

Ideology of Power and Power of Ideology in Early China

Edited by

Yuri Pines
Paul R. Goldin
Martin Kern



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Contents

Acknowledgments VII
List of Contributors VIII

Introduction

Ideology and Power in Early China 1
Yuri Pines

PART ONE

The Foundations: Unity, Heaven, and Ancestral Models

- 1 Representations of Regional Diversity during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty 31
Paul R. Goldin
- 2 Omens and Politics: The Zhou Concept of the Mandate of Heaven as Seen in the *Chengwu* 程寤 Manuscript 49
Luo Xinhui 羅新慧
- 3 Long Live The King! The Ideology of Power between Ritual and Morality in the *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳 69
Joachim Gentz
- 4 Language and the Ideology of Kingship in the “Canon of Yao” 118
Martin Kern

PART TWO

Textual Battles: Rulers, Ministers, and the People

- 5 Monarch and Minister: The Problematic Partnership in the Building of Absolute Monarchy in the *Han Feizi* 韓非子 155
Romain Graziani
- 6 The Changing Role of the Minister in the Warring States: Evidence from the *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 181
Scott Cook
- 7 Ideologies of the Peasant and Merchant in Warring States China 211
Roel Sterckx
- 8 Population Records from Liye: Ideology in Practice 249
Charles Sanft

EPILOGUE

Ideological Authority in China: Past and Present

- 9 Political and Intellectual Authority: The Concept of the “Sage-Monarch”
and Its Modern Fate 273

Liu Zehua 劉澤華

Bibliography 301

Index 337

Representations of Regional Diversity during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty

Paul R. Goldin

If there is one word that art historians love to use in connection with the art of the great southern state of Chu 楚, it is “flamboyant” (e.g., Eugene Yuejin Wang 1994: 522; So 1983: 67; Lawton 1982: 24).¹ “Exotic” is a favorite as well (Willets 1958: vol. 1, 254). But the issue is not the fulsomeness of such adjectives (no item of culture is “exotic” to those who grew up with it), for even soberly worded accounts must still come to grips with the fact that Chu art displays certain styles and motifs not found anywhere else in the ancient Chinese world (e.g., Flad and Chen 2013: 133; Sickman and Soper 1971: 40). For instance, an observer with any knowledge of Chinese art will be able to tell that a certain type of drum stand with addorsed birds, often treading on tigers or snakes, comes from Chu (Furniss 2008: 39). The same goes for the tomb objects known in Chinese as “grave-securing beasts” (*zhenmu shou* 鎮墓獸), which are usually made of wood—sometimes joined with real antlers—and can have conspicuous features such as lolling tongues (Chaffin 2007). There are all sorts of apotropaic images and figurines in Chinese funerary art, but this type is peculiar to Chu.

Thus, it may come as a surprise that, as several scholars have recently stressed (Li Ling 2004: 271–333; also Falkenhausen 2006: 264–265; Xu Shaohua 1999: 21–32), the further back one goes in time, the more Chu art resembles that of the Zhou 周 court and the Central Plain. This seems not only counter-intuitive but also contrary to depictions of Chu, commonplace even in antiquity, as a polity straddling the border between Chinese civilization and alien barbarism. In one memorable passage in *Speeches of the States* (*Guoyu* 國語), the men of Chu are portrayed as “savages from Jing” 荆蠻 (Jing being another name for Chu: see Li Yujie 2001: 10–11) who do not know how to conduct themselves at ritual gatherings; elsewhere in the same text, they are called “savage

* Many thanks to Matthew Anderson, Cortney E. Chaffin, Annie Chan, Lothar von Falkenhausen, Martin Kern, Yuri Pines, and Ori Sela for helpful comments while I was drafting this essay.

1 “Flamboyant” is much abused in other contexts as well. See, e.g., Valenstein 2007, which, perhaps not coincidentally, makes a case for Chu influence (62).

barbarians”蠻夷 (*Guoyu* 14.12: 429–431 [“Jinyu ba” 晉語八]; 18.7: 527 [“Chuyu xia” 楚語下]). The *Zuo Commentary* (*Zuo zhuan* 左傳) is less overtly condescending (Pines 2002a: 42–43) but still reflects ambivalence (Wai-ye Li 2007: 298ff.; Schaberg 2001: 133ff.). Thus, if Chu art was originally comparable to that of any other regional power in the Zhou cultural sphere, within a few centuries Chu’s neighbors had forgotten this fact; responding, perhaps, to the same artistic styles that have struck modern critics as “flamboyant” and “exotic,” these ancient observers regarded the population of Chu as alien, admissible into the Chinese moral order only after thorough habituation and schooling.

This phenomenon demands explanation—and the explanation must also address the apparent paradox that, just as the Chinese world was moving *toward* political and ideological unification (finally achieved in 221 BCE by the First Emperor of Qin 秦始皇帝, after decades of preparation), regional art in Chu was becoming *more*, not less, distinctive. The story of early Chinese history has been told by masters such as K.C. Chang² as a protracted transition from a system with a large number of small and culturally diverse polities (as in the Stone Age) to a system with a small number of large and culturally homogeneous ones (as in the Warring States period, on the eve of unification). While this schema is no doubt correct in its essentials, it is in need of refinement.

