-cMh 1993 - 1995 nien fa-chUeh chien-pao,” and ‘‘Liao-ning Sui-chimg  
    hsien 'Chiang-nu-shih1 Ch'in Han chien-chu ch'Un-chih wa-tzu-ti i-chih i hao yao-chih,^  
    as well as Yang Jung-ch’ang，“Shih-pei-tii-chih ch’iK’u Ch’in Han chien~chu wa-chien  
    pi-chiao yen«chiu.M We can tentatively accept the site at Sui-chung as the location of  
    Chieh-shih, as long as we are not aware of any major Ch'in palace and sacrificial structure  
    in the northeast. However, since the account in Shih-chi 6\*252 notes that the emperor,  
    after having erected the stele at Chieh»shih» went further north to the border of his empire,  
    the site of Chieh-shih itself does not need to be located as far north as modem Sui-chung.  
    We need to await new archaeological evidence to reach a definite conclusion. Even if  
    Chieh-shih was located at modem Sui-chung, and therefore not a real mountain, we should  
    consider that the First Thearch conceived of the site at Sui-chung as an elevated place that  
    was mountain-like in its nature and cosmological significance. First, as a location of an  
    imperial inscription, Chieh-shih is not an isolated spot but an integral part of a string of  
    locations, with all the others being actual mountains. Second, Chieh-shih appears as a  
    name of a mountain located at, or of a mountain range leading to, the sea that figures  
    prominently in the mythical geography of the culture-hero YU - one of the First  
    Thearch^s foremost models of ideal rulership (see below). When mentioning them as a  
    group, I will therefore continue to refer to the inscription sites as mountain peaks, despite  
    the possibility that Chieh-shih may not have been a mountain in the strict sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. 2〇 South of modem Shao\*hsmg 紹興 in Chekiang 浙江，see Tan Ch’i，hsiang， [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Chung-kuo li-shih tUVu-chi, 2:11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. See his “T’ai-shan k，o-shih k’ao.” [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. See his “Shin Shikotei no tdhd junshu kokuseki ni miru kyoJkdsd.” [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. See Shih-chi 6267. The Lang~yeh stele actually survived until 1900 when it fell  
    victim to a violent rain-storm during which it plunged down into the sea. Fragments have  
    later been re»assembled into a stele which is now preserved in the Museum of Chinese  
    History (Chimg-Jkuo li-shih po-wu~kuan 中國歷史博物館）m Peking; see Jung Keng，

    ^Ch^in Shih-huang k\*o-shih k?a〇Z，128-29, 140-41\* The allegedly original fragment from  
    Mt. T’ai is kept in the Temple of [Mt.] Tai (Tai~miao tS廟）in T’ai-an 泰安，Shantung  
    province. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Another set are the imperial edicts on weights and measures\* Although politi-  
    cally highly significant^ they represent only a few standard formulae. In addition to the  
    stelae mentioned in the Shih-chU much later sources mention at least nine more inscribed  
    stones for the Ch'in dynasty; see Ma Fei-pai, Ch\*in chi-shih, 2: 770-71. None of these  
    records can be seen as reliable. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. See Shih-chi 130.3288-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. I owe the term ^professionals^ to Michael Nylan who now proposes to translate  
    ju as ^Classicist^ (private communication); see also her44A Problematic Model: The Han  
    ‘Orthodox Synthesis，’ Then and Now.” [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. For the text, see Jung Keng, ^Ch^n Shih-huang k'o-shih k'ao/1 131-32, and

    “Ch’tian Ch’in wen” LI Ob. A German translation and discussion of this text may be  
    found in Lothar Ledderose and Adele Schlombs, Jenseits der Grossen Mauer： Der Erste  
    心以泛厂 vcm In my translations，I number the

    lines according to the rhyme scheme and indicate changes of rhyme by beginning a new  
    stanza; thus, every rhyme sequence is marked as a discrete paragraph. The present  
    inscription rhymes on every third verse and has two rhyme sequences, yang ® (^arf) and  
    chih both constituting six rhymes. I apply the rhyme categories summarized for

    the Shih-ching WMbyho Ch^ang-p'ei and Chou Tsu-mo, Han Wei Chin nan-pei-ch\*ao  
    yiin-pu yen-pien yen-chiu, 13-14; see also the rhyme analysis of the inscriptions by Ch^en  
    Hsin-hsiung, u«Shih-chi \* ChMn Shih-huang pen-chi» so chien ti sheng-yUn hsien-  
    hsiang/' For the tentative transcription of the finals, I use a slightly modified version of  
    Li Fang-kuei’s 李芳桂 system. Two rhyme words strongly indicate the authenticity of  
    this text: the fourth yang rhyme is on the word ming which rhymed in pre-Han and  
    early Han literature in the category yang but then, in Western Han times, underwent a  
    significant phonological change and as a result rhymed with words of the category keng  
    (t/办 See Lo Ch’ang-p’ei and Chou Tsu-mo, 51，and W. South Cobiin, A Him必  
    Eastern Han Sound Glosses, 113-14. The fifth chih rhyme is pn the word chiu X which  
    moved, obviously as a result of another phonological change, in Western Han times from  
    the category chih to the category yu ® See Lo and Chou, 16-17. Even without

    raising the question of the possible motives that would have led a later writer to credit the  
    first CWin emperor with a highly traditional inscription like this one, it seems  
    improbable to assume that such a writer - in early T'ang times, at the latest - would have  
    been able to create rhymes requiring a sophisticated theoretical conceptualization of pre»  
    Han “rhyme categories” that were actually not constructed until Ch’ing times\* [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. On the procedure of how King Cheng 政，ruling as the King of Ch’in since 247  
    B.C,，adopted the new title of the “August Thearch”（Aw伽容皇帝）in 221 B.C.，see [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. 6,236, As Derk Bodde in his “The State and Empire of Ch’in，” 54, has noted，the [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. new title ^by then had acquired a strong political coloration, yet retained potent [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. associations with the gods and sages of antiquity/' On the quasi-religious significance of [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. the title see also Howard L Wechsler, Offerings of Jade and Silk: Ritual and Symbol in [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. the Legitimation of the Tang Dynasty, 86-87. The designation huang-ti appears in all of [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. the inscriptions (with the exception of the incomplete Chieh-shih-m^n text, see below) at [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. least twice, and in the Lang-yeh inscription no less than six times. It is one of the [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. distinctive structural devices of the inscriptions since it is typically employed at the very  
    beginning of the text and again at the beginning of a new section as defined both by  
    semantics and rhyme structure. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. Since 324 B.C.，the rulers of Ch’in held the title of “king”（wa吨王).See  
    Nienhauser, Grand Scribe \*s Records, 1:111. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. The “four extremities” C?似-cW 四極）are the “extremities of the four [heavenly]  
    quarters^ (ssu-fang chih chi 077 for this cosmological formula see Mao shih

    [# 305] 20~4.360b. The political notion of the ^four extremities^ (as well as that of the  
    ^four quarters^) placed the Chinese ruler in the pivotal position of the world. It had been  
    constitutive for the Chinese world-view since earliest times (the term ssu-fang is attested  
    on the Shang oracle bones). See Sarah Allan, The Shape of the Turtle: Myth, Art, and  
    Cosmos in Early China, 74-111. For the - however fanciful - early geographic notion of  
    the “four extremities” in the 爾雅，see Hao I-hsing，z•-说w B5,20b\* The

    present !ine is paraUel to Hslin-tzu’s 荀子 statemeru on the “lord-protectors”（pa 霸）of  
    Eastern Chou times: \*They mightily moved all under heaven>, (wei-tung t'ien-hsia  
    T). See Wang Hsien-ch'ien, Hsiin-tzu chi-chieh 7.133. The same phrase appears also in  
    the chapter “On the Lord-protectors”（pd >>挪霸言）in 管子.See Tai Wang,

    Kuan-tzu chiao-cheng 9.143. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. Or: “Martia! order and rightness straightened the [four] regions, [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. With the overall administrative unification of 221 B.C., chao ^ became the  
    official appellation for the commands {ling issued by the emperor (Shih-chi 6.236). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. The “cruel and violent ones” - a standard formula in Eastern Chou political  
    language - here denotes the six states of Han 韓，Chao 趙，Wei 魏，Ch’u 楚，Yen 燕，and  
    Ch’i 齊，successively subdued by Ch’in between 230 and 221 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. 221 B.C [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. Shang ±. in this line probably does not refer to the emperor (uHis Highness^)\*  
    since the seven inscriptions call him uThe August Thearch/\* As an adverb, shang  
    (^upwards^) should refer to the ancestors, meaning that the emperor presented his new  
    designation to them in the ancestral temple. This reading matches the following line.  
    Again, in the present line there is the significant textual variant of miao (''ancestral [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. temple”）for too 號（“designation”)，see “Ch，iiaxi Ch’m wen” Ll〇b. The variant reading  
    would result in his twenty-sixth year / He presents [his achievements] to those above  
    in the lofty ancestral temple - / the way of filial piety is brilliantly manifest and shining!'1 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. This refers to the Chou feudal system which was abolished under the Ch'in. The  
    negative evaluation of the Chou system reflects a political position expressed by Li Ssu  
    in 221 B,C,, just before he rose to the position of chancellor\* According to Shih-chi  
    6.239, Li Ssu alone spoke against the revival of the feudal system (proposed by the  
    chancellor of the day，Wang Wan 王縮，and the other high officials) and instead argued  
    successfully in favor of a centralized administrative and political system for the newly  
    unified state. His position eventually resulted in the state policy of establishing thirty-six  
    commanderies (chiin lf〇 instead of princedoms and fiefs. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. Read fcwng 功 as Aim矣攻 here, [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. Tsuruma, uShin Shikotei no toho junshu kokuseki ni miru kyokosef', 15-16,  
    believes that the expression uone lineage" reflects a historical perspective from Erh-shihTs  
    times rather than from 219 B.C. Given the scarceness of original documents transmitted  
    from the Ch\*in imperial court, I do not accept this argumentum ex silentio. In a personal  
    exchange during spring 1998, Dr, Achim Mittag argued (without reference to Tsuruma)  
    similarly: the unification was much less of a teleological process than retrospectively seen  
    and probably resulted in a t4positive trauma^ within which the boastful inscriptions would  
    not fit. I find these ideas appealing but there is no evidence to support them. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. The topos of final truce and stability, ending the times of war and chaos, is the

    ritualized formula denoting military victory. It appears again in LY.56 and in CFTK.18.  
    While texts Hke 如沾w 商君書 and Atoz 韓非子 in general stress the

    military component of rulership, Shang-chUn shu (see Yen Wan-li, Shang-chiin shu hsin  
    chiao-cheng) 18.31 also recalls the times of the legendary emperor Shen-nung CThe  
    Divine Husbandman”）who “ruled as a king without giving rise to shields and weapons”

    dz7 er/z vmng 甲兵不起而王）.This ideal of rulership without military force  
    is particularly prominent in the Li-chi (e.g., 3\*22a, 37.301c, 62.459c, 63.465a) and  
    may also be traced to passages in Hsiin-tzu (5 J00, 7.143) and Kuan-tzu (11.182). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. The 41black-haired people^ {ch'ien-shou became the official designation of  
    the common people in 221 B.C. (Shih-chi 6.239); in the seven inscriptions, the term  
    appears no less than eight times (see below). The expression seems to have been coined  
    somewhat earlier in the third century B.C. since it is already employed in Han Fei-tzu (cf,  
    Wang Hsien-shen, Han Fei-tzu chi-chieh) 20.360 and in various passages of the Lu-shih

    呂氏春秋（cf. Wang Shu-min，S/n7^cW 吨，2:203-4). Most

    interesting, it also appears in Li-chi 47367c. (Other passages in Chuang-tzu and  
    Chan-kuo tsfe iicHSI which include the term may actually postdate the inscriptions.) [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. This is the closing line of what I will call the ^historical narrative^ proper; it  
    closes with the topos of historical permanence in precisely the pattern seen often in Shih-  
    ching hymnvS and Chou bronze inscriptions (see the discussion below). This general  
    context, and the pairing with tse ^ (ublessings>,), sacralizes the meaning of li fij - an  
    omnipresent notion in works like Shang-chiin shu or Han Fei-tzu ~ and elevates it from  
    concrete material ^profits'1 to general ubenefit$n sent down to the people. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. The term <4musical stone'\* {yueh-shih 1^5) is unique in the present cycle. Yen  
    Shih-ku (581 - 645) in his K'uang miu cheng su EPIEIQ1 8.104 refers to the

    definition of ch'ing ^ (^sounding stone'1 or ^iithophone11) as ^musical stone51 in the Shuo-  
    wen chieh-tzu and in return takes yueh-shih here as chfing. He quotes from the

    “Yli kung” 禹貢 chapter in iS/zang-s/zw 尚書 6.36b (for convenience，I will refer to the  
    Shih-san-ching chu-shu ed. throughout, though in this study I will only quote passages to  
    be found also in the chin-wen version) where it is stated that sounding stones were  
    floating by the banks of the Ssu ffl river south of Mt. I. Therefore, Yen concludes, the  
    “musical stone” carved on this mountain was one of these. Chao I 趙翼（1727 - 1814) has  
    accepted this explanation (Kai-yii ts'ung-k'ao 32.15b) and pointed out that

    yueh-shih later became a common designation for inscription stones. The main problem  
    with Yen's attractive yet highly speculative interpretation lies in the fact that he (like [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. This inscription rhymes on every third verse and has two rhyme sequences, chih  
    職and dWA 之（\*-?)，both of six rhymes. For the text see SWA-eW 6.243, Jung  
    Keng，“Ch’in Shii>huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 136-37, and “Ch’iian Ch’in wen” 1.1 la.

    W The notion of “dear laws” or “making the laws dear”（mfrtg/o 明法）is recunrent  
    both in the Shang-chiin shu and in the Han Fei-tzu (and even forms the title of a strongly  
    legalist chapter in Kuan-tzu 15\*258-60) but alien to the texts that were later promoted to  
    represent the Confucian tradition, including the Li-chi. The context of ming fa in CF\*28,  
    however, indicates that in the present cycle the term should better be understood in the  
    general meaning 4<shining rules^ rather than in a narrow technical sense (<(to clarify the  
    penal law system,J). To a certain degree probably induced by the tetrasyllable meter of the  
    inscriptions,/^ appears on the stelae usually in binomial expressions like ming-faja-shih  
    法式（“rule and model”； line 15 of the presenttext，LY.60, KC.16),为法度（“rules and  
    measures^; LY3, CF.ll), sheng-fa Claws of the sageM; CFTK.10). Only in the  
    verb-object structures feng fa (4<to receive the rules^ or ^received rulesM; KC.67) and

