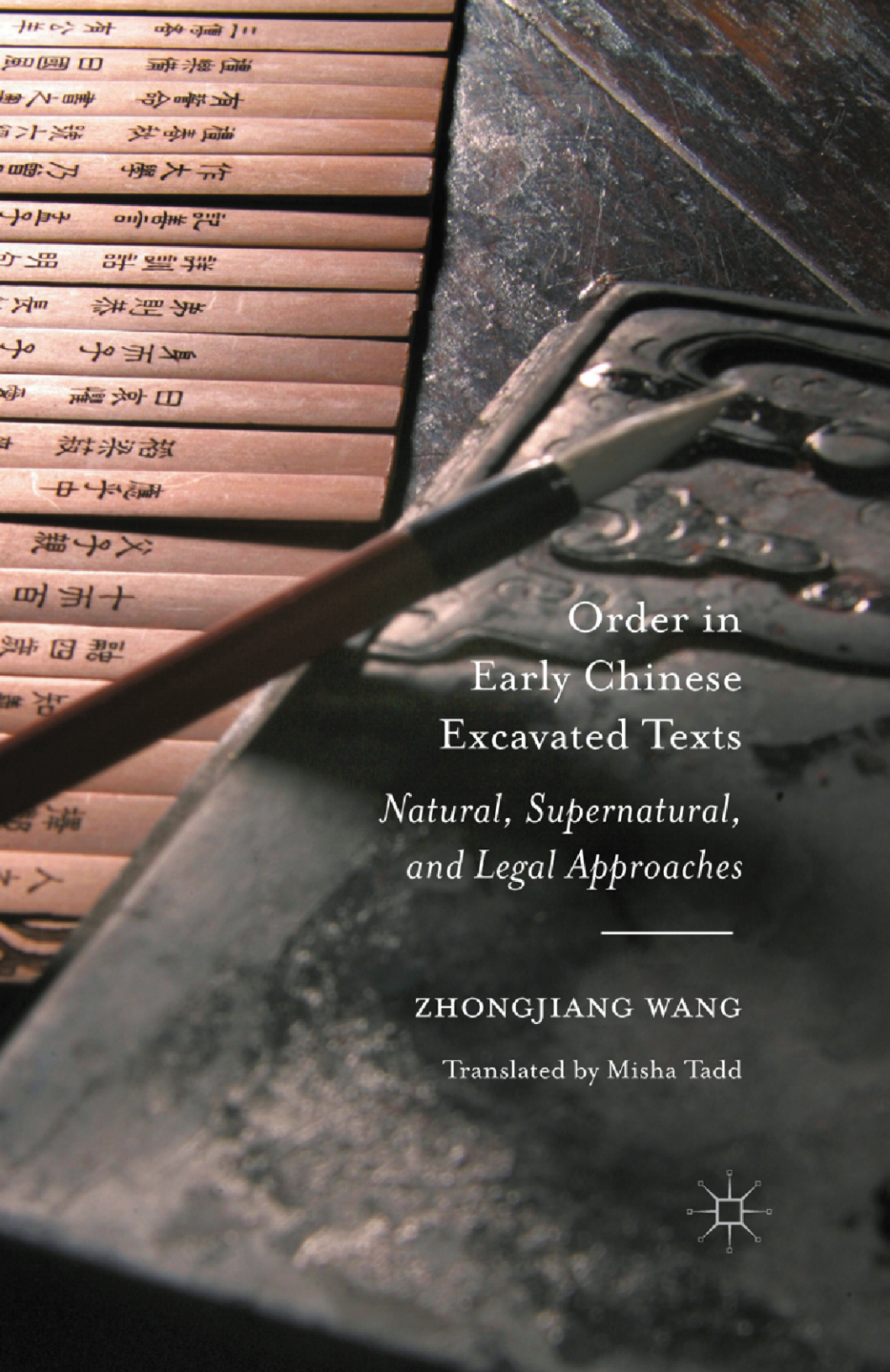

Order in Early Chinese Excavated Texts

Natural, Supernatural, and Legal Approaches

ZHONGJIANG WANG

Translated by Misha Tadd

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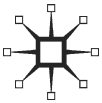

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Contents

Prolegomenon

The study of newly discovered bamboo strip and silk manuscripts is one of the most exciting and fresh fields in China today. Beginning in the previous century, this globally significant topic has become one of the three main branches of scholarship on ancient China. Unlike with the finite discoveries of the Shang dynasty oracle bones or the Dunhuang manuscripts, starting the 1970s, and especially into the 1990s, there has been a continual stream of these early texts emerging from the ground. This field is thus constantly changing and evolving, and one cannot exaggerate its rapid ascent to prominence.

As these texts have been appearing for some time, previously skilled analyses of the excavated materials have already improved our knowledge of ancient Chinese civilization, history, culture, and thought, and such research continually strives to deepen and reformulate our understanding of the past.[1] We can definitely affirm, without overstating the case, that the excavated texts indeed present numerous, exciting opportunities for expanding our general knowledge of ancient Chinesec ulture.[2]

This current project unearths innovative theories about early Chinese thought from within a variety of buried books. In particular, we would like to draw attention to three mutually related aspects of ancient thought that, because of the finds, have gained prominence and undergone significant reassessment. These three will comprise the core focus of the following chapters and highlight theories of order: the natural order of cosmology, the supernatural order of divine will, and the human order of law and governance.

Such different approaches to order all emerge from a search for constancy in the world and society and often all interact in nuanced ways. For example, within the excavated materials one finds new cosmologies and perspectives on social order that reveal the union of Daoist and Legalist thought indicative of the post-Laozi Daoism that we call the "Huang-Lao tradition." The interconnections of these topics reveal important historical developments in the conceptions of both the cosmos and society. Moreover, while many archeological texts employ abstract notions of "natural order" as a basis for human

communal organization, others also reveal a persistent belief in the supernatural and a reliance on that worldview for the establishment of political legitimacy, purpose, value, and social norms.

The many texts addressed in this project complicate and enhance our awareness of the intricate relationship in early Chinese thought between the natural and supernatural orders as sources for social organization and legitimacy. The wealth of rediscovered works now highlights the diversity of these early views and helps us to go beyond the simple evolutionary model of Chinese thought that suggested a movement from superstition to natural holism. Instead of considering the history of Chinese thought as a straight line, we should regard it as a loose net of divergent views and interests. This more realistic perspective still finds a sense of continuity in the shared search for a reliable source of order. A search we can now more fully recall.

Recovered Memories

In every field of study new methods have the ability to open up novel paths to knowledge, but in the discipline of history, the discovery of new texts and materials holds a special place of honor that supersedes even that of methodology. In this regard, the bamboo and silk manuscripts can assist us in further confirming that which we previously understood, while also further expanding our awareness. If one proposes that history is essentially a recollection of the past,[3] then the discovery of the excavated texts represents an awakening and rebirth of such memories. The events that occurred in the past (what was said and what was done) were incredibly numerous and multifarious, and so our maintained and preserved memories represent only a small fraction of what actually took place. To put it another way, in its very origin, the creation of history accompanies a massive amount off orgetfulness.[4]

In terms of storing the information of history and human thought, the bamboo and silk manuscripts represent an unusual type of memory in that they transcend the "mythologized" memories passed down over the millennia. Because the manuscripts were preserved as burial objects and only recently excavated, they are historical memories that were sealed away and forgotten and have once again arisen into the light; they are precious beyond description. Due to the large quantity of excavated manuscripts, we can now imagine how the national library at Luoyang might have looked during the Eastern Zhou, and we can more accurately speculate on the diversity present within early

Chinese civilization. Some go so far as to consider the Chinese culture recorded on bamboo and silk as representing a unique "Bamboo and SilkC ivilization."[5]

Actually, during the Zhou and Qin dynasties, Chinese culture was mostly recorded on bamboo strips, though there were also wooden and silk books as well. All the ancient texts that the Han dynasty father-son duo Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BCE) and Liu Xin 劉歆 (50 BCE-23 CE) edited were most likely written on these materials. Thus, we must remember that the "bamboo book" was not only a particular manifestation of material culture but also carried the entire content of ancient Chinese civilization.

In contrast to the Western technologically based notion of the "Bronze Age," the historical period of Early China should more accurately be termed the "Bamboo and Silk Age." This is a broader and more syncretic understanding of what constitutes an "Age." Its vast timespan began in the second millennium BCE with the Xia or at least the Shang dynasty (as supported by the mention of bamboo book records, *ce* 册 and *dian* 典, in the *Shangshu* 《尚書》),[6] and extended down to the Eastern Han and the Jin of the third century CE: this period reached its zenith during the Zhou and Western Han.

These bamboo and silk books are the creation of early Chinese civilization, and the vast information they convey about its history, culture, knowledge, and thought is invaluable. Within them, we find the foundations of all subsequent Chinese historical memory. This is why we might refer to early Chinese civilization as a "Bamboo and Silk Civilization" and use this term to indicate the rich variety and brilliance of ancient China preserved and transmitted on bamboo strips, inscribed on wooden tables, and penned on silk manuscripts. Ancient Chinese philosophy holds a prominent position in this civilization as well.

As for the recently excavated texts, they represent only a small component of the total bamboo and silk culture, but they include significant content relating to the history of Chinese philosophy and thought. These records belong to the broad category of historical memory known as "intellectual memory." While we must admit that the most important works of early Chinese thought were all transmitted down through the ages, regaining so many precious lost components of early philosophy has revealed a world of ancient thought vaster, richer, and more varied than we could have previously imagined.

Just as Ikede Tomohisa says, "The bamboo and silk excavated materials are unquestionably profound and important resources that open new vistas in the study of the history of Chinese thought."[7] When compared to transmitted texts, the different excavated works, the Mawangdui bamboo and silk texts, the Qin dynasty bamboo strips of Shuihudi, the Chu kingdom bamboo strips of Guodian, and the Chu kingdom bamboo strips held by the Shanghai Museum unveil novel components of ancient thought that significantly alter our previousc onceptions.

Natural Order

One of the profound revelations from the buried texts is the importance and variety of early Chinese cosmogonic speculation. Emblematic of this trend are the works found in end the twentieth century at Mawangdui, Guodian, and among Shanghai Museum's collection. Most of the texts within these three groups belong to either Confucianism or Daoism (including Huang-Lao), and the content of these rediscovered manuscripts confirm that Confucians of this period were not particularly concerned with the realm of metaphysics. This signifies a major contrast between the teachings of early Confucianism and early Daoism, as the latter often engaged with questions concerning the origin of the universe and the creation of Heaven, Earth, and the ten thousand things.

Among the newly excavated materials, one finds "The Way's Origin" ("Dao Yuan"《道原》) within *The Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi sijing* 《黃帝四經》) found at Mawangdui, *The Great One Birthed Water* (*Taiyi shengshui*《太一生水》) from Guodian, and *The Primordial Constant* (*Hengxian*《恒先》) and *All Things Are Forms in Flux* (*Fanwu liuxing*《凡物流形》) from the Shanghai Museum's collection. These four are notable for preserving metaphysical theories lost for thousands of years, and there is a general consensus among Chinese scholars that these texts all belong to the Daoist or Huang-Lao traditions.

Among these recovered works, there exist two types of metaphysics: ontology and cosmology. "The Way's Origin" belongs to the first type, while *The Great One Birthed Water, The Primordial Constant,* and *All Things Are Forms in Flux* represent the second. The key distinction of these two types is that ontology investigates the foundational nature that unifies everything, while cosmology addresses how the universe and all the ten thousand things were created and why

they continue to transform. Previously, Han dynasty metaphysics was classified as "cosmology," and Wei-Jin Neo-Daoist and Song-Ming Neo-Confucian metaphysics were identified as "ontology," but the excavated texts reveal a less linear history of thought.

"The Way's Origin" affirms the Way as the foundational body that supports all creation and is quite comparable to the view found in "The Great and Venerable Teacher" 《大宗師》 chapter of *Zhuangzi* 《莊子》.[8] Actually, this conception of the Way represents a similar but more developed version of Daoist metaphysics found in the "The Way's Origin" ("Dao Yuan"《道原》) chapter of the *Wenzi* 《文子》 and the "Originating in the Way" ("Yuan Dao"《原道》) chapter of the *Huainanzi* 《淮南子》. In these three texts, the Way mainly appears as an ontological reality, in contrast to the *Laozi*'s mostly cosomolgical depictions and explanations of it. However, by supplemmenting the content of the two received texts, the Mawangdui version of "The Way's Origin" has enriched and expanded our understanding of Daoist ontology. This is especially true for its equation of the Way and the One, as it says of the Way that "the One is its style name."[9] By using the One to discuss the Way, the text explicitly names the Way as the foundational nature that unifies the diversity of the ten thousand things.

Laozi's metaphysics includes both ontology and cosmology but prioritizes cosmology. Previously our understanding of pre-Qin Daoist cosmology mainly relied on the key passage in *Laozi* Chapter 42: "The Way birthed the One, the One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, and the Three birthed the ten thousand things."[10] This model is both staggeringly simple and unnervingly vague. Beyond this, all we had was Zhuangzi's metaphysics which presented a heavy dose of *qi* transfiguration theory but lacked a clear cosmological model. Now, *The Great One Birthed Water*, *The Primordial Constant*, and *All Things Are Forms in Flux* provide new sources for understanding the cosmological side of early metaphysics.

These discoveries have revealed how Daoist cosmology developed after Laozi. Notably, within the cosmological models of *The Primordial Constant*, *The Great One Birthed Water*, and *All Things Are Forms in Flux*, the "Way" *Dao* 道 is not the supreme central concept. In *The Primordial Constant*, the core term is the eponymous "Primordial Constant" Hengxian 恒先, in *The Great One Birthed Water* it is the "Great One" 太一*Taiyi*, while in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* it is simply the "One" *Yi* 一.

These three key terms form the center of each texts' distinctive cosmology and cosmogony. The cosmogonic process in *The Primordial*

Constant proceeds as follows: the Primordial Constant → Space → *Qi* → the Manifest → the Beginning → Movement. Following a detailed analysis of other explanations found in the text, we more or less are able to understand what each of these stages represents. However, in the case of *The Great One Birthed Water,* a more complex process of cosmic creation and transformation has been depicted as: the Great One ←→ Water (Great One) ←→ Heaven ←→ Earth → Spirit and Illumination → Yin and Yang → the Four Seasons → Cold and Hot → Dry and Wet → the Year. This model presents something much more intricate because during the first few steps the newly created components continually return to the previous stage before being able to divide again and generate the next step. The text terms this shift "returning to assist" *fanfu* 反輔. Yet, after the emergence of Heaven and Earth, the subsequent stages either depict the simultaneous creation of opposite pairs or multiple interrelated factors like the four seasons. The text calls these "repeated mutual assistance" *fuxiangfu* 復相輔.[11] Together, the two types of "assistance" represent binary relationships and complicate the model of simple linear cosmic emergence. Lastly and most simply, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* says, "The One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, the Three birthed the Mother, and the Mother completed the Congelations." This includes heavy shades of *Laozi* Chapter 42.

Although concepts used in the cosmological models of *The Primordial Constant*, *The Great One Birthed Water,* and *All Things Are Forms in Flux* were all influenced by Laozi to differing degrees, they also used novel ideas and terms beyond his own core concepts. Thus, Laozi's and their cosmologies noticeably diverge. Most significantly, they present more detailed depictions of the process of creation. The discovery of these three texts confirms that the problem of cosmology remained a core issue of Daoist philosophy and hints at the variety that existed during this more historically advanced stage of Daoist metaphysics.

The three previous explanations of the origin and creation of the universe help to substantiate the view that ancient Chinese cosmology primarily involves theories of "generation" and not "creation," "birthing" and not "constructing." Pondering the origin of the cosmos, the Daoists were perhaps inspired by observing the reproduction of humans and animals as they envisioned the universe coming about through a process of pregnancy and birth. This sort of cosmology could be called a "birthing model of cosmology," and the Daoist establishment of this new "procreative metaphysics" provided a long-lasting source of inspiration for Chinese thinkers.

As a matter of fact, after the universe was birthed, it existed for an extremely long time and covered a profoundly vast space. However, as surely as it began, the life of the universe must come to an end, a view that happens to concord with beliefs in contemporary physics that the universe will eventually disperse. Significantly, ancient Chinese cosmologists were only concerned with the process of the emerging cosmos, and never considered the issue of a final reversion to its origin. Therefore, they were not "Finalists" let alone "Eschologists." They remained focused on understanding the origin of cosmic order, that constant source of stability.

Supernatural Order

Though the abstract and naturalistic models of cosmology found in lost texts represent a major strand among the early attempts to find a constant and reliable order in the cosmos, the archeological materials have also taught us much about the religious beliefs of the Eastern Zhou and early theories of divine will. These discoveries complicate a commonly held model of Chinese intellectual history.

It is generally believed that the transition from the Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang, and Western Zhou) to the Eastern Zhou involved a shift from "religion" to "philosophy." More concretely this has been described as a pivot from the belief in the Will of Heaven *Tianyi* 天意 or Divine Will *shenyi* 神意 toward a humanism that emphasized human subjectivity and the value and function of the individual and a naturalism that did not rely on any supernatural power to explain the cosmos or its constituents.

Because of abruptness of this shift, the appearance of the early Chinese philosophical masters in the Eastern Zhou (771–221 BCE) has been called China's "Axial Age." That is to say, the philosophies of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods represent a creative and diverse break from past religious beliefs, and this original moment of awakening is seen as the fountainhead of all later Chinese thought.

When only considering large trends and circumstances, the reductionism of the Axial Age model and the notion of linear transformation from religion to naturalistic philosophy rest on stable ground. It is especially pertinent to the shift represented by Daoist thought and Confucianism's progression from Mencius to Xunzi, as the Daoists and Xunzi indeed propounded new philosophical stances concerning a naturalistic Way of Heaven, natural humanism, and the subjectivity of the human mind. Furthermore, within Zhuangzian and Xunzian

style naturalism, the divine nature and divine will of Heaven 天 *Tian* were completely excoriated, and Heaven was transformed into a purely natural ideal, a standard of value, and a natural order.

However, due to recent archeological discoveries, we have become more cognizant that the religious beliefs of the Three Dynasties persisted during the transformative age of the Eastern Zhou, and often appeared in modified forms in the writings of that period's philosophical masters. One classic example is Mozi's views on the Will of Heaven *Tianzhi* 天志 and the "spirits and gods" *guishen* 鬼神. We can firmly say along with the dominant Eastern Zhou trends of humanism and naturalism, we can find another cultural scene filled with stanch views on the Will of Heaven and the spirits and gods. The conspicuousness of Mozi's religious views forces us to admit that the philosophers of the Eastern Zhou were not solely promoting naturalistic notions of the Way of Heaven. Furthermore, when approached without secular bias, the *Analects* 《語語》 and the *Liji* 《禮記》proclaim to us that Confucius and many non-Xunzian Confucians, in fact, had not divorced themselves from the ancient religious traditions of honoring spirits and gods.

This last claim requires in-depth explication, as it runs counter to popular narratives about early Confucianism. We assert that Confucius did by no means reject the existence of Heaven, the Mandate of Heaven *Tianming* 天命, or the spirits and gods. He said, "Respect the spirits and gods, but keep them at a distance."[12] By this we propose he did not mean that people are "estranged from the spirits and gods," but instead that one should "honor and respect the spirits and gods, and not profane them."

Support for this reading comes from the *Guoyu*《國語》. That text mentions "severing the communication between Heaven and Earth,"[13] This statement does not negate the divinity of Heaven or promote estrangement from it but actually represents a solemn proclamation about the boundaries between gods and men, and the importance of preventing "the people from having a hodgepodge of deities that cannot be clearly differentiated" or "individuals giving offerings as their own families' shamans."[14] The key aim of the passage is for the ruler to regain a monopoly on religious order and divine power to promote the idea that "people and gods have different roles, and so [people should] respect them and not profane them."[15] Following this textual support, the *Guoyu* statement that "[people should] respect them and not profane them" becomes a revealing gloss to the *Analects'* saying, "Respect the spirits and gods, but keep them at a distance." Confucius

is not rejecting supernatural beings, but is promoting the maintenance of sacred and profane categories.

To further support this more religious reading of the *Analects*, we turn to the "Biaoji" 《表記》 chapter of the *Liji* 《禮記》 which provides a record of the religious traditions of the Three Dynasties. It says:

> The way of the Xia dynasty was to honor the mandate, and serve the spirits and respect the gods but keep them at a distance . . . The [rulers] of the Shang dynasty honored the gods, and led the people in serving them. Thus, they prioritized spirits before ritual propriety . . . The [rulers] of the Zhou honored ritual propriety and valued engagement. They served the spirits and respected the gods, but kept them at a distance.[16]

This passage illustrates the different methods people used during the Three Dynasties to serve the spirits and gods and does not indicate that during those periods people neglected or were estranged from these supernatural beings. Consequentially, Confucius stating, "Earnestly caring for the people, while respecting the spirits and gods but keeping them at a distance, can be called wisdom," should definitely not be interpreted to mean, as is so common, that Confucius values only the human and rejects or neglects the divine.

Those who promote the popular view that Confucius distanced himself from spirits and gods affirm this stance by relying on the passage, "The Master did not speak about the extraordinary, strength, disorder, or gods."[17] Yet, looking closely one finds this reading rests on questionable interpretive decisions.

Such analysis of this famous passage can be traced to the commentary of Wang Su 王肅 (195–256) who explains:

> "Extraordinary" means "bizarre," "strength" refers to feats like Ao pulling the boat, or Wu Huo lifting a weight of 30,000 catties, "disorder" refers to ministers killing kings and sons killing fathers, and "gods" refer to the affairs of spirits and gods. Some of these contribute nothing to teaching and transforming people, and some of these are not worthy ofme ntion.[18]

While I generally accept the interpretations of Wang Su, in this case the alternative reading of Li Chong 李充 (c. 323) that appears in the *Lunyu jijie* 《語語集解》 is worth considering instead. The key shift is that instead of seeing the four characters on which Confucius does

not speak as the individual terms "extraordinary," "strength," "disorder," and "gods," Li Chong suggests these actually should be read as the two compounds "strange powers" and "disordered gods." He explains:

> Powers that do not follow the normal order are called strange powers. Gods that do not follow the proper order are called disordered gods. Strange powers and disordered gods are grouped with evil and contribute nothing to education. Thus they are not discussed.[19]

Incorporating Confucius' view on spirits and gods explained above, Li Chong's reading seems to accord with Confucius' original intent. That is to say, Confucius certainly did not reject spirits and gods and actually offers discourse on these beings.

This understanding of the religiosity of Confucius and Confucians finds multiple sources of support within the excavated manuscripts. For example, in *The State of Lu's Great Drought* (*Lubang dahan* 《魯邦大旱》) discovered among the bamboo strip collection of the Shanghai Museum, Confucius proposes to Duke Ai two methods to control the disaster. The first involves correcting the use of punishment and virtue, and the second entails sacrificing to the rivers and mountains.[20] In this regard Confucius was continuing the great traditions of the Three Dynasties that approached the issues of cosmic and social order from a religious and moral angle.

The rich body of texts in the Shanghai Museum collection further includes a manuscript called *The Three Virtues* (*San De* 《三德》) that seems to explain Confucian religious beliefs.[21] Carefully investigating this text reveals it to be filled with naturalistic approaches to the Way of Heaven, as well as discourses on the divine nature of Heaven and the will of the gods. It uses many religious expressions like "Heaven" *Tian* 天, "God of Heaven" *Tianshen* 天神, "August Heaven" *Huangtian* 皇天, "Lord on High" *Shangdi* 上帝, "Heaven's Rituals" *Tianli* 天禮, "Mandate of Heaven" *Tianming* 天命, "spirits and gods" *guishen* 鬼神, "Heaven sent disasters" *Tianzai* 天災, "Supreme Heaven" *Shangtian* 上天, and "ritual sacrifice" *jisi* 祭祀. It also reveals a theory of calamities and anomalies that suggest that it is Heaven which sends these "natural disasters." We consider this a lost work of the Confucian tradition that reflects the religious and theological views of Eastern Zhou Confucians.

The religious concerns of *The Three Virtues* do not focus on human salvation or liberation, but on the preservation, ordering, and stabilization of the empire and its states. This represents a continuity of activity

and form where the "Way of Heaven" *Tiandao* 天道 and the "Way of Humanity" *Rendao* 人道 interact, and the "Will of Heaven" *Tianyi* 天意 and the "Will of Humanity" *Renyi* 人意 are mutually bound together. This type of synthesis combines differentiation and intimate involvement; it is religious and also naturalistic; it combines "governing with the constant" and "governing with virtue" with "establishing the way of gods to govern" and "unifying gods and governance." This vision that integrates cosmic and social order provides a new hybrid example of the search for a stable foundation of existence.

This confidence in the cosmic justice of Heaven appears somewhat weakened in another text from the Shanghai Museum, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* (*Guishen zhi ming*《鬼神之明》). There one can observe a previously unknown Eastern Han perspective on divine beings that is neither as naturalistic nor as idealistic as texts like *The Three Virtues*. When compared to the three *Mozi* chapters on "Shedding Light on Spirits" 《明鬼》 that provide prolonged theologically resolute expositions on the belief in these supernatural beings, the small size of the lost text *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* seems trivial. However, the text's stance, that sometimes spirits and gods have divine insight and sometimes they do not, reveals a view on divinity that significantly diverges from that of either Mozi or Confucius. This perspective affirms that accepting the existence of spirits and gods must entail an admission that their bestowal of rewards and punishments is inconstant and their surveillance of human activity incomplete.

Such a view is a major adjustment to the Confucian and Mohist convictions that spirits and gods universally "provide fortune to the good, and bring calamity to the evil" or the notion that good and evil people always get what they deserve, and so it should be considered an ambiguous take on the divine that contains a measure of skepticism. The discovery of this lost manuscript has provided a small window into the previously unrecognized diversity of religious beliefs during the Eastern Zhou and represents a unique instance where the active search for observable constancy in the cosmos comes into tension with tradition.

Legal Order

Our final theme concerns the renewed understandings of the legalistic manifestation of a "communal rationality" in the Huang-Lao tradition and the importance of the consistency of law during the Qin. As for the pre-Qin Daoist philosophical lineage, we have long possessed

a strong grasp on the development of its thought from Laozi to Zhuangzi and have frequently stressed the importance of Zhuangzi's individualism and political and civil disobedience within that early tradition. However, this approach dilutes Laozi's philosophical enthusiasm for politics and his political insights on ruling with nonaction, and obscures the connection of this political thought to the Huang-Lao tradition.

Previously, because transmitted texts like *Guanzi* 《管子》 and *Shenzi* 《慎子》 had not received much attention and the works of the Huang-Lao tradition had been lost, we were unable to recognize that the post-Laozi Huang-Lao tradition integrated components of Legalism and Confucianism. Yet, with the discovery of the Mawangdui silk manuscript *The Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi sijing* 《黃帝四經》), these previous impediments to Huang-Lao research were shattered. Relying on this new work, we now understand how the political philosophy of Laozi was received and transformed by the Huang-Lao tradition. "Naturalness and non-activity" are Laozi's highest principles that are used to control and limit the power of the ruler and reject interventionism, maintain a state of purity, stillness, and nonaction so that everyone can manage their own affairs in their own way. Yet, Laozi's "Way of naturalness and non-activity" is highly abstract and weak on implementability. He appeals to cosmic constants, but never provides concrete guarantees to ensure that the ruler will consistently employ said constants.

By incorporating the Legalist notion of a "system of laws" into Laozi's political thought, the Huang-Lao tradition established a Way-centric conception of natural laws that functioned as a foundation for a transcendent and unified legal system. The formation of this unified and universal system finally provided an objective guarantee for the ruler to follow the ideal of nonaction and not arbitrarily or unfairly impose his whims on the people. The reason that the ruler can be "non-active" is because of the existence of this unified system of laws, which operates as a standard of measure for human behavior and a guarantee of national and governmental order. Moreover, this legal system can operate as a standard measure for human behavior because it accords with human nature and the natural order.

As people naturally seek to gain and avoid harm, reward based laws are effective; similarly, as people flee injury and fear death, punishment based law are also effective. In this sense, the ruler's approach of following what is "natural" for the hundred clans becomes laws that accord with human nature. From this origin, we can easily understand why the Huang-Lao tradition emphasizes the legal system, and why

it promotes "the way of still accord" and "according and following." This new view reveals a major change in post-Laozi Daoist political philosophy and explains why Huang-Lao focuses so heavily on politics.

This ideal of a single legal system emerged from the Legalism of Qin. That tradition and its association with the first Chinese empire has historically been reviled by Confucians and historians due to the infamous instance when Qin Shihuang "burned books and buried scholars" in an effort to forcibly create a single unified society. With the discoveries of the numerous Qin legal documents at Shuihudi, we have a new understanding of the importance of law within the political life of Qin officials and the complexities of implementing a single constant standard within a diverse empire.

Summation

We are greatly inspired by the continued revelations emerging from the yellow earth of China. The scores of excavated documents not only affirm the existence of the Silk and Bamboo Age but also arouse new appreciation for the diversity and sophistication of ancient Chinese thought.

This collection of essays hopes to offer renewed insight into how the ancient Chinese viewed the universe (supernatural or natural) and how those views related to their search for social order and stability during the Warring States and into the early Han. In all cases, these thinkers and writers expressed the importance of a constant foundational order, or relied on this lever to question sources of such order, as is the case of *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods.* This longing for something stable on which to build a peaceful and prosperous society stimulated great creativity and led to rich conceptualizations of the universe, its functions, its gods, and the rule of law.

We are grateful for these findings that have both historical and philosophical value and look forward to future discoveries that will only further broaden our perspective on these questions and many others.

CHAPTER 1

The Cosmology of *The Great One Birthed Water*

Within the early records of human thought, one tends to find three major cosmogonic models. The first is the "mythological" model that imagines heroic figures who create Heaven and Earth and all the creatures therein.[1] The second is the "religious" model that envisions a supreme deity who makes the cosmos and humanity. The last is the "philosophical" approach, which asserts the world emerged from some foundational principle or substance. These three divergent cosmogonic modes of thought all appear to some degree within the traditions of early China. However, the historical relationship of these different perspectives remains extremely difficult to unravel.

Considering the records that predate the great masters of the Zhou (like *The Book of History*, *The Book of Odes*, the *Guoyu*, or the *Zuozhuan*), one finds a conspicuous dearth of cosmogonies that depict creation as a sequential concrete process. Instead one simply sees references to how "Heaven generated the people and established the ruler," "Heaven generated the multitudes of humanity that exists as creatures and that possess an order," "Heaven generated the five materials" and the like, all of which only represent a single moment of genesis and a simple relationship between creator and created. Compared with these early examples, later cosmological visions that rely on a transcendent "Divine Will" or "Way of Heaven" to explain the universe, its creatures, as well as natural and social orders present a much more dynamic perspective.

Previously, the only available early depiction of the process of cosmic creation was the pithy model in Chapter 42 of the *Laozi*: "The Way birthed the One, the One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, and the Three birthed the ten thousand things."[2] Following the discovery of *The Great One Birthed Water* (*Taiyi shengshui* 《太

一生水》) among the tomb texts of Chu, we now can gaze upon a new cosmogonic model.[3] Because this text emerged together with the three bamboo strip groups of *Laozi A*, *B*, and *C*, and in particular because its appearence perfectly matches that of *Laozi B*, many questions have been raised over whether it was written before or after this *Laozi* edition.

If we postulate that the Guodian *Laozi* is the earliest edition of the *Laozi* or is the earliest stage in the formation of the *Laozi*, then *The Great One Birthed Water* could have been written around the same time or it could even predate the *Laozi*. By accepting either of these propositions, it means that *The Great One Birthed Water* could not possibly have been influenced by the bamboo *Laozi* text. Yet, if there is evidence of some kind of influence, it must be that *Laozi* was affected by *The Great One Birthed Water*. This could be the case because the Guodian *Laozi* does not include the passage "The Way birthed the One, the One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, and the Three birthed the ten thousand things."

The author, however, is confident that the Guodian *Laozi* cannot be the original edition of the *Laozi* because of its inclusion of reduplicated chapters, and so we postulate that the Guodian *Laozi* is comprised of selections from the original 5,000 character edition.[4] Furthermore, the pervasiveness of *Laozi* citations in the Zhou and Qin periods strongly suggests an earlier origin. Because of both these points, we argue that *The Great One Birthed Water* must have emerged under the influence of the *Laozi*.

While this recently discovered text's cosmogonic model is quite close to the *Laozi*'s, it obviously has its own unique qualities and structures. For example, the concept of the "Way" *Dao* 道 does not hold such a central position in the text. It also lacks the extremely important terms "virtue" *de* 德 and *qi* 氣. Perhaps this omission is the result of lost passages, as our copy of *The Great One Birthed Water* emerged from the ground degraded and incomplete. However, the work clearly demonstrates its main goal of explaining the creation and origin of the cosmos.[5] It also happens to belong to the same category as the roughly contemporary *The Primordial Constant* 《恒先》.

There have been numerous academic debates within and outside of China concerning *The Great One Birthed Water*,[6] and this chapter hopes to build on the foundation of this previous research to further advance and broaden our understanding of the text.

The Primordial State of the Cosmos: The Great One and The One

As long as one accepts that the universe was created, one must also simultaneously admit it has a beginning and an origin. While this stance does not agree with the old "steady state" theory that the universe is infinite in regard to both time and space, it fits nicely with current views in physics and cosmology. According to the *Shizi* 《尸子》, the *Mozi* 《墨子》, and the "Qisu" 《齊俗》 chapter of the *Huainanzi*, "time" includes the past and the present but is never something infinite.[7]

Traditional Chinese cosmologies are generally understood to include cosmogonies that not only depict the beginning of the universe but also recount the full process of its emergence. While these records do not explicitly mention a terminus to creation, the fact that they portray a beginning implies that as some point everything must reach its end. Intriguingly, Chinese cosmologists generally focus on the origin and process of creation, and do not stop to consider the question of the ultimate fate of the universe. They are not interested in theorizing about the "apocalypse" or the end of the world. Instead the classic questions mainly concerned whether or not the universe had a beginning, when it might have started, and how things came to be.

Similarly, *The Great One Birthed Water* does not concern itself with the end of the world, but only depicts the origin and birth of the cosmos. This origin is identified as the *Taiyi* 太一 or "Great One." A prominent explanation of this term is that it refers to the god "Great One" who functions as the divine creator. While historically this term has been used to refer to a specific deity, it has other meanings as well. In philosophy, it is a conceptual term for the ultimate origin; in religion, beyond indicating a god, it has also been the name of a star.[8] It is unlikely these three different definitions could have developed simultaneously, and so to understand which usage is appropriate in this text requires some background on the history of the term.

Li Xueqin long ago noted a connection between *The Great One Birthed Water* and a *Zhuangzi* passage in the "Tianxia" 《天下》 chapter that explains the teachings of Laozi and Yin Xi 尹喜 (first recipient of the *Laozi*, per legend): "They built [their system] according to the constantly unmanifest, and made their central [concept] the Great One."[9] This led him to suggest that the newly discovered text might be a lost teaching from Yin Xi's school of thought.[10] We

are thus inclined to suggest that the Great One in *The Great One Birthed Water* provided the theoretical foundation for the term's later use in identifying stars or deities.

This assertion further arises from the philological sense of *Taiyi* 太一. *Da* 大 "large" is another way to write *Tai* 太 "Great," a character which the *Shuowen jiezi* 《說文解字》 identifies as an image of a person. In the oracle bone records, this also appears to be the case where it means "big man."[11] The character *Yi* 一 "one" operates as the first counting number as far back as the oracle bones as well. In the compound constructed from these two words, we take "large" or "great" as the modifier of "one." As a result we must consider that the primary concept here is "one." The *Shuowen jiezi*, dated to the early second century CE, defines "one" as follows, "It is the origin of the Great Beginning and the foundation of the Way. It formed and divided Heaven and Earth and created the ten thousand things." The "one" defined here clearly had already become a philosophically sophisticated concept that far exceeds its usage as a simple counting number.

So how did this basic number attain its status as ultimate existence? We propose it was a metaphoric extension of the idea of "first number" to the concept of "first thing." Numbers also are used to identify the multiplicity of creation in contrast to the "one thing," as in the expression "The number for all things is ten thousand" found in *Zhuangzi*.[12] Considered philosophically, these numbers of "one" and "ten thousand" occupy the roles of the classic binary "The One" and "The Many." Because the multiplicity of "ten thousand" comes from an accumulation of the smaller "ones," we can say that ten thousand is contingent on the existence of one and that one is its origin. According to Wang Bi's comments on the *Laozi* Chapters 22 and 39, "One is the ultimate of the few," and "One is the origin of numbers and the ultimate of things."[13] Similarly, in the *Classic of Weiqi* 《棋經》, it notes: "The calculation of the ten thousand things begins with one . . . One is the master that creates numbers, and by residing in its extreme you can travel to the four ends of the Earth."[14]

Naturally, the transformation of a simple number into this philosophical term involves a long process. By becoming the opposite of multiplicity, "one" comes to mean things like *yiyang* 一樣 "one and the same," *yizhi* 一致 "identical," and *tongyi* 同一 "the same one." The *Zuozhuan* records that after the death of Yao "[the people of] the empire were like one, and with a common heart they raised up Shun as the Son of Heaven."[15] Here the "one" in "like one" means

"unified" and the "same." Similarly, in the *Guoyu* 《國語》 it says, "In controlling territory, partition the people as if [they are] one," and "The people are born from three, but serve them as though they are one."[16] In the *Xici* 《繫辭》 it says, "What do [the people of] the empire think? [The people of] the empire submit together but follow different paths; they have one goal but a hundred approaches."[17] Here one finds a contrast between "submit together" and "one goal" with "different paths" and "a hundred approaches."

While the teachings of Confucius are undoubtedly broad, he repeatedly emphasizes the "one" in his thought, especially in the famous "one thread that runs through it" passages.[18] The "one" in the "one thread that runs through it" passage is explained by Zengzi as "loyalty and sympathy." If he was right, then Confucius' teachings became "one" in loyalty and sympathy. Zhang Dainian 張岱年 indicated that Confucius' expression suggests employing a single general principle to unify the plurality of knowledge attained by studying a multiplicity of subjects.[19] Regardless of how Confucius means this "one" in his statement, its function is to unite multiplicity. Thus, this "one" encompasses the general abstract meanings of essentiality and oneness.

While Confucius provides hints of a philosophical conception of "one," the first conspicuous occurrence of the philosophical "one" appears in the *Laozi*. According to Zhang Dainian, Laozi gives the "one" in his cosmology the meanings of "oneness" and "self unification."[20] Laozi's understanding of "one," following the transmitted edition of the *Laozi,* appears in Chapter 42, "The Way birthed the One; the One birthed the Two," Chapter 14, "merge and become the One," and Chapter 39, "Heaven obtained the One and became clear".[21] Significantly, in these examples, the relationships between the Way and the One diverge. "The Way birthed the One" means the One must exist on a level lower than the Way. Yet, the One found in "merge and become the One" and "Heaven obtained the One" instead suggest it as an alternative appellation for the Way.

Consider the longer passage from Chapter 14:

> If you look but do not see it, call it "even." If you listen but do not hear it, call it "rarified." If you grasp for but do not obtain it, call it "subtle." These three cannot be realized through investigation. Thus they merge and become the One. On high, it is not bright. Down low, it is not dim. Oh it stretches on and is unnamable. It repeatedly returns to the unmanifest things. It is called the shape of unmanifest

> shapes, the image of unmanifest things. It is called vague and elusive. Welcoming it, do not see its front. Following it, do not see its back. Hold fast to the ancient Way to rule the present realities.[22]

In the Fuyi and Mawangdui editions of the *Laozi*, following the line "merge and become the One," there is an extra *yizhe* 一者 "The One [topic marker]."[23] This difference affirms that the long list of descriptions that follows refer to "The One," and supports, based on the content of that list, the equation of the One with the Way.

Zhang Dainian finds another sense of the "one" in the text, which he identifies as the oneness of self-unification. He sees this in the term *baoyi* 抱一 "embrace the One" found in Chapter 10, "Support and manage the white soul and embrace the One," and Chapter 22, "Therefore the sage embraces the One to become a model for the world."[24] He further identifies the term *deyi* 得一 "obtain the One" in lines from Chapter 39:

> Concerning those of the past that obtained the One: Heaven obtained the One and became clear. Earth obtained the One and became stable. Spirits obtained the One and became divinely powerful. Gorges obtained the One and became full. The ten thousand things obtained the One and came to life. Nobles and kings obtained the One and brought order to the empire.[25]

In all cases, Zhang Dainian suggests this sense of "one" that involves obtaining and preserving self-unity.[26]

The One in the Laozi's term "embrace the One," however, can also be understood as the Way. From this view, "embrace the One" and "obtain the One" equate with "embrace the Way" and "obtain the Way," and so the One in these two cases cannot simply refer to the preservation of something's unity or its self-integration. In fact, it is only because the One operates as the origin of things and the universal unity providing things with their original nature that these two phrases signify the maintaining of unity.

The term "Great One," in *The Great One Birthed Water*, likely developed under the influence of the *Laozi*'s conception of "The One."[27] If Laozi had not previously imbued the term "one" with the cosmological sense of origin and unity, then the "One" as "Great One" might not have been possible. The term "Great One" is a compound, but does not indicate the combination of two equal concepts. Instead, "Great" modifies and describes "One." Because Laozi had already developed the philosophical connotations of "one," that single

syllable term can be glossed with the more technically specific "Great One."[28] Similarly, though in Chinese it is customary to translate the key concept of the Neo-Platonic philosopher Plotinus as *Taiyi* "Great One," in fact his term is simply just "one" (or *hen* in Greek). Even in this case, the philosophically sophisticated meaning of "one" equals the term *Taiyi*.

Researchers have noted that the "Great One" plays an equivalent cosmic role to that of Laozi's Way and that the *tai* 太 half of the compound relates to Laozi's use of *tai* 大 "great" as well. This later point is not surprising for in ancient times these two characters were equivalent. In the *Pianya* 《駢雅》 chapter "Explaining Names" (1587), it recounts:

> Most ancient people did not add the extra dot to *tai* 太, like in *Taiji* 大極 "Great Ultimate," *Taichu* 大初 "Great Beginning," *Taisu* 大素 "Great Simplicity," *Taishi* 大室 "Great Hall," *Taimiao* 大廟 "Royal Ancestral Temple," and *taixue* 大學 "Imperial Academy." This was later included to help differentiate the term from the word *da* 大 "big," as in "big or small."[29]

Tai 太 is also equated with the character *tai* 泰. In the *Zhengzi tong* 《正字通》 it explains, "The *Shuowen* has *tai* 泰 as having an old from of 𠔃 and a seal script form of 𣏌. They were simplified into 太 or even *tai* 大."[30] By the time of Fan Ye's 范曄 compilation of the *History of the Later Han* (220 CE), the character had changed to 太 as a result of an imperial name taboo. In the *Jiyun* 《集韻》 (1037), the three characters 太, 大, 泰 are identified as having the same pronunciations and meanings, though none of them indicate the normal sense of "big."[31] Looking at Daoist sources, *Zhuangzi* writes the term *Taichu* "Great Beginning" as 泰初 and thus show a comparable usage for 泰 and 太.[32]

In all these cases, we must remember that *tai* 太 "great" originally comes from the character *tai* 大. This older character is used in the *Laozi* when it discusses the "Four Greats" *sitai* 四大, "The Way is great, Heaven is great, Earth is great and the king is also great," using this modifier to explain the breadth and depth of these four. Laozi also uses *tai* 大 to identify something's transcendental nature: *Taidao* 大道 "Great Way," Taixiang 大象 "Great Image," *Taiqi* 大器 "Great Vessel," and *Taizhi* 大智 "Great Wisdom." This is especially important in the case of the Way, as *Laozi* Chapter 25 says, "I do not know its name, so I style it 'The Way.' If forced to name it, I call it 'Great.'"[33] We can conclude that for Laozi regardless of whether he is expressing the transcendent nature or high level of something he

uses the term *tai* 大. This expresses the highest limit of things and accords with the original meaning of the character *tai* 大. In these cases, Laozi uses *tai* 大 as an equivalent to *tai* 太.

Laozi favors the term *tai* 大 when depicting all superlative cases of range or degree, and this might have influenced the combination *tai* 大/*tai* 太 with the *yi* 一in *The Great One Birthed Water*. For one, we know this combination appears in the *Zhuangzi*:

> He knows it as the Great One (大一), knows it as the Great Obscured, knows it as the Great Eye, knows it as the Great Equalizer, knows it as the Great Square, knows it as the Great Reliable, knows it as the Great Stabilizer. This is perfection. The Great One penetrates it. The Great Obscured divides it. The Great Eye sees it. The Great Equalizer causes it. The Great Square embodies it. The Great Reliable manages it. The Great Stabilizer upholds it.[34]

Here the *tai* 大 in the "Great One" and all the other "Greats" (*tai* 大) that follow are equivalent to *tai* 太. *Zhuangzi* even has a passage which explains *taiyi* 大一 as a cosmic existence comparable to our understanding of *Taiyi* 太一. It says, "The supremely Great has nothing outside it and is called *Taiyi* 大一 'The Great One.'"[35] Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (circa 631) comments on this saying, "Total inclusion is what is called Great (*tai* 大)."[36] Cheng Xuanying further explicates the meaning of *Taiyi* 太一 in *Zhuangzi* by stating, "'Great' *tai* 太 names the 'broad' and 'large' *da* 大; 'One' identifies what is undivided. [Together] they refer to the Great Way that is boundless, unlimited, all-inclusive, and connected as one. Thus it is called the Great One."[37]

Sun Xidan 孫希旦 (1736–1784) analyzes the "Great One" *Taiyi* 大一 in the "Ritual Activity"《禮運》chapter of the *Liji*《禮記》saying, "Great" [*tai* 大] names the ultimate; One means the undivided. The Great One is what contains the highest Heaven, is pure undivided unity, and is the supreme level of order."[38] Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682) suggests *Taiyi* 太一 (Great One) is basically the name of a deity or a star, though he "does not know when this name first appeared."[39] Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 (1893–1980) noted the term *Taiyi* (Great One) does not appear before the Warring States and feels it difficult to determine which came first, the philosophical or theological sense of the word.[40] According to Qian Baocong 钱宝琮 (1892–1974), *Taiyi* (Great One) was originally a philosophical concept, and it was only in the Han that it became a term for the deity of the pole star.[41]

Like Qian, we are also inclined toward the view that the philosophical sense of the Great One appeared first and it only later underwent a transformation. More concretely, if the *Taiyi* (Great One) in *The Great One Birthed Water* developed from Laozi's two seperate concepts "One" and "Great" *tai* 大, then this compound term must have been coined by the author of this lost work. It is true that the "philosophical" *Taiyi* (Great One) can be found in works like *Liji, Zhuangzi, Wenzi,* and *Lüshi chunqiu,* and that the term clearly indicates a god in the *Chuci* 《楚辭》and *Heguanzi* 《鶡冠子》. However, recalling that the *Zhuangzi* identifies Laozi and his disciple Yin Xi with the phrase "Their mainstay was the Great One *Taiyi* 太一," we can posit that the "Great One" predates both the *Liji* and the *Zhuangzi*, and it may be that this early emergence is preserved and revealed in *The Great One Birthed Water.*

The Great One in *The Great One Birthed Water* is the source and origin of the cosmos. Yet, the text offers no explanation or description of this "Great One." Other cosmogonies like the *Laozi*, however, present various depictions of the primordial state prior to creation. Laozi terms this the "Way" and describes it thusly:

> How elusive and indistinct! Within its midst there is a something. How indistinct and elusive! Within its midst there is an image. How abstruse and hidden! Within its midst there is essence. Its essence is so true. Within its midst there is sincerity.[42]

The *Huainanzi* depicts the Great One in similar fashion:

> That cavernous fusion of Heaven and Earth, that undifferentiated inchoate muddle not yet created or formed into things, refer to it as the "Great One."[43]

According to this, the state of the Great One lacks any division, not even that of Heaven and Earth, and is the primordial chaos of undifferentiated simple substance that has yet to generate things. The Great One of the *Huainanzi* is also a unity, a One opposed to the Many, opposed to a Many that emerges from that very One, and because of divergent activities, the Many becomes all the multifarious phenomena and things:

> Together emerging from the One, each acquired its distinctive qualities. There were birds, there were fishes, and there were animals: this we call the differentiation of things. Regions became distinguished

> according to their categories; things became differentiated according to their groupings. Their natures and destinies were dissimilar; all acquired their physical forms in the manifest realm. Separate and not interconnected, differentiated as ten thousand things, none could compare with their ancestor. Thus, when animated, things are said to be alive; when dead, things are said to be expired. In both cases, they are things. It is not that there was nothing that made things into things; rather, what made things into things is not among the ten thousand things. In antiquity, at the Great Beginning, human beings were generated by the unmanifest and formed by the manifest. Having a physical form, they are restrained by things. But one who can return to that from which one was born, having not yet acquired a physical form, is called a True Person. The True Person is one who has not yet begun to differentiate from the Great One.[44]

In this section, One, Great Beginning, and Great One all have the same meaning.

According to Confucians, *li* 禮 "ritual propriety" is not only something created by humans as a form of etiquette or type of rites but it possesses a transcendent origin that is generally identified as Heaven. In the "Ritual Activity" 《禮運》 chapter of the *Liji*, the sources of *li* is not simply Heaven, but in the even more rarified Great One. It says:

> Therefore, ritual must be rooted in the Great One that divided into Heaven and Earth, turned into yin and yang, transformed into the four seasons, and fractured into spirits and gods. What it bestows is called the commands, and they are officiated by Heaven. Ritual must be rooted in Heaven; its movement reaches to Earth; its divisions affect affairs; its transformations follow the seasons; it mediates the division of the arts.[45]

We can see from the process of the Great One dividing into Heaven and Earth, turning into yin and yang, transforming into the four seasons, and so on down to the ghosts and spirits that it is undoubtedly the ultimate origin. Yet, this passage never depicts the state or reality of this Great One.

Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648), in the *Liji zhengyi* 《禮記正義》, comments on this saying, "The Great One is the chaotic original *qi* that preceded the division of Heaven and Earth."[46] Within the history of Daoist metaphysics, a prominent view considers the origin of the cosmos to be "the *qi* of chaos." Yet, to say that the Great One is "the original *qi* of chaos" has perhaps too strong a Han dynasty "theory of

original *qi*" flavor. For now, we need not be concerned with whether the Great One in "Ritual Activity" is "the original *qi* of chaos." The real issue is whether or not the Great One in *The Great One Birthed Water* has anything to do with *qi*.

It is generally understood that the One in Laozi's expression "The Way birthed the One" refers to a type of *qi* for later in the chapter the status of *qi* is confirmed when it says, "the ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang, and the rushing *qi* becomes the harmony."[47] In the cosmogony of *The Primordial Constant* (*Hengxian* 《恒先》), *qi* is also an important component. Even *Zhuangzi*'s cosmology can unequivocally be identified as a "transformation of *qi*" model. In contrast to these cases, *The Great One Birthed Water* never mentions *qi*. From the perspective of Daoist, or even all Chinese, metaphysics, this is outside the norm. Perhaps the text uses "water" as a unique substitution, for "water" (like *qi* in other texts) becomes a key link in the process of cosmic generation.

Similar to the perspective presented in "Ritual Activity," the *Lüshi chunqiu* 《吕氏春秋》 chapter "Great Music" 《大樂》 traces the origin of music all the way back to the Great One, "That from which music comes is distant. It is born from measures, and is rooted in the Great One."[48] This Great One is once again the ultimate origin of the cosmos, generating the world, Heaven and Earth, and all creatures. The text continues, saying:

> The Great One brought forth the Two Measures (*Liangyi* 兩儀); the Two Measures brought forth yin and yang. Yin and yang transformed, one ascending and one descending, joining together to become a pattern. Muddled and mixed, they divide and again join, join and again divide. They are called Heaven's Constants. The wheel of Heaven and Earth reaches its end and begins again, reaches its extreme and returns again, and all have their place. The sun, moon, planets, and constellations: some move fast and some move slow. The sun and moon differ in completing their movement. The four seasons alternatively arise: some hot, some cold, some have short days some have long days, some are soft and some are hard.[49] The ten thousand things that have emerged were created by the Great One and transformed by yin and yang. After the sprouts were first activated, they congealed into forms. The embodied forms have [their] places, and they all have their sounds. Sound emerges from harmony and harmony emerges from accord.[50]

This model has no place for *qi*, and definitely does not identify the foundational nature of the Great One as *qi*. In this sense, *The Great One Birthed Water* shares points of similarity with this conception.

However, the *Lüshi chunqiu* considers the "Way" as equal to the "Great One," a point conveyed later in the "Great Music" chapter:

> Concerning the Way: look for it, but do not see it; listen for it, but do not hear it. This is because it has no form. Those who know of seeing the invisible, hearing the inaudible, describing the indescribable get close to knowing it. The Way is the highest essence. It cannot have shape or name. When forced to name it, we call it the Great One.[51]

In the *Wenzi* 《文子》 and the related *Huainanzi*,[52] the Way and the Great One are also mutually defining. The *Wenzi* says:

> The emperor embodies the Great One; the king models yin and yang; the hegemon follows the four seasons; the lords employ the six tones. Those who embody the Great One are aware of Heaven and Earth and are versed in the theories of the Way and Virtue. Their sensory faculties are more radiant than the sun and moon; their essential spirit connects to the ten thousand things; their actions accord with yin and yang; their emotions harmonize with the seasons. They nurture everything of the Way, spreading out [their influence] impartiality. Among [even] flying bugs and writhing worms there are none that do not rely on [their] virtue for life. [Their] virtue flows beyond the bounds of civilization and their fame is passed down to future generations.[53]

Based on this whole passage, we can say that for the *Wenzi,* the "Great One," in the phrase "embody the Great One," equates with the Way.

The *Huainanzi* copies this passage from the *Wenzi,* and while adding a few characters here and there it preserves the Great One's correspondence to the Way. "The Basic Warp" 《本經》 chapter says:

> But the scholars of later times know nothing about how to form one body with the Way or how to comprehensively epitomize its virtue. They merely take up the track of things that have already come before. They sit facing one another with a dignified air and debate it; they drum, chant, and express themselves in dance. But [despite] their expansive studies and extensive learning, they still do not avoid delusions. It is as the *Odes* says, "One does not dare to attack a tiger barehanded; one does not dare to cross the [Yellow] River without a boat." Everyone knows this, but no one knows anything else. The emperor embodies the Great One; the king models yin and yang; the hegemon follows the four seasons; the lords employ the six tones. Those who grasp the Great One enclose and contain Heaven and Earth, suppress mountains and streams, absorb and emit yin and yang, blend with the

> four seasons, bind together the eight directions, and weave the web of the six coordinates. They renew the dew and universally spread out [their influence] impartiality, so among [even] flying bugs and writhing worms there are none that do not rely on [their] virtue for life.[54]

This next quote comes from the final chapter of the *Huainanzi,* which summarizes the "Origin of the Way" chapter by saying:

> Concerning the "Origin of the Way," it [begins with] the six coordinates contracted and dimensionless and the ten thousand things a muddled chaos. It then encompasses the image of the Great One, plumbs the depths of the unfathomable, and soars beyond the edge of the empty unmanifest. It relies on the small to embrace the great and guards the constrained to order the broad. It leads one to know the good and bad fortune of leading or following, and the benefit and harm of action or stillness. By sincerely penetrating its floodlike mind, realize its grand vision.[55]

Relying on this passage, we might conclude that the Great One in *The Great One Birthed Water* is similar to the concept of the Way in the *Laozi* or Daoism generally. *The Great One Birthed Water,* however, never makes this connection and the term the "Way" is not nearly as important or notable as in the *Laozi.*

This is quite a contentious problem, with the two major stances represented by Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭 and Li Ling 李零.[56] *The Great One Birthed Water* only mentions the term Way *dao* 道 in three places, so consider them one at a time. First, "The Way of Heaven values weakness" 天道貴弱; second, "The Way is also its style" 道亦其字也; third, "Anyone who relies on the reputation of the Way to manage affairs" 以道從事者必托其名. Observing these three uses of the "Way," it might be fair to deem it comparable to that of Laozi's Way and even equivalent to the Great One in line with the previous discussions. Yet, such an important decision requires further investigation.

Following Li Ling's adjustments to the text, these three places that discuss the Way all occur in relation to Heaven and Earth. It says:

> Below is soil and it is called Earth. Above is *qi* (air) and it is called Heaven. The Way is also its style, inquire into its name. Anyone who relies on the reputation of the Way to manage affairs will be able to complete them and personally gain prominence.
>
> 下，土也，而謂之地。上，氣也，而謂之天。道亦其字也，請問其名。以道從事者，必托其名，故事成而身長。

The key question is what the two "its" *qi* 其 characters indicate in the phrase "The Way is indeed its style, inquire to its name." Qiu Xigui suggests they refer to the Great One, which would mean this passage confirms the identity of the Way as a name for the Great One. Li Ling, however, feels they indicate "Heaven and Earth" as a unit, translated instead as "their," and that the passage depicts the relationship of these natural phenomena to the Way. The core difference between Qiu and Li rests in the question of why the "pervasive Way" would only encompass "Heaven and Earth."

As a point of comparison, the "it" *zhi* 之 in *Laozi* chapter 25 "so I style it the Way" undoubtedly signifies the ultimate origin of Heaven, Earth, and the ten thousand things.[57] The full passage clearly explains:

> There is something formed of chaos that preceded the creation of Heaven and Earth, How Still and Vast! It stands alone unchanging. It moves everywhere, without danger. It can be considered the mother of Heaven and Earth. I do not know its name, so I style it "The Way" [字之曰道].[58]

Unfortunately, both indefinite signifiers "its" in *The Great One Birthed Water* passage do not posses an explicit signified, and so assuming that they refers to "Heaven and Earth" is not unreasonable.

Li Ling has noted that the original transcription of the bamboo slip includes, "inquire into its name," but suspiciously there is no answer that follows the question. Because of this, Donald Harper suggested to Li Ling that that the line should be transcribed as "青昏其名" "azure and murky are their [*qi* 其] styles" where "azure" and "murky" operate as the styles of Heaven and Earth. Professor Li has subsequently accepted this reading.[59] "Azure" *qing* 青 can also be a variant for "clear" *qing* 清, as in Laozi's line "Heaven obtained the One and became clear." The problem with this reading is that in the *Laozi* the term the Way had already become the universal and ultimate abstract concept. Therefore, if, as argued above, *The Great One Birthed Water* postdates the *Laozi,* should not the Way be on the level of the Great One? How could it be just a style name for Heaven and Earth?