In the area of bronze-casting, the origins of Chu art as an unmistakable subtype of Zhou culture are paralleled, *mutatis mutandis*, in most other states on the ancient periphery (Rawson 1999: 365–366).³ In Yan 燕, in the northeast, the recently excavated *Ke lei* 克罍, which might have been produced as early as the eleventh century BCE and records the establishment of a gentleman named Ke as Lord of Yan 燕侯,⁴ is so similar to Zhou analogues that no one can be sure of where it was produced: either in the king’s workshops (whence it would have been packed and transported to Yan) or in a Yan workshop that imitated royal standards. Like early bronzes from Chu and other peripheral regions, early Yan bronzes can be virtually indistinguishable from royal products.

2 E.g., Chang 1983: 32: “the political landscape of ancient China was dotted with hundreds of thousands of towns inhabited by members of discrete clans and lineages.” For a shorter version of the argument, see Chang 2005. Chang blunted his analysis by insisting on referring to the period as “the Three Dynasties” (i.e., Xia 夏, Shang 商, and Zhou), even though his own work went a long way toward overturning this mythic conception of ancient China. Thus, he is not without his critics (e.g., Bagley 1999: 135n17).

3 For early Qin bronzes, which could scarcely be identified were it not for their inscriptions, see esp. Han Wei 2001: 10–16; also Teng Mingyu 2003: 65–68.

4 This piece, incidentally, invalidates the older theory that the appointment of the Lord of Yan under Zhou auspices is but a myth (e.g., Qi Sihe 1940).

Indeed, they are most distinctive when they *fail* to live up to royal models because of craftsmen's incompetence—as in the case of the Ke *he* 克盃, a later vessel with an inscription identical to that of the Ke *lei* but noteworthy for its gross inferiority (Li Feng 1997).

The inscription is difficult, but herewith a tentative translation:

王曰：太保，唯乃明乃鬯，享余乃辟。余大對乃享，令克侯于燕。事*? 羌*、馬、盧*、于*、馭、長。克來燕，入土及厥司。用作寶尊彝。(Zhou Baohong 2005: 1–104)⁵

The King said: “Grand Protector, you have brightened your fragrant wine, offering it to me, your ruler. I greatly respond to your offering and command Ke to be the Lord of Yan, to govern the Qiang, Ma, Zha [?], Yu, Yu, and Chang.” Ke came to Yan and accepted the land and its officials, wherefore he made this treasured sacrificial vessel. (Cf. the translation in Li Feng 2008: 241–242.)

Inasmuch as Ke's legitimacy derived directly from his appointment by the sovereign, it is plausible that he wanted the inscription authorizing his governance of Yan to be cast in a bronze vessel as similar as possible to those enjoyed by the King of Zhou himself. The very act of displaying his legitimacy in writing—for these might have been the first written words that had ever been seen in Yan—was also part of Ke's effort to associate himself with the literate culture of the heartland.⁶ Such motives would have suppressed any nascent tendency toward regional distinctiveness.

This is not to say that there was no regional variation during the Bronze Age. On the contrary, there was variation of multiple kinds. First, it is a near certainty that not everyone spoke the same language, even if the full range of linguistic diversity can never be ascertained through archeology. (Language and culture, as is especially well illustrated in New Guinea, the most linguistically diverse region on earth, are by no means coterminous.)⁷ For reasons that are

5 Asterisks in my transcription indicate graphs that cannot be reproduced in the standard *kaishu* 楷書 font.

6 On the spread of writing from the center to the periphery, see, e.g., Li Feng 2011: 271–272.

7 The classic study is Welsch 1992, with numerous responses, rebuttals, re-rebuttals, etc. For a synthesis, see Terrell 2001. These findings vitiate theories attempting to match material cultures inferred from archeology with discrete linguistic groups: e.g., Laurent Sagart's (2011) equation of Proto-Sino-Tibetan-Austronesian with the Yangshao Culture 仰韶文化. For all we know, Yangshao might have encompassed multiple unrelated (and possibly extinct) language families.

still not completely understood, Chinese was the only written language, but, with an elite education, someone with a foreign mother tongue could read and recite Chinese like any other aristocrat. This is, at any rate, the situation depicted in historical sources (*Zuo zhuan*, Xi 14.1: 1005–1007; cf. Pines 2005b: 70), and there must have been at least as much linguistic variety in prehistoric times.

Second, literally tens of thousands of bronze vessels from the Shang and Zhou periods have been documented,⁸ and certain regional tendencies are undeniable.⁹ Vessels depicting human faces, for example, are relatively rare in the north¹⁰ and thus suggestive of southern manufacture. Sadly, the hypothesis cannot be tested by some of the most famous examples, such as the “Human-Faced Square Cauldron” 人面方鼎, currently in the Hunan Provincial Museum,¹¹ or “The Tigress,” a *you* 卣 depicting a creature holding a human head near its maw,¹² because they are unprovenanced. But both of these are thought to come from Hunan.