    "rtg/沒定法（“fixes the rules”； LY‘31) do we encounter办 as a single noun as it is usually  
    employed in the above mentioned works of the <1egalist>, tradition; however, feng fa  
    appears in the ritual context of the ^monthly ordinances" (see Lii-shih cWun-cWiu 1.2, Li-  
    14.128b), where the Grand Astronomical Recorder (Ak/z汸太史)，in the first month  
    of spring, is commanded uto protect the statutes and adapt the rules (shou tienfengfa  
    典奉法)” in order to observe the movements of the heavenly bodies and to record them in  
    the correct way. Furthermore, the binomial phrases of the present cycle which include fa  
    all appear as venerated stock formulae, referring not to penal law but to a much older  
    notion of general social and cosmic regulations put into effect by an enlightened ruler.  
    (Leon Vandermeersch, La Formation du ligisme: Recherche sur la constitution d^ne  
    philosophic politique caracteristique de la Chine ancienney 186-200, who calls this fa \*1oi  
    transcendante\*1 [186] has argued that the 'legalist1\* thinkers adapted fa with \*'toute sa charge  
    de signification metaphysique,J [200] for what was formerly understood as hsing In  
    this sense, though without subscribing to Vandermeersch's specific vocabulary, one may  
    translate fa-tut for example, flexibly as ^[general] laws and regulations" or \*\*rules and  
    measures/1 which were to be defined or corrected by a new ruler\* This notion, although  
    occurring repeatedly in Han Fei-tzu (2.22, 6.112, 8J47, 11.213, 18.326, 18338, 19.356,  
    etc.) lies definitely beyond t1egalist,> thinking, both in terms of time and ideology. The  
    most venerated model of a legendary ruler stipulating the correct regulations is Shun who  
    rectified the pitchpipes and measures during his tours of inspection (cf. Shang-shu 3.14b-  
    15b; the significance of this passage with regard to the ChMn emperor will be discussed  
    below). For additional references, c[ S/t伽9\*57a，論語[20.1] 20.79a，  
    T5夕 dmatt 舂秋左傳[Chao 29】53\*422c，心叩兮仰犮 dWan 春  
    秋公羊傳[Wen 9] 13.75c，and 份如-rzw 17.290, 292; at the end of the Western Han， [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. Yang Hsiung 揚雄（53 B\_C. - A.D\* 18) still uses /u-rw m this sense，referring to the  
    "rules and measures^ of the culture-heroes of high antiquity; see Wang Jung-pao, Fa-yen i-  
    shu 6.125. With regard to the present cycle, the early references cannot be discarded as  
    accidental, since they seem to imply a conscious choice: the prominent binomes of the  
    “legalist” tradition like/d-Aw 法術（“laws and methods”）and 为-dto 法禁（“laws and  
    prohibitions”）are tellingly absent in Ch’in Shih-huang’s inscriptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. In this line I do not follow the Shih-chi version accepted by Jung Keng, which  
    has H+ instead of "tt； the latter is the variant from the inscription collections included in  
    4<Ch’Uan Ch’in wen，’ 1.11a. For discussions see Chavannes，2:141，  
    Takigawa, Shiki kaichu kosho 6.33-34, and the note in Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-

    2:209. The earliest scholar to raise the issue may have been Hung Mai 洪邁（1123  
    -1202) in his 似i-pi•容齋隨筆，1:69-70. Like Hung，in the present line as well

    as in similar cases with the other inscriptions, I regard the shorter variants from the  
    inscription collections (cf. the ''Ch^an Ch'in wen"' as well as the collation notes in Jung  
    Keng, “Ch，in Shih-huang k’o-shih k，ao，” 136, 141，145, 146, 149) as superior since they  
    strictly adhere to the four-character line. Given the fact that the inscriptions are formally  
    structured by extremely accurate rhyming patterns as well as by an overall strictly  
    maintained tetrasyllable meter (there are, all in all, only three exceptional lines which will  
    be explained below), and that they probably were orally recited (see the discussion below),  
    I am inclined to value the four-character line as a distinctive formal device that was  
    probably not casually abandoned. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. The whole line is a slight variant - with 罔 for mo 莫一 of a stock phrase

    that also appears in CF.24. In Mo-tzu (see Sun I-jang, Mo-tzu chien-ku) 6,102 and Han  
    Fei-tzu 3.49 the line is used with regard to the enlightened rule of the legendary Yao  
    while in the “Wu-ti te” 五帝德 chapter of the Ta LLc/ii 大戴禮記（see Wang P’in-  
    chen，Tb/ Zi-c/u\* c/zk/i-faO 7,121 it refers to the universal rulership of the legendary YU  
    禹.Although the Ta Tai Li-chi as a book was compiled considerably later than the  
    inscriptions, it seems improbable that it quotes just from them or the Han Fei-tzu,  
    especially since it puts the phrase into Confucius^ mouth. It may be safest to assume that  
    all these texts draw from a common pool of ritual language. This assumption can be  
    substantiated when comparing the whole passage of the Ta Tai Li-chi with its counterpart  
    in the “Chung-yung” 中庸 chapter in 53.406c: there it is Confucius who is

    eulogized as a universal ruler and towards whom uthere is none who was not reverential  
    andioving”（mo pM m饥 c/fk 莫不尊親)• In addition，this very passage from and  
    Ta Tai LUchi is closely parallel to the lines LY.21-24, with two lines being verbatim. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
58. I follow Yen K，o-chUn’s version (“Ch’ilan Ch’in wen” 1,11a) which is based on  
    the inscription collections. The 幼沾-eW gives this verse as 親巡遠方黎民，sacrificing [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
59. the tetrasyllable meter only for the sake of wordiness. Takigawa, Shiki kaichu koshd  
    6.34, quotes a commentary by Nakai Sekitoku 中井積德 who proposes to erase the last  
    two characters; thus the line would be identical to 1.15. Nakai, who doubts the origins of  
    the inscription versions, points to the fact that ch \*ien-sh〇u was now the official  
    designation for the common people. This argument is worth considering, as li-min  
    was an old term used under the Chou, yet it lacks concrete textual support from any of the  
    known versions. Again, whereas one may speculate that yiian-fang li-min could

    represent an elaboration on the somewhat unusual yuan-li MS, Nakai}s solution leaves  
    us without any idea why the two additional characters may have been introduced into the  
    received Shih-chi text. Finally, although the language of the inscriptions is marked by  
    extreme redundancy and close intertextual relations, we may recognize a conscious effort to  
    avoid the simple repetition of whole lines.

    Tai ^ (ugrandM) is not just a name, i\*e., Mt. T'ai, but a distinction, [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
60. In accord with the inscription collections (see Jung Keng, ^Ch'in Shih-huang

    k’o-shih k’ao,” 136)，the “Chilian Ch’in wen” 1.11a has 似速（“rapidity”）for ciW 迹  
    (“footprints:’ i.e,，“feats”)，The same character is also employed in KC.10-11:群臣誦功，  
    本原事速[迹L Here, cW 迹（again in the version) is unmistakably the better

    choice and thus should also be accepted for the present line. According to Hsun-ttu 3.61,  
    the ^merits of the sage king}, (sheng-wang chih chi M3E^S1F) become manifest in an age  
    when the calamities in the subcelestial realm are erased and the tasks of humane men are  
    fulfilled (after emulating the sages of antiquity and suppressing heterodox teachings). [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. The term shih-yeh occurs twice in the cycle: in the present line it refers to

    the emperor's achievements, and in LY.48 to the subordinates in their official duties. For  
    the latter case, the meaning ^duties and responsibilities,> is well attested in Hsiin-tzu  
    B.160, but this understanding obviously does not fit well to the present line. The second  
    meaning of the phrase is formed by its context in two early commentaries on the Chou-i  
    周易：both in the 繫辭 commentary 7,71a) and in the 文言

    commentary to the second hexagram kfun (1.7a) emphasis, carrying strongly  
    cosmological overtones, is laid on the great achievements of a ruler and his ability to  
    apply the fundamental cosmic principles towards ordering the society. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
62. a process of emulation, has been inherited from both his ancestors and heaven and which  
    again has been transmitted to both posterity and the people\* See Vassili Kryukov,  
    ^Symbols of Power and Communication in Pre-Confucian China (On the Anthropology  
    of De). Preliminary Assumptions/\* 314-33, It is only by te that the king occupies the  
    central point of intersection of the two axes: ancestors-king-successors and heaven-king-  
    people. Symptomatically, in the language of the Shih-ching the term appears only twice  
    in the 160 “Airs of the States”（fawa-jfen君國風)，but twenty times in the seventy-four  
    “Lesser Elegantiae”，J、雅），thirty-four times in the twenty-one “Greater  
    Elegantiae^ (ta-ya and nine times in the (generally shorter) ^Eulogies^ (sung ^),  
    ATw/ig 功（“merit”）一 which is also a key term in “legalist” meritocratic polidcaUhought -  
    is foimd in only one of the “Airs，” in two of the “Lesser Elegantiae，” in three of the  
    ''Greater Elegantiae/> and in four of the ^Eulogies/1 altogether thirteen times (three texts  
    include the word twice each)\* In eleven of these thirteen instances, kung denotes military  
    achievement and / or the founding of a rule or capital; for the most famous example, cf,  
    the ancestral hymn to the Chou t4Martial King/1 Mao shih [# 285] 19-\*3.329c, a short yet  
    dense eulogy - or part of a whole cycle - that seems to be the true blueprint of which the  
    Ch'in emperor^ inscriptions may have been an elaboration. Thus, kung - in its sacralized  
    sense, praised in the ancestral temple - became emblematically associated with the martial  
    qualities of a founding emperor. See, e,gM a kind of complementary definition for kung  
    and re promulgated by Han Ching-ti 漢景帝（r, 157 - 141 B,C\*) in an edict on the  
    imperial sacrificial music issued immediately after his accession in 157 B.C. (Han-shu  
    5.137). Given the political claim of the ChMn inscriptions, the pairing of kung with te  
    unmistakably testifies to the old ritual meaning of kung in the present line, as opposed to  
    its later profane “legalist” usage. The same is true in four of the five other instances where  
    kung appears in the present cycle, namely in LY.13, LY.69, CF,34, and KC.10; only in  
    CS,16 where the emperor 4twith benevolence reviews (his subjects'] merits and  
    achievements/^ is kung employed in the meritocratic ^legalisf' meaning. (Note that kung  
    in L22 serves as a loan character for 如叹攻.） [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
63. As in line 2 of the present inscription,/a ^ is not to be understood as 4\*penal  
    law” here. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. 休明（“superb and shining”）is the epithet of the virtuous power (纪  
    德）of the Chou “Martial King”（Wu-wang 武王）who conquered the Shang and founded  
    the Chou. See Tso chuan [Hstian 3] 2L166c; cf, also note 155 below. The word hsiu as  
    “exalted” or “superb” is alien to the la哪age of Waning States political discou^^  
    common in early Chou ritual contexts, i.e., in the ^Elegantiae^ and <<EuIogies,, as well as  
    in the Shang-shu. All five passages of the present cycle where it appears adhere to this  
    ritual meaning. While / ^ appears in other lines of the cycle obviously in the sense of  
    “rightness，” I here，as in CFTK.22, translate it as “principle/\* [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
65. The concern for dynastic permanence - cf. Ch'in Shih-huangTs claim for a  
    dynasty of ten thousand generations (Shih-chi 6\*236) - which is omnipresent in the  
    ancestral ritual of the Chou (see the discussion following the translations) turned into a  
    common topos of Eastern Chou political philosophy, traversing distinct ideological  
    borders. The present line reflects its rhetorical ossification, as illustrated in nearly  
    verbatim formulations through a great variety of texts\* Cf., e.g. Meng-tzu 8B.66c  
    and9B.75cJ Mo-tzu L9 and 3,54, Han Fei-tzu 4.75, 8.149, and 8.157, Hsiin-tzu 7.132,

    15,260-61，孝經 1.7a and 7.20a, c/T/m-c/Tz’w 2.18, 2\*19. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
66. Mizusawa，办/zd 妨6‘188b，notes 慎（“cautious”）as a  
    variant for shun (uobedientlyJ>) in a Sung edition. The binomial expression shun-chyeng IH

    - maybe a rare inversion of the more common ch'eng-shun - appears in the Vuan ^  
    (“judgement”）cm the second hexagram A’ww i中（C/zowd 1,6a) to express that A:’ww

    follows obediently the will of heaven. In the present phrase I would not exclude a political  
    interpretation of this statement and, accordingly, a cosmological one of the August  
    Thearch’s position. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
67. This line is a verbatim quotation from Mao shih [# 256, # 196, and #58] 18-  
    1,287a, 12-3.184a> 3-3.57b，and a stock rhetorical phrase adapted in many diffe\_

    See Tso chuan [Hsiang 26] 37.289b, Mo-tzu 229, 6.108, 8.159-60, 9.176, Hsiao^hing  
    2.10c, Kuan-tzu 19.315, HsUn^tzu 20.348, Han Fei-tzu 17.309. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
68. Mizusawa，幼決/ /:办祕众油6.188b，notes "吏（“official”）as a variant  
    for h 利（“benefits”)； in this case，長（“enduring”）must be read as c/wm哀（“seniof’X  
    Chang-li (t4$enior officials>1) is a common generic term for the officials of higher rank. The  
    variant would enforce a more concrete and indeed very plausible reading of the three lines:

    4'He rises early»retires late at night, / estabiishes and sets up [the positions of] the senior  
    officials / to radiate and glorify His teachings and instructions•” This would exactly reflect  
    the ideal of hierarchic 41abor division'1 in government which ^legalist1' texts time and again  
    display. See，e,g” the “Chiin ch’en” 君臣 chapters in 572cm裒sAw (23.38-39) and  
    心伽-如（1CU62-11」79)，劭⑶ 慎子 3-4, and //伽 14,250, M.258, [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
69. These verses are strongly reminiscent of the “Wu i” 無逸（“No Ease!”）chapter of  
    the Shang-shu (16.110c) which praises the untiring efforts of the sage rulers of high  
    antiquity; the phrase "teachings and instructions^ (chiao-hui appears in this very  
    context. (For another traditional reference, see Mao shih [# 196] 12^3.183c.) [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
70. CfM e\*g., Hsun-tzu 6.115 (ltThe rites are the means by which the noble and the  
    mean have their hierarchical g^adation,,), Li-chi 50.383a CWithout the rites, there is  
    nothing to regulate the services to the spirits of Heaven and Earth; without the rites, there  
    is nothing to distinguish the positions of ruler and subject, above and below» aged and  
    juvenile; without the rites, there is nothing to keep separation in the relations of man and  
    woman, father and son, older and younger brother^), Li-chi 50,387a ('In antiquity, the  
    sage thearchs, the enlightened kings» and the feudal lords distinguished the noble and the  
    mean, the aged and the juvenile, the distant and the near, man and woman, the outer and  
    the inner - no one dared to transgress the other's position Han Fei-tzu 2.24 CThe  
    noble and the mean do not transgress each other's position; the stupid and the wise are  
    graded and fixed [in their positions]. This is the perfection of rulership”)，and

    3.49 (“The young and the aged，the noble and the mean do not transgress each other’s  
    position; therefore, chaos does not emerge, and calamities do not arise''). The notion of a  
    rigid social order based on a full catalogue of clear divisions (fen between ruler and  
    subjects, high and low, old and young, men and women, etcM assigning everybody to his  
    proper place, is one of the constant fundamentals shared by both law-centered and ritual-  
    centered blueprints of authoritarian political philosophy since the fourth/third century B.C.  
    The recurrent passages in Hsiin-tzu and Li-chi, Han Fei-tzu. and Kuan-tzu, of which I have  
    quoted but a few examples, are virtually interchangeable, although derived from different  
    secondary presuppositions (meritocratic vs. aristocratic). The underlying primary equation  
    was one and the same: division ~ here by li there by fa - means order. The  
    following four lines continue to elaborate this point. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
71. The Shih-chi version, accepted by Jung Keng, uCh'in Shih-huang k'o-shih  
    k'ao,\*\* 136, and Takigawa, Shiki kaichu kosho 6\*34, has // M where the inscription  
    collections (see “Ch’ilan Ch’in wen” 1\_ 11a，also Jung Keng，136) have "z\* 體• Wit6 this  
    latter reading the verse is parallel to the preceding one; the Shih-chi variant would result in  
    the reading umen and women are obedient to the rites,^ obviously even closer to ju ®  
    ideology. In a passage close to this and the next rhyme, Kuan-tzu 10.163 reads: <4When the  
    ruler is enlightened then above and below are separate and the inner and outer spheres  
    are kept apart”（君明[…]則上下體而內外別也The use of the word d is the same as  
    in the present line; “the inner” and “the outer” are understood as the spheres of “women，，  
    and 4tmen.M On the separation of men and women, see also the Li-chi passages quoted in  
    the previous note, [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
72. limits, and hence reflects the division of social, professional, and ritual duties and  
    positions. See the related lines LY.33 and CFTK.25, [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
73. See also KC.49-50 below, [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
74. Mizusawa，祕/^ 6,188b，notes the variant e/z/叫靜（“calm”)  
    for ching # (^pure^) in a Sung edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
75. See the note on line 17 above. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
76. Ch’en Chih-liang，“T’ai-shan shih-k’o k，ao (hsia)，’’ 40, obviously reading the  
    line as \*\*he respects and follow the bequeathed decree/' considers this phrase as 4<iron proof  
    that the text must come from the Second Generation [Thearch] since CWin Shih-huang  
    would not have inherited any decrees. However, as will be discussed in section 4,2., the  
    closing lines of the inscriptions, following the venerated model of the bronze inscriptions,  
    point not to the past but to the future. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
77. According to Mizusawa, Shiki kaichu kosho koho 6.188b, from Southern Sung  
    times on a whole string of editions have the reduplicative yung-yung (^forever,  
    forever'1) instead of yung ch\*eng C'forever accepf,). This variant, however, cannot be  
    substantiated by an overall comparison with the language of the inscriptions, which seem  
    to contain no reduplicatives. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
78. The phrase an cWi yii (4tfinds peace in his own abode'1) is a variant of a

    very common political (to some degree cosmological) topos in Eastern Chou and early  
    Han literature which appears elsewhere as an ch'i so (<4finds peace in his own

    place”)，a/z cA’f wd 安其位（“finds peace in his own position”)，伽 安其居

    (“finds peace in his own residence”)，or 伽 cA 7 c/i’m 安其處（“finds peace in his own  
    spot^); see, e.g., the HsUtz'u commentary in Chou-i 7.76b} Kuan-tzu 1.11, 5.79, 15.260,  
    协如20.253, //“n-从m 3CU723, and one of the “An-shih fang-chimg ko” 安世房中歌  
    (probably dating from the first years of the Han dynasty, see below) in Han-shu 22.1048.  
    The phrase (in its different variants) also appears several times in Li-chi (12.110c,  
    38.307b, 50.383a); in Tso chuan, it is used in the negative form (udo not find peace  
    see [Hsi 27] 16.121a，[Ch’eng 6] 26.200b, [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
79. For the term mingfa, see the note on T.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
80. The formula 經緯（“warp and woof’）metaphorically denotes the

    fundamental ethical^politica! principles of government. See Tso chuan [Chao 25] 51.406c,  
    [Chao 29] 53.422c, Hsiln-tzu 15\*265. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
81. 1 follow Yen K^o-chun, ^Ch^an Ch'in wen'\* 1.12a, and Takigawa, Shiki kaichu  
    kosho 6.43, who believe that the line is incomplete, missing the third character; one may  
    compare this line to one from the “An~shih fang-dmng ko” in //仙22.1047:大矣孝  
    m