For one, *The Great One Birthed Water* explains the emergence of the cosmos from the Great One, and does so in a fashion far more concrete and detailed than what is found in the *Laozi.* In Chinese cosmogonies, the emergence of "Heaven and Earth" is generally the most important stage, for their relationship with the ten thousand

things, and humanity is closest. In *The Great One Birthed Water*, Heaven and Earth play such a role, and it may be that identifying these two with the Way helps emphasize their importance to creation. Nonetheless, the Way should not be limited to being the style name of Heaven and Earth, for it is also the style name of all of creation. This reading is supported by the text because it does not say "the Way is its style" but "the Way is *also* its style." Here "also" *yi* 亦 suggests that while the Way is a style name for Heaven and Earth it is more than that; it also is the style name of everything else in the cosmos. It is as the *Zhuangzi* says, "Dong Guozi asked Zhuangzi, 'That which is called the Way, where does it reside?' Zhuangzi replied, 'There is nowhere it does not reside.'"[60] All things have the Way: the Way is omnipresent, and so we can say that it is the style name of all things and not just Heaven and Earth.

Consider some the following final thoughts and discussions on the relationship of the "One" to the "Great One." After the "Great One" emerged historically, both the "Great One" and the "One" functioned as metaphysical concepts that describe a type of existence and role. This compatibility further confirms the transformation and mutual relationship of these two "ones." Still, the "One" was much more common than the "Great One," appearing in texts like the *Zhuangzi*, *Guanzi*, *Mengzi*, *Huangdi sijing*, *Xunzi*, *Lüshi chunqiu*, and *Huainanzi*. These works all contain numerous instances of the term the "One," and its meaning and usage are much broader than the "Great One." The Great One is more limited in its role as the origin of the cosmos, as the primordial state of pure undifferentiated unity. The One, however, when employed with a similar cosmic meaning usually includes a sense of being the totality and unity of the ten thousand things, and the singular natural order of all things. The following are select examples of this sense of the "One."

Zhuangzi says, "Thus the ten thousand things are One."[61] This is also true for unity and order in social political life, like when Mencius explains to King Xiang of Liang that the empire can be "stabilized with Oneness."[62]T he *Mengzi* records:

> Mencius had an audience with King Xiang of Liang. When he emerged he said, "When I observed him from a distance, he did not appear like a ruler. When I came close to him, there was not present any sense of awe. He suddenly asked, "How do you stabilize the empire?" I responded, "Stabilize it with Oneness." [He asked], "Who can make it One?" I replied, "He who takes no pleasure in killing can make it One."[63]

Here Mencius expresses "One" as the highest principle of rulership, a notion that is confirmed as a fundamentally a Daoist concept in many other examples. The *"Inward Training"* 《内業》 chapter in the *Guanzi* says:

> The One that can transform things, call it spirit. The One that can alter situations, call it wisdom. Transformations do not change *qi* and alterations do not change wisdom. Only the superior person who holds the One can act thusly. Holding the One without fail, one becomes the ruler of the ten thousand things. A superior person can affect things but is not affected by them for he has obtained the principle of the One.[64]

In the *Mengzi* it also says, "The distance which this covered exceeds one thousand *li*. The period over which this was transmited exceeds one thousand years. In the Middle Kingdom their behavior and intent was unified like the two halves of a seal. These previous and later sages, their method of ruling was One."[65] The *Zhuangzi* says, "That which the sage creates and that which the king completes all originate with One."[66]

From these examples we can see the similarities between the "One" and the "Great One" and expand our understanding of the "Great One." First, they equally signify the origin of the universe and the beginning of the process of creation.[67] Second, they both operate as the state of the Way, and this is even more important for the term the "One."[68] Lastly, they equally represent a state of awareness.[69] Together they are fundamentally related foundational early Chinese philosophical concepts. In *The Great One Birthed Water*, they are essential.

The Generation by a Primary and an Assistant: From Water to Heaven and to Earth

In the study of traditional Chinese thought, water is normally discussed as one of the "five phases" (*wuxing* 五行) or just as that which has a downward flowing nature. However, the conceptual history of water in Chinese civilization is much richer than this.[70] Due to the emergence of *The Great One Birthed Water*, reexaminations of the philosophical evolution of "water" have highlighted that Confucius, Laozi, and Mencius all praise its wondrous qualities, with Laozi being most enamored with the substance.

All the values of Laozi's philosophy—like softness and weakness—emerge from an analysis of the virtues and powers of water. For Laozi, water is closest to the Way's basic substance: "Water is near to the Way."[71] Once water, which on the surface is flat and calm, gathers together to manifest its amazing power there is nothing it cannot attack and defeat. Water always resides at the bottom, on the lowest and lowliest level; always supporting the ten thousand things it never conflicts with anything. We know that all life is dependent on water and that it is the origin of life itself. Yet, Laozi does not only consider how water benefits life. Not subtly or silently hinting, he explicitly explains how water's noble nature nourishes and supports without dominion or self-interest. Even so, in Laozi's cosmology *qi* is generally thought to hold the key position. After all, his view of water certainly does not resemble that of the Pre-Socratic philospher Thales who imagined it as the origin of everything, nor does it ever play any metaphysical role. For Laozi, water is just another exceptional creation among the ten thousand things.

By contrast, the cosmogony of *The Great One Birthed Water* presents "water" as an "assistant" creative power that mediates the Great One and Heaven. This is a type of "water" totally separate from the system of the five phases and one that elevates Laozi's prized substance to the status of an independent and creative cosmic force. Most scholars consider that this novel role for water in the Guodian text was inspired by Laozi's love of water, and this possibility cannot be ignored. Thus, to further understand the role of water in *The Great One Birthed Water,* Laozi's, and other sources', conceptions of its higher symbolism are essential background.

In the history of philosophy, the greatest lover of water was Thales. He considered water to be the foundational substance of existence, though his theories have only been preserved via a critique by Aristotle. Hegel cites this critique in his lectures on the history of world philosophy, saying:

> Aristotle posited, "Perhaps the reason Thales created this theory was because he observed that the basic nutrient is fluid, that heat is generated by it, and that all living creatures rely it to live. However, the thing from which all creation comes is the principle of all creation. So he reached this opinion by this means, and because the seeds of all things have a fluid nature, water in turn had to be the root of fluid things."[72]

Within Thales conception, "water" is both the original substance and the first cause. It is the One that generates the Many of all creation. In *The Great One Birthed Water*, "water" is not the original substance instead functioning as the source of Heaven and what combines with Heaven to create Earth.

Within early Chinese philosophy, the "Water and Earth" *Shui Di* 《水地》 chapter in the *Guanzi* also affords water a cosmic role. It explains that water and earth are the dual sources of the ten thousand things and presents a theory that might be considered dualistic. On the one hand, it says, "Water is a foundational source of the ten thousand things. It is the ancestral temple of all life." On the other, it says, "Earth is a foundational source of the ten thousand things. It is the root of all life."[73] While the chapter refers to water as a "foundational source," it does not function as the supreme origin of things. "It collects within Heaven and Earth and is stored in the ten thousand things. It is produced by metal and stone, gathers in all life, and thus is called the water spirit."[74] The text continues to depict water as "the blood and *qi* of Earth." These different cosmic roles imply that "water" is not primordial and does not exist beyond the bounds of Heaven and Earth. Water is simply something that is a basic requirement of life and so is one important source of the ten thousand things. This *Guanzi* chapter does not further investigate the origins of all things or consider what gave rise to Heaven and Earth and so does not qualify as a true cosmogony.

The core focus of "Water and Earth" is the nature of water and the "power of water" *shuide* 水德, views that have clearly been influenced by the *Laozi*. For example, Chapter 8 of the *Laozi* says that water "resides in the places the masses detest and thus is near to the Way,"[75] and "Water and Earth" similarly states, "Others all reside in lofty places; I alone head downward to lowliness. The lowly is the abode of the Way, the tool of the king, and the residence of water."[76] Furthermore, *Laozi* Chapter 8 explains, "Water is skilled at benefiting the ten thousand things, while "Water and Earth" says, "There is none that do not rely on it for life."

Clearly the two works resonate, but what is date of "Water and Earth," and did it influence *The Great One Birthed Water*? Huang Zhao 黄钊 suspects that the "Water and Earth" line normally read as "the waters of Qi and Jin" 齊晉之水 should actually be read as "the waters of the Three Jin" 叁晉之水. He suggests this transcription helps clarify the dating of the text, as Jin was divided into three parts in 376 BCE, and so the text cannot predate that event. Xu Kangsheng 许抗

生 counters with a *Shiji* record from the state of Jin suggesting that during the reign of Duke You of Jin (437–420 BCE) the concept of the Three Jin already existed. "Water and Earth" also mentions "the waters of Yue" 越之水, indicating the text predates the destruction of that state in 335 BCE. Overall, these arguments suggest that "Water and Earth" predates *The Great One Birthed Water*, which most situate in the late Warring States.[77] However, this late date for *The Great One Birthed Water* only relates to the age of its tomb and not a definitively confirmed point of original composition. Resultantly, we cannot say with certainty which of these texts precedes the other. Though both texts were influenced by the *Laozi*'s conception of water, "Water and Earth" emphasizes it as a key substance betwixt Heaven and Earth that supports all life, while *The Great One Birthed Water* raises it above Heaven and Earth and makes it something essential to their creation.

In the cosmogony of *The Great One Birthed Water*, the first step is the Great One's creation of Water. We might expect that this created Water *should* generate another type of existence, similar to "One birthed Two" in the second stage of creation in the *Laozi*, or how in other cosmogonies where there are comparable sequences, yet such is not the case in *The Great One Birthed Water*. In this instance, Water only operates as an assisting force that is unable to create on its own. The text says:

> Water returns to assist the Great One, and thus they form Heaven. Heaven returns to assist the Great One, and thus they form Earth.
> 水反輔大一，是以成天，天反輔大一，是以成地.

Water does not directly generate Heaven but instead returns to its origin and assists the Great One in forming Heaven.

Pang Pu 庞朴 especially stresses the importance of this concept of "returns to assist" *fanfu* 反輔 noting:

> The expression of "returns to assist" is the greatest idiosyncrasy of this cosmology . . . Presently we are lucky enough to encounter this essay *The Great One Birthed Water* that dares to propose that the origin of the cosmos had one if its creations returning to assist in the process of generating the world. This confirms that a function simultaneously accompanies the occurrence of its opposite function, which theoretically is undoubtedly a most radical conception of movement and reveals a praiseworthy organic cosmology.[78]

According to Pang Pu's analysis, the concept of "returning to assist" represents an important type of thought that suggests the process of creating the world involves function and opposite function engaging with each other as part of an organic cosmos. He stresses that this idea of "returning to assist" does not appear in any transmitted texts from the masters of the Zhou and Qin and may be terminology uniquely developed by the author of *The Great One Birthed Water*.

In investigating this assertion, we must consider the individual characters of this compound. To begin with, *fan* (return/opposite 反) is also written as *fan* (return 返), and is a key term that the *Laozi* uses to describe motion. Its main sense relates to the movement of something returning to its own self. This is a basic principle of the Way noted in *Laozi* Chapter 40, "Returning is the movement of the Way." This sense of *fan* (return) resembles another *Laozi* term *fu* (once again 復) that is part of the compound *fugui* (once again return 復歸). These conceptions diverge from the modern linear understanding of time and the progressive nature of creation. As for *fu* (assist 輔), its original meaning was to enhance the load-bearing capacity of the wooden spokes of a wheel by fixing two straight pieces of timber to the outer side of the wheel. This sense was extended to mean a "supplement" and or in its verb form "assist."

With this understanding of "returns to assist," we can describe the first two steps of creation: The Great One is the supreme creator that directly generates Water, but it does not give Water the power to create something itself or allows Water to distance itself or individualize itself, and so Water returns to the Great One and assists the Great One in forming Heaven. Starting with Heaven, the stage of the cosmogony advances to one of "formation." "Formation" depicts the mutual function of different powers facilitating and bringing things to maturity. The relationship of the Great One and Water is indeed subtle because once Water assists the Great One in facilitating the emergence of Heaven it retires from the cosmic evolutionary process. Heaven does not return to assist Water in facilitating the creation of Earth but instead skips Water to assist the Great One in this act. Because of this, at a fundamental level, Heaven and Earth are both generated by the Great One, for as the text says, "Heaven and Earth are that which the Great One birthed" 天地者，太一之所生也. Here, Water is nowhere to be found. Yet, the text also notes, "Consequently, the Great One is concealed within Water, and moves with time" 是故，大一藏於水，行於時. This reveals that the Great One has not abandoned Water, as Water is its place of residence and

concealment. Why does the Great One store itself in the Water, which it birthed? This is not an easy question to resolve.

Within Chinese cosmology and natural philosophy, Heaven and Earth are the most powerful agents and forces. "Heaven" *Tian* 天 is an object of religious devotion, and when considered in its broadest sense as "nature," it also includes Earth. However, in regard to the processes of nature, these two generally operate together. For example, *Laozi* Chapter 32 says, "Heaven and Earth merge and send down sweat dew,"[79] or in the "Heaven and Earth" chapter of *Zhuangzi* it says, "Even in their greatness, Heaven and Earth share the transformations equally"[80] The *Zhuangzi* also says, "So Heaven and Earth indeed have constancy; the sun and moon indeed have brilliance; the stars and constellations indeed have their order; the birds and beasts indeed have their groupings; trees and shrubs indeed have their verticality,"[81] and it continues "Heaven and Earth are the father and mother of the ten thousand things. They combine to complete form and separate to complete the beginning. When form and essence are not depleted, this is called the capacity to change."[82]

There are non-Daoist examples as well, for Xunzi expresses some similar sentiments. He says, "Heaven and Earth are the origins of life,"[83] and "Heaven and Earth rely on their integration; the sun and moon rely on their brilliance; the four seasons rely on their order; the stars and constellations rely on their movement, streams and rivers rely on their flow; the ten thousand things rely on their growth."[84] Xunzi further notes, "Heaven and Earth integrate and the ten thousand things are born; yin and yang connect and transformations arise."[85]

All of these examples suggest a certain equality or mutuality of these two powers; however in the cosmology of *The Great One Birthed Water,* Heaven was birthed prior to Earth. Not only this, Heaven was involved in the creation of Earth, which significantly changes the dynamic of their relationship. Though this is a rare notion, something similar does appear in the *Huainanzi* where it says, "Heaven was first completed and Earth was later established,"[86] and explains the reason for this situation by saying:

> A boundary [divided] the original *qi*. That which was pure and bright spread out to form Heaven; that which was heavy and turbid congealed to form Earth. It is easy for that which is pure and subtle to converge, but difficult for the heavy and turbid to congeal.[87]

From Water to Heaven and then to Earth, the Great One completed the sequential creation of Heaven and Earth. Yet, even with this sense

of logical priority, *The Great One Birthed Water* subsequently describes these two powers as mutual existing, "The names and styles of Heaven and Earth are established together" 天地名字并立. This clearly refers to the situation of Heaven and Earth following their creation.

The role of Heaven and Earth in *The Great One Birthed Water* remains prominent, as the text offers a concrete discussion of the natural state of these two. There are three specific points worth noting. First, Heaven and Earth occupy different places in space, with Heaven above and Earth below. This is a common view held in Chinese theories of space and time.

Second, the substances of Heaven and Earth are different, for Earth is made of soil, and Heaven is made of air (*qi*). Air is light, and soil is heavy. This accords with direct observation of these natural phenomena and also explains why Heaven is above and Earth is below. When compared with other texts, one finds the *Liezi* 《列子》 depicting something comparable. It says, "Heaven is the accumulation of air (*qi*) as nowhere is without air; Earth is the accumulation of clods [of soil] as nowhere is without a clod [of soil]."[88] However, the perspectives of both *The Great One Birthed Water* and the *Liezi* diverge significantly from what one finds in *The Primordial Constant*. In that text, Heaven and Earth are both constructed from *qi*, with Heaven comprised of "clear *qi*" and Earth comprised of "turbid *qi*."[89] This is also a common theory of Heaven and Earth one sees in the Han dynasty, as we saw in the *Huainanzi* above. In comparison to this *qi* cosmology, the vision of *The Great One Birthed Water* is more simplistic and straightforward.

Third, in *The Great One Birthed Water* Heaven and Earth both have their defects, "Heaven is deficient in the northwest…Earth is deficient in the southeast" 天不足於西北…地不足於東南. This suggests that Heaven and Earth have inherently different relationships to space. One finds something similar in both the *Shiji* and the *Huainanzi*. Sima Qian records, "Heaven is deficient in the northwest because the stars and constellation are shifted in that direction;[90] Earth is deficient in the southeast for the sea is a pool."[91] While this passage belongs to Sima Ji's 司馬季 critique of Song Zhong's 宋忠 and Jia Yi's 賈誼 misgivings about divination, most importantly it helps explain the reasons for the deficiencies of Heaven and Earth. The *Huainanzi* uses a "mythological" approach to explain these natural phenomena:

> In ancient times Gong Gong and Zhuan Xu fought to become the Thearch. Enraged, they crashed against Mount Buzhuo. Heaven's

> pillars broke and the cords of Earth snapped. Heaven tilted in the northwest, and thus the sun and moon, stars and constellations shifted in that direction. Earth became deficient in the southeast and thus the waters flooded in as the mounding soils subsided in that direction.[92]

If *The Great One Birthed Water* has an explanation for the inadequacy of these great powers, it does not inform the reader. Most likely it simply relies on direct observation.

The last important revelation about the status of Heaven and Earth in *The Great One Birthed Water* is the following troublesome and intriguing passage, "Heaven's and Earth's names and styles were established together. Therefore if one exceeds its side do not think of mutual aid" 天地名字并立，故過其方，不思相尚.[93] There are multiple challenges here: to what do the "names and styles" refer and how do we understand "exceeds its side" and "not think of mutual aid"?

For the first question, we should consider these names and styles in relations to the text's discussion of Heaven's and Earth's materiality cited during the previous discussion of the One and the Way. Jiang Shengcan 姜声灿 and Li Ling 李零 did just this to discover the best solution. They identify "names and styles" as pairs of opposites, explaining that "soil" and "air" are the simple "names" for Earth and Heaven, while "Heaven" and "Earth" are the "styles" for those two basic substances.[94] These are "concurrently established" as one cannot have Heaven without air, Earth without soil, and vice versa,

The second issue it not so challenging. "Side" *fang* 方 can be understood as "place" or "position," and can imply "appropriate" or "right," but Qiu Xigui's interpretation of it as "correct" *zheng* 正 is a strong option.[95] Following this view, the passage should instead be understood as "exceeding what is correct." The final challenge relates to the "think" *si* 思 and "aid" *shang* 尚 in the line "do not think of mutual aid." Liu Xinfang's 刘信芳 analysis is most helpful here because he transcribes these characters as "cause" *shi* 使 and "equal" *dang* 当.[96] Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭 follows this, and it seems prudent to do so as well.

Relying on the insights of these various scholars, we can now clarify this passage: "Heaven and Earth each have their names and styles established as opposite pairs. Thus, if these two exceed the bounds of their own correct place they will lose their mutual positions." The statement that "Heaven is deficient in the northwest and Earth is deficient in the southeast," which follows, concretely illustrates the loss of these mutual positions. For more on this matter, we will have to wait until the final section of this chapter.

The Generation by Complementary Assistants: From Spirit and Illumination to the Year

After the generation of Heaven and Earth, there is a shift in the cosmogonic process of *The Great One Birthed Water*. The creative process transitions from one of "returning to assist" to one of "repeated mutual assistance" *fuxiangfu* 復相輔. Considering the roles in these different modes of generation, "returning to assist" represents a hierarchical relationship comprised of a principal and an assistant, while "repeated mutual assistance" involves the equal give and take of two mutually supportive partners. This type of relationship emerges after the creation of Heaven and Earth, when these two become an interactive and interconnected unit. With their creation, Heaven and Earth begin the mechanism of the repeated cycles of mutual assistance that results in the birth of the new pair of *shen* 神 and *ming* 明, and these two in turn rely this cyclic mechanism to generate yin and yang.

One heavily debated question centers on how to read *shenming* 神明. Scholars can at least agree that in this context these two characters do not form a compound but are divided into *shen* and *ming* in parallel to the division of yin and yang. One suggestion, posited by Wang Bo 王博, is that these two refer to the sun and the moon respectively.[97] This contrasts with other views that explain these as wondrous transformations or the divine essences of Heaven and Earth.

Wang Bo's argument is quite powerful, and as such Li Ling accepts that reading *shen* and *ming* as the sun and moon is a sensible approach, though Li Ling simultaneous notes how *shenming* 神明 commonly indicates the compound "Illuminated Spirit" and mostly refers to a single god.[98] However, Pang Pu disagrees, considering *shen* and *ming* to refer to the functions of Heaven and Earth.[99] Guo Yi 郭沂 similarly connects Heaven and Earth with *shen* and *ming* but identifies that each side of the latter pair is a god of Heaven and a god of Earth.[100] Unfortunately, Guo's theory remains quite speculative, as he finds no concrete support for it within the received texual corpus.

So what does *shenming* 神明 indicate in *The Great One Birthed Water*? In the Zhou and Qin periods, *shenming* certainly had multiple meanings, with some instances referring to an elevated state of human wisdom and spirit like one finds in the *Guoyu* 《國語》. There it records, "The spiritual illumination [*shenming*] of King Wuding was such that even though his sageliness was farsighted and broad and his wisdom was without flaw, he still considered his rule incomplete and so silently pondered the Way for three years."[101]

In other cases, *shenming* suggests a special quality that deities possess. In *Mozi* it says:

> Gong Mengzi said to Mozi: "There is only righteousness and unrighteousness; auspicious and inauspicious omens mean nothing." Mozi said, "The ancient sage kings all considered the deities to have divine insight [*shenming*] and to bestow calamities and blessings. They were able to differentiate between auspicious and inauspicious omens and thus the government was well administered and the country was at peace. From the time of Jie and Zhou, the rulers all considered the deities as lacking in divine insight [*shenming*] and being unable to bestow calamities and blessings. They were unable to differentiate between auspicious and inauspicious omens, and thus the government became disorderly and the country imperiled."[102]

In this passage we would be hard pressed to read *shenming* as referring to the sun and the moon.

There are multiple texts that explain *ming* 明 "illumination" as relating to the sun and moon, but none of them connect this notion to *shen* 神 "spirit."[103] For example, Zhuangzi says, "Just as Heaven is naturally high, Earth is naturally thick, and the sun and the moon are naturally illuminated [*ming*], what need have they for cultivation?"[104] This connection of sun and moon to *ming* "illumination" is logically based on character form 明, which is a combination of 日 sun and 月 moon. However, this does not necessarily solve the issues of *The Great One Birthed Water*.

In that text, *shenming* does not depict extraordinary human wisdom, nor does it indicate the power of divinities. Of this we can be certain. Furthermore, while the possibility of the character pair referring to the sun and moon remains unlikely, the notion of *shenming* as spirit essences or particular traits of Heaven and Earth require further investigation. In the *Liji* it says, "In ancient times the illuminated kings of the Three Dynasties served the *shenming* of Heaven and Earth. Without this there would be no purpose for divination."[105] The "Xici" 《繫辭》 chapter in the *Book of Changes* says, "Rely on this to embody the creations of the Heaven and Earth; rely on this to connect to the virtuous power of *shenming*."[106] This implies a parallel between Heaven and Earth and *shenming*. This type of correspondence also appears multiple times in *Zhuangzi*: "be equal to *shenming* and as refined as Heaven and Earth," "Heaven is honored and Earth is lowly. These are the positions of *shenming*," "Complete the beauty of Heaven and Earth, and balance the inclusiveness of *shenming*."[107]

Although these passages loosely connect Heaven and Earth with *shenming*, one also finds discussions which specifically pair *shen* and *ming* with Heaven and Earth. A commentary by Xun Shuang 荀爽 (128–190 CE) on the "Shuogua" 《說卦》 chapter of the *Book of Changes* explains as much, "*Shen* is in Heaven and *ming* is on Earth. *Shen* glows at night and *ming* shines in the day."[108]

Considering the divergence of these conceptions and the fact that in *The Great One Birthed Water* the terms *shen* and *ming* are separate entities, can we claim that, because *shenming* belongs to Heaven and Earth, *shen* must represent Heaven and *ming* must represent Earth as in Xun Shuang's comment? Unfortunately, we are unable to draw such a conclusion because the text has yin and yang, the four seasons, hot and cold, wet and dry, which all connect to both Heaven and Earth. Therefore, *shen* and *ming* most likely function as qualities of both Heaven and Earth with *shen*, here translated as "spiritual power," referring to their wondrous nature and *ming*, here translated as "luminosity," indicating the natural order they illuminate.

In conclusion, spiritual power and luminosity do not relate to the sun and the moon because these two are not concrete substances. Just like the other terms mentioned above like the four seasons or wet and dry, they represent cosmic qualities and aspects of the natural order. As these other concepts are easier to categorize, they offer potential ways of understanding spiritual power and luminosity. The "four seasons" and "year" *sui* 歲 depict order, while hot and cold or wet and dry are opposite qualities and capacities. We propose that spiritual power and luminosity are most similar to yin and yang because these four are all nonsubstantial things; as such, spiritual power and luminosity should likewise belong to category of "order" including the four seasons and the year.

Rejecting the notion that *shenming* (spiritual power and luminosity) is related to substance is controversial. Xu Kangsheng 许抗生, for one, suggests that *shenming*, as a singular compound, is equivalent to the original unified essential *qi*, because essential *qi* is what generates the two *qi* of yin and yang.[109] Certainly in *The Great One Birthed Water,* the *shenming* forms yin and yang, yet nowhere among the many appearences of the term *shenming* one does find a case where it operates as essential *qi*.

Of course, there is also the key issue of whether or not yin and yang are kinds of *qi* substances as well. In the teachings of the Zhou and Qin dynasty masters, there are instances of yin and yang as types of *qi*, but there are also instances where they function as complementary

forces or qualities that exist within a single thing. Zhang Dainian suggests these were two separate roles for the terms.[110] In light of this, the process of creation from spiritual power and luminosity to the "year" that involves Heaven and Earth forming things through "repeated mutual assistance" likely only depicts cosmic qualities and relationships but not substances.

Heaven and Earth are clearly two substance-based things, for *The Great One Birthed Water* says that Heaven is comprised of *qi* and Earth is formed from soil. These are the basic materials of existence, but they alone do not make a fully differentiated world. They lack both a fixed way to order things and the movement and principle of change. If spiritual power and luminosity are indeed such nonsubstantial categories that help to order the substances of Heaven and Earth, we would be correct in identifying them as "wondrous transformations" and "order." Put another way, they must represent the natural law of Heaven and Earth.

The "Names and Patterns" 《名理》 chapter of the *Huangdi sijing* 《黃帝四經》 explains *shenming* as follows:

> The Way is the origin of spirit [*shen*] and luminosity [*ming*]. Spirit and luminosity reside within the standard [*du* 度] and manifests outside the standard. Residing within the standard, they say nothing but are trusted. Manifesting outside the standard, their declarations cannot be changed. Residing within the standard, they are tranquil and unalterable. Manifesting outside the standard, they are active and unchangeable. That which is tranquil and unalterable, active and unchangeable is called spirit. Spirit and luminosity are the pinnacles of insight and knowledge.[111]

This is like how in the *Guanzi* yin and yang function as the "great pattern" of Heaven and Earth and the four seasons operate as the "great warp" of yin and yang.[112] Simply put, these all depict the principles and standards that govern the transformation of things, and the spiritual power and luminosity in *The Great One Birthed Water* can also be understood thusly. Consequently, the interaction of spiritual power and luminosity, as two kinds of forces, generated yin and yang, and then those two interacted to produce the order of the four seasons.

Normally, the logical connection between the movement of the four seasons and the cycle of the year should be automatic. However, in *The Great One Birthed Water,* there are a few intervening stages between the emergence of the four seasons and the completion of

the "year." Between these two stages, the pairs of hot and cold and wet and dry are born, with the year being generated by the interaction of wet and dry. This full process reveals that in this text "year" is not a simple summation of the four seasons but requires more specific intermediaries to help completely manifest its order. Pang Pu proposes an inspiring interpretation of "year," taking it to imply the harvesting of crops and the overall efforts of the farmers.[113] From this view, "year" likely implies the cycles of favorable growing weather and the normal alternation of the four seasons. In the words of the *Hanshi waizhuan*《韩詩外傳》, "Heaven does not change its pattern and Earth does not alter its form. The sun and moon shine brightly and the constellations have their constant [movement]. Heaven enacts and Earth transforms, yin and yang harmonize and merge. Energized by thunder and lighting, moistened by wind and rain, divided by mountains and rivers, balanced by winter and summer, the ten thousand people nourish life. Everything achieves its proper place and the state is ordered."

The Concepts of The Great One and The Way of Heaven

Describing the process of creation is an essential part of any cosmology, but it also must elucidate the cosmos' order and principles. According to the natural philosophers of ancient Greece, the cosmos is not just something created but is also something that includes harmonious activity and has an underlying purpose. Daoist cosmology similarly tends to include both these aspects of creation and order. Certainly, Laozi's "Way" includes these two: it is the origin and generator of the cosmos and the cosmic order and principle that unifies all things. By extension, this definition also applies to Laozi's "Way of Heaven."

As we well know, *The Great One Birthed Water* recounts a detailed cosmogony, but it also discusses cosmic principles and natural laws. Such order is associated with the text's core concept the Great One. Addresssing this, the text says:

> Thus the Great One is concealed within Water and moves with time. Cycling and then beginning again: it takes itself as the Mother of the ten thousand things. With one empty and one full, it takes itself as the warp of the ten thousand things. It is that which Heaven cannot eliminate, Earth cannot control, and yin and yang cannot form.

> 故太一藏於水 ， 行於時。周而又始 ， 以己為萬物母 ， 一缺一盈 ， 以己為萬物經。此天之所不能殺 ， 地之所不能厘 ， 陰陽之所不能成。

That the Great One "moves with time" indicates that it does not transcend time but exists within it. The Great One can also be described as an active guiding principle, identified as "Cycling and then beginning again," and as having "one empty and one full." The Way in the *Laozi* "moves in cycles [*zhouxing* 周行], never tiring,"[114] while in *The Great One Birthed Water,* the Great One "cycles [*zhou* 周] and begins again." In both cases, the passages depict cosmic activity as cyclical, though in the case of the Great One, this can have two possible meanings. First, there is a cycle that begins with the creation of the cosmos and end with its destruction in a way comparable to numerous other myths and religious narratives. We could call this the "great cycle." Second, there are the smaller cycles of the ten thousand things that accord with the Great One's cyclical principle. This might be called the "small cycle."

It is this later type that we find in the *Lüshi chunqiu* chapter "Great Music" 《大樂》, where it states:

> The transformations of yin and yang, one above and one below, merge as a perfect order. Murky and muddled, they separate and merge again; merge and separate again. These are Heaven's Constants. Heaven and Earth are [like the spinning of a] chariot wheel. They reach the end and again begin; they reach the extreme and again return. There is nothing that is not so.[115]

Given this example, it is most likely that *The Great One Birthed Water* does not suggest a "great cycle" cosmology, instead implying the "small cycle" that operates as the cyclical the movement of all things. This is part of how the Great One functions as the root source of the ten thousand things, as their Mother.

The Great One, moreover, involves the principles of "one empty and one full." These represent the developmental process of interaction and transformation by which things move from a state of emptiness to that of fullness, and cycle between deficiency and sufficiency. As the *Book of Changes* says, "One yin and one yang [together] are what is known as the Way."[116] This "one yin and one yang" is structurally parallel to "one empty and one full." Yet, within Chinese natural philosophy, yin and yang became abstracted as the universal pair of complementary opposites, while empty and full never attained such

status. According to Laozi, as soon as something develops to the point of strength and flourishing, a shift toward the opposite state begins. Thus, if something desires to preserve itself, it must rely on deficiency and emptiness. For example, Chapter 45 says, "Great accomplishment seems deficient."[117] However, one cannot claim that *The Great One Birthed Water* similarly supports the Daoist principle of "guarding deficiency and avoiding sufficiency," because both "empty" and "full" are identified as the "warp" *jing* 經, that constant Way which guides all the transformations of the ten thousand things.

While it may not assert that the ideal of deficiency belongs to the Way of Heaven, *The Great One Birthed Water* does make the intriguing statement that "The Way of Heaven honors weakness" 天道貴弱. This phrase has particularly excited scholars due to its resonance with the values of the *Laozi* and how it affirms a connection between the two works. In evaluating the conceptual opposites like strong and weak, hard and soft, front and back discussed in the *Laozi*, that text conspicuously honors weakness, esteems softness, and selects the back. *Laozi* Chapter 34 further clarify this position:

> The great Way is overflowing! It is on both the left and the right. The ten thousand things rely on it for life, and it does not reject them. Its deeds are done, but it is not so named. It cherishes and nourishes the ten thousand things, but does not act as their ruler. Constantly desireless, it can be named small. The ten thousand things pay homage to it but it does not act as their ruler. It can be named great. Therefore the sage in the end is not considered great, and thus achieves greatness.[118]

Read in concert with the abovementioned Laozian values, this passage suggests that the honoring of softness, weakness, and selecting the back relate to a spirit of humility and giving way to others. Ultimately these ideals and values can be identified as the natural principles of the Way of Heaven.

Similarly, when *The Great One Birthed Water* describes the "Way of Heaven" as having a preference for "weakness," it is promoting humility as a natural principle. "The Way of Heaven honors weakness" signifies limiting the hard and strong, and diminishing the prosperous and great to augment the weak and small. As it says:

> It hampers the developed to support the developing and attacks the strong and penalizes the [hard].
>
> 削成者以益生者 ， 伐於强 ， 責於[剛]。

Zhao Jianwei 赵建伟 usefully reads "developed" *cheng* 成 and "developing *sheng* 生 as "prosperous" *sheng* 盛 and "weak and small" *ruoxiao* 弱小. Zhao considers the missing parallel term after "penalize" to be "full" *ying* 盈,[119] though choosing "hard" *gang* 剛 works a bit better. After all, Laozi has the saying, "the soft and weak conquer the hard and strong."[120] The parallel of "soft and weak" with "hard and strong" nicely accords with the text's core stance that "the Way of Heaven honors weakness."

Previously, we have discussed the natural state of Heaven and Earth as depicted in *The Great One Birthed Water*, citing the lines "Heaven tilted in the northwest" and "Earth became deficient in the southeast." However, it is also important to note that because Heaven is deficient above, Earth is able to possess the advantages of height and strength; because Earth is deficient below, Heaven attains a different type of advantage. The text says:

> Heaven is deficient in the northwest, and so that below can be high and strong; Earth is lacking in the southeast, and so that above can be . . . and . . . .
>
> 天不足於西北 , 其下高以强 , 地不足於东南 , 其上□以□。

There are two missing characters in the passage. Li Ling conjectures these are "empty" *kong* 空 and "vast" *kuang* 曠; Zhao Jianwei posits they are "thick" *hou* 厚 and "broad" *guang* 廣.[121] Though, they most likey should read as "great" *da* 大 and "hard" *gang* 剛. Why would that be? Logically, if we consider that Heaven, when compared to Earth, is "high and strong," then Earth, when compared to Heaven, should have the advantage of being "great and hard."

Unfortunately, this last option appears to conflict with the text's other statements like "the Way of Heaven honors weakness" and "attack the strong and penalize the [hard]." These qualities of strong greatness and hard strength, however, are not absolute ideals and are not opposed to "weakness," which if we remember actually indicates humility. Furthermore, Heaven and Earth both have their points of deficiency, which enable the possibility of advantages like the great and strong. In this way, we could posit a relative value for the "hard" and "strong" in the text. *The Great One Birthed Water*s ays:

> That which is deficient above has excess below; that which is deficient below has excess above.
>
> [不足於上]者 , 有餘於下 , 不足於下者 , 有餘於上。

Heaven's deficiency causes Earth's surplus, and Earth's deficiency causes Heaven's surplus. This relationship of "deficiency" and "surplus" is comparable to the mutually created states of loss and gain; nothing can be gained without something being lost and vice versa. *Laozi* has the expression "The Way of Heaven diminishes the excessive and augments the deficient."[122] This is the natural principle that promotes homeostasis and equilibrium by not allowing any single thing to become disproportionately developed to the point where its excess would cause deficiency in other things. From this perspective, *The Great One Birthed Water*'s point that "Heaven and Earth are established together" suggests that the text promotes the complementarity balance of Heaven and Earth. That Heaven and Earth both have their points of deficiency is a precondition for their mutual support, and so even if Earth can attain strength and hardness, it is a result of a give and take relationship. Thus, it is consistent with the humility principle in "the Way of Heaven honors weakness."

In *Laozi,* the Way functions as the model for human behavior, and acting in adherence to and in accordance with the Way is always humanity's best option. For *The Great One Birthed Water*, basing one's actions on the Way likewise guarantees success:

> Those who use the Way in handling affairs will indeed rely on its name. Thus their affairs will be completed and they will personally gain prominence. The sage's handling of affairs also relies on its name. Thus he realizes his achievements and is personally unharmed.
> 以道從事者 ， 必托其名 ， 故事成而身長。聖人之從事也 ， 亦托其名 ， 故功成而身不傷。

The expression "use the Way in handling affairs" simply refers to holding to the Way in one's life. The more intriguing line is "indeed rely on its name." This is generally interpreted to mean that one must depend on the "name" of the Way, though Qiu Xigui thinks it means "relying on the 'Way' as a name which is not the original name."[123] These two readings are markedly different. Qiu's view emphasizes that people must reluctantly apply the "Way" as a nonoriginal "name," and so raises the old question concerning the relationship of Way and name.

The *Laozi* describes the Way as "nameless" (*wuming* 無名) as in "the Way is constantly nameless," "the Way is hidden and nameless," while also identifing it as a "style name" *zi* 字.[124] *The Great One Birthed Water* similarly uses "the Way" as a style name when stating "the Way is also its style," but the Way in addition to being a

pragmatic term somehow functions as a "name" that signifies its specific concrete existence. This challenge results from it being the name of the nameless. Most often, because in *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* "name" is opposed to the "uncarved" *pu* 樸 and is contrasted with "actuality" *shi* 實, it is often taken as unreliable and limited. However, *The Great One Birthed Water* indicates that following the Way, even for the sage, means according with the "name" of the Way, and uses the term "the Way" as a rallying point. This conflicts with Daoist tendencies, and more closely conforms to Confucian thought.

This detail hints that *The Great One Birthed Water* may have syncretic tendencies and so not surprisingly its approach to "name" resembles that of the *Huangdi sijing*. On numerous occasions, that Mawangdui text emphasizes the importance of activities like "following the name" *xunming* 循名 and "guarding the name" *shouming* 守名, and notes that "those who hold the Way" must grasp "name and pattern" *mingli* 名理. The aptly named "Names and Patterns" 《名理》 chapter says:

> When dealing with the affairs of the empire, one must investigate their names…To investigate and examine names [ming 名] and patterns [*li* 理], ends and beginnings is called "studying the patterns." [Value] the public and be without private [interest], and then one's perceptions and knowledge will not be confused and [true] knowledge will enthusiastically arise. Thus, those who hold the Way, and use it to observe the empire, see the proper Way and follow the patterns, they enumerate the bent and the straight and the ends and the beginnings. Thus, they can adhere to the names and study the patterns[125]

This citation supposes that if people only adhere to the names that anything can be easily accomplished. Consistent with *Huangdi sijing*, the "rely on the name" phrase in *The Great One Birthed Water* should be understood as following the "names" of the Way, handling affairs according to the principles and patterns of the Way.

CHAPTER 2

Cosmology, Nature, and the Sage in *All Things Are Forms in Flux*

Following Cao Jinyan's 曹锦炎 compilation of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* (*Fanwu liuxing* 《凡物流形》),[1] the field gained, in addition to *The Primordial Constant* (*Hengxian* 《恒先》), another philosophically sophisticated text from among the Shanghai Museum's collection of Chu bamboo strips. This rediscovered work slightly exceeds *The Primordial Constant* in both length and breadth of content[2] and trades its straight exposition for a question and answer structure.[3]

As for content, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* has three major focii: cosmos, nature, and political philosophy. Its key terms like "holding the Way" *zhidao* 執道, "holding the One" zhiyi 執一, and "unifying the mind" *yixin* 一心 relate to the sage's way of rulership, and these practices are all rooted in the cosmological and natural concepts of the "Way" and the "One." However, like *The Primordial Constant* (*Hengxian* 《恒先》) and *The Great One Birthed Water*, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* has very little to say on the topic of the "Way." Instead the text emphasizes the idea of the "One," and establishes it as the supreme cause of all the natural phenomena which the text investigates.

The publication of this manuscript has incited many debates over the editing, transcribing, and glossing of the bamboo record's handwritten characters. However, the Chinese scholarly community has yet to deeply engage in systematic discussions of the work's thought and philosophy. This chapter hopes to build on previous foundations of transcription and philology to focus on the core philosophical concept of the "One" and how it relates to the text's views on nature, the cosmos, and the way of the sage ruler. In this way, we hope to reveal the philosophical structure and content of the rediscovered *All Things Are Forms in Flux* and eventually speculate about the tradition to which the text belongs.

The One as Root Source of Creation

Within the received canon, and even including the newly discovered texts like Guodian's *The Great One Birthed Water* and the Shanghai Museum's *The Primordial Constant,* we have previously known very few examples of early Daoist cosmology. The recently published *All Things Are Forms in Flux* further supplements our limited knowledge with another cosmological model that both possesses unique characteristics and maintains conspicuous connections with the formerly extant materials.

The basic conception of creation found in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* appears concentrated in a pithy passage that we will unpack throughout this section:

> I have heard it said: "The One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, the Thee birthed the Mother, and the Mother formed the Congelations"
>
> 聞之曰：一生兩，兩生叁，叁生母，母成結.

Before diving into the philosophical meaning of these lines, we must first note the philological debates and quickly explain why we rely on this particular transcription. These are not minor considerations, as according to the original compiler, Cao Jinyan, the transcription of the passage should instead look like this:

> 聞之曰：豸(貌) 生亞(惡)，亞(惡)生參，參生吊城(成)結.[4]

How did we arrive at our own transcription quoted above? First consider the all important term the "One" *yi* 一, which Shen Pei 沈培 originally suggested as a reading for the character 豸 *mao* 貌.[5] Interpreting this (transcribed as 䎽) as a method for writing one *yi* 一 is quite unusual. Even in the Guodian texts *The Great One Birthed Water,* the word for "one" is simply written as a straight line 一. Regardless of the continued disagreement over the transcription of this character's form,[6] the majority of scholars now are inclined to read the word as "one."

The other adjustments of the text are as follows. In regards to taking the original transcription's *e* 惡 "evil" as *liang* 兩 "Two," there has been scant dissent. However, there are competing theories concerning the character *diao* 吊. For example, both Shen Pei and Li Rui 李锐 read it as *si* 四 "four."[7] This then produces the passage, "the Three birthed the Four, and the Four formed the Congelations." Yet,

the Fudan Reading Association thinks the word originally transcribed as 吊 looks more like *nü* 女 "woman," and that it should be read as *mu* 母 "Mother."[8] Qin Hualin 秦桦林 considers the appearance of this character in the A edition of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* to more closely resemble "女," and so also rejects the reading of it as *si* 四 "four" or *diao* 吊. He further supports the Fudan Reading Associations interpretation and has made some preliminary explanations about the nature of the "Mother" and the "Congelations."[9]

Although this debate continues, there now exist enough scholarly consensus, based on the work of Shen Pei, the Fudan Reading Association, and Qin Hualin, to begin investigating the intriguing philosophical contents of this passage as transcribed above.

To understand this cosmogony and the cosmology of the text as a whole, we must first deeply examine the "One." Even if we still question the identity of the character now read as the "One" within *All Things Are Forms in Flux,* its appearances in the work, including "The One birthed the Two," confirm that this term functions as the original source of the ten housand things. This vision of the "One" as creator allows for a fruitful comparison with the writings of Daoism and the Huang-Lao tradition.

The idea of the "One" as an original source of the cosmos traces back to Laozi. Even Cao Jinyan, the compiler of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* who questions the transcription—"It was once said: 'The One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, the Three birthed the Mother, and the Mother formed the Congelations'"—recognizes a similarity between this passage and *Laozi* Chapter 42. For example, he admits that the chapter's classical cosmogony, "The Way birthed the One, the One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, and the Three birthed the ten thousand things,"[10] shares the same three character structure as seen in *All Things Are Forms in Flux,* and that both texts depict a sequential process of generation (X birthed Y, Y birthed Z). The only divergence of these parallel structures comes when *All Things Are Forms in Flux* replaces "birthed" with "formed" in its final phrase. Clearly, the cosmogony of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* was directly influenced by the *Laozi*, and among all other extant cosmogonic models this new text maintains a unique fidelity to the classic *Laozi* Chapter 42 cosmogony.

Because of this firm syntactic and semantic connection, our primary source for investigating the One in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* comes from the *Laozi.* Unsurprisingly, that notoriously oblique text offers a range of usages for the term. For example, there are the cases where the "One" is involved in "embracing the One" *baoyi* 抱一 like

"Store and protect the white soul to embrace the One" in Chapter 10 and "Therefore the sage embraces the One to become a model for the empire" in Chapter 22.[11] The One also "merges and becomes one" *hun er wei yi* 混而為一 in Chapter 14 as part of the full passage "If you look but do not see it, call it 'even.' If you listen but do not hear it, call it 'rarified.' If you grasp for but do not obtain it, call it 'subtle.' These three cannot be realized through investigation. Thus they merge and become one."[12] Finally, Chapter 39 notes the phrase "obtain the One" *deyi* 得一 in the passage:

> Concerning those of the past to obtain the One: Heaven obtained the One and became clear; Earth obtained the One and became stable; Spirits obtained the One and became divinely powerful; Gorges obtained the One and became full; The myriad beings obtained the One and came to life; Nobles and kings obtained the One and brought order to the empire.[13]

These four instances show Laozi's One playing multiple roles beyond simply being the first thing birthed by the Way.

Because of these different cases, it has often been suggested that the text includes three distinct senses of the term *yi* 一 "One." For example, 陳鼓應 Chen Guying considers *yi* 一 "one" in the phrases "obtained the One" and "embrace the One" from Chapter 22 to indicate the Way; he takes the One in "merge and become one" as referring to a composite "Unity"; lastly, he regards "embrace the One" from Chapter 10 as a unification of the *hun* and *po* souls.[14] Xu Kangsheng 许抗生, however, proposes the following. First, the One equals the Way. Second, it identifies the first primal unified thing that the Way created ("The Way birthed the One"). Third, it operates as a gloss for the bodily-self as seen in Chapter 10's discussion of cultivation ("Store and protect the white soul to embrace your [body's] unity").[15]

While these other scholars argue for a tripartite understanding of Laozi's "One," the concept can perhaps be reduced to only two types: the One as synonymous with the Way and as the first unified body, which the Way created. If we says that the One in the phrase "obtained the One" indicates the Way, we should also be able to argue that the One in Chapter 10's "embrace the One" and in Chapter 14's "merge and become one" also refer to the Way.

First, both the Mawangdui editions and the Fuyi edition include the short phrase "Concerning the One" *yizhe* 一者 following the expression "merge and become one" in Chapter 14.[16] If we employ

these editions, the long depiction of some type of cosmic existence that follows must naturally refer to the One. This description of the "One" is as follows:

> On high, it is not bright. Down low, it is not dim. Oh it stretches on and is unnamable. It repeatedly returns to the unmanifest things. It is called the shape of unmanifest shapes, and the image of unmanifest things. It is called vague and elusive. Welcoming it, do not see its front. Following it, do not see its back.[17]

Considering the content of this portrayal, the simple *yizhe* 一者, the One, must also refer to the "one" in "merge and become one." Ergo, this sense of the One does not describe a composite unity but instead depicts the Way.

Second, the suggestion that the One in Chapter 10's "Store and protect the white soul and embrace the One" refers to the body is doubtful, and it is much more likely that this "One" also signifies the Way. These two readings originally come from the *Laozi*'s famous commentators Heshanggong 河上公 (1st c. CE) and Wang Bi 王弼 (226–249 CE). According to the first, "protect the white soul" *yingpo* 營魄 means "cloud soul and white soul" *hunpo* 魂魄 and the "One" *yi* 一 indicates the "bodily-self" *shen* 身. However, Wang Bi 王弼 offers a more plausible reading.[18] He suggests that *yingpo* 營魄 be read as "The places people constantly reside" 人之常居處 and *yi* 一 as "The Truth of Humanity" 人之真.[19] Lou Yulie 楼宇烈 builds on Wang Bi's suggestion to argue that "embracing the One" *baoyi* 抱一 equates with "embracing the unhewn" *baopu* 抱樸.[20] Of course, in the *Laozi*, and Daoism generally, the Way can be glossed as both the "unhewn" and the "Truth." Following this line of interpretation, it is certainly possible for "embracing the One" to mean "embracing the Way."

This reading of "embracing the One" does not reject the importance of the body in the passage, but highlights the One as the key for nourishing life and cultivating the body instead of referring to the body itself. This is also the case in *Laozi*'s Chapter 22 "Embrace the One to become the model of the empire." Further support comes from outside of the *Laozi* as *Zhuangzi* records the following:

> Laozi said: On the path to protecting life, can you embrace the One? Can you not lose it? Can you know the auspicious and inauspicious without divining with milfoil or tortoise shell? Can you come to rest? Can you stop? Can you seek it in yourself and not in others? Can you be bedraggled? Can you be naïve? Can you be a child? Children scream

> all day, but their throats do not get horse, and so are the perfection of harmony. They can grasp something all day, but their hands do not become knotted fists, and so are the communion of virtue. They gaze about all day, but their eyes never blink, and so the periphery is never excluded. Move without knowing the purpose, rest without knowing the reason, and undulate and accord with the wave of things. This is the path to protecting life.[21]

The middle section of this long passage also appears in *Laozi*, and according to this perspective "embracing the One" involves using the consistent true patterns of the Way to cultivate the self and nourish one's vital nature. The Way *is* the One and both are used in the process of cultivation.

While we have argued for the equation of the Way and the One in the *Laozi*, that text and the Zhuangzi also promote the sense of the One as a second tier of existence below the pinnacle of the Way. In the *Laozi*, the One emerges from the Way, and in the "Heaven and Earth" chapter of *Zhuangzi,* the One similarly appears at the second stage of creation:

> During the Great Beginning [*Taichu* 泰初] there was nothing. There was nothing and nothing that could be named. From it there arose the One, a manifest unity without form. [All] things attained life through this and we call it "Virtue."[22]

In this cosmogony, *Zhuangzi* identifies the source of life as *Taichu* 泰初 "Great Beginning," which has a nature of nothingness that lacks manifestation or a name. Following the reading of the famous Daoist priest Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (608–?) in his *Zhuangzi shu* 《莊子疏》,[23] the nothingness of the Great Beginning 泰[太]初 operates as the highest level and preexists the One, something instead identified with the secondary quality of formlessness. Chen Guying likewise offers a related reading, suggesting that the One is an undifferentiated state that appears one stage below the Way (Nothingness and emptiness) in the process of creation.[24] We can conclude that in many instances the One exists at a level lower than the Great Beginning or its alternative name—the Way.

This latter sense of the One as secondary to the ultimate origin in *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* differentiates those texts from *All Things Are Forms in Flux.* This new work instead accords more closely with other later and excavated cosmologies that emphasize the primal unity, the One, as the supreme origin that is both empty *and* formless.

The Great One Birthed Water terms this highest level as the "Great One," an expression equivalent to the "One" but includes the modifier "Great" to emphasize that the word should not be taken as the normal "one." Similarly, "The Way's Origin" 《道原》chapter of the *Huangdi sijing*, says, "In the beginning, the primordial constant was completely united and supremely empty. Empty and united it existed as the One, the constant One and that was all."[25] Here, unlike with *Zhuangzi* and *Laozi,* the "Primordial Constant" *Hengxian* 恒先, the "supremely empty" *Taixu* 太虛 and the "constant One" *Hengyi* 恒一 combine together to signify the original state at the beginning of creation.

The *Huainanzi* rephrases this same sentiment saying, "That cavernous fusion of Heaven and Earth, that undifferentiated inchoate muddle not yet created or formed into things, refer to it as the 'Great One.'"[26] Following all these examples, it seems that the "One" in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* conforms more closely to the variations seen *The Great One Birthed Water*, *Huangdi sijing*, and the *Huainanzi* than earlier works like *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*.

The concept of the One in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* shares important connections with these other Daoist texts, yet the depiction of this key term diverges in a single important way. The newly discovered text obscures the common association of the One with asceticism or extrasensory perception by highlighting its concrete nature as something that can be sensually and directly contacted and experienced. The text explains:

> Thus, concerning the One: gnawing on it, there is flavor; inhaling it, there is fragrance; drumming on it, there is sound; cozying up to it, it can be seen; holding it, it can be held.
>
> 是故一 ， 咀之有味 , 嗅[之有臭] , 鼓之有聲 , 近之可見 , 操之可操 。

All Things Are Forms in Flux offers an extremely peculiar depiction of the One, as it contradicts most traditional Daoist visions of the metaphysical realm.

Compare this to the Mawangdui B edition of the *Laozi* Chapter 14, where it states:

> If you look but do not see it, call it "subtle." If you listen but do not hear it, call it "rarified." If you grasp for but do not obtain it, call it "smooth." These three cannot be realized through investigation. Thus they merge and become the One. Concerning the One, its height is not exaggerated. It lowliness is not of things. Oh it stretches on and is

> unnamable. It repeatedly returns to the unmanifest things. It is called the shape of unmanifest shapes, and the image of unmanifest things. It is called vague and elusive. Welcoming it, do not see its front. Following it, do not see its back.[27]

This example and others affirms that Daoists regularly speak of the Way and the One as formless, imageless, soundless, flavorless, unable to be felt, unable to be touched, and that is exactly why they can function as the total source and origin of the ten thousand things.[28] This depiction follows a type of logic as the world's basis of existence involves numerous abstract concepts like time, space, numbers, relationships, the limited, the unlimited, absolutes, opposites, that all transcend experience and tactile knowledge.

The tension between the perceptible "One" of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* and the other expressions of Daoist cosmology might lead us to suggest divergent traditions; yet if we look to the *Zhuangzi*, a conciliatory explanation emerges. Dongguozi 東郭子 is recorded as asking Zhuangzi about the location of the Way. Zhuangzi replies, "There is nowhere that it does not exist."[29] As Zhuangzi sees it, the Way manifests in crickets, ants, weeds, and duff. It is even within broken tiles, shit, and piss. Dongguozi imagines that the Way exists as a concrete thing, but Zhuangzi explains that the Way is actually the basic material from which everything is constructed. This basic material exists in all things and simultaneously cannot be any concrete thing. This is to say, "What makes things things is not limited by things. Yet, things have limits because what are called things are limited, and the limitless limit is limited only by its limitlessness."[30]

Following from this, if the sensible nature of the One expresses itself as the ten thousand things in *All Things Are Forms in Flux*, then concretely sensing anything provides sense-based knowledge of the One. This interpretation further implies that the One, itself lacking the manifestation of individualized things, cannot be directly sensed. If this were not so, admitting that the One is the supreme basic substance, while also simultaneously proposing that it can be perceived by the senses, leads to a type of "imagistic" explanation suggesting that the One could be depicted as an image. Early Daoism generally does not employ this approach, as it more often relies on negating the possibility of sensory perception when explaining the foundation of existence. Thus, the most likely reading of this passage suggests a substantive One that is both the source of all potential sensations and something that transcends sensation itself.

This substance-based interpretation of the One also helps clarify the process of division seen in the full cosmogonic statement of *All Things Are Forms in Flux*. Here we again see similarities with a classic interpretation of *Laozi* Chapter 42. While this numerological creation, with its levels of the One, the Two, and the Three, hints at a process of abstract division and differentiation, these numbers are often identified as types of *qi* substances. In this reading, the progression moves from "undivided *qi*" to the "two *qi* of yin and yang" and finally to the three that comprises yin, yang, and the mixture of those two as "harmonious *qi*." The culmination of this numerological cosmogony then involves these three types of *qi* birthing the "ten thousand things."

This reading of Chapter 42 not only appears in later contexts like that of *Heshanggong's Commentary* but also in the *Huainanzi* and *Liezi* that more likely possess closer historical connections with *All Things Are Forms in Flux*. The *Huainanzi* provides the earliest version of this reading, stating:

> The Way begins with the One, but the One did not birth [anything]. This is because it [simply] divided into yin and yang. When yin and yang combined with harmony, then the ten thousand things were born. Thus it is said, "The One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, and the Three birthed the ten thousand things."[31]

This provides an explanation of creation as a process of division and recombination of a single *qi*. The *Huainanzi* explicitly identifies the Two as the divided *qi* of yin and yang and the Three as the set of these and "harmonious *qi*."

In the "Beneficence of Heaven" *Tianrui* 《天瑞》 chapter in the *Liezi* one finds four preliminary stages in its cosmogony prior to the emergence of the One.[32] Once the One appears, we see the beginning of the transformation of form and the creation of the familiar tripartite subdivision. It says, "The One is the beginning of form's transformations. The pure and light ascend to become Heaven; the turbid and weighty descend to become Earth; [lastly,] the central harmonious *qi* becomes humanity.[33] Thus, Heaven and Earth contain these essences and the ten thousand things are generated."[34] Both this passage and that from the *Huainanzi* draw on the *Laozi* and affirm that chapter 42 depicts a sequential division of *qi* into yin, yang, and harmony.

In considering whether this three-qi cosmology appears within *All Things Are Forms in Flux,* the problem of *qi* must first be resolved. Without a conception of *qi* at the heart of creation, then

the identification of the text's numbers with yin, yang, and harmony would rest on shaky ground. *Qi* only appears a single time in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* in the phrase "The five *qi* appear together" 五氣並至. Of course, this then raises the question of what the compound "five *qi*"indic ates.