8 Here I do not consider the bronze cultures of Sanxingdui 三星堆 and Jinsha 金沙, autochthonous yet interconnected with the civilizations of the Chinese heartland, because there is no reason to suppose that they participated in the same political system. The most recent discussion in English is Flad and Chen 2013: 89–100. Chinese scholarship usually identifies Sanxingdui as the forerunner of the later nation called Shu 蜀 (e.g., Li Xueqin 1997: 204–214). The lack of any writing from Sanxingdui or Jinsha obviates definite conclusions, but Shang and Zhou documents do not convey that these cultures (whatever they were called in their day) were part of the same *oikumene*.

9 The relevant bibliography is too large to cite in a single footnote. For representative studies, see Li Xueqin 1997: 190–273; Zhu Fenghan 1995: 647–681, 782–858; and Kane 1974–1975.

10 Bagley (2004: 241n29) goes too far when he claims that Anyang never produced “representational art,” let alone depictions of human beings, except in its writing system: “Only in the sixth century BC do pictorial designs appear on a few bronze vessels.” There are many noteworthy counterexamples. For example, Allan (2010) discusses two unmistakable pictorial motifs (from Anyang as well as other regions). Bagley himself discussed several jade figurines in Bagley 1980, entries 34–40.

11 Also sometimes called *Dahe* 大禾 Square Cauldron, after the two graphs inscribed inside it. Much Chinese scholarship has been wasted on the intractable question of the identity of the face. See, e.g., Xiong Jianhua 2007; and Sun Zuoyun 2007.

12 Two nearly identical copies are known: one in the Musée Cernuschi (Paris) and one in the Sumitomo Collection (Sen'oku Museum 泉屋博古館, Kyoto and Tokyo). See Chen Peifen 2007.

Third, burial practices vary as well. The great western state of Qin probably displays the most variation of all.¹³ In the words of Lothar von Falkenhausen, “Qin tombs differ in two respects from Eastern Zhou–period tombs elsewhere in the Zhou culture sphere: they are overwhelmingly oriented east–west rather than north–south, and they feature flexed rather than extended burial” (2006: 215). Falkenhausen goes on to analyze Qin burials at Yimencun 益門村 and Maojiaping 毛家坪 that indicate the presence of multiple ethnic groups (Falkenhausen 2006: 224–239; Teng Mingyu 2003: 93–94). Similarly, the inscription on the aforementioned Ke *lei* seems to enumerate diverse ethnic groups living in the territory of Yan, where Ke is about to assume command.¹⁴

But sources such as these emphasize cultural conformity over heterogeneity for ideological reasons. By grounding Ke’s franchise in the words spoken by the King of Zhou, the same inscription deploys the standard political discourse of the time: presenting the Zhou confederation as a great family—modeled, no doubt, on the structure of Bronze Age lineages—of fellows in a shared enterprise, united by familial rhetoric (Li Feng 2008: 294–299; He Ziquan 2001: 95–96; Hsu and Linduff 1988: 163–171) regardless of whether they were, in fact, related by blood. (Some were; some were not.) Like the patriarch (*gong* 公) of a lineage presiding over far-flung and potentially factious branches, the King of Zhou served as the lodestar whose legitimacy, itself conferred by Heaven,¹⁵ was eagerly borrowed by lesser lords. Overt submission to the King would be required by whatever offices or domains he thought fit to dispense. And the coin of the realm was ritual. There was no surer indication of the King’s favor than a bronze vessel duly inscribed with a record of his dispensation, often recounting the many precious ritual gifts that accompanied the commission (Vogt 2012: 63–67; Li Feng 2008: 109–110; Musha 1980). Armed with such tokens, the lesser lord would play out his role as the King’s representative by erecting, in his appointed lands, a smaller ritual center imitating that of his overlord. This would be his own lineage seat (Falkenhausen 2008: 218ff.), centered on the precinct of his ancestral cult.

Li Feng (2003; 2008: 288–290) has rightly criticized the characterization of this system as feudalistic, which was all too common in both Chinese and

13 Yin Qun (2012) interprets one Qin burial as evidence of a close connection between the cultures of Shang and early Qin. See also Thote 2004: 84.

14 Compare also the ode “Hanyi” 韓奕 (Mao 261), where the Lord of Han is charged with overseeing the “hundred groups of savages” 百蠻 in his domain.

15 On the Mandate of Heaven, see, e.g., Luo Xinhui 2012; Deng Peiling 2011: 30–48; Shaughnessy 1999: 313–317; and Kominami 1992. The discussion in Creel 1970: 93–100 is marred by his conception of the political system as feudalistic (see below).