    川\ ► [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
82. P’ei Yin 裴騮（/?• 438) glosses % 宇 as 坤-以仙宇宙（“universe”）and 如如縣

    as 赤縣（“red districts，” see iSWA-e/zi 6.250)，Le” the Chinese realm, [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
83. Cf. Li-chi 39316 (and its close parallel Li-chi 48\*370b): t4The virtuous power  
    [being related to music] shines and moves within [the heart], and none of the people does  
    not receptively listen; the inner pattern [being related to rites] unfolds without, and none  
    of the people does not receptively follow/1

    i0〇 In this line 1 follow Yen K’o-chlin (“Ch’Uan Ch’in wen” L 12a) and Takigawa，  
    Shiki kaichu kosho 6,43 who vote for expunging the character ^ from the received Shih-  
    version which reads 表垂于常式，fhere seems to be no advantage to this longer  
    reading which would transgress the tetrasyllable meter. The value of 4<constancy,> (ch'ang  
    常）in rulership，norms, and regulations figures most prominently in Warring States texts，  
    probabiy not surprisirig in times of continuous warfare and variable political and military  
    fortunes; for the “constant norms” or “models”（cfe’flwg'yW/i 常式）of the state see，e.g.，  
    Kuan-tzu 11\*175. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
84. gee Tso chuan [Hsiang 4] 29.231c: \*The neighbors of the four directions are  
    shaken and moved” 四鄰振動)，//城伽 12,219 refers to the founding

    emperors T’ang (of the Shang) and Wu (of the Chou): “In the associated [vassal states]  
    that were reached [by their influence] there was none who was not shaken and moved, and  
    who did not become following and submissive in order to transform [himself] and be  
    obedient to them [i.e., T^ang and Wu].1' The same wording occurs again in Hslin-tzu  
    12.224, now with regard to the ruiership of Yao and Shun. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
85. 呈 With respect to the following lines, I translate f‘義 here as “principle，” not as  
    “rightness.” The notion of “great principle”（/a彳大義）established by the ruler is very  
    common in late Warring States texts, and in particular in the Lii-shih ch'un-ch^u (e.g.,  
    15.173). [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
86. 1See the note on LY33 above. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
87. The phrase is syntactically and semantically parallel to LY.72; according to the  
    overall idea of social order the present lines elaborate on, to know one\s proper place and  
    to respect the divisions (fen) of duties, i.e,, one's own boundaries, results in stability and  
    peace. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
88. H2 〇f, Li-chi L3a: \*'By the rites, one fixes [the relations] of close and remote,  
    decides the doubts and uncertainties 嫌疑）[…]” [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
89. IB Jung Keng，“Ch’in SWh-huang k’o-shih k’ao，” 145, has 政 instead of [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
90. 改‘ ^ [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
91. The word 聖治（“the Sage’s good rule”)，appears to be entirely

    devoid of any particular meaning, open to various ideologies and ready to be filled only by  
    its context: it figures as a chapter title of the Hsiao-ching (5J5-16c)» but can also be  
    defined in strict “legalist” terms as in the extended phrase /妨 c/nVi 聖人之治 in

    Shang-chun shu 7,14 and Han Fei-tzu 18319\*

    jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k，o-shih k’ao，” 145, has 似叩頌（“to  
    eulogize^) instead of sung li (\*4to recite^)\* As in T.12,1 do not follow this variant. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
92. Jung Keng，“Ch’in Shih-huang k’o-shih k’ao，’’ 146, has AzTz 時 for di’似疇  
    (“fields”). [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
93. Cf\_ c/jw挪[Hsiang 31] 40.313c: “[Chi Cha 季札】is deep in his virtuous  
    power and again in his measure: by his virtuous power he does not lose the people; by his  
    measure he does not lose the tasks. [As a consequence,] the people have affection for him  
    and the tasks have sequence - this is the means by which heaven opens up.}, [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
94. ⑶ Like Nienhauser，Gram/ Sen加\ 1:145, **I** follow the variant /en 分

    C\*to divide^) **for chiu X,** as given by PTei Yin, who again quotes Hsti Kuang in **Shih-chi**6.252, **Lai** 5)5 here, as in many early occurrences, is to be understood as **mai** ^ Ctbarley,>).  
    The variant yw 由（“origin” or “from”）for，7似田（“field’，)，attested in several editions  
    since Sung times, has inspired - obviously with **chiu** instead **of fen** and reading **lai** as uto  
    come” 一 an interpretation that links the line to the emperor^ assumed quest for  
    immortality (see Mizusawa, **Shiki kaichu kosho koho** 6.190c). Given the context of the  
    present line, this seems to be off the mark, as the quest for immortality does not appear  
    anywhere in the inscriptions\* [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
95. See the note on LY.72 above. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
96. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
97. Mo-tzu 4.111. Immediately following this passage there are two apparent  
    references to forged ''old text'1 (ku-wen chapters of the Shang shu\ however, Sun I-  
    jang argues that the first apparent reference to the chapter “Tai shih” 泰誓 is only a later  
    miswriting of the original words ta shih while the second apparent reference to the  
    chapter “Ta YU mo” 大禹誤 is in fact the very source for the title of the later forgery，and  
    therefore cannot refer to it. These assumptions, although not provable, may allow for  
    accepting the Mo-tzu passage under review as unproblematic. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
98. ^ Lii-shih ch'un-chriu 22.9b. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
99. The principal study on these inscribed blocks is Gilbert L. Mattos, The Stone  
    Drums ofCh'in. Mattos tentatively dates them to the fifth century B.C. The stones which  
    are now in the Palace Museum in Peking may have been discovered in the early seventh  
    century A,D., the time of the earliest known references t〇 them (cf, Mattos, 37-38).

    ^ The text has been discussed, dated and translated by Chavannes, <lLes Inscriptions  
    des Ts\*in^ 475-82, and Memoires historiques, 2:544-49. This text had been found in three [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
100. For the measure instruments cf, the references given in the note on LY.20  
     above. The works by Jung Keng，Shirakawa，and Wang Hui also include the “tiger tallies”  
     (which may not all be original). Again, the famous inscribed bronze 4tgiant statues"' cast  
     by ChMn Shih-huaag after the unification (see below) are said to have been a series of  
     twelve\* (Most unfortunately, early in Chinese imperial history they were all melted down  
     to be recycled as coins, etc,) Finally, identical inscriptions appear on Ch\*in weapons (see  
     again Jung Keng and Wang Hui). These texts functioned basically as identification marks.

     Cf. Mattos, The Stone Drums, 108-10\* [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
101. ^ See Ho-pei sheng wen»wu yen-chiu-so, TsJo mu: Chan-kuo Chung-shan kuo  
     kuo-wang chih mu, 1; 740, 2: monochrome plate IL The stone itself, placed outside the  
     tomb, was found already in 1935\*

     ^ My translation differs substantially from that given in Ho-pei sheng wen-wu  
     yen-chiu-so, Ts'o mu: Chan-kuo Chung-shan kuo kuo-wang chih mu, I: 10, One reason  
     is the reduplicative marker after the “joined character”（合字）公乘 which  
     can be seen on the stone but has been neglected in the earlier translation\* [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
102. ^ See, e.g., Liu Hsieh^ discussion of these pieces in his Wen-hsln tiao4ung\  
     Chan Ying, Wen-hsin tiaoAung Ucheng, 11.401. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
103. For the early sources on Mt. KTun-!un as the cosmic center, see my Die Hymnen  
     der chinesischen Staatsopfer, 238-39. For Eliade's notion of the cosmic mountain as the  
     axis mundi, see his The Myth of the Eternal Return, or: Cosmos and History, 12-17, and  
     Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, 266-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
104. On this idea, and on the notion of the cosmic journey, see section 3.3. below. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
105. See Mark Edward Lewis, Sanctioned Violence in Early China, 17-18, 21-22,  
     145-46, and (for the later imperial hunt) 150-57; with relation to the 4<stone drums,^ see  
     Kominami Ichiro, <4Sekikobun seisaku no jidai haikei/\* For a broad survey of the early  
     sources, including Shang divination records, see Ch'en P'an, 4<Ku she-hui tMen-shou yu  
     chi~ssu chih kuan-hsi” 古社會田狩與祭祀之關係 in his 从舶-

     ts'ung, I: 63-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
106. Shih-chi 5.201, 203. The date of 383 B.C. is not definitely known; see  
     Nienhauser, Grand Scribed Records, 1:107 (n. 211). Moreover, Wang Tzu-chin, ^Ch'in  
     Hsien kung tu Ytieh-yang shuo chih-i” and “Yiieh-yang fei Ch’in tu pien，” has raised  
     serious doubts about whether Yiieh-yang was actually ever made the Ch7in capital (for a  
     critical response, cf. Liu Jung-ch'ing, 4<Ch'in tu Yueh-yang pen shu shih-shih>,). Ytieh-  
     yang was located ca. 50 km northeast of modern Hsi~an 西安（Shensi province), while  
     Hsien-yang was on the north banks of the Wei 渭 river north of modern Hsi-an. See T’an  
     Ch^-hsiang, Chung-kuo ii-shih tUfu-chiy 2:5-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
107. 28.1375. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
108. Cf\* Michael Loewe, Crisis and Conflict in Han China, 167-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
109. Shih-chi 6.236. This newly invented title to designate the father of a ruling or  
     future emperor was maintained through later imperial time心 Han Kao-tsu 漢高祖（r. as  
     emperor 202 - 195 B.C.) bestowed the title on his stil! living father (Shih-chi 8382, Han-  
     shu IB.62). In later dynasties the crown prince used the designation to address his father;  
     VaUshang-huang also became the title of retired emperors.

     59 [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
110. Shih-chi 6.236, 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
111. Shih-chi 6.239. The sublime symbol of melting weapons down into ritual  
     instruments probably conveys only part of the truth, since weapons umade in the state of  
     Qin or weapons originally made in the six eastern states but captured by Qin and then  
     inscribed with additional writings have been found at many locations following the steps  
     of the Qin soldiers on their eastern conquests^ (U Xueqin, Eastern Zhou and Qin  
     Civilizations, 234). [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
112. Shih-chi 6.246-47. On the question whether or not this udiscussion^ belongs to  
     the Lang-yeh inscription proper see the translation note above. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
113. 跗 On the meaning of “metal and stone” see section 3 丄 above, [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
114. Shih-chi 6.267. In addition to Ch^n Shih-huang^ mausoleum, the Second  
     Generation [Thearch] showed concern for the system of the lineage temple and the  
     respective sacrificial service to his deceased father (6.266). Again, the discussion was based  
     on the venerated Chou prescriptions and practices, especially with respect to the number of  
     seven ancestral halls appropriate for the Son of Heaven (cf. Li-chi 12.107b). Although the  
     formula tcmetal and stone^ probably requires a rather conventional understanding, 'imetalnmay now in addition refer to the twelve bronze giant statues cast (together with the bells  
     and racks) from the collected and melted-down weapons and set up in the palace (see Shih-  
     chi 6.239; for further notes, cf. Wang Shu-min, Shih-chi chiao-cheng, 2:204-5).  
     According to Shui-ching chu 4.130, they all bore inscriptions on their chests. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
115. Our most valuable repository of Chou ritual performance texts, including pieces  
     probably dating back to the eleventh century B.C., are, of course, the sung M ^nd ya  
     sections of the Shih-ching. There is no strict demarcation line between these two groups  
     (with the ya again divided into ^Greater^ and ^Lesser\*\*): just as the 4\*Eulogia from Lu,J (<4Lu  
     sung” 魯頌）were probably not ancestral hymns (cf. already K’ung Ying4a，s 孔穎達[574  
     -648] commentary in Mao shih 20-1,341a), the ^Lesser Elegantiae^ on the other hand,  
     include some of the most dramatic performance texts for the ancestral rites, e.g^ Mao shih  
     # 209 - 212. These hymns, especially Mao shih # 209 (13-2.199b-202b), alvSO include the  
     most authentic and vivid references to prayers and announcements during the ceremonies,  
     much more valuable than the systematized accounts in the later ritual compendia Chou4it/-M義禮，and Zi-cW. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
116. Cf. Virginia Kane, Aspects of Western Zhou Appointment Inscriptions: The  
     Charge, the Gifts，and the Response,” 16)，and von Falkenhausen，“Ritual Music in  
     Bronze Age China: An Archaeological Perspective,>, 639-42. A slightly different emphasis  
     is advanced by Jessica Rawson, review of Shaughnessy, Sources of Western Zhou  
     History642, who sees the texts remaining in their place (instead of moving through the  
     offerings and sounds): uThe placing of the inscriptions within the vessels may even have  
     been regarded as an especially sure way of reaching the attention of the spirits. For the  
     spirits would have been attracted to the contents of the vessels by the smeli of food and  
     wine/\* In this understanding, the spirits come to the texts. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
117. For remarks on typical ChJin features, cf. Li Xueqin, Eastern Zhou and Qin

     Civilization, 224, and ^Ch^n-kuo wen»wu ti hsin jen-shih/' 27; Chsen PMng, 4<Shih-lun  
     kuan-chung Ch'in mu chMng-t'ung jung-chM ti fen-ch'i In his comprehensive

     collection of inscribed bronzes which have been linked to the state of Ch7in, Chyin tfung-  
     ch'i ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, Wang Hui includes 270 objects; the attributions of a  
     number of these are stiH disputed. The example of the early Ch，in bells