While we might relate to the six *qi* of the *Zuozhuan* (yin, yang, wind, rain, darkness, and light),[35] the *Shiming*《釋名》 presents a more plausible equation of "the five phases with the five *qi*."[36] Cao Jinyan 曹锦炎 promotes this as the obvious answer to this puzzle, but unfortunately even if this is the correct reading, one still cannot automatically equate the categories of "five phase *qi*" with "yin-yang *qi*" for in this early time they often appeared in separate cosmological models.

All Things Are Forms in Flux does, however, mention the concepts of yin and yang. It notes, "The order of yin and yang, why is it so stable?" 陰陽之序，奚得而固. Regrettably, this does not definitively prove anything either, for regardless of whether one considers the topics of *qi* or yin and yang, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* does not connect these concepts to the process of creation. Therefore, we cannot indisputably state that the Two 兩 and the Three 叁 signifies the two *qi* of yin and yang with the addition of harmonious *qi*. The best we can do is rely on transmitted Daoist traditions and tentatively employ the vision of divided *qi* to explain this cosmogony. Thus, we posit that the Two likely refers to the *qi* of yin and yang that emerge from the One, while the Three indicates the harmonious *qi* combined with the Two.

Having provisionally resolved the issue of the Two and Three, only the "Mother" which the Three birthed and the "Congelations" that the Mother formed require further clarification. The "Mother" is a metaphorical term used within Daoist cosmogony that applies the relationship of a human mother and child to the cosmos, positing that the entire universe and the ten thousand things also have their "Mother." Simply put, the term "Mother" represents the root source of all things. Yet, the "Mother" seen in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* appears at the third stage of creation and does not accord with Laozi's Chapter 25 assertion that the Way is "the mother of the world" or *The Great One Birthed Water's* proclamation that the Great One is "the mother of the ten thousand things."[37] Instead, it functions as a link in the process of creation that ends with the birth of the ten thousand things and perhaps should be understood as Heaven and Earth.

However, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* does not end its cosmogony with the appearance of the ten thousand things but instead finishes with the Mother completing the "Congelations" (*jie* 結). The basic meaning of *jie* 結 is actually "conclude," but Qin Hualin 秦桦林 draws on the *Heguanzi* 《鶡冠子》 to emphasize a different meaning. He quotes, "Thus the illuminated spirits confine and bind [*gujie* 錮結] their vastness to form all the kinds of life that endlessly rely on the One"[38] to assert that *jie* means "condense" or "gather."[39]

Normally, in Huang-Lao and Daoist works the One generates a sequence of events that culminate in the emergence of the ten thousand things. For example, the *Laozi* concludes with the "Three birthed the ten thousand things," and the "Great Music" 《大樂》 chapter in the *Lüshi chunqiu* says, "The ten thousand things emerged, created by the Great One."[40] Because of these examples, we can posit that the *jie* 結 "Congelations" in "the Mother formed the Congelations" relates to the generation of the ten thousand things, that is, "all the things that are forms in flux." While Qin Hualin has his theory, the basic meaning of *jie* 結 is "to form," or "complete." In the *Zuozhuan*, we find the phrase, "sent Official Zhou to complete [*jie* 結] it."[41] Therefore, we can tentatively state that *jie* 結 indicates bringing creation to completion.

Daoist cosmology mostly depicts Heaven and Earth as appearing during the stage of creation where form emerges, and sometimes they are even depicted as the Mother of the ten thousand things as in *Laozi* Chapter 1.[42] Though *All Things Are Forms in Flux* does not situate Heaven and Earth as the Mother of the ten thousand things, it still emphasizes their special status. If the Mother is what brought the ten thousand things to completion, even though the text does not explicitly present it as a gloss for Heaven and Earth, it certainly must possess the "naturalness" associated with those two.

To summarize our reading of the text's short cosmogony: The One *qi* birthed the Two *qi* of yin and yang. Those Two birthed the Three of harmonious *qi*. Those Three birthed Heaven and Earth (the Mother), which brought the ten thousand things to completion. Overall, this process is one of numerical division. It starts with the One *qi* and ends with the ten thousand things. Inherent in this use of numbers is the idea of order and consistency, depicting how the diversity of the ten thousand things actually has a single foundation and origin.

When read this way, the lost text's cosmogony closely parallels that found in the *Laozi*, with a few key distinctions relating to the role of the One and the Mother. It also bears a striking resemblance to parts

of the *Zhuangzi*, *Liezi*, *Huainanzi*, and more. Uniquely, it promotes humanity's ability to engage with the One as the substance of all manifest existence. The One in the text is not just something distant and solely attainable through mystic gnosis but also is visible and tangible as the body of the world.

Nature (*ziran* 自然) and the Creation of Things

In Daoist theories of creation, the Way, the One, the Great One, and the Primordial Constant variously function as the basic origin of the myriad beings. These singular origins generate a plurality, the Many, which is to say the objective physical things of the natural world—the "ten thousand things." In Daoism, the binary of the creator (One) and the created (Many) is also often glossed as the formless and the formed, the imageless and the imaged, the nameless and the named, the insensible and the sensible. In *Liezi* and *Zhuangzi*, one additionally finds explanations contrasting that which birthed life and the life that was birthed, that which formed the forms and the forms that were formed, and that which made things things and things that were made.[43] Those which have form, image, name, and can be sensed are considered "things" or the "ten thousand things" and exist as particularized phenomena. However, the text argues that these are part of the One and are a holistic plurality that moves in cycles.

The first half of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* is an investigation into individuated forms and natural phenomena, and is why Asano Yūichi 淺野裕一 identifies it as an isolated essay that he calls "Inquiring into Things" 《問物》[44] Yet, it is perhaps inappropriate to separate this from the latter section. Considering Asano's name for the second section "Knowing the One" 《識一》 (though it really should be called "Holding the One" *zhiyi* 《執一》) these sections are actually perfect complements that concern the One and the Many that it produced.[45]

The first section of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* involves a series of questions and notably resembles Qu Yuan's 屈原 "Inquiring about Heaven" 《天問》. In contrast to "Inquiring about Heaven," during its "second act" *All Things Are Forms in Flux* shifts away from questions toward a format where each passage begins with "I have heard it said." This is why Asano separates these sections based on style and content. However if we assume that the two sections contrast the One with the Many, then the second half likely represents an answer to the questions raised in the first.

The text's binary division when correlated with the One and the Many provides a clear structure for analysis. Having previously covered the important topic of the One as creator above, we can now turn to the section on Many that questions the nature of "things" and pursues the difficult topic of the causes of phenomena, a sequence that eventually lead to the root cause of all things—the One.

In the first section of *All Things Are Forms in Flux*, its perspective on the many emerges from a series of questions concerning the causes of "nature."[46] This list includes more than 40 individual queries, which the text never directly answers. Although we cannot know the author's explicit responses to his own questions concerning the causes of natural phenomena, we can at least discover what sort of natural causes he sought to investigate. The very fact that the text engages with this type of "nature" suggests that natural occurrences intrigued, fascinated, and inspired its author.[47] The title *All Things Are Forms in Flux* confirms that the author's views on nature and the key topic of the text involves exploring the relationship of "things" and "forms in flux."

Here, "things" operates as a general term for all the objects that exists within the world, including ghosts and spirits. *All Things Are Forms in Flux* terms these the "hundred things," though classical philosophy mostly calls them the "ten thousand things," "varieties of things" *pinwu* 品物, or "all things" *shuwu* 庶物. The text's conception of the "hundred things" centers on the manifestations and transformations of their "forms" *xing* 形 and "substantive structures" *ti* 體, which explains the importance of "forms in flux."

Shuowen jiezi explains these two terms the text uses to analyze things by noting that "form" *xing* 形 is a visible "image" *xiang* 象, and "substantive structure" *ti* 體 is a term for the "totality of the twelve components," referring to a person's head, hands, feet, and, by extension, is a person's body or the structural form of anything. The *Zhuangzi* implies another sense of these two, saying:

> From it there arose the One, a manifest unity without form. [All] things attained life through it and we call it "Virtue." Moving it birthed the things. The things' completion come from patterns that we call forms. The forms and substantive structures protect the spirit and all have their standard principles that we call individual nature.[48]

Here Zhuangzi uses the term "form" to explain the nature of things, but he also importantly includes the compound *xingti* 形體 (form and substantive structure).

All Things Are Forms in Flux applies the terms form and substantive structure in its own fashion. "Form" mostly depicts the appearance of things just following their creation, while substantive structure instead relates to things' fully developed manifestation. It explains:

> All things are forms in flux, so how do they become fully developed? These forms in flux develop bodies of substantive structure, so how do they avoid death [or destruction]?
> 凡物流形，奚得而成？流形成體，奚得而不死。

Here *liu* 流 "flux" includes the basic meaning of forward moving water.[49] The expression "forms in flux" in the title *All Things Are Forms in Flux* refers to the transformative process of natural things and the alteration of their manifest substantive structures and forms. This is comparable to the *Book of Changes* where it says, "the varieties of things are forms in flux" 品物流形, or the *Book of Poetry* where it notes "They will bud and they will have substantive structure" 方苞方體.[50] Following from these sources, we can propose that when things "develop bodies of substantive structure" they have completed all their various aspects of substantive structure and forms.[51]

Beyond mentioning the general concepts of "things," "forms," and "substantive structures," *All Things Are Forms in Flux* also inquires into more specific examples of these manifestations. All such things can be divided into two categories: Heaven and Earth, and things associated with Heaven or Earth.

The ancients viewed Heaven and Earth as the most influential components in the cosmos. Sometimes they were even considered the creators of the universe, and so the pair also sometimes signify the original source of all things. In *All Things Are Forms in Flux,* the terms "Heaven" and "Earth" partially include this sense in accordance with our prior assertion that identifies them as the "Mother." The text explains:

> Heaven and Earth established the end and they established the beginning. It was Heaven that sends down the five measures.[52]
> 天地立終立始，天降五度.[53]

The "end and beginning" should refer to the ends and beginnings of all things that exist between Heaven and Earth. This establishes the sequential priority of Heaven and Earth, but this passage also demonstrates that in the text Heaven plays an even more fundamental role

than Earth because it sends down the "five measures" and because one should "follow the Way of Heaven" 順天之道乎.

Though the text might hint at the special importance of Heaven, it equally pursues questions about both Heaven and Earth as the grandest phenomena in the cosmos. The two main lines of interrogation relate to the cause of their large forms ("Why is Heaven high?" 天孰高 and "Why is Earth broad?" 地孰遠), and what brought them into existence ("What made Heaven?" 孰為天 and "What made Earth?" 孰為地). According to early traditional cosmologies, Heaven and Earth are mostly identified by their incredible height and vast breadth. Heaven is also described as having the greatest capacity to cover things, and Earth is depicted as having the greatest capacity to carry things. Therefore, mentioning the height and breadth of these two accords with transmitted traditions.

The syntax of these questions parallels how *All Things Are Forms in Flux* also engages in other queries. Particularly, we should note that when it asks about the sizes of Heaven and Earth it uses the term *shu* 孰 that normally means "who" or "which." We suggest that in this context it should taken to mean "why." This view results from the text's concern with causes and reasons for "why" natural phenomena exist as they do. This questioning goes beyond normal observations about the height of Heaven and the breadth of Earth, revealing the desire of the author to seek out something cosmically prior that created Heaven and Earth and generated their specific natures.

This interest in what came before Heaven and Earth conveys that these two are simply the largest of all manifest phenomena and not the ultimate origin of things. Still, when engaging the phenomena found between the extremes of Heaven and Earth, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* groups them according to their associations with these most magnificent components of creation. For Heaven, this means the sun and moon, thunder and lightning, and wind and rain; for Earth, this includes water and fire, grass and trees, birds and beasts, the ground, humans, the hundred clans, and spirits and gods. The content of these two realms comprise the totality of the traditional Chinese natural world. The text ponders the basic existence of these phenomena and what makes them just so. For example, it asks why grass and trees can be born, why birds and beasts can twitter and growl, why the ground can be flat, why water can be clear, why people are born and die, why there is wind and rain, why thunder rolls and lightning strikes, why when the sun rises it is larger but less hot, and why the sun becomes smaller as it sets. It posits numerous questions in need of answers.

These phenomena are quite familiar and most people generally take them for granted. Yet, the author of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* does not do so, instead seriously pondering the causes of these various manifest forms. The author moves beyond the basic human experience that presents a sense of "what" exists in the natural world to investigate the "why" mentioned above. In this process, he also mentions more unusual and difficult phenomena, which provide thought-provoking examples.

First among these, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* addresses rare heavenly phenomena like "solar prominences" *ri'er* 日珥[54] and "lunar halos" *yueyun* 月暈. The text says:

> [As for when the sun has] ears, what sage will there be? As for when the moon has an army, what orderings will there be?
>
> [日之又]耳 , 將何聖 ? 月之有軍 , 將何正?

This passage poses many questions about the reading and meaning of these characters. The above transcription presents its most basic form and does not even confirm the author's awareness of subtle natural phenomena like solar prominences or lunar halos.

The original compiler Cao Jinyan was the first to take "sun ears" 日耳 as "solar prominences" 日珥 and "moon army" 月軍 as "lunar halo" 月暈. He also read "sage" 聖 as "hear" 聽 and "order" 正 as "military campaign" 征. This interpretation emphasized how ancient Chinese astrology connected solar prominences to human affairs and lunar halos to military activity.[55]

However, Liao Mingchun 廖名春 reads "sage" *sheng* 聖 as "sound" *sheng* 聲 and takes it to mean "explanation." He likewise interprets "order" *zheng* 正 as "verify" *zheng* 証 and suggests it means "evidence" or "significance." As a result of these two changes, he argues these sentences do not address how people should respond during times when solar prominences and lunar halos appear but instead are inquiring into the cause or significance of these events.[56]

Fan Guodong 凡国栋 rejects this and other interpretations, like those of Song Huaqiang 宋华强, [57] and bolsters Cao Jinyan's reading by drawing on the Mawangdui text *Augury by the Sun, Moon, Wind, Rain, Clouds, and Qi* 《日月風雨雲氣占》. There both the *er* 珥 in *ri'er* 日珥 "solar prominence" and the *yun* 暈 in *yueyun* 月暈 "lunar halo" are written with the same simplified forms of *er* 耳 "ear" and *jun* 軍 "army" found in *All Things Are Forms in Flux*. However, he suggests that Cao Jinyan's interpretation is lacking because in the *Augury*

by the Sun, Moon, Wind, Rain, Clouds, and Qi one finds not only *ri'er* 日珥 "solar prominences" and *yueyun* 月暈 "lunar halos" but also *riyun* 日暈 "solar halos" and *yue'er*月珥 "lunar prominences." This suggests that all these terms refer to light around the edges of the sun and moon.[58]

All four of these phenomena appear during solar and lunar eclipses when various forms and events along the edges of the sun and moon become visible. In ancient times, they were explained as the peripheral *qi* of the sun and moon. According to Feng Shi's 冯时 reading of history, when Shi Shen 石申 and Gan De 甘德 of the Warring States observed something that looked like a flock of birds and a white rabbit at the edge of the sun during an eclipse, it was actually the earliest record of solar prominences in the world.[59] Now with *All Things Are Forms in Flux* we have another early record of these two celestial phenomena.

Overall, we tend toward Cao Jinyan's view in thinking that these two sentences are not interested in inquiring into the what or why of solar prominences and lunar halos but instead ponder how people should respond to their occurrences. This is because the topic of the sentences is humanity and not these phenomena. In line with this, we follow Liao Mingchun's reading that takes *zheng* 正 "ordering" as *zheng* 証 and interpret it to mean "admonish" or "remonstrate" following the use of term in the *Zhan Guo Ce* 《戰國策》.[60] This move also means that *sheng* 聖 "sage" should be read as *ting* 聽 "listen" in the sense of "obey." Therefore, the general meaning of this fascinating record of early astronomical observation becomes, "When an eclipse reveals solar prominences, what instruction will people take from it? When an eclipse reveals a lunar halo, what admonition will people take from it?" The thrust of these two sentences reveals a belief in the interdependent resonance of Heaven and humanity.

While inquiries into natural phenomena like solar prominences suggest a more naturalistic or "scientific" approach to engaging with the world, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* also presents a noteworthy discussion of ghosts and spirits as earthly phenomena.[61] In ancient China, people commonly held that after death humans became ghosts and that these ghosts possessed incredible power and insight. *All Things Are Forms in Flux* explicitly affirms this view by stating that "Ghosts are born from people" and that they possess "divine insight." Even though ghosts have special powers, due to their status as transformations of human beings, the text appears to classify them as just

another instance things within the flow of the many forms, as part of the plurality of "natural" phenomena.

Though the text accepts the existence of ghosts, it still maintains an inquisitive stance that seeks a consistency of reason and order within the world. Thus, the author asks how it is that ghosts emerge from humans but are wiser than humans:

> Ghosts are born from [dead] humans, so what causes them to have divine insight? Their bones and flesh have decayed, but their wisdom is move evident. Why do they have this intelligence?[62] Who understands their strength?
> 鬼生於人，奚故神明，骨肉之靡，其智愈彰，其慧奚適，孰知其强？

The most interesting aspect of this passage is its intellectual stance. In ancient times, one finds Mozi sincerely worshiping ghosts and spirits and firmly believing that they possess some type of transcendent nature. One also finds skepticism, in the newly discovered text also found within the Shanghai Museum's collection the *Guishen zhi ming* 《鬼神之明》, over the power of divine insight and the influence of ghosts and spirits. It questions their capacities, noting that their presence sometimes seems to affect the world, but sometimes not. *All Things Are Forms in Flux* does not doubt the might of ghosts and spirits, but its author wants to know *why* these beings have such power.

According to ancient Chinese views on ghosts and spirits, they are beings invisible to humans and who cannot be directly contacted. Resultantly, ritual sacrifice offers the lone channel for interacting and connecting with ghosts and spirits. In regards to this tradition of sacrifice, the text asks why people must serve ghosts and spirit, and how is it possible to actually communicate and interact with these amorphous beings:

> Ghosts are born from [dead] humans, so why do [humans] serve them? Their flesh and bones are decayed and their bodies are lost, so to where do we offer their food? Their arrival has no confirmation, so what should I consider their mysterious time? During the sacrificial ritual when do we present the offering and how do we give them their fill? The spiritual power within ghosts, how does it eat?
> 鬼生於人，吾奚故事之？骨肉之靡，身體不見，吾奚自食之？其來無度，吾奚時之奧？祭饌奚登，吾如之何使飽？鬼之神奚食？

These rituals generally involve the offering of sacrificial objects that people imagined the ghosts and spirits could actually eat. Yet, *All*

Things Are Forms in Flux asks how we can cause them to eat to satiation when they lack concrete bodies, and how we can know their locations when they have no fixed patterns for their movement.

Ghosts and spirits are incorporeal, invisible, and traceless, so how can one contact and make offerings to them? Indeed, this is quite a momentous question. However, since "ghosts and spirits" by nature are unusually mysterious beings that humans cannot experience directly through their senses, logically the method of connecting with them should be of the indirect sort. According to Confucius' view, to feel the presence of the ghosts and spirits and interact with them people must employ a reverential heart when one is in the sacred space and operate as though they are by one's side.[63] This uncertainty is common in engaging with the divine, yet the author of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* seeks a clearer foundation of order and understanding.

Regardless of whether investigating astrologically important events or the relation of humans and ghosts, all "things" of interest to the text involve some type of transformation and change. This is the issue of "forms in flux." While the above examples provide specific instances of things undergoing change, the text also presents a general philosophy for these transformations. In Daoism, the two aspects of cyclical and the gradual transformation find common support, and *All Things Are Forms in Flux* appears to include both of these within its theory of change as well.

In the *Laozi*, phenomena tend toward the cyclical process of "returning" and "reverting" because they follow the basic revertive action of the Way.[64] *All Things Are Forms in Flux* presents a comparable view of cycles by emphasizing the complementary nature of various pairs like birth and death, beginning and ending, new and old, arriving and returning, and exiting and entering to explain such alternations.

Out of these different cases, the text's questioning of birth and death offers an especially profound instance of cyclical change:

> People are forms in flux, so how do they attain life? These forms in flux become substantive bodies, but what do they lose to die? They once again obtain [it] and come to [life], but do not know the qualities of the left and right.[65]
>
> 民人流形，奚得而生？流形成体，奚失而死？又得而成，未知左右之情。

According to the *Zhuangzi*, the reason for birth and death is the congealing and dispersing of *qi*.[66] *All Things Are Forms in Flux* may hold

a similar view, if it truly presents a *qi*-based cosmogony as argued above. However, it goes beyond this basic discussion of the process of birth and death to perhaps suggest rebirth. In addition to the passage "They once again obtain [it] and come to [life]" this position finds support in a later line that states, "People die and once again become people" 人死復為人. If the text does in fact promote a rare early Chinese vision of reincarnation, it confirms how essential cyclical change must be in its thought.

Concordant with the extreme case of rebirth, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* generally promotes cyclical transformations as its basic view on all change. The text says:

> I have heard it said: "Realize sincerity to be wise; hold to wisdom to have divine insight; hold to divine insight to indistinguishable. Yet, holding to being indistinguishable is perilous; holding to peril is an untenable position; holding an untenable position then return again. This is the reason the old becomes new, people die and once again become people, water returns to the Heavens, and just like the moon things never fully die. They exit then enter again, end then begin again, wane then wax again."
>
> 聞之曰：至情而知，執知而神，執神而通，執通而僉，執僉而困，執困而復。是故陳為新，人死復為人，水復於天咸，物不死如月。出則又入，終則又始，至則又反。

This passage repeatedly affirms the cyclical and revertive processes that all things undergo as they transform. Furthermore, the sequence from "Realize reality to be wise" to "holding an untenable position one will again return" concerns the cyclic transformation during which one's knowledge and engagement in affairs moves from good to bad and then back to the starting point once again. This entire sequence should be understood as follows. By coming to understand a thing's sincere nature one gains wisdom, by holding to this wisdom one attains divine insight, and this divine insight leads to total interpenetration with the world. In turn, interpenetration leads to unification with all things, something that ultimately leads to confusion and a lack of distinctions, and that is what brings everything back to the beginning.[67] This is a cycle of learning and of life.

This cycle involves a sequence of concrete steps, where in between the extreme stages of the cycles, like heading out and returning or beginning and ending, exist multiple intermediary stages. For example, in between birth and death people pass through childhood, adolescence, middle age, and old age. The existence of these middle stages indicates the sequential and gradual nature of this cyclical change.

Gradual change, like cyclical transformations, holds an honored place in Daoism. In the philosophy of Laozi, transformation always involves an endless process of gradually accumulated alterations. As a result, even seemingly radical transformations in a person's life are identified as the result of the buildup of countless small shifts. This is true for every circumstance, be they positive or negative. Because of this gradual nature of change, if one wishes to transform in a positive direction they must constantly work to accumulate the factors that lead to such a result. Simultaneously, they must strive to avoid accumulating the effects that lead to large negative events. In the words of Laozi:

> Plan for difficulties while they are easy. Enact the great with the small. The difficult affairs of the world must be dealt with when they are easy, and the great affairs of the world must be dealt with when they are small.[68]
>
> The still is easy to hold. The yet indicated is easy to plan for. The brittle is easily broken. The fine is easily dispersed. Act on things before they manifest. Regulate them before they are disordered. A tree large enough to embrace starts as a sapling. A nine-story tower begins as a mound of dirt. A journey of a thousand *li* begins under one's feet . . . In managing affairs, people often ruin them when they are near completion. Be as serious at the end as at the beginning, and then no affairs will be ruined.[69]

These passages affirm that because small instances accumulate into significant human events they can be controlled and guided, though the first step involves realizing the relationships between small and great and simple and difficult.

All Things Are Forms in Flux likewise explicates this gradual-accrual-type relationship of the high and low, distant and near, large and small, and seems to have been specifically influenced by this aspect of Laozi's thought. It says:

> I have heard it said: "Those that rise to great heights start from the base level, those who travel far do so from a nearby place. A tree with a ten person girth began life as a lowly sprout. Legs aiming to cover a thousand *li* must start with a single inch."
>
> 聞之曰：升高從卑，至遠從邇。十圍之木，其始如孽。足將至千里，必從寸始。

The affinity of these passages could not be clearer. Though the exact language diverges, the basic examples to illustrate the reality of gradual change remain the same.

Gradual change emphasizes continuity, which in Daoist philosophical works, like the *Laozi*, accompanies generally holistic views on the cosmos and nature. This holistic stance deeply affects the text's perspectives on the causes of natural phenomena and relates to the porous boundary between philosophy and physics in ancient China. Early thinkers not only discuss what caused all things to exist but also consider why this was so. Holism is a common answer that connects to the concept of the One. We find an example of this connection in the Mawangdui edition of "The Way's Origin" 《道原》, where it relies on the phrase "In the beginning the primordial constant," 恒先之初 which is glossed as the One, to articulate the original cause of all natural phenomena. This affirms the One as the holistic cause of everything. The whole passage says:

> In the beginning the primordial constant was completely united and supremely empty. Empty and united it existed as the One, the constant One and that was all. Utterly misty and vague, there was not yet darkness or light. Its divine sublimity was omnipresent; its essential stillness was inexhaustible.[70] Thus, there was not yet any movement, and none of the ten thousand things stirred. Thus, there was no form, and the great totality was nameless. Heaven could not have covered over it; Earth could not have held it up. So small, it was the perfection of the minute; so large, it was the perfection of the massive. It is present everywhere within the Four Seas, and encompasses everything beyond them. Residing in yin it does not rot; residing in yang it does not burn. It has a single unalterable standard that even applies to crawling insects. Birds can fly because of it; fish can swim because of it; and beasts can run because of it. The myriad things live because of it, and the numerous affairs can be successfully managed because it. All men use it but none know its name.[71]

Further elaboration on the relationship of the One and natural causes appears in the *Huainanzi* "Sayings Explained" 《詮言》Chapter where it provides a concrete depiction of how the "Great One" brings about all the manifest natural phenomena like birds, fish, and beasts. The text says:

> That cavernous fusion of Heaven and Earth not yet created or formed into things, we call it the "Great One." Emerging together out of this One, each individual became distinct. There are birds, fish, and beasts that we call the "differentiated things." This variety is separated by types and things are divided by their groups. All their natures and destinies differ and they possess manifest forms. They are isolated and

> disconnected, and being divided into ten thousand different things none of them equal their ancestor. Therefore, while animated we call them "alive" and in death we call them "expired," but in either case they are just things. It is not that there is nothing that made things things, but just that which made things things is not among the ten thousandthings .[72]

Most important to note, these passages from "The Way's Origin" and the "Sayings Explained" both present holistic explanations of natural causes.[73]

All Things Are Forms in Flux similarly takes a holistic stance by asserting that the One caused the ten thousand things to exist, which is something clearly mentioned at the beginning of this essay. Part of this discussion notes:

> Consequently, possessing the One means there is nothing in the empire you will not possess. Lacking the One means in the empire you will not even possess a single thing. [When possessing it] even without looking you can know [something's] name, and without listening you can hear [something's] sound. Grasses and trees grow because of it; birds and beasts twitter and growl because of it.
>
> 是故有一 , 天下亡不有 ; 亡一 , 天下亦亡一有。無[目]而知名 , 無耳而聞聲。草木得之以生 , 禽獸得之以鳴。

This passage is the strongest confirmation that the text considers the One to be the root cause of all existence. Everything relies on the One, and without the One then there would be nothing. Furthermore, this passage neatly answers the text's previous inquiry into the reasons for the growth of grass and trees and the sounds made by birds and beasts—it is all because of the One.

Daoist cosmogonies generally begin with the highest source that created all things, yet *All Things Are Forms in Flux* in addition to this common content and structure also includes queries into the concrete causes of natural phenomena. While the knowledge of that ancient time was unable to fully explain these physical causes, such queries represent a deep yearning to know and search for a constant and stable order that resulted in the theory of the cosmic holistic One manifested in a continual process of change and flux.

The Sage and Holding the One

The One's function as the origin of all creation and the foundation of all unity and change in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* has already been

discussed above; however, in addition to this cosmic role the text also considers the "One" as the basic principle of governance. This dual position for the One is certainly not unique to *All Things Are Forms in Flux,* as it appears in numerous Daoist works. Therefore, the following discussion centers on the particular way in which the text depicts this political role of the One.

Traditional Chinese political models are rooted in fixed divisions between the ruler and the ruled. For example, the *Mengzi* proposes that those who work with their mind govern, while those who work with their body are governed.[74] Daoism usually identifies the ruler as a sage (be they nobles, lords, or kings), and the ruled as the hundred clans or the people. On the surface, the contrast between this and the Confucian model is negligible. Yet, Daoist approaches include extra layers of complexity seen in the distinction between the ideals of the Way and One. The relationship of the Way and humans is universal. All people, not just rulers, can study, embody and follow the principles of the Way. The One, however, is most often presented as the sole purview of the ruler as "sage" (sage king or enlightened king) and is a truth no average person can realize.

How does *All Things Are Forms in Flux* approach these questions of cosmological politics? Does it distinguish between how common people and rulers should engage with the original causes of things? We suggest that appearance of the terms "holding the One" *zhiyi* 執一 and "holding the Way" *zhidao* 執道 signify that the ruler alone engages with the One, something confirmed by many Huang-Lao texts. The difficulty connecting this assertion to the newly recovered text once again relates to issues of character transcription. The key question is how to understand the word 𢦏 that we argue should be read as zhi 執 "hold." The original compiler transcribes it as *shi* 識 "know." Li Rui 李锐 supports this reading, but Liao Mingchun 廖名春 suggests it should be read as *de* 得 "obtain."[75] The Fudan Reading Association posits that it might actually be *shou* 守 "guard" or *zhi* 執 "hold."[76]

This character appears multiple times within the text and has a close relationship with both the Way and the One. It appears three times before *yi* 一 "the One" and two times before *Dao* 道 "the Way," often being paired with deyi 得一 "obtain the One." Due to its connections with other Daoist key phrases, we lean toward reading it as *zhi* 執 "hold." In Daoism, and especially in the Huang-Lao tradition, *zhidao* 執道 "holding the Way" and zhiyi 執一 "holding the One" are common expressions that parallel the even more widespread phrases *deyi* 得一 "obtaining the One" and *shouyi* 守一 "guarding the One."

All of these denote the highest principles by which a leader rules, for they indicate governing with the Way and the One.

In Chapter 35 of the received *Laozi*, it says, "hold the great image and the empire will come to you."[77] There "the great image" is a metaphor for the Way. Therefore, "holding the great image" *zhi daxiang* 執大象 expresses that if a ruler realizes, holds to, and employs the Way in governing, then all in the empire will flock to serve him. The Mawangdui editions of the *Laozi* also use *zhi* 執 in this passage, but in the Guodian edition the character has an unusual form that we consider a likely equivalent to the troublesome 執.[78] This provides further text-base evidence for our conclusion that said character is actually *zhi* 執.[79]

Having now explained why we consider *zhi* 執 to play a prominent role in the text, we can turn to the question of its relationship to rulership. Though in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* both *zhi* 執 "hold" and *shou* 守 "guard" appear as activities anyone can engage in, the text never explains who should practice the more specific techniques of "holding the One" *zhiyi* 執一, "holding the Way" zhidao 執道, "obtaining the One" *deyi* 得一, and "possessing the One" *youyi* 有一.

To help identify if these methods to engage with the Way and the One are universal or particular to the ruler, we must draw on the full content of the essay. Providing a conspicuous hint, the text says:

> Hold the Way to cultivate the self and rule the state.
> 執道 , 所以修身而治邦家

Here "hold the Way" and "rule the state" are discussed together, and because of the ordering of the sentence, it appears that governance is in fact the end goal of "holding the Way." From this single passage we posit that the text imagines that those who grasp and use the Way must be political leaders.

To further support this stance, we also present the text's contrast of the hundred clans *baixing* 百姓 and the lord *jun* 君. It says:

> The hundred clans only honor the lord. The lord only honors the mind. The mind only honors the One.
> 百姓之所貴 , 唯君 ; 君之所貴 , 唯心 ; 心之所貴 , 唯一。

This type of progressive relationship between the hundred clans honoring the lord, the lord honoring the mind, and the mind honoring the One, reveals the One to be specifically associated with the lord.

Lastly, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* implies this reading by depicting the sage as an exceptionally wise politician. The text explains:

> Consequently, when the sage resides in his position, all the state's issues of peace and stability and danger and destruction related to rebels and bandits can be known in advance.
>
> 是故聖人處於其所 , 邦家之危安存亡 , 賊盜之作 , 可之〈先〉知。

According to ancient Chinese thought, the quality of a country's governance was mostly determined by the top political figure. Resultantly, the most important political principles were primarily framed with the ruler in mind. The Huang-Lao tradition believed that the Way and the One were the sage's and king's foundational principles and sources of wisdom, and, based on the three cited passages, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* also appears to reflect this view. We therefore can conclude that the key practices of "holding the Way," "holding the One," and "obtaining the One" are political and relate specifically to the operations of the sage.

Holding the One might be a political act, but what is the underlying philosophy of this practice? Generally, Daoism considers the Way or the One to be the origin of all creation and what guarantees and supports unity. This belief includes an implicit parallel with governance, as rulers must provide unity for their society. Because the Way and the One are the ultimate sources of unity in existence, quite logically the highest ruler, the Daoist sage, seeks to increase social and political cohesion by drawing on the power of this original totality.

All Things Are Forms in Flux, in terms of both language and content, shows remarkable compatibility with this Daoist model. The text's author describes the ideal political leader as the sage and his transcendent wisdom as coming from his grasp on the One. As long as the sage possesses the One, as the principle cause of all things, he can connect to the workings of Heaven and Earth and thus make decisions about affairs thousands of miles away. The text explains:

> When you obtain the One and understand it, you will follow Heaven above and reach all the way to the watery depths below. Sit and ponder it to find solutions for affairs a thousand *li* away; arise and use it to enact these throughout [all the lands within] the Four Seas.
>
> 一得而解之, 上賓於天, 下播於淵。 坐而思之, 謀於千里; 起而用之, 陳於四海。

This passage depicts the pervasive nature of the One and implies that when one can know its constant order, the order of nature, then one will understand how to engage with all circumstances near and far.

As previously mentioned, in Daoism "obtaining the One" is the purview of the sage. For example, the *Laozi* specifically connects the understanding of the single foundational order of things to the sage:

> He does not step outside his door to know the empire. He does not look out the window to know the Way of Heaven . . . Therefore the sage does not travel, yet knows. He does not see, yet understands. He does not act, yet accomplishes.[80]

All Things Are Forms in Flux likewise suggests that only the sage ruler is able to "hold the Way" or "hold the One" and attain this level of wise insight. The text explains:

> I have heard it said: "'[If the ruler] holds the Way, sits unmoving in his seat, properly positions his crown, and never participates in any [concrete] affairs, he will know in advance [the affairs] within the Four Seas, his hearing will reach a thousand *li,* and his sight will cover a hundred *li*. Consequently, when the sage resides in his position, all the state's issues of peace and stability and danger and destruction related to rebels and bandits can be known in advance.
>
> 聞之曰: 執道, 坐不下席。端冕, 著不與事, 之〈先〉知四海,至聽千里, 達見百里。是故聖人處於其所, 邦家之危安存亡, 賊盜之作, 可之〈先〉知。

This passage confirms the special relationship of the ruler and the One, but how the sage specifically manifests the order of the One requires thoughtful textual analysis.

The philologically problematic term in this passage is "participates" *zhu* 著, from the expression "never participates in any [concrete] affairs," and was original transcribed by Cao Jinyan as *zhu* 箸 "bamboo sticks" and read to mean *shu* 書 "books." Many have presented alternative readings, but Cao Feng's theory merits special mention.[81] Cao takes *zhu* 著 as *ning* 寧 "tranquil" following the gloss in the *Guzi tongjia huidian* 《古字通假会典》 dictionary. Based on a *Liji* passage, he also believes that *ning* 寧 signifies the ruler holding court to listen to his subjects. Therefore, to him the passage 著不與事 means the ruler just symbolically holds the throne but does not engage in the active affairs of state.[82]

When one takes this phrase in context, one could loosely interpret it to mean "calmly residing in the court and not undertaking any trivial affairs." Yet, *zhu* 著 read as *ning* 寧 need not mean "holding court," as it also has a sense of "stable" and "settled." *Laozi* states Chapter 37 states, "If one attains desirelessness through stillness, then the empire will naturally stabilize."[83] Accordingly, the sage king who can grasp the One will be able to "stabilize the empire and not engage in trivial affairs" 著不與事. This sense is equivalent to the text's other passage "Sit and ponder it to find solutions for affairs a thousand *li* away; arise and use it to enact these throughout [all lands within] the Four Seas," and similar to "obtain the One and understand it." These passages suggest that the sage does not rule through unengagement or by operating as a passive figurehead silently sitting on the throne. Instead, his ability to hold the universal Way enables him to know, hear, and see distant places without leaving court, and that knowledge allows him to bring stability to the realm.

In the Huang-Lao tradition, the One is the omnipresent principle of unification, and it is considered unknowable through normal sensory means. Yet, the sage can grasp it by "holding the One" or "obtaining the One" and so gains superhuman mental and perceptive abilities that help him to rule. *All Things Are Forms in Flux* reveals a curious variant of this practice because, as mentioned above, its version of the One can be directly perceived even though it also transcends perception. Because of this second transcendent aspect of the One, fully obtaining it still results in transcendent perceptive abilities:

> [When possessing it] then without looking he can know [something's] name, and without listening he can hear [something's] sounds.
> 無[目]而知名，無耳而聞聲。

Rulers have always been tasked with managing the countless actions of innumerable people, but the text argues that the One has the power to bring order to every detail of the ruler's complex obligations. The divergent realities of the many become unified in the knowledge and perception of this one person.

The sage not only uses the knowledge of the One but also occupies a comparable role in the social context as the unifier of the human Many. These two sides, unifier and those who are unified, operate as opposites confirmed by the *yi* 一 "one" in the compound *tongyi* 统一 "unify." This One-Many relationship plays out in the text on multiple

levels, as seen in the following lines that affirm the parallel of the roles of cosmic One and the unification of multiplicity within the empire.

> Consequently, possessing the One means there is nothing in the empire you will not possess. Lacking the One means in the empire you will not even possess a single thing. It was once said: "If you can hold the One, then the hundred things will not be lost; if you cannot hold the One, then the hundred things will all be lost. If you seek to hold the One, look up to see it and look down to observe it. Do not go far to find it, but rely on the measure of your own self to reach it."
>
> 是故有一, 天下亡不有; 亡一, 天下亦亡一有。聞之曰: 能執一, 則百物不失; 如不能執一, 則百物具失。如欲執一, 仰而視之, 俯而察之。毋遠求, 度于身稽之。

To possess the One is to become the force of unification in the world. This is not just an abstract analogy but a substantive reality; the passage reveals the connection of the One and the ruler's self.

Both the Confucians and Daoists believe that the sage's superhuman leadership abilities are not inborn. In the Huang-Lao tradition, the capability of the sage to "hold the One" results from a process of cultivation and nourishment, just as the *junzi* "superior person" in Confucianism attains his virtue by developing himself. Therefore, how the sage is able to "hold the One" becomes a question concerning techniques of spiritual refinement and self-cultivation.

In *All Things Are Forms in Flux,* the cultivation of the mind and the One directly correspond:

> I have heard it said: "If the mind does not conquer the mind, then great disasters arise; if the mind can conquer the mind, this is called the "understanding of the few." What is the understanding of the few? Humans are pure through "holding." How do we know someone's purity? Till the end of life they are naturally thus. Oh being able to rarely make statements! Oh being able to be One! These are what are called "attainments of the few." I have heard it said: "The hundred clans only honor the lord. The lord only honors the mind. The mind only honors the One."[84]
>
> 聞之曰: 心不勝心, 大亂乃作; 心如能勝心, 是謂少徹。奚謂少徹? 人白為執。奚以知其白? 終身自若。能寡言乎, 能一乎, 夫此之謂少成。曰: 百姓之所貴,唯君; 君之所貴, 唯心; 心之所貴, 唯一。

One finds a close parallel between "Oh being able to make few statements! Oh being able to be One!" in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* and the line "Oh being able focus! Oh being able to be One!"

能專乎, 能一乎[85] found in both the "Inward Training" 《內業》 and "Techniques of the Mind II" 《心術下》 chapters of the *Guanzi*.[86] According to these and the other two inner cultivation chapters in the *Guanzi*,[87] the purification of the psyche (the removal of all selfish thoughts and distractions from the mind) includes the practice of *zhuanyi* 專一 "focusing on the One." This parallel suggests that mental cultivation seeking to unify the mind connects to limiting the statements and active politicking of the ruler, i.e. "making few statements."

The term *xin* 心 (here mostly translated as mind but also meaning heart) is used by the ancient Chinese masters in three major ways. First, it refers to the organ of thought separated from the physical organs. Second, it indicates cognitive activity and thoughts. Third, it signifies moral or immoral types of consciousness.[88] As the text says "If the mind does not conquer the mind" and "If the mind conquers the mind," it certainly implies two different senses of the term *xin* 心 "mind." The text depicts one type of mind (positive consciousness) controlling and conquering another type of mind (negative consciousness).

Similarly, the four inner cultivation chapters of *Guanzi* note "control the mind from within" 治心在於中, "store the mind with the mind" 心以藏心, and "within the mind is another mind" 心之中又有心 that all unequivocally suggest two types of mind. Furthermore those texts also discuss how to "focus the mind" *zhuanxin* 專心 and "correct the mind" *zhengxin* 正心, implying a second component of the mind is doing the focusing and correcting. [89]

This process of using the positive aspect of the mind to transform its negative aspect, identified in the above passage as "the mind conquers the mind," is somehow glossed with the strange phrase "understanding of the few" *shaoche* 少徹, and also relates to protecting one's purity until the end of one's life.[90] The text similarly mentions "attainments of the few" *shaocheng* 少成, which refers to saying little ("rarely making statements" *guayan* 寡言), and focusing on the One ("Oh being able to be One!"), which we could say all refer to the mind focused mind. The puzzle within this discussion of mental cultivation of the mind is the role of the word *shao* 少" few."

The original compiler Cao Jinyan considers the *shao* 少 in both expressions "understanding of the few" and "attainments of the few" to mean *xiao* 小 "little." He draws support from the *Liji,* where it says, "In the seventh year, they could understand theory and could select friends. This is called "small attainment" *xiaocheng* 小成." He also explains that the *che* 徹 "understanding" refers to *tong* 通 "penetrate"

and by extension both *tongda* 通達 "understanding" and *tongxiao* 通曉 "knowledge."[91] Cao Feng 曹峰 speculates that one should not use the reading of "little," and instead just take the character as *shao* 少 "minor." Thus, *shaoche* 少徹 "minor understanding" and *shaocheng* 少成 "minor attainment" refer to the mind having some clear insight and having a measure of attainment.[92] Yet, the text does not contrast "small understanding" and "small attainment" with "great understanding" and "great attainment,"making it an unlikely reading, and Cao Feng's interpretation of "minor understanding" and "minor attainment" is not noticeably different or more plausible.

An alternative understanding would be to take *shao* 少 "minor" to mean *yao* 要 "essential." Xunzi says, "The few and principled rule" 少而理曰治.[93] In the Huang-Lao tradition, the contrast of One and Many is also the contrast of the *shao* 少 "few" and the "many." For example, *Huangdi sijing* chapter "Completing the Law" 《成法》 says, "Rely on the One to tend the transformations and use the few (*shao* 少) to know the many,"[94] and "The Way's Origin" 《道原》 chapter says, "Enact the One to not transform. Obtain that root of the Way, grabbing the few (*shao* 少) to know the many."[95] *All Things Are Forms in Flux* makes the One its focus, and so the discussions of *shaoche* 少徹 "rare understanding" and *shaocheng* 少成 "rare attainment" must connect to the One. Resultantly, *shao* 少 does not have the basic meaning of small quantity but instead refers to the "core" or the "root." One could say the two compounds in question could be glossed as "root understanding" and "root attainment" and affirm the key relationship of the One and Many in cultivation and governance.

The goal of attaining mental and thus political unity requires that "the mind can conquer the mind," which refers to the "focused the mind" and represents a high level of mental control. This tranquil state is not disrupted by anything, or as "Techniques of the Mind II" explains, "Focus the thoughts and make One the mind." The general meaning of *zhuanyi* 專一 "singular focus" and a *zhuanxin* 專心 "focused mind" relate to working intently on a single creative or job-related project. *All Things Are Forms in Flux* obviously does not use these terms in regard to focusing on mundane tasks or objects, and instead brings to mind Zhuangzi's *zuowang* 坐忘 "sitting in oblivion" or Chan Buddhism's concept of *wunian* 無念 "without a thought." In the text, the terms take the most foundational thing as the object of focus, because *zhuanyi* 專一 "singular focus" here means to focus on the One. It explains, "The lord only honors the mind. The mind only honors the One." This type of "focusing on the One" or "focusing the mind" signifies "holding the One" and "obtaining the One."

While the ruler engages with this intensive mental cultivation, as mentioned above, the goal of practices like "obtaining the One" is to fully understand the One cause of reality and to help promote unity in society. By learning to "use their mind to conquer their mind" he enables his minds to maintain a high level of focus. This means the external and objective techniques of rulership all emerge coexistent with the internal and subjective techniques of the mind.

Concluding Remarks: Identifying the School of Thought

Having investigated *All Things Are Forms in Flux*'s views on cosmology, natural phenomena, and the application of this knowledge to politics, we can finally present a confident argument about how to classify the text. The original complier Cao Jinyan considers it to closely resemble the "Inquiring into Nature" 《天問》 chapter in Qu Yuan's *Chuci* 《楚辭》, even suggesting it is a sister text to that essay, and categorizing it as a *Chuci*-style work.[96] Asano Yūichi posits that this lost text is really two separate essays that were accidentally copied together. He calls the first half "Inquiring into Things" 《問物》 and identifies it, like Cao Jinyan, as belonging to the tradition of Qu Yuan's "Inquiring into Nature." He considers the second half as a Daoist work of systematic thought that he calls "Knowing the One" 《識一》.[97]

Li Rui 李锐 presents an alternative theory by proposing that *All Things Are Forms in Flux* draws on a broad range of influences. These include *Laozi, Wenzi, Zhuangzi, Lüshi chunqiu, Huainanzi*, *Huangdi sijing*, and the *Guanzi* chapters "Inward Training," "The Purified Mind," and "Techniques of the Mind I and II." Though affirming the affinity of these texts, Li does not identify *All Things Are Forms in Flux* as Daoist since he does not recognize that Daoism specifically existed during the pre-Qin period. Presently, he withholds judgment concerning the identity of the text's tradition.[98]

The views of Cao Jinyan, Asano Yūichi, and Li Rui represent the three major theories on the text's pedigree. These are in summary: classify it with Qu Yuan's "Inquiry into Nature" (either partially or wholly), identify it as partially Daoist, or rule it as unclassifiable. Unfortunately, none of these are quite satisfying.

Following this chapter's previous discussions, we assert that *All Things Are Forms in Flux* is a Warring States example of early Huang-Lao thought and does not belong to the genre of *Chuci*. Li Rui has already noted the close affinity of the text with many Daoist works,

but he rejects the existence of a pre-Qin "Daoist school." It is reasonable to suggest that in the pre-Qin period the term "Daoism" (*Daojia*) did not yet exist, but this lack of a name does not necessarily indicate that there was no Daoist thought. The same point can be made for Huang-Lao as well. The "Under Heaven" 《天下》 chapter in the *Zhuangzi* and the "Against the Twelve Masters" 《非十二子》 chapter in the *Xunzi* both explicitly summarize various intellectual lineages without identifying them with by name. Sima Qian first identifies the schools of both Daoism and Huang-Lao and the *Hanshu* bibliography follows these classifications. Relying on these pragmatic categories, we can broadly assert that *All Things Are Forms in Flux* is a Daoist and, more specifically, a Huang-Lao work.

The most compelling evidence for this classification comes from the text's focus on cosmogony, the origins of nature, and embrace of the concept of the One in establishing its theory of creation. Furthermore, it combines natural philosophy and political principles. All of these factors, especially the core concept of the One, point toward the Huang-Lao tradition. "Holding the One," "guarding the One," and "holding the Way" are the teachings on which the Huang-Lao sage bases his rule. This differs from the Confucian sage who rules with his "moral virtue" or the Legalist model where the enlightened ruler relies on "law."

During the Warring States period, Huang-Lao was a syncretic school that merged a Daoist core with Sophist, Legalist, and even Confucian theories. It was this admixture that led to the great syncretic works of the *Lüshi chunqiu* and the *Huainanzi*. *All Things Are Forms in Flux* does not present a version of Huang-Lao where the "law" of the Legalists has already been equated with the Way and the One, but it does integrate the "mind" and the "One," and the "ruler" and the "sage" in accordance with the inner cultivation chapters of the *Guanzi*. Furthermore, whether or not the text has absorbed any Confucian notions of "ritual" is still uncertain Perhaps at the point when the text was composed the movement toward strong syncretization had not yet fully developed, or such a short lost text could only encompass a few facets of the tradition.

In this regard, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* resembles *The Primordial Constant* (*Heng Xian* 《衡先》), though it is clearly a longer work. Both texts represent the rediscovery of a middle phase between Laozian Daoism and the later fully formed Huang-Lao tradition. In revealing some of the process of this transition they are invaluable resources that have just begun to reveal their treasures.

CHAPTER 3

The Diversity of Eastern Zhou Views on Deities and *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*

Compared to the long arguments that the *Mozi* 《墨子》 presents concerning absolute faith in the gods in its "Shedding Light on Spirits" 《明鬼》 chapter, the discussion in the Shanghai Museum's *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* 《鬼神之明》 *Guishen zhi ming* on whether or not spirits and gods are insightful and powerful seems quite brief.[1] Nonetheless, this newly excavated text reveals an unusual conception of the divine that diverges from those of both Mozi and Confucius. This perspective affirms the existence of spirits and gods, while simultaneously asserting that these beings are inconsistent when bestowing rewards and punishments. This adds an extra layer of doubt to the Mohist and Confucian belief that spirits reliably "bless the good and curse the evil," instead presenting what we might call an ambiguous view of spirits and gods. The discovery of this text thus add a fresh layer of color to the Eastern Zhou masters' conceptions of spirits, expanding our understanding of the diversity and plurality of the religious beliefs in that period. In particular, it reveals the nuance of the complex religious transformations that occurred between the "Three Dynasties" and the Eastern Zhou. Here, we intend to focus on the unique vision of the divine in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* and its position in the religious world of the Eastern Zhou.

Found in the fifth volume of the Shanghai Museum's Chu texts, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* covers less than five bamboo strips. According to the transcription of Cao Jinyan 曹锦炎,[2] and following the edits of other scholars, the text has a total of 197 character or 211 characters when one includes the recovered damaged characters. This text presents distinctive answers to questions concerning the spirits and gods commonly discussed during the Warring

States: Do spirits and gods exist? Do the spirits and gods reward the good and punish the wicked? What powers do the spirits and gods have and what are their limitations? As such, this text allows for a deepening of our knowledge of these debates, an understanding of which will help in identifying the text's school affiliation.

Distinguishing Belief and Disbelief in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*

The core of Mozi's received essay "Shedding Light on Spirits" 《明鬼》 (only section III, as I and II are lost) is an argument to prove the existence of spirits and gods and affirm their absolute authority. In contrast, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* simply assumes the existence of spirits and gods and investigates the problem of "spirits and gods having that on which they are divinely insightful and that on which they are not divinely insightful." Because of the text's foundational assumption, our central line of inquiry relates to how the work connects to Mozi's view on spirits and gods, and even Confucian or earlier traditional understandings of spirits?

On the Mohist side, the notion of "spirits and gods" is very broad. It includes every type of divine being: deified humans ghosts, natural deities, and celestial deities. "Shedding Light on Spirits" says, "Master Mozi said: 'The spirits of ancient times and the present are not different. There are celestial spirits, mountain and water spirits and gods, and those that are the spirits of dead people.'"[3] This text directly attacks advocates who do not believe in the spirits and gods and terms this group "those who hold there are no spirits" *zhi wugui zhe* 執無鬼者. Within the "Shedding Light on Spirits," "Gongmeng" 《公孟》, and related chapters of the *Mozi*, we find important records on these so-called disbelievers' views. Put simply, they completely reject the existence of any spirits or gods, asserting that no such beings exist anywhere in the world.[4]

Mozi never specifically identifies these disbelievers in "Shedding Light on Spirits" or in any other chapter. Yet, Mozi does not artificially construct this position, which he attacks. We can see from the text that Mozi actually encountered real people who rejected the existence of spirits and gods. In the "Gongmeng" chapter, when Mozi faces a Confucian named Chengzi 程子, he criticizes four Confucian doctrines that have brought turmoil to the empire. Among these four is the Confucian idea that "considers Heaven lacking in divine insight and considers spirits lacking in divine powers."[5] Chengzi is unhappy

with Mozi's critique of Confucianism, considering it unfair slander. However, Mozi is firm in his conviction and explains that he is simply depicting these four problematic doctrines and slandering no one. Angrily, Chengzi leaves without a word. This exchange reveals that Confucianism "considers spirits lacking in divine insight," but does not reject these beings' existence.[6]

Nevertheless, Confucianism also includes those who totally deny that spirits are real, and they debate with Mozi and his disciples as well. One of these is Gongmengzi 公孟子, from the eponymous chapter, who completely repudiates the spirits and gods. Gongmengzi, also known as Gongmingzi 公明子, is a disciple of Zengzi 曾子[7] and, according to Mozi, holds multiple contradictory views. For example, he believes in the Mandate of Heaven and that wealth, poverty, longevity, and early death are all fixed and determined by Heaven and cannot be altered in any way. Yet, he also promotes the idea that "the gentleman must study." Mozi criticizes his views by noting that teaching people to improved themselves through education while concurrently claiming that everything is determined by the mandate of Heaven is a paradox like "ordering someone to simultaneously don and remove a hat." Gongmengzi also holds a paradoxical view as one of "those who hold there are no spirits." He claims "there are no spirits and gods," while simultaneously emphasizing that a gentleman must study the offering of sacrifices. Mozi criticizes this contradiction with a similar logic as before saying, "holding to the nonexistence of spirits while studying sacrificial rituals is like learning how to host a guest when one has no guests or learning to fish when there are no fish."[8]

In addition to this case of Gongmengzi, there is also a Confucian of unknown provenance named Dong Wuxin 董無心. He is briefly mentioned in the *Hanshu* where it says, "His name was Wuxin and he was bested by Mozi."[9] If this record is reliable, he is also likely one of "those who hold there are no spirits" mentioned in "Shedding Light on Spirits." This point finds some support in the *Lunheng* where it says:

> The Confucian Dong Wuxin and the Mohist Chanzi 纏子 met to discuss the Way. Chanzi extolled the Mohist theory concerning the protection of spirits and gods, citing the case of Duke Mu of Qin who possessed such brilliant virtue that Shangdi granted him a lifespan of ninety years. Dong Wuxin defeated this argument with the examples of [the sages] Yao and Shun who were not granted long lives, and [the tyrants] Jie and Zhou who did not die young.[10]

In another record, Dongzi laughs at Chanzi saying, "You believe in spirits and gods. How is that different from [trying] to untie a knot with your heel, something which in the end is useless?" to which Chanzi has nothing to reply.[11] In addition to the likely case of Dong Wuxin, there were other people whom Mozi criticized as "those who hold there are no spirits," and there even were those among his disciples who doubted the divine insight of spirits and gods.

Still, most of those whom Mozi criticizes as disbelievers were Confucians, and importantly when these scholars' directly attack Mozi's belief in the existence of spirits, they are also indirectly critiquing the structure of early Confucian religious beliefs as well. This implies a break in Confucianism's continuity with the religion of the Three Dynasties (2070–771 BCE). After all, the belief in spirit and gods was a consistent and major component of religious beliefs during the Xia, Shang, and Western Zhou. In the "Biaoji" 《表記》 chapter of the *Liji* 《禮記》, it records:

> The Master said, "The way of the Xia dynasty was to honor the mandate, to serve the spirits and respect the gods but keep them at a distance…The [rulers] of the Shang dynasty honored the spirits, and led the people in serving them. Thus, they prioritized the spirits before ritual propriety…The [rulers] of the Zhou honored ritual propriety and valued engagement. They served the spirits and respected the gods, but kept them at a distance."[12]

According to Confucius' explanation, the people of the Shang dynasty honored the gods, served the gods, and led people in the broad worship of spirits and gods. However, the Xia and Western Zhou people "served the spirits and respected the gods, but kept them at a distance." The "Biaoji" 《表記》 further records Confucius' comments on how the enlightened kings of the Three Dynasties used plastron and milfoil divination to properly worship the "divinely influential gods of Heaven and Earth" and "Shangdi":

> The Master said of this, "In the ancient time of the Three Dynasties, when the enlightened kings served the divinely insightful gods (*shenming* 神明) of Heaven and Earth, they always first divined with plastrons and milfoil and never dared to make private judgments in the service of Shangdi. Thus, they did not contradict calendrical timing nor disobey the [times divined with] plastrons and milfoil. The plastrons and milfoil were not consulted together [on the same matter]. The great sacrificial services had their seasons and days, while the lesser sacrificial services had no set season or day and were determined by

> the milfoil. For external affairs odd days were used; for internal affairs even days were used. They never disobeyed the tortoise shells or the milfoil.[13]

"The divinely insightful gods of Heaven and Earth" and "Shangdi" can not be equated with the notion of "spirits and gods," but they do overlap because "spirits and gods" can refer to the gods of Heaven and Earth. Generally, Shangdi is identified as the highest god of the Shang people, with the Zhou people placing Heaven as their highest god (though they also persevered a belief in Shangdi as well). Beyond this there was the belief in all types of ancestral spirits and nature gods.[14]

This vast world of religious belief and its related system of sacrificial activities and religious life became disrupted and altered because of the breakdown of the central government of the Zhou court and the rise of the self-ruling regional nobility in the Spring and Autumn period. One manifestation of the "collapse of ritual and destruction of music" in that time was how the Zhou King, the Son of Heaven, lost his position as the master of the highest level sacrifices. This coincided with the efforts of the vassal states to enhance their geopolitical status by engaging in reforms and pragmatic politics. These reforms during the Eastern Zhou resulted in an active transformation of religious life, and led to a fragmentation of and diversification within the Three Dynasties religious tradition. Resultantly, three main approaches to the old religion emerged: moderate reforms, intensive reforms, and radical rejection.