Western scholarship of the twentieth century (e.g., Granet 1952; Fan Wenlan 1956, 1: 133–138). The throng of nobles beholden to the Zhou ruler—bearing titles conventionally translated as “duke” (*gong* 公), “marquis” (*hou* 侯),¹⁶ “earl” (*bo* 伯), “viscount” (*zi* 子), “baron” (*nan* 男), and so on—were conceived as vicegerents charged with establishing ritual colonies and serving the king’s interests away from the royal center, in the midst of alien populations. As Li Feng explains:

Beyond the territorial core, the royal domain in Shaanxi, there was probably no “territory” that we can call Zhou, but there were thousands of settlements that were linked by roads to the many regional centers that formed the Zhou state. In between and beyond these settlements, there were forests, virgin lands, and probably also settlements, especially in the east and north, inhabited by some non-Zhou communities. (2008: 288)

For all their impressive bronzes, the power of regional lords to impose their will on those non-Zhou communities was by no means guaranteed, and in some cases may have been nil. A text as late as the *Zuo Commentary* depicts non-Chinese groups living uneventfully in the proximity of major Chinese settlements (e.g., *Zuo zhuan*, Ai 4.2: 1627; cf., generally, Creel 1970: 199–200). Thus, it makes more sense to imagine the Western Zhou kingdom not as a continuous territory with fixed borders but as a royal ritual center surrounded by satellite ritual centers in all directions.

Over time, however, the establishment of so many regional lords led to the diminution of the king’s power. Partly because he seems to have conceded the right to intervene in the various lords’ territorial affairs, they and their descendants were able to harness the resources of their domains, so that within a few centuries, their collective strength outstripped that of their king (Wang Jian 2004: 146–151; Li Feng 2006: 110–121). A milestone in this transition came in 771 BCE, when the Lord of Shen 申侯, the king’s father-in-law, joined forces with an alien group known as the Canine Warriors (*quanrong* 犬戎)¹⁷ to depose King You 幽王 (r. 781–771) and sack his capital, ushering in the period that we now call Eastern Zhou 東周 (770–256 BCE). If the sources are to be believed,

16 Strictly speaking, if the English translation of *bo* 伯 is to be “earl,” then the translation of *hou* ought to be “marquess,” not “marquis.” (“Earl” and “marquess” are English titles, “count” and “marquis” their French equivalents.) I have never understood this quirk of Sinology.

17 Virtually all Chinese scholars make the mistake of assuming that *rong* 戎 refers to an ethnic group (see Goldin 2011c: 221, 235n5).

the impetus was a succession dispute: the Lord of Shen wanted the Crown Prince to be his own grandson, but King You wished to designate a son by a concubine, the bewitching Si of Bao 褒姒 (which might mean no more than “The Woman from Bao”). The legend of Si of Bao, which I have discussed elsewhere (Goldin 2002: 49–50), is not entirely believable, but it encapsulates the crucial political dynamic of the day: territorial lords were now strong enough to dictate who should be the next king. The Son of Heaven no longer had the power to choose his own successor.

Bronze inscriptions reflected this political sea change: once it was no longer obligatory to fawn upon the King of Zhou and laud his munificence, lords would more typically commemorate their own achievements undertaken on their own authority (Mattos 1997: 86). And this is precisely when the expression of regional identity began to take shape (Thote 2004: 86). One important development is that the regional franchises, which were now acting more and more like autonomous states, began to compile their own historical annals, often called “scribal records” (*shiji* 史記; Pines 2002a: 14–26). The most famous is the text known as *Springs-and-Autumns* (*Chunqiu* 春秋), or the annals of the state of Lu 魯 for the period 722–481 BCE. The *Bamboo Annals* (*Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年), which has a complicated textual history, probably constitutes an analogue for the state of Wei 魏 (and previously Jin 晉) (Shaughnessy 2006: 186–256; Nivison 2009). *Mengzi* (8.21: 192), finally, mentions two other chronicles, of which no traces remain: *The Conveyance* (*Sheng* 乘) of Jin and *The Fiend* (*Taowu* 橈杓) of Chu. There are no examples of such texts before the Eastern Zhou.¹⁸

These developments in the political sphere led to fundamental changes in the significance of war and the manner in which it was waged. As Mark Edward Lewis has explained, in the early Eastern Zhou, battle was primarily a ritual affair: there was little reason to fight to the death when the combatants were gentlemen of the same elite class and often interrelated by marriage—hence the frequent literary tropes of refusing to press a strategic advantage because it would be considered undignified, of dismounting to aid one’s foe when his chariot was stuck in the mud, and so on. (Bronze Age chariots were rickety little cars that must have been in constant danger of tipping over.) In the Warring States, by contrast, with states fighting for their very survival, punctiliousness in matters of ritual would have been an unaffordable luxury. Now battles were large-scale confrontations involving masses of unskilled

18 Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145–ca. 85 BCE) famously complained that he had to rely exclusively on the annals of Qin, because that state had destroyed all the others: *Shiji* 史記 15: 686, “Liuguo nianbiao” 六國年表.

troops—most were probably peasants who were handed a crossbow in the seasons when their labor was not needed in the fields—with incomparably higher numbers of casualties (Lewis 1990: 15–96).¹⁹

Thus, it stands to reason that some of the earliest Chinese texts highlighting regional variation were military manuals. A commander marching into foreign lands needed to know as much as possible about its terrain and customs.²⁰ *Wuzi* 吳子—which, despite the attribution to Wu Qi 吳起 (d. 381 BCE), cannot be dated precisely—offers a vade-mecum through the regions of China:

夫齊性剛，其國富。君臣驕奢而簡於細民。其政寬而祿不均。一陳兩心，前重後輕，故重而不堅。擊此之道，必三分之，獵其左右。脅而從之，其陳可壞。

秦性強，其地險，其政嚴，其賞罰信，其人不讓；皆有鬪心，故散而自戰。擊此之道，必先示之以利而引去之；士貪於得而離其將。乘乘獵散，設伏投機，其將可取。

楚性弱，其地廣，其政騷，其民疲。故整而不久。擊此之道，襲亂其屯，先奪其氣。輕進速退，弊而勞之。勿與戰爭，其軍可敗。

燕性慤，其民慎。好勇義，寡詐謀；故守而不走。擊此之道，觸而迫之，陵 [= 凌] 而遠之，馳而後之，則上疑而下懼。謹我車騎必避之路，其將可虜。

三晉者，中國也；其性和，其政平，其民疲於戰。習於兵，輕其將，薄其祿。士無死志，故治而不用。擊此之道，阻陳而壓之，眾來則拒之，去則追之，以倦其師。此其勢也。 (*Wuzi* 2: 3–4 [“Liaodi” 料敵])

19 If I have one misgiving about Lewis's brilliant account, it is that, for the Springs and Autumns period (Chunqiu 春秋, 770–453 BCE), he relies too heavily on romanticized tales in documents such as the *Zuo Commentary*. Incidentally, Lewis's conception of military history seems to be influenced by Turney-High 1971: 30, where the rise of the state is also associated with the emergence of “true war.”

20 “Maps” (“Ditu” 地圖), *Guanzi* 管子 x.27: 529, states this explicitly: the commander “must be thoroughly familiar with the location of winding gorges, waterways that might flood his chariots, famous mountains, passable valleys, navigable rivers, hills, and mounds; the places where grasses, trees, and reeds flourish; the lengths of roads; the sizes of fortifications; famous towns; ruined towns; harsh and arable land” (cf. the translation in Rickett 2001: 391–392) 輾轉之險，濫車之水，名山、通谷、經川、陵陸、丘阜之所在，苴草、林木、蒲葦之所茂，道里之遠近，城郭之大小，名邑、廢邑、困殖之地，必盡知之。

Qi's nature is hard, its state rich. Lords and ministers are arrogant and extravagant, and strict with the destitute populace. Its government is generous, but salaries are uneven. A single formation will be of two minds, the front heavily armed and the rear lightly; thus, they are heavily armed but not solid. The way to attack them is to divide them into three and chase down their left and right. Outflank and pursue them, and their formations can be broken.

Qin's nature is strong, its terrain hazardous, its government severe, its rewards and punishments reliable. Its people do not defer: they all have a pugnacious heart; thus, they scatter and fight for themselves. The way to attack them is first to display something profitable before them, inducing them to leave [their positions]. Their men-at-arms are greedy for gain and will abandon their commander. Take advantage of their recklessness and chase them down when they are scattered. Set up ambushes and exploit the opportunity enthusiastically, and their commanders can be seized.

Chu's nature is weak, its terrain broad, its government troublesome, its people exhausted. Thus, they may line up in order but do not remain so for long. The way to attack them is to assault and wreak havoc in their encampments, thereby robbing them first of their fighting spirit. Advance with lightly armed troops and retreat quickly, enervating and overworking them. Do not engage in battle with them, and their troops can be defeated.

Yan's nature is cautious, its people careful. They are fond of bravery and righteousness but rarely scheme or conspire; thus, they defend and do not decamp. The way to attack them is to coerce them by jabbing them; provoke them but keep them at a distance, and charge to their rear. Their superiors will be uncertain, inferiors fearful. Use chariots and cavalry conscientiously; secure the roads whereby they might escape; and their commanders can be captured.

The Three Jin [i.e., Zhao 趙, Han 韓, and Wei 魏] are states in the center. Their nature is harmonious, their government evenhanded, but their people are exhausted from warfare. They are practiced in combat but make light of their commanders and consider their salaries meager. Their men-at-arms have no will to die; thus, they are orderly but useless. The way to attack them is to isolate their formations and harry them. When their whole host comes [to the rescue], resist them; when they turn back, hunt them down, debilitating their army.

Such is the situation [in these states]. (Cf. the translations in Sawyer 1993: 210–211; and Lewis 2006: 202.)

The final line places this passage in the military tradition of inferring the best strategy from a thorough evaluation of “the situation” (*shi* 勢). For example, *Sunzi* 孫子, by every indication an older text, advises the commander to collect as much information as possible about the enemy—his position, the status of his camps, the attitude of his soldiers, etc.—and then devise the right response to smash him (Goldin 2005b: 15ff.). In *Wuzi*, the habits of the fighting men in each of the Warring States are presented as another “situation” that a prudent commander must assess before acting.