     (discussed below) may caution us: Han Wei, ^Kuan-yil Ch'in jen tsu-shu chi wen-hua  
     yuan-ytian kuan-chien^ 26, has noticed that if we were not informed so fay the inscription  
     it would be very difficult to decide that these pieces were from the state of Ch’in.  
     Sirailarty，Ch’en P’ing，“Ch’ien-t’an U hsien Ch’in Kung mu-ti i-ts’im yti hsiang-kuan  
     wen-t^i/' 81, has remarked that the six vessels from Kansu that are now preserved in the  
     Shanghai Museum (see below) are traditional enough to seem like late Western Chou  
     objects; again, it is only the brief inscription that informs us about their early Spring and  
     Autumn period origin. The everpresent possibility of some arbitrary ^classicism/1 i.e., the  
     reference to a venerated models serioUvSly threatens the validity of serializations and  
     assignment of substantia! amounts of the uninscribed bells and vessels. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
118. Of. Shirakawa, KBTS 34 (1971), 1246t 54 (1982), 110; Wang Hui, CWin  
     t'ung-ch\*i ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 28-32. This bell is recorded and discussed in  
     several Sung sources, such as Lii Ta-lin，s 呂大臨（1044 - 1093) iT如 to f’w 考古圖  
     (1092)，Ou-yang Hsiu’s 歐陽修（1007 - 1072) CJW-如 /w 集古錄（1054 - 1072)，and Chao  
     Ming-ch’eng’s 趙明誠（108卜 1129) C/«>m/w7z Zw 金石錄（1119 - 1125). [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
119. Cf. KBTS 34 (1971), 1-34, encompassing the discussion on related Ch^n  
     inscriptions known up to 1971, and 54 (1982)^ 109-110; Wang Hui, CWin fung-chH  
     ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 18-28; Wang Kuo-wei, Kuan-t'ang chi4iny 1:901-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
120. cf, KBTS 50 (1979), 398-409, and 54 (1982), 180-81; Wang Hui, CKin fun^  
     chfi ming-wenpien-nien chi-shih, 13-18; also von Falkenhausen, ^Ritual Music,1\* 386-87  
     and 487-88 (also for the description of the po found in Sung times). [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
121. See Li Hstleh-ch’in and Ai Lan (Sarah Allan)，“Tsui hsin ch’u-hsien ti Ch’in

     Kung hu” who date the vessel to the late ninth century Pai Kuang-ch’i，“Ch’in  
     Kung hu ying wei Tung-Chou ch’u-ch’i ch’i，” 71，argues that because of the designation  
     “Ch’in Kung” the vessel cannot date before early Eastern Chou times; see also Ch’en  
     PMng, ^ChHen-fan Li hsien ChTin Kung mu-ti i-ts^n yti hsiang-kuan wen-t,i,,> 79-81.  
     Earlier，Li HsUeh-ch’in had regarded the Pu ChUwd 不其簋 as the earliest known Ch’in  
     vessel, dating from about 820 B,C. See his ^Ch'in-kuo wen»wu ti hsin jen-shih>?, 25-26.  
     Wang Hui，C/i’h Z’wng-dz 7 wen 认，1-6, who a!so recognizes the

     vessel as the earliest inscribed Ch^n object, dates it before 822 B.C. The question is still  
     controversial; see Mattos» Stone Drums, 94 (n. 57). [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
122. See Li Ch’ao-yiian广Hsin ch’u Ch’in kung ch’i-ming yti chou-wen‘” Li dates  
     these bronzes to the era of Duke Hsiang 襄（r. 777 - 766 B\_C\*). or Duke Wen 文（r. 765 -  
     716 B,C,); see also his “Shang-hai po-wu-kuan hsin huo Ch’in kung ch’i yen-chiu.” [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
123. According to the report by Lu Lien-cheng and Yang Man-ts^ng, 4<Shen-hsi Pao-  
     chi hsien TTai-kung-miao ts’un fa-hsien Ch’in Kung chimg, Ch’in Kung po，” 2, the set of  
     three bells is missing the final twnety-one characters. The quantity of four for a set of  
     bells sharing the same text is conventional; of. von Falkenhausen, tcRitual Music/' 636.  
     Hereafter, I will refer to the Ch?in bronzes by the following designations: First C\Cm-po  
     (for the bell found in Sung times), CWm-kuei, and Eight ChMn bells. These designations  
     are merely pragmatically motivated, since here we are dealing with the texts, not with the  
     bronzes. From an archaeological approach concerned with the artifacts, the <4Eight Ch^in  
     bells/1 of course, would require a further differentiation, but with regard to their  
     inscriptions, they represent just one single text\* [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
124. ^ For their publication, see Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng, and Ma Chen-chih,  
     “Ch’in Kimg ta-mu shih- ch’ing ts’an-ming k’aoshih\*” [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
125. For a survey of the various opinions, ci Mattos, The Stone Drums, 94-96, 364-  
     65 (Table 7), and 367, whose conclusions I am inclined to follow. Wang Hui, Chyin [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
126. between these bronzes and the chime-stones do not necessarily ask for a common date,  
     given that similar relations exist between these inscriptions and those on the early bells  
     from the reign of Duke Wu. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
127. See Shih-chi5,m, [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
128. ^ See KBTS 34 (1971), 21-22; Wang Hm, CKin tfung-chfi ming^wen pien^nien  
     chi-shih^ 19, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
129. For Ihe following translations 1 have consulted several major studies: Kuo Mo-  
     jo, ^ChMn Kung kuei yiin~tu>, in his Yin Chou ch'ing-fung-ch'i ming-wen yen-chiu, 144-  
     SI; Kuo Mo-jo, Liang-Chou chin-wen-tz'u ta-hsi k^ao-shih, 247a-250b (cf. also his  
     Liang-Chou chin-wen-tz'u ta-hsi t'u-lu, 288a-91a); Yang Shu-ta, Chi-wei-chu chin-wen  
     shuo (repr. in Chi-wei-chu ts'ung-shu), 43-45; Wang Hui, Ch'in t'ung-chH ming-wen  
     pien-nien chi-shih, 13-32 and plates 8-16 (for the rubbings); Li Ling, ^Ch^un-chMu ChMn  
     ch’i shih\_t’an”； Wu Chen-feng，“Hsin<h’u Ch’in Kung chung-ming k’ao-shih yil yu-kuan  
     wen-t’i”； Lu Lien-ch’eng and Yang Mang-ts’ang，“Shen-hsi Pao-chi hsien T’ai-kung~miao  
     ts^n fa-hsien Ch?in Kung chung, Ch^n Kung po1'; Wu Shih-chMen, "Ch'in Kung chung

     k’ao-shih”； Chang T’ien-en，“Tui ‘Ch’in Kung chung k’ao-shih’ chung yu七uan wen4’i ti  
     i~hsieh k’an~fa，，； Sun Ch’ang~hsU，“Ch’in Kung chi wang-chi chung，po ming-wen k’ao-  
     shih"; Shirakawa, KBTS 34 (1971), i-34, 50 (1979), 399-409, 54 (1982), 109-11, 180-  
     8L In a number of single words and lines as well as, perhaps more importantly, in the [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
130. interpretation of the closing lines of all three texts, my renderings differ from the existing  
     translations and discussions by Mattos, ^Eastern Zhou Bronze Inscriptions^ 111-20, and  
     by von Falkenhausen, t4Ritual Music/\* 1040-65, and ^Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat  
     Qin/' 39»40; in several cases there is more than one defensible interpretation of the actual  
     word a character may stand for. In the transcriptions I follow Shirakawa, KBTS 54 (1982)4adding only in brackets the characters commonly representing the word for which the  
     actual graphs stand. The studies mentioned above contain instances of different transcrip-  
     tions or interpreuitions of a chamctor and the word it may represent (compare also the  
     transcriptions by Ch'iu Te~hsiu, Shang Chou chin-wen chi-ch'eng shih-wen kaot nos.  
     3061, 8023, 8024). Since the present study is not primarily dedicated to these inscriptions  
     -or to the related problems of bronze inscriptions in general - I have refrained from  
     detailed philological discussions here; the interested reader may consult the above  
     mentioned textual studies. In the notes I will mention only those few cases where I prefer  
     an interpretation different from that of Shirakawa or where significantly different  
     alternatives should be considered. In addition to the above studies one may consult a work [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
131. have not seen: Feng Kuo~jui ?馬國瑞，“T’ien-shui chVt’u Ch’in ch’i hui-k’ao” 天水出  
     土秦器匯考，in 隴南叢書（1944), For other interpretations of the

     rhymes see, Shirakawa and Wolfgang Behr, Reimende Bronzeinschriften und die  
     Entstehung der chinesischen Endreimdichtung, 407^13\* Since the obvious and strict  
     rhymes testify to a basic - although not invariably maintained ~ tetrasyllable meter, I  
     have stmetured the other parts of the texts accordingly,

     ^ For the chime-stones, I follow Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng, and Ma Chen-chih,  
     “Ch’in Kung ta-mu shih- ch’ing ts’an-ming k’ao-shih•” [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
132. Although these inscriptions, compared to later texts, are relatively irregular in

     their rhymes, they still display distinct rhyme sequences that appear to be consciously  
     created in order to enhance the semantic structure of the texts. In the following  
     representation of the texts, I mark rhyme changes by beginning a new stanza. The  
     numbering of the lines, on the other hand, does not reflect the rhyme scheme but simply  
     refers to single lines by number. In the initial section of the First Ch'in-po inscription  
     (lines 1-9) I do not see a regular rhyme scheme, although lines 7 and 8 both rhyme in the  
     category chen M i〇t the word ming # in this rhyme category, see Baxter, A

     Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology, 423\* The second section (lines 10-24) is dominated  
     by a long so-called ^combined rhyme\*' (ho-ytin sequence of the categories chih

     (氺-3) and dWA 職comprising rhymes in lines 11，12，14，15，19, 20, and 24.  
     Following are two lines (25-26) with lung ^ (^urj) rhymes; the final portion of the text  
     (lines 27-35) is dominated by a yang H? (rhyme sequence (on lines 27, 28, 30, 32,  
     and 33). [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
133. Kuo Mo-jo, Liang-Chou chin-wen-tz'u ta-hsi k'ao-shih, 250a, understands the  
     first two characters as tsao yu & (^created and supported^) instead of yen yu  
     (“broadly possessing”). [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
134. For chiieh ^ as a first-person possessive pronoun, see Ken?ichi Takashima,  
     “The So-called ‘Third’ Person Possessive Pronoun «/狀毕 / 厥 in Classical Chinese.”  
     Takashima actually refers to very similar lines in bronze inscriptions to build his  
     argument. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
135. Here and in the parallel lines of the following inscriptions, Ch'iu Te-hsiu,  
     Shang Chou chin-wen chi-ch'eng shih-wen kaoy nos. 3061, 8023, and 8024, - apparently  
     following Kuo Mo-jo and Yang Shu-ta - reads the second character as 吏[使](“to  
     command”)，Li Ling, “Ch’un-ch’iu Ch’in ch’i shih-t’an/，517, has argued against this  
     interpretation. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
136. For a discussion on the reduplicative see Shirakawa, KBTS 34 (1971), 8,  
     and Wang Hui, Ch\*in t'ung-cWi ming-wenpien-nien chi-shih, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
137. The first character is reconstructed in various ways (the version here is that given  
     by Shirakawa) and is generally understood as jou 柔\* [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
138. The last character in this line is missing; see the hand-copy of the inscription  
     reproduced in Shirakawa, KBTS 34 (1971), 14. It is generally assumed that this character  
     should be 鐘（“bell”). [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
139. The characters seems unintelligible to most readers, yet HsQ Chung-shu  
     舒 has identified it as 少以叶（=協，“to regulate”； see Wang Hui, C/iWw’ww容  
     ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 30); Wu Shih-ch'ien, Xh'in Kung chung k'ao-shih,,> 107,  
     has proposed the same reading. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
140. Here and in the text of the Eight bells I do not follow Shirakawa and Wu Chen-  
     feng, “Hsin-ch’u Ch’in Kung chimg-ming k’ao-shih yll yu~kuan werK’i，” 88，who  
     identify the first onomatopoetic reduplicative as yang-yang (which would then  
     become part of the yang [^arj] rhyme sequence and might indicate a stanza break). Sun [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
141. The meaning of the second character in this line is unclear; for a discussion, see  
     Kuo Mo-jo, Liang-Chou chin-wen-t^u ta-hsi k\*ao-shih, 248b-49b, Shirakawa, KBTS 34  
     (1971), 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
142. In the transcription and interpretation of these two lines I follow Li Ling,  
     “Ch’uivch’iu Ch’in ch’i shih-t’an，” 518.

     1. As these closing lines are virtually identical to those of the First Ch'in-/?c? I am  
        inclined to read t'ien 5^ here as li tl, as proposed by Kuo Mo-jo, Liang-Chou chin-wert-  
        tz'u ta-hsi k'ao^shih, 250b, Yang Shu-ta? Chi-wei-chii chin-wen shuo, 44, and recently by  
        Wang Hui, Ch'in Vung-ch^i ming-wen pien-nien chUshih, 25-26, and Mattos, ^Eastern  
        Zhou Bronze Inscriptions/> 117. Cf\* again the concluding part of the Eight Ch'in bells  
        where the present line, with a minor variation, also appears. Shirakawa, KBTS 34 (1971),  
        940, rejects Yang^ (and Kuo^) opinion and understands the spirits residing in heaven as  
        the subject of the closing lines in the present text.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
143. 66 The initial section (lines 1-7) does not show a regular rhyme pattern; the yang  
     % rhyme on lines 5 and 7 may be just accidental, if compared to the relative

     density of rhymes in the following portions. The second section (lines 8-20) is dominated  
     by a “combined rhyme” of the categories cWA 之（and dWft 職on lines 9, i 1， [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
144. 14, 15, 17, 18, and 20. This is followed by a mng 東 〇叫）rhyme on lines 21，22,  
     23; lines 24 and 25 show again the c/nTi 之（\*-沒）/ cW/i 職（\*-#) “combined rhyme,”  
     Another short section (lines 26-28) has a cAen 真（〜>i) rhyme on lines 26 and 28; finally，  
     there is a yang rhyme on lines 29 and 30.

     The first character is sometimes also identified as S (cf. Sun Ch'ang-hsii,  
     ^Ch'in Rung chi wang-chi chung, po ming-wen k^ao-shih/\* 14; Wu Chen-feng, uHsin-  
     ch’u Ch’in Kung chung，ming k’aosh出 yU yu-kuan wen-t’i，’’ 88). [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
145. I shall not translate the individual text of all the fragments but only the most  
     complete version of a given passage, leaving the shorter fragments of the same passage  
     aside; albeit somewhat economical, the translation will cover all fragments of the assumed  
     whole text. In general, my rendering follows the textual study offered by Wang Hui,  
     Chiao Nan-feng，and Ma Chen-chih, “Ch’in Kung ta-mu shih-ch’ing ts’arwning k’ao-  
     shih^; some passages (see the notes below) are very uncertain. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
146. I translate fragment 85 jEi^ M 1:300, parts of which are also on fragments 85

     鳳南 Ml:299 and 85 鳳南 Ml:253, This fragment includes three rhymes: first a y伽g 陽  
     (本-ag) rhyme on lines 1，3, and 5, next a c/zf/i 之（\*-没众）rhyme on lines 6 and 7, and  
     finally a kengWt rhyme on lines 8 and 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
147. I am not sure about the interpretation of shang M here. It seems unlikely that  
     the line refers to a single note; hence my tentative translation t4^a«g[-mode music]/' A  
     similar case may be found in the uHao yin'J (^Indulging in Tones'1) paragraph of the  
     uShih kuo" +S ((Ten Fault$T,) chapter in Han Fei tzu 3,42-45 (paraphrased also in Shih-  
     chi 24.1235-36) where musical modes or patterns are referred to by the name of single  
     notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
148. The interpretation of the first two characters is uncertain. Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-  
     feng, and Ma Chen-chih, ^Ch'in Kung ta-mu $hih- ch'ing ts^an-ming k^ao-shih^ referring  
     to a suggestion by Sun Ch’ang-hsU 孫常敍，read them as e/zW-vvw 組鐯，Le” the serrate  
     back of a tiger-shaped wooden figure that was struck in order to stop the music. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
149. According to legend, the highest ancestor of Ch^n is Chuan-hsu see Shih-  
     chi 5.173. According to Shi-chi Lll, Chuan^hsil, with the appellation Kao-yang, was the  
     grandson of the Yellow Emperor. The present and the following line are closely parallel to  
     lines 32-33 on the First CWin-po; the most significant difference lies between the  
     characters 及弘 on the and 陽 on the stone，resulting in the translation “high and  
     vast” for the former and “Kao~yang” for the latter. The rubbing from chime-stone 85 鳳南  
     M 1:300 (unfortunately, the respective passage is missing on the parallel fragments