The famous politicians of the Spring and Autumn period, like Zi Chan 子產, Yan Ying 晏嬰, Shu Xing 叔興, Shi Yin 史囂, and Sima Ziyu 司馬子魚, all turned the focus of politics away from religious practice toward human affairs. They emphasized a kind of humanism, summarizable with the views that "the auspicious and inauspicious are caused by humans" and "government only is founded on virtue," shattering the belief that affairs must always be resolved with sacrificial rites. However, they did not deny the existence of the spirits and gods, still maintaining a basic level of belief. Confucius followed this humanistic reformist trend, as confirmed by statements like, "If you are yet unable to serve people, how can you serve the spirits" and his emphasis on "fulfilling human affairs."[15] Yet, like the Spring and Autumn politicians previously noted, Confucius and his main disciplines basically maintained a belief in the spirits and gods.

This emphasis on the importance of human affairs, along with the promotion of naturalistic explanations for natural phenomena

and social interpretations for social phenomena, inevitably led to the emergence of disbelievers. This was the group identified by Mozi as "those who hold there are no spirits." They represent an Eastern Zhou position that dismantles the Three Dynasties' beliefs in spirits and gods. If the story of Ximen Bao 西門豹 sums up the activities of the disbelievers of this era,[16] Xunzi perfectly reveals the theoretical side of this group.[17]

In the context of these Eastern Zhou reforms and fragmentation of religious perspectives, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* most likely belongs to the moderate reform camp. Its basic belief in spirits and gods places if firmly within the peripheral Eastern Zhou tradition that maintained continuity with the old dominant religion of the Three Dynasties. However, its doubt in the gods ability to reliably reward the good and punish the wicked suggests a simultaneous questioning of tradition.

Mozi, however, has no reservation concerning the truth of the old religion or the power of the gods. He offers a forceful defense of tradition and actively opposes both the Confucians' moderate reforms and the disbelievers' radical deconstruction of the old ways. Mozi's approach to arguing for the existence of spirits and gods mainly rests on the traditional belief in spirits and gods passed down from the Three Dynasties. Because of this, although on most issues Mozi opposes the Confucians, in regard to the belief in spirit and gods, he maintains some points of commonality with them.

Mozi offers an absolutist response to the two core issues concerning spirits and gods and the Will of Heaven. First, he concludes that spirits and gods possess an undeniable existence. Second, concerning the issue to be discussed in the next section, he affirms that the spirits and gods universally and inevitably reward the good and punish the wicked. These two issues of existence and of reward and punishment are intimately connected. Investigating the ability of the spirits and gods to reward the good and punish the wicked might lead to doubt, which in turn can become a platform for negating the existence of these beings entirely. This is exactly what we find, as the disbelievers rely on the failures of divine justice to support their perspective. Conversely, Mozi relies on an affirmation of divine righteousness to support his argument for the existence of spirits and gods.

As for *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods,* it assumes that the deities exist, but raises questions about their ability to enforce justice. However, the text simply expresses doubts about the universality and inevitability of the rewards and punishments and so does not head toward the extreme of actual disbelief. In regards to its faith in spirits,

the texts conforms to the positions of both Mozi and Confucius instead of the disbelievers; however, as it refuses to affirm the universality and inevitability of the spirit and gods rewarding the good and punishing the wicked, its position significantly diverges from those two. This latter issue represents one major adjustment to the beliefs of the old religion of the Three Dynasties and is the topic to be discussed in the following section.

Rewards and Punishments in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*

One of the key goals of the "Shedding Light on Spirits" chapter in the *Mozi* is to demonstrate that spirits and gods reward the good and punish the wicked, and in doing so, Mozi repeatedly asserts the concrete existence of "the divine insight of spirits and gods."[18] Mozi's argument follows two logical vectors. First, spirits and gods have the capacity to fulfill the supreme role of rewarding the just and good and punishing the evil and wicked because they are exemplars of goodness and justice and only love and support those who are like them. Following this brand of logic, as long as there are people in the world who love and benefit others, the spirits and gods will reward them. Those of the opposite sort will receive their wrath. Mozi says:

> In ancient times, the sage kings Yu, Tang, Wen, and Wu were universally loving to all the people of the empire, and led them in honoring Heaven and serving the spirits. Because they greatly benefited the people, Heaven blessed them, positioned them as the Sons of Heaven, and all the lords of the empire came to serve them as their vassals. The tyrants Jie, Zhou, You, and Li were universally hateful towards the people of the empire, and led them in reviling Heaven and insulting the spirits. They harmed many people and so Heaven brought calamity upon them, causing them to lose their kingdom, and they were humiliated in death. Later generations cursed them and even now this still continues. Therefore, of those who engaged in evil and thus received misfortune, there are Jie, Zhou, You, and Li. Of those who loved and benefited others and thus received good fortune, there are Yu, Tang, Wen and Wu. Those who loved and benefited others, and received good fortune thus existed; those who engaged in evil, and received misfortune also existed.[19]

Here Mozi recounts classic cases of when the bestowal of good fortune and calamity were obviously the results of behavior, a causality he notes was mediated by Heaven.

Mozi's second logical argument focuses on the problem of the universality and inevitability of rewards and punishments managed by the spirits and gods. He says:

> Thus in ancient times, King Zhou of Shang was honored as the Son of Heaven and possessed all the riches of the empire. He had brave and mighty men such as Fei Zhong, E Lai, and Duke Hu of Zhong who could kill a man with only a finger. The number of people they slaughtered was in the millions, pilling them in lakes and on mountains. Yet with all this, Zhou could not stave off the retribution of the spirits and gods. One's wealth, strength in numbers, bravery, might, tough armor, or sharp weapons are all irrelevant to what I call the punishment of spirits and gods. For as Qin Ai said, "the procurement of a flawed pearl is not minor, and the annihilation of a lineage is nothing major." That is to say, among those whom the spirits and gods reward, there are none too insignificant to be surely rewarded; among those who the spirits and gods punish, there are none too great not to be surely punished.[20]

Mozi enjoys using the word translated above as "surely" *bi* 必 to express "certain" or "inevitable" causal relationships. That the spirits "certainly" will reward the good and punish the wicked indicates Mozi's belief in this "inevitability." He also is fond of using the term "every" *fan* 凡 when he extends his logical analysis of a particular situation to a universal judgment. In regards to the issue of divine justice, Mozi applies a similar logic to claim that all human goodness and all human wickedness must inevitably result in rewards or punishments from the spirits and gods.

Mozi uses the story of how Du Bo was killed by King Xuan of Zhou and became a spirit to punish the king as proof of the universality of divine justice. He said:

> When King Xuan of Zhou was about to execute his innocent minister Du Bo, Du Bo said, "The king [intends to] execute me even though I am innocent. If I lack consciousness after death, then that will the end of it. [However,] if I remain conscious after death, within three years I will certainly let the king know it." After three years, King Xuan assembled the feudal lords at Putian. There were several hundred chariots. Attendants numbered in the thousands and the whole host filled the fields. At noon Du Bo in a red garment and cap appeared riding in a plain chariot drawn by a white horse, holding a red bow and clasping red arrows. He chased down King Xuan and shot [the king] in his chariot. The arrow smote [the king's] heart and broke his back. Struck down in his chariot, he toppled onto his quiver and died. At this time,

> all the close attendants of the Zhou saw [this], and [even] those far away heard it. This event is recorded in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* of Zhou. Rulers use it to instruct their ministers and fathers caution their sons with it, saying, "Be careful, be respectful. All [*fan* 凡] who kill the innocent are visited by misfortune. The spirits and gods punish as swiftly as this!"[21]

Mozi's proof that the spirits justly dispense rewards and punishments comes from two sources. The first are legends taken as the oral history of the common people and second are the historical records of the Three Dynasties' sage kings. These two types of supports are part of Mozi's overall system for determining the true and the false, which he calls the "method of the three standards." In this case, the two standards used for this argument are "those that have foundations" (sources of truth that are founded in the affairs of ancient kings) and "those that have sources" (what the common people have seen and heard), which according to Mozi both corroborate his belief in the activities of the spirits.

Even with this logic, Mozi's extremely absolutist and utilitarian theory of divine justice that is easily undermined by countless counterexamples.[22] Even his own disciples, like Die Bi 跌鼻 and Caogongzi 曹公子, who originally accept this philosophy, later come to doubt it. Following Mozi's advice Caogongzi took an official post in the state of Song. When he sees Mozi again three years later, he complains to Mozi that he has followed the master's teachings but has not received his reward:

> When I first came to your school, I only had a coarse short coat. I just ate vegetable soup and only in the morning. I could not eat it in the evening because [of the need for] offerings and sacrifices to the spirits and gods. Now due to your guidance, my family has become better off and I can respectfully make sacrifices and worship the spirits and gods at home. However, several members of my household have died, six of my animals do not bear young, and I am afflicted with disease. I still do not understand the usefulness of your way.[23]

Obviously Mozi would never admit that his teachings are ineffectual and so criticizes Caogongzi for thinking his insignificant actions merit the divinely disbursed prosperity he desires. He responds:

> Not so! What the spirits and gods desire from man are numerous. They desire that those with high rank and many emoluments will relinquish

> their position to someone virtuous, and those possessing much wealth will share it with the poor. How can the spirits and gods merely desire to snatch away food and drink? Now, you have a high rank and many emoluments, but have not relinquished your position to someone virtuous. This is your first source of misfortune. You possess much wealth, but have not shared it with the poor. This is your second source of misfortune. Now you merely serve the spirits and gods through sacrifices and you say, "Where does my suffering come from?" This is like shutting only one of a hundred gates and saying, "How did the thieves get in?" How can you invoke the blessings of spirits and gods like this?[24]

How many good deeds must someone perform before fulfilling the wishes of the gods? This is very hard to say.

Mozi's disciples feel that their good behavior is enough to receive the blessings of the gods, but Mozi accuses them of insufficient goodness in response to their doubting the divine insight of spirits and gods. Another unnamed student of Mozi's is recorded as doubting the power of spirits and gods because even after following Mozi for many years he has never received blessings for his efforts. However, Mozi suggests a solution that put him in a difficult position, "Your sins are heavy, so how can you deserve any good fortune?"[25]

Then there is Die Bi who starts to doubt the influence of the spirits and gods after Mozi becomes ill. In Die Bi's mind, his master is a sage. So, if the spirits and gods are able to really reward the good and punish the wicked, then his teacher should never be sick. Mozi uses his same logic to deflect this point as well.[26] According to the above examples, Mozi's belief in the divine justice of the spirits and gods was indeed questioned by his disciples, though he always managed to find some twist of logic to bridge the gap between his belief and reality.

Previously, we mentioned the radical disbelievers Gongmengzi and Dong Wuxin, who completely reject Mozi's view. In one exchange, Gongmengzi challenges Mozi with a universal claim, "There is only righteousness and unrighteousness; auspicious and inauspicious omens mean nothing." Mozi replies:

> The ancient sage kings all considered the spirits and gods to have divine insight and to control calamities and blessings. They were able to grasp the difference between auspicious and inauspicious omens and thus the government was well administered and the country was at peace. From the time of Jie and Zhou, all the rulers felt the spirits and gods to lack divine insight and that they did not control calamities and blessings. They were unable to grasp the difference between auspicious and inauspicious omens, and thus the government became disorderly and the country was imperiled.[27]

Here Mozi again employs his technique of "those that have foundations" (the affairs of the ancient sages) as support for his argument that one cannot separate righteousness from the will of the divine.

When compared with Mozi, his doubters, and even those who utterly reject his views, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* promotes a novel perspective on the issue of divine justice. Still, in regard to issue like the spirits and gods rewarding the good and punishing the wicked, the Shanghai museum text shares much with Mozi. For one, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* relies on Mozi's terminology of "rewarding the good and punishing the wicked" *shangshan fabao* 賞善罰暴. It also relies on the same classic examples used by Mozi (and the Confucians) as the extremes of human goodness and evil: the sages kings Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang, and the tyrants Jie, Zhou, You, and Li. However, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* conspicuously diverges from Mozi because of its ambiguous stance. According to its position, on the one hand, the spirits and gods can actually reward the good and punish the wicked; yet, on the other hand, they are unreliable in this role.

The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods considers that because they attained the pinnacle of goodness, the spirits and gods bestowed on Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang the supreme reward: they were "honored as the Sons of Heaven."

> In ancient times, Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang were benevolent, righteous, sagely, and wise, and so the empire modeled them. In this way they were honored as the Sons of Heaven, possessed the wealth of the empire, their long lives where filled with praise, and their stories were passed down through the ages. That these were the rewards of the spirits and gods is clear.
>
> 昔者堯舜禹湯仁義聖智，天下法之。此以貴為天子，富有天下，長年有譽，[28]後世述之。則鬼神之賞，此明矣。

Conversely, because the evil of the tyrants Jie, Zhou, You, and Li, the spirits and gods punished them mercilessly:

> In the times of the tyrants Jie, Zhou, You, and Li, they burned sages, killed remonstrators, robbed the common people, and brought chaos to the state. Because of this Jie was broken at Mount Li, Zhou's head [was presented] at Zhishe. They did not fulfill their proper lifespans and were ridiculed by the whole world. That these were the punishments of the spirits and gods is clear.
>
> 及桀紂幽厲，焚聖人，殺諫者，[29]賊百姓，亂邦家。[此以桀折於鬲山，而紂首於只社]，身不没，為天下笑。則鬼[神之罰，此明]矣。

The history of these different rulers is the main evidence for the text's claim that the spirits and gods can reward the good and punish the wicked. In this regard, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* perfectly mirrors the *Mozi*.

Of course, the newly excavated text also claims that the spirits and gods are not able to deal out divine justice in every case and raises the examples of Wu Zixu and Duke Yi of Rong:

> [However,] in the time of Wu Zixu, the whole world considered him a sage, but his corpse was dumped into the river in a leather bag. Duke Yi of Rong was someone who brought chaos to the empire, but he enjoyed a long life and died a natural death. Relying on these examples to closely investigate it, [we must say] that sometimes the good are not rewarded and sometimes the wicked are not punished.
>
> 及伍子胥者 , 天下之聖人也 , 鴟夷而死。榮夷公者 , 天下之亂人也 , 長年而没。如以此詰之, [30]則善者或不賞 , 而暴[者或不罰。]

During the Spring and Autumn period, Wu Zixu was one of the famous prime ministers of the State of Wu, respected for his loyalty, sincerity, uprightness, and honesty. Duke Yi of Rong was the favorite minister of the tyrant Li who ruled at the end of the Western Zhou. Because he and tyrant Li were both exceedingly greedy and avaricious, the people of the world despised them. According to the theory of divine justice, Wu Zixu should have lived a long and fulfilling life. Yet, he was executed by the King of Wu, and met a tragic end.[31] *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* even identifies Wu Zixu as a "sage," which demonstrates the degree of respect the text's author has for this unlucky politician. Likewise, Duke Yi of Rong was "someone who brought chaos" and thus should have been punished. However, he lived a long and prosperous life. These two offer a strong counterexamples to the belief that spirits and gods reward the good and punish the wicked.

According to *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*, divine justice is not universally or inevitably enforced, but only sporadically so. This is an obvious emendation to Mozi's views which attempts to reconcile his extreme with that of the nonbelievers. Actually, the text offers a unique twist to the belief in spirits by using the term *huo* 或 "sometimes" to shift divine justice from an inevitability to something occasional or accidental.

Confucians generally accept the theory that the good are rewarded and the wicked are punished,[32] after all Confucius once said, "Those who enact goodness, Heaven rewards with fortune; those who enact

evil, Heaven rewards with misfortune."[33] However, this passage does not address whether or not Confucius believes the justice of Heaven must always prevail or only occasionally as in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*. The following quote from the *Zhongyong* suggests that the Master believes virtue "inevitably obtains" its reward:

> The Master said, "How greatly filial was Shun! His virtue was as a sage; his honor was as the Son of Heaven; his wealth included all within the four seas. He offered his sacrifices in his ancestral temple, and his descendants maintained this. Thus, having such great virtue, he inevitably obtained his position, inevitably obtained his wealth, inevitably obtained his fame, and inevitably obtained his long life. Thus, Heaven, in its production of things, inevitably is generous with them according to their basic substance. Therefore, what is growing, it nourishes; what is soon to fall, it overturns. In the Book of Odes it says, 'The admirable and amiable prince conspicuously displayed his excelling virtue. According with the people and according with others, he receives emoluments from Heaven. The protection for his mandate is extended from Heaven.' Hence, those of great virtue will inevitably receive the Mandate [of Heaven]."[34]

The *Book of Changes* likewise records, "The family that accumulates goodness will inevitably have profuse blessings; the family that accumulates evil will inevitably have profuse misery,"[35] which conspicuously expresses the unavoidability of Heaven's justice.[36]

Confucius' view may have been more nuanced than this. While traveling through the various states of the Zhou, he frequently faced hardships and misfortune, and this led his disciples to begin to question his efforts and even their belief in Heaven. For example, when passing between the lands of Chen and Cai, he and his disciples were surrounded by soldiers for seven days. As a result they began to starve and many disciples became ill. Although Confucius "most enthusiastically lectured, chanted, and strummed songs without tiring," and managed to inspire his students to dance, he could not fully alleviate their difficulties. Confucius summoned Zi Lu and asked him, "'We are not rhinoceroses, we are not tigers to be kept in these desolate wilds.' Is my way wrong? How can it have come to this?"[37]

In response to Confucius' question, Zi Lu raised even more questions:

> The Gentleman is without difficulties. Some wonder, is the Master not yet benevolent? This is why others do not trust as I do. Some wonder, is the Master not yet wise? This is why others do not act as I do.

> The cause of this is that in the past they have heard the Master say, "Those who enact goodness, Heaven rewards them with fortune; those who enact evil, Heaven rewards them with misfortune." Presently the Master stores virtue and embraces righteousness and has been enacting these for a great while. How is it that you live in poverty?[38]

These questions of Zi Lu touch on Confucius' notion of Heaven's just rewards and punishments. To address this challenge, Confucius relies on two different arguments. First, he explains that the good do not "inevitably" receive their rewards. Second, he suggests that whether or not a person encounters something relies on "opportunity and timing."

From Zi Lu's perspective, the saying he quotes, "Those who enact goodness, Heaven rewards them with fortune; those who enact evil, Heaven rewards them with misfortune," definitely depicts a theory of inevitability. Yet, Confucius continues the exchange, emphasizing that such an understanding is mistaken. He says:

> This is because of a lack of understanding, I say to you. You think that the benevolent will inevitably be trusted, but then Boyi and Shuqi would have not starved to death on Shouyang mountain. You think that the wise will inevitably be employed, but then Prince Bigan would not have had his heart cut out. You think that the loyal will inevitably be rewarded, but then Guan Longfeng would never have been executed. You think that remonstrators will inevitably be embraced, but then Wu Zixu would not have been killed[39].

From this passage, we see that Confucius is no longer promoting the idea of perfect cosmic justice. We might even posit that the view found in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* about the sporatic nature of reward and punishment could be an elaboration of or a reflection on Confucius' explanation here.

Both Confucian and Mohist theories of reward and punishment originate with the religion of the Three Dynasties. The *Book of History* section on the Shang repeatedly promotes this belief. In the "Instructions of Yi" 《伊訓》 chapter, it says: "Only the Lord on High [*Shangdi*] does not have a constant [*wuchang* 無常]. To those who do good, he sends down one hundred blessings; to those who do evil, he sends down one hundred miseries."[40] According to Kong Anguo's 孔安国 commentary, "'The Lord on High does not have a constant' means 'the misfortunes and fortunes of Heaven all rest with those who are good and evil, as they never constantly [*buchang* 不常] reside with a single [ruling] family.'"[41]

In another *Book of History* chapter, "All Have One Virtue" 《咸有一德》, it mentions "Heaven protects the virtuous" and "Misfortune and fortune are sent down according to virtue":

> I do not have the Shang kingdom because of Heaven's personal preference, for Heaven only protects the one virtue. It is not that the Shang was sought by the people below, for the people only pay homage to the one virtue. When virtue is really one, every action will be auspicious. When virtue is divided, every action will be calamitous. The auspicious and calamitous do not rest with humans, as these disasters and blessings sent down by Heaven rest with virtue.[42]

This presents a model where Heaven disperses rewards and punishments according to the virtuousness of the individual. The *Book of History* in the "Commands of King Tang" 《湯誥》 likewise has "The Way of Heaven brings blessings to the good and disasters to the wanton, for it brought calamity to the Xia dynasty to reveal its crimes."[43] In the *Lüshi chunqiu,* it records, "The *Admonitions of Shang* says, 'Every time Heaven sends down calamity or disperses the auspicious, it always has its reason.'"[44] These Three Dynasty beliefs are clearly well attested. During the Eastern Zhou Mozi intensified them to the point of inevitability, while Confucius gave them a bit more flexibility. *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* shifts from Mozi's extreme position to a more relativistic one, indirectly amending the Three Dynasties beliefs in divine justice.

The theory of rewarding and punishing good and evil, or the theory of fair retribution for human behavior, can be generally described as a way of thinking and a kind of value system. It exists in different forms throughout many civilizations and religious traditions. This type of thought and value system includes two interrelated levels.

The first level involves the notion that one's life circumstance should be a reflection of whether one is good or bad. This is not only in regard to how political order, legal structures, or moral systems serve as protectors of proper retribution, protecting the good and punishing the evil, but also how the transcendent divine operates to safeguard such justice. Certainly, it is because of the various supports and protections for legal and proper conduct and the numerous censures and punishments for illegal and improper conduct that people can predict the results of their actions and thus select the kind of behavior that will help them attain their goals. Just as people have a contractual type relationship in the case of laws and morals, according to those who believe in religion there also exists a tacit set of

rules binding the divine and humanity: the divine rewards people for good behavior and punishes them for evil. Humans can only attain the favor of God or the gods through their own goodness and must carefully avoid potentially harsh punishments. If in the human world righteousness is constrained and wickedness goes unpunished, people will complain "the Way of Heaven is not just" and hope that Heaven will assert its power to enact proper retribution. Durkheim offers a realistic explanation for the origin of this common phenomenon:

> Thus religion, far from ignoring the real society and making abstraction of it, is in its image; it reflects all its aspects, even the most vulgar and the most repulsive. All is to be found there, and if in the majority of cases we see the good victorious over evil, life over death, the powers of light over the powers of darkness, it is because reality is not otherwise. If the relation between these two contrary forces were reversed, life would be impossible; but, as a matter of fact, it maintains itself and even tends to develop.[45]

The second level relates to how retributive systems for good and evil behavior reflect the human notion of mutual exchange and reciprocity.[46] Regardless of whether it is the exchange of profit in the economic realm or the mutual love and reciprocity of virtue in the moral realm, or the daily rituals of gift exchange, they all affirm that humans require fair interactions. The reciprocity between the divine and humanity is one important example of this. The gods desire human goodness and justice and people desire divine rewards, and so they depend on each other for the mutual satisfaction of these desires:

> "Give to me, and I also give to you; sacrifice your body for me, and I also sacrifice my body for you; sacrifice to me, and I also sacrifice to you." In this Vedic text, the supplicant is having a dialogue with the gods in just this way. In such an exchange relying on a fair method and the same understanding to connect people and the gods together is a common need. Thus, just as humans must rely on the gods, so too must the gods rely on humans. Gods are maintained through the power of humanity, for gods require the ritual vessels to exist. [47]

Mozi and the Confucian views on retribution for good and bad actions embody the human desire for an equitable relationship between action and consequence. Of course, this remains an ideal, as there exist countless instances when people's actions and consequences do not match. Such examples where good people find no success and evil people face no consequences, or the virtuous are impoverished while the unvirtuous are famous and wealthy, are readily apparent.

This reality invariably leads people to doubt the theory that the good are rewarded and the wicked punished.[48] However, Mozi deploys numerous arguments to explain the tensions between theory and reality, and Confucius suggests the importance of "opportunity and timing" to supplement the weaknesses of this belief. *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* promote "accidentalism" as a fresh angle on the nature of the rewards and punishments bestowed by the spirits andgods .

The Powers and Limits of the Divine in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*

If the gods only represent justice and goodness but lacks power and wisdom, then they will be unable to reward the good and punish the wicked. This is one way to explain why deities of justice must be both wise and powerful. These requirements logically emerge from humanity's comprehension of its own weakness, incapacity, and helplessness and come from a desire to extend and broaden its power. Just as humans create tools to enhance human capacity, so too do they imagine the superpowers that are "gods."[49] People wish for the support of a supernatural and superhuman force to resolve challenges and difficulties that they themselves cannot. In the case of the monotheistic God, the divine is an omnipotent and omniscient supreme being. Polytheistic religions rely on a division of labor model where each god possesses one facet of the supreme divine power. As long as people require that spirits and gods play the role of moderator of cosmic justice, functioning as the protectors of humanity, they must imbue these supernatural beings with both power and wisdom.

Within the teachings of the Eastern Zhou masters, "spirits and gods" are generally imagined to be hidden and distant beings that exist within an obscure "shadow realm" *youming* 幽冥. In the *Liji,* this is noted as "In the obscured, there are the spirits and gods,"[50] and the *Zhuangzi* similarly states, "Spirits and gods protect their obscurity."[51] Spirits and gods are omnipresent, but because of existing in obscurity, they are hard to fathom. This is their special mysterious quality and unique ability. Spirits and gods transcend the bounds of human perception and so humanity can only attain knowledge of their existence through methods commonly accepted by both the divine and humanity. *The Doctrine of the Mean*r ecords:

> The Master said, "How abundantly do spirits and gods enact the virtues that belong to them! We look for them, but do not see them; we listen to them, but do not hear them. Yet, embodied in things, they cannot be

> lost. They cause the people of the world to fast and purify themselves, and array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend to their sacrifices. Like pervasive water, they seem to be up above,and to the right and left. The *Book of Odes* says: 'The approaches of the spirits you cannot predict, or even guess at.' The manifestation of the sublime, how imposible it is to repress sincerity such as this!"[52]

To avoid discovery and punishment, those engaged in bad behavior often hide what they do. Yet, people who believe in spirits and gods assert that no actions are secret, as the divine sees all. *Mozi* says, "Although there are deep ravines and broad forests, in those remote uninhabited places, [even there] one must be vigilant because the spirits and gods are watching."[53]

Mozi is unwavering in his belief that the gods inevitably rewarded the good and punished the wicked, a belief inseparable from his view that these deities are unlimitedly wise and powerful. He says:

> Thus the divine insight of spirits and gods (*guishen zhi ming* 鬼神之明) is not affected by remote places, vast marshes, mountain forests, or deep valleys, as the divine insight of the spirits and gods inevitably knows [everything that happens]. The punishments of spirits and gods are not affected by wealth, strength in numbers, bravery, might, tough armor, or sharp weapons, as the punishments of spirits and gods inevitably overcome these. If this is doubted, consider the ancient King Jie of Xia, who was honored as the Son of Heaven and possessed the wealth of the whole empire. Above he cursed Heaven and belittled spirits, and below he and brought misery to the myriad people of the empire. He harmed the achievements of Shangdi and opposed the virtues of Shangdi. Therefore, Heaven guided Tang to enact its divinely insightfulpunis hment.

The "divine insight of spirits and gods" (*guishen shi ming* 鬼神之明) is one of the core issues Mozi discusses in the "Shedding Light on Spirits" chapter, which he relates to extraodinary capacities. The original sense of *ming* 明 was "bright light" and this was extended to include "brilliant" *gaoming* 高明, "wise" *yingming* 英明, and "spiritual divine insight" *shenming* 神明 that altogether describe the intelligence of the sage and the wondrous and mysterious transformations of Heaven, Earth and nature. *Ming* in the expression *guishen zhi ming* refers to what cannot be evaluated with normal human perceptive abilities related as it is to a superior "divine insight," which we tentatively also interpret as "brilliant," "wise," or "brilliant wisdom."[54]

Another disbeliever, Wu Mazi 巫馬子, questions the "divine insight of spirits and gods" when he asks Mozi to compare the abilities of the spirits and gods and the sages. The *Mozi*r ecords:

> Wu Mazi questioned Master Mozi, "Which are more insightful and wise, the spirits and gods or the sages?" Master Mozi said, "The spirits and gods are so much more insightful and wise than the sages that it is like comparing the sharp eared and keen sighted with the deaf and blind."[55]

This is a direct attack against Confucians, who believe in the superior wisdom of the sages and generally would not admit that the spirits and gods are wiser than them. In another case, Suichaozi 隨巢子, a disciple of Mozi, engages is a related debate with a likely Confucian named Yue Lan 越蘭. Suichaozi directly asserts the superiority of the divinities' wisdom:

> Those who hold there are no spirits said: "Yue Lan asked Suichaozi, 'How does the wisdom of the spirits and gods compare to the sages?' He said, 'The sage [is superior].' Yue Lan said, 'Controlling disorder relies on humans, how can we say it is the spirit and gods [who do it]?' Suichaozi said, 'When sages are born in the world they do not yet have their abilities. Spirits and gods enact the four seasons and the eight solar divisions to foster the people; they control rain clouds and wet places to bring about flourishing growth. These all are the spirits and gods abilities, so how can we say they are not more capable than the sages?'"[56]

Certainly, the Mohists consistently uphold that the wisdom and insight of the spirits and gods exceeds even the most highly attained humans. They possess "superhuman" awareness.

As mentioned above, Mozi has many disciples who question his belief in the spirits and gods, and there are two sides to this issue: the belief in the divine beings' ability to reward and punish and the belief in their wise perceptions. Mozi's disciples like Die Bi and Caogongzi all believe in spirits and gods but doubt the insight and wisdom of these beings because they never received any blessings from them. However, using his polished rhetoric, Mozi maintains that spirits do have divine insight and wisdom, though we will never know if he ever managed to placate his disciples doubt.

Like his views on divine justice, Mozi's belief in the wisdom of the spirits and gods was also challenged by the Confucians. Wu Mazi,

Gongmengzi, and Yue Lan not only reject the ability of the spirits and gods to dole out justice, they deny the "divine insight of spirits and gods." Mozi's dogmatic stance is that the divine beings are so wise and perceptive that every instance of fortune and misfortune is perfectly suited to people's prior behavior, and this absolutism is the main reason his teachings face so much criticism and doubt. This vision of perfect universal divine justice is easily contradicted by concrete examples, and is precisely why *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* expresses doubt about both the awareness and capability of the spirits and gods, raising clear historical examples to support this stance. Nevertheless, its misgivings are mild, and it still basically accepts the existence of the "divine insight of spirits and gods."

Cao Jinyan selected *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* (*Guishen zhi ming*) as the title to be applied to this Shanghai Museum manuscript and, in doing so, closely associated it with Mozi's approach to this topic. Its discussion of the spirits' and gods' "divine insight" *ming* 明 or "lack of divine influence" *buming* 不明 is likely one of the issues debated between the those who believe in spirits, represented by Mozi, and the various doubters and disbelievers. Judging by the theory in *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* that the spirits and gods have "have that on which they are divinely insightful and that on which they are not divinely insightful," it firmly stands between the extremes of the two debating camps. However, it does not directly address whether the gods are "wise and insightful" or "not wise and insightful." Thus, using the name *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* could be misleading, as Ding Sixin 丁四新 has noted.[57] However, insight and capacity are definately issues central to *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*.

The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods uses the term *ming* 明 in seven places. "That on which they are divinely insightful" *you suo ming* 有所明 and "that on which they are not divinely insightful" *you suo buming* 有所不明 are repeated twice for a total of four appearances; the phrase "is clear" *ci ming yi* 此明矣 has two instances; "spirit and gods lack of divine insight" *guishi bu ming* 鬼神不明 is the final usage. The phrase "that on which they are not divinely insightful" does not appear in *Mozi* or any other pre-Qin text, but "have that on which they are divinely insightful" *you suo ming* 有所明 is found in *Zhuangzi* where it describes something much more mundane:

> The empire is in turmoil, and sages and worthies are not insightful. The Dao and virtue are not unified. In the empire, many examine only a

> single thing and become complacent. [Their knowledge is] like the eye, the nose, or the mouth each having their own perceptive abilities [*you suo ming* 有所明] that cannot be repurposed.[58]

Though this does not specifically solve the issue of how to read the phrase in *The Divine Insight of Spirits*, it does highlight the idea of perception. The *ming* 明 in the expressions "have that on which they are divinely insightful" *you suo ming* 有所明 and "that on which they are not divinely insightful" *you suo buming* 有所不明 is a verb to which the *suo* 所 "that on which" plays the role of a noun. In this context, these expressions should be interpreted to mean the spirits and gods "have places where they are insightful and "have places where they are not insightful." *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* is designed to show that spirits and gods are not completely wise and insightful. To put it more concretely, in their rewarding and punishing the spirits and gods have blind spots,

The *ming* 明 in the expression "is clear" *ci ming yi* 此明矣 means "clear," and refers to how the *ming* "insight" that allows spirits to reward and punish is conspicuous and clear. The term *buming* 不明 appears often in the *Mozi* where it means "not wise and insightful" in the context of discussing "the wisdom and insight of spirits and gods" or "the divine insight of spirits and gods." However, when *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* uses this same phrase *buming* 不明, it does not concern the either-or proposition of these beings' ability to perceive or possess wisdom; instead it is addressing the specific cases when the spirits' awareness is flawed or incomplete—when they have "that on which they are not divinely insightful." The issues in this lost work come from Mozi, but by asserting the spirits have "that on which they are not divinely insightful," it makes a unique adjustment to Mozi's absolute belief in the "wisdom and insight" of the spirits and gods.

To take this a step further, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* considers that there must be a reason that "spirits and gods have that on which they are not divinely insightful." Yet, the cause is not as easily identified as the result, and this is where the author of the work demonstrates his intelligence. He conjectures that the reason "spirits and gods have which they cannot divinely influence" is either that they "have the power and capacity to make it so, but do not" or that they "wish their power was firm, but are incapable of making it so." However, the text avoids an arbitrary conclusion about which option

is the real cause and instead simply says, "I do not know." The full passage is as follows:

> Therefore, I propose that spirits and gods lack of divine insight must have its reason. Do they have the power and capacity to make it so, but do not? I do not know. Do they wish their power was firm, but are incapable of making it so? I also do not know.
>
> [故]吾因加鬼神不明，则必有故。其力能致焉而弗为乎？吾弗知也；意其力固不能致焉乎？[59]吾又弗知也。[60]

Mozi and his critics mostly use *ming* and *buming* to explain the different abilities the spirits and gods possess, while *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* focuses on the question of the "power" of spirits and gods to reward or punish. However, what *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* refers to as "power" is not pure "strength." It is the strength and ability to be just and wise.

The original form of the character "strength" *li* 力 was a pictogram representing human tendons, which was subsequently extended to mean the strength of tendons and then strength generally. This sense of "strength" can be see in *Laozi* Chapter 33 where it says, "those who conquer others have strength," or in the *Analects* where it says, "In archery, piercing the leather is not the main thing because people's strength varies."[61] One also finds "using strength to make others submit" from *Mengzi*,[62] and "their strength does not equal an ox" in *Xunzi*.[63] These examples of "strength" are the strength of the body, which is contrasted with intelligence, wisdom, and even morality. The *Mengzi* passage contrasts "using strength to make others submit" and "using virtue to make other submit," which parallels the same text's opposition of "working with bodily strength" and "working with the mind."[64] Xunzi similarly opposes "blood-*qi*-tendons-strength" with "wisdom-thought-accepting-rejecting"[65] From these examples we can observe that "strength" became further extended to mean "power" or "force" in the context of politics, and thus there is the contrast of rule by "force" and rule by virtue and righteousness.

In *Mozi*, *li* 力 is most often used in the sense of physical strength. For example it says, "strength is that by which the physical form makes exertions," and "exhausting the strength of the four limbs in service of the ruler."[66] Mozi's conception of *li* also includes "brutal force" *qiangli* 强力, "concrete strength" *shili* 實力, and "intellectual strength" *zhili* 智力 as in the cases of "the political strength of the many feudal lords" 諸侯力政[67] and "the Son of Heaven relies on his intellectual strength" 天子以其知力.[68]

Valuing "universal love" *jian'ai* 兼爱 and "non-aggression" *feigong* 非攻, Mozi does not promote a simplistic conception of power or strength. Similarly, he primarily stresses that his gods are "just" and only secondarily notes they are "powerful." Mozi's employment of the concept *ming* 明 when discussing spirits and gods and this choice demonstrates just this: his focus is not on simply the power of the gods but also how their perceptive capacity and power enable them to observe human behavior. *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* continues Mozi's discussion of *ming* by engaging with the issue of "that on which they are divinely insightful" (*you suo ming* 有所明) and "that on which they are not divinely insightful" (*you suo buming* 有所不明) to investigate the type of power the spirits and gods possess. Thus, this "power" is obviously not "strength" or "force" but is related to the total capacity to defeat evil and protect the good.

Conclusion

Following from preceding argument, we would like to conclude by discussing the place of *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* within the philosophical schools. The original editor, Cao Jinyan, considers the text a lost essay of the *Mozi* that records a dialogue between Master Mozi and his disciples. Because of this, he considers the text a "dialogue."[69] Similar to this view, Asano Yūichi 浅野裕一 considers it a Mohist text and asserts that it is part of either section I or II of the "Shedding Light on Spirits" chapter.[70] Ding Sixin disagrees and suggests that it is not the work of either Mozi or his disciples.[71] We can at least be certain that *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* presents a view on the divine significantly divergent from what Mozi held, and Cao Jinyan notes this as well.

We have previously mentioned on numerous occasions that Mozi has an absolute faith in the Will of Heaven and the spirits and gods and reveals no hint of doubt. He argues this position against "those who hold there are no spirits," and those who believe the spirits and gods are not divinely insightful. In "Shedding Light on Spirits," he vigorously asserts both the existence and the wisdom and power of spirits and gods. In contrast, although *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* does not fully deny the existence of spirits or their wisdom, it does assert that the spirits and gods have "that on which they are not divinely insightful." This obviously represents a significant divergence from Mozi's unfailing belief. Nevertheless, looking at the core issues, background, and intellectual resources, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* definitely has a close relationship with the *Mozi*. Thus,

it should be considered an amendment to or reformation of Mozi's theory of spirits and gods, and can generally be classed as representing a branch of Mohism or even a break away Mohist group.

Mozi established Mohism as one of the most influential school during the Warring States, and Mozi's disciples and his disciples' disciples were legion. Unfortunately, the texts of the later generation of Mohists have all been lost, and so we have had no way to examine the complexity of the school's lineage and different branches. In Mohism, Mozi and Juzi 巨子 had great charisma and authority and so Mozi's theories naturally were received and passed on by numerous disciples. Of course, these theories were not always necessarily identical to those of Mozi. In the *Hanfeizi* is says that Mohism split into three branches.[72] These three lineages must have had their differences, especially since they existed some time after Mozi's death, but they were all called the "True Mohism" *Zhen Mo* 真墨.

In regard to views on spirits and gods, we find Chanzi and Suichaozi maintaining the position of their teacher, but Die Bi, Caogongzi, and other anonymous Mohist followers doubted his belief in the "divine insight of spirits and gods." Perhaps this rediscovered text, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*, emerged within that intellectual context with the author having even been one of Mozi's disciples. This text, from its thesis to its conclusion is concise and focused, and its points are clear. It asks and answers its own questions, though finally ending in resignation. Because Mozi never appears, or any other dialogue partners for that matter, it seems the whole essay may be a work of Mohism broadly defined, but we cannot claim it is a lost chapter of the *Mozi* and certainly not part of "Shedding Light on Spirits."

CHAPTER 4

Natural Order and Divine Will in *The Three Virtues*

The publication of *The Great Drought of the State of Lu* 《鲁邦大旱》, in the second volume of the Shanghai Museum's Chu bamboo manuscripts, has sparked a renewed interest in the views Confucius held concerning ritual sacrifice. This issue further instigated the reconsideration of whether or not Confucius really believed, or to what extent he believed, in the existence of a transcendent Mandate of Heaven or Divine Will. This problem is complex and must be approached carefully. For example, if one begins with either the perspective of the Three Dynasties religious traditions or that which later completely opposes the old tradition, one will easily reach faulty conclusions when investigating Confucius' stance on religious issues.[1] We must recognize that rise of the "learning of the masters" in the Spring and Autumn period, and the competition between the different schools both generated a trend of valorizing philosophical rationality and led to a transformation and fragmentation of religion.

For understanding the role of religion and the different theories of transcendent power, *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* and *The Three Virtues* 《三德》 *San De* found in the fifth volume of the Shanghai Museum texts offer two additional and extraordinarily valuable works.[2] While *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* discussed in the previous chapter might possibly be Mohist, *The Three Virtues* is more likely the work of Confucians.[3] No matter how we classify these new documents, because they depict a heretofore-unknown religious component of the Eastern Zhou masters, they leave us with feelings of anticipation.

This chapter focuses on *The Three Virtues*, a work that includes both a naturalistic and rationalistic conception of the Way of Heaven, common in certain strains of Confucianism, as well as detailed religious discussions. It mentions numerous religious symbolic and conceptual

terms like Heaven *Tian* 天, God of Heaven *Tianshen* 天神, August Heaven *Huangtian* 皇天, Lord on High *Shangdi* 上帝, Heaven's Rituals *Tianli* 天禮, Mandate of Heaven *Tianming* 天命, spirits and gods *guishen* 鬼神, Heaven sent disasters *Tianzai* 天災, Supreme Heaven *Shangtian* 上天, and ritual sacrifice *jisi* 祭祀. Furthermore, it includes discussions on how "disasters" *zai* 災 and "strange omens" *yi* 異 are sent down by Heaven.

In *The Three Virtues,* its religious mentality is not particularly concerned with personal salvation, instead focusing on the survival, order, and peace of the empire and nation. It addresses the interaction of the Way of Heaven and the way of humanity, the interconnection of the Will of Heaven and the will of humanity, and the conjoining and linked resonance between Heaven above and the activities of the human realm. These complex relationships, both differentiated and intimately involved, are religious and simultaneously political and moral. They can be summarized as the "education based on the way of the gods" and the "government based on the way of the gods," meaning that "ritual and government are the same" and "religion and government are one body." Historically as Confucianism developed from Confucius to Mencius and then especially to Xunzi, it became evermore humanistic, rationalistic, and naturalistic. Therefore, *The Three Virtues,* which reveals a later Confucian manifestation of religiosity, deserves a special look, and in the following chapter, we hope to investigate how a naturalistic rational conception of the Way of Heaven and a religious notion of the divine both somehow coexist within it.[4]

Heaven's Constants: Natural Law and Heaven's Seasons

After the Spring and Autumn period, there emerged what are generally described as a naturalistic Way of Heaven and a humanistic sort of rationality, both resulting from a change in the intellectual world that reflected the reorganization of the social political structure. These cold and objective observations of "Heaven" or the "Way of Heaven" sought natural laws and secrets that could be enthusiastically applied to the world of human affairs. This "move" understands nature and coopts its power, represented a new practical focus on human initiative and activity and an increase in the subjective power of the human individual coinciding with a decrease in the acceptance of external preset conditions. From the perspective of this "humanistic rationality,"

the human condition is basically determined by humanity's own willpower, as humanity's desires are attained only through its own efforts and the old notion of the Mandate of Heaven simply offers abstract traditionalist support for this impetus to action.

According to Confucian humanistic rationality, specifically, humans can perfect themselves through their own efforts; in fact, a person must cultivate their own morality and moral behavior, relying on learning and education as the basic path to self-realization. As for the naturalistic Way of Heaven, Laozi epitomizes its earliest forceful manifestation. Undergoing development by Zhuangzi and then the Huang-Lao tradition, this naturalism expanded even further. However, the different masters' naturalistic and humanistic worldviews did not appear from nowhere, and so we should not imagine a "pure" state of the Three Dynasties' religion that suddenly and completely transformed into these novel creations of the pre-Qin thinkers. We should also not imagine that a "pure" rational naturalism or rational humanism, during the period of pre-Qin philosophy, instantly expunged all vestiges of the Three Dynasties' religious world.

It is easy for us to equate primitive culture with religious culture. This mistaken view emerges from the epistemological stance that religion functions as the lowest level of human consciousness. The problem with this assumption is that religion actually coincided with humanity's development of consciousness and wisdom. In prehistory the religious consciousness of primitive humans was actually quite low, after all animals with low or nonexistent cognitive abilities cannot possibly possess religion. Thus, as early humans developed their religious consciousness, they simultaneously enhanced their rationality. Bronislaw Malinowski notes that primitive humans can easily distinguish the natural from the supernatural and work from magic.[5] This is not a distinction that arrives later in human evolution. Thus, because rationality and spirituality are coexisting aspects of human consciousness, we cannot consider the shift from the old religion of the Three Dynasties to new way of the Eastern Zhou Masters to simply be a linear evolution from religion to philosophy.

If we are to accept this historical moment represented a major shift, then we must argue that there were two parallel processes of transformation: Three Dynasties philosophy becoming Eastern Zhou philosophy, and Three Dynasties religion becoming Eastern Zhou religion. In this sense, we can consider the naturalistic understanding of the Way of Heaven seen in *The Three Virtues* both represents the flourishing of Eastern Zhou natural rationality and a further evolution of the natural

rationality of the Three Dynasties. (Religious consciousness will be similarly discussed below). When considering this, the concept of the "Heaven's Constants" *Tianchang* 天常 is a good place to start.

According to the "Duke Ai" 《哀公》 chapter in the *Zuozhuan*, "Heaven's Constants" is a term that already appeared in *The Book of the Xia* 《夏書》, as it was cited by Confucius during an assessment of King Zhao of Chu:

> Confucius said: "King Zhao of Chu knows the Great Way for he has not lost his state. This is as it should be! *The Book of Xia* says, 'Only King Yao followed the leadership of Heaven's Constants and so he possessed the north. Today [people] have lost this method and have disrupted the central thread. Therefore they are destroyed.' It also says, 'Fairness emerges from this and is present in this.' By following the constants it will be good."[6]

The Book of Xia explains how during the age of Sage King Yao, rulers followed Heaven's Constants and so possessed China, while the rulers of the current age, having turned their backs on Heaven's Constants, head toward ruin. According to Confucius, one only must follow Heaven's Constants, and then the country can be pacified.

Confucius says that King Zhao of Chu "knows the Great Way." Specifically, this refers to how the King refused to perform a sacrifice to stave off calamity when abnormal signs appeared in the Heavens, and how he rejected diviners' and ministers' advice that sacrifice would heal his sickness. King Zhao of Chu's decisions to not sacrifice suggests a strong rationalistic tendency. The *Zuozhuan*r ecords:

> This year there was a cloud resembling a flock of crimson birds that surrounded the sun for three days. The master of Chu sent a messenger to ask the Zhou court ritual master. He said: "This is aligned with the king's body! If one redirects it, it can be shifted to the Prime Minister or the Minister of War." The king said: "What is the benefit of discarding one's right hand just to eradicate the disease of the bowels and heart? If I have done evil, it was no great sin, so why would Heaven strike me down in my youth? If I have done wrong, I should be punished. Why shift the blame?" Thus he did not redirect it. Previously, King Zhao was ill and the divination said: "The Yellow River is the evil influence." The king did not offer sacrifice, even though the diviners and ministers invited him to the suburbs to do so. The king said: "The national sacrifices of the Three Dynasties cannot be held at a distance. The rivers of Jiang, Han, Sui, Zhang and Chu are all distant. The arrival of calamity or prosperity is not related to sin. Although I am unvirtuous, the Yellow River is not what is sinned against." Thus he did not sacrifice.[7]

This confirms that Confucius' assessment of King Zhao of Chu was inspired by his rational handling of sacrifice and his great wisdom. Such a king realizes that managing the affairs of humanity is the way to supplement the activity of Heaven and his actions reveal his self-reliant and independent approach to life.

According to the ancient notion of the "Three Powers" *sancai* 三才, Heaven, Earth, and humanity each possess their own nature and role. Here Heaven and Earth relate to an objective humanity, while humanity uses its subjective and indepent existence to "supplement Heaven and Earth" and "participate in the transformation and nourishment of Heaven and Earth." Heaven and Earth represent two halves of a whole: Heaven constantly cycles the seasons, and Earth endlessly produces materials. Perpetually relying on their knowledge and activity to manifest creative excellence, humans hold pride of place between these two. *Xunzi* summarizes this as, "Heaven has its seasons, Earth has its bounty, and humanity has its order. This is called being able to be Three."[8] *The Three Virtues* records a variation of this, "Heaven provides the seasons, Earth provides the materials, and humanity provides the manpower" 天供時，地供材，民供力. Ultimately, this proposition is political, expressing that the ruler should engage with the seasons, natural materials, and manpower.

The text suggests that in the interaction between the ruler and these three, the ruler should employ "non-thinking" *wusi* 無思. Cao Feng quite reasonably interprets this as comparable to the Huang-Lao terms "non-action" and "non-affairs" *wushi* 無事.[9] From the Huang-Lao perspective, the enlightened ruler's "non-thinking" state allows him to align with the natural abilities of "Heaven, Earth, and humanity" and enables the full manifestion of their potentials. Confucianism also happens to include comparable concepts as well. Confucius said: "What does Heaven say? The four seasons turn and the hundred creatures arise. What does Heaven say!"[10] This discussion of "not speaking" in *The Analects* suggests something analogous to the "non-thinking" of *The Three Virtues*.

The *Xici* 《繫辭》 specifically includes "non-thinking" *wusi* and "non-calculating" *wulü* 無慮 terminology. "The changes are non-thinking and non-active. Silent and unmoving they resonate and affect the totality of the world."[11] Similarly, *The Three Virtues* itself indicates:

> To know Heaven, you must simply follow the seasons; to know Earth, you must simply grasp the materials; to know humanity, you must simply gather [people] close. If you do not exert yourself in the completion

> [of affairs] and listen to [your own] trivial [impulses], then the hundred affairs will not be handled and your prized affairs will not be complete.[12] 知天足以順時 , 知地足以固材 , 知人足以會親。不修其成 , 而聽其營。百事不遂 , 慮事不成。

"To know Heaven," "to know Earth," and "to know humanity," one must obviously think and analyze, as knowing involves knowledge. This distinguishes the practice of "non-thinking" from Xunzi's promotion of "not seeking to know Heaven."[13] The aim of understanding (or knowing) Heaven, Earth, and humanity is not to meddle with or modify these three, as one should not modify their completeness, but instead it is to accord with the natural division of labor between them. This is expressed as "follow[ing] the seasons," "stabiliz[ing] the materials," and "gather[ing] [people] close." These activities enable one to accord with the special nature of each or to "listen to their operations." When one fails to accord with their natures, overthinking things instead of using "non-thinking," then "[t]he hundred affairs will not be handled and your prized affairs will not be completed."[14]

Ideally, one should embody the Confucian notions of "according with the time," "according with the place," and "according with the person." *The Three Virtues* discusses these ideals in various parallel ways: "follow the seasons" 順時 and "stabilize the materials" 固材, "Heaven provides the seasons" 天供時 and "Earth provides the materials" 地供材, and "follow the seasons of Heaven and engage the materials of Earth" 順天之時! 起地之〔材〕.[15] However, "gather [people] close" does not quite as obviously match "manpower" 民力, "…the power of the people" 口民之力. Providing some insight, the *Huangdi sijing* includes the phrases "accord with the power of the people" 因民之力 and "fully employ the power of the people" 盡民之力, while the *Liji* has "use the power of the people" 用民之力.[16] Based on these and similar cases, Cao Feng suggests the missing character at the beginning of the phrase is likely "accord" *yin* 因, "fully employ" *jin* 盡, or "use" *yong* 用.

The *Huangdi sijing* contains other passages sharing the *The Three Virtues*' vision of rational accordance with the inherent order of nature and humanity. For example, the "Six Divisions" 《六分》 chapter takes "Heaven, Earth, and humanity" as the foundation of governance, expressing that if a monarch could reasonably employ these three, he would gain the entire empire. It says, "The way of those who are the kings of the empire includes Heaven, humanity and Earth. By employ these three one will possess the empire."[17] Furthermore, the

"Previous Way" 《前道》 chapter promotes the importance of knowing and according with this trinity:

> In handling affairs, the sage harmonizes with Heaven and Earth, follows the people and acts auspiciously toward the spirit and gods. He brings shared benefits to the people and the myriad men rely on him. This is what is called righteousness…Thus the king does not rely on luck to rule the state. He rules the state firmly with the "previous Way": above he knows the seasons of Heaven, below he knows the benefits of Earth, and in their midst he knows human affairs.[18]

According to fatalists, not only is an individual's fate determined by an unknowable power, but the survival of the entire state is predetermined by such "fate." This belief diminishes the importance of human affairs and activities, as awaiting fate or chance events are all that matters. Notably, both *The Three Virtues* and the *Huangdi sijing* lack this fatalistic perspective; instead asserting governance depends on knowledge, rationality, and human efforts. The *Huangdi sijing* especially notes that governance cannot rely on the randomness of luck and requires grasping the "previous Way."

According to the compliers of the Mawangdui manuscripts, the word "previous" *qian* 前 in this expression should be understood as "prior" *xian* 先. Also, Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 interpretation of the *Zhongyong* 《中庸》 passage "If the Way is previously [*daoqian* 道前] settled, then it will not be exhausted" is illuminating. He says this means "when you wish to practice the Way, always prepare ahead of time [*yuqian* 豫前] and then the Way will be inexhaustible." Following this logic it may be that "previous Way" should be understood as a method of preparing in advance.[19] This sort of planning belies a sense of autonomy and creative engagement with the world. Thus we can conclude that the notion of a ruler who accords with "Heaven, Earth, and humanity" to rationally manage affairs and who uses human initiative to steer fate and adjust natural circumstances is not only important to Confucianism, but to the Huang-Lao tradition as well.

It is not only reasonable for the ruler to harmonize with and follow the "Three Powers" but is also required according to the natural laws of the Way of Heaven. *The Three Virtues* says:

> Respect the boundaries of Heaven; promote the rules of Earth. The Constant Way must…Oh Heaven! Oh humanity! On what close connections do you rely on till the end of your days?"
>
> 敬天之敔 , 興地之弔。恒道必□。天哉人哉 , 憑何親哉 , 没其身哉.

The character *yu* 敔 "boundaries," according to Chen Jian 陈剑, is equivalent to "defense or boundary" *yu* 圉 or "prison" *yu* 圄 and should be interpreted as "prohibitions" *jin* 禁.[20] By comparison, the *Book of Odes* says, "Respect the wrath of Heaven, and dare not act mischievously; respect the alternations of Heaven, and dare not act carelessly."[21] Here, "respect" means respect and fear the calamities brought down by the wrath of Heaven, with "Heaven" obviously signifying an anthropomorphic deity instead of the patterns of nature. However, *The Three Virtues* use of "respect…Heaven" and "promote…Earth" most likely depicts a more naturalistic situation and relates to following the Way of Heaven's movements.

The *Lüshic hunqiu*r ecords:

> In ancient times, the music of the Getian family involved three people brandishing oxtails and stomping their feet while singing eight stanzas named: "Supporting the People," "Obscuring the Birds," "Cultivating Grasses and Trees," "Invigorating the Five Grains," "Respecting Heaven's Constants," "Achieving Di's Merit," "Relying on Earth's Potency," and "Incorporating the Myriad Things' Ultimate."[22]

The Three Virtues' expression "Respect the boundaries of Heaven" and the *Lüshi chunqiu*'s phrase "Respecting Heaven's Constants" are quite similar in meaning and furthermore equate with the "Constant Way" *Hengdao* 恒道 mentioned later in the text.

The Three Virtues admonishes people to not break the natural laws (Heaven's Constants), as breaking these laws means assured punishment:

> Grasses and tree must await the [proper] season before they begin to flourish. What Heaven hates do not love: at sunrise do not cry, at dusk do not sing, and at the half and full moons [prepare for sacrifice] in the fasting hall. This is what is called following Heaven's Constants. Those who respect [Heaven] achieve it and those who neglect [Heaven] lose it. This is called "Heaven's Constants."
>
> 卉木須時而後卑。天惡毋忻，平旦毋哭，晦毋歌，[23]弦、望齋宿，是謂順天之常。敬者得之，怠者失之，是謂天常。

According to *The Three Virtues*, the rules represent the natural order—Heaven's Constants—and whether or not one follows them determines the outcome of events. Just as the grasses and trees must await the proper season before flourishing, "Those who respect [Heaven] achieve it and those who neglect [Heaven] lose it." The "it" in these

phrases refers to the timely growth, like in the case of the grasses and trees.[24]

The Three Virtues emphasizes that if the ruler's behavior is not reasonable he will naturally be punished according to the Way of Heaven:

> Consequently, this is continually detrimental, as the state has lost the root and the Constants. If you have a small state, it will certainly be harmed. If you have a large state, there will be major destruction. If you alter the Constants and change ritual practices, the Earth will split and the people will perish. Wonderful! Wonderful! Three times wonderful! The foundation of prosperity is to correct your mistakes. . . .
>
> 故常不利 , 邦失幹常 , 小邦則剫 , 大邦過傷。變常易禮 , 土地乃坼 , 民乃夭死。善哉善哉參善哉 , 唯福之基 , 過而改 . . . 。

This statement is quite similar to ones found in the *Huangdi sijing* "Xing Zheng" 《姓爭》 chapter, where it illuminates the radically different fates for those who either follow or rebel against the natural law:

> Those who follow Heaven prosper; those who oppose Heaven die. Do not oppose the Way of Heaven and then you will not lose what you protect. Heaven and Earth already were formed when the black heads [humans] were born . . . Being still at the proper time, Heaven and Earth gives to you; Being still at the wrong time, Heaven and Earth take from you.[25]
>
> 順天者昌 , 逆天者亡。毋逆天道 , 則不失所守。天地已成 , 黔首乃生。 . . . 靜作得時 , 天地與之。靜作失時 , 天地奪之

Both these texts employ comparable language for the natural laws that one must follow and never oppose. *The Three Virtues* calls them the "Constant Way" *Hengdao* 恒道, "Heaven's Constants" *Tianchang* 天常, and the *Huangdi sijing* likewise employs the exact same terms.[26] Beyond this, the *Huangdi sijing* includes phrases like "Constant Actions" *henggan* 恒榦, "Constant Constants" *hengchang* 恒常, "pattern" *li* 理, and "model" *fashi* 法式.[27]

Not only do the *Huangdi sijing* and *The Three Virtues* both use the terms "Heaven's Constants" and "Constant Way," in general they both employ them to refer to natural laws. Considered from the perspective of the masters of the Zhou and Qin, the emergence of natural law, represented by the use of these terms in the two texts, constitutes a major aspect of the era's naturalistic conception of the Way of Heaven.