Moreover, the passage is significant for tracing soldiers’ attributes to two major factors: the terrain of their homeland and the state of its government. Both tropes are amply attested in the contemporary literature. “Water and Earth” (“Shuidi” 水地), a chapter in the received *Guanzi* 管子, contains a section attributing the characteristics of people from Qi, Chu, Qin, Jin, Yan, and Song 宋 to the nature of their water. For example: “The water of Qi flows restively and churns; thus, its people are greedy, crude, and enamored of bravery” (夫齊之水道躁而復 [= 澗],²¹ 故其民貪麤而好勇 *Guanzi* XIV.39: 831; cf. the translation in Rickett 1998: 106). Appealing to ineluctable geographical circumstances was one of many strategies to account for (perceived) regional variations in human behavior.²²

By contrast, most judgments of fighting spirit in texts such as the *Zuo Commentary* are based on the status of the combatants’ government rather than their geography. Consider, for example, the Battle of the Plain of Han 韓原之戰 (Wai-yee Li 2007: 160–171). The *casus belli* is that Qin had succored Yiwu 夷吾, the Lord of Jin, before he came to the throne and supported him afterward by sending grain in the midst of a famine, but Yiwu, far from expressing gratitude, went so far as to provoke a war by renegeing on promises of land and refusing to send grain when Qin suffered a famine of its own. Just before the commencement of hostilities, Yiwu sends a scout named Han Jian 韓簡 to gauge the enemy:

復曰：「師少於我，鬥士倍我。」
 公曰：「何故？」
 對曰：「出因其資，入用其寵，饑食其粟。三施而無報，是以來也，今又擊之。我怠秦奮，倍猶未也。」 (*Zuo zhuan*, Xi 15.4: 355)

21 For the emendation *fū* 復 = *fū* 澗, I follow the commentary of Ren Linpu 任林圃.

22 Compare *Liji* 禮記, “Wangzhi” 王制: “Wherever people dwell, their character will certainly accord with Heaven, Earth, and the cold, warmth, aridity, or humidity [of their environment]” 凡居民材，必因天地寒暖燥濕 (*Liji zhengyi* 12: 1338b).

When [Han Jian] returned, he said: “Their army is smaller than ours, but they have twice as many men-at-arms ready to fight.”

The Lord [of Jin] said: “Why is that?”

He replied: “When you departed [from Jin], you relied on their [Qin’s] assistance; when you reentered [Jin], you made use of their patronage; and when you were starving, you ate their grain. They did these three things without recompense; this is why they have come, and now you have gone so far as to attack them. Our [forces] are listless, while those of Qin are vigorous. They might have even more than twice [our number of men ready to fight].” (Cf. the translations in Watson 1989: 32; and Legge 1893–1895: vol. 5, 168.)

The soldiers from Jin are “listless” (*dai* 怠) because of the boorishness of their lord, not because of their inherent constitution. The episode reveals nothing in particular about either Jin or Qin; the point is that *any* army, regardless of its origin, would be listless if placed in the position of fighting for a morally or ritually deficient ruler—just as any army enraged by prior offenses will have a disproportionate number of ferocious warriors. Elsewhere, when Jin is in the right and Qin has behaved improperly, Jin’s troops are invincible and Qin is routed (Goldin 2010: 77).²³

On the unforgiving battlefield, however, moral superiority is no guarantee of victory. In literature, a small band of inspired warriors might win against all odds, but a pragmatic commander would still prefer to have numbers and matériel on his side. This brings us to another relevant observation by Lewis: logistical problems associated with raising, training, and supplying huge armies induced rulers to rethink their approach to governing their territories: those who could exploit their resources most efficiently gained a sizable advantage in the theater of war. Thus, the demands of battle led to the restructuring of the state as a vast production ground of people and munitions, maintained by an organized administration and serving a single king, to whom the entire population owed unquestioning allegiance. Kinship ties, ritual obligations, and traditional practice, which had been significant considerations guiding human

23 The most famous analysis of regional diversity in the *Zuo Commentary*—namely, the concert performed for Prince Zha of Wu 吳公子札 (576–484 BCE)—has a very different setting but is based on the same logic. Hearing the music of each region in turn, Zha infers the character of its people and the status of its government: regional differences apparent through music merely supervene on varying states of moral and political rectitude. The passage has been discussed insightfully by Wai-ye Li (2007: 136ff.) and David Schaberg (2001: 86–95) and thus need not be treated in extenso here. For some doubts as to its authenticity, see Zhao Zhiyang 1985.

action in earlier times, were now subordinated to the material requirements of the warring state (Lewis 1990: 53–67; 1999a: 597–619). Dismantling the hereditary aristocracy, a prime impediment to the centralization of power and “the major source of cultural homogeneity in the Zhou world” (Shelach and Pines 2006: 219), was a political goal of the first order.