     Ml:299 and M 1:253) leaves no doubt about the character since we do not possess an  
     original rubbing but only a Sung hand-copy of the po text, one may be tempted to  
     question this version. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
150. I follow Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-feng, and Ma Chen~chih，“Ch’in Kung ta-mu  
     shih-ch，ing ts’an-ming k’ao-shih，” 289, who understand these two lines as the Duke’s  
     prayer to his highest ancestor. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
151. The text of this passage is on three fragments (85 鳳南 Ml :495+549+517)  
     originally of one piece of stone (recognizable by the size of the stones and the lines of  
     fracture). Part of the text appears again on fragment 85 鳳南 M 1:257. It is not possible to  
     identify the rhymes of this passage, in particular since the final two characters of the last  
     line are missing. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
152. This passage, comprising ten characters, provides a (however idealized) date. On

     the hypothesis - strongly suggested by the longer fragments - that parallel fragments are  
     verbatim identical，one may read two different fragments (85 鳳南 M 1:543 and 84 鳳南  
     Ml: 186) together, since the end of the first and the beginning of the second follow one  
     another on a third fragment (more precisely, on the two pieces 85 Ml:225+303 that

     again can be linked together); a third fragment: of two pieces (85 鳳南 Ml:225+303)  
     contains again two characters. A rhyme cannot be identified. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
153. I translate the fragment consisting of three parts of the same stone (85  
     Ml:547+578+514); parts of this text are also found on the fragments 85 鳳南 Ml:710  
     and 83 鳳南 Ml:085 as well as on 85 鳳南 Ml:84+84 鳳南 Ml:158. This last fragment  
     of two pieces would complement either of the foregoing two; the hypothesis of three  
     different sets of the same text is again confirmed. We cannot identify the rhymes of this  
     fragment; most likely, line 1 rhymes with some foregoing, now lost lines. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
154. The interpretation of these two characters is highly speculative. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
155. Fragment 82 M 1:082 consists of only four characters in probably two  
     verses. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
156. I translate the text that is found on fragment 86 SM Ml:884. The last character  
     of the second line, however, is missing, but can be complemented from the parallel  
     fragment 85 JIU^ M 1:548\* As a result, the line is the reversed version of line 22 on the  
     First Ch'in-^o and of line 16 on the CWm-kuei. Parts of the text are also found on  
     fragments S6 鳳南 Mi :897, 86 鳳南 Ml:1853, mid 85 鳳南 Ml:576. The altogether five  
     fragments further corroborate the hypothesis of three identical versioas, [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
157. I follow Wang Hui, Chiao Nan-fengt and Ma Chen-chih, 4<ChMn Kung ta-mu  
     shih-ch'ing ts5an-ming k^ao-shih/' 298-99\* Another possibility would be to read shih ji：  
     as the usual resuming pronoun and translate <4God on High, he is truly observed^ but then  
     the following line seems to fit less well. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
158. Fragment 84 MI: 185 consists only of four characters; no parallel versions  
     are known. The translation is speculative. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
159. No parallel texts for the three characters of fragment 85 Ml:544 are extant. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
160. Mao 沾认 i3-2.199b-202K [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
161. See my 詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of \*Chu ci’

     楚茨（‘Thorny Caltrop’).” [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
162. 9董 Wf 48.258c. All four lines rhyme in the category 真with the last  
     line rhyming on the penultimate word. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
163. To a lesser degree, these shifts of voices appear also in the sacrificial hymns  
     Mao shih # 210, 211, and 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
164. Takashima，“The So-called ‘Third’ Person Possessive Pronoun 毕 / 厥 in  
     Classical Chinese^ offers very interesting observations on prosodic features both in Shih-  
     ching hymns and bronze inscriptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
165. See Behr, t4Reimende Bronzeinschriften und die Entstehung der chinesischen  
     Endrdmdichtung,” 418-24 [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
166. From this perspective, a comparison between Greece and China may become  
     meaningful again after leaving behind the issues of oral composition that are now familiar  
     from what is sometimes called “the new orthodoxy” in Homeric studies，represented by  
     dozens of books and hundreds of articles on the oral composition and resulting poetic  
     structure of the early Greek epics. As both Ruth Finnegan, Oral Poetry^ 16-24, and Bruno  
     Gentili, Poetry and Its Public in Ancient Greece, 3-23, have demonstrated, the distinction  
     between oral composition> transmission, and performance is actually significant also for  
     the study of early Greek literature. By distinguishing these three modes of orality that can,  
     but do not necessarily need to, go together, Gentili is able to move the discussion of  
     poetic patterns of oral performance texts beyond the false alternative of whether or not the  
     Homeric epics, either in their original stage or in their transmitted versions, were based on  
     the availability of the Greek alphabet, i.eM on literacy. In ancient Greece, even after the  
     acquisition of literacy, the up〇wer of memory remained unaltered, as did the oral character  
     of poetic communication and transmission. The most significant fact here is the presence  
     in epigraphic versification of formulas, stylistic features, and meters that belonged to the  
     repertory of citharoedic or choral poetry.^ (Gentili, Poetry and Its Public in Ancient  
     Greece^ 19) Rosalind Thomas, Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece, 62, has developed  
     the argument further and identified early Greek epigraphy as a means to enhance and  
     perpetuate the spoken text: uMuch if not all of the early writing put on stone was meant  
     to represent statements which were to be uttered aloud» usually in verse: so here writing is  
     the servant of the spoken word, a means of communicating what would usually be sung or  
     said/' This situation seems to match precisely the Chinese case. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
167. ^ Mao shih 13-2.202a. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
168. See LUchi 21.190a. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
169. See Hayashi, uConcerniag the Inscription \*May Sons and Grandsons Eternally  
     Use This [Vessel]’•” [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
170. Von Falkenhausen, ^Issues in Western Zhou Studies/\* 154, identifies this  
     pattern as the standard structure of the majority of Chou bronze inscriptions. Although

     this pattern can be fruitfully applied to the three Ch'in inscriptions, there are other  
     inscriptions that may be better described by different structural schemes. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
171. 〇ne may note that the regularity of Shih-ching rhymes by and large happens to  
     coincide with our own notions of regular rhymes, on the even lines of a poem.  
     Actually, we know close to nothing about the actual performance of hymns in Chou  
     China, the accompanying rhythms and melodies, or a textual prosody that may have  
     worked together with apparently irregular rhyme patterns. The fact that the Shih-ching  
     pieces rhyme in a much more regular fashion than the (probably) contemporary bronze  
     inscriptions supports the hypothesis that the Shih-ching hymns may have gone through  
     the hands of later editors. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
172. 〇3 Cf. Jenny F.S. So, “Early Eastern Chou Bronze Vessels from Ch’in Territory”；  
     von Falkenhausen，“Ritual Music，’’ 386-87, 652 (n. 14)，654 (!!• i8)，667-68, 1040, and  
     the same author^ Suspended Music: Chime-Bells in the Culture of Bronze Age China,  
     167, 236. According to HsU Chmig-shu, “Chin wen ku-tz’u shih-li，” 44, the formulae  
     mef-s/zaw 眉壽（“extended longevity”）and 容無疆（“without limit”）are typical of [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
173. Western Chou inscriptions, changing into vwm-从仙萬壽（“ten thousandfold longevity”）  
     and wu-ch'i ^10 in Eastern Chou texts; in both cases we see the earlier expression  
     employed on the ChMn Kung bronzes. Whether or not the possessive pronoun chiieh M.  
     (appearing twice on the First po, once each on the kuei and the Eight bells) can be  
     identified as a rhetorical archaism by Eastern Chou time, as proposed by W.A.C.H.  
     Dobson {The Language of the Book of Songs, 35, 127) and Constance A. Cook  
     ((<Auspicious Metals and Southern Spirits: An Analysis of the Chu Bronze Inscriptions/'  
     242), may be subject to further discussion, especially in the light of Takashima^s findings  
     noted above. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
174. Hsia M. can refer - as in the Ch^in bronze inscriptions - to the central states  
     while also being cognate to y。雅，meaning “standard’’ or “elegant”； on this and other  
     meanings of hsia, see Liang ChM-ch^ao, Chung-kuo chih mei-wen chi chfi li-shih, 95~96»  
     and my Die Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer, 25.

     i〇5 eft[Hsiang 29] 39.305a. According to its context，I read this passage as  
     prophetic\*

     m6 v〇n Falkenhausen，“Ritual Music,” 1062-65, who juxtaposes the texts to  
     comparable documents, notes a ^significant break with the fundamental political  
     principles^ of the Chou world in that the Ch'in rulers here present themselves as rulers in  
     their own right who have received their mandate not from the King of Chou but directly  
     from heaven; see also the same author's ^Ahnenkult und Grabkuit im Staat Qin/' 40\*

     107 Shih-chi 6.241. Lung-hsi was located at present Lin-t^o in Kansu  
     province; for this and the other locations, cf\* T'an Ch^-hsiang, Chung-kuo li-shih ti-Vu  
     chi, 2:5-6. For attempts to reconstruct the original order of this journey, see Wang Ching-  
     yang» ^Kuan-yu Ch'in Shih-huang chi-tz'u ch^-hsiin lu-hsien ti t5an-fao,? and Inaba  
     ichird, “Shin Shik6 no jimshu to kokuseld，”74-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
175. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
176. The area west of present Wu-han 武漢；see T’an Ch’i-hsiang，  
     shih ti-fu chi, 2:11-12\* [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
177. ^ Mt. Chiu-i was located another 500 km south - a place to which the emperor  
     most certainly did not travel. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
178. "〇 South of present Nanking 南京， [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
179. 出 Southwest of present Hangchow 杭州 > [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
180. See Shih-chi 28.1370 (cf. also Han-shu 25A\* 1205) and 6.260. According to  
     Shih-chi 6\*248, there was another trip to the south as early as 219 B.C.; purportedly, the  
     empemr proceeded directly from Lang-yeh for some 1000 km in a southwest direction and  
     finaliy reached Mt. Hsiang 湘，located on an island in Lake Tung-t’ing (cf. T’an Ch’i-  
     hsiang, Chung-kuo li-shih tUVu chi, 2:11-12). At Mt, Hsiang, according to this Shih-chi  
     passage, the emperor became outraged by a storm which nearly prevented him from  
     crossing the lake. Blaming the local spirits, he ordered three thousand men to strip the  
     mountain of all trees, rendering it dirt-red. Compared to the relatively precise and  
     apparently realistic account of the trip of 211 B.C., the whole story of the 219 B,C.  
     journey looks dubious to me. If the emperor indeed had visited Mt\* Hsiang already in 219  
     B.C., why did he come back again later to exactly the same region? Again, the travels of  
     219 / 218 B.C. appear a bit too strenuous even for a ChMn Shih-huang: first to Mt. I,  
     from there to Mt. T^ai^ then (without counting the additional 400 km trip to Mt. Chih-fu,  
     probably misplaced in Shih-chi 6,244) to Mt, Lang-yeh, from here 1000 km southwest to  
     Mt. Hsiang, then back home, and in next spring another 1100 km to Mt. Chih-fu, and  
     from there again back home - all in all, more than 5000 km linear distance, whatever this  
     may mean in terms of the actual number of kilometers traveled. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
181. Cf. the note on line KC.57. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
182. For the political implications of the imperial tour of inspection, cf. Wechsler,  
     Offerings of Jade and Silk, 161-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
183. On the concrete meaning of yu, see the note on line CF.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
184. p〇r the whole passage, cf. Shang-shu 3.14b-15c; the text is also in Shih-chi  
     28,1355-56 and Han-shu 25A. 1191, with some explanatory phrases inserted. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
185. Cf, CF.2: “the season of middle spring.” [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
186. ⑴ 宗 is another name for Mt. T’ai. The formulation “to visit [for

     inspection] those under his protection,, reflects one traditional understanding of the term  
     hsun-shou usually translated as utour of inspection^ [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
187. Shang-shu 3.15b. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
188. rather late date of composition of this portion of text. On the other hand, the passage  
     leaves no room for a ^middle^ season, which suggests to me - on the basis of a  
     comparison between the three yueh-ling versions in Lii-shih chfun-chfiu, Li-chi, and Huai-  
     nan tzu - that it is a product of early Han times. This tentative conclusion, being in full  
     accord with the arguments for an imperial Ch^in redaction of the text, can be substantiated  
     by the fact that both the Shih-chi and Han-shu versions finally add a ^central peak^ to the  
     enumeration of the mountains. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
189. Shih-chi 28.1357. The parallel Han-shu passage (25A.1193-94) extends the  
     enumeration down to the common people who only sacrifice to their ancestors. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
190. See Ch’en Meng-chia，幼训gjAw 呢Jjm，135~46; Chiang Shan~kuo,

     shu tsung-shu, 140-68; for the role of the erudites and their scholarship at the ChMn  
     imperial court，see Kanaya Osamu, iS/u>z 230-57, [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
191. Shih^chi 28.1366, of, Han^shu 25A. 1201. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
192. Shih-chi 6.242, 28.1366, cf. Hart-shu 25A. 1201. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
193. Shih^chi 6.242.

     ^ Shih-chi 28,1366-67, cf. Han-shu 25A.1201. Disregarding all later definitions  
     of the term feng (e.g.t in the Pai-hu t'ung, for further elaborations of which cf. Wechsler,  
     Offerings of Jade and Silk, 170-94), one would be tempted to read this passage as the  
     earliest explanation of what the 容 ritual may have meant，atleast to Ch’in Shih-huang:  
     the formula te feng used here may simply be understood as uto receive the fief\* -  
     not, of course, the small allotment from the King of Chou but rather the world, presented [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
194. by heaven (for this idea, cf» the pre-imperial Ch'in bronze inscriptions). [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
195. It is this image of rough improvisation that the historical records attach to the  
     介rtg and rituals，both of Ch’in Shih-huang and later of Han Wu-tl See  
     28.1366-67, 1397-98, Han-shu 25A.120I-2, 1233-35. Han Wu-ti, the historians note,  
     performed the feng ritual in the same manner as his newly designed sacrifice to the Great  
     Unity (T’ai-i 太一), [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
196. Shih-chi 28.1366-67, cf. Honshu 25A.1201. For doubts on the antiquity of the  
     feng and shan rituals, see Wechsler, Offerings of Jade and Silk, 171-72. Although the  
     emperor may have developed his most ambitious ritual out of preexisting local cults at  
     Mt. T'ai, there is no evidence that these had any connection with political representation.  
     The ostensible Kuan-tzu quotation in Shih-chi 28.1361 - being again the probable basis  
     of the corresponding paragraph in Kuan-tzu 16.273 (note the remark by the Shih-chi  
     commentator Ssu~ma Chen, that the ^present/' i.e,, T'ang-times Kuan-tzu had no such  
     paragraph) - is clearly spurious, as the anachronistic inclusion of certain omens betrays.  
     Even the Shang-shu passage quoted above presents the peak only as one in a sequence of  
     four; it is “first” simply chronologically，since the eastern position is correlated with  
     spring. None of the scattered references to Mt. TJai in Mao shih [# 300] 20-2.349b,  
     Meng-tzu 13B.104c, Mo-tzu 4.70, Tso chuan [Yin B] 4.31a, and Kung-yang chuan [Yin [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
197. 3.15b goes substantially beyond this significance: Mt. TJai is the peak of the east, in  
     particular of the old state of Lu and was honored with regular offerings. Although to  
     Confucius all under heaven appeared small when he looked down on it from the top of Mt,  
     T'ai (cf. the passage in Meng-tzu), I am unable to trace the peak's later political signifi-  
     cance to any text substantially predating the unification of the empire. The earliest passage  
     where Mt, T’ai appears in a truly exalted position is (3\*44)，i.e.，in a Ch’in

     text almost contemporary with the inscriptions: here, we are told that the legendary  
     Yellow Thearch (Huang，ti 黃帝）once assembled the spirits on the top of ML T’ai. It  
     seems that the cosmic significance of the mountain developed parallel to, or maybe even  
     together with, the equally recent myth of the Yellow Thearcb as a cosmic ruler. (To Han  
     Wu-ti the Yellow Thearch became the foremost mode! of a cosmic emperor who performed  
     the feng ritual on Mt. T^ai and thereby finally achieved transcendence.)

     ^ Shih-chi 28.1367, Han^shu 25A.1202.