In ancient agricultural societies, and specifically China, enabling farmers to grow their crops according to the seasons is a major affair of state. Even when compared to the other major governmental business like sacrificial rituals and military activities, farming is the most important. The *Yizhoushu* 《逸周書》 states:

> The Duke of Zhou rectified the values of the Three Dynasties, writing the *Months of the Zhou* 《周月》; he divided the twenty four solar terms to clarify Heaven's seasons, writing the *Lecture on the Seasons* 《時訓》. The Duke of Zhou organized the twelve months to order the laws of governance, writing *Monthly Decrees* 《月令》.[28]

According to this passage, the *Months of the Zhou,* the *Lecture on the Seasons*, and the *Monthly Decrees* were all the work of the Duke of Zhou, and that it was the Duke of Zhou who established the first day of the year, demarcated the 12 months and the 24 solar terms, and even explained which governmental decrees should be issued each month. Regardless of whether or not this is a fully historically accurate account, these records indicate how seriously the government took the business of the seasonal ordinances concerning farming.[29]

Farming was the not the only activity of the state, as it also needed to conscript its subjects, especially in times of war. This led to a conflict between the needs of the agricultural growing season and those of conscripted work and soldiering. In many records, the wise ruler decides to protect food production by limiting public works and avoiding military action during the growing season.[30] The *Huangdi sijing* "Lord's Order" 《君正》 chapter notes the importance of this manpower management, saying:

> The root of humanity relies on the Earth, and the root of Earth relies on timeliness, and timeliness emerges from the seasons. The employment of the seasons relies on the people, the people's employment relies on power, and the employment of power relies on restraint. Know the timeliness of the Earth, await the seasons and then grow. Restrain one's use of the people's power and then wealth will be generated.[31]

The Three Virtues advises the ruler to promote full-scale agricultural production:

> Venerating Heaven and serving the ruler requires seriousness and [things] must be [handled with] integrity. Look down to observe . . . and

> do one's utmost in the work of farming. Do not do anything beyond your capacity. Do not change that at which you are able.
>
> 仰天事君，嚴恪必信。俯視□□，務農敬戒。毋不能而為之，毋能而易之。

The two missing character in this passage, according to Cao Feng, could possibly be the "patterns of Earth" *dili* 地理.[32] This passage simultaneously addresses multiple layers of society: "Venerating Heaven and serving the ruler" addresses ministers and the people, while "Look down to observe the patterns of Earth, and do one's utmost in the work of farming" addresses the ruler. Here the text emphasizes that the ruler does not force people to serve him in ways they cannot and never shifts them away from positions right for their capacities.

Two of the text's other admonitions, "Do not undertake major projects" and "Do not harm the constants" 毋作大事! 毋害常, also speak to the ruler. "Major projects" here signifies the military activities and massive construction projects that easily disrupt the constants of agriculture:

> When you impede the people's [farming] season with construction projects, this is called "interrupting production." If you lack concern for others' suffering, you will indeed lose their love and support. When you impede the people's [farming] season with irrigation projects, this is called a "flood." If you are joyful during funerals, people from all the four directions will cry out. When you impedes the people's [farming] season by going to war, this is called a "plague." With these types of disasters the whole harvest fails, as none can raise a sickle for the reaping.
>
> 奪民時以土攻是謂稽，不絕憂恤，必喪其佖（粊）；奪民時以水事，是謂激，[33]喪怠（以）系（繼）樂，四方来嚮；奪民時以兵事，是［謂厲，禍因胥歲，不舉銍艾］。

Much of the transcription and interpretation of this passage relies on Fan Changxi's 范常喜 realizing its resemblance to the following section from the *Lüshic hunqiu*:[34]

> When you impede it with construction projects, this is called "interrupting production." If you lack a sense of concern, you will indeed lose their love and support. When you impede it with irrigation projects, this is called "locking the door." If you are joyful during funerals,

> from all the four directions disasters will come. When you impede the people's [farming] season by going to war, this is called a "plague." With these types of disasters the whole harvest fails, as none can raise a sickle for the reaping. Only when you impede the people's seasons in multiple ways does the great famine come.[35]

Relying on this additional background, the message becomes exceedingly clear. For *The Three Virtues,* the large-scale projects like earthen works, building construction, and irrigation, along with military campaigns "steals the people's season." This inevitably causes widespread famine, as no one remains to till the fields. Sometimes war is unavoidable, and public works are necessary, but *The Three Virtues* forbids these activities during the growing season and particularly singles out the damages of war.

In this context "Heaven's Seasons" *tianshi* 天時 relates to the "farming season" *nongshi* 農時. Thus to disrupt the seasonal activities of agriculture is to oppose the seasonal commands of Heaven. The *Guoyu*s tates:

> Within the four boundaries, the affairs of the hundred clans occur during the three joyful seasons. Do not disrupt the people's work or oppose "Heaven's Seasons." Then the five grains will peacefully ripen, the people will multiply, and the ruler and ministers, superiors and inferiors will all attain their desires.[36]

According to this naturalistic view, by harmonizing with Heaven's seasons the people are able to properly engage in agriculture. When the harvests is plentiful, the people will have the wherewithal to raise children, the superiors and inferiors will have no need to fight over limited resources, and the social order will be maintained. Of course, the opposite approach naturally leads to the kinds of punishments mentioned in *The Three Virtues.*

While we might say these are the punishments of nature or Heaven, in actually they are brought about by humans themselves. The *Zuozhuan* terms this effect "Human aberrations" *renyao* 人妖. In the fourteenth year of Duke Zhuang, it records:

> Humans [are the source] of flourishing. When humans lack conflict, aberrations do not appear. When humans abandon the Constants, aberrations abound. This is the cause of aberrations.[37]

Xunzi similarly explains that calamities result from opposing the "Constant movement of Heaven," and he considers these "Human

aberrations."[38] *The Three Virtues* does assert this type of "Human aberrations" theory, though it does depict the serious ramifications of not following "Heaven's Constants."

Heaven's Rituals: Behavior Rules and Prohibitions

The ritual aspect of Zhou culture, identified with "rites" *liyi* 禮儀, "ritual rules" 禮制, and "propriety" *liyi* 禮義, remains one Confucianism's core components. In contrast, Daoism as represented by Laozi and Zhuangzi rejects this "ritual culture" *liwen* 禮文 and replaces it with their ideal of "true unadulterated substance" *zhipu zhi zhen* 質樸之真. Among these two, *The Three Virtues* sides with the ritualists, and in doing so significantly distances itself from Lao-Zhuang Daoism.

Ritual, analogous to moral law, is demonstrated through a code of conduct used for differentiating all manner of things and relationships The *Liji* say in the "Qu Li shang" 《曲禮上》 chapter, Ritual is what fixes intimacy and distance, decides taboos, differentiates the similar and different, and clarifies the right and wrong."[39] In Confucianism, "ritual" is not simply a code of conduct but is also considered a "natural law" built on nature and originating from "Heaven's order and Earth's propriety." The *Zuozhuan* "Duke Zhao" 《昭公》 chapter records:

> When Zhao Jianzi met with Master Dashu, he inquired about the rituals of bowing and giving. Master Dashu said: "These are rites *yi* 儀 but are not ritual *li* 禮." Jianzi then said: "May I ask, what is ritual?" Master Dashu replied: "I have heard the previous minster Zi Chan say, Ritual is the order of Heaven, the propriety of Earth, and the activity of the people. The order of Heaven and Earth is manifest by the people . . . ritual is the central strand of superiors and inferiors; it is the warp and woof of Heaven and Earth; it is what gives the people life. Thus the former kings honored it."[40]

This is in line with the thought of Zi Chan who said, "The Way of Heaven is distant, but the way of humanity is near," while also promoting the notion that ritual is the "warp and woof of Heaven and Earth." It further resembles Xunzi's notion that nature establishes ritual for humanity. As he says in his discussion of the "three roots of ritual," "Heaven and Earth are the roots of life" and are important objects of ritual sacrifice.[41]

Concerning the promotion of ritual, *The Three Virtues* twice mentions the concept of "Heaven's Rituals" *Tianli* 天禮. This term is

unattested in the received Confucian canon, appearing to be the unique creation of this rediscovered text. In regards to structure, the compound is comparable to "Heaven's Constants" *Tianchang* 天常, but unlike with those natural patterns this aspect of Heaven applies to the concrete relationships of the things in the human world. At their most basic, "Heaven's Rituals" relate to a few concrete ritual norms: "Fully respect all ritual distinctions: the division of outer and inner, the separation of men and women. These are called Heaven's Rituals." 齊齊節節 ,[42] 外内有辨 , 男女有節 , 是谓天禮。 Normally when Confucianism expresses "The separation of men and women," it uses the term *bie* 別 "division or distinction" instead of *jie* 節 "divided" or "courtesy," translated here as "separation," which instead emphasizes how between men and women there are rules of etiquette *lijie* 禮節 that maintain their distinctive social roles and proper forms of interaction. This is mostly a side note, for though Confucian literature frequently discusses this issue of men and women the separation of the two sexes is not our major concern here.

As for the "division of outer and inner," Confucianism understands it on two different levels. First, there is the inner "mind" and outer "surface" of a person. For example, the Mawangdui *Wuxing* 《五行》 text discusses these two sides as "inside the bodily form" and "outside the bodily form."[43] Xunxi expresses something similar, "Patterns and appearance, nature and function operate as the inner and outer or internal and external. Rituals exist within these and being able to ponder and investigate [these distinctions] is called being able to calculate."[44] Second, the "inner" represents family and the "outer" indicates society. The *Liji*r ecords:

> In ancient times, the Son of Heaven's Queen established the six back palaces, three wives, nine consorts, twenty-seven palace women, and eighty-one concubines to rule the inner empire and to express feminine obeisance. Thus the inner empire was harmonious and the family ordered. The Son of Heaven established the six offices, three councilors, nine high ministers, twenty-seven low ministers, and eighty-one primary officials to ruler the outer empire and to reveal masculine control. Thus the external was harmonious and the state was governed. Therefore it is said, "The Son of Heaven follows masculine control, and the Queen follows feminine obeisance. The Son of Heaven orders the Way of yang and the Queen governs the virtue of yin. The Son of Heaven follows external regulating and the Queen follows internal duties. When control and obeisance become customs, the internal and external harmonize, the state and family are ordered. This is called triumphantv irtue.[45]

Accordingly, "the division of outer and inner" most likely refers to the division of family and society, or more generally the familiar and unfamiliar. The well-developed ritual code found in *The Three Virtues* is broad, but the text offers no explanation for why it identifies this with the unusual expression "Heaven's Rituals." We can only speculate that the author considered this ritual order to come from Heaven.

While the text includes positive prescriptive discussions of "Heaven's Rituals," it mostly depicts this concept in terms of prohibited behaviors:

> Gao Yang said, "Do not wear inauspicious clothing when offering sacrifices. Do not wear extravagant clothing in ritual spaces…" Emperor said, "[The following] has been established: Do not speak in a domineering way. Do not put yourself before others. Do not undertake major projects. Do not harm the Constant [Way]. Do not obstruct rivers. Do not break sewage channels. Do not cease the sacrifices to the ancestors. Do not abandon the burial rituals. Do not…prohibitions. Do not change established affairs. Do not bother aunts or sisters-in-law. Do not bring shame to your fathers and brothers. Do not humiliate the poor. Do not mock those who have received corporal punishment. Do not [dare to] measure the depths of the rivers. Do not [dare to] measure the heights of the mountains. Do not be carefree with your body or boastful with your words. Your behavior must not be lazy. In handling affairs you must not seek ease. Do not extinguish goodness and do not enact the inauspicious. When entering valleys do not make music, and while climbing hills do not sing. These are what are considered H eaven's Ritua ls…"
>
> 高陽曰：“毋凶服以享祀，毋錦衣絞、袒，□子。……”皇后曰：“立。毋為角言，毋為人倡。毋作大事，毋剗常。毋壅川，毋斷洿，毋滅宗，毋虛床。毋□敔，毋變事。毋煩姑嫂，毋耻父兄。毋羞貧，毋笑刑。毋揣深，毋度山。毋逸其身，而多其言。居毋惰，作毋荒。善勿滅，不祥勿為。入虛毋乐，登丘毋歌，所以為天禮。”

This discussion on prohibited behaviors constructed as a dialogue between Gao Yang (the Thearch Zhuan Xu 顓頊) and the Emperor (the Yellow Emperor) demonstrates the extremely broad scope of ritual. For *The Three Virtues*, enacting "Heaven's Rituals" requires the avoidance and proscription of all these behaviors.

Confucianism generally considers the implementation of ritual from the sides of what is prescribed and what is proscribed. On the affirmative side, there are the types of etiquette involved in ritualistic activities that are encouraged and allowed. While this is the major focus of Confucian ritual, on the negative side, there are also the forbidden

types of behavior that do not accord with ritual. Thus Confucius said, "If it is contrary to ritual do not look at it; if it is contrary to ritual to not listen to it; if it is contrary to ritual to not speak it; if it is contrary to ritual to not enact it."[46] Within Confucianism's notions of ritual there are even more forceful proscriptive rules than this.

Looking at the entirety of *The Three Virtues*, few occurrences of affirmative ritual statutes appear, but instances of proscriptive ritual standards abound. On the one hand, the text implores the reader to never oppose ritual:

> When happiness and joy are without proper timing or measure, this is called a "Great Famine"…When all eating and drinking is without limit or purpose, this is called a "Dreadful Flood."…When robes and garments are overly elaborate and excessively beautiful, this is called "violating the rules."
>
> 喜樂無期度，是謂大荒。……凡食飲無量計，是謂滔皇……衣服過制，失於美，是謂違章。

It also says:

> Capitals with command of the rivers, towns with…of the shores, families with a hundred chariots, compounds with ten buildings, palace halls, and cesspools, all must strictly follow the [standards of] measure and not lose the [principles] of the Way.
>
> 监川之都，□岸之邑，百乘之家，十室之佔，宫室污池，各慎其度，毋失其道。

Ritual dictates the proper standards and measures of everything: human emotions, diet, dress, architecture, and levels of political administrative. Failing to accord with these norms equates to a loss of ritual.

On the other hand, *The Three Virtues* mentions numerous taboos relating to people's behaviors and activities, and these have been made clear above. Those forbidden things are divided into two categories. First, there are abstract prohibitions, like "Do not undertake major projects and do not harm the Constants" and "Do not extinguish goodness and do not enact the inauspicious." Second, there are the very concrete prohibitions on specific behaviors and actions, being structured in pairs of sentences that discuss opposite scenarios. This is true for both prohibitions on individuals, but also for taboos for the public. Some of these proscriptions are difficult to explain. For example, the taboos of location like "When entering valleys do not

make music, and while climbing hills do not sing,"[47] and the taboos of time like "At sunrise do not cry, and at dusk do not sing" reveal the importance of how one interacts with these dimensions of existence but reveals little of their logic.

The Three Virtues includes other categories of forbidden behavior as well:

> Do not denounce government officials in the home of the spirits. Do not enjoy a carefree life of leisure. Harming your family because of scheming for profits, this is called "transgression." When the ruler cannot manage his ministers, this is called "danger." The destruction of the state is [something that induces] anxiety and fear and must be understood. Do not say "dare not" and do not say "no"…In [the early stages of] planning, do not rule anything out. If you want life to flourish, do not kill. If you want equality, do not make divisions…Low walls should not be raised. Useless people should not be employed.
>
> 毋詬政卿于神次 , 毋享逸安。求利 , 殘其親 , 是謂罪。君無主臣 , 是謂危。邦家其壞 , 憂懼之閑 , 疏達之次 , 毋謂之不敢 , 毋謂之不然 ; 又說方營勿伐 , 將興勿殺 , 將齊勿刳。……卑墻勿增 , 廢人勿興。

The "Ordering Chaos" 《正亂》 chapter of the *Huangdi sijing* likewise records similar prohibitions:

> The Thearch said: "Do not violate my prohibitions. Do not circulate my pickled hash. Do not disrupt my people. Do not extinguish my way. Those who violate prohibitions, circulate pickled hash, disrupt the people, and extinguish the way rebel against justice and oppose proper timing, act wrongly, are excessive and improper, take control without correct authority, and disrupt what is proper. That their minds desire these actions means they do not consider the Supreme Thearch first [in the world], and aim to rouse their troops. They should look on Chi You and stare at Gong Gong, whose spines are bent and backs fettered. Neither living nor death, they are simply pillars of earth." The Thearch said: "Take care to maintain the names I have rectified and do not discard my constant punishments so they may remain in place for laterge nerations."[48]

From the comparable prohibitions found in both *The Three Virtues* and the *Huangdi sijing*, we can speculate that these texts somehow may have influenced each other.

The Confucian ritual code relies on the difference of things to determine propriety in every interaction and to establish an order that maintains relationships between individuals and individuals, between

individuals and society, and between individuals and nature. All of these varied relationships are mediated by specific forms of ritual propriety. For example, Confucians often stress how there are unique ritual guidelines for demarcating the status between ruler and minister, father and son, husband and wife, old and young, friend and friend. Proscription-minded rituals also function similarly but segregate things in order to prevent contact or contamination.[49] More concretely, they forbid people from engaging in specific behaviors with certain kinds of people or things. Take the example, "When entering valleys do not make music, and while climbing hills do not sing." Here the pairs of "valleys" and "music," and "hills" and "singing" are considered incompatible and must be kept separate. Whether social or natural, prescriptive or proscriptive, these rituals all help maintain the distinctions that are the foundation of order.

In addressing this question of order, *The Three Virtues* focuses on prohibitions, and they are wide-ranging in scope. Not only do they address religious and magical taboos but also those related to the rational order of nature as well. We could underscore that the greater the prohibitions, the more restricted human behavior becomes. However, considered from another angle, prohibitions are also a way for people to gain a type of self-protection. As long as they can avoid violating the taboos, they can predict the outcome of their actions. This knowledge then offers peace of mind.

The God of Heaven: A Religious Theory of Divine Will

Interwoven with the natural laws, ritual codes, and prohibitions of *The Three Virtues,* one finds the religious conceptions of "divine will" and "divine rewards and punishments." Thus, those who are accustomed to thinking in "either or" terms, and are used to contrasting natural and humanistic rationality with religion and divinity, are bound to have a sense of dissonance when confronted with the hybrid thought of *The Three Virtues.* However, as a syncretic work *The Three Virtues* indisputably incorporates Daoist natural rationality, Confucian humanistic rationality, and a layer of Confucian theology. Having been written at a time when the major trend involved a shift away from the religious mentality of the Three Dynasty toward the philosophical rationality of the Eastern Zhou, the religious content of *The Three Virtues* reveals a surprisingly strong vision of Will of Heaven. According to the previous discussions, *The Three Virtues* includes a layer of rationality. Its

natural rationalistic approach to "Heaven's Constants" is easily mentioned in the same breath with a comparable statement from Xunzi, the preeminent Confucian rationalist: "Heaven's movements are constant. They are neither preserved by Sage King Yao nor destroyed by tyrant Jie."[50] Yet, *The Three Virtues*' anthropomorphic conception of the divine and its theory of divine will are completely absent from *Xunzi* and are even rare in the *Huangdi sijing*.

In regard to the text's anthropomorphic conception of the divine, not only do we find the familiar terms of "Heaven" *Tian* 天, "August Heaven" *Huangtian* 皇天, Shangdi 上帝, "Mandate of Heaven" *Tianming* 天命, and "spirits and gods" *guishen* 鬼神 but there is also the unusual expression "God of Heaven" *Tianshen* 天神. The *Zhouli* records one instance of this compound, "Take charge of the state's rituals [directed to] Heaven's gods [*Tianshen* 天神], humanity's spirits, and Earth's deities," and the Han dynasty commentator Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 interprets it to mean "the gods that reside in Heaven," or, more specifically, the gods of the five directions *Wudi* 五帝 and the nature deities of the sun, moon, planets, and stars.[51] The *Liji* associates "Heaven's gods" with "humanity's spirits":

> Heaven suspends the images and the sage imitates them, going to the suburbs to illuminate the Way of Heaven. If the ox for the sacrifice to [the High God] Di is not auspicious, it is used to [sacrifice to the god of] grain. An ox for the Di sacrifice must be purified for three months, while any oxen can be used for the grain sacrifice. This is the difference between serving the God of Heaven [*Tianshen* 天神] and humanity's spirits. The myriad creatures are rooted in Heaven and humans are rooted in the ancestors. Thus their sacrifices are combined with Shangdi's. For the suburban sacrifices, the major rite is rooted in returning to the origin.[52]

Here the usage of "humanity's spirits" and "God of Heaven" is equivalent to what we found in the *Zhouli,* though its connection with Shangdi indicates *shen* 神 should be the singular "God" instead of the plural "gods." According to the *Liji*, people have their origin in the ancestors, and "humanity's spirits" refer to the spirits of these ancestors or to the deities of the ancestral temple. As all the myriad creatures exist because of Heaven, we can say that the "God of Heaven" is the God of the natural world. During the suburbs rituals south of the city, there is a distinction made between the sacrifices to the "God of Heaven" and the sacrifices to "humanity's spirits." However, because the ancestors are the origins of humanity, one must also coordinate

the sacrifices to human spirits and to Shangdi (here equivalent to the God of Heaven). This demonstrates the connection between the origins of humans and the origin of everything.

In *The Three Virtues,* "God of Heaven" appears once in concert with both "August Heaven" and Shangdi, and all of which are different names for the same supreme anthropomorphic deity:

> God of Heaven . . . August Heaven will adore you. Do not act falsely or deceitfully, for Shangdi will hate you.
>
> 天神之□ , □□□□ , 皇天將興之。毋為偽詐 , 上帝將憎之。

This expresses that the supreme anthropomorphic deity relies on standards of morality and righteousness in monitoring human activities. The previously discussed prohibitions of Heaven's Rituals are also mentioned in regard to the will of Shangdi, the will of the God of Heaven:

> When happiness and joy are without proper timing or measure, this is called a "Great Famine." August Heaven will not forgive this, and will indeed respond with misfortunes. When all eating and drinking is without limit or purpose, this is called a "Dreadful Flood." Shangdi will not forgive this, and will indeed respond with crop failure. When Shangdi is not forgiving, he will not partake in the sacrificial offerings. When a state loves extravagance, this is called a "temporary splendor." Although it may be rich, it certainly will become impoverished. When the palace halls exceed the proper standards [of size and lavishness], this is what August Heaven hates. Even though they are completed, they are unsuitable for habitation. When robes and garments exceed the proper proportions, losing their beauty, this is called "violating the rules." Even Shangdi cannot forgive this. By sacrificing to the spirits and gods [at the proper times with the proper rituals], Shangdi becomes happy and the state will . . .
>
> 喜樂無期度 , 是謂大荒 , 皇天弗諒 , 必復之以憂喪。凡食飲無量計 , 是謂饕皇 , 上帝弗諒 , 必復之以荒。上帝弗諒 , 以祀不享。邦四益 , 是謂方芋 , 雖盈必虛。宮室過度 , 皇天之所惡 , 雖成弗居。衣服過制 , 失於美 , 是謂違章 , 上帝弗諒。鬼神禋祀 , 上帝乃怡 , 邦家 . . . . . .

According to this passage, August Heaven/Shangdi does not forgive people who do not accord with the ritual standards of behavior, and so punishes them directly. It "responds with misfortunes" and "responds with crop failure." Punishment is generally contrasted with reward, and August Heaven and Shangdi happily reward those who accord with Heaven's Rituals. *The Three Virtues* says, "When Shangdi

is happy, then there are no calamitous disasters" 上帝喜之，乃無凶災. Still, the text mostly focuses on penalty and punishment.

Shangdi's system of reward and punishment in *The Three Virtues* rests on humanity's own moral standing, that is to say it rewards the good and punishes the wicked. In fact, the text states this quite explicitly, "Be good and fortune will follow; do evil and misfortune will manifest" 為善福乃来，為不善禍乃或之 This belief that fortune favors the good and misfortune haunts the wicked, and discussed extensively in the previous chapter, plays a role in both Confucian and Mohist traditions. In Confucianism, this appears as the notion that if the rich and powerful are to maintain their position, they must not harm the people.

This theory is often explained by using the concept the "will of the people," that popular support which undergirds any successful government. *Book of History* chapter "Great Declaration" 《泰誓》 depicts the intimate connection between the will of the people and the will of Heaven. It says "Heaven sees what my people see; Heaven hears what my people hear" and "What the people desire, Heaven inevitably follows."[53] These two sentences imply that Heaven accords with the wishes of the people because Heaven sympathizes with and pities their plights. Furthermore, they covey that Heaven uses humanity as its medium of perception, in a sense experiencing their joys and sorrows and taking their will as its own. Expressing a similar sentiment, *The Three Virtues* states, "What the people love, Shangdi will protect" 民之所喜，上帝是佑, and "What the people desire, the spirits and gods will protect" 民之所欲，鬼神是佑. Unambiguously, these anthropomorphic gods observe and protect the people's desires and interests.

In the Confucian political model, the ruler is the human representative of the gods and must uphold the Mandate of Heaven when ordering his the state, his family and his people. He is the Son of Heaven. He is also the father and mother of the people, the immediate guardian of the people, the direct embodiment of the people's hearts, and must accord with the people's wishes. This is just as *The Great Learning* 《大學》e xplains:

> The *Book of Odes* says, "Joyful is the lord, father and mother of the people." To love that which the people love, and to hate that which the people hate, this is what it means to be the father and mother of thepe ople.[54]

Here there emerges a clear parallel between the role of Heaven, as in "What the people desire, Heaven indeed follows" from the "Great

Declaration," and how the ruler is depicted in *The Great Learning* passage above.

Playing the role of the doting parent is one component of the Confucian "ruling with virtue" model of governance. In that political philosophy, if the ruler does not represent the will of the people, they have the right to rebel and even depose him. According to an even more ancient notion, because the ruler is the Son of Heaven, if his rule does not represent the righteous principles of Heaven and opposes its will and Mandate, then he will receive Heaven's "punishment" and be stripped of his authority. However, Heaven does not enforce this punishment directly. Instead, the new delegate of Heaven's command performs this transfer of the Mandate of Heaven, as in the case when King Wu of Zhou overthrew the Shang.

"Punishments" are the painful results an evildoer must endure. The good always wish for it to be thus, and often complain when evildoers avoid punishment and become powerful and prosperous. However, Confucians steadfastly believe that the Mandate of Heaven is fairly decided and enacted, that it always implements proper punishments. Barring a change in the Mandate, essentially a form of capital punishment, Heaven just mildly punishes the ruler by sending down disasters or anomalies. This explanation for disasters and anomalies is noted for its popularity in the Han dynasty but actually originates in pre-Qin conceptions of these manifestations of Heaven's will. *The Three Virtues* confirms this and may be the first text to discuss the concepts of disasters and anomalies as independent phenomena. It says:

> When [something should be] forbidden but is not made forbidden, Heaven sends down disasters. When [something should be] stopped but is not stopped, Heaven sends down anomalies."
> 忌而不忌 , 天乃降災。已而不已 , 天乃降異.

The Three Virtues never explains the concrete differences between "disasters" and "anomalies," but we presume that these are two ways that Heaven punishes human misbehavior for improperly enacting Heaven's Rituals.

Generally, anomalies or abominations are occurrences that exceed the bounds of common knowledge and understanding, and cause confusion and unease.[55] We have previously discussed the two ways to interpret natural disasters and anomalous phenomena: the rational and the religious. The naturalistic approach considers these uncommon

and strange events as part of the natural order itself and as unrelated to human activity or divine punishment. *Zuozhuan*r eports:

> In the spring of the sixteenth year, There were meteors in Song, five meteors. A sixth flew off and passed the capital of Song with the wind. The Zhou minister Su Xing was posted in Song and Duke Xiang of Song ask him, "What type of omen is this? Is it auspicious or inauspicious?" He replied, "Now in Lu there will be many great misfortunes, and next year there will be rebellions in Qi, you will receive the many nobles and not be deposed." He withdrew and explained to someone else, "The lord was mistaken in asking this. This is a yin-yang type event and is unrelated to the auspicious or inauspicious. The auspicious and inauspicious are caused be humans. [But] I did not dare oppose the lord'sr easoning.[56]

Xunzi even more explicitly uses the natural transformations of Heaven and Earth and yin and yang to explain the appearance of uncommon anomalous phenomena:

> When stars fall or trees sound the whole state is afraid. They ask, "What do these mean?" I say, "They mean nothing. They are just rarely occurring changes of Heaven and Earth and transformations of yin and yang. We can consider them strange, but it is wrong to fear them. The sun and moon have their eclipses, the winds and rains come out of season, and the strange stars appear dim. In every generation these events occur from time to time. If those above are enlightened and their government fair, then even if all of these would manifest in a single generation no harm would come of it. If those above are benighted and their government cruel, then even if these never occur it would offer no benefit.[57]

In Xunzi's view, no supernatural causal relationships exist between nature and humanity.

Xunzi represents the extreme of naturalistic rationality, promoting a complete separation between the activities of humanity and the natural world. Some naturalistic minded people, however, describe an integrated natural order that involves a mutually influential relationship between humans and nature. For example, in the *Zuozhuan*, it says, "When Heaven disrupts the seasons there are disasters. When Earth disrupts the creatures, there are abominations. When people violate virtue, there are rebellions. When there are rebellions, then abominations and disasters appear."[58] This is to say, all unseasonable

weather and all strange creatures find their original source in the disruptions of human virtue.[59]

The *Hanshi waizhuan* 《韓詩外傳》 offers a comment on the *Book of Odes* that also affirms that a good government follows the natural order and how if it does not there will be consequences:

> The *Commentary* says, "Those good at governance accord with what is appropriate to emotions and human nature, follow the order of yin and yang, penetrate the pattern of root and branches, and merge the boundary of Heaven and humanity. If one is like this, then Heaven and Earth will produce a bounty and the creatures born will be luscious and beautiful. Those ignorant in governing cause the emotions to oppress human nature, cause yin to overpower yang, cause the branches to oppose the root, cause people to contradict the *qi* of Heaven, warnings to not be trusted, and concerns to not be proper. If one is like this, then disasters are born, anomalies arise, all living things are harmed, and the yearly crops do not ripen. Therefore, activity harms virtue and stillness needs no aid. Those of patience serve it, while those of impatience are ignorant. To those who daily contradict the patterns and desire to rule, the *Book of Odes* say, 'Discarded as degenerate bandits, none know their transgressions.'"[60]

This passage leaves little to the imagination, explicating a clear causal connection between styles of government and the events in the natural world.

Contrasting with both the completely rationalistic and naturalistic explanations of strange phenomena and the classic holistic "unity of Heaven and humanity" resonance model where humans are their root cause, the religious approach provides supernatural explanations. This latter perspective believes that the natural order and anomalous natural phenomena are both manifestations of the will of the divine, with anomalous events generally seen as punishments for the mistakes and crimes of the ruler. It is this view to which *The Three Virtues* chiefly subscribes.

The Three Virtues represents a combination of the rational naturalistic and religious trends of its age, and though these may appear incompatible, they integrate because the text's naturalism is not Xunzian but something closer to the *Hanshi waizhuan*. The work's basic thesis reaffirms, according to both naturalistic and religious logic, that as long as people oppose Heaven's Rituals, a set that encompasses what we normally separate into natural-supernatural and natural-social, Heaven as God and nature "will send one calamity after another, relentless and unending."

CHAPTER 5

Huang-Lao's Conception of Universal Law: Why Govern with the Way and the Law?

According to Sima Tan's "Six Schools" theory recorded in the *Shiji* and Ban Gu's "Categorization of the Many Masters" found in the *Hanshu*, Daoism (*Daojia*) is essentially a political philosophy or system of governance.[1] This definition radically diverges from the modern view of Daoism as a tradition of hermits seeking individual fulfillment.[2] Actually, Laozi's philosophy originally combined the regulation of the state and the regulation of the body, though these later developed along two different paths. One became the "individualist" trend represented by the *Zhuangzi*'s emphasis on individual life, spiritual freedom, and transcendence. The other became the Huang-Lao "political" trend represented by the *Guanzi* 《管子》, Peng Meng 彭蒙, Tian Pian 田駢, Shen Dao 慎到, the newly discovered archeological texts of the *Huangdi sijing*, and the Shanghai Museum text *The Three Virtues*. If we include the Dao-Legalist school of Laozi-inflected Hanfeizi within the bounds of Huang-Lao, then the scope of this political philosophy becomes even broader.[3]

During the middle and end of the Warring States, the Huang-Lao[4] tradition flourished in the North and the South, and at the beginning of the Han, it was widely employed and promoted by the educated elites. Because of this, Huang-Lao naturally and effortlessly shaped the development of Daoist philosophy.[5] However, because later Confucian dominance pushed Daoism to the fringes, because of the role Zhuangzi played as a common literati spiritual resource, and because of religious Daoists' concern for individual immortality, it is not strange that modern scholars would be skewed toward understanding Daoism from the side of "individualism." It was only following the discovery and study of key Huang-Lao works, like the

Huangdi sijing 《黃帝四經》 (also called the *Huangdi shu* 《黃帝書》), and ensuing research on the interactions of the different masters and philosophies during the middle and late Warring States, especially at the Jixia Academy, that there was a major broadening and deepening of academic knowledge concerning the history of Huang-LaoD aoism.[6]

Academically and intellectually, Huang-Lao is a syncretic combination of different teachings of the pre-Qin masters.[7] Theoretically and doctrinally, it is a kind of political philosophy, and more concretely it is a legal philosophy that makes law its core concept. Originating from a few tightly interrelated problems, its developed form offers a complete system of legal philosophical principles that ultimately aims to establish a "utopian" law-based community.

This last point perhaps is unexpected, for generally, Huang-Lao has offered the impression that it is a *Realpolitik* type tradition, a form of absolute monarchism, where the will of the ruler or king supersedes the law or any "public good."[8] Actually, in the Huang-Lao tradition, the law is a universal standard found based on natural law designed to serve the state and the people, and is not a tool or technique serving to maximize the ruler's power. Even though the ruler has the authority to establish laws, he cannot casually manipulate or arrogate them. This impressive status given to the law is the key feature of Huang-Lao public-mind rationalism.

This chapter aims to engage received as well as newly excavated texts to rectify many previous biases and misunderstandings concerning Huang-Lao and the relationship of Daoism and Legalism.[9] This process requires a structured and comprehensive investigation of Huang-Lao legal philosophy, the value it places on the "public," and the law based community it aims to construct. We will see how Huang-Lao tirelessly and persistently promotes a government built on general law ("The rule of law") as an extension of the natural "Law of the Way" *Daofa* 道法, and its vision for an objective and rationally ordereds ociety.[10]

Law of the Way: The Natural Law Underpinning Positive Law

Early Legalist figures like Guanzi 管子, Zi Chan 子產, Wu Qi 吳起, Li Kui 李悝, and Shang Yang 商鞅 were to different degrees constructors and implementers of "positive law." We do not see any hint of them possessing a notion of "natural law," which means that they

sought no natural foundation to support the laws which they created. Laozi's "Way," also called "The Way of Heaven," operates as the body of the cosmos and the origin of the ten thousand things. It is humanity's rational nature: the highest principle of justice and the ultimate standard. Humanity lives according to its order, which means it lives according to Nature. However, although the Way equals what we could call "natural law" in the *Laozi*, that text never extends or lowers it to the level of positive law.[11] The Huang-Lao tradition, however, does just that. It merges Daoism and Legalism by rooting the legal standards of Legalism in the natural law of Daoism and bringing the Daoist natural Law of the Way ("Heaven's net is vast; it is open but nothing slips through")[12] down to the practical level so it can function as the model for positive law. This fusion is a basic characteristic of Huang-Lao, as well as the foundational principle of its legal philosophy.[13]

Before the *Huangdi sijing* was discovered, people paid little attention to the principles of Huang-Lao legal philosophy. They also barely noted Hanfeizi's synthesis of Laozi's Way and the notion of law, mistakenly considering that Legalism and Huang-Lao "only valued positive laws that are pure reflections of the will of the laws' creator."[14] Having researched the *Huangdi sijing* in concert with transmitted works like *Guanzi* 《管子》 and *Shenzi* 《慎子》 has led us to appreciate the important relationship between human positive law and transcendent natural law—the Way—in early Chinese thought. However, some related questions remain unanswered: How did Huang-Lao establish positive law on the foundation of the transcendent nature of the Way? Why can the Way operate as the source of positive law? Why was positive law combined with the Law of the Way?

The Daoist concept of "naturalness" *ziran* 自然 as a nonsubstantive state for the individual conditions of all the myriad beings, and the idea of "the law of nature" or "natural law" *ziranfa* 自然法 are not completely unrelated. Natural law includes what the Daoists would consider proper "Nature": the character, existence, and life of humanity and all creation. Yet, the "natural law" of ancient China, broadly defined, additionally includes "the Law of the Way" *Daofa* 道法, "the law of the patterns" *lifa* 理法, and "the law of Heaven's patterns" *Tianlifa* 天理法.

Laozi's Way—the Way of Heaven—also should be called "natural law." Defined as such, it encompasses two layers of meaning: the rules of nature and the rational order of nature. One of the key early Chinese terms for order, *li* 理 "patterns," never appears in the *Laozi*,[15] but the

Zhuangzi discusses this concept numerous times. Zhuangzi not only embraces Laozi's assumptions about the Way and the Way of Heaven, he also promotes a substantial and ideal sense of Heaven, advising people to "model" *fa* 法 Heaven and realize the "unity of Heaven and humanity."[16] Zhuangzi is certainly not the first to use "patterns," as Mencius and Peng Meng 彭蒙 had both previously theorized about them. Hanfeizi draws on these different intellectual resources when he theorizes a relationship between the Way of Laozi and "patterns" *li* 理. The more developed Huang-Lao notion of natural law articulates both these two sides as aspects of law, as the "Law of the Way" and the "Law of the Patterns," and moreover combines them as the "Law of the Way's Patterns" *Daolifa* 道理法. In Hanfeizi's "Jie Lao" 《解老》 chapter, it says:

> For those who follow the patterns of the Way [*Daoli* 道理] in managing affairs, there is nothing that cannot be accomplished. For those who discard the patterns of the Way and act rashly, even if above they have the power and authority of the Son of Heaven or the feudal lords and wealth equal to Yi Dun 猗頓, Tao Zhu (Fan Li 范蠡), or the master of augury, they still will lose all their subjects and their riches.[17]

Hanfeizi also employs the "Law of the Way" concept when he says, "But the Law of the Way is utterly perfect, while the wise and capable miss much."[18] The use of this terminology confirms that for him the Way functions as the foundation of natural law and order.

In many cases, Huang-Lao uses Heaven and the Way of Heaven to express this notion of the natural law. The "Observations" 《觀》 chapter in the *Huangdi sijing*s ays:

> When the Way of Heaven is finally complete, only then will the things of Earth become perfected. The mutual development of the scattered and the flowing is the affair of the sage. [Yet] the sage is not clever, and only holds to the cycle of the seasons. Excelling at cherishing the people, he has the same Way as Heaven. The sage relies on propriety to serve Heaven; he relies on tranquility to accord with the people. He does not do what Heaven would punish, and is neither faithless nor untrustworthy. He decides everything according to Heaven's Seasons, for if he makes decisions he should not he will [certainly] suffer rebellion.[19]

Extrapolating from this passage, we can say that the Law of the Way or the order of the way is "natural law."

Legal positivists do not accept the existence of "natural law," let alone a necessary connection between morality and law. From

their perspective, the rule of law is a human construct designed to meet the needs of humanity and its social life. Legal positivists are also legal realists, which precludes the possibility of their interest in any type of transcendent natural system of value. In a sense, the early Legalists are also legal positivists because they only focus on positive law and its implementation, never seeking moral or natural backing for their laws. This, however, does not mean they actively reject the use of natural law to support positive law; they generally lack any such conception, for religion and metaphysics are completely outside their purview. Huang-Lao is certainly not a tradition of legal positivism, as it explicitly grounds its positive laws in natural law—the Law of the Way's Patterns.

According to the *Guanzi* "Modeling Law" 《法法》 chapter, law and government must model the Way.[20] In the *Guanzi* "Techniques of the Mind I" 《心術上》 it says, law comes from the general standard of "balance weight" *quan* 權 that measures the seriousness of events, and this balance weight comes from the Way.[21] Furthermore, the *Huangdi sijing* depicts the Way as the origin of "spiritual insight" *shenming* 神明, and how spiritual insight unifies the internal standard (morality) and the external standard (law). The "Names and Patterns" 《名理》 chapters says:

> The Way is the origin of spiritual insight. Spiritual insight resides within the measure (*du* 度) and manifests outside the standard. Residing within the measure, it says nothing but is trusted. Manifesting outside the measure, its declarations cannot be changed. Residing within the measure, it is tranquil and unalterable. Manifesting outside the measure, it is active and unchangeable. That which is tranquil and unalterable, active and unchangeable is called Spirit. Spiritual insight is the pinnacle of insight and knowledge.[22]

Wei Qipeng 魏啟鵬 suggests "spiritual insight" indicates the highest mode of thought or cognitive power achieved by those who hold and embody the Way.[23] However, a close analysis of the connection between spiritual insight and the Way in the text indicates that spiritual insight actually signifies the realization of the unified order and natural rationality by those who can embody the Way. That spiritual insight resides within the "measure" suggests how it unites with the standards of the Way and is what establishes trust (i.e. the reliability of natural patterns). That it resides outside of the "measure" indicates how it can be manifested in society as a force of unalterable order. Spiritual insight is what allows the "legal standard" of the Way, the order of nature, to be understood and manifest as positive law.

This relationship is most explicit in the *Huangdi sijing* "The Way and the Law" 《道法》 chapter where it says, "The Way birthed the law."[24] Logically, because the Way is the source of the myriad things, humanity, and all activity, so too can law ultimately ultimately be traced to the Way. However, the Way does not directly establish the human legal system, requiring an enlightened ruler who realizes and formalizes the Law of the Way. The "Assessments" 《論》 chapter of the *Huangdi sijing* say, "The ruler is the [partner][25] of Heaven and Earth, and is who issues all commands."[26] Since the ruler is the partner of Heaven and Earth, his formulation of legal standards must follow "natural law."

Returning to the "The Way and the Law" 《道法》 chapter, we discover it describing how only the person who has grasped the Way can establish reasonable laws, and how they too must never disobey or discard said laws:

> Thus those who hold the Way generate laws and do not dare break them. They establish laws and do not dare discard them . . . can naturally lead with the chalk line, so that all observations and knowledge concerning the world will be without confusion.[27]

Concerning this three-sided relationship of the Law of the Way, the ruler, and positive law, Gao Daoyun 高道蘊 offers an insightful explanation:

> The Way is a natural standard that operates as the foundation of law, but it is certainly not a law giving God. It is simply introduced as a norm and model for establishing the law. I think the reason the Way was elevated as the normative principle was that it represented a personalization [concerning the nature of] transformation that broke away from the anthropomorphic gods. Uninfluenced, unmanipulated, unchangeable, its regular manifestation cannot be disrupted, and so it is able to function as a metaphor for the model ruler. This type of ruler can rely on his brilliant analysis to observe the world, but is not at all influenced by temptation or changing [circumstances]. When ruling, this type of ruler naturally will be able to predict events and uphold justice . . . The Way represents a unified standard, a rule-governed natural order that can function as a model for society and government.[28]

Confucianism generally considers the sages, worthies, or rulers who perfect human relationships as the ideal political figures, but Peng Meng clearly differentiates the "sage" from the "sagely law." The sage rules with extraordinary wisdom and morality, functioning as a

Weberian charismatic leader; however, the sagely law operates as a sort of routinized charisma, as an objective law rooted in key fundamental principles. Peng Meng makes this distinction in response to a question Songzi 宋子 raises in the *Yinwenzi* 《尹文子》:

> Tianzi 田子 was reading and said, "During the time of Yao there was Great Peace." Songzi said, "Was this the result of rule by a sage?" Peng Meng went to their side and responded, "It was the sagely law that brought this about and not the rule of a sage." Songzi said, "What is the difference between a sage and sagely law?" Peng Meng said, "Your confusion over terms is serious. Being a sage comes from the self. Sagely law comes from principles. Principles come from the self, but are not the self. Thus the sage only rules himself, while the sagely law rules everything. [29]

This distinction clearly explains that Huang-Lao does not place the burden of effective government on a individual's personal attainment of sagehood, but seeks an impersonalized sagely law. Sagely law is the collection of objective "law of the patterns" *lifa* 理法 that a sage discovers, which contrasts with governance that follows the whim of an individual.

When ideals of governance focus on the capacity and worthiness of each individual ruler, moral self-cultivation becomes the imperative. However, impersonal governance by law instead relies on natural law and the Law of the Way's principles to handle affairs. Because of this distinction, Huang-Lao naturally does not require the ruler to be a standard of perfect morality, but their "enlightened" ruler is one who modestly studies and implements the natural law. The "Assessing Essentials" 《論約》 chapter of the *Huangdi sijing* says, "Thus those who hold the Way observe the world";[30] *Hanfeizi* says, "The Way is the beginning of the myriad things and the standard of true and false. Therefore, the enlightened ruler guards the foundation by knowing the origin of the myriad things and controls the standard by knowing the extremes of success and failure."[31] In both these examples, the enlightened ruler is one who upholds the Law of the Way and uses natural law as the foundation for the establishment of positive law.

Generally, when Western theory employs the concept "natural law," it uses it to indicate a transcendent and eternal standard for humanity's shared natural rights and systems of justice. It has a broad range of manifestations, variously referring to "divine law," law based on the natural order or self-evident supreme moral principles, rights, and beliefs. [32] Huang-Lao's Law of the Way is natural law, in that

it includes natural standards, natural rationality, and natural order. Nevertheless, Huang-Lao's "Law of the Way" is a unique manifestation of this broad philosophical concept. For example, it pays no attention to natural rights nor does it use morality as a standard by which to establish positive law (This is especially true in the case of Hanfeizi's rejection of Confucian morality).

In the Huang-Lao tradition, the Way can operate as the source for positive law because of a key few aspects of its metaphysical nature. First, the Way operates as both the source of the myriad thing and the motivating power behind their existence and activity. "The Way's Origin" 《道原》 chapter in the *Huangdi sijing* explains that the "Primordial Constant" *Hengxian* 恒先 is the origin and foundation of creation:

> In the beginning the Primordial Constant was completely united and supremely empty. Empty and united it existed as the One. It was constantly One, and that was all. Hazy and murky, it did not yet have light or dark; its mysterious subtly filled all and its tranquil essence did not stir. Therefore, it did not possess form and its expansive greatness had no name…Its one standard does not change and is even used to determine the wriggling of worms. Birds attain it and fly; fish attain it and swim; beasts attain it and run. The myriad things attain it and are born; the hundred affairs attain it and are complete. All people rely on it, though none know its name. All people use it, though none see its form.[33]

There the Primordial Constant, like in the newly discovered Shanghai Museum text *The Primordial Constant* 《恒先》, functions as an alternative term for the Way as creator, sustainer, and natural standard.

In the previous passage, the Primordial Constant is described as "not possess[ing] form." This status of formlessness is part of a common Huang-Lao contrast between "the formed" *youxing* 有形, those perceptible concrete things, and "the formless" *wuxing* 無形, the imperceptible and undifferentiated Way. The "Inward Training" 《內業》 says:

> The Way is that which the mouth cannot explain, the eye cannot see, the ear cannot hear. It is that by which one cultivates one's mind and corrects one's form. People die because they lose it and live because they gain it. Affairs are bungled because it is lost and are handled because it is gained. The totality of the Way is without roots or stems, without leaves or buds. Through it the myriad things are born and through it the myriad things develop. What commands this is called the Way.[34]

According to Huang-Lao, what people perceive are the variegated, diverse, and constantly changing "formed" things. Being formless, the Way naturally cannot be perceived. Nonetheless, the formless Way is the origin from which all the formed creatures emerge. Put another way, it is because the Way is formless that it can omnipotently and omnipresently create all the things that possess form, can be the master of the formed, can be contrasted with everything that possess a concrete specific capacity or nature, and can become that by which all the myriad things function. "Techniques of the Mind I" 《心術上》 says, "The Way acts but does not reveal its form, enacts but does not reveal its potency. The myriad things all attain it but none know its limit."[35] "Purification of the Mind"《白心》 says, "Of the Way, when one person uses it, they will not go to excess; when the empire employs it, there will be no deprivation. This is called the Way. The small gain it and the small achieve prosperity. The great gain it and the great achieve prosperity. Exhaustively enact it and the world will submit [to you]."[36]

According to Huang-Lao's concept the Law of the Way, the Way is the source of order and rules, and as Hanfeizi's expression "the Law of the Way is utterly perfect" implies following the law and order of the Way is eternally beneficial. According to the theory of Peng Meng mentioned above, Huang-Lao's notion of "law of the patterns" *lifa* 理法 also equates with the Law of the Way. However, Hanfeizi both differentiates and correlates the Way and the patterns by defining them thusly:

> The Way is that by which the myriad things are thus and that by which the myriad things are perfected. The patterns [*li* 理] are the figures of fully developed things. The Way is that by which the myriad things develop. Thus it is said, "The Way is the cause of the patterns." Things having patterns means they cannot conflict with each other, and is why the patterns keep things under control. All of the myriad things have their own patterns and the Way perfects them.[37]

According to Hanfeizi's view, the Way is the complete collection of all the rules of the myriad things and is the absolute existence through which the myriad things become the myriad things. Patterns refer to the specific rules, presentations, and limits, which each of the myriad things possesses. The Way and the patterns have a whole-part relationship that perhaps can be articulated as the relationship between fundamental law and the different classes of laws, or as the general order and localized order.

If we say that these "rules" provide all things with a unified standard, then order is built upon those natural norms. This Huang-Lao set of universal standards, the Law of the Way, is often identified with the term "The One." Originating in the *Laozi*, where it is used both as an alternative appellation for the Way and a descriptive quality of the Way, the notion of the One further evolves in Huang-Lao thought. "The One" contrasts with "the Many," being the general principle that can unify and lead the multitudinous things. No matter how complex or varied phenomena might be, they posses a unity and coherence as a result of being ordered and limited by the One. This is as in the line, "Although the myriad thing are numerous, their governance is One," where Zhuangzi emphasizes how ultimately there is only a single method for ruling "the Many."[38]

The "The Way and the Law" 《道法》 chapter in the *Huangdi sijing* expands on this idea of a consistent standard, saying:

> Measure them by balancing the steelyard and align them by according with Heaven. The affairs of the World must be minutely investigated. Affairs are like straight trees and like the numerous grains in a granary. When "bushels" and "pecks" have been established and "feet" and "inches" a have been arrayed, nothing will be able to escape their spirit-likepow er.[39]

"Affairs are like straight trees and like the numerous grains in a grainary" explains that even though affairs are numerous like tree in a forest or grains in a granary once there are standards, everything, no matter how complex, attains order. "Techniques of the Mind I" 《心術上》 similarly explains that law is universal and is what enables the unification of different things. It says, "Laws all have the same origin and cannot but be so. Thus execution and punishments are unified." This suggests that the unique nature of every thing or affair can find unity in the overarching structure of legal rules.[40]

The "Perfect Law" 《成法》 chapter of the *Huangdi sijing* retells a discussion between the Yellow Emperor and Li Hei 力黑 which addresses how the One can function as the root of the Way and the root of governance. [41] Debating on whether or not the world can include the One and whether or not the One can include the Many, Li Hei asserts that the One does in fact exist in the world:

> In Ancient times, when August Heaven sent down the wind, all it needed was to speak of the One. The Five Thearchs used it to divide Heaven and Earth, order the Four Seas, embrace the lowly people,

> and correct all the officials in the world . . . They followed the names and returned to the One, and so the people did not disrupt the central thread.[42]

Li Hei also explained to the Yellow Emperor how the One includes the Many myriad things:

> The One is the root of the Way. Why would it not grow? . . . was lost, as none guarded the One. The divisions of the One, observe them in Heaven and Earth. The patterns of the One, enact them throughout the Four Seas. How can one know the end of . . . or the extremes of near and far. Only the One misses nothing. With the One manage the transformations and through the few know the many. Now look at all that reaches to the Four Seas, surrounds the extremes of high and low, and embraces the four directions, to perceive how everything follows the Way. A hundred words have a foundation, a thousand words have an essence, and ten thousand words have their summation; they all gather in the One's opening. Now if he does not correct others, how could he control them? He must correct others. Only then, will he be able to grasp hold of the correct to correct the incorrect, to lay hold of the One and thereby know the Many, to expel what is harmful to the people and support what is appropriate to them. In all cases, he preserves the One and possesses the same ends as Heaven and Earth: then he can know the fortunes and misfortunes of Heaven and Earth.[43]

According to Li Hei, the One not only includes the Many but also has unlimited control over the Many.

This relationship of the One and Many resembles how the complex and variegated natural phenomena are united by natural law. Put another way, in comparison to the multiplicity of natural phenomena the natural law is "the One," it is that which always remains the same. In the *Zhuangzi*, it mentions how the Huang-Lao figures Peng Meng, Tian Pian, and Shen Dao have an intellectual inclination toward the ideal "That which unites [*qi* 齊] the myriad things is considered its leader."[44] This idea of uniting could be understood as forcing uniformity, because the myriad things are distinguished by the large categories to which they belong and are differentiated by the specificity of individuation. Therefore, the Huang-Lao notion of "unity" *qiyi* 齊一 is not an erasure of the variations of manifest existence through uniformity but rather signifies how all things rely on the One as their common measure and standard.

According to the "Bu Er" 《不二》 chapter in the *Lüshi chunqiu*, "They are able to unite the dissimilar so the foolish and wise, the

competent and clumsy all exhaust their strength and realize their full capacity as though emerging from One opening."[45] Huang-Lao does not seek to erase the differences of the myriad things, or, for example, make the foolish wise, but accepts the given reality of natural variation. However, every thing also maintains an inherent unity in that they unanimously act in accordance with their own natures and abilities, "as though emerging from One opening." This type of unity is the One: the universal natural law that exists within everything.

The concept of "uniting the people's customs" found in the "Uniting Customs" 《齊俗》 chapter of the *Huainanzi* could be described as an elaboration of Peng Meng's and Tian Pian's notion of "uniting the myriad things":

> Zilu saved someone from drowning and accepted an ox by way of thanks. Confucius said, "[People in] the state of Lu will now certainly favor saving [others] from calamity." Zengzi ransomed someone and did not accept gold from the [state] treasury. Confucius said, "No one in Lu will ever pay ransom for anyone again." By accepting, Zilu encouraged virtue; by refusing, Zigong put a stop to goodness. Confucius' insight was in how he used the small to know the great [and] used the near to know the distant. He was one who possessed penetrated reasoning. Viewed on this basis, the side hall has its place, but cannot be opened to the public. Thus when one's actions accord with customs, they may be followed; when one's affairs correspond to one's abilities, they are easily accomplished. Arrogant falsehoods that delude the age and haughty conduct that separates one from the masses—these the sage does not take as customs for the people . . . Now with regard to all that is covered by Heaven and supported by Earth—all that is illuminated by the sun and overseen by the moon—make each facilitate its nature, rest secure in its position, occupy what is appropriate to it, and accomplish what it is able. Thus even the stupid have their strong points, and the wise have that for which they are not equipped. A pillar cannot be used as a toothpick; a hairpin cannot support a house. A horse cannot carry heavy loads; an ox cannot chase in fast [pursuit]. Lead cannot be used to make sword, and bronze cannot be used to make a crossbow; iron cannot be used to make a boat, and wood cannot be used to make an ax. Each is used where it is best suited and applied to what it is most appropriate, thus all the myriad things are unified and united (*yiqi* 一齊) and none transgresses the others.[46]

The final sentence makes it clear that the Huang-Lao conception of "unity" involves natural law. Everything is subject to these universally efficacious laws because they rest on a common nature. Thus, it is only through grasping the oneness of natural law and establishing the

oneness of positive law that the governing and ruling of the many will be naturally simple and effective.

The "Holding the One" 《執一》 chapter in the *Lüshi chuqiu* takes the Huang-Lao conception of holding the One as its core topic:

> Heaven and Earth and yin and yang never change, and so create the variety of the myriad things. Eyes that have not lost their sight can see the variations of white and black. Ears that have not lost their hearing ability can hear clear and muddled tones. The king who holds the One brings order to the myriad things. The army must have a general to unite it. The state must have a ruler to unite it. The empire must have the Son of Heaven to unite it. The Son of Heaven must hold the One to grasp [everything] in the palm of his hand. Oneness means order and division means chaos. Presently, if someone who drives a team of four horses gave four people each a whip to weld, they would be unable to [even] exit the main gate because of a lack of Oneness.[47]

The *Lüshi chunqiu* believes in governance through "holding the One," something rooted in the the unity and commonly shared nature of all things.

Following the Huang-Lao "Law of the Way" concept, the "Way" and the "Way of Heaven" come to signify transcendental impartial fairness, or as the Western version of natural law would call it—Justice. People often say that Laozi changed the religious conception of Heaven into the naturalistic "Way of Heaven," but even if this is so we cannot simplistically understand Laozi's "Heaven" from the perspective of naturalism.[48] This is because Laozi's conception of the Way of Heaven depicts both the justice of nature and the rationality of nature. This natural justice can be seen in the following passages: "The Way of Heaven lacks favorites, always associating with good people," and "The Way of humanity diminishes the deficient to increase those with excess; the Way of Heaven diminishes the excessive and augments the deficient."[49] The *Shenzi* 《申子》 likewise explains, "The Way of Heaven lacks self interest and so is always just; Heaven is constantly just and so it clear and bright."[50] The Huang-Lao tradition believes that Heaven, Earth, the sun, and moon all represent unbiased, unselfish, and objective fairness. It often employs the saying "There is nothing Heaven does not cover and nothing Earth does not carry"[51] to show these great powers treat everything with equal care. In the employment of positive law, this conception of natural fairness and justice manifests as the equal treatment all people must receive under the law. Such a value system stresses that a ruler rules, not according to vacillations of personal whim or temper, but with

an objective, unified, and reliable "law" that supports and protects everyoneunif ormly.