Whereas the ritual centers of the Bronze Age had been enclaves among lands and tribes whom the local lords probably never surveyed systematically, now it was of vital importance to take stock of natural resources that could be utilized to support the war effort, including soil, plants, game and livestock, mineral deposits, timber, and fruits of the sea such as fish and salt—not to mention the most important resource of all, namely, the populace.²⁴ People had to be registered for tax and service,²⁵ lands charted and apportioned,²⁶ and stockpiles vigilantly tallied and secured. This process must have led to an unprecedented appreciation of China’s economic diversity (Chao Fulin 2003: 527–650). Different regions had always produced different goods, but again, the dominant political discourse did not formerly emphasize differentiation. In the Warring States, by contrast, a prudent ruler had the keenest incentive to acquaint himself not only with his own stores but also with those of his rivals. (Know thine enemy and know thyself 知彼知己; *Sunzi* 1: 62 [“Mou Gong” 謀攻].)²⁷

This is the most plausible background for the undatable text known as “The Levies of Yu” (“Yugong” 禹貢), now transmitted as a chapter of the *Classic of Documents* (*Shujing* 書經).²⁸ In its opening section, the text retraces the journeys of Sage-King Yu throughout the realm—surveying land and taming rivers

24 Cf. *Guanzi* 1X.22: 453: “The Hundred Clans of Qi are your foundation, my Lord” 齊國百姓，公之本也 (“Baxing” 霸形).

25 The recently discovered population records from Liye 里耶, discussed in this volume by Charles Sanft, have enormously improved our understanding of this process.

26 Cf. *Guanzi* XXII.74: 1282: “There is soil for rushes, soil for bamboo [with which to make] arrows, for sandalwood and zhe-trees, soil of low-lying riverbanks and moist marshes, and soil that is inundated by water [and produces] fish and turtles” 有莞蒲之壤，有竹前 [= 箭]、檀柘之壤，有汜下漸澤之壤，有水潦魚鼈之壤 (“Shan guogui” 山國軌). Another chapter (“Chengma” 乘馬) recognizes that different plots have different levels of productivity and speaks of “equalizing lands in accordance with the statistics of their produce” 地均以實數 (*Guanzi* 1.5: 89).

27 Cf. *Shang jun shu* 商君書 III.10: 69 (“Zhanfa” 戰法): “If one analyzes the enemy and inspects one’s multitudes, victory or defeat can be known beforehand” 論敵察眾，則勝負可先知也.

28 There is a similar text called “The King’s Gathering” (“Wanghui jie” 王會解, *Yi Zhou shu* VII.59: 850–983), which also lists tribute items from all parts of the realm but does not refer to the Nine Provinces.

wherever he went—and outlines the products and indigenous peoples of each of the legendary Nine Provinces: Jizhou 冀州, Yanzhou 兗州, Qingzhou 青州, Xuzhou 徐州, Yangzhou 揚州, Jingzhou 荊州, Yuzhou 豫州, Liangzhou 梁州, and Yongzhou 雍州.²⁹ The description of Qingzhou (corresponding roughly to modern northeastern Shandong 山東) is typical:

海岱惟青州。嵎夷既略；濰淄其道。厥土白墳，海濱廣斥。厥田惟上下；厥賦中上；厥貢鹽、絺，海物惟錯，岱畎絲、泉、鉛、松、怪石。萊夷作牧，厥篚絜絲。浮于汶，達于濟。(Shangshu 6: 147c–148a)

The sea and Mount Dai make up [the boundaries] of Qingzhou, where the region of Yuyi was mapped, the Wei and Zi Rivers given their courses. Its soil is white and loamy; by the seacoast there are broad salterns. Its fields are of the lowest of the highest rank, its revenue of the highest of the middle rank. Its tribute items are salt and fine linen; creatures from the sea are sundry; the valleys of Mount Dai [produce] silk, hemp, lead, pine timber, and marvelous stones. The barbarians of Lai are engaged in pasturage; their baskets [contain] silk from the *yan*-mulberry. [Yu's party] sailed on the Wen River and arrived at the Ji River. (Cf. the translation in Legge 1893–1895: vol. 3, 102.)

The text goes on to divide the entire known world into five concentric rings, ranging from the domain of the Son of Heaven (*dianfu* 甸服), the beacon of civilization itself, to “the desert” (*huangfu* 荒服), fit only for savages and exiles (Shangshu 6: 153ab). None of these territories, it should be noted, is identified explicitly with any of the states of the Eastern Zhou (for that would expose the anachronism of the document), but readers would have been able to tell from the geographical references which “province” refers to which area of China.

Moreover, in a branch of astrology called “field allocation” (*fenye* 分野), known from contemporaneous sources such as the *Zuo Commentary* and *Rituals of Zhou* (*Zhouli* 周禮), the Nine Provinces are associated with leading kingdoms. (Qingzhou, as one might expect, is the province where one finds the northeastern state of Qi.) The sky is divided into nine equal partitions, and the trick is to ascertain which region on earth will enjoy a military advantage by observing which of the nine corresponding regions in the sky currently houses the planet Jupiter. As David W. Pankenier (1999) has shown, the technique

29 For other lists of the Nine Provinces besides that of “Yugong” (which Dorofeeva-Lichtmann regards as the oldest set), see Dorofeeva-Lichtmann 2009: 595–644.

must really have been practiced, because there is evidence that states timed their campaigns to coincide with such astrologically propitious moments.

Crucially, according to these sources, the regions of China are diverse, but together they constitute a complete and closed system. A commander perusing the *Wuzi* needed to learn the salient features of Qi, Qin, Chu, Yan, and the Three Jin—but *only* those five. Evidently, he was not expected to encounter other foes. Similarly, because field-allocation astrology relied on the association of the Nine Provinces with its nine celestial divisions, no tenth region could ever have been added. There would simply have been no tenth part of the sky to identify with it.