     1. Cf. Shih-chi 28.1367^68, cf. Han-shu 25A-1202.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
198. Consequently, in Eastern Chou times when no Chou king or feudal lord was in  
     the political position to conduct this tour, the wang sacrifice was degraded to nothing  
     more than a subordinate part of the sacrifice at the suburban altar (chiao-ssu  
     performed in the capitals of the feudal states\* See Tso chuan [Hsi 31] 17.1295-0, [Hsiian  
     3] 2L166a-b, [Ch^ng 7] 26,201bs [Chao 26] 52.412 a, [Ai 6] 58.460a, Kung^yang chuan  
     [Hsi 31] 12.69a-c. For the changing significance of the wang sacrifice, cf, Lester James  
     Bilsky, The State Religion of Ancient China, 1:143-45, 2:248, passim\ Chang Ho-  
     ch^an, Chou-tai chi-ssu yen-chiu, 40-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
199. Shun was obviously regarded as a mountain spirit, residing at his supposed  
     burial place on Mt. Chiu-i; see below\* [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
200. 〇n the ChUn script, see ChMu H$i~kuei, Wen-tzu-ksueh kai-yao, 59-72;  
     Tsuruta Kazuo, ^Shunju, Sengoku jidao no Shin no moji ni tsuite''; Narita Toshiki,  
     “Shindai no moji shiryG.” Recently，Ch’en Chao-jung，“Ch’in 4shu t，img wen-tzu’ hsin  
     t'an/1 has argued that the unification of the script, initiated by the First Thearch and  
     accomplished through the early decades of the Western Han, was highly effective, rapidly  
     eliminating regional writing styles and character variants, [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
201. Mark Edward Lewis, Writing and Authority in Early Chinay 339. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
202. See Chiang Shan-kuo, Shang-shu tsung-shuy 173-99. Chiang argues for a date  
     between 289 B.C. (the year of Menciuses death) and 239 B.C. (the year when the Lil-shih  
     chfun-chfiu was completed.). One significant difference between the t4Yu kung>? and the  
     uYao tien'1 chapters is the number of provinces into which the realm is divided: nine in  
     uYu kung^ but twelve in uYao tien.n Apparently, nine reflects an earlier layer, while  
     twelve can be related to the Ch'in imperial order. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
203. See Shang-shu 6.35a, 39a, Shih-chi 2.52, 67,Yu,s geography must have  
     troubled Ssu-ma Ch^ien: where the Shang-shu has Chieh-shih in the first passage leading  
     to the ^[Yellow] Rivern and in the second leading to the ^[Eastern] Sea/\* the Shih-chi  
     parallel text has in both places relating the location to the one ChMn Shih-huang

     had visited. On the problem of Chieh-shih in Ch^n times, see chapter 1, note 19, above. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
204. t37 Shih^chi 2.83. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
205. Kuo-yil 5,14a. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
206. ^ Han Fei^tzu 5.91. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
207. Shih-chi 28.136L [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
208. Mo-tzu 6.113, Huai-rtan tzu 11,176. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
209. Wu-YUeh ch'un-ch'iu 6.8a-10b, Yueh chlieh shu 8,ib'2a, [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
210. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
211. Von Falkenhausen, ^Issues in Western Zhou Studies^' 163-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
212. See von Falkenhausen，“Ritual Music，” 635-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
213. See Assmann, Das kulturelle Geddchtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische  
     Identitdt in friihen Hochkulturen. For a fuller discussion of the notion of ^cultural  
     memory,> as it can be applied in the analysis of early Chinese ritual performances and  
     ritual texts, see my “57zi 力詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of ‘Chu  
     ci’楚茨（Thorny Caltrop’)/， [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
214. ^ With regard to their heightened intertextuality, the Chou bronzes do not  
     fundamentally differ from later Chinese literature, especially poetry where we encounter  
     the same tension between the two <<hi$toriesy,; for a more detailed discussion, which I will  
     not repeat here, see my Zum Topos „Zimtbaum” in der chinesischen Literatur:  
     Rhetorische Funktion und poetischer Eigenwert des Naturbiides kuei, 11-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
215. For the very few (only apparent) irregularities, see the notes to the respective

     lines. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
216. Including the emendation that restores the first yii rhyme in line 21 of the Chieh-  
     shih-m^n inscription, as noted above.

     126 [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
217. Ch’en Hsin-hsiung，“《Shih-chi ■ Ch’in Shih-huang pen-chi» so chien ti sheng-  
     ytin hsien-hsiang/1 9, notes two exceptions: tax # (in the Kuang-yun fipf in the rising  
     tone [shang-sheng Jt^]) rhyming with five level-tone (p3ing-sheng words in the  
     Chih-fu tung-kuan inscription, and i M (usually in the departing tone [ch'u-sheng 5:^]),  
     rhyming with five entering-tone (ju-sheng A^) words in the Chih-fu inscription. The  
     second case would even constitute a ^combined rhyme^ of one yin-sheng word (rhyme  
     category 之[\*-》]) with fiveywwfes/级 words (category 職A]). However, based  
     on other cases, both words have been identified as occasionally rhyming precisely in the  
     tones that are required in the present inscriptions; for tai rhyming in ping-sheng, see Lo  
     Ch'ang-p^i and Chou Tsu-mo, Han Wei Chin nan-pei-cWao yiin-pu yen-pien yen-chiu,  
     125, n. I; for i rhyming in ju-sheng, see Baxter, A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology,  
     330. As Baxter points out (and as it has been noted earlier in traditional Chinese  
     scholarship), the double reading (ju-sheng and ch'u-sheng) of i is part of a larger contact  
     pattern between the two tones. The otherwise perfect regularity of the inscription rhymes  
     suggests we should consider the present cases of tai and i as additional evidence for their  
     particular behavior, and not as irregularities within the inscriptions\* [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
218. For a succinct outline of this important and long-debated issue of historical

     phonology see Baxter，〇/ 302-24•丁he distinctions

     observed in the stele inscriptions were not necessarily between “tones” as we know them  
     from the rhymebooks of the Sui and Tang dynasties; they may have been related to  
     morphological features that gradually developed into the later tones. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
219. On the rhymes of the bronze inscriptions, see Behr, uReimende Bronzeinschriften  
     und die Entstehung der chinesischen Endreirndichtung.^

     i〇 See Walker, ^Toward a Formal History of the Chuci/1

     H For a more detailed discussion, see my Die Hymnen der chinesischen  
     /er，H2-13, 16i~68; cf. also my “S/uVzVz友詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A  
     Case Study orChu ci’ 楚茨（Thorny Caltrop’)/’ [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
220. See, e.g.» Ch^en Hsin-hsiung, 4<«Shih-chi • Ch^n Shih-huang pen-chi» so chien  
     ti sheng-ylin hsien-hsiang，” 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
221. The imperial decision is noted in Shih-chi 6\*237, 15.757, 26,1259, and  
     28.1366; ail three instances belong to the historical narrative and are not part of a direct  
     speech, e.g., an imperial edict. For the full array of arguments that the official adoption of  
     uWater^ is probably an early Han invention, see Kurihara Tomonobu, Shin Kan shi no  
     kenkyu, 45^91, and Kamada Shigeo, Shin Kan seiji seido no kenkyuy 42-10L Bodde, 4\*The  
     State and Empire of Ch’in，” 77-78，96~97，summarizes parts of the argument but  
     concludes that the mentioning in three different chapters of the Shih-chi t4would require an  
     interpolator of exceptional astuteness with the entire work to insert all these parallel  
     passages ... Thus the thesis that this was done cannot be convincingly substantiated and  
     remains only an attractive possibilityThis consideration does nothing to invalidate the  
     arguments offered by the two Japanese scholars, and it is based on a false assumption:  
     both Kurihara and Kamada assume that the account on the adoption of ^Watef\* is of early  
     Han origin and therefore original to Ssu-ma Ch^en^s Shih-chi - though not to the  
     historical facts of the Ch\*in dynasty. In other words, there is no later interpolator  
     involved. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
222. The same is true for the closing topoi of the inscriptions, which are missing in  
     the more narrowly defined inscription text but appear finally in the ^discussion^ of the  
     officials. Despite this situation, I still doubt that the Shih-chi passage in question should  
     be regarded as part of the original inscription, mainly on formal grounds. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
223. It may be important to note that chu, mieh, and the other terms which in the  
     inscriptions denote killing, punishing, destroying, eliminating, etc\*, do not belong to the  
     lexicon of Ch?in penal law but are part of the contemporary political language: of all these  
     terms only lu appearing once in CS.1I - can be traced to the excavated Shui-hu-ti  
     documents (written #), where it appears once and is defined as \*\*10 abuse [the convict]  
     alive in public and then behead him/5 (Shui-hu-ti Ch'in mu chu-chien, 173) The  
     contemporary (not attested in the Shih-ching or the new-text Shang-shu) word chu, on the  
     other hand, which according to the Shuo-wen belongs to the category of Vao M CHo  
     conduct a punitive expeditionn), appears with high frequency in Warring States texts like  
     Kuan-tzu, Hsun-tzu, Han Fei-tzu, and Lu-shih chyun<hriu. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
224. See C.H. Wang，From m 61-66. Note that the Chou, unlijce

     later dynasties, venerated wen as the initial and wu as the folio wing powerful aspect of  
     rulership m establishing a dynasty. Although the inscriptions presentthe more pragmatic  
     vision of history, the First Thearch still emphasized wen over wu. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
225. ^ For the continuity of these topoi in early Western Han ancestral hymns, see [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
226. section 5.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
227. ^ Under ^the Sage/' one may add three instances where I take sheng as an epithet [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
228. (T.27, LY.7, CF.33). Ch'in-sheng (4<the Sage of Ch^n^) in KC.13 may be t'ai-sheng [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
229. (“the Great Sage”)\_ See the note on this line. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
230. 1 have counted fifteen different expressions: cAk呢長（“long，lasting; duration，”  
     occurring four times), eWw 久（“enduring，” once), ：yw 攸（“long，” once)，經  
     (“constant,，，once)，ft伽认7 後[i] (“later generations，” twice), wm-如勿革（“will not  
     change，” once)，/zow-灯w 後嗣（“later descendants，” twice)，無窮（“inex-  
     haustibly，” once), ytmg 永（“forever/，three times), 客常（“constancy，” five times)，

     垂（“to transmit,” four times), /z也脩（“permanent，” once),鲶邶® (“constan^^  
     once), ww-cM 伽g 無疆（“withoutlimit,” once)，而-c/u‘無極（“without limit，” once). [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
231. Since Eastern Chou times, it is generally assumed that the Shih-ching hymns  
     were performed at sacrifices and banquets. The interplay of the performance and its synchro-  
     nic description is highly complex in this hymn {Mao shih 13-2.I99c«202b): the text even  
     quotes - and thus doubles? - the announcements given during the ceremony. See my "Shi  
     力Xg 詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of 4Chu ci’ 楚茨（‘Thorny Caltrop’)/， [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
232. The character I loosely translate as 4<recitation>, here is sung IS which is to a

     certain extent interchangeable with sw叹頌（“to praise”； “eulogy”； see below). Note that  
     Li Shan 李善（d. 689) quotes this line with 頌 instead of 誦 in his commentary to Ts’ao  
     Chih’s 曹植（192 232) “Letter to Wu Chi-chung (i,e” Wu Chih 吳質[177 - 230])，，

     (“Yii Wu Chi-chung shu”與吳季重書）in 胸―2,23a. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
233. ^ Mao shih 18-3.30ib. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
234. In the ^Elegantiae^ sections, see Mao shih [# 162] 9-2.138c, [# 191] 12-1.173c,  
     [#199] 12-3.I87c, [#200] 12-3.188c, [# 204] 134.195a, [# 252] 174.279b, [# 257] 18-  
     2.293a, [# 259] 18»3,299c.

     140 [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
235. Quoted after Kuo Mo-jo, 'Tsu Ch'u wen k^o-shih^ 617. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
236. For a discussion of the self-referentiality of early Chinese ritual hymns, see my  
     灰e 办也r c办11-22, and •力Xg 詩經 Songs as

     Performance Texts: A Case Study of ‘Chu ci’ 楚茨（‘Thorny Caltrop，)•”

     27 Von Faikenhausen，“Issues in Western Zhou Studies，” 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
237. S Note that although this text is devoid of the standard ending, it includes the  
     standard opening part and hence still seems to follow the macrostructure of the prototext. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
238. See note 1 in the Introduction above. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
239. Mao shih 1-1.4c. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
240. **CAom-//**23.158a. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
241. Tsuruma, <4Shin Shikotei no toho junshu kokuseki ni miru kyokosei/1 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
242. I am unable to resist the temptation to link tentatively the stele inscriptions to a  
     second Han literary genre，namely the/w 賦（“rhapsody”). In the “Ch’i-lUeh” 七略（“Seven  
     Epitomes^ the abbreviated version of the catalogue of the imperial library, copied into the  
     Han-shu <4Monograph on Literature^), Liu Hsin (d. 23) quotes an unspecified  
     commentary to define the rhapsody: 4<To recite (sung H) without singing is called fu. He  
     who climbs high (teng kao and recites, may serve as a grandee.^ (Han-shu 30.1755)  
     The second phrase may have been taken from the Mao commentary to 4<Ting chih fang [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
243. Hsli Chtmg-shu, “Chin-wen ku-tz’u shih~li，” 43, has noted that “seven to eight  
     out of ten,J (i.eM 70-80%) of the Chou bronze inscriptions included the final prayer for  
     longevity and permanence. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
244. LUchi 49.378c. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
245. Shih^chi 6.267. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
246. Shih-chi 6.266,

     See Wang Hui, Ch'in Vung-ch'i ming-wen pien-nien chi-shih, 141-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
247. 1. Cf. von Falkenhausen, ^Issues in Western Zhou Studies/1 175-76\*

     [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
248. Ian Assmann, Das kulturelle Gedachtnis, 52.

     ^ Edward L. Shaughnessy, Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze  
     Vessels, 176-77, cf. the whole paragraph, 175-82.

     148 [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
249. v〇n Falkenhausen, iSThe Concept of Wen in the Ancient Chinese Ancestral  
     Cult，” 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
250. Shih-chi 6.255. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
251. Marcel Bloch, 4<Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation: Is Religion  
     an Extreme Form of Traditional Authority?'1 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
252. Emily Ahern, Chinese Ritual and Politicsy 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
253. Stanley J\* Tambiah, <4A Performative Approach to Ritual/' 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
254. For a more comprehensive and systematic discussion of the issue of language in  
     early Chinese ritua丨，see my “57n’ 力’吨詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study  
     of ‘Chu ci’ 楚茨（Thorny CaUrop’)，” [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
255. Strikingly, the stele inscriptions do not contain a single reduplicative (today  
     called ch'ung-tieh ®#), and this sets them distinctively apart from the language of the  
     Shih-ching, despite their common meter. Again, they also refrain from systematic use of  
     alliterations (沾如叩雙聲）and rhyming binomes (心#韻）typical of the  
     southern literature of late Warring States and Western Han times. I believe this reflects a  
     conscious choice, since it is only the categorical accumulation that conveys a definite and  
     normative meaning, whereas the other classes of binomes are notoriously ambiguous and  
     hence may work counterproductively in texts like the present inscriptions; for these  
     problems, see Knechtges, Wen xuan, 2:2-13\* [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
256. On the traditionalism of the First Thearch^s rule, see also Kurihara, Shin Kan shi  
     no kenkyu^ 105-12\* [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
257. Shih-chi 130.3302-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
258. On this description, see the initial sentences of Chia Fs uKuo Ch'in lunJ, in Shih-  
     chi 6.276. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
259. On some aspects of the Western Han image of the Ch'in, see Tsuruma Kazuyuki,  
     "Shiba Sen no jidai to Shikotei: Shin Shiko hongi hensan no rekishiteki haikei\*' and uKan  
     dai ni okeru Shin dch6 shikan no hensen: Ka Gi “Ka Shin ron，” Shiba Sen \*Shin Shito  
     hongi\* o chushin toshite^ [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
260. 6.248. The word e/ze 赭 in this context is often translated as “to paint

     redM; however, this reading seems impossible even for the most fanciful account of the  
     First Thearch's alleged misdeeds: where would the paint have come from? Indeed, the text  
     is very straightforward: 4<[The emperor] ordered three thousand conscripts to cut off all the  
     trees of Mt Hsiang, rendering the mountain dirt-red.^ Che is hematite, explained in the  
     幼as “red soil”（e/TzTz/’w 赤土). [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
261. Shih-chi 6.247. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
262. Shih-chi 6.248. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
263. Shih-chi 6,255, 87.2546. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
264. SWA-cW 6.258; on the word /:’你容阬 as “execute” instead of “bury alive，” see [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
265. Bodde, uThe State and Empire of Ch,in/> 72, n. 76, and Neininge^ ^Burying the Scholars  
     Alive，” 133-35. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
266. i〇 Shih<ki 6.255, 87.2546.