The Rule of Law and the Public and the Objective

Positive law, when rooted in natural rationalism, manifests clear identifiable characteristics in society: it establishes the public and the objective. This is specifically true for Huang-Lao with its strong emphasis on the rule of law. Overall, the "public" refers to the "public sphere," or *res publica*, and reflects the common interest. Furthermore, the "public" can both suggest communally shared things and the just and fair way in which those communally shared things are managed. Following these definitions, the legal philosophy of Huang-Lao definitely promotes a strongly rational and logical sense of the public.

Confucianism, Mohism, Daoism, Legalism, and Huang-Lao all include some sense of a universal and just "public" related to the concepts of the Way and the Way of Heaven. Yet, what they deem "public" varies. For example, Confucianism stresses ethics and morality as what is publicly shared, while Huang-Lao emphasizes the important role of law. In the Huang-Lao tradition, especially in the case of Hanfeizi, the division of public and private is defined very specifically and in regard to keeping or breaking the law. While we cannot easily observe this point from Hanfeizi's more famous abstract statements like "Being self centered is called the private (*si* 私) and turning away from the private is called the public (*gong* 公)," [52] in his concrete application of the division of public and private the legal basis of his view becomes apparent.[53] He says:

> The Way of the enlightened ruler must illuminate the division of the public and the private: it illuminates legal rules and excises private feelings. That the commanded is indeed followed and the banned is indeed prevented is the public justice of the ruler. Enacting the private, putting trust in one's friends, and not offering rewards or punishments is the private justice of the minister. If one enacts private justice, there will be chaos; if one enacts public justice, there will be order. Thus the public and private are divided.[54]

He also says:

> Thus in the present age, if one can excise private wrongs and establish public laws, then the people will be at peace and state ordered. When

> one can excise private actions and enact public laws, then one's soldiers will be strong and one's enemies will be weak.[55]

This is not solely Hanfeizi's view, as the whole of Huang-Lao correlates the legal and illegal with the public and the private.[56]

The public quality of Huang-Lao law has its origin in the "common" role of the Law of the Way. Just as the Law of the Way and the Way of Heaven rule the myriad things in an unbiased fashion, positive laws based in the Law of the Way treat people in an impartial manner. However, if, as some say, Huang-Lao's laws are designed to simply enhance the ruler's power and personal gains, then arguing for the public nature of these laws would be quite difficult. Yet, we should remember that even Thomas Hobbes, who claimed that the law is the absolute command of the ruler and the absolute manifestation of his will, did not feel that law could exist for the sole purpose of enhancing the ruler's power or maximizing his personal profit. As long as the rule of law exists, it by its very nature provides the general populous some manner of public justice.[57]

In the case of Huang-Lao, the ruler is the lawmaker, and while we can imagine the overwhelming control exerted by a ruler in that early time, the vast scope of his power does not imply that he could casually transgress the law whenever he wished. If, as a student of Huang-Lao, he actually wanted to be an enlightened ruler and maintain the efficacy of law, he would have to follow the law himself. [58] "The Way and the Law" chapter in the *Huangdi sijing* warns, "Thus those who hold the Way create the law and do not dare break it."[59] For Huang-Lao, the law is public, and the purpose of establishing a ruler and a state is for the public good as well. *Shenzi* 《慎子》s ays:

> In ancient times, those who established and honored the Son of Heaven did not do so [just] to benefit one person. [For] it is said that if the empire has no singularly honored [person], then the patterns (*li* 理) cannot be universal and that without universal patterns there is no empire. Thus [we can say] the establishment of the Son of Heaven is for the empire; the empire is not established for the Son of Heaven. The establishment of the king is for the kingdom, the kingdom is not established for the king. The establishment of the head official is for the offices, the offices are not established for the head official.[60]

Even in light of this explicit statement, there are some who will immediately assert powerful reasons for describing at least Shang Yang and Hanfeizi as promoters of an absolute monarchy created solely to benefit the ruler. Yet even this view must be somewhat tempered.

Shangzi 《商子》, the collection of Shang Yang's work, contrary to expectation, warns that the public and the private represent two types of interest that must be strictly differentiated:

> When the public and private are clearly distinguished, then petty people will not hate the worthies, and the disgraced will not be jealous of others' accomplishments. Thus when Yao and Shun established the empire, it was not to privately profit from the empire. They established the empire for the empire. When discussing the worthy and selecting the able to receive the transmission [of power] they did not keep family at a distance or bringing strangers near, and illuminated the way of controlling disorder. Thus when the Three Kings held the righteous close and the Five Hegemons rectified the nobles with the law, none sought to privately profit from the empire. They ordered the empire for the empire. Therefore they attained fame and success, the empire rejoiced in their government, and none sought to do them harm. Currently, the rulers and ministers of this chaotic age are content to seize benefits from the state, and they manage major offices according to private [interest]. Because of this, the states are endangered. Thus, the interaction of the public and the private is the key determinate to whether [a state is] preserved or destroyed.[61]

We can see that when Shang Yang addresses privately profiting from the empire, he implies a contrast with spreading public or shared benefits in the empire, noting that the preservation of public and common prosperity is what maintains social and political stability.

Shang Yang and Hanfeizi are both famous for maintaining and enacting harsh punishments and laws, but it happens they also view the law as something that cares for and protects the people The *Shangjun shu* 《商君書》 says, "The law is that by which one [shows] love; ritual is that by which one handles affairs."[62] Going even farther, the *Hanfeizi* says, "When the sage rules the people he uses 'the measure' (*du* 度) as his foundation. Never following his own desires, he only hopes to benefit the people. Thus he does not use punishment because he hates the people but because it is the source of love."[63]

Confucianism maintains that every true government is founded on "obtaining the hearts and minds of the people" *deminxin* 得民心 and following the "will of the people" *minyi* 民意.[64] Though Hanfeizi critiques this notion because he feels the people are like children who are unqualified to lead the state, [65] Shen Dao and the authors of the *Huangdi sijing* reformulate the "will of the people" theory to promote their own system of laws. The *Shenzi* 《慎子》 says, "The law does not descend from Heaven or emerge from Earth. It appears

among humans, simply according with their hearts and minds.[66] The *Huangdi sijing* has a few similar passages: the "Four Measures" 《四度》 chapter explains that law, "participates with Heaven and Earth and accords with the people's hearts and minds,"[67] while "The Lord's Order" 《君正》 chapter says, "When orders and commands accord with the people's hearts and minds, then the people will heed them."[68]

Shen Dao and the *Huangdi sijing* promote "according with the hearts and minds of the people" and "according with the will of the people" from the sense of how law can guide people to act in accord with human nature. Because their notions diverge from the Confucian usage of these expressions, they do not conflict with Hanfeizi's critique concerning the dangers of listening to *hoi polloi*.

It may be surprising to some that Huang-Lao upholds the law for the open and equal benefit of the public, as it developed in a traditional hierarchical society where law could be used to preserve inequality. Normally, the concept that everyone is equal before the law is considered a product of a "rule of law" society, so on this point Huang-Lao can be seen as an exception in that it energetically promoted this ideal in early China. Valuing the equality of all before the law demands that law is not private but must be both extended to the whole society and clearly articulated so everyone understands the consequences of their actions under the rules of the law.[69] This also means that a society's profits and resources should be available to all, and that everyone can flourish according to their own ability and effort.

It is not accidental that the Huang-Lao tradition developed this conception, as it represents a response to certain concrete needs emerging from the political fragmentation that occurred during the Eastern Zhou. At that time, the exceedingly entrenched hereditary and aristocratic feudal political model of the Western Zhou was collapsing and so the overall goals of early Legalists was to enact political reform aimed at constructing a new political model. It did not passively wait for the end of feudalism, but worked vigorously to transform a society long based on inheritance and social status into one founded on "personal merit" and "contractual relationships," and driven by self interest and undergirded by the law. As a result, efficacy and productivity became the basic standards of social value, people's earnings became relative to their contributions, and through concrete contribution commoners were able to quickly ascend the ranks of society.[70] This was not just abstract theorizing, as the states of Qi, Chu, Qin, and the Three Jin all underwent various experiments with the Legalist or Huang-Lao political policies.[71]

The Confucian notions of "honoring the honorable" where "punishment does not reach up to the great officers and ritual etiquette does not reach down to the common people" and of "keeping close those of close relations" where "the father conceals the misconduct of the son and the son conceals the misconduct of the father" are both unacceptable to the followers of Huang-Lao.[72] They reject the idea that someone's position in the social hierarchy should be determined by their inborn status, instead asserting it should be achieved through a person's own actions. Also, to a radical extent, Huang-Lao restricts the behavior of all people equally with the law, regardless of their connection to those in power or their economic or social status. From as early as the *Shangzi* we can see:

> What is called singular punishment is when punishment does not consider rank. From the high ministers and generals to the lower ministers and common folk, those who disobey the kings orders, break national prohibitions, or disrupt their superiors' control must be executed without mercy.[73]

However, Shang Yang's investigation into two illegal acts of the crown prince that resulted in the prince's teacher being punished for his student reveals a gap between the theory and the practice of law.

At least in theory, Huang-Lao law does not differentiate according to rank or allow for special preference. The "Purification of the Mind" 《白心》 chapter of the *Guanzi*a sserts:

> However, Heaven does not alter its seasons for anything and the enlightened sage ruler does not alter his laws for any man. Heaven acts as it acts and the myriad things are benefited. The sage also acts as he acts and the hundred clans are benefited. Therefore, the myriad things are equal, as are the masses.[74]

The *Hanfeizi* "Possessing the Measure" 《有度》 chapter similarly records:

> The law does not favor nobles as the chalk line does not bend. What the law asserts, the wise cannot debate and the valiant dare not oppose. When punishing crime, do not avoid great ministers; when rewarding good, do not forget the ordinary man.[75]

From these two passages we can see that Sima Qian's appraisal of Legalism as a tradition that applies law irrespective of relationships or status applies to Huang-Lao as well.[76]

The early Chinese legal tradition underwent a sequence of developments: during the Three Dynasties people discussed "punishment" (*xing* 刑), during the Eastern Zhou they typically debated "law" (*fa* 法), and during the Qin, they mostly disputed issues of "universal rules" (*lü* 祿). This reminds us that the concrete manifestations of systems of norms, whether they be legal or moral, are always human social constructs.[77] Nonetheless, once they are compiled and deployed, they become the will of nations, societies, and populations, impersonal objects of social activity, and universal standards and measures for evaluating human behavior.

According to Hu Shi, "law" *fa* 法 originally referred to a model or paradigm. Legalism and Huang-Lao fully expand this notion of law as a model or standard by attempting to construct an objective and impersonal legal system. Measures determine weight, size, and length function in a similar objective fashion, and people believe in and employ them because they provide consistent standards. Huang-Lao thinkers approach to law may have been inspired by this notion of concrete measurement, as they use tangible weights and measures as metaphors for the invisible, yet consistent and objective, law. As weights and measures are fixed by real world objects (like the international prototype kilogram), laws are concretized through the public proclamation of actual legal provisions. The *Shenzi* 《慎子》 underscores that for the law, the existence of specific legal statutes is most important. Even when these laws themselves are imperfect, having these flawed creations is far superior to having none:

> Even if the laws are not good, having them is still better than having no law at all because they unify people's minds. When casting lots to divide wealth and drawing lots to divide horses, the lots are not evenly shared. [Yet,] those who are favored do not know toward whom to be grateful and those who are disappointed do not know towards whom to be hateful. Therefore this does not crush people's hope. Thus using milfoil and tortoise shell establishes public knowledge; using standards of weight establishes public accuracy; using records and agreements establishes public trust; using standards of measure establishes judgment; using legal rules and ritual records establishes public righteousness. The establishment of all these public [standards] is so the private can be discarded. The enlightened ruler must use wisdom to analyze actions and affairs; he must use law to establish rewards and divide wealth; he must use ritual to enact virtue and control the center. Thus, desires cannot disrupt the seasons, love cannot transgress the laws, honors cannot exceed the family, emoluments cannot exceed the position, officials cannot hold two offices, and workers cannot hold two jobs.

> Distribute jobs based on capacity and distribute profit based on those jobs. If things can be thusly, then above none will envy rewards and below none will envy wealth.[78]

Relying on lots to determine the division of supplies gives people an opportunity to gain something, and even though the amount of gain varies, people do not complain about these outcomes because there is an objective standard and a unified method to the distribution. Similarly, law establishes objective and fair standards that treat everyone the same. It removes the influence of the special advantages that come from one's family, position, power, or intelligence.

The *Shenzi* 《慎子》 further says:

> Law is what equalizes the actions of the empire and what makes supremely fair the great prescriptions of control. Thus the wise cannot avoid the law with their clever schemes, the debaters cannot avoid the law with their sophistry, the officials cannot avoid the law because of their fame, and the ministers cannot avoid the law because of their achievements. My joy can be restrained and my hate stifled, but my law cannot be abandoned.[79]

Having an objective standard allows people's actions to be judged at any time and in any place, just as using scales to measure has a preventative function because these impartial norms makes it quite difficult for people to seize an opportunity to use their cleverness to attain unfair advantages.

These examples inspires a new look at Huang-Lao's notions of "no worthies," "no sages," "no wise men." This should not be understood as requiring the ruler to become stupid, but is a rejection of the ruler using the subjective decisions made by people of exceptional capacity and wisdom to replace the rule of objective law. Simply put, no matter how brilliant a ruler might be, his ability to deal with the complexity and diversity of events is limited. However, the *Shenzi* 《慎子》 clearly states, "One [could] discard the techniques of the Way and abandon the measures to [simply] rely on the knowledge of a single person to understand the empire, [but] who could [possibly] be knowledgeable enough [to make this work]?"[80]

Xunzi confirms that Shenzi truly valued law, and not ability, when he critiques him by saying, "Shenzi hides in the law and does not realize the [importance of] worthies."[81] However, Xunzi never really understood why Shenzi valued the law. Xunzi's student Hanfeizi, however, expresses a sentiment quite similar to Shenzi when he

criticizes Zi Chan for relying on his own ability to determine guilt in a crime:

> If crimes must be known through direct observation, then capturing criminals in the state of Zheng will be a rare occurrence. Would it not also be a weak approach, if the city police are not relied upon, if the government does not investigate the three and five, if there are no clear measures [of proper behavior], and one has to solely resort on one's own knowledge and mental power to determine such cases? Now things are numerous and knowledge is scant [by comparison]. The scant cannot overcome the numerous. Knowledge is insufficient to fully know things and thus one [should] accord with things to govern things. The inferiors are numerous and the superiors are scant. The scant cannot overcome the numerous. Thus, one [should] accord with the people to govern the people. Therefore, without exhausting your body and without needing knowledge or mental powers you can find the criminals. Thus the man from Song says, "If a sparrow [happened] to pass the archer Yi, Yi would certainly get it, but this is Yi just cheating. If we take the empire as a net then the sparrows will not get away." To know of crimes we also must have a large net and never lose its unity. By not cultivating this principle and using his own observations as a bow and arrow, Zi Chan was just cheating. For Laozi said, "Those who rule the state with wisdom are traitors to the state."[82]

No wonder Aristotle said that law leads people away from wisdom and that the desire for a single person's reasoning to overturn the law is specifically forbidden by law.[83] After all, an individual's intelligence is limited and effected by their individual personality. From the Huang-Lao perspective, people's personalities, psychological makeup, and personal likes and dislikes are viewed as extremely subjective, random, and unreliable.

Using personal preferences to rule a state is what Hanfeizi calls "governing with the mind." He argues that "governing with the mind" *xinzhi* 心治 instead of "governing with law" *fazhi* 法治 would make it impossible for even someone like the Sage King Yao to properly order a state. He says:

> It has been said that those in ancient times skilled at employing people followed Heaven, accorded with humanity, and made rewards and punishments clear. Following Heaven, they were able to establish their achievements by only rarely using force. According with humanity, they were able to enact their orders with limited brutality and punishment. Clarifying rewards and punishments, the Bo Yi's and Dao Zhi's do not

> rebel. Thus, the white and black are divided . . . By abandoning the art of law and governing with the mind even Yao could not order a single state. By discarding the square and compass and randomly measuring, even Xi Zhong could not make a single wheel. By forsaking the ruler and estimating length, even Wang Er could not divide something in half. If the central ruler holds to the technique of law and the craftsman holds to the square, compass, and ruler, then nothing will be lost. If those who rule people can discard the uselessness of clever worthies and hold to central foolishness that loses nothing, then the strength of the people will be fully utilized and achievements and fame will be established . . . The ancients said, "Heart and minds are hard to know and joy and anger are hard to balance." Thus demonstrate it to the eyes and ears, so the law can teach minds.[84]

From Hanfeizi's perspective, the legal standard is open, transparent, easy to understand, and easy to use. Thus, we should use the standard of law to determine our own mental outlook, instead of the opposite approach where one uses "the governance of the mind" as a substitute for the rule of law.

The natural inclination of people to seek benefit and avoid harm leads them to always wish for generous rewards and lenient punishments. If we do not follow the legal standards for rewards and punishments and rely only on the subjective decisions of someone in charge, even if the rewards are numerous, people will feel they are too few, and even if the punishments are light, people will find they are too heavy. However, by according with the objective standards of law people are much more likely to accept the decisions. The *Shenzi* 《慎子》, following the previously mentioned discussion of "casting lots," explains the power of relying on the law. It says:

> Thus it is said, "The great ruler relies on the law and not his own self, and so affairs are decided by the law. Then what the law gives is always in proper proportion, and those who receive rewards and punishments do not look to their lord. Thus animosity does not arise and the superiors and inferiors are harmonious.[85]

Shen Dao's discussion of "affairs" and "proportions" decided by the law can be said to broadly belong to the Huang-Lao theory of "forms and names" *xingming* 形名.

The technical sense of "forms" basically refers to the social reality of actual circumstances, while "names" refer to every kind of law and rule. Huang-Lao champions the idea that forms and names should

match each other, which means that the rules of law must completely conform to the reality of each situation. Concretely put, rewards and punishments must be properly proportionate to contributions and crimes. Though Huang-Lao emphasizes the importance of investigation and confirmation of each concrete circumstance, without objective "names" there would be no way to accurately measure these carefully corroborated "forms":

> The way of applying Oneness takes "names" as primary. If names are correct then things become stable; if names are skewed then things become untethered. Thus the sage holds the One with stillness, allowing the names to be commanded naturally, and the ordered affairs to settle themselves. He does not reveal his preferences and thus those below are pure and proper. He follows and relies on them, letting affairs manage themselves. He follows and praises them as others raise them up. He correctly manages them, letting them all stabilize themselves. The superiors select people according to the names. When the name is unknown have [people] further cultivate their forms. When forms and names fit together, apply what they produce. When these two can be trusted then the inferiors will display sincerity.[86]

Once there is an objective set of laws (the names and the One), then affairs and things (forms) naturally become induced into the system of rules and can be judged.

The correspondence of forms and names is equivalent to that of "names and divisions" (*mingfen* 名分). "The Way's Origin" 《道原》 chapter in the *Huangdi sijing* say, "Divide them according to their divisions and then the myriad people will not contend; give to them according to their names and the myriad things will settle themselves."[87] The *Shenzi* 《慎子》 has a passage that similarly explains the relationship of "names and divisions" as a corollary of "forms and names":

> One rabbit runs down a street and a hundred people race after it. None of the desires of these people are faulty because the division of the rabbit is not settled. Piles of rabbits fill the market, but that one passes by without at glance is not because one does not desire rabbit. This is because after the divisions are settled, not even the degenerate contest it.[88]

The "division" of the rabbit refers to who possesses the rabbit, and "settled division" indicates the ownership of the rabbit confirmed by the standards of law.

An even more nuanced discussion of rabbit ownership, in regard to the relationship of name and division, appears in the writings of Shang Yang:

> Laws and ordinances are the mandates of the people, the roots of governance, and what complete the people. If one governs without laws and ordinances, this is like desiring to be without hunger and so discarding food, desiring to be without cold and so discarding clothing, desiring the east and so going west. The crucial point is indeed clear. One rabbit runs and a hundred people chase it. This is not because the rabbit can be divided into a hundred parts, but because its name is not yet stable. Now those who sell rabbits fill the market, yet thieves do not dare seize them because their names are already stable. Thus when then [the rabbit's] name is not yet stable even Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang would seek to chase it; when its name is stable even greedy thieves would not seize it. Today the laws and ordinances are not clear and the names are not stable and so the people of the empire can debate them. In these debates, people's opinions differ and nothing is stable . . . If the names are divided and unstable, Yao and Shun could accidentally break them and become criminals, so how much more is this true for thema sses?[89]

Shang Yang, Shen Dao, and Peng Meng also use similar examples. This explains the close relationship of Huang-Lao and Legalism. One of the keys of this relationship is that they both promote the objective and universal nature of law.

The Ideal of a Law-Based Community: Rule of Law Versus Rule of Virtue

We have observed many kinds of utopian ideals and dreams, but who has ever encountered a Utopia ruled by law like the Huang-Lao "law-based community"? It is an ideal of prosperity built on order. As Benjamin Schwartz's term for Huang-Lao, "instrumental Daoism,"[90] clearly articulates, the tradition possesses a realistic focus, a theme of straightforward political affairs, and an aim to maximize governmental efficiency and practical state benefits. Certainly, Huang-Lao's political program is direct and explicit in its desire to establish a powerful hegemonic state, and the tradition's notions of bureaucracy and techniques of governmental management have been praised by scholars in numerous regards. Its original principle of law and governance accords with human nature, and beyond the core focus on law it also addresses the mutually related issues of authority and power.

This mechanistic model of control and clarity in many ways emerged as a response to the failure of tradition. Hanfeizi, for one, was especially skeptical of any Confucian belief in the power of virtue, and this pushed his political philosophy toward a pragmatic model. He and the other proponents of Huang-Lao never hoped for a country ruled by the Confucian Superior Person (*junzi* 君子), and never prayed for the emergence of truly charismatic ruler. Instead, they conceptualized their ideal ruler as a person who possesses the power to unify, is comfortable being nonactive, and can play the role of a *laissez-faire* "night watchman."

For Confucians, Huang-Lao, especially Hanfeizi's variety, seems ruthlessly hardhearted and coldly impartial. Certainly its adherents rest their legal system on the foundation of natural law (the Law of the Way), and nothing personal or private is allowed to disrupt the function of this cosmic order. However, none of what the Confucians consider problematic prevents Huang-Lao from establishing its ideal law-based community. On the contrary, these supposed faults were exactly what should enable them to reach their goal, as those countries during the Warring States that underwent Legalist reforms, especially those like the Qin operating on the western edge of the Zhou cultural sphere, saw concrete benefits from this rule of law. Such examples not only encouraged the followers' belief in the efficacy the system of laws, but also caused them to further idealize the law.

Huang-Lao's ideal law-based community finds its richest depiction in the "Great Structure" 《大體》 chapter of the *Hanfeizi*, where the text presents an extremely appealing utopian state:

> Those of ancient times who perfected the Great Structure gazed at Heaven and Earth, pondered the rivers and seas, and followed the mountains and valleys. They [accorded] with the light of the sun and moon, the movement of the four seasons, the spreading of clouds, and the blowing of the winds. They did not encumber the mind with knowledge or burden themselves with private matters. They entrusted [the affairs] of order and chaos to the techniques of law, based [the standards of] right and wrong on rewards and punishments, and gave [the measure of] heavy and light to the balancing scales. They did not oppose the patterns of Heaven or harm the natural inclinations. They did not blow away hairs in search of scars or wash away dirt to reveal unattainable knowledge. They did not exceed or fall short of the chalk line. They were not too severe or too lenient in [the use of] the law. They held to the perfect pattern and followed nature.
>
> Prosperity and ruin emerge from the Law of the Way and not from love and hate. The responsibility of honor and grace is no one else's

but one's own. Thus in the supremely peaceful age the law is like the pure and unwavering morning dew; its heart is without enmity and its mouth is without vitriol. Thus the chariots and horses are not fatigued by long journeys, flags and banners are not trampled in great marshes, countless people do not lose their lives to the enemy, and the brave and strong do not come to an end arrayed in battle. The great and capable are not noted in the histories or have their achievements inscribed on bronze trophies, and the annals remain empty. Thus it is said that there is no benefit more long lasting than simplicity, and no good fortune more enduring than peace.

Even if one gives a stone carver a thousand year lifespan, and a hook, a square, compass, and a chalk line to make Mount Tai perfectly square, or gives Meng Ben and Xia Yu the famous sword *ganjiang* to unite the myriad people, though they might exhaust their skills and live for countless years, Mount Tai would never become square and the people would never be united. Thus it is said that those who led the empire in ancient times did not induce the great skill of stone carvers to destroy the form of Mount Tai or incite the great ferocity of Meng Ben and Xia Yu to harm the myriad people's natures.

Follow the Way and perfectly [enact] the law and then the ruler will be joyous and great criminals will vanish. Be placid, calm, and still, [just] following the Mandate of Heaven and upholding the Great Structure, and thus people will never commit the crime of abandoning the law, a calamity like a fish bereft of water. If one can be thus, there is little in the world that cannot be accomplished. If there was no Heaven above, then nothing would cover what is below. If below there was no Earth, then nothing would support the creatures. Mount Tai did not rise up by [differentiating] good and evil [stones] and so it could become so tall. The rivers and seas were not selective about their minor tributaries and so they could become mighty.

Thus the great person bases his form on Heaven and Earth and the myriad things are complete. He examines his mind according to the mountains and seas and the state is prosperous. The superiors lack the poison of anger and the inferiors lack the harm of resentment. The superiors and inferiors interact smoothly using the Way as their arrangement. Thus long term benefit accrues, and great achievements are accomplished. Names are completed first and virtue follows behind. This is the perfection of governance.[91]

This first two paragraphs of the passage are believed to be a lost quotation from Shen Dao 慎到.[92] Regardless of who wrote the passage, we can see from its contents that it completely accords with Hanfeizi's Huang-Lao philosophy, though the expressions "Those of ancient times who perfected the Great Structure" and "those who led the empire in ancient times" do not quite accord with Hanfeizi's notion

of adaptating with the times instead of idolizing the past. Of course, Hanfeizi does not completely avoid "relying on the past." Regardless of its author, the "Great Structure" chapter imagines an inspiring ideal law-based community.

Employing its rich imagination, Chinese culture has conceptualized many different utopian societies: the "anarchist nation" *wujun* 無君, the egalitarian collectivism of the "Great Harmony" *datong* 大同 society, Confucianism's moral utopia, Zhuangzi's primitive community *zhide zhi shi* 至德之世, Tao Yuanming's "peach spring beyond the world" *shiwai taoyuan* 世外桃源, the state ruled by a "superior person" in Li Ruzhen's 李汝珍 novel *Flowers in the Mirror*, and now we can add the ideal law-based society of Huang-Lao to the list.

This ideal relies on the Law of the Way to set the highest unity and standard, one that is both universal and simple. This means that in the human realm people must model the Way and the natural order of Heaven and Earth. They must accord with natural human tendencies by establishing positive law and completely constrain and regulate all behavior according to the law. Because no personal sentiment or private intentions are allowed to influence the public righteousness of the law, the constraints on personal interests do not result in dissatisfaction or resentment. This type of society has a high level of safety, every person peacefully enjoys their work, and there is no leisure class.

In the *Zhuangzi* we also find records of Huang-Lao thought that tend toward the utopian. The "Way of Heaven" chapter records:

> Therefore those ancients who clearly understood the Great Way first sought to understand Heaven, and then [turned to] the Way and virtue. When the Way and virtue were clearly understood, then they [turned to] Benevolence and Righteousness. When Benevolence and Righteousness were clearly understood, then they [turned to] distinctions and their maintenance. When distinctions and their maintenance were clearly understood, then they [turned to] forms and names. When forms and names were clearly understood, then they [turned to] the employment of men according to their qualities. When the employment of men according to their qualities was clearly understood, then they [turned to] sourcing and removal. When sourcing and removal were clearly understood, then they [turned to issues of] true and false. When [issues of] true and false were clearly understood, then they [turned to] rewards and punishments. When rewards and punishments were clearly understood, then the wise and foolish resided in the proper places, the noble and the lowly occupied their positions, and the benevolent worthies and those inferior to them sincerely did their best. It is imperative to differentiate ability and this must be done according to

> names. If one serves their superiors in this way, supports their inferiors in this way, regulates things in this way, and cultivates themselves in this way, then knowing how to scheme becomes useless because everything [simply] returns to Heaven's [order]. This is what is called the supreme governance of Great Peace.[93]

This is a utopian vision that combines Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism. Although it does not especially stress the rule of law, "understanding Heaven," "employment according to qualities," "rewards and punishments," and "differentiated abilities" are all core Huang-Lao concepts.

Calling something an ideal generally implies it is impractical, just as Utopia refers to that wonderful "no place." However, the law-based ideal Huang-Lao community was actually realized, to a point, in the state of Qin, something confirmed by Xunzi's record of his visit there, which took place somewhere between 306–251 BCE. The order, wealth, and strength of Qin left a deep impression on Xunzi, According to Liu Xiang 劉向 (77 BCE–6CE), he was invited there for a government position and went to realize his political aspirations.[94] The *Xunzi* further records that he received an audience with King Zhao of Qin.[95] In contrast to how King Hui of Liang asked Mencius about how to benefit his country, King Zhao simply confronted Xunzi by declaring that Confucianism provides no benefit to the state. Of course, Xunzi did not accept this and gained the praise of the king when he brilliantly defended the Confucian tradition.

Around the same time, the Marquis of Ying named Fan Ju 范雎 also met with Xunzi and asked about his impression of Qin. Xunzi responded:

> Its defenses at the borders have a natural strength of position. Its geographic features are inherently advantageous. Its mountains, forests, streams, and valleys are magnificent. The benefits of its natural resources are manifold. Such are the inherent strengths of its geography. When I passed across the border, I noted that the customs and mores of the Hundred Clans were unspoiled, that their music and dances did not tend toward indecency, that their clothing was not frivolous, that they were exceedingly obedient and deferential to the authorities—just as the people of antiquity. When I reached the bureaus and agencies of the towns and cities, I saw the Hundred Officials sternly attend to their functions, none failing to be respectful, temperate, earnest, scrupulously reverential, loyal, and trustworthy, and never being deficient in the execution of their duties—just as were the officers of antiquity. When I entered the capital, I noticed how when officers and grand

> officers left the house gates, they entered the gate of their office, and when they left office gate they returned to their homes without conducting any private matters. They do not form cliques and parties; they do not associate in exclusive friendships. But they, in a rather exalted manner, are all intelligent, comprehensive, and public-spirited—just as the officers and grand officers of antiquity. I noted how in the operation of your court adjudications, the hundred affairs of government are decided without delay and so serenely it seems as though there were not government at all—just as in the courts of antiquity. Certainly the four consecutive generations of victories are not due to mere chance, but to method and calculation. This is what I have observed. Thus it is said, "Undertaken with ease, yet well ordered; restricted to essentials, yet carried out in full detail; not involving trouble, yet resulting in real achievement—these are the perfections of government." Qin belongs to this category.[96]

According to this description, the state of Qin's wonderful situation fills one with yearning, seemingly a portrait of Huang-Lao's ideal law-based community. The way Xunzi describes Qin as including "the people of antiquity," "the officers of antiquity," and "the courts of antiquity" suggests the newly powerful Qin resides in a former "Golden Age." In Xunzi's portrayal, we can see an example of a Huang-Lao king who "rules through non-action." He is the sort to constantly overwork his people so he can complete countless affairs everyday, but is a person who "does not move from his mat" and "rules with settled clothing and crossed hands." Xunzi's citation of "Undertaken with ease, yet well ordered; restricted to essentials, yet carried out in full detail; not involving trouble, yet resulting in real achievement—these are the perfections of government" exactly articulates Huang-Lao's ideal conception of government, and remarks that Qin actually attained this.

Xunzi may not have seriously reflected on how Qin's governmental order was the result of law. Although he did note the importance of rules in the society, he was referring to the rules of ritual and not the standards of law. This accords with his Confucian view of the value of law, on which he remarks:

> There are rulers who are preside over chaos, but there are no inherently chaotic states. There are people who bring order but there are no laws that inherently order. The laws of Yi the archer are not lost, but there is not an Yi to be found in the world; the laws of Yu are still preserved, but the Xia are not kings the world. Thus laws cannot exist on their own, and their classifications cannot implement themselves; if

> you attain [the right] people [the state] survives, but if you lose those people [the state] is lost. Laws are the cause of order, but the superior person is the source of the law. Thus if there is a superior person, even though the laws may be few they will sufficiently handle everything. Without a superior person, the law is just a tool, its application loses sight of what is primary and secondary, there is no way to respond to the shifting nature of affairs, and this leads to chaos. If one does not understand the suitability of laws and corrects laws by making them numerous, then although one is learned the affairs near at hand will become chaotic.[97]

In contrast to the rule of law promoted by Huang-Lao, Xunzi resolutely upholds the Confucian ideal of "personal rule"—governance based on the moral attainment of the ruler. Only in a very limited sense is Xunzi compatible with Huang-Lao, as their core ideals are opposite. If we consider Mencius' perspective, the "Way of Hegemons" *Badao* 霸道 and the "Way of Kings" Wangdao 王道 cannot coexist. For him, the Way of Kings is the only path to achieving Great Peace in the world. Yet, Xunzi does not so clearly differentiate these two, considering the Way of Hegemons to be effective in ordering all levels of society, which explains why he has such high praise for the state of Qin.

He still, however, asserts that the Confucian Way of Kings is an even higher ideal:

> Yet even though all this is so, Qin is filled with trepidation. Despite its concurrent and complete possession of all these numerous attributes, if one weighs Qin by the standards of the solid achievements of True Kingship, then the vast degree to which it fails to attain that ideal is manifest. Why is that? It is dangerously lacking in Confucian scholars. Thus it is said, "Those who possess the pure form are True Kings; those who have the mixed form are Hegemons; those completely lacking are annihilated." This is precisely the shortcoming of Qin.[98]

He also notes:

> The art of brute force fails, while the art of Righteousness succeeds. What does this refer to? I say it describes the Qin. Its might is more awesome than that of Tang or King Wu. It is broader and larger than Shun's or Yu's [territories]. However, it is anxious and distressed that it will not defeat its enemies. Terrified, it constantly fears it will be crushed by a world united against it. This is what it means to say, "The art of brute force fails."[99]

Xunzi was a stalwart defender and enthusiastic propagator of Confucianism, but two of his disciples became famous anti-Confucian Legalists, a fact that certainly influenced his status within Confucianism.

One of his students, Li Si 李斯 hoped to escape his lowborn status by finding a place to demonstrate his abilities and so left Chu and headed to Qin. When taking leave of his master Xunzi, he asked how he should govern Qin, and Xunzi instructed him to employ Confucianism's virtues of Benevolence and Righteousness.[100] *The Commentary on the Xunzi* 《荀子注》 by the Tang dynasty scholar Yang Jing 楊倞 describes this encounter as follows, "Li Si asked Xunzi, 'In the present age what should the Qin do?' Xunzi said, 'The art of brute force fails, while the art of Righteousness succeeds. This is what describes the Qin.'"[101] Li Si argues that Qin's continually increasing strength and prosperity does not come from Benevolence and Righteousness, but from its ability to adapt to situations. Xunzi, however, chastises him by explaining that Benevolence and Righteousness are the greatest of all adaptations.[102]

In contrast to Shang Yang's and Hanfeizi's classic rejection of Confucian morality, the Huang-Lao thought that develop in the Qi and Chu states generally incorporates Confucian Benevolence and Righteousness, as we can see from texts like the *Guanzi* and the *Huangdi sijing*. Furthermore, though Confucians have endlessly criticized the state of Qin for "considering the law as its teachings" and "considering officials as its teachers," that state's famous Huang-Lao encyclopedia *Lüshi chunqiu* includes Confucian theories in its syncretic worldview.

The Qin bamboo text *The Way of the Official* 《為吏之道》 *Wei Li zhi Dao*, found at Shuihudi, also contains Confucian moral concepts and promotes the idea that "because of tolerance, loyalty, and trust there is peace and no resentment, and any crimes or disruptions are minor." It considers caring fathers and filial sons as the keys to governance, "The root of government is when the rulers are spirited, the ministers are loyal, the fathers caring, and the sons filial," and articulates that there are "Five Goods" (*wushan* 五善) that operate as the basic morals of a proper government official:

> Officials have Five Goods. First, loyally respect your superior. Second, be wholly honest and without slander. Third, be careful and attentive in handling affairs. Forth, enjoy doing good. Fifth, be reverent and give way to others. When one can completely fulfill these five there will indeed be great rewards.[103]

From these basic statements, we can see that Huang-Lao combines the rule of law with the supposedly incompatible rule of virtue.

During China's transition from a traditional society to a modern society, both Confucianism's rule of virtue and Huang-Lao's rule of law were criticized. The Confucian penchant for allocating government positions based on "virtues" was seen as an impediment to the development of modern Western rule of law because its understanding of rules and regulation were too ethics-based. The traditional Chinese Huang-Lao and Legalist conceptions of the rule of law were also seen as unsuitable for the modern age, having been designed to serve an absolute monarch. As a result, for most of the last century these two major traditional Chinese political philosophies were viewed as mistaken creations that provided no contemporary value.

However, having investigated the Huang-Lao tradition's own legal theory, we can firmly state that it actually incorporates many of the key characteristics of the Western notion of "rule of law," and is not totally incompatible with modernity as many wrongly assume. Similarly, we cannot say that the Confucian concept "rule of virtue" has absolutely no value to modern political life either. Truly, the rule of law and the rule of virtue both have a range of potential and particular applications. Politics is not the extension of ethics, and law is not a replacement for morality. Yet, the rule of law and the rule of virtue can operate as complements that supplement the shortcomings of each.

From a comparative standpoint, the Confucian rule of virtue emphasizes politicians' personal character and humanistic education and seeks a stable political foundation in self-cultivation and moral leadership. We must admit that even the rule of law cannot fully extract itself from human individuals, and though we agree that the rule of law is a type of objective order it is ultimately a manmade one. Laws are determined by people and are the products of individuals and society, and so any approach to the rule of law still must rely on people for its creation and implementation. If we fully imagine a system of law based on the notion that humans have an evil nature, that does not have to mean that humans are pure evil, but just that this assumption allows for the creation of a just and good legal order. However, in establishing and protecting the legal order of public justice one must also assume that humans are good because of the foundational need for the enforcers of the law to be just and for the majority of citizens to be law abiding.

Confucianism propounds morality-based governance, and its common assumption that human nature is good is also aimed at establishing a precondition for this political order. One of the basic meanings

of Confucian "moral rule" is requiring politicians to possess and demonstrate exceptional morality. In our modern society, the division and range of social, political, and economic interests is extremely complex and so the having a developed legal system is enormously important, but this situation also means that moral requirements for politicians are crucial. A politician should not only be a law-abiding person but also a moral exemplar. In this regard, Confucian thought can play a significant active role.

Max Weber, famous for affirming modernity's rationalization and bureaucratization, also emphasizes political ethics. According to him, a passionate sense of responsibility and proper judgment has a decisive significance for politicians. In the political world the greatest sins are lacking objectivity and responsibility. The "ethic of responsibility" suggests that those who engage in politics must always consider the potential negative consequences of their actions. Concurrently, political action must find internal support and correspond to the "ethic of conviction." Politicians' convictions inevitably differ, perhaps by ethnicity, or culture, or ethics, or society, but no matter what they always have some kind of conviction. If this was not the case, even if they achieve the greatest political attainments in the world, they inevitably will suffer the curse of nihilism:

> Politics is a type of career. If one does not consider its purpose in the overall array of human moral behavior (*die sittliche Gesamtokonomie*), what can politics really accomplish? That is to say, in the world of ethics, where is the home of politics?[104]

> What can deeply move someone's heart is a mature person (regardless of age). He has realized the need to take responsibility for consequences of his own actions, an authentic sense of responsibility emerging from his heart. After he conforms to the ethic of responsibility in his actions, at a certain point he says, "This is my position and I can only be thus." Only this truly accords with human nature, a moving demonstration. Each one of us, as long as our spirit has not died, must understand that at some point in time we will also reach this level. For that matter, the ethic of conviction and the ethic of responsibility are not diametrically opposed, instead operating in a complementary fashion. Only when these two can be combined can one become an authentic person—a person who can undertake the mission of politics.[105]

From this we can see that the Confucian rule of virtue is not completely outdated and reveals a valuable political world. Still, it is not unfair to say that Confucians overemphasize the importance of individuals and ethics in government.

By contrast, the Huang-Lao tradition discovered a different political world, one that involves its conception of the rule of law that we have extensively discussed above. In the history of law, Huang-Lao was quite pioneering in how it managed to construct an integrated and systematic legal government at such an early time. Yet, its failing was in over idealizing the rule of law to the point where law occupied roles more appropriate to morality and culture. It reduced humans to self-interested animals, erasing emotion and spiritual life and thereby removing the joy of existence. Based on what has been said above, we need not choose between the two options of Confucian rule of virtue or Huang-Lao rule of law. If we grasp the secrets of both approaches to politics, a more complete "rule of the Way" may be possible.

Appendix 1: *The Great One Birthed Water* (*Taiyi sheng shui*) 《太一生水》

This text was discovered in the Chu tombs of Guodian and accompanied the Guodian *Laozi* B manuscript. It includes a total of 14 bamboo strips with some lacuna and was prepared and transcribed by specialists at the Jingmen Museum.[1] Using that original transcription as a base, the author's following edition of the text incorporates the work of Li Ling 李零, Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭, and Chen Wei 陈伟. The terminus of each bamboo strip is numbered below according to the original transcription.[2] [Translator's Note] The following translation is based on the authors's personal reading of the text.

Translation

The Great One birthed [the original] Water. [The original] Water returned to assist the Great One and thus they formed Heaven. Heaven returned to assist the Great One and thus they formed Earth. Heaven and Earth repeatedly interacted **[Strip 1]** and thus they formed Spiritual Power and Luminosity. Spiritual Power and Luminosity repeatedly interacted and thus they formed [the two opposite powers] Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang repeatedly interacted and thus they formed the Four Seasons [of spring, summer, fall, and winter]. The Four Seasons **[Strip 2]** repeatedly interacted and thus they formed Cold and Hot. Cold and Hot repeatedly interacted and thus they formed Wet and Dry. Wet and Dry repeatedly interacted and thus they formed the Year **[Strip 3]**, ending [the process]. Therefore, the Year is that which Wet and Dry birthed; Wet and Dry are that which Cold and Hot birthed; Cold and Hot are that which the Four Seasons birthed; the Four Seasons **[Strip 4]** are that which Yin and Yang birthed; Yin and Yang are that which Spiritual Power and Luminosity birthed; Spiritual Power and Luminosity are that which Heaven and Earth birthed; Heaven and Earth **[Strip 5]** are that which

the Great One [with the assistance of Water] birthed. Consequently, the Great One is concealed within Water, and [endlessly] moves with time. Its movement pervades all things and is their beginning. [Because of this], it [naturally] considers itself **[Strip 6]** the Mother of the ten thousand things. It is both empty and full, and [naturally] considers itself the root of the ten thousand things. [The Great One] is that which Heaven cannot eliminate and that which Earth **[Strip 7]** cannot stifle, and that which Yin and Yang cannot form. The superior person's understanding of this [Truth] is called wisdom. Not understanding this [Truth] is called ignorance. **[Strip 8]**

Below is soil and so we call it Earth. Above is air (*qi* 氣) and so we call it Heaven. The Way is [the Great One's] style and clear and dark are its names. **[Strip 10]** Anyone who relies on the reputation of the Way to manage affairs will be able to complete them and personally gain prominence. The sage also relies on its reputation in handling affairs **[Strip 11]** and so is able to realize his achievements and become personally secure. [The air as] Heaven and [the soil as] Earth are names and styles concurrently established. Therefore if one exceeds its position they lose their mutual balance and will not remain for long. **[Strip 12]** The Way of Heaven values weakness. It [always] hampers the [strong and] developed to support the [weak and] developing and [always] diminishes the strong [and great] to supplement the weak [and small]. Consequently, **[Strip 9]** Heaven is deficient in the northwest and so [Earth] below can have height and strength. [Similarly], Earth is deficient in the southeast and so [Heaven] above can have lowliness and weakness. [The principle of the Way of Heaven's movement is that] because there is deficiency above **[Strip 13]**, there can be excess below; because there is deficiency below there can be excess above.

Modern Character Transcription

太一生水。水反輔大一，是以成天；天反輔大一，是以成地；天地[復相輔] 【簡1】也，是以成神明；神明復[相]輔也，是以成陰陽；陰陽復相輔也，是以成四時；四時【簡2】復[相]輔也，是以成滄熱；滄熱复相輔也，是以成濕燥；濕燥復相輔也，成歲【簡3】而止。故歲者，濕燥之所生也；濕燥者，滄熱之所生也；滄熱者，[四時之所生也]；四時【簡4】者，陰陽之所生[也]；陰陽者，神明之所生也；神明者，天地之所生也；天地【簡5】者，太一之所生也。是故，大一藏於水，行於時。周而又[始]，[以己為]【簡6】萬物母；一缺一盈，以己為萬物經。此天之所不能殺，地

之所【簡7】不能埋，陰陽之所不能成。君子知此之謂[智，不知此之謂愚]。【簡8】

下，土也，而謂之地；上，氣也，而謂之天。道也其字也，清昏其名。以【簡10】道從事者必托其名，故事成而身長；聖人之從事也，亦托其【簡11】名，故功成而身不傷。天地名字并立，故過其方，不使相[當，無久長]。【簡12】天道貴弱，削成者以益生者，伐於强，积於[弱。是故，【簡9】天不足]於西北，其下高以强；地不足於東南，其上[低以弱。不足於上]者，【簡13】有餘於下，不足於下者，有餘於上。【簡14】

Appendix 2: *All Things Forms in Flux* (*Fanwu liuxing*)《凡物流形》

This text is one of the Chu bamboo works housed by the Shanghai Museum. It has two editions which the compiler, Cao Jinyan 曹锦炎, includes in the seventh volume of the museum's manuscripts as A and B. The A edition has a total of 30 strips and is nearly complete. Corrupted sections exist, but they can be resolved through reference to the B edition. The transcription presented below takes the original transcription as its base text but also incorporates the insights of Shen Pei 沈培, Li Rui 李锐, Gu Shikao 顾史考, Wang Zhongjiang, and the Graduate Students Reading Association at Fudan University's Excavated Texts and Ancient Script Research Center.[1] [Translator's Note] The following translation is based on the author's personal reading of the text.

Translation

All things are forms in flux, [but] what do they obtain to come into being? These forms in flux become [bodies of] substantive structure, [but] what do they obtain to [continue their existence and] not die? After they come to be and [continue] to exist, why do they cry and moan? Since all things have a root and an origin, what [came] after **[Strip 1]** and what [came] before? The order of yin and yang, how is it stable [and unchanging]? The [concurrence and] harmony of water and fire, what do they obtain to be indivisible? I have heard it said: "People are forms in flux, [so] what do they obtain to live? **[Strip 2]** These forms in flux become [bodies of] substantive structure, [so] what do they lose to die? They once again obtain [it] and come [to life], [but] I do not know the reason. Heaven and Earth established the ends and the beginnings [of the myriad things], and Heaven sent down the Five Measures, [but] what **[Strip 3]** [parts of the myriad things] are horizontal and what [parts] are vertical? The Five *Qi* arrive together, [but] how are they different and how are they similar? People all speak of the Five Virtues, [but] who will judge them

faithfully? The Nine Territories all possess people with teachings, [but] who will transmit them? [When people] are already advanced in years **[Strip 4]** and have declined into old age, who will assist and serve them? Ghosts are born from [dead] humans, [so] what causes them to have divine insight? [Having died and become ghosts], their bones and flesh have decayed, [but] their wisdom is move evident. Why do they have this intelligence? Who understands their **[Strip 5]** strength? Ghosts are born from [dead] humans, so why do [humans] serve them? [After death] their bones and flesh have decayed and their bodies are lost, [so] to where do we offer their food? Their presence cannot be measured **[Strip 6]**, so how do [we know] when [they arrive for] their offerings. During the sacrificial ritual when do we present the offering? How do we give them their fill? When following the Way of Heaven, what do we consider the priority? If one desires **[Strip 7]** to bring harmony to the hundred clans, how [should] one make this happen? The spiritual power within ghosts, how does it eat? The wisdom of the Former Kings, how can it be perfected?"

I have heard it said: "Those who rise to **[Strip 8]** great heights [must come] from somewhere low. Those who travel far [must set out] from somewhere near. A tree with a girth of ten people began life as a lowly sprout. Legs aiming to cover a thousand *li* must start with a single inch. When the sun has **[Strip 9]** [two] ears, what is it hoping to hear? When the moon has a lunar halo, what is it hoping to rectify? Water flows to the east, [but] what is it trying to fill? When the sun has just risen, why is it both larger and less bright? When it reaches **[Strip 10]** noon, why is it both smaller and more dazzling?" I have once heard someone say: "What is higher than Heaven? What is broader than Earth? Who made Heaven? Who made Earth? Who made thunder? **[Strip 11]** Who made lightening? What does soil obtain to become level? What does water obtain to become clear? What do grasses and trees obtain to live? **[Strip 12A]** What do birds and beasts obtain to twitter and growl? **[Strip 13B]** Rain arrives, [but] who performed the rain sacrifice to darken [the Heavens]? Wind arrives, [but] who summoned it to rush after [everything]."

I have heard it said: "[If the ruler simply] holds the Way, sits unmoving in his seat, properly positions his crown, **[Strip 14]** and never participates in any [concrete] affairs, he will know in advance [the affairs] within the Four Seas, his hearing will reach a thousand *li,* and his sight will cover a hundred *li.* Consequently, when the sage resides in his position, all the state's **[Strip 16]** issues of peace and stability and danger and destruction related to rebels and bandits can be known in advance."

I have heard it said: "If the [intellectual] mind does not conquer the [impulsive] mind, then great disasters arise; if the [intellectual] mind can conquer the [impulsive] mind, **[Strip 26]** this is called 'core understanding.' What is the core understanding? Humans are pure through 'holding.' How do we know someone's purity? Till the end of life they are naturally thus. Oh being able to rarely make statements! Oh being able to be One! **[Strip 18]** These are what are called 'core attainments.'"

I have hear it said: "The hundred clans only honor the lord. The lord only honors the mind. The mind only honors the One. When you obtain the One and understand it, **[Strip 28]** you will follow Heaven above and reach all the way to the watery depths below. Sit and ponder it to find solutions for affairs a thousand *li* away; arise and use it to enact these throughout [all the lands within] the Four Seas."

I have heard it said: "Realize sincerity to be wise; **[Strip 15]** hold to wisdom to have divine insight; hold to divine insight to be indistinguishable. Yet, holding to being indistinguishable is perilous; holding to peril is an untenable position; holding an untenable position then return again. This is the reason the old becomes new, people die [and then] once again become people, water returns **[Strip 24]** to the Heavens, and just like the moon things never fully die. They exit then enter again, end then begin again, wane then wax again. We hold to this reason which arises from One source." **[Strip 25]**

I have heard it said: "The One birthed the Two, the Two birthed the Three, the Three birthed the Mother, and the Mother formed the Congelations. Consequently, possessing the One means there is nothing in the empire you will not possess. Lacking the One means in the empire you will not even possess a single thing. [When possessing it] even without **[Strip 21]** looking you can know [something's] name, and without listening you can hear [something's] sound. Grasses and trees grow because of it; birds and beasts twitter and growl because of it. Most distantly, [the One can] be presented to **[Strip 13A]** Heaven; most closely, [the One can] be offered to humanity. For this reason **[Strip 12B]** hold the Way to cultivate the self and rule the state."

I have heard it said: "If you can hold the One, then the hundred things will not be lost; if you cannot hold the One, then **[Strip 22]** the hundred things will all be lost. If you seek to hold the One, look up to see it and look down to observe it. Do not go far to find it, but rely on the measure of your own self to reach it. Obtaining the One and **[Strip 23]** striving with it is like having the assistance of the entire world. Obtaining the One and pondering together with it is

like grasping the entire world. This One is the measure of Heaven and Earth. **[Strip 17]** Thus, concerning the One: gnawing on it, there is flavor; inhaling it, there is fragrance; drumming on it, there is sound; cozying up to it, it can be seen; holding it, it can be held. Shaking it, it is lost. Destroying it, it **[Strip 19]** shrivels. Damaging it, it disappears. We hold to this reason which arises from One source."

I have heard it said: "With one statement [gain] unlimited power; with one statement possess the masses; **[Strip 20]** with one statement benefit the myriad people; with one statement [observe] the measure of Heaven and Earth. [As for the One] if you grasp it, grasp it firmly: if you release it, you will have nothing. At its grandest, **[Strip 29]** with it one can know the world; at its smallest, with it one can order a state. This power [of the One] is confirmed by antiquity, and in its lowliness [can obey] the highest [foundational existence]. **[Strip 30]**

Modern Character Transcription

凡物流形，奚得而成？流形成體，奚得而不死？既成既生，奚呱而鳴？既本既根，奚後【簡1】之奚先？陰陽之序，奚得而固？水火之和，奚得而不厚？

聞之曰：民人流形，奚得而生？【簡2】流形成體，奚失而死，又得而成，未知左右之情。天地立終立始，天降五度乎，奚【簡3】橫奚縱？五氣并至乎，奚異奚同？五言在人，孰為之公？九域出誨，孰為之逢乎？既長而【簡4】又老，孰為侍奉？鬼生於人，奚故神明？骨肉之既靡，其智愈彰，其慧奚適？孰知其【簡5】强？鬼生於人乎，奚故事之？骨肉之既靡，身體不見乎，奚自食之？其來無度【簡6】乎，奚時之塞？祭祀奚升乎，如之何使飽？順天之道乎，奚以為首乎？欲得【簡7】百姓之和乎，奚事之？敬天之明奚得？鬼之神奚食？先王之智奚備？

聞之曰：登【簡8】高從卑，致遠從邇。十圍之木，其始生如蘖。足將至千里，必從寸始。日之有【簡9】耳，將何聽？月之有暈，將何征？水之東流，將何盈？日之始出，何故大而不耀？其入【簡10】中，奚故小益暲？屢聞：天孰高与，地孰遠与。孰為天？孰為地？孰為雷？【簡11】孰為電？土奚得而平？水奚得而清？草木奚得而生？【簡12A】禽獸奚得而鳴？【簡13B】夫雨之至，孰雩漆之？夫風之至，孰而屏之？

聞之曰：執道，坐不下席。端冕【簡14】，著不与事，先知四海，至聽千里，達見百里。是故聖人處於其所，邦家之【簡16】危安存亡，賊盜之作，可先知。

聞之曰：心不勝心，大亂乃作；心如能勝心，【簡26】是謂少彻。奚謂少彻？人白為執。奚以知其白？終身自若。能寡言乎，能一【簡18】乎，夫此之謂少成。

[聞之]曰：百姓之所貴，唯君；君之所貴，唯心；心之所貴，唯一。[一]得而解之，上【簡28】賓於天，下播於淵。坐而思之，謀於千里；起而用之，陳於四海。

聞之曰：至情而智，【簡15】執智而神，執神而同，執同而險，執險而困，執困而復。是故陳為新，人死復為人，水復【簡24】於天咸，百物不死如月。出則又入，終則又始，至則又反。執此言起於一端。【簡25】

聞之曰：一生兩，兩生叁，叁生母，母成結。是故有一，天下無不有；無一，天下亦無一有。無【簡21】[目]而知名，無耳而聞聲。草木得之以生，禽獸得之以鳴，遠之施【簡13A】天，近之薦人。是故【簡12B】執道，所以修身而治邦家。

聞之曰：能執一，則百物不失；如不能執一，則【簡22】百物俱失。如欲執一，仰而視之，俯而察之。毋遠求，度於身稽之。得一[而] 【簡23】圖之，如并天下而助之；得一而思之，若并天下而治之。[此]一以為天地稽。【簡17】是故一，咀之有味，嗅[之有臭]，鼓之有聲，近之可見，操之可操，握之則失，敗之則【簡19】槁，賊之則滅。執此言起於一端。

聞之曰：一言而終不窮，一言而有眾，【簡20】一言而萬民之利，一言而為天地稽。握之不盈握，敷之無所容，大【簡29】之以知天下，小之以治邦。之力，古之力，乃下上。【簡30】

Appendix 3: *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* (*Guishen zhi ming*) 《鬼神之明》

This text is another one of the Chu bamboo works housed by the Shanghai Museum. It consists of five strips (the fifth strip is shared with *Rongshi you chengshi* 《融師有成氏》) that are basically complete. It was compiled by Cao Jinyan in the fifth volume of the Shanghai Museum collection.[1] Here the ordering of the strips and the transcription of the modern characters is based on work of the original compiler but with some amendments adopted from Liao Mingchun 廖名春 and Chen Wei 陈伟.[2] [Translator's Note] The following translation is based on the author's personal reading of the text.

Translation

Presently, spirits and gods have that on which they are divinely insightful and that on which they are not divinely insightful, at least in regard to how they reward the good and punish the wicked. In ancient times, Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang were humane, righteous, sagely, and wise, and so the empire modeled them. In this way they were honored as the Sons of Heaven, **[Strip 1]** possessed the wealth of the empire, their long lives where filled with praise, and their stories were passed down through the ages. That these were the rewards of the spirits and gods is clear. In the times of the tyrants Jie, Zhou, You, and Li, they burned sages, killed remonstrators, robbed the common people, and brought chaos to the state. Because of this Jie was broken at Mount Li, Zhou's head [was presented] at Zhishe. **[Strip 2: Back]** They did not fulfill their proper lifespans and were ridiculed by the whole world. **[Strip 2]** That these were the punishments of the spirits and gods is clear. [However,] in the time of Wu Zixu, the whole world considered him a sage, but his corpse was dumped into the river in a leather bag. Duke Yi of Rong was someone who brought chaos to the empire, but he enjoyed a long life and died

a natural death. Relying on these examples to closely investigate it, [we must say] that sometimes the good are not rewarded and sometimes the wicked **[Strip 3]** are not punished. Therefore, I propose that spirits and gods lack of divine insight must have its reason. Do they have the power and capacity to make it so, but do not? I do not know. Do they wish their power was firm, but are incapable of making it so? I also do not know. These two diverge, and thus **[Strip 4]** I say, "This is what is referred to as the spirits and gods having that on which they are divinely insightful and that on which they are not divinely insightful." **[Strip 5]**

Modern Character Transcription

今夫鬼神有所明，有所不明，則以其賞善罰暴也。昔者堯舜禹湯仁義聖智，天下法之。此以貴為天子，【簡1】富有天下，長年有譽，後世述之。則鬼神之賞，此明矣。及桀紂幽厲，焚聖人，殺諫者，賊百姓，亂邦家。[此以桀折於鬲山，而紂首於歧社]【簡2背】，身不没，為天下笑。則鬼【簡2】[神之罰，此明]矣。及伍子胥者，天下之聖人也，鴟夷而死。榮夷公者，天下之亂人也，長年而没。如以此詰之，則善者或不賞，而暴【簡3】[者或不罰。故]吾因加鬼神不明，則必有故。其力能致焉而弗為乎？吾弗知也；意其力固不能致焉乎？吾又弗知也。此兩者歧，吾故【簡4】[曰：鬼神有]所明，有所不明。此之謂乎！【簡5】

Appendix 4: *The Three Virtues* (*San De*) 《三德》

This text is also found within the Shanghai Museum collection of Chu bamboo manuscripts. It has a total of 22 strips, including both those that are perfectly preserved and those that are damaged; one of these strips is stored at the Chinese University of Hong Kong Institute of Chinese Studies. The text was compiled by Li Ling 李零 and published in the fifth volume of the Shanghai Museum's texts.[1] Here the order and transcription of the strips incorporates the insights of Chen Jian 陈剑, Cao Feng 曹峰, Gu Shikao 顾史考, and Wang Chenxi 王晨曦.[2] There are numerous lacuna in this text, and so there are still many philological problems that require investigation. This transcription uses the "□" symbol to indicate a missing character. [Translator's Note] The following translation is based on the author's personal reading of the text.

Translation

Heaven provides [the world] seasons, Earth provides [the world] materials, and humanity provides [the world] manpower. If the enlightened king can be without his own thoughts [and accord with the different natures of Heaven, Earth, and humanity], then he can be said [to possess] the Three Virtues. Grasses and tree must await the [proper] season before they begin to flourish. What Heaven hates do not love: at sunrise do not cry, at dusk do not sing, and at the half and full moons [prepare for sacrifice] in the fasting hall. This is what is called following Heaven's Constant [Way]. **[Strip 1]** The emperor said, "[The following] has been established: Do speak in a domineering way. Do not put yourself before others. Do undertake major projects. Do not harm the Constant [Way]. Do not obstruct rivers. Do not break sewage channels. Do not cease the sacrifices to the ancestors. Do not abandon the burial rituals. Do not change prohibitions. Do not change established affairs. Do not bother aunts or sisters-in-law. Do not **[Strip 10]** bring shame to your fathers and brothers.

Do not humiliate the poor. Do not mock those who have received corporal punishment. Do not [dare to] measure the depths of the rivers. Do not [dare to] measure the heights of the mountains. Do not be carefree with your body or boastful with your words. Your behavior must not be lazy. In handling affairs you must not seek ease. Do not extinguish goodness and do not enact the inauspicious. When entering valleys do not make music, **[Strip 11]** and while climbing hills do not sing. These are what are considered Heaven's Rituals. **[Strip 12]** [Attain the] protection of Supreme Heaven and then there will be no calamitous disasters. Gao Yang said, "Do not wear inauspicious clothing when offering sacrifices. Do not wear extravagant clothing in ritual spaces. To do so is called 'forgetting the gods'. . . " **[Strip 9]**

Respect the prohibitions of Heaven, promote the rules of Earth, [and then] the Constant Way will indeed be level [and easy to walk]. Oh Heaven! Oh Humanity! On what close connections do you rely on till the end of your days? To know Heaven, you must simply follow the seasons; to know Earth, you must simply grasp the materials; to know humanity, you must simply gather [people] close. If you do not exert yourself in the completion [of affairs] and **[Strip 17]** listen to [your own] trivial [impulses], then the hundred affairs will not be handled and your prized affairs will not be complete. Venerating Heaven and serving the ruler requires seriousness and [things] must be [handled with] integrity. Look down to observe the patterns of Earth and do your utmost in the work of farming. Do not do anything beyond your capacity. Do not change that at which you are capable. Do not impede the people's proper [farming] season or a great famine will certainly arrive. **[Strip 15]** When you impede the people's [farming] season with construction projects, this is called "interrupting production." If you lack concern for others suffering, you will indeed lose their love and support. When you impede the people's [farming] season with irrigation projects, this is called a "flood." If you are joyful during funerals, people from all four directions will cry out. When you impede the people's [farming] season by going to war, this is **[Strip 16]** called a "plague." With these types of disasters the whole harvest fails, as none can raise a sickle for the reaping. . . . If you do not delay the [farming] season, Shangdi will be happy and there will be no calamitous disasters. . . **[Hong Kong Strip]** Heaven never fails to obey [people's good behavior]. Those who love the good, Heaven will obey them; those who love happiness, Heaven will obey them; those who love prosperity, Heaven will obey them; those who love the enduring, Heaven will obey them. Follow the seasons

of Heaven. Engage the materials of Earth. Use the manpower of the people. . . . **[Strip 18]**

Those who respect [Heaven] achieve it. Those who neglect [Heaven] lose it. This is called Heaven's Constant [Way]. [Follow] the prohibition of the God of Heaven. Do not cheat or deceive, and August Heaven will adore you. Do not swindle or trick, for Shangdi will hate you. When [something should be] forbidden but is not made forbidden, Heaven will send down disasters. When [something should be] stopped but is not stopped, **[Strip 2]** Heaven will send down anomalies. [The consequences of these events] not only affect yourself, but also your sons and grandsons. [When something should be] bright and [visible] but is [dark and] obscured, this is called "Great Distress." [When something should be dark and] obscured but is bright [and visible], this is called "Inauspicious." Fully respect all ritual distinctions: the division of outer and inner, the separation of men and women. These are called "Heaven's Rituals." Honor it, Honor it, and then the Mandate of Heaven will be great and bright. **[Strip 3]** Whoever opposes it will certainly meet calamity and ruin. Do not denounce government officials in the home of the spirits. Do not enjoy a carefree life of leisure. Harming your family because of scheming for profit, this is called "transgression." When the ruler cannot manage his ministers, this is called "danger." The destruction of the state is [something that induces] anxiety and fear and must be understood. [At times when you must,] you do not say **[Strip 4]** "dare not," you do not say "no." Consequently, this is continually detrimental, for the state has lost the root and the Constant [Way]. If you have a small state, it will certainly be harmed. If you have a large state, there will be major destruction. If you alter the Constant [Way] and change ritual practices, the Earth will split and the people will perish. Wonderful! Wonderful! Three times wonderful! The foundation of prosperity is to correct your mistakes. **[Strip 5]**

. . . negligent and not following his own wishes, the superior person greatly respects its virtue. Within the far reaches of the four directions everything is the concern of Shangdi. Use benevolence in dealing with the people and there will be no one who will not feel **[Strip 22]** close [to him]. Endlessly energize the people's undertakings, continue the kindnesses of the past, and look to a [better] future. What the people love, Shangdi protects. Generally relying on the people to evaluate the officials, this is called "stabilizing the state." Relying on the officials to evaluate the people, this is called "ruining the state." Establishing the five officials but not employing them, this is called "rebellion." The

Earth will split, and the people will **[Strip 6]** be ruined . . . **[Strip 17]** When a state loves ostentatiousness and extravagance, this is called a "temporary splendor." Although [the state] may be rich, it certainly will [soon] become impoverished. When the palace halls exceed the proper standards [of size and lavishness], this is what August Heaven hates. Even though they are completed, they are unsuitable for habitation. When robes and garments exceed the proper proportions, losing their beauty, this is called "violating the rules." Even Shangdi does not forgive this. By sacrificing to the spirits and gods [at the proper times with the proper rituals], Shangdi becomes happy and the state will not be **[Strip 8]** lost. When [the ruler's] happiness and joy are without proper timing or measure, this is called a "Great Famine." August Heaven will not forgive this, and will indeed respond with misfortunes. When all eating and drinking is without limit or purpose, this is called a "Dreadful Flood." Shangdi will not forgive this, and will indeed respond with crop failure. When Shangdi is not forgiving, he will not partake in the sacrificial offerings.

Capitals near rivers, towns along the shores, homes with a hundred chariots, compounds with ten buildings, palace halls, and cesspools, all must strictly follow the [standards of] measure and not lose the [principles] of the Way. Whoever will carrying out executions must not drink and must not eat. The bonds of [convicts] must not be made too tight, **[Strip 12]** [as slightly] loosening them presents no danger. When doling out severe punishments, you should be sorrowful; when carrying out executions, you should be regretful. What the people desire, the spirits and gods will protect. Hold fast to humility and sincerity . . . **[Strip 20]** If [the ruler] makes amusement his priority, his body will become sick and he will hate [the sight of] food and drink. His state will near collapse, and he will hate the advice of the sage. His family will near destruction, and he will not maintain the sacrifices. He will only care for amusement. When this is the case, if he does not face great violence, he will at least suffer great disgrace. When Heaven seeks your defeat, it first fulfills your desires and **[Strip 13]** removes your worries. It first makes your prosper, but then casts you aside without mercy. In [the early stages of] planning, do not rule anything out. If you want life to flourish, do not kill. If you want equality, do not make divisions. These are the origins of harm, and thus Heaven will send one calamity after another, relentless and unending. Be good and fortune will follow; do evil and misfortune will manifest. Low **[Strip 14]** walls should not be raised. Useless people should not be employed. What August Heaven rejects is what the emperor hates.

Darkness is called the obscuring, [and even when dark] Heaven above [still observes] the governmental affairs below…**[Strip 19]**…[If you are not careful, small] tangerine [branches] and tree stumps can overturn a chariot. [If they are not careful,] someone skilled at swimming **[Strip 21]** [can] die under a bridge. A careless tiger can be eaten by a lion c ub…**[Strip 18]**

Modern Character Transcription

天供時，地供材，民供力，明王無思，是謂三德。卉木須時而後奮。天惡毋忻，平旦毋哭，晦毋歌，弦望齋宿。是謂順天之常。【簡1】皇后曰：“立，毋為角言，毋為人倡；毋作大事，毋害常；毋壅川，毋斷洿；毋滅宗，毋虛床；毋改敔，毋变事；毋煩姑嫂，毋【簡10】耻父兄；毋羞贫，毋笑刑；毋揣深，毋度山；毋逸其身，而多其言；居毋惰，作毋康；善勿滅，不祥勿為；入虛毋樂，登【簡11】丘毋歌。所以為天禮。”　上天之保，乃無凶災。【簡12】高陽曰：“毋凶服以享祀，毋錦衣絞禓子，是謂忘神。□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□]”【簡9】

敬天之敔，興地之矩，恒道必平。天哉人哉，凭何親哉，没其身哉。知天足以順時，知地足以固材，知人足以會親。不修其成，而【簡17】聽其縈，百事不遂，慮事不成。仰天事君，嚴恪必信。俯視[地理]，務農敬戒。毋不能而為之，毋能而易之。驟奪民時，大飢必來。【簡15】奪民時以土攻，是謂稽，不絕（繼）憂恤，必喪其匹；奪民時以水事，是謂激，喪以繼樂，四方來囂；奪民時以兵事，是【簡16】[謂厲，禍因胥歲，不舉銍艾]。□□□□□□□□□□□□□□不懈於時，上帝喜之，乃無凶災。□□□□□□【香港簡】天無不從。好昌天從之，好袚天從之，好旺天從之，好長天從之。順天之時，起地之財，[盡]民之[力] □□□□□。【簡18】

敬者得之，怠者失之。是謂天常。天神之[敔，毋為欺诳]，皇天將興之；毋為偽詐，上帝將憎之。忌而不忌，天乃降災；已而不已，【簡2】天乃降異。其身不没，至於孫子。陽而幽，是謂大戚；幽而陽，是謂不祥。齊齊節節，外内有辨，男女有節，是謂天禮。敬之敬之，天命孔明。【簡3】如反之，必遇凶殃。毋詬政卿於神次，毋享逸安。求利殘其親，是謂罪；君無主臣，是謂危。邦家其壞，憂懼之間，疏達之次，毋謂之【簡4】不敢，毋謂之不然。故常不利，邦失干常。小邦則殘，大邦過傷。變常易禮，土地乃坼，民乃夭死。善哉善哉三善哉，唯福之基，過而改。【簡5】

[□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□]疏未可以遂，君子丕慎其德。四荒之内，是帝之关。臨民以仁，民莫弗【簡22】親。興興民事，行往視來。民之所喜，上帝是佑。凡度官於

人，是謂邦固；度人於官，是謂邦路。建五官弗措，是謂反逆。土地乃坼，民人乃【簡６】路。［□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□］【簡17】邦四益，是謂方华，雖盈必虛。宮室過度，皇天之所惡，雖成弗居。衣服過制，失於美，是謂違章，上帝弗諒。鬼神禋祀，上帝乃怡，邦家〔不〕【簡８】喪。喜樂無期度，是謂大荒，皇天弗諒，必復之以憂喪。凡食飲無量计，是謂饕皇，上帝弗諒，必復之以荒，上帝弗諒，以祀不享。【簡７】

　臨川之都，憑岸之邑，百乘之家，十室之造，宮室污池，各慎其度，毋失其道。出（?）欲殺人，不飲、不食。秉之不固，【簡12】弛之不危。至刑以哀，矰去以悔。民之所欲，鬼神是佑。慎守虛信，［□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□，以］【簡20】娛為首，身且有病，惡菜与食。邦且亡，惡聖人之謀。室且棄，不随祭祀，唯娛是服。凡若是者，不有大禍，必有大耻。天之所敗，多其求而【簡13】寡其憂。興而起之，使蹎而勿救。方营勿伐，將興勿殺，將齐勿刳，是逄凶朔。天災繩繩，弗滅不隕。為善福乃來，為不善禍乃或之。卑【簡14】墻勿增，廢人勿興。皇天之所棄，而后帝之所憎。晦曰冥冥，上天有下政，晝□□□□□□□□□□□□□【簡19】□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□......諒，竿之長。枸株覆車，善游者【簡 21】死於梁下，狻猊食虎。□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□。【簡18】

Notes

Prolegomenon

1. We must be careful not to promote extreme perspectives concerning the significance of these finds. Both claims that the excavated bamboo and silk manuscripts completely invalidate our previous knowledge or that they have not really altered much of anything are equally simplistic approaches to this material; they do not really assist in accurately determining the true value of the excavated texts. This parallels the view that both total doubt and total belief offers nothing to human understanding. Concerning these two false perspectives, Henri Poincaré offered this fine critique, "To doubt everything or to believe everything are two equally convenient solutions; both dispense with the necessity of reflection." Henri Poincaré, *Science and Hypothesis* (London: Walter Scott Publishing, 1905), xxii.
2. For more on this issue, see Li Xueqin 李学勤, *Jianbo shiji yu xueshushi* 简帛佚籍与学术史 (Nanchang: Jiangxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001); Kakuten Sokan kenkyū kai 郭店楚簡研究会, ed., *Sochi shutsudo shiryō no Chūgoku kodai bunka* 楚地出土資料と中国古代文化 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin 汲古书院, 2002); Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭, *Zhongguo chutu guwenxian shijiang* 中国出土古文献十讲 (Shanghai: Fudan Daxue chubanshe, 2004); Asano Yuichi 浅野裕一, *Kodai shishōshi no Kakuten Sokan* 古代思想史と郭店楚簡 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin 汲古书院, 2005); Ikede Tomohisa 池田知久, *Chitian Zhijiu jianbo yanjiu lunji* 池田知久简帛研究论集, trans. Cao Feng 曹峰 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006).
3. Carl Becker said, "History is the memory of the events that have occurred in the past." "Cultural traditions" are refined and habituated recollections of history and their selections are chosen for their continuity. "History," in the historical memory of early China played an extremely important role. In fact, one of the major continuous features of Chinese culture has been the integration of institutionalized "historical memory" and the pursuit of immortalized personal thoughts. See Carl Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian" *The American Historical Review*, vol. 37n2 (Jan. 1932), 222; Carl Becker, *Everyman His Own Historian* (New York: F. S. Crofts and Co.,1935) .

4. Of course, the limits of historical memory also result from an active process of "selection."
5. Liao Mingchun 廖名春, *Xie zai jianbo shang de wenming—Changjiang liuyu de jiandu he boshu* 写在简帛上的文明——长江流域的简牍和帛书 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Daxue chubanshe, 2011).
6. "The progenitors of the Yin dynasty (Shang dynasty) had *ce* 册 'bamboo strip records' and *dian* 典'large table-size bamboo strip records.'" See Mu Ping 慕平 ed., *Shangshu* 尚书 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2009), 228. [Translator's note] Even in the modern forms of these characters, one can see the depictions of vertical bamboo strips tied with horizontal cords.
7. Tomohisa, *Ikede Tomohisa jianbo yanjiu lunji*, 5.
8. *Zhuangzi* 6/17/1-20. [All citations from the classics come from the ICS concordance series unless otherwise indicated.]
9. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu zhengli xiaozu* 马王堆汉墓帛书整理小组, *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu: yi* 马王堆汉墓帛书: 壹 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1974), 1:87.
10. *Laozi*42A /15/5.
11. See Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji* 郭店楚简校读记 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2002), 32.
12. *Lunyu*6.22/13/29.
13. *Guoyu*6.10 /105/29-30.
14. *Guoyu*6.10 /106/1.
15. *Guoyu*6.10 /105/29-30.
16. Sun Xidan 孫希旦 ed., *Liji jijie* 禮記集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989),1309–1310.
17. *Lunyu*7.21/16/17.
18. Wang Yunwu 王雲五 ed., *Lunyu jijie yishu* 語語集解義疏 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1927), 94.
19. Ibid.
20. Ma Chengyuan 马承源, *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chuguo shu* 上海博物馆藏战国楚国书, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002), 117–118.
21. Whether or not this lost text should be identified with the Huang-Lao tradition still requires further debate.

1 The Cosmology of *The Great One Birthed Water*

1. It has been generally understood that China's "mythological thought" is comparatively underdeveloped, and that all major mythological records appear fairly late. However, following the discovery of the Warring States silk manuscripts at Changsha's Chanziku, we now know that mythological creation narratives appeared much earlier. See Sarah Allen, *The Way of Water and Sprouts of Virtue* (Albany: SUNY Press,1997) .

2. *Laozi*42A /15/5.
3. The present chapter's discussion of *The Great One Birthed Water* relies on the original *Guodian Chumu zhujian* transcription and takes Li Ling's work into account. See *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓楚简 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1998), 123–126; Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu* 郭店楚简校读记 (Bejing: Peking University Press, 2002). [Translator's Note] Many of the translations in this chapter are purposefully awkward to reflect certain ambiguities in interpretation that the author analyzes below the quotations. For the author's complete transcription of the text and a more polished translation that accords with his reading, see appendix 1.
4. Concerning this issue, there has been a complicated academic debate. The other main position is that the Guodian editions are selections. However, I feel that is quite unlikely. For more on this, see Wang Zhongjiang 王中江, "Guodian zhujian *Laozi* lueshuo" 郭店竹简《老子》略说, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 20 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999).
5. It also happens to belong to same category as the roughly contemporary *The Primordial Constant*.
6. Examples of notable research include, Li Xueqin 李学勤, "Jingmen Guodian Chujian de jian Guan Yin yishuo" 荆门郭店楚简的见关尹遗说, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 20 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999); Xing Wen 邢文, "Lun Guodian *Laozi* yu jinben *Laozi* de buyixi—Chujian *Taiyi shengshui* ji qi yiyi" 论郭店《老子》与今本《老子》不属一系——楚简《太一生水》及其意义, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 20 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999); Li Xueqin 李学勤, "Taiyi shengshui de shushu jieshi" 太一生水的数术解释, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Pang Pu 庞朴, "Yizhong youji de yuzhou shengcheng tushi—jieshao Chujian *Taiyi shengshui*" 一种有机的宇宙生成图式——介绍楚简《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Xu Kangsheng 许抗生, "Chu du *Taiyi shengshui*" 初读《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Li Ling 李零, "Du Guodian Chujian *Taiyi shengshui*" 读郭店楚简《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); He Bilai 贺碧来, "Lun *Taiyi shengshui*" 论《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Carine Defoort 戴卡琳, "*Taiyi shengshui* chutan"《太一生水》初探, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Qiang Yu 强昱, "*Taiyi shengshui* yu gudai de Taiyi guan" 《太一生水》与古代的太一观, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Zhao Jianwei 赵建伟, "Guodian Chumu zhujian *Taiyi shengshui* shuzheng" 郭店楚墓竹简《太一生水》疏证, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究

17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Chen Guying 陈鼓应, "*Taiyi shengshui* yu *Xing zi ming chu* fawei" 《太一生水》与《性自命出》发微, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999); Pang Pu 庞朴, "*Taiyi sheng shui* shuo" 《太一生水》说, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 21 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000); Ye Haiyan 叶海烟, "*Taiyi shengshui* yu Zhuangzi de yuzhouguan" 《太一生水》与庄子的宇宙观, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 21 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000); Xing Wen 邢文, "*Taiyi shengshui* yu *Huainanzi*: *Qianzaodu* zai renshi" 《太一生水》与《淮南子》：《乾凿度》再认识, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 21 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000); Sarah Allen, "The Great One, Water, and the Laozi: New Light from Guodian," in *T'oung P'ao* 89, no. 4/5 (2003): 237–285; Xiong Tieji 熊铁基, "Dui "shenming" de lishi kaocha—jianlun *Taiyi shengshui* de Daojia xingzhi" 对"神明"的历史考察——兼论《太一生水》的道家性质, in *Guodian Chujian guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 郭店楚简国际学术研讨会论文集 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000); Peng Hao 彭浩, "Yi zhong xinde yuzhou shengcheng linian—du *Taiyi shengshui*" 一种新的宇宙生成理念——读《太一生水》, in *Guodian Chujian guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 郭店楚简国际学术研讨会论文集 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000); Chen Songchang 陈松长, "*Taiyi shengshui* kaolun" 《太一生水》考论, in *Guodian Chujian guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 郭店楚简国际学术研讨会论文集 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000); Zhang Siqi 张思齐, "Taiyi shengshui yu Daojiao Xuanwu shenge" 太一生水与道教玄武神格, in *Guodian Chujian guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 郭店楚简国际学术研讨会论文集 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000); Yan Shian 颜世安, "Dao yu ziran zhishi—tan *Taiyi shengshui* zai Daojia sixiangshi shang de diwei" 道与自然知识——谈《太一生水》在道家思想史上的地位, in *Guodian Chujian guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 郭店楚简国际学术研讨会论文集 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000); Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭, "*Taiyi shengshui* 'mingzi' zhang jieshi—jianlun *Taiyi shengshui* de fenzhang wenti" 《太一生水》"名字"章解释——兼论《太一生水》的分章问题, in *Zhongguo chutu guwenxian shijiang* 中国出土古文献十讲 (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2004); Chen Wei 陈伟, "*Taiyi shengshui* jiaodu bing lun yu *Laozi* de guanxi" 《太一生水》校读并论与《老子》的关系, in *Zhongguo chutu guwenxian shijiang* 中国出土古文献十讲 (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2004); Wang Bo 王博, "*Taiyi shengshui* yangjiu" 《太一生水》研究, in *Zhongguo zhexue yu yixue—Zhu Bokun xiansheng bashi shouqing jinian wenji* 中国哲学与易学——朱伯崑先生八十寿庆纪念文集 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2004).

7. There are exceptions to this more common view. In the "Gengsang Chu" 《庚桑楚》 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* and in the *Lingxian* 《靈先》 by Zhang Heng 張衡 (78–139 CE), one finds depictions of a world where time is infinite, and thus without beginning or end.

8. For more on this, see Li Ling 李零 "Du Guodian Chujian *Taiyi shengshui*" 读郭店楚简《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999).
9. *Zhuangzi*33/99/27–28.
10. See Li Xueqin 李学勤, "Jingmen Guodian Chujian de jian Guan Yin yishuo" 荆门郭店楚简的见关尹遗说, in *Zhongguo zhexue* 中国哲学 20 (Liaoning: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999).
11. Xu Zhongshu 徐中舒, ed. *Jiaguwen zidian* 甲骨文字典 (Chengdu: Sichuan cishu chubanshe, 1993), 1139–1141.
12. *Zhuangzi*17/43/30.
13. Wang Bi 王弼, Lou Yulie 楼宇烈 ed., *Laozi Daodejing zhu jiaoshi* 老子道德经注校释 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008), 56, 106.
14. Li Yuzhen 李毓珍, *Qijing shisan pian jiaozhu* 棋经十三篇校注 (Chengdu: Shurong qiyi chubanshe 蜀蓉棋艺出版社,1988) ,54.
15. *Chunqiu zuozhuan*B 6.16.7/54/13.
16. Xu Yuangao 徐元诰, *Guoyu jijie* 国语集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), 228, 248.
17. *Zhouyi*66/82/17–18.
18. *Lunyu*4.15 /8/7,15.3/ 42/5.
19. Zhang Dainian 张岱年, *Zhongguo gudian zhexue gainian fanchou gailun* 中国古典哲学概念范畴概论 (Beijing: Zhonggong shehui kexue chubanshe, 1989), 55.
20. Zhang Dainian, *Zhongguo gudian zhexue gainian*,55–57.
21. *Laozi* 42A/15/5, 14A/5/5, 39A/14/3.
22. *Laozi*14A/5/3–7.
23. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:117.
24. *Laozi*10A/3/18,22A/8/3.
25. *Laozi*39A/14/3–4.
26. Zhang Dainian, *Zhongguo gudian zhexue gainian*,56.
27. Schwartz once posited that the term *Taiyi*, something he translated as "The Great Unity," appeared to be the origin of the Daoist mystical concept of the One. Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Ancient Thought in China* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press,1985), 375.
28. Zhang Dainian interprets the "Great," in the Great One in the *Zhuangzi* passage mentioned above, as the "Way" and the One as the one in "The Way birthed the One." See Zhang Dainian 张岱年, *Zhongguo zhexue dagang* 中国哲学大纲 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1982), 17, 29.
29. Zhang Zilie 张自烈 ed., *Zhengzi tong* 正字通, in *Xuxiu Siku Quanshu* 续修四库全书, Classics section vol. 234 (Shanghai: Shanghai guiji chubanshe, 2002), 244.
30. Ding Du ed., *Ji Yun* 集韵 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 517.
31. Guo Qingfan 郭庆藩, *Zhuangzi jishi* 庄子集释, vol. 2, Wang Xiaoyu 王孝鱼 ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 1102–1103.

32. *Zhuangzi*12/31/10
33. *Laozi*25A /9/4.
34. *Zhuangzi*24/72/24–26
35. *Zhuangzi*33/100/14–15.
36. *Zhuangzi jijie*, vol. 2, 1102–1103.
37. *Zhuangzi jijie*, vol. 2, 1094.
38. Sun Xidan, *Liji jijie*,616.
39. Gu Yanwu suggests the main meaing of *Taiyi* is "star palace," but he never mentions the philosophical meaning of *Taiyi*. We feel that the sense of "star palace" developed from the term's abstract philosophical and cosmic sense. See *Gu Yanwu* 顾炎武, *Taiyi* 太一, in *Rizhilu jishi* 日知录集释, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 30.870.
40. *Gu Jiegang* 顾颉刚, *Gu Jiegang gushi lunwenji* 顾颉刚古史论文集, vol. 2 (Bejing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), 55–57.
41. See Qian Baocong 钱宝琮 "Taiyi kao" 太一考, in *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京学报(Dec.19 32).
42. *Laozi*21A/7/13–14.
43. *Huainanzi* 14/132/10. For an alternative translation, see John J. Major et al., *The Huainanzi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010),536.
44. *Huainanzi* 14/132/10–16. This translation mostly follows Major et al., *The Huainanzi*,536–37.
45. *Liji jijie*,616 .
46. *Liji zhengyi* 礼记正义 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2000), 824.
47. *Laozi*42A/15/5.
48. *Lüshic hunqiu*5.2/23/1.
49. This Great One based cosmological model could be described as a reformulation of the *Xici* 《繫辭》chapter in the *Book of Changes*: "The Great Ultimate [*Taiji* 太極] birthed the Two Measures [*Liangyi* 兩儀], and the Two Measures birthed the Four Images [*Sixiang* 四象]." Of course, here *Taiji* takes the role of *Taiyi*. See *Zhouyi* 65/80/9.
50. This translation found inspiration in John Knoblock and Jeffery Riegel, *The Annals of Lü Buwei* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 136–37; *Lüshi chunqiu*5.2/23/ 1–7.
51. *Lüshic hunqiu*5.2/23/20–22.
52. In the past it was commonly accepted that the *Wenzi* was a copy of the *Huainanzi*, yet based on the incomplete excavated edition of the *Wenzi* we can see that the *Huainanzi* actually copied the *Wenzi*.
53. *Wenzi*9/48/25–9/49/2.
54. This translation was influenced by John J. Major et al., *The Huainanzi*, 277; *Huainanzi*8/64/5–6.
55. *The Huainanzi*, 21/224/1–3; John J. Major et al., *The Huainanzi*, 849–50.

56. For detail on the following discussion, see Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭, "*Taiyi shengshui* 'ming zi' zhangjieshi—jianlun *Taiyi shengshui* de fenzhang wenti"《太一生水》"名字"章解释——兼论《太一生水》的分章问题, in *Zhongguo chutu wenxian shijiang* 中国出土文献十讲 (Shanghai: Fudan Universeity Press, 2004), 248–251; Li Ling 李零, "Du Guodian Chujian *Taiyi shengshui*" 读郭店楚简《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999), 319–320.
57. *Laozi*25A/9/4.
58. *Laozi*25A/9/3–4.
59. Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji* 郭店楚简校读记 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2002), 40.
60. *Zhuangzi*22/61/31.
61. *Zhuangzi*22/60/16.
62. Mengzi1.6/2/7.
63. Mengzi1.6/2/4–11.
64. *Guanzi*16.1 /116/6–7.
65. *Mengzi*8.1/40/25–26.
66. *Zhuangzi*33 /97/14.
67. "During the Great Origin there was nothing. There was nothing and nothing that could be named. From it the One arose, a manifest unity without form." *Zhuangzi*12/31/10.
68. "The Way is formless and soundless and so when forced to give it a form the Sage uses the character *yi* 一 [the simplest unified form] as its name." *Wenzi*2/10/1.
69. *Zhuangzi* says, "The thread of protecting life is the ability to hold the One." *Lüshi chunqiu* say, "His spirit united with the Great One, [and so] his life was unrestrained and mind was unbounded." *Zhuangzi* 13/65/14–15; *Lüshi chunqiu*17.4/103 /4–5.
70. Concerning the meaning of water as a cultural and philosophic symbol, Sarah Allen has undertaken a thorough investigation. See Sarah Allen, *The Way of Water and Sprouts of Virtue* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997).
71. *Laozi*8A/3/8.
72. Hege'er 黑格尔 (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel), *Zhexueshi jiangyan lu* 哲学史讲演录 [*Record of the History of Philosophy Lectures*], vol. 1 (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1993), 182.
73. Li Xiangfeng 黎翔凤, *Guanzi jiaozhu* 管子校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 831, 813.
74. *Guanzi jiaozhu*,814.
75. *Laozi*8A/3/8.
76. *Guanzi jiaozhu*,831.
77. See Xu Kangsheng, "Chu du *Taiyi shengshui*" 初读《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999):309.

78. Pang Pu 庞朴, "Yizhong youji de yuzhou shengcheng tushi—jieshao Chujian *Taiyi shengshui*" 一种有机的宇宙生成图式——介绍楚简《太一生水》, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999): 303.
79. *Laozi*32A /11/15.
80. *Zhuangzi*12 /29/19.
81. *Zhuangzi*13 /36/16.
82. *Zhuangzi*19 /49/27–29.
83. *Xunzi*9/39/1–2.
84. *Xunzi*19/92/4–5.
85. *Xunzi*19/95/2–3.
86. *Huainanzi*3/18/20.
87. This translation follows Major et al., *The Huainanzi*, 114; *Huainanzi* 3/18/20.
88. Yang Bojun 杨伯峻, *Liezi jishi* 列子集释 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 31–32.
89. Li Ling 李零, ed., *Hengxian* 恒先, in *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhangguo Chu zhushu* 上海博物馆藏战国楚竹简, vol. 3, edited by Ma Chengyuan 马承源 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2003), 288–299.
90. This implies that part of Heaven is obscured in the northwest because the stars disappear as they set and because the position of the North Pole in the temperate regions hides part of sky.
91. *Shiji*127.3219.
92. *Huainanzi* 3/18/25–26; translation based on Major et al., *The Huainanzi*, 115.
93. See Wang Bo 王博, "*Taiyi shengshui* yangjiu" 《太一生水》研究, in *Zhongguo zhexue yu yixue—Zhu Bokun xiansheng bashi shouqing jinian wenji* 中国哲学与易学—朱伯崑先生八十寿庆纪念文集 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2004), 281.
94. See Ikeda Tomohisa 池田知久, ed. *Kakuden Shokan no kenkyo* 郭店楚简之研究 vol. 1 (Daito Bunka University Press, 1999), 53–61; Li Ling 李零 *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji* 郭店楚简校读记 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2002), 38.
95. Qiu Xigui, "*Taiyi shengshui* 'ming zi' zhang jieshi—jianlun *Taiyi shengshui* de fenzhang wenti," 252.
96. Liu Xinfang 刘信芳, "Chu boshu lungang" 楚帛书论纲, in *Huaxue* 华学 2 (1996); Liu Xinfang 刘信芳, "*Taiyi shengshui* yu *Zengzi Tianyuan* de yuzhoulun wenti" 《太一生水》与《曾子天圆》的宇宙论问题, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted on April 9, 2001.
97. Wang Bo, "*Taiyi shengshui* angjiu,"273–276.
98. Li Ling, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji*,36–38.
99. Pang Pu, "*Taiyi sheng shui* huo,"195.

100. Guo Yi 郭沂, *Guodia zhujian yu Xian Qin xueshu sixiang* 郭店竹简与先秦学术思想 (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001), 138.
101. Xu Yuangao 徐元诰, *Guoyu jijie* 国语集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), 504.
102. Sun Yirang 孙诒让, *Mozi jiangu* 墨子间诂 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 455.
103. For example, the *Xici* says, "There are no model images greater than Heaven and Earth, there are no transformations more remarkable than the four seasons, and there are no celestial objects brighter [*ming* 明] than the sun and moon." It also say, "The sun and moon move forward and illumination [*ming* 明] is born." *Xunzi* has a similar discussion but uses *ming* to explain the sun and moon; "Heaven and Earth rely on their integration; the sun and moon rely on their brilliance [*ming* 明]; the four seasons rely on their order; the stars and constellations rely on their movement, streams and rivers rely on their flow; the ten thousand things rely on their growth." *Zhouyi* 65/80/9, 66/82/17; *Xunzi*19/92/4–6.
104. *Zhuangzi*2 1/58/10.
105. *Liji jijie*,1010.
106. *Zhouyi*66/ 83/24.
107. *Zhuangzi* 33/97/21, 13/35/15–16, 33/98/1.
108. Li Daoping 李道平, *Zhouyi jijie zuanshu* 周易集解纂疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 687.
109. Xu Kangsheng, "Chu du *Taiyi shengshui,*"31 2.
110. Zhang Dainian, *Zhongguo gudian zhexue gainian*,83–86.
111. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu* 1:58. For an alternative translation, see Robin D. S. Yates, *Five Lost Classics*: *Tao, Huanglao, and Yin-Yang in Han China* (New York: Ballatine Books), 99.
112. *Guanzi jiaozhu*,838.
113. Pang Pu, "Yizhong youji de yuzhou shengcheng tushi—jieshao Chujian *Taiyi shengshui*,"304.
114. *Laozi*25A /9/3.
115. *Lüshi chunqiu* 5.2/23/4–5. For an alternative translation, see Knoblock and Riegel, *The Annals of Lü Buwei*,136.
116. *Zhouyi*65/ 77/17.
117. *Laozi*45A /15/21.
118. *Laozi*34A /12/5–8.
119. Zhao Jianwei 赵建伟, "Guodian Chumu zhujian *Taiyi shengshui* shuzheng" 郭店楚墓竹简《太一生水》疏证, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1999), 388.
120. *Laozi*36A /13/4.
121. Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian xiaodu ji* (*xiuding ben*) 郭店楚简校读记（增订本） (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue chubanshe,

2007), 43; Zhao Jianwei, "Guodian Chumu zhujian *Taiyi shengshui* shuzheng,"329.

122. *Laozi*77A /26/6.
123. Qiu Xigui, "*Taiyi shengshui* 'ming zi' zhang jieshi—jianlun *Taiyi shengshui* de fenzhang wenti," 251.
124. *Laozi* 32A/11/14, 41A/15/1, 25A/9/4.
125. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu* 1:58. For an alternative translation, see Yates, *Five Lost Classics*,99–100.

2 Cosmology, Nature, and the Sage in *All Things Are Forms in Flux*

1. The Shanghai Museum collection includes two separate editions of *All Things Are Forms in Flux* that the compiler has termed A and B. The A text is comparatively complete, including a total of 30 bamboo strips, and after calculating all the combined and repeated text it totals 846 characters. The B text is fairly corrupted, with only 21 strips remaining. It includes a sum of 601 characters. For the original transcription of the text, see Ma Chengyuan 马承源, ed., *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chuguo shu* 上海博物馆藏战国楚国书(七), vol. 7 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), 219–300. Throughout this chapter it will be abbreviated as *Shang Bo qi shiwen*. There is also an edition compiled by the Graduate Students Reading Association at Fudan University's Excavated Texts and Ancient Script Research Center 复旦大学出土文献与古代文字研究中心研究生读书会 called *Shang Bo (qi) Fanwu liuxing: chongbian shiwen* 《上博(七) 凡物流形》重编释文, which was published on Fudan Universities Ancient Texts website (复旦大学古文字网) on December 31, 2008. This edition will be referred to as *Fudan dushuhui shiwen*, following Wu Kejing's 邬可晶 suggestion. Lastly, there is the draft transcription by Li Rui 李锐 entitled "*Fanwu liuxing* shiwen xinbian (gao)" 《凡物流形》释文新编(稿) that was published to the website *Kongzi 2000 wang* 孔子 2000 网 on December 31, 2008. Though we draw on these many editions, unless otherwise noted, the transcription of the text is the author's own.
2. In addition to the more common cosmological and political questions, *All Things Are Forms in Flux* is unusually interested in the origins and causes of natural phenomena.
3. The text alternates between asking with "what/why" *xi* 奚 and answering with "I have heard it said" *wenzhi yue* 問之曰.
4. *Shang Bo qi shiwen*, 260–261. [Translators note] This original transcription cannot easily be translated, but is included to provide a contrast to the significantly altered version presented by the author. However, the following is a word for word attempt, "It was once said: "Appearance birthed evil, evil birthed participation, and participation birthed the gathering of hanging walls." The radical divergence of

these two transcriptions reveals the profound challenges faced when dealing with excavated texts. Following this original transcription of characters, one finds a passage concerning the origin of human civilization instead of the creation of the cosmos. Of course, this reading does not accord with content of rest of the text that more closely fits different readings of the characters, and is why the cosmological interpretation has become standard.

5. Shen Pei 沈培, "Lueshuo *Shang Bo (qi)* xinjian de 'yi' zi" 略说《上博(七)》新见得"一"字, Fudan Daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted December 31, 2008.
6. See Yang Zesheng 杨泽生, "Shang Bo jian *Fanwu liuxing* zhong de 'yi' zi shijie" 上博 简《凡物流形》中的"一"字试解, Fudan Daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted February 15, 2009; Su Jianzhou 苏建洲, "*Shang Bo qi·Fanwu Liuxing* 'yi,' 'zhu' erzi xiaokao" 《上博七·凡物流形》"一", "逐"二字小考, Fudan Daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted January 2, 2009.
7. Shen Pei 沈培, "Lueshuo *Shang Bo (qi)* xinjian de 'yi' zi" 略说《上博(七)》新见得"一"字, Fudan Daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted December 31, 2008; Li Rui 李锐, "*Fanwu liuxing* shiwen xinbian (gao)" 《凡物流形》释文新编(稿), *Qinghua Daxue jianbo wang* 清华大学简帛网, entry posted December 31, 2008.
8. See *Fudan dushuhui shiwen*.
9. Qin Hualin 秦桦林, "*Fanwu liuxing* di ershiyi jian shijie" 《凡物流形》第二十一简试解, Fudan Daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted January 9, 2009.
10. *Laozi*42A /15/5.
11. *Laozi*10A /3/18,22A/ 8/3.
12. *Laozi*14A /5/3-5.
13. *Laozi*39A /14/3-5.
14. For more on this, please see Chen Guying 陈鼓应, *Laozi jizhu jinyi* 老子今注今译(Beijing: Commercial Press, 2003), 221, 161, 127, 109. [Translators note] Reading *hun* and *po* into Chapter 10 comes from the *Heshanggong zhangju* 河上公章句 commentary. See *Daodezhenjingzhu* 道德真經注(DZ682) .
15. Xu Kangsheng 许抗生, *Boshu Laozi zhuyi yu yanjiu* 帛书老子注译与研究 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Renmin chubanshe, 1985), 9.
16. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,* 1:120; Jiang Xichang 蒋锡昌 agrees that the "One" in "merge into One" to also refer to the Way. See Jiang Xichang 蒋锡昌, *Laozi jiaogu* 老子校诂 (Chengdu: Chengdu Guji Shudian, 1988), 78.
17. *Laozi*14A /5/5-6.
18. Seenote 14.
19. See Lou Yulie 楼宇烈, *Wang Bi ji jiaoshi* 王弼集校释, vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 22.
20. Lou draws this reading from Chapter 33 where Wang Bi comments: "The Unhewn and Nonactive do not exhaust their Truth for the

sake of things and do not harm their spirit for the sake of desire. In this way, things are naturally companions and the Way is naturally attained." See Lou Yulie, *Wang Bi ji jiaoshi*,22.

21. *Zhuangzi*23/65/14- 18.
22. *Zhuangzi*21/31/10.
23. He explains, "'Great/Still' (泰) means 'Great' (太) and 'Origin/Beginning' (初) means 'Beginning' (始). The original *qi* begins sprouting here, and so it is called the 'Great Beginning' (太初). This speaks of the expansive greatness of the *qi* that was capable of being the root beginning of the ten thousand things. Thus, it is named the 'Great Beginning.' In the time of the Great Beginning, there only existed nonexistence, and there did not yet exist existence. Existence was yet to exist so how could there be any names. Thus it says, 'There was nothing and nothing that could be named.'" See Guo Qingfan 郭庆藩, *Zhuangzi jishi* 庄子集释, vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961),425.
24. Chen Guying 陈鼓应, *Zhuangzi jizhu jinyi* 庄子今注今译 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 310.
25. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,* 1:87. [Transltors Note] The author changes the transcription of *Hengwu* 恒无 to *Hengxian* 恒先.
26. *Huainanzi* 14/132/10. For an alternative translation, see John J. Major et al., *The Huainanzi*,536.
27. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:117.
28. Consider two other examples from the *Laozi* and *Wenzi*. *Laozi* Chapter 35 says, "The Way's exiting the mouth is so bland and flavorless. Looking at it is not enough to see it. Yet use it and it is not consumed." *Wenzi* says, "The formless is what is called the 'One.' The One has no heart bound to the world. Spreading virtue, it is unmoved. Yet, use it and it is not exhausted. Look but do not see it, listen but do not hear it. It is formless, but the formed is birthed from it. It is soundless, but the five tones ring out from it. It is flavorless, but the five flavors are formed from it. It is colorless, but the five colors are completed by it. Thus, the manifest is birthed from the unmanifest, and the solid emerges from the vacuous . . . Thus, the order of the One is enacted throughout the Four Seas. The prosperity of the One is observable throughout the Heavens and the Earth. Its completion is dull like unhewn wood, and its dispersion is muddled like turbid water. The turbidity gradually becomes clear, and the vessel is gradually filled. It is placid like the ocean, and it glides like floating clouds. It seems both unmanifest and manifest, both absent and present." See Lou Yulie 楼宇烈, *Wang Bi ji jiaoshi* 王弼集校释, vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 88; Li Dingsheng 李定生 and Xu Huijun 徐慧君 *Wenzi xiaoshi* 文子校释(Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2004), 28–29.
29. *Zhuangzi*22 /61/31.

30. *Zhuangzi*22/62/8–9.
31. [Translator's note] The beginning of this line presents some challenges. It may be that 道曰 is a compound that means "it is said," which would make the topic of the first phrase 規 (compass or measure). For an alternative translation of this passage, see Major et al., *The Huainanzi*, 133; *Huainanzi*3/25/17–18.
32. The Great simplicity *Taiyi* 太易 leads to the Great Origin *Taichu* 太初 that develops into the Great Beginning *Taishi* 太始 and then produces the Great Purity *Taisu* 太素. The *Liezi* defines these four in the following way: "The Great Simplicity precedes the appearance of *qi*. The Great Origin is the beginning of *qi*. The Great Beginning is the beginning of form. The Great Purity is the beginning of substance." *Liezi*1/1/14- 15.
33. [Translators note] This translation follows the *Heshanggong Commentary*'s reading of 沖氣以為和 from *Laozi* Chapter 42 that takes *chong* 沖 "rushing" as *zhong* 中 "central" and affirm the top-center-bottom relationship of Heaven, humanity, and Earth.
34. *Liezi*1/1/18–19.
35. *Chunqiu zuozhuan*B 10.1.12/319/24.
36. *Shiming*1.1/3/4.
37. Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji* 郭店楚简校读记 (Beijing: Beijing Daxue chubanshe, 2002, 32.
38. *Heguanzi*11/16/7.
39. Qin Hualin 秦桦林, "*Fanwu liuxing* di ershiyi jian shijie," 《凡物流形》第二十一简试解, Fudan Daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网,e ntry posted January 9, 2009.
40. *Lüshic hunqiu*5.2/23/ 6.
41. Yang Bojun 杨伯峻, ed., *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左传注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 997.[Translator's Note] Be advised that the key term here, *jie* 結, does not appear in most editions of this text and is replaced by *ni* 逆.
42. *Laozi*1A/ 1/2.
43. *Zhuangzi*6/17/42,11/28/26-27,18/48/17,22/62/8, 22/63/15; *Liezi*1/2/27,2/5/16.
44. Asano Yuichi 浅野裕一, "*Fanwu liuxing* de jiegou xinjie" 《凡物流形》的结构新解, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted February 2, 2009. According to the Fudan Reading Association's ordering of the strips, the division of the two sections occurs before instance of "I have heard it said" in strips 13 and 14B. For more on the division of this section, see Wang Zhongjiang 王中江, "*Fanwu liuxing* bianlian xinjian"《凡物流形编联新见》, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted March 3, 2009.
45. Cao Feng also has a theory concerning the relationship of these former and latter sections. For more on this, see Cao Feng 曹峰, "Cong *Yizhoushu Zhouzhujie* kan *Fanwu liuxing* de sixiang jiegou" 从《逸周

书·周祝解》看《凡物流形》的思想结构, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted on March 9, 2009.

46. [Translator's Note] These scare quotes identify that the category of "nature" in this text also includes things often classified as supernatural, like ghosts and spirits.
47. The original compiler, Cao Jinyan, considers that the questioning of nature in *All Things Are Forms in Flux* resembles *Zhuangzi*'s "Revolutions of Heaven" 《天運》 chapter. Cao Feng also suggests that the first half of the "Zhou zhu jie" 《周祝解》 in the *Yizhoushu* 《逸周書》 contains similar content. See *Shang Bo qi*, 222; Cao Feng, "Cong *Yizhoushu* Zhouzhujie kan Fanwu liuxing de sixiang jiegou" 从《逸周书·周祝解》看《凡物流形》的思想结构, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted on March 9, 2009.
48. *Zhuangzi*12/31/10–11.
49. [Translator's Note] The root meaning of "flux" includes this sense of flowingw ater.
50. Wang Shuihuan 王水渙, ed., *Zhouyi* 周易 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2010),1; *Maoshi*246/125/13.
51. Liao Mingchun explains that "fullness," "life," and "forms in flux" all are forms and substances. See Liao Mingchun 廖名春, "*Fanwu liuxing* jiaodu lingzha (yi)" 《凡物流形》校读零札(一), Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子2000网, entry posted December 31, 2008.
52. The five measures could be read as a gloss for the five phases, but the text already mentions the five *qi* and so this term must refer to something else. It most likely indicates the "five types of laws." This reading finds support in the *Huangdi sijing* chapter "The Five Governances" 《五正》. There the term *wuzheng* 五正 "five governances" indicates the five aspects of law. What might these five be? The *Liji* provides the five terms "compass" *gui* 規, "square" *ju* 矩, "chalk line" *sheng* 繩, "balance weight" *quan* 權, and "balance arm" *heng* 衡. These five all depict naturally constant measures on which one can base Heaven's laws. See *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 1:65; *Liji jijie*,1379.
53. Wang Liancheng parses the first sentence as "When Heaven and Earth were established, at the end they established the beginning [of things]" 天地立，終立始. This does not appear to be accurate. See Wang Liancheng 王连成, "*Shang Bo qi · dong (tong) wu liuxing* tiandiren pian shiyi" 《上博七戢(同) 物流形》天地人篇释义, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网,e ntry posted on January 31, 2009.
54. [Translator's note] Solar prominences are bright gas plumes that extend from the edge of the sun and are especially visible during eclipses. They often form in the shape of a loop, which explains why the Chinese named them *ri'er* 日珥 "earrings of the sun." That the text would address such an obscure phenomenon, requiring careful observation during full eclipses, reveals the level to which the author and his community prized this type of empiricism.

55. See *Shang Bo qi shiwen*,242–243 .
56. Liao Mingchun 廖名春, "Fanwu liuxing jiaodu lingzha (yi)," Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子 2000 网, entry posted on December 31, 2009.
57. Song Huaqiang reads "army" *jun* 軍 as "wheel" *lun* 輪 and also takes "order" *zheng* 正 as "military action" *zheng* 征 but interprets it to mean "advance." Overall, the latter sentence then means "The wheel of the moon, how will it advance?" Song Huaqiang 宋华强, "*Shang Bo (qi)·Fanwu liuxing* zhaji size" 《上博(七)·凡物流形》札记四则, Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, January 3, 2009. Cao Fangxiang supports this reading as well. See Cao Fangxiang 曹方向, "Guanyu *Fanwu liuxing* de 'yue zhi you lun'" 关于《凡物流形》的"月之有轮", Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, January 4,2009.
58. Fan Guodong 凡国栋, "Ye shuo *Fanwu liuxing* zhi 'yue zhi you jun (yun)'" 也说《凡物流形》之"月之有军(晕)", Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, entry posted on January 4, 2009.
59. Feng Shi 冯时, *Zhongguo tianwen kaogu xue* 中国天文考古学 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2007), 338-342; Also see Jiang Xiaoyuan 江晓原, *Tianxue zhenyuan* 天学真原 (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1991), 233–234.
60. "The officials tried to remonstrate *zheng* 証 with and calm Lord Jingguo, but Lord Jingguo would not listen." He Jianzhang 何建章, ed., *Zhanguo ce zhushi* 战国策注释 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), 302.
61. Wang Liancheng identifies this content as its own section called "The Chapter on Serving Ghosts." See Wang Liancheng 王连成, "*Shang Bo qi · Tongwu liuxing* 'Shigui pian' shiyi" 《上博七·同物流形》"事鬼篇"释义, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted on January 31,2009.
62. The original compilers transcribed this as "lacking" *que* 缺 instead of "intelligence" *hui* 慧 (*Shang Bo qi*, 234). Here we again follow the Fudan Reading Association that considers the character *hui* 慧 (*Fudan dushuhui shiwen*).
63. *The Analects* says, "Sacrifice to the spirits as though the spirits are present." *Lunyu*3.12/5/ 24.
64. "Returning is the movement of the Way." *Laozi*40A/ 14/12.
65. Here, the text's original compiler Cao Jinyan explains "the qualities of left and right" (*zuoyou zhi qing* 左右之情) as referring to the left and right sides. Liao Mingchun takes the phrase to mean "lead" or "control." Cao Feng considers it to indicate two different situations. Because the text is inquiring into what the formed creatures lose that leads to their death and what leads to their receiving a fixed substantive body in the first place, it seems that "lead" or "bring about" is most appropriate. The meaning of the troublesome term *qing* 情 (situation, emotion, nature, reality) leans toward "reality." This reading is

supported by both the *Zhuangzi* and the "Ten Questions" 《十問》 The *Zhuangzi* says, "This is because of not yet understanding the patterns of Heaven and Earth, or the reality [*qing* 情] of the ten thousand things." The Mawangdui text "Ten Questions" similarly says, "You observe the reality [*qing* 情] of Heaven and Earth." See *Shang Bo qi shiwen*, 228; Liao Mingchun 廖名春, "*Fanwu liuxing* jiaodu lingzha (yi)"《凡物流行》校读零札(一), Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子2000网, entry posted December 31, 2008; Cao Feng 曹峰, "*Fanwu liuxing* zhong de 'zuoyou zhi qing'"《凡物流形》中的"左右之情", Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted January 4, 2009; *Zhuangzi* 17/44/32-17/45/1; *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,4:145.

66. In the *Zhuangzi* chapter "Knowledge Wanders North" 《知北遊》 it says, "A person's birth is a congealing of *qi*. While it is congealed there is life, but when it disperses there is death." *Zhuangzi* 22/60/15–16.
67. Qin Hualin builds a similar case by drawing on a few outside sources. He cite *Zhuangzi* who says, "Become rooted in the origin to gain a wisdom reaching to the spirits." He cites *Xunzi* who says, "This way emerges from One. What is called One? 'To hold the spirit and be resolute.' What is called spirit? 'To maximize goodness and embrace ordering is called spirit. To be unswayed by anything among the ten thousand things is called resolve.'" He also cites the *Guoyu*, "When the sun is trapped [*kun* 困] it returns and when the moon is full it wanes." Qin believes the sequence of wisdom-spirit-unity-danger-entrapment-return can be divided into three pairs. These are wisdom/spirit, unity/danger, and entrapment/return. See Qin Hualin 秦桦林 "Chujian *Fanwu liuxing* zhaji erce" 楚简《凡物流形》札记二则, Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, entry posted on January 4,2009.
68. *Laozi*63A /21/14–15.
69. *Laozi*64A /22/3–6.
70. [Translator's note] Here I read *buxi* 不熙 in accord with the *Shuowen jiezi* gloss of *xi* as *zao* 燥 "dry." Here it is used in a causative sense of "does not dry out." Idiomatically this becomes "inexhaustible."
71. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu* 1:87. For an alternative translation, see Yates, *Five Lost Classics*,173.
72. *Huainanzi* 14/132/10–13. For an alternative translation, see Major et al., *The Huainanzi*,536–537.
73. One finds similar descriptions in the inner cultivation chapters of the *Guanzi*. The "Inward Training" says, "The Way has neither roots, nor stem, nor leaves, nor flowers. Through it all things gain life and all things attain maturity." It also says, "The essence of all things merges and brings about life. Below it births the five grains and above it creates the constellations. Those that can flow with it between Heaven and Earth, we call them ghosts and spirits. Those who stores it within their

abdomen, we call them sages." The "Techniques of the Mind I" says, "As for the Way: when it moves we cannot see its form; when it acts we cannot see its power; the ten thousand things all obtain it, but none know its bounds." See *Guanzi* 16.1/115/31-32, 16.1/115/17-18, 13.1/97/6.

74. *Mengzi*5.4/29/1–2.
75. Li Rui 李锐, "*Fanwu liuxing* shiwen xinbian (gao)"《凡物流形》释文新编（稿）, Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子2000网, entry posted December 31, 2008; Liao Mingchun 廖名春, "*Fanwu liuxing* jiaodu lingzha (er)" 《凡物流形》校读零札(二), Kongzi 2000 wang, entry posted December 31, 2008.
76. *Fudan dushuhui shiwen*.
77. *Laozi*35A /12/13.
78. The original compiler reads it as *zhi* 執, Qiu Xigui 裘锡圭 transcribes it as the character *shi* 埶 and reads it to mean *she* 設 "establish." This is now the commonly accepted reading. Li Ling 李零 posits that *shi* 埶 might be interchangeable with *zhi* 執. There is also an instance of *shi* 埶 in the Mawangdui edition of *Laozi*. Han Wei 韩巍 disagrees by saying that *zhi* 執 is a misreading of *shi* 埶, which means *she* 設 "establish." However, in the various Han dynasty bamboo slips we see the character also read as *zhi* 執 See Li Ling, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji*, 26-27; Han Wei 韩巍, ed., *Beijing Daxue zang Xi Han zhushu* 北京大学藏西汉竹书, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012), 161.
79. Previously, the author transcribed this character as zhi 執 without explanation. The best argument is made by Yang Zesheng. See Wang Zhongjiang 王中江, "*Fanwu liuxing* bianlian xinzhi" 《凡物流形》编联新知, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted March 4, 2009; Yang Zesheng 杨泽生, "Shuo *Fanwu liuxin*g cong 'shao' de liang ge zi" 说《凡物流形》从"少"的两个字, Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, entry posted March 7, 2009.
80. *Laozi*47A /16/8-9.
81. The Fudan Reading Association reads the character as *shu* 書 based on the sentence that follows. Fan Guodong 凡国栋 agrees with them and explains the line to mean that "although books cannot predict certain affairs, the ideas within books can lead people to know in advance all within the Four Seas, hear what happens a thousand *li* away, and see what happens a hundred *li* away." Gu Shikao 顾史考 takes it as *tu* 圖 and having the same meaning as *mou* 謀 "plan" as in *Guo Ce* 《國策》. Therefore, the two lines "sits unmoving in his seat" and "never participates in any [concrete] affairs" mean "In calculating one does not leave one's seat, and in planning one does not leave the pavilion." Yet, reading the character as either "book" or "plan" does not quite work. Instead it should be *zhu* 著. See *Fudan dushuhui shiwen* 复旦读书会释文; Fan Guodong 凡国栋, "Shang Bo qi *Fanwu liuxing*

zhaji yice"上博七《凡物流形》札记一则, Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, entry posted January 4, 2009; Gu Shikao 顾史考, "Shang Bo qi *Fanwu liuxing* jianxu ji yundu xiaobu" 上博七《凡物流形》简序及韵读小补, Wuhan Daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, entry posted February 2, 2009.