     ^Shih-chi 15.686. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
267. On this critical issue, see section 53\* below. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
268. On their assumed transmission\* see Kurihara, Shin Kan shi no kenkyu, 7-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
269. 夏4 The fundamental bias of Han historiography of the Ch，in in general and of Ssu-  
     ma Ch'ien's account in particular has been emphasized by Kurihara Tomonobu, Shin Kan  
     shi no kenkyUy and Kanaya Osamu> Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
270. !5 Cf, Stephen Durrant，“Ssu-ma Ch’ien’s Portrayal of the First Ch’in Emperor\*” [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
271. I use the word “apparently” since we do not know the original form of some  
     Shih-chi chapters, especially of the \*'ten lost books1' to which the ^Monograph on Ritual^  
     (“Li-shu” 禮書）and the “Monograph on Music”（“Yiieh-shu” 樂書）actua丨ly belong; see  
     section 5.2 below. The obviously damaged shape of the present 4tBasic Annals^ of Ch'in  
     Shih-huang is again not likely to strengthen our confidence that we are actually reading  
     Ssu-ma ChMen's original redaction of the inscriptions, [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
272. n See Shih^chi 6.236. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
273. The identical delusion is, of course, also assigned to Han Wu~ti; see below. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
274. For the whole question, cf. Ying-shih Ytl, t4Life and Immortality in the Mind of  
     Han China，” esp, 87-88. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
275. See Shih-chi 6,278 and 130,3303; for the significance of the term, see also the  
     note on line KC.22 above. Ssu-ma ChMen's negative picture of the Ch'in is of course not  
     confined to chapter six of the Shlh-chi; see Tsuruma Kazuyuki, \*4Kan dai ni okeru Shin  
     6chd shikan no hensen,” 1-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
276. Shih-chi 130.3295, [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
277. See Tsuruma Kazuyuki, (\*Shiba Sen no jidai to Shikotei: Shin Shiko hongi  
     hensan no rekishiteki haikei/' [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
278. It should be noted that both Ssu-ma ChMen and Chia I see the Second Generation  
     (Thearch] as much worse than his father and blame him, in his fatal combination of

     ruthlessness and lunacy, directly for the actual fall of the dynasty. However, both  
     narratives portray the First Thearch as an oppressive ruler who had already lost the support  
     of the people; his dynasty was therefore deemed to collapse sooner or later. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
279. See Loewe*，*Divination, Mythology, and Monarchy in Han China*，*57• [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
280. Wang Hui, Lun heng chiao-shih 20,855. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
281. Chan Ying, Wen-hsin tiao4ung Ucheng, 1L401. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
282. ^ Chan Ying, Wen-hsin tiao4ung Ucheng, 21.803, [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
283. See, e.g\*, Kanaya, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu, 244-49, Angus C. Graham,  
     Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China, 31, Petersen, tsWhich  
     Books Did the First Emperor of Ch^n Burn? On the Meaning of Pai Chia in Early  
     Chinese Sources,” 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
284. See Shih-chi 130.3288-92\* As Petersen, ^Which Books Did The First Emperor  
     of ChUn Burn/1 34» points out, it is precisely the ju and the mo who are not called chia  
     by Ssu-ma T'an; instead, they are mentioned as ju-che (uthe ju^) rndmo-che  
     (“the [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
285. Petersen, ^Which Books Did the First Emperor of ChMn Burn/1 33-37\* [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
286. Michael Nylan's term; see her liA Problematic Models 50, n. 82, where  
     ^scholastic lines^ is not to be understood as genealogical lines of transmission. By  
     contrast, Petersen understands chia as referring to individual persons.

     164 [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
287. Kanaya, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu, 242-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
288. For a fully annotated translation of them, see Hulsewe, Remnants of Chfin Law, [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
289. For a discussion on what is regarded as ju ideology in the Shui-hu-ti findings, cf.  
     Wu Fu-chu, Shui-hu-ti Ch'in chien lun-k'ao, 190-95, and Yu Tsung~fa, Yun-meng Chyin  
     chien chung ssu-hsiang yii chih-tu kou-chih, 33-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
290. % Bodde, “The State and Empire of Ch’in,” 75-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
291. Cf. Vandermeersch, La Formation du legismey 200-209. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
292. W. Allyn Rickett senses this problem in the notoriously eclectic Kuan-tzu; see  
     the introductions to the individual chapters in his Guanzi： Political, Economic, and [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
293. Philosophical Essays from Early China. He labels the political writings of the Kuan-tzu  
     (which are often, at least in part, called as ^Realist^ presenting point of

     view much closer to that of the realistic Confucian, Xunzin (3); elsewhere he qualifies the  
     chapter “Fa-chin” 法禁 as “a mixture of Confucian and Legalist ideology, perhaps best  
     described as authoritarian Confucianism”（235) and speaks of “the teachings of such  
     authoritarian Confucians as Xunzi” (249) or “that later authoritarian wing of  
     Confucianism represented by Xunzi15 (412). It seems to me that the difficulties the Kuan-  
     tzu presents to every effort of ^school1' categorization are symptomatic also for a number  
     of other texts» especially the Hsun-tzu and the Li-chi, and I have little confidence that we  
     can solve the problem by exchanging epithets ~ note that in the quoted examples from  
     Riekett the words “realistic” and “authoritarian” become virtually synonymous. It would  
     be equally meaningless to speak of “ritualist” and “tmditionalizing Legalism,” or even of  
     “Legalist Confucianism” and “Confucian Legalism”； none of these designations will hdp  
     us out of the conceptual trap. The succinct and illuminating discussion by Vandermeersch  
     (cf. the previous note and the note on TS.2 above) has already opened the way to a more  
     sophisticated understanding. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
294. 1. Hsiin-tzu 6.115, Li-chi 3.21b.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
295. 1. See the note on TS上

     4〇 Bodde, “The State and Empire of Ch’in/’ 75-76. Cf•幼mw dW-  
     chien, 263, and Katrina C. D. McLeod and Robin D. S. Yates, ^Forms of ChMn Law: An  
     Annotated Translation of the Feng-chen shih^ 121-22, n\* 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
296. See Wakae Kenzo, <4Shin Kan ritsu ni okeru 'fuko\* zai.J> [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
297. Huai-nan tzu 20.357, [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
298. Lii-shih chyun-chyiu 14.1b. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
299. ^Han^shu 22.1049. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
300. Lii-shih ch'un-ch'iu 14.137. These opening lines of the <'Hsiao-hsingM chapter  
     are followed by a long passage found also in the Hsiao-ching [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
301. The principal study on this is Harry Hsin-i Hsiao, ^Filial Piety in Ancient  
     China; A Study of the Hsiao-ching'1; see also Michael Nylan, 4<Confucian Piety and  
     Individualism in Han China'' and Keith Knapp, uThe Ru Reinterpretation of Xiao'' The  
     two latter articles furnish references to a number of other relevant studies. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
302. See Ochi Shigeaki, Sengoku Shin Kan shi kenkyu 1:323-50, 2: 224-25, 245-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
303. I adopt this term from the discussion in Yen-zen Tsai, ^Ching and chuan:  
     Towards Defining the Confucian Scriptures in Han China (206 BCE - 220 CE),M 259-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
304. ^Shih-chi 13.488^504, 14.512-683, and 15.687-758. See also von Falkenhausen,  
     ^The Concept of Wen in the Ancient Chinese Ancestral CulC\* 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
305. See Yen-zen Tsai, ^Ching and chuan^ 244-5 L [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
306. The hymns are preserved in the ^Monograph on Ritual and Music^ in Han-shu

     22.1046-51, A French translation is in Chavannes, Memoires historiques, 3:605-11; an  
     extensively annotated German translation and study is included in my Die Hymnen der  
     chinesischen Staatsopfer, 100-173. The best recent study on the hymns in Chinese is that  
     by Cheng Wen, <t4Han An-shih fang-chung ko\* shih4un,n 97403 (a slightly changed  
     version of a chapter originally included in his Han-shih yen-chiu, 1-21), See also the  
     textual notes in his /itoi 漢詩選M, 98-104. The most valuable

     traditional commentaries - in addition to Yen Shih-ku^ notes to the Han^shu - are Shen  
     Ch’in-han 沈欽韓（1775 - 1831), 叩漢書疏證（first print 丨900); Wang

     Hsien-ch^en, Han-shupu-chu\ Ch^n Pen-li (1739 - 1818), Han yueh-fu san Jco

     漢樂府三歌牋註（18〖0); Chu Chia-cheng 朱嘉徵（/Z. 1642)，如伽☆  
     办姐樂府廣序（1676?); and Chu Ch’ien 朱乾（dates not known),价Ww 邶-/ 樂府正

     義（1789). Collation notes are in Lu Ch，in-li，HWew-C/zW Wd OuVi n如少乂-仏’加  
     shih, 1:145-47, and ChMu Ch'iung-sun, Li-tai yiieh-chih lii-chih chiao-shih, 185-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
307. See Shih-chi 99.2725-26, Han-shu 43.2129-30. For Shu-sun^s biography, see  
     section 53. below. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
308. See Graham, Disputers of the Ta〇y 270-73, who under this heading discusses  
     “changing with the times” as a signature feature of “Legalist” thought. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
309. Shang-chiin shu Ll-2, and its parallel in Shih-chi 68.2229. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
310. Han FeUtzu 20,366. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
311. Li Ssu in Shih^chi 6.254. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
312. Hsiin-tzu 3.51-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
313. Hsun-tzu 3.53. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
314. Hsun-tzu 8.87, [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
315. LUchi 37.302c and its parallel in Shih-chi 24.1193. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
316. Han^shu 6.173.

     *说* Han-shu92Th

     ^ Han-shu ^13333. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
317. Shih-chi 99.2722, Han-shu 43.2126. In another Han-shu passage (22.1044, cf.

     parallel also 5.137-38) it is stated that the early Han musical pieces and dances were on the  
     one hand oriented toward those created by the ancient kings (to demonstrate that one had a  
     model) and on the other hand newly created (to demonstrate that one had one\*s own distinct  
     order); this statement may have been taken from an early Han work entitled Yueh-yuan yu  
     樂元語；see Ch’en Li, /’w吨 3.107\* [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
318. See Shih-chi 6.254. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
319. Shih-chi 99\*2726; Han-shu 22.1034 also mentions the noble designation  
     “primogenitor of the Han jfw” 漢[家]儒宗)• [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
320. Shih-chi 99,2722-23, Han-shu 43.2126-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
321. See Han-shu 87B.3572, On Yang Hsiung's classicism, see Franklin M.  
     Doeringer, 4<Yang Hsiung and His Formulation of a Classicism.M However, it seems that  
     the Han writers cited here were not simply admiring Shu-sun T'ung but held an  
     ambivalent, or even mainly negative, opinion about him. When Yang Hsiung in his Fa-  
     yen (Wang Jung-pao, Fa-yen i-shu 1L252) mentions the two principle»minded ju scholars  
     ridiculed by Shu-sun as ufoolish,n he indeed compares them to Confucius - and implicitly  
     criticizes Shu-sun as not reaching up to the earlier models of ju conduct\* Both Yang  
     Hsiung and Ssu-ma Ch5ien actually bemoan the poor state of Western Han ju conduct and  
     principle, if measured against the sages. It is only under these circumstances, I understand  
     them saying, that someone like Shu-sun could become the ^primogenitor of the Han ju.11 [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
322. See section 5.3. below. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
323. See Hsiln-tzu, chapter 8; for Yang Hsiung, see Michael Nylan» t4Han Classicists  
     Writing in Dialogue About their Own Tradition，” 150-53‘ [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
324. See Michael Nylan, Problematic Model/' 48, n. 69, [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
325. According to Shih-chi 99.2721 and Han-shu 43.2125, Shu-sun changed his dress  
     from the traditional ju-sheng robe to short Ch^-style clothes in order to comply with the  
     informal customs of Han Kao-tsu's geographical origins. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
326. Here I limit myself to aspects of ritual and political thought. The same problem,  
     set out already in the uBook of Changes" and its early commentaries, appears as a key  
     issue on many other levels of the cultural tradition, e.gM in theories of literature. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
327. One of the earliest statements of this doctrine may be found in a supposedly

     authentic passage of Tung Chung-shu’s 董仲舒（ca. 195 - 115 B.d?) 伽-Zm [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
328. For a full discussion of this question, including both the ideological and the  
     practical problems through the succeeding dynasties down to the T'ang, see my Die  
     Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer, ch. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
329. Although the idea that individual musical pieces or dances attributed to the

     culture-heroes of antiquity can be traced to a number of pre-imperial literary sources^ it  
     received its finally systematized form probably no earlier than Han times. The line of  
     culture-heroes included here is the following: Huang-ti Chuan-hsii Ti-k'u ^  
     嚳，Yao 堯，Shun 舜，Yli 禹，T’ang 湯，Chou Wu-wang 周武王，and Chou-ktmg 周公;  
     the sequence of musical pieces attributed to them may be found, enumerated consistently,  
     in the 樂緯（quoted in c/n•初學記 15.366)，H伽-说w 22,1038, Ying