82. Cao cites the *Liji* passage, "When the Son of Heaven is 'tranquil' [*ning* 寧] and on his throne, and the many officials are on east side and the nobles are on the west side, this is called holding court". See Cao Feng 曹峰, "Zai lun *Fanwu liuxing* de 'zhu bu yu shi'" 再论《凡物流形》的"箸不与事", Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted May 19, 2009.
83. *Laozi*37A/13/10- 11.
84. [Translator's Note] Once again we include an awkward translation in prepartion for the author's analysis. For a more cogent and polished version, see appendix 2.
85. The full "Techniques of the Mind II" passage reads as follows, "Focus the thoughts and make One the mind so the eyes and ears reach their full capacity and one can know the truth from a distance. Oh being able to focus! Oh being able to become One! Oh being able to know the auspicious and inauspicious without tortoise shell or milfoil divination! Oh being able to stop! Oh being able to cease! Oh being able to naturally obtain it from within oneself without asking others! Thus it is said: 'Ponder it. If pondering it fails, then the ghosts and spirits will teach it. This is not a power of ghosts or spirits, but the pinnacle of essential *qi*.'" 專於意, 一於心, 耳目端, 知遠之證, 能專乎, 能一乎, 能毋卜筮知凶吉乎, 能止乎, 能已乎, 能毋問於人, 而自得之於己乎。故曰, 思之, 思之不得, 鬼神教之。非鬼神之力也, 其精氣之極也。One of the important question concerning the compatibility of these two seemingly similar passages relates to the meaning of *hu* 乎. In the *All Things are Forms in Flux*, it should be read as *ye* 也 and thus indicating a copula, but in the *Guanzi* it is normally understood to represents a question mark. The issue is that such an interpretation of the *Guanzi* passages encounters problems because the "thus it is said" that follows these lines affirms that the entire sentence is descriptive and affirmative in nature. Therefore, in the *Guanzi* we also should also read *hu* 乎 as *ye* 也 to reveal the proper procession of meaning, and so affirms the text's parallelism. See *Guanzi*13.2/98/8–10.
86. *Guanzi*13.2 /98/8,16.6/ 117/6.
87. These include "Purification of the Mind" 《白心》 "Baixin," and "Techniques of the Mind I" 《心術上》" Xinshus hang."
88. Liu Jie divides *xin* 心 into the mind that forms *qi* and creates principles, and the mind of morality. See 刘节 Liu Jie, "*Guanzi* zhong suo jian zhi Song Jian yipai xueshuo" 《管子》中所见之宋钘一派学说 in *Liu Jie wenji* 刘节文集, ed. Zeng Xianli 曾宪礼 (Guangdong: Zhongshan Daxue chubanshe, 2004), 207.

89. *Guanzi* 16.1/117/7, 13.2/98/17, 16.1/116/21, 16.1/116/17.
90. As the text says, "Human purification is called 'holding,'" and "Till the end of life it is naturally thus."
91. *Shang Bo qi shiwen*,270,257.
92. Cao Feng 曹峰, "*Fanwu liuxing* de 'shaoche' he 'shaocheng'—'xin bu sheng xin' zhang shuzheng" 《凡物流形》的"少彻"和"少成"——"心不胜心"章疏证, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted January 9, 2009.
93. *Xunzi*2/6/4.
94. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*1:72.
95. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*1:87.
96. *Shang Bo qi shiwen*,228.
97. Asano Yuichi 淺野裕一, "*Fanwu liuxing* de jiegou xinjie," Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted February 2, 2009.
98. Li Rui 李锐, "*Fanwu liuxing* shiwen xinbian (gao)," Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子 2000 网,e ntry posted December 31, 2008.

3 The Diversity of Eastern Zhou Views on Deities and *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods*

1. [Translators Note] In this chapter, I translate *guishen* 鬼神 as "spirits and gods" instead of the more commons "ghosts and spirits" to emphasize the theological dimension of the discussion and allow continuity with phrases like "ancestral spirits."
2. Cao Jinyan's transcription of *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* appears in *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* (*wu*) 上海博物馆藏战国楚竹书(五), ed. Ma Chengyuan 马承源 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005), 307.
3. As another explanation of "spirits," the Mohist Zi Chan 子產 explains in the *Zuozhuan* that Boyou 伯有 became a spirit because of his violent death. See *Mozi jiangu*, 249; Yang Bojun 杨伯峻, *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左传注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 1291–1293.
4. *Mozi*'s "Shedding Light on Spirits" chapter records the views of "those who hold there are no spirits." For example, "Presently, those who hold there are no spirits spoke, saying: 'Who has ever heard or seen the spirits and gods!'"; "Presently, those who hold there are no spirits spoke, saying: 'How are the auditory and visual senses of the masses enough to put an end to doubt? Why would those who desire to be the superior people of the world continue to trust the auditory and visual sense of the masses.'"; "Presently, those who hold there are no spirits spoke, saying: 'Within the books of the former kings there is not a single foot of silk or essay that repeatedly speaks to the existence of spirits and gods. What books include this?'"; "Presently, those who hold there are no spirits spoke, saying: 'Of course there are no spirits and gods and therefore I should not expend my wealth on cakes and

wine and sacrifices. This is not so much that I cherish the resources of cakes and wine and sacrifices, but what can I [possibly] get out of this?'" See *Mozi jiangu,* 202, 212, 215, 224, 225–226.

5. It is possible that Chengzi is the Cheng Fan 程繁 mentioned in the *Mozi* "Three Arguments." *Mozi jiangu* 35, 422, 417.
6. *Mozi jiangu*,422.
7. *Mozi jiangu*,411.
8. *Mozi jiangu*,417.
9. *Hanshu*,30. 1726.
10. *Lunheng*20/78/57.
11. On the same page, the text describes Dongzi, "Wuxin was belittled by others. He was rarely able to serve the lord and knew nothing of worldly affairs." See "Chanzi shiwen" 缠子佚文 in Sun Yirang 孙诒让, *Mozi jiangu* 墨子间诂 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 707.
12. *Liji jijie* 禮記集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), 1309–1310.
13. *Liji jijie*,1381.
14. For more on the religious beliefs and religious life of the Three Dynasties, see Yu Dunkang 余敦康, *Zongjiao·zhexue·lunli* 宗教·哲学·伦理 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2005); Chen Lai 陈来, *Gudai zongjiao yu lunli—Rujia sixiang de genyuan* 古代宗教与伦理——儒家思想的根源 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1996).
15. *Lunyu* 11.12/27/11; *Baihutong*22/46/16.
16. [Translator's note] This refers to the famous story of an official from the state of Wei named Ximen Bao. After assuming a regional post, he eradicated the local custom of sacrificing a young girl to the river god. See *Shiji*126:3211–3212.
17. In the *Zhanguo ce,* it is quite rare to find anything resembling the records on spirits and gods or spirit and god-related activities like those that appear in the *Zuozhuan*. Gu Yanwu, in his comparison of the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods, noted one of the key differences related to the use of sacrifice in these periods. See *Gu Yanwu* 顾炎武, *Rizhi lu* 日知录 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 1005–1006.
18. Just like with the social distinction of "good people" and "bad people," Chinese ancient religious beliefs, similar to those of other civilizations, divided the spirit world between the "good spirits" and the "bad spirits." Emile Durkheim generally considered religion and the belief in the divine to be a reflection of societal realities. This kind of reflection not only has led people to imagine benevolent gods but also every type of evil spirit. He said, "But, in the first place, things are arbitrarily simplified when religion is seen only on its idealistic side: in its way, it is realistic. There is no physical or moral ugliness, there are no vices or evils which do not have a special divinity. There are gods of theft and trickery, of lust and war, of sickness and of death. Christianity itself, howsoever high the idea which it has made of the

divinity may be, has been obliged to give the spirit of evil a place in its mythology. Satan is an essential piece of the Christian system; even if he is an impure being, he is not a profane one. The anti-god, is a god, inferior and subordinated, it is true, but nevertheless endowed with extended powers; he is even the object of rites, at least of negative ones." Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), 420–421.

19. *Mozi jiangu*,20–21.
20. *Mozi jiangu*,221–222.
21. *Mozi jiangu*,202–205.
22. Sima Qian uses the story of Bo Yi 伯夷 and Shu Qi 叔齊 to raise doubt about the theory that the good are rewarded. "It is said, 'The Way of Heaven has no favorites constantly giving to the good.' Well, cannot Bo Yi and Shu Qi be call good? They accumulated benevolence and were noble in their actions, but they starved to death! Out of his seventy disciples, Confucius only held up Yan Hui as a true lover of learning. Yet, Yang Hui was poverty stricken, happily ate grain husks, and died young. How can we say that Heaven rewards the good?" *Shiji*61.2124–2125.
23. *Mozi jiangu*,437–438.
24. *Mozi jiangu*,438.
25. *Mozi jiangu*,425.
26. *Mozi jiangu*,425.
27. *Mozi jiangu*,417.
28. 譽 *yu* praise" was originally transcribed as 舉 *ju* "elevate." Following Liao Mingchun, we use the reading of 譽. See Liao Mingchu 廖名春, "Du *Shang Bo wu · Guishen zhi ming* pian zhaji" 读《上博五·鬼神之明》篇札记 Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子2000网, entry posted February 19,2006.
29. 諫 *jian* "remonstrate" was originally transcribed as 訐 *jie* "expose misdeeds." Following Chen Wei, I use the reading of *jian* 諫. See Chen Wei 陈伟, "Shang Bo wu *Guishen zhi ming* pian chudu" 上博五《鬼神之明》篇初读, Jianbo yanjiuwang 简帛研究网, entry posted Februrary 18, 2006.
30. 如 *ru* "if" was originally transcribed as 汝 *ru* "you." We make this substitution following Chen Wei. See Chen Wei, "Shang Bo wu *Guishen zhi ming*pia nc hudu."
31. The "Robber Zhi" 《盗跖》 chapter in the *Zhaungzi* uses examples like Wu Zixu to explain how loyal ministers are nothing special: "Among those which the world calls loyal ministers there are none like Prince Bigan and Wu Xixu. [Yet,] Zixu was sunk in a river and Bigan had his heart cut out. These two masters are called loyal ministers by the world, but in death the whole empire laughed at them. Concerning all the cases predating Wu Zixu and Bigan, none of these [people] are worth honoring." *Zhuangzi*29/88/ 14.

32. Even the *Laozi*, which is quite inclined toward the natural conception of the Way of Heaven, still includes the concept that Heaven protects the just within his thought. For example, Chapter 77 states, "The Way of Heaven diminishes the excessive, and augments the deficient. The way of humanity is not like this. It diminishes the deficient to increase the excessive." Chapter 79 says, "The Way of Heaven lacks favorites constantly giving to the good people." In the *Shuoyuan* 《說苑》, it records, "Laozi said: 'To attain some benefit one must consider harm. To take joy in an accomplishment one must consider failure. Those people who are good, Heaven rewards with prosperity. Those who are not good, Heaven rewards with suffering. Thus I say, "Adversity! It is what prosperity rest upon. Prosperity! It is what defeats adversity."'" The final two lines are close quotes from Chapter 58 of the *Laozi* and here suggest that prosperity relies on knowing what Heaven rewards and punishes. If this is an actual lost saying of Laozi, it further confirms that Laozi possessed the belief that Heaven rewards and punishes of good and evil. See *Laozi* 77A/26/6, 79A/27/4, 58A/20/3–4; *Shuoyuan*10 .8/78/27-10.8/79/3.
33. *Xunzi*28/140/18–19.
34. *Liji*32.1 1/144/5–9.
35. *Zhouyi*2/5 /2.
36. Prince Cao Zhi of Wei (192–232) cites a passage from Xunzi in his *Xianglun* 《相論》, "Xunzi said: 'If we consider that Heaven knows nothing of human affairs, there are the examples of the Duke of Zhou facing disasters of wind and lightening and Jing of Song having three instance of auspiciousness. If we consider it knows of human affairs, there are the examples of King Zhao of Chu facing the response of not performing the *ying* sacrifice and Duke Wen of Zhu facing the result of not properly extending the period. Because of these examples we can say that the Way of Heaven and divination can be known but must be doubted because they cannot be fully obtained.'" If this is truly a record of Xunzi, as he mostly promoted the separation of Heaven and humanity, we can say that even he did not completely reject some notion of transcendent power. *Yiwen leiju* 艺文类聚 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982), 75.1287.
37. *Kongzi jiayu* 20/40/1.
38. *Kongzi jiayu*20/40/2–4
39. This dialogue between Confucius and Zi Lu is also preserved in the *Xunzi*. Yet, because Wu Zixu died in 484 BCE, these words could not have been perfectly recorded straight from the mouth of Confucius. *Kongzi jiayu* 20/40/4-7; *Xunzi*28/140/17- 28/141/10.
40. *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚书正义 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2000), 246.
41. *Shangshu zhengyi*,246.
42. *Shangshu zhengyi*,258.

43. *Shangshu zhengyi*,238.
44. *Lüshic hunqiu*13.2/64/28.
45. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*,421.
46. For more on the issue of "reciprocity and "retribution," see Yang Lien-sheng, "The Concept of *Pao* as a Basis for Social relations in China," in *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, John K. Fairbank, ed. (University of Chicago, 1957), 298–301.
47. Ernst Cassirier 恩斯特·卡西尔, *Shenhua siwei* 神话思维 [*Mythical Thought*] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1992), 245.
48. Holding a critical stance, Wang Chong noted this type of perspective commonly held by worldly people. "Worldly [people] say that those who receive protection and prosperity do so because of their good behavior; they also say that those who suffer disasters do so because of their evil behavior. They think that great evil and heavy sins will be punished by Heaven and Earth, and will face the judgment of the spirits and gods. The punishments of Heaven and Earth are handed down to all great and small; the judgments of the spirits and gods reach all near and far." See *Lunheng*21/78/1 9–20.
49. Gods always are imagined to be greater and more powerful than humanity, and so humans give over to the divine those evil ones whom they are unable to stop or punish.
50. *Liji jijie*,988 .
51. *Zhuangzi*14/38/16–17.
52. *Liji*32.1 0/144/1–3.
53. *Mozi jiangu*,211.
54. *Mozi* also uses the expression "do not the spirits and gods have insight and wisdom [*mingzhi* 明智]!" *Mozi jiangu*,425.
55. *Mozi jiangu*,385.
56. *Mozi jiangu*,702.
57. Ding Sixin 丁四新, "Lun Chu jian 'guishen' pian de guishenguan jiqi xuepai guishu" 论楚简《鬼神》篇的鬼神观及其学派归属, in *Rujia wenhua yanjiu* 儒家文化研究, ed. Guo Qiyong 郭齐勇 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2007), 400–408.
58. *Zhuangzi*3/97/27- 28.
59. 固 (*gu* firm) was originally transcribed as 古 (*qu* ancient). Following Chen Wei, I use the reading of 固. See Chen Wei, "Shang Bo wu *Guishen zhi ming*pia nc hudu."
60. 又 (*you* also) was originally transcribed as 或 *huo* "sometimes." Following Chen Wei's examples and other cases in the bamboo strips of Chu, it seems that in many instances 或 should be read as 又. See Chen Wei, "Shang Bo wu *Guishen zhi ming* pian chudu." Furthermore, the *Book of Odes* records, "An inspector is appointed, and also a recorder to assist him" 既立之監，或佐之使. Here 或 "sometimes" means 又 "also".
61. *Laozi* 33A/11/20; *Lunyu*3.16/6/ 4.

62. *Mengzi*3.3/17/17.
63. *Xunzi*9/39/10.
64. *Mengzi*5.4/29/1.
65. *Xunzi*18/86/15.
66. *Mozi jiangu*, 284; *Mozi jiangu*,48.
67. *Mozi jiangu*,200.
68. *Mozi jiangu*,91.
69. Cao Jinyan 曹锦炎, "Guishen zhi ming" 鬼神之明 in *Shanghai Bowuguan* cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu (*wu*) 上海博物馆藏战国楚竹书(五), ed. Ma Chengyuan (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005),307- 308.
70. Asano Yūichi 淺野裕一, *Shang Bo Chujian* "*Guishen zhi ming*" *yu* "*Mozi*" *mingguilun* 上博楚简《鬼神之明》与《墨子》明鬼论 in "Xinchu Chujian Guoji Xueshu yantaohui (Shang Bo jian juan)," 会晦论文集（上博简卷） presented at a Havard-Yenching and Wuhan University cosponsored international conference, Wuhan University, Wuhan, 2006, 74–75.
71. Ding Sixin 丁四新, "Lun Chujian *Guishen* pian de guishenguan ji qi xuepai guishu" 论楚简《鬼神》篇的鬼神观及其学派归属, in Guo Qiyong 郭齐勇 ed. *Rujia Wenhua yanjiu* 儒家文化研究 1 (2007): 400–408.
72. *Hanfeizi*50/150/19.

4 Natural Order and Divine Will in *The Three Virtues*

1. We cannot view the relationship of the religion of the Three Dynasties and the philosophy of the Eastern Zhou as one unified linear historical transformation. For more on this, see Christian Jochim, *Chinese Religions: A Cultural Perspective* (New York: Pearson, 1985); Yu Dunkang 余敦康, *Zongjiao·zhexue·lunli* 宗教·哲学·伦理 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2005).
2. Concerning issues related to the collation and transcription of *The Three Virtues*, see the following. Ma Chengyuan 马承源, ed. *Shanghai Bowuguan Zhanguo Chu zhushu*, vol. 5 上海博物馆藏战国楚竹书（五） (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005); Chen Jian 陈剑, "*San De* zhujian bianlian de yichu buzheng" 《三德》竹简编联的一处补正, Jianbo wang 简帛网, entry posted April 1, 2006; Cao Feng 曹峰, "*San De* de bianlian yu fen zhang" 《三德》的编联与分章, in *Shang Bo Chujian sixiang yanjiu* 上博楚简思想研究 (Taibei: Taiwan wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2006).
3. Cao Feng曹峰 feels it is highly compatible with the *Huangdi sijing*. However, *The Three Virtues* clearly has Confucian tendencies, especially in regards to its notion of "ritual" *li* 禮, and "the farming season" *nongshi* 農時. It certainly does not incorporate any Daoist ideas, let alone Legalist ones. Therefore, it overall must be identified as

Confucian. As for the issue concerning the similarities between the *Huangdi sijing* and *The Three Virtues*, and the question of which text influenced which, these require further investigation. See Cao Feng 曹峰 *San De* yu *Huangdi sijing* duibi yanjiu 《三德》与《黄帝四经》对比研究, in *Shang Bo Chujian sixiang yanjiu* 上博楚简思想研究 (Taibei: Taiwan wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2006).

4. Research on the thought of *The Three Virtues* is fairly limited but includes the following. Yuasa Kunihiro 湯淺邦弘, "Shang Bo Chujian *San De* de Tianren xiangguan sixiang" 上博楚簡《 三德》的天人相關思想 (paper presented June, 2006); Fukuda Kazuya 福田一也, "Shang Bo jian wu *San De* pian zhong 'Tian' de guannian" 上博 簡五《 三德》篇中'天'的觀念 (paper presented June, 2006).
5. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science, Religion and Other Essays* (Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1948).
6. For another discussion of Heaven's Constants in the *Zuozhuan*, see "The Eighteenth Year of Duke Wen" 文公十八年. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu*,163 6,1639–1640.
7. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu*,1635–1636.
8. *Xunzi*17/ 80/2–3.
9. These kinds of examples are numerous. The *Hanfezi* "Jie Lao" 《解老》 chapter says, "Those who value non-action, non-thinking [*wusi* 無思], and emptiness, we say that their minds are uncontrollable." Its "Ba Shuo" 《八說》 chapter also says, "To exhaust all thoughts and calculations by analyzing gain and loss is something even the wise find difficult. Being without thought [*wusi* 無思] and without calculation, [just] seize on prior proclamations when seeking future achievements." The *Lüshi chunqiu* says, "Supreme wisdom discards wisdom; supreme benevolence forgets benevolence; supreme virtue is not virtuous, [so] be without words or thoughts [*wusi* 無思]. Be passive in the service of the seasons, [only] responding to them as they arrive." See Cao Feng 曹峰, "*San De* shidu shiba ze" 《三德》释读十八则, in *Shang Bo Chujian sixiang yanjiu* 上博楚简思想研究 (Taibei: Taiwan wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2006), 193–195; *Hanfeizi*, 20/34/14, 47/141/19–20; *Lüshi chunqiu*17.3/ 102/5.
10. *Lunyu*17.19/49/25–26.
11. *Zhouyi*65/ 79/21–22.
12. The Guodian manuscript *Chenzhi wenzhi* 《成之聞之》 requires the ruler to "sacrifice to Heaven's Constants" which seems to depict the normally naturalist expression "Heaven's Constants" as a reference to nature spirits or gods, but here "sacrifice" might also be understood in reference to following the rationalistic natural patterns. It says, "Only the Superior Person can seek things near and not borough things from afar. What did it mean, in ancient times, when the Superior Person mentioned, 'The sage's heavenly virtue?' It means to carefully seek it in yourself and then you can rely on it to perfectly

follow Heaven's Constants. What does it mean when the "Kang Gao" 《康誥》 chapter of *The Book of History* says, 'Those that did not return or did not [practice] the common rituals were punished by King Wen, executing the guilty without mercy'? This saying says do not oppose the Great Constants as King Wen's punishments were not excessive. Thus the Superior person is careful of the six positions and 'sacrifices to Heaven's Constants.'" *Hanshi waizhuan* 《韩诗外传》 discusses the relationships of the Heaven Earth and humanity in a manner concordant with *The Three Virtues,* "Know Heaven above and you can use it seasons; know Earth below and you can use its materials; know humanity in the middle and you can [bring] peace and joy to them. This is sagely benevolence." See Jingmenshi bowuguan 荆门市博物馆 ed., *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹简 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe),168; Han Ying 韩婴, and Xu Weiyu许维遹校释, ed. *Hanshi waizhuan jishi*韩诗外传集释 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980),25.

13. *Xunzi*17/80/7.
14. In this context, the term *baishi* 百事 "hundred affairs" should actually be read as *moshi* 陌事 "exert [yourself] in affairs." Consider the meaning of 百 in the *Zuozhuan* where it says, "Jumping across three hundred [*bai* 百], leaping up three hundred [*bai* 百]." Du Yu's 杜預 commentary on this line says, "hundred [百] seems to mean 'strive,'" and Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 subcommentary says, "This means to use one's full effort in every jump." *Chunqiu Zuozhuan*,454.
15. Here "materials" *cai* 材 is added following Cao Feng's suggestion. See Cao Feng, "Shang Bo jian sixiang yangjiu," 222.
16. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 1:71; *Liji jijie*,356.
17. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,*1:49.
18. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,*1:76.
19. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu,*454.
20. See 陈剑, "*San De* zhujian bianlian de yichu buzheng" 《三德》竹简编联的一处补正, Jianbo wang 简帛网, entry posted April 1, 2006.
21. Maoshi *zhengyi* 毛诗正义 (Beijing: Peking University, 2000), 1354.
22. *Lüshic hunqiu*5.5/26/6–8.
23. Li Ling 李零 transcribes *ming* 明 "bright" as *hui* 晦 "dusk" following Yan Changgui's 晏昌贵 reading. Based on the preceding and following lines this phrase may be missing a character. See Yan Changgui 晏昌贵 "*San De* si zha"《三德》四札, Jianbo wang 简帛网, entry posted March, 2006.
24. Fukuda Kazuya follows the concept of yinyang in analyzing the relationship of "sunrise" and "crying" and "dusk" and "singing." He says, "If we follow the theory of yin and yang, 'dusk' and 'crying' are yin and 'sunrise' and 'singing' are yang. Thus, if one is 'crying' (yin) at 'sunrise' (yang) or 'sings' (yang) at 'dusk' (yin), then this goes against the proper timing of things and the proper relationship of things, and so is forbidden. *The Three Virtues* never mentions yin and

yang together, but later in the text we see 'bright [yang] but obscured is called the Great Distress' that connects yang and 'obscured.' When yang and 'obscured' appear together it is unsuitable and so is called 'Great Distress' or 'inauspicious' and so is forbidden. 'at sunrise do not cry, at dusk do not sing' is certainly this kind of yinyang thinking that takes the timing of Heaven, day and night, and the changing of the seasons, as rules and rigorously works to harmonize people's ritual behaviors with them." See Fukuda Kazuya, "Shang Bo jian wu *San De* pian zhong 'Tian' de guannian."

25. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,*1:69.
26. For example, "If one does not follow Heaven's Constants [*Tianchang* 天常] and does not modulate the people's power, one will fruitlessly cycle around." Also, "Participate in the Constant Way [*Hengdao* 恒道] of Heaven and Earth." *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:57.
27. Consider the following examples. "To begin with the civil and end with the martial is the Way of Heaven and Earth. That the four seasons have their measure is the pattern (li 理) of Heaven and Earth. That the sun, moon, planets, and stars have their movements is the central strand of Heaven and Earth. To accomplish works during three seasons and punish and kill during one is the Way of Heaven and Earth. That the four seasons have set times with no deviations or changes, constantly possessing a model [*fashi* 法式] [is the pattern of Heaven and Earth.]" "Heaven and Earth have Constant Constants [*hengchang* 恒常]...The Constant Constants of Heaven and Earth are the four seasons, darkness and light, life and death, and soft and hard." "Heaven has Constant Actions [*henggan* 恆幹] and Earth has Constant Constants." *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,* 1:57, 1:43, 1:78.
28. Huang Huaixin 黄怀信, ed. *Yizhou shu huijiao jizhu* 逸周书汇校集注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe,1995), 1211–1212.
29. According to this, the *Monthly Decrees* 《月令》 preserved in the *Liji*, the *Lüshi Chunqiu*, and the *Huainanzi* all should originate from the *Yizhoushu*.
30. As Confucius says, "When ruling a state with a thousand chariots be respectfully attentive to affairs and to loyalty, frugal in expenses out of concern for others, and employ the people in accord with the seasons." Mencius emphasizes this point, "By not interfering with the agricultural season, there will be more grain than can be eaten. When closely knotted nets do not enter pools and ponds, there will be more fish and turtles than can be eaten. When woodcutters enter mountains and forests in the proper season, there will be more wood than can be used. When grains, fish, and turtles are plentiful, and wood unlimited, the people will be able to care for the living and mourn the dead without remorse. Caring for the living and morning the dead is the foundation of the Way of Kings." *Lunyu* 1.5/1/14; *Mengzi* 1.3/1/28–1.3/2/1.
31. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu,*1:47.

32. Cao Feng, *Shang Bo jian sixiang yangjiu*,182 .
33. Concerning the transcription of this character, see Cao Feng, *Shang Bo sixiang yanjiu*,182.
34. Fan Changxi 范常喜, "*Shang Bo wu · San De* zhaji sanze" 《上博五·三德》札記三則, Jianbo wang 简帛网, entry posted February 24, 2006.
35. *Lüshic hunqiu*,26.3/16 9/7–9.
36. *Guoyu jijie*,5 78.
37. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu*,197.
38. This paraphrases Xunzi's argument. *Xunzi*17/79/ 16–21.
39. *Liji jijie*,6.
40. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu*,1457–1459.
41. *Xunzi*19/90/20–22.
42. 齊齊節節 *qiqi jiejie* "fully respect all distinctions" is an expression not found in any other early works. We still conclude that 齊齊 *qiqi* means "respect" because of two passages in the *Liji*: "Shao Yi" 《少儀》chapter says, 'The beauty in the sacrifice is respect [*qiqi*] and magesty," while the "Ji Yi" 《祭義》 chapter says, "Be complete [*qiqi*] in your respect." 節節 can be transcribed as the rules of etiquette *lijie* 禮節 and can be interpreted as 節操 *jiecao* "behaving with distinction." Altogether the phrase means "respecting the ritual" or respecting proper behavior." *Liji jijie*,934,12 10.
43. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:17.
44. *Xunzi*27/ 130/8.
45. *Liji jijie*,142 2.
46. *Lunyu*12.1 /30/20–22.
47. Concerning the concrete signification of the strange phrases "When entering valleys do not make music, and while climbing hills do not sing," see Lin Wenhua 林文华, "*Shang Bo wu San De* "ru xu wu yue, deng qiu wu ge, suo yi wei Tianli" kaobian 《上博五 三德》"入虛毋樂，登丘毋歌，所以為天禮"考辨, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted September 3, 2007.
48. This translation was informed by that of Yates. See *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 1:67; Yates, *Five Lost Classics*,121.
49. Durkheim divides prohibitions into the religious and magical varieties, though the two have some shared characteristics. "The two have this in common, that they declare certain things incompatible, and prescribe the separation of the things whose incompatibility is thus proclaimed. But there are also very grave differences between them. In the first place, the sanctions are not the same in the two cases. Of course the violation of the religious interdicts is frequently believed, as we shall presently see, to bring about material disorders mechanically, from which the guilty man will suffer, and which are regarded as a judgment on his act. But even if these really come about this spontaneous and automatic judgment is not the only one; it is always completed

by another one, supposing human intervention. A real punishment is added to this, if it does not anticipate it, and this one is deliberately inflicted by men; or at least there is a blame and public reprobation. Even when the sacrilege has been punished, as it were, by the sickness or natural death of its author, it is also defamed; it offends opinion, which reacts against it; it puts the man who did it in fault. On the contrary, the magic interdiction is judged only by the material consequences which the forbidden act is believed to produce, with a sort of physical necessity. In disobeying, a man runs risks similar to those to which an invalid exposes himself in not following the advice of his physician; but in this case disobedience is not a fault; it creates no indignation." Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 300–301.

50. *Xunzi*17/79/16.
51. *Zhouli zhengyi* 周礼正义 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2000), 529.
52. *Liji jijie*,693 –694.
53. The first of these quotes appears in the *Mengzi*, while the second also resides in the *Guoyu*. See *Shangshu zhengyi*, 329, 325; *Mengzi* 9.5/49/1; *Guoyu jijie*,76.
54. *Liji*43.2 /166/5–6.
55. While Confucius spoke nothing about "abnormalities, feats of strength, rebellions, or spirits" and once said, "living in obscurity and engaging with abnormalities . . . is not what I do," that immensely learned man did explain numerous strange phenomena. For example, in the *Guoyu* 《國語》, it records, "Ji Hengzi was digging a well and found something resembling an earthen jug containing a sheep. He went to ask Confucius about this, saying: 'I was digging a well and found an animal. What is it?' Confucius responded: 'According to what I've heard it is a sheep. I have also heard that abominations of wood and stone are called the Kui and the Wangliang. The abominations of water are called the Long (dragons) and the Wangxiang. While the abomination of earth is called the Fenyang sheep spirit.'" *Lunyu*, 7.21/16/17; *Liji*, 32.7/143/13; *Guoyu jijie*,191.
56. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu*,369.
57. For more on Xunzi's anti-supernaturalism, also see his "Encouraging Study" 《勸學》 chapter. *Xunzi*,17/81/10,1/ 1/13–1/2/7.
58. *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhu*,763.
59. There is also the famous *Guoyu* passage where Bo Yangfu 伯陽父 explains an earthquake as resulting from an imbalance of yin and yang. The event referenced was massively destructive and historically meaningful, as it brought an end to the Western Zhou by forcing King Ping of Zhou to move the capital east to Luoyang. Yet, Bo Yangfu felt that even this major catastrophe should not be considered a punishment of Heaven. See *Guoyu jijie*,26.
60. *Hanshi waizhuan*,7.19/54/ 15–19.

5 Huang-Lao's Conception of Universal Law: Why Govern with the Way and the Law?

1. There are also those like Zhang Shunhui who considers Zhou and Qin Daoism to be a tradition of politics and governance, and Meng Wentong who uses the topic of the "art of rulership" *zhishu* 治術 to differentiate between his preferred Huang-Lao and the Laozian tradition. See Zhang Shunhui 张舜徽 *Zhou Qin Daolun fahui* 周秦道论发微 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982); Meng Wentong 蒙文, "Luelun Huang Lao xue" 略论黄老学, in *Xian Qin zhuzi yu lixue* 先秦诸子与理学 (Guilin: Guangxi Shifan daxue chubanshe, 2006).
2. Major scholars like Wang Guowei 王国维, Lin Yutang 林语堂, and Feng Youlan 冯友兰氏 all hold this view. See Wang Guowei 王国维, "Quzi wenxue zhi jingshen" 屈子文学之精神, in *Wang Guowei wenji* 王国维文集, vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1997); Wang Guowei 王国维, "Kongzi zhi xueshuo" 孔子之学说, in *Wang Guowei wenji* 王国维文集, vol. 3 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1997); Lin Yutang 林语堂, *Wu guo yu wu min* 吾国与吾民 (Beijing: Baowentang shudian, 1988); Feng Youlan 冯友兰, "Yuan mingfa yinyang daode" 原名法阴阳道德, in *Sansongtang quanji* 三松堂全集, vol. 11 (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe, 2000).
3. The *Zhuangzi* "Tianxia" 《天下》 chapter discusses three lineages of the "ancient arts of the Way": Peng Meng 彭蒙, Tian Pian 田駢, Shen Dao 慎到 belong to one, Guan Yin 關尹, and Lao Dan 老聃 (Laozi) another, and lastly Zhuang Zhou 莊周 (Zhuangzi) has one to himself. The Zhuang Zhou lineage basically incorporates the inclinations of the other Daoist figures and their teachings. *Zhuangzi*33/ 99/10–25.
4. [Translators Note] This term is a combination of Huangdi 黄帝 "the Yellow Emperor" and Laozi 老子. If first appears in the *Shiji*, but is never specifically defined. After the discovery of the texts attached to Mawangdui *Laozi* B, scholars broadly adopted this term to refer to what they saw as a synthesis of Legalism and Daoism popular in the early Han. Currently among Chinese scholars this is a nearly universally accepted school of thought, while in Western sinological circles there remains much doubt over the definition and usefulness of this expression.
5. The *Lüshi chunqiu* and the *Huainanzi*, as Qin and early Han works of Huang-Lao syncretism, combine the governance of the body and the state in a single system. Also, the Mawangdui *Laozi* and the received *Laozi* reverse the order of the two halves of the text, with the Mawangdui *Laozi* putting the *De pian* 《德篇》 before the *Dao pian* 道 篇》. This conforms to the order seen in Hanfeizi's "Jie Lao" 《解老》 and "Yu Lao" 《喻老》 chapters, and Yan Zun's 嚴遵 *Laozi zhigui* 老子指归, but is the opposite of the Heshanggong 河上公, Wang Bi 王弼, and Fu Yi 傅奕 editions. Zhang Dainian 张岱年 feels that that in the early Han there were two different circulating editions. This may have been because of divergent understandings concerning the importance of the "Way of governing"

zhidao 治道 and "techniques of governing" zhishu 治術. However, both of these are the antithesis of the tradition aimed at preserving life and perfecting the body and avoids the political sphere for the sake of individual health and prosperity.

6. For comprehensive studies on Huang-Lao, see Wu Guang 吴光, *Huang Lao zhi xue tonglun* 黄老之学通论 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1985); Yu Mingguang 余明光, *Huangdi sijing yu Huang Lao sixiang* 黄帝四经与黄老思想 (Ha'erbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1989); Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, *Zhanggguo shiqi de Huang lao sixiang* 戰國時期的黃老思想 (Taibei: Taiwan lianjing chubanshe, 1991); Asano Yūichi 浅野裕一, *Ōrōdō no seiritsu to tenkai* 黄老道の成立と展開 (Tokyo: sobusha, 1992); Ding Yuanming 丁原明, *Huang Lao xue lungang* 黄老学论纲 (Jinan: Shandong daxue chubanshe, 1997); Bai Xi 白奚, *Jixia xue Daojia—Zhongguo gudai de sixiang ziyou yu baijia zhengming* 稷下学道家——中国古代的思想自由与百家争鸣 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1998); Hu Jiacong 胡家聪, *Jixia zhengming yu Huang Lao xinxue* 稷下争鸣与黄老新学 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1998).
7. Just as the *Shiji* says of Huang-Lao: "as an art it accords with the idea of following [nature] like the Yinyang school, it takes the best from the Confucians and Mohists, and it gathers the essences of the Sophists and Legalists." *Shiji* 130.3289. [Translator's Note] This is actually the definition for *Daojia* 道家 "Daoism," but some scholars like Wang Zhongjiang consider these two interchangeable during the earlyH an.
8. Liu Zehua 刘泽华, Yu Yingshi 余英时 and Liang Zhiping 梁治平 all negatively critique Legalism and Huang-Lao. See Liu Zehua 刘泽华 *Xierzhai wengao* 洗耳斋文稿 (Zhonghua shuju, 2003); Yu Yingshi 余英时, "Fanzhilun yu Zhongguo zhengzhi chuantong" 反智论与中国政治传统, in *Zhongguo sixing chuantong de xiandai quanshi* 中国思想传统的现代诠释 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1989); Liang Zhiping 梁治平, *Fabian—Zhongguo fa de guoqu, xianzai, yu weilai* 法辨——中国法的过去、现在与未来 (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe,1992).
9. The work of Benjamin Schwartz has already begun to shift the understanding of Huang-Lao in this direction, as has Gao Daoyun. Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Ancient Thought in China* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press,1985), 240–254; Gao Daoyun 高道蕴, "Zhongguo zaoqi de fazhi sixiang?" 中国早期的法治思想？, in *Meiguo xuezhe lun Zhongguo falü chuantong* 美国学者论中国法律传统, eds. Gao Daoyun 高道蕴 and Gao Hongjun 高鸿钧 (Beijing: Zhongguo zhengfa daxue chubanshe, 1994), 212–254.
10. We cannot say that the Huang-Lao "rule of law" is equivalent to the modern Western "rule of law," but on many important points, it should still be termed "rule of law" as we shall see throughout this chapter.

11. Laozi imagines a small country with a limited population that does not need a complex legal system, but any state requires some laws and so Laozi criticism of "prohibitions" should not signify a complete rejection of law.
12. *Laozi*73A /25/5.
13. Prior to this in early Chinese culture, there already existed a notion of "natural law" (like the law of divine punishment, and the ideal justice of Heaven and Shangdi), an awareness of "positive law," as well as a fusion of ritual and natural law. However, the combination of the Way and law was mainly a Huang-Lao innovation. See Qu Tongzu 瞿同祖, *Zhongguo falü yu Zhongguo shehui* 中国法律与中国社会 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996).
14. Joseph Needham famously argued that China never had the notion of eternal universal natural laws, a claim the author aims to disprove in this chapter. Pi Wenrui 皮文睿 (R. P. Peerenboom), "Rujia faxue: chaoyue ziranfa"儒家法学：超越自然法, in *Meiguo xuezhe lun Zhongguo falü chuantong* 美国学者论中国法律传统, ed. Gao Daowen 高道蕴 and Gao Hongjun 高鸿钧 (Beijing: Zhongguo zhengfa daxue chubanshe, 1994), 118, 123.
15. If we assume that when the "Jie Lao" 《解老》 chapter of the *Hanfeizi* uses the expression "thus it is said" *gu yue* 故曰 it indicates a quote from Laozi, then "Thus it is said: 'The Way is what causes them to have patterns [*li* 理]'" must be the words of Laozi. However, this passage appears nowhere among the received or excavated writings of Laozi and remains in doubt. See *Hanfeizi*20/39/ 7.
16. *Zhuangzi*31/94/11.
17. *Hanfeizi*20/35/32- 20/36/12.
18. *Hanfeizi*19/33/15–16.
19. Yates, *Five Lost Classics*, 110; *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:62–63.
20. "Statutes, rules, strictures, and standards [*du* 度] must all model [*fa* 法] the Way." *Guanzi jiaozhu*,301.
21. *Guanzi*13.1/97/4.
22. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:58.
23. Wei Qipeng 魏启鹏, *Mawangdui Hanbo boshu* "*Huangdi shu*" *jianzheng* 马王堆汉帛帛书《黄帝书》笺证 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004),84.
24. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:43.
25. Wei Qipeng theorizes that the missing character here is "partner" (*pei* 配). See Wei Qipeng 魏启鹏, *Mawangdui Hanbo boshu* "*Huangdi shu*" *jianzheng* 马王堆汉帛帛书《黄帝书》笺证 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 55–56.
26. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:53.
27. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:43.
28. Gao Daoyun, "Zhongguo zaoqi de fazhi sixiang?," 235–236.
29. This passage accords with the records in *Zhuangzi* concerning the thought of Song Xing 宋鈃 and Yin Wen 尹文. Yin Wen's philosophy

mostly draws on Mohism, but it also includes Huang-Lao components. See Gao Liushui 高流水, ed., *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi* 慎子、尹文子、公孙龙子全译 (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe, 1996), 149–150; *Zhuangzi*33/98 /29-33/99/8.

30. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:57.
31. *Hanfeizi*5/6 /21.
32. Hu Shi divided Western theories of natural law and kinds of rules or principles for determining what is just in the following way: the law of God; the law that is superior and more fundamental than human established law; the moral power and highest authority of critics, reformers, and revolutionaries. Peerenboom offers this definition, "Natural law often employs some ultimate source of values that is incapable of being superseded. It generally originates in the ultimate principles of some transcendent order or determined human order that has been discovered and not created by humanity for their own needs or to make their systems of belief coherent. Different from common law or positive law, natural law is considered universally efficacious, eternally unchanging. It does not adapt to the times, unlike concrete beliefs and customs, or social structures. Natural law is a specific language, a language of ultimate authority, and a language of the supreme good, unalienable rights, holy commandments, and categorical imperatives." See Hu Shi 胡适 "Zhongguo chuantong zhong de ziranfa" 中国传统中的自然法, in *Zhongguo de wenyi fuxing* 中国的文艺复兴 (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1998); Pi Wenrui 皮文睿 (R. P. Peerenboom), "Rujia Faxue: Chaoyue ziranfa," 122; also see John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press,196 5).
33. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 1:87. [Translator's note] This translation is based on the author's slight alteration of the original transcription. He changes *hengwu* 恒无 "unmanifest constant" to *Hengxian* 恒先 "Primordial Constant".
34. *Guanzi*16.1 /115/30–32.
35. *Guanzi*13.1 /97/6.
36. *Guanzi*13.3 /99/30–31.
37. *Hanfeizi*20/39/6–8.
38. *Zhuangzi*12/29/12.
39. For an alternative translation, see Yates, *Five Lost Classics*, 53; *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:87.
40. Maintaining a similar intellectual objective, the "Inward Training" says, "The reason one thing can transform is called spirit. The One that can transform things, call it spirit. The One that can alter situations, call it wisdom. Transformations do not change *qi* and alterations do not change wisdom. Only the Gentleman who holds the One can act thusly. Holding the One without fail, one becomes the ruler of the ten thousand things. A Superior Person can affect things but is

not affected by them for he has obtained the principle of the One." *Guanzi*16.1 /116/6–7.

41. According to legend, Li Hei is one of the seven advisors of the Yellow Emperor.
42. For an alternative translation, see Yates, *Five Lost Classics*, 135; *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:72.
43. This translation was influenced by Yates. See Yates, *Five Lost Classics*, 53; *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:72.
44. *Zhuangzi* 33/99/11/-12; *Lüshi chunqiu*
45. *Lüshic hunqiu*17.7/107/ 7.
46. This translation mostly relies on Andrew Meyer's. See Major et al., *The Huainanzi*, 399-401; *Huainanzi*11/94/15- 28.
47. *Lüshic hunqiu*17.8/107/ 12-16.
48. The Laozi passage, "Heaven and Earth are not Benevolent, taking the myriad things as straw dogs" can be understood as based in the "Greater Benevolence" *Daren* 大仁, which transcends the normal distinction between what is and is not benevolent. *Laozi*5A/ 2/14.
49. *Laozi*79A/27/4,77A/26/6.
50. Ou Yang Xun 欧阳询, *Yiwen leiju* 艺文类聚, ed. Wang Shaoying 汪绍楹 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982), 1.
51. *Zhuangzi* 6/19/26-27; *Lüshi chunqiu*1.5/5/ 10.
52. *Hanfeizi*49/147/31.
53. The *Shuowen jiezi* explains the character "private" *si* 私 by quoting Hanfeizi, "Hanfei said, 'When Cang Jie created writing he denoted self determination with the symbol 厶 "private." Everything that is private represents a kind of favoritism.'" When one acts for oneself or is selfish, one is obviously in conflict with the public nature of the law. See *Xu Shen* 许慎, *Shuowen jiezi* 说文解字 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1963),189.
54. *Hanfeizi*19/33/27–28.
55. Hanfeizi also said, "The reasons for establishing laws and ordinances is to remove private interest. When laws and ordinances are employed the way of private interest is removed. Private interest is what disrupts the law." Whenever there was a conflict between personal sentiments or loving benevolence and the public objective law, Hanfeizi always picks the law. He said, "Now [the theory that] if ruler and minister relate to each other as father and son then there will necessarily be order must rest [on the fact] that there are no disordered relationships between fathers and sons. [We can say with certainty that] it is people's nature to care for their parents more than for others, and in all cases there is love. However, this does not [mean that families] are necessarily ordered. Even if the love is increased, how does it prevent disorder? The Former Kings' love for their people did not exceed a parent's love for their children, and children are not always well behaved, so how can the people be ordered this way? If when enacting the punishments of law the ruler cries, this demonstrates benevolence

but does not help to create order. That which causes tears to flow and the desire for lenience is benevolence. That which cannot but punish is the law. The Former Kings chose their laws over their tears, and thus the fact that benevolence cannot be used to govern is clear. *Hanfeizi* 6/8/1-2,45/136/26.

56. The *Guanzi* chapter "Ruler and Minister I" 《君臣上》 expresses this point, "The ruler possessing the Way is skilled and insightful in establishing laws, and does not let his personal preferences impede them. The ruler bereft of the Way follows himself in establishing laws and discards the law for his private interests." *Shenzi* 《慎子》 similarly says, "Laws, regulations, rituals, and records are what establish public justice. All that is made for the public is to excise the private." *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 558; *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,25.
57. Sometimes this "general populous" does not include every member of society, as in some cases laws only apply to certain classes of people.
58. The *Hanfeizi* "Jie Lao" chapter says, "If a craftsman repeatedly changes his occupation multiple times, he will lose his productivity. If a workman repeated shifts his occupation, he will lose his productivity. If one man loses a half day's productivity every day, within ten days he will have lost the productivity equal to that of five men. If ten thousand men each lose a half day's productivity every day, in ten days they will have lost the productivity equal to that of fifty thousand men. Thus, the more numerous those who frequently change their specialty become, the greater the losses that they will incur. If laws and decrees are altered, advantages and disadvantages will shift. If advantages and disadvantages shift, the specialized roles of the people will change. If the specialized roles are changed this is called a change of occupation. Therefore, following this principle we can observe that if major tasks involving the masses are disrupted repeatedly, little will be accomplished. If one collects large [bronze] vessels but moves them repeatedly, many will become damaged and destroyed. If one cooks a small fish by repeatedly flipping it, it will ruin its luster. If when ruling a large state one repeatedly changes the laws, the people will suffer. Consequently, the ruler who possesses the Way values stillness and does not make major changes to the law. Thus it is said, 'Ruling a great state is like cooking a small fish.'" *Hanfeizi*20/ 37/23–27.
59. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,43.
60. *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,25.
61. Jiang Lihong 蒋礼鸿, *Shangjun shu zhuizhi* 商君书锥指 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 84.
62. *Shangjun shu zhuizhi*,3.
63. *Hanfeizi*54/ 156/19–20.
64. *Mengzi*13.14/68/24.
65. The *Hanfeizi* says, "Currently those who do not understand rulership say one must gain the minds of the people. Focusing on gaining the minds of the people as the way to rule is not something Yi Yin 伊尹 or

Guan Zhong 管仲 ever did. They listened to the people, but that was all. The wisdom of the people cannot be used, as they have the minds of infants. Now if infant's heads are not shaved their stomachs will hurt, and if their swollen lymph is not removed their they will sleep excessively. Shaving their heads and removing their lymph requires that some person hold them, and a loving mother does this. Though they scream without end, the infant does not know that these small instances of suffering greatly benefit them." *Hanfeizi* 50/152/29-50/153/1.

66. *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,73.
67. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:51.
68. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,1:47.
69. The *Hanfeizi* "Difficulties III" 《難三》 chapter says, "Law is recorded in the documents and books, stored in the officials' halls, and dispersed among the people." The "Establishing Law" 《定法》 chapter say, "Law refers to the mandates and ordinances recorded in the officials halls, and the punishments inevitably on people's minds. It is the rewards presented to those attentive to the laws, and the penalties imposed on those who break the ordinances." *Hanfeizi* 38/125/10,43/ 131/9–10.
70. In the state of Qin, people could advance through achievements in farming or soldiering.
71. Each country's legal reform incited major opposition from the nobles. This was because the "new law" eradicated the special privileges of the aristocrats. For example, concerning the political reform of Wu Qi 吳起 it is recorded, "In the state of Chu they leveled the ranks of the nobles and equalized their emoluments. They took from those with excess and augmented those who were lacking." Unsurprisingly, the nobles of Chu "were very bitter about this." See *Shuoyuan*15.4/ 117/26.
72. *Liji jijie*, 81–82; *Lunyu*13.19/35/ 23.
73. *Shangjun shu zhuizhi*,100.
74. *Guanzi*13.3 /99/20–22.
75. *Hanfeizi*6/9/7- 8.
76. *Shiji*130 .3291.
77. For Huang-Lao, these constructs rely on the Law of the Way as their foundation.
78. *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,25–26.
79. *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,78.
80. *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,59–60.
81. *Xunzi*21/ 103/8-9.
82. *Hanfeizi*38/ 123/32-38/124/7.
83. Shen Buhai has a statement that affirms Aristotle's point, "Furthermore, the ears, eyes, intelligence, and creativity are inherently insufficient to be solely depended upon. Only cultivating proper techniques and implementing proper rational principles can be judged admissible. When Marquis Zhaoxi of Han looked over the sacrificial animals to

be used in worship at the ancestral temples, the pig was too small, so the marquis ordered an official to substitute another. The official brought back the same pig. The marquis said, 'Is this not the same pig that was here before?' When the official had no response, the marquis ordered an officer to censure him. His followers asked, 'How did your majesty recognize that it was the same pig?' The lord answered, 'By its ears.' When Shen Buhai heard of this incident, he said, 'How do we recognize that he is deaf? By the keenness of his ears. How do we recognized that he is blind? By the clarity of his vision. How do we recognize that he is mad? By the correlation between what his words and the facts. Hence it is said that if a person excludes listening and has no other means of hearing, then his hearing is keen; if he excludes looking and has no other means of seeing, then he will see clearly; and if he eliminates intelligence and has no other means of recognizing, then he will be impartial. If these three faculties are not employed, there is order; if they are employed, there is disordered.' This contends that the ear, eyes, mind, and intelligence are insufficient to be depended on by themselves." See Knoblock and Riegel, *The Annals of LüBu wei,* 415–416; *Lüshi chunqiu,*17.3/101 /26-17.3/102/1.

84. *Hanfeizi*27/58/14- 29.
85. *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*,42.
86. *Hanfeizi*8/10/29- 32.
87. *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*,87.
88. The *Lüshi chunqiu* records a near exact quote of this lost work. See *Shenzi, Yinwenzi, Gongsunlongzi quanyi*, 58; *Lüshi chunqiu*, 17.6/106/11–14.
89. *Shangjun shu zhuizhi,*144–145 .
90. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China*,237.
91. *Hanfeizi*29/60/19- 29/60/4.
92. The Ming dynasty scholar Shen Maoshang 慎懋賞, who collated the inner and outer sections of the *Shenzi* 慎子, and Qian Xizuo 錢熙祚 who collated the lost seventh chapter of chapter of the work, considered that the lines beginning with "Those of ancient times who perfected the Great Structure" and ending with "There is no good fortune more enduring than peace" recorded the lost work of Shen Dao. However, this "Great Structure" 《大體》essay is associated with the *Hanfeizi* in the *Qunshu zhiyao* 《群書治要》 and not the *Shenzi* 《慎子》. Furthermore, according to the *Qunshu zhiyao* 《群書治要》, *Shenzi* 《申子》 also had an essay entitled "Great Structure." See Shen Maoshang 慎懋賞, *Shenzi* 慎子, in *Sibu congkan chubian* 四部丛刊初编, Masters division volume 417 (Shanghai: Shanghai Commercial Press, 1922), 16.
93. *Zhuangzi*13/35/21–25.
94. Wang Xianqian 王先谦, *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Zhonghua shuju, 1988),588.
95. *Xunzi*8/2 7/26-8/28/13.

96. This translation follows Knoblock with some minor alterations. See John Knoblock, *Xunzi*: *A Translation and Study of the Complete Works,* vol. II (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 246–247; *Xunzi*16/78/10–16.
97. *Xunzi*12/57/3–6.
98. This translation generally follows Koblock. See Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. II, 247; *Xunzi*16/78/1 6–18.
99. This translation occasionally accords with Knoblock. See Knoblock, *Xunzi*, *vol. II*, 245; *Xunzi*16/77/16–17.
100. According to Sima Qian's records, when Shang Yang 商鞅 arrived in Qin, he first expounded on the "Way of Thearchs" *Didao* 帝道 and the Way of Kings, but Duke Xiao of Qin 秦孝公 was uninterested. However, when he explained the Way of Hegemons, Duke Xiao became excited and eventually gave Shang Yang a position. See *Shiji*68.2 228.
101. *Xunzi jijie*,300.
102. *Xunzi*15/72/1–7.
103. *Shuihudi Qinmu zhujian zhengli xiaozu* 睡虎地秦墓竹简整理小组, ed., *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian* 睡虎地秦墓竹简 (Bejing: Wenwu chubanshe,1990) .
104. Makesi Weibo 马克斯·韦伯 (Max Weber), *Xueshu yu zhengzhi* 学术与政治 [*Wissenschaft als Beruf Politik als Beruf*] (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1998), 103.
105. Ibid.,116.

Appendix 1 *The Great One Birthed Water* (*Taiyi sheng shui*) 《太一生水》

1. See *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹简 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1998), 125–126.
2. See Qiu Xigui 裘锡, "*Taiyi shengshui* 'Ming Zi' zhangjie" 《太一生水》"名字"章解释——兼论〈太一生水〉的分章问题, in *Zhongguo chutu wenxian shijiang* 中国出土文献十讲 (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2004), 248–251; Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodu ji* (*zengding ben*) 郭店楚简校读记（增订本）(Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin daxue chubanshe, 2007), 41–55; Zhao Jianwei 赵建伟 "Guodian Chumu zhujian *Taiyi shengshui* shuzheng" 郭店楚墓竹简《太一生水》疏证, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究 17 (Bejing: Sanlian shudian, 1999): 380–392.

Appendix 2 *All Things Forms in Flux* (*Fanwu liuxing*) 《凡物流形》

1. Shen Pei 沈培 略说《上博（七）》新见的"一"字, Fudan daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted on December, 31, 2008; Li Rui 李锐, "*Fanwu liuxing* shiwen xinbian (gao) 《凡物流形》释文新编（稿）, Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子2000网, entry

posted on December 31, 2008; Gu Shikao 顾史考, "Shang Bo qi *Fanwuliuxing* jianxu ji yundu xiaobu" 上博七《凡物流形》简序及韵读小补, Wuhan daxue jianbo wang 武汉大学简帛网, Feburary 23, 2009; 王中江 Wang Zhongjiang 《凡物流形》编联新见, Jianbo yanjiu wang 简帛研究网, entry posted March, 3, 2009; Fudan daxue chutu wenxian yu gudai Wenzi yangjiu zhongxin yangjiusheng dushuhui 复旦大学出土文献与古文字研究中心研究生读书会, ed., "*Shang Bo* (*Qi*) · *Fanwu liuxing* Chongbian shiwen" 《上博（七）·凡物流形》重编释文, Fudan daxue guwenzi wang 复旦大学古文字网, entry posted December31,2008.

Appendix 3 *The Divine Insight of Spirits and Gods* (*Guishen zhi ming*) 《鬼神之明》

1. Ma Chengyuan 马承源, ed., *Shanghai Bowuguan Zhanguo Chu zhushu* 上海博物馆藏战国楚竹书, vol. 5 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005),307–320.
2. See Liao Mingchu 廖名春, "Du *Shang Bo wu* · *Guishen zhi ming* pian zhaji" 《读<上博五·鬼神之明>篇札记》 Kongzi 2000 wang 孔子2000网, entry posted February 19, 2006. See Chen Wei 陈伟氏, "Shang Bo wu *Guishen zhi ming* pian chudu" 《上博五《鬼神之明》篇初读》, Jianbo yanjiuwang 简帛研究网, entry posted Februrary 18, 2006.

Appendix 4 *The Three Virtues* (*San De*) 《三德》

1. Ma Chengyuan 马承源, ed., *Shanghai Bowuguan Zhanguo Chu zhushu*上海博物馆藏战国楚竹书, vol. 5 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005), 287–303.
2. Chen Jian 陈剑. "*San De* zhujian bianlian de yichu buzheng" 《 三德》竹简编联的一处补正, Jianbo wang 简帛网, entry posted April 1, 2006; Cao Feng 曹峰, "*San De* de bianlian yu fen zhang" 《 三德》的编联与分章, in *Shang Bo Chujian sixiang yanjiu* 上博楚简思想研究 (Taibei: Taiwan wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2006), 173–232; 顾史考, "Shang Bo zhushu *San De* pian zhuzhang qianjie"上博竹书《三德》篇逐章浅解, in *Qu Wanli xiansheng baisui danchen guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 屈万里先生百岁诞辰国际学术研讨会论文集 (Septemper2006) :269–310.

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