     Shao’s 應勁（ca. 140 «before 204)似 z’wrtg-f 風俗通義（cf, Wu Shu-p’ing，  
     fungA chiao-shih) 6.217, and Pai-hu t'ung 3.100-104; the last source presents the  
     sequence of culture-heroes and musical titles explicitly as a quotation from the Li-chi (the  
     passage is not in the received text). A slightly altered version of the sequence is provided  
     in Ts，ai Yung，s 蔡邕（133 - 192) TVtom 獨斷 U5b. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
330. See Frederick Moore's report, ^President Yuan Shih-kai at the Altai\* of HeavenZ，354, for the renaming of state music at the inauguration of Ytian^ ^republicans state  
     sacrifice to heaven, conducted on the day of the winter solstice of 1914 (December 23) at  
     the altar of heaven in the southeastern suburbs of Peking. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
331. A recent attempt to reconstruct the various forms of Ch^n ritual is Ch^n Shu-  
     kuo, CWin Han li-chih yen-chiu, 1~77; see also Ma Fei~pai, Ch'in chi-shih, 2: 50948  
     (music), 705-15 (religion)，and 753-75 (stone and bronze mscriptions) for a summary  
     comprising both pre-imperial and imperial times. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
332. See section 3.2\* above. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
333. S〇 See Han-shu 62.2724\* [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
334. While the authenticity of the uBook on RituaF' is still debated (with most  
     scholars arguing that it is indeed a later replacement), the ^Book on Music1\* is almost  
     certainly not by Ssu-ma Ch^ien but at least decades later; see my 4iA Note on the  
     Authenticity and Ideology of Shih-chi 24, The Book on Music,M; for discussions on the  
     4<ten lost books/\* see Yu Chia-hsi, "'Tai'Shih kung shu wang-p'ien k'ao/' esp. 38^49, and  
     Ch'iu ChMung-sun, Li-tai yueh-chih lii-chih chiao-shihy 1-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
335. ^Han-shu 22.1042. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
336. Shih^chi 99.2722. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
337. Han^shu 43.2126. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
338. ^5 Shih-chi 28.1378, Han-shu 25A,12iO. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
339. See //伽22.1043-44. In addition to the “Fang-chung yiieh” 房中樂（see  
     below), the Chou martia! dance “Ta-wu” 大武（“Great Martiality”）was renamed under the  
     Ch\* in as “Wu~hsing” (“Five Phases”) and as such was adopted in early Western Han times\* [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
340. Shih-chi 23.1159. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
341. 22.1043\* The phrase “An，shih ylleh”（“Music to pacify the era”）can  
     also be understood as (iMusic of the pacified era/1 [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
342. This differentiation is very important, yet almost always neglected, though it has  
     been noticed by Lu Ch'in-Ii, Hsien-Ch'in Han Wei Chin nan-pei-c^ao shih7 1:147. A  
     more anecdotal aspect of the common misunderstanding of the Han-shu passage may be  
     traced to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao who did not miss the opportunity to ask for more respect for  
     Chinese womens literature, since the ^earliest piece of Han literature^ would have come  
     from the hands of a consort. See his Chung-kuo chih mei-wen chi ch'i li-shih, 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
343. These hymns follow immediately the present passage in the Han-shu. Their title  
     was probably chosen by Pan Ku in order to embrace the two titles “Fang-chung yiieh” and  
     uAn-shih yileh'\*; see Lu K?an~ju and Feng Yuan-chun, Chung-kuo shih shih, 1:170-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
344. SetHan-shu 22.1045. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
345. See David R. Knechtges, uThe Emperor and Literature: Emperor Wu of the  
     Han,^ 61 and 72, nn. 38-39\* For an excellent survey on the origins, functions, and early  
     development of the Han yiieh-fu, see Chang Yung-hsin, Han yueh-fu yen-chiu, 45-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
346. This connection was proposed by Cheng Hstian in his I4i (15.81b) commentary.  
     Although Cheng Hsuan did not comment on the Han ritual songs, the misconception of  
     consort T^ng-shan as the author of the texts fits perfectly with his statement; accordingly,  
     later authors - e,gM Cheng Ch^ao #5^ (1104 - 1162) in T'ung-chih 49.645a ~  
     have related the “An-shih fang-chung ko” to the palace ladies, [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
347. Accordingly, they were later included in chapter eight of the Yueh-fu shih-chi,  
     Liang Ch'i-ch^o, Chung-kuo chih mei-wen chi ch^ li-shih, 33» concluded that the term  
     fang should denote the place in the ancestral temple where the ancestral tablets were  
     displayed (e/zVn cAf/i 切陳主之所).He provides, however, no hint on the source of  
     his definition. According to the Shuo-wen chieh-tzu,fang denotes a side chamber,  
     probably both sides of the shih M in the rear part of a building. See the ^Plan of a House  
     under the Chou Dynasty/1 appended to John Steele, The I4i or Book of Etiquette and  
     Ceremonial. The first commentator who explicitly glossed fang as a ^sacrificial hall1'  
     {tz'u-fang was Li Hsien (651 ~ 684). See Hou-Hanshu 7,314. With respect  
     to the “Aiv-shih fang-chung ko，” Miao Hsi 谬襲（eariy third century) clarified the matter in  
     a long memorial (see Sung-shu 5^# 19.536-37) where he proposed to change the name  
     “An-shih ko” 安哥 to “Hsiang shen ko” 享神哥（“Songs to regale the spirits”）in order  
     to bring the name and the actual function of the hymns into congruence. It is interesting [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
348. that at least the title of the hymns seems still to have been in use in early Wei (220 - 66)  
     times，although the texts had been changed by Wang Ts，an 王粲（177 - 217), See Simg-  
     ■y/m 19.534-37, Mm-CV/沾w 南齊書 1U78, 晉書 22,676, 挪通典

     141.3596. The new texts by Wang Ts^n, however, must have been lost at an early date, [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
349. I have tried to substantiate the Han times term “melodies from Ch’u” with regard  
     to the texts, taking into account the internal musical references, the lexical characteristics  
     of the language, the rhyme schemes and categories, the vowel patterns of the rhymes as  
     well as the metric patterns; these features I have compared to Shih-ching songs, to the  
     “Chiu ko” 九歌，to the H腿‘韻《 咖，to the Ch’in inscriptions，and to the six songs  
     preserved in Shih-chi and Han-shu that are dated to the early years of the dynasty and can  
     be related to persons from the imperial house or others with the same geographical  
     background. The results of these investigations are contradictory and do not allow one to  
     identify a single coherent feature that might be linked to the distinctive notion of Ch'u  
     sheng for early Han times; see my Die Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer, 169-73,  
     passim, [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
350. See, LUchi 24.211c, 213a, 47.367a. Venerating one^ origins is, of course,  
     nothing less than the ideological basis of the ancestral cult\* [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
351. His biographies in Shih-chi and Han-shu mention Hslieh M as his place of  
     origin, which the commentators identify as the name of a district (hsien H) belonging to  
     (the Han princedom of) Lu 魯；see Ssu，ma Chen in \*S7»7z-c/ti 99\*2721 and Yen Shih~ku in  
     Han-shu 43,2124. For the location some 40 kilometers west of modern Tsao-chuang

     in Shantung province, see T'an Ch^-hsiang, Chung-kuo li-tai ti-fu chi, 2:7-8. During  
     Warring States times, the former city-state of Hsueh came under the control of Ch'i W,  
     with which it is usually associated in historical sources. In ChMn imperial times, Hsiieh  
     was used as the name of a commandery (in the southern part of which Hstieh hsien  
     was located). The Han princedom of Lu, encompassing the former Ch'in commandery  
     Hsueh, was established in 187 B.C,; see Han-shu 28B.1637. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
352. For the (however idealized) Chou system, see Chou-li 22.153a» 24.162c. See  
     also von Falkenhausen, Suspended Music, 29; for later imperial times, see my Die  
     Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer^TJAS、 [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
353. See section 42. above. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
354. See my 4<In Praise of Political Legitimacy: The miao and jiao Hymns of the  
     Western Han," esp. 43-45, further expanded in Die Hymnen der chinesischen Staatsopfer,  
     chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
355. This text in Han-shu 22.1047 is number four in the generally accepted sequence  
     of the seventeen hymns. Most probably, there is one line missing; it has been suggested  
     that the second line should be repeated in order to maintain a coherent rhyme pattern; for  
     discussion on the form and for annotations, see my Die Hymnen der chinesischen  
     Staatsopfer, 122-23. For the full discussion of the hymnic cycle, see 100-173. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
356. The exploitation of the image of ChTin Shih-huang is documented in Li Tu-  
     ning, The Politics of Historiography: The First Emperor of China \ see especially the  
     introduction, xiii-lxxiii. On the use of this image in the Peopled Republic of China, cf.  
     Stefan Simons, Das Bild Qin Shihuang ys in der Geschichtsschreibung der Volksrepublik  
     China: die Historiographie des ersten Kaisers von China, J949-1979. For a 1975 politkdl  
     reading of the Ch’in stele inscriptions，see “Ch’in Shih-huang chin-shih k’〇4z’u chu”  
     chu»shih t$u, Ch\*in Shih-huang chin-shih kyo-tzfu chu. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
357. 〇niy fr〇m the later perspective of the Chinese tradition is it permissible to  
     speak of eariy imperial “Confucians” and “Legalists”; these categories，as I have argued in  
     section 5.2, above, are almost meaningless in the context of Qin and Han times proper.

     183 [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
358. As noted by Lti Ssu-mien in Lu Ssu-mien tu-shu cha-chi, 642. For quotations  
     in Western Han edicts and memorials from what are now chapters of the received Li-chi,  
     see Nambu Hidehiko, uZen-Kandai no seisho joso to ni mieru rei no jiku no yinyo ni  
     tsuite: Zen-Kandai ni okeru keijutsu shugi no ichi sokumen/\* From this, and from the  
     analysis of the ancestral hymns, I see sufficient evidence that not only the imperial ChJin  
     but also the early Han court was fundamentally traditionalist and ritualist^ despite Han  
     Kao-tsu's well-known portrayal in the Shih<hi. Even if the first Han emperor had held the  
     ju-sheng in contempt, there can be little doubt that professionals of classical expertise -  
     and not just Shu-sun T'ung alone - were in charge of ritual, ritual music, and ritual texts»  
     ail of which were based on inherited models. This should not surprise us, since compared  
     to the Ch^in who had been a powerful state for centuries, the Han, political upstarts from  
     below, had a real problem of political legitimation that must have prompted attempts to  
     traditionaiize the new rule- [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
359. For the existence of the canon of the Songs, the Documents, the Rites, and the  
     Music prior to imperial CWin times, see, e.g.} Hsun-tzu 8.84. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
360. See Han-shu 19A.726, On the Ch\*in erudites, see Wang Kuo-wei, uHan Wei  
     po-shih k>ao,n Ma Fei-pai, Ch'in chi-shih 1:337-41, 2:893-901, and Kanaya OsamuT Shin  
     Kan shisdshi kenkyu, 230-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
361. i〇8 Shih-chi 99.2720-27; Han-shu 43.2124-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
362. He is also mentioned as po-shih in Han-shu 1B.52 and 19B.747-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
363. See Shih<hi 99,2725; Han-shu 43,2129,19B.747-49, The Shih^hi anachronis-  
     tically uses the title t^ai-ch'ang instead offeng-ch'ang^ feng-ch}ang was replaced by

     Vai-ch'ang no earlier than 144 B.C. (cf. Han-shu 19A,726, 19B.764-65). According to  
     Han-shu 19A»726, the feng-chrang was an office created under the ChMn. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
364. Hi See also Shih^chi 55\*2046; Han-shu 19B.747^48, 40.2035. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
365. ^12 On Shu-sun^ role under the Han, in addition to his biography and other Shih-  
     chi and Han-shu passages already noted, see also the scattered references in Shih-chi

     23,1159, 121.3117, and 130.3319, as well as in Han^shu 1B.81, 22.1030, 22.1034,  
     36.1968, 43.2143, 62.2723，88.3592, and 100B.4260\* Later sources credit him with  
     extensive ritual writings: Wang Ch'ung in his Lun heng (see Huang Hui, hurt heng chiao-  
     shih 12\*561) mentions a work entitled I-p\*in (\*\*Classes of Ceremonies>,) in sixteen  
     pHen M； this may be related to a passage in Han-shu 67.2917 according to which Shu-sun  
     had “stipulated the classes of ceremonies”办of-/? In 制作儀品)，In 价 w 後

     漢書 35.1203 we learn of a //伽 f 漢儀（“Ceremonial of the Han”）in twelve the

     T\*ang commentator of the Chou4iy Chia Kung~yen (fl^ 627 - 656), mentions a

     Wan "-eft V 漢禮器制度（“The System of Han Ritual Pamphernaiia’’）for which

     Shu-sun had extensively drawn on the old Chou models (cf.Chou-li 5.33b); for fragments  
     of this work, see Sun Hsing-yen’s 孫星衍（1753 - 1818) /fon七似漢官七種  
     l.la-b. For a further discussion of Shu-sun’s role，cf\_ Huang I-chou 黃以周（1828 -  
     1899)，“Tu Han Li-yUeh chih” 讀漢禮樂志,in his CA&g-cW 加ww c/zwrt容儆季雜著  
     五種，“Shih-shuolileh” 史説略，2.13b46a. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
366. The characterization given to him in Yang Hsiung^ Fa-yen\ see Wang lung-  
     pao, Fa-yen i-shu 17.460. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
367. See Tjan Tjoe Som, Po Hu Tfung: The Comprehensive Discussions in the  
     White Tiger Hall, 1:86-88. In his A History of Chinese Political Thought, 473, Hsiao  
     Kung-chuan condemns Shu-sun Tung and others as ^nothing more than debasers of their  
     learning who sought through sycophancy to achieve eminence. Within the Confucian  
     school they must be counted petty-minded Confucians concerned with self-aggrandizement,  
     about whom it is unwarranted to speak of any thought and learning.^ Note how this  
     modern judgement stands diametrically against the Han writers' judgement of Shu-sun.

     ^ See Shih<hi 99,2721,2724, and Han-shu 43.2125, 2129. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
368. Bodde，“The State and Empire of Ch’in，” 95, speaks of the “almost certainly  
     fictional character^ of this event; pointing also at othe fanciful events related by Ssu-ma  
     Ch'ien, among them the highly suspicious punishment of ML Hsiang in 219 B.C.,  
     Bodde, 80, concludes that 4iremoval of such seemingly fictional elements makes the First  
     Emperor appear considerably less erratic and satanic as a figure of history, but more  
     believable as a human being.^ Doubts on some of the stories furnished in Shih-chi chapter  
     six have also been expressed by Tsuruma Kazuyuki, ^Shin Shikotei shodensetsu no  
     seiritsu to shijitsu.”

     夏19 Neininger, “Burying the Scholars Alive，” as well as Bodde，accepts the  
     biblioclasm; Fields, 'The Ch'in Dynasty: Legalism and Confucianism,rejects both  
     events. Note that Petersen, ^Which Books Did the First Emperor of Ch'in Bum/\* 11, in  
     his otherwise valuable study, misrepresents Neininger completely. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
369. See Huang Hui, Lun heng chiao-shih 28.1159\*  
     ^21 Vung-chih 7L831a. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
370. For a theoretical assessment of this issue, see Aleida Assmann and Jan  
     Assmann，“Kanon imd Zensur als kultursoziologische Kategorien.” [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
371. The event is not mentioned in the Shih-chi and in only three brief notes (6.159,  
     19A.726, 88.3620) in the Han-shu, [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
372. See Han-shu 6.212, 883593. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
373. See Han^shu 6.159, 6.171-72, 6.212, 19A.726, 88,3593^94. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
374. ^ See Kanaya, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu, 240-4L [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
375. Most of what Western scholars have proposed over the past two decades in  
     reconsidering the Ch'in daynsty (except on the 1975 Shui-hu-ti manuscripts finds) can be  
     found already in Kanay^s Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu (I960, with a revised and expanded  
     edition published in 1992), often in a more thoroughiy argued manner. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
376. See Kanaya, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyuy 230-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
377. See Kanaya, Shin Kan shisdshi kenkyu, 353-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
378. In a 1997 conference paper 4<From Teachers to Texts: Confucian Coilabora-  
     tionism and Qin Encyclopaedism>, that was again circulated in August 1999 on E. Bruce  
     Brooks's WSWG e-mail list, Robert Eno, who also mentions the ^Ch'in-shih^ and the  
     “Chung-yung，” added the chapter “Ta~hslieh’’ 大學 to this venerable list. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
379. It is interesting to note that the Shih and the Shu are actually much closer in  
     nature than their translations as ^Songs'1 and <tDocuments,' suggest. The Shu are not  
     documents but mainly ritualized speeches; and the Shih are not just songs but since their  
     earliest tracable exegesis were perceived as ^history told in verse^ (Riegel, ^Eros,  
     Introversion, and the Beginnings of 力Commentary，” 171). [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
380. Shih^chi 6.258. ^

     ^ In Eastern Chou times and the early empire, wen-hsueh is concerned with  
     canonical learning. As such, it is not confined to textual learning but also, and probably  
     primarily, encompassed ntual knowledge. In this historical context, it has nothing to do  
     with the much later notion of <tliterature"> in the narrow sense; see my 4tRitual, Text, and  
     the Formation of the Canon: Historical Transitions of wen in Early Chinas [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
381. ^ See Ochi Shigeaki, Sengoku Shin Kan shi kenkyu 2:581-82.

     Also in this context, speculations about the official Ch'in embracement of the  
     traditional canon have pointed to the ^Phase^ or \*<PoteBcy,, of ^Watef' (shui-tu) and its  
     cosmologically correlated number purportedly adopted in 221 B.C. (for doubts on  
     this, see section 4.2,, n, 14, above). According to Wang Pao-hsuan, Hsi-Han ching-hsileh  
     y尨伽-Wm, 15-20, and others, the notion of the “Six Arts’’（"w-f 六藝）might reflect the  
     official standard of organizing the cosmos in groups of six, while the Western Han term  
     “Five Canons”（丽五經）is cosmologically related to the adoption of “Earth”（土)  
     and its correlated number ^five^ as the imperial patron potency. This would move the term  
     wu-ching from 136 B.C. to 104 B.C. (or later), when the ^Earth11 was adopted by Han  
     Wu-ti. Such a move is not without support: the term is not mentioned in the Shih-chi  
     (except in the spurious <fBook on Music/7 on which see section 5,2,, n, 81, above) and  
     appears in only three brief notes (6.159, I9A.726, 883620) in the Han-shu. This [↑](#footnote-ref-382)