This conception of China as a great whole containing a number of discrete subdivisions went hand in hand with the view that proper networks of trade should bring about economic self-sufficiency. What one region lacks, another is sure to have in plenty; thus, the road to autarky is not to try to produce everything oneself but to locate the natural sources of the products that one needs and acquire them prudently. The philosopher Xunzi (i.e., Xun Kuang 荀況, d. after 238 BCE) summarized the attitude of the day:

北海則有走馬吠犬焉，然而中國得而畜使之；南海則有羽翮、齒革、曾青、丹干焉，然而中國得而財之；東海則有紫、紵 [= 紵]³⁰、魚、鹽焉，然而中國得而衣食之；西海則有皮革、文旄焉，然而中國得而用之。故澤人足乎木；山人足乎魚。農夫不斲削、不陶冶而足械用；工賈不耕田而足菽粟。(Xunzi v.9: 161–162 [“Wangzhi” 王制])

By the Northern Sea, there are galloping horses and barking dogs, but the Central States obtain them and domesticate and employ them; by the Southern Sea, there are feathers, tusks and hides [of pachyderms],³¹ azurite, and cinnabar, but the Central States obtain them and prize them; by the Eastern Sea, there are dyed cloth,³² coarse linen, fish, and salt, but the Central States obtain them and wear or consume them; by the Western Sea, there are leather goods and fancy oxtails, but the Central States

30 For the emendation *qǔ 紵 = xī 紵*, I follow the commentary of Wang Yinzhi 王引之 (1766–1834).

31 I follow the commentary of Yang Liang 楊倞 (fl. 818 CE). Hides of pachyderms were used for armor, as Xunzi states in *Xunzi* x.15: 281 (“Yibing” 議兵). See also Shadwick et al. 1992.

32 Yang Liang glosses *zi* 紫 as *zibei* 紫貝, or “cowrie,” but this seems to be incorrect, inasmuch as all the items from the Eastern Sea are products that people wear or eat. The basic meaning of *zi* is “purple.”

obtain them and use them. Thus, people in the marshes have sufficient timber; people in the mountains have sufficient fish. Husbandmen do not have to carve or chisel or make pottery or work iron, yet they have sufficient equipment and utensils; craftsmen and merchants do not have to till the fields, yet they have sufficient legumes and grain. (Cf. the translations in Lewis 2006: 210; and Knoblock 1988–1994: vol. 2, 102)

Xunzi lived at a time when the victory of Qin was all but assured, and his surviving works include two separate analyses of its strengths and weaknesses, with moralistic recommendations for improvement (*Xunzi* x.15: 280–281 [“Yibing” 議兵], XI.16: 303–304 [“Qiangguo” 疆國]; cf. Zhang Wenli and Song Shanguan 2003: 68–89; and Yu Zongfa 1998: 103ff.). These are noteworthy because such extended discussions of the characteristics of a single state are rare; more commonly, as we have seen, Qin was situated within the context of the Chinese world writ large. But presumably it was no longer possible to pretend that Qin was merely another constituent state within the world order. On the contrary, Qin was about to establish a new order of its own.

It fell to Xunzi's student Li Si 李斯 (ca. 280–208 BCE) to forge the ideological underpinnings of that order (Goldin 2005a: 69ff.; Meng Xiangcai 2001: 229–238; Bodde 1938: 162–222). Li Si inherited the view that the diverse regions of China are pieces of an overarching whole but added the assertion that the other pieces of this whole would have to adapt themselves to the suzerainty of Qin. Before the final conquest, however, it appears that even the King of Qin (the future First Emperor) was unprepared for the conceptual consequences. We get the first glimpse of Li Si's imperialist vision in his response to an edict that would have debarred immigrants from government service on the grounds that they could not be trusted. In his memorial in his own defense, Li Si, who was born in Chu, explained that a king who cannot accept ministers from another state is a king who is not ready to be the emperor of the world. Ruling the world means ruling every part of the world, taking advantage of *all* its resources, not merely the resources of one's native domain (An Zuozhang and Meng Xiangcai 2005: 91–96; Zhang Fentian 2003: 102–107).

今陛下致昆山之玉，有隨、和之寶，垂明月之珠，服太阿之劍，乘織離之馬，建翠鳳之旗，樹靈鼉之鼓。此數寶者，秦不生一焉，而陛下說之，何也？必秦國之所生然後可，則是夜光之璧不飾朝廷，犀象之器不為玩好，鄭、衛之女不充後宮，而駿良馱馱不實外廄，江南金錫不為用，西蜀丹青不為采。所以飾後宮、充下陳、娛心意、說耳目者，必出於秦然後可，則是宛珠之簪、傅璣之珥、阿綯之衣、錦繡之飾不進於前，而隨俗

雅化佳冶窈窕趙女不立於側也。... 王者不卻眾庶，故能明其德。是以地無四方，民無異國，四時充美，鬼神降福；此五帝、三王之所以無敵也。(Shiji 87: 2543 and 2545 [“Li Si liezhuan” 李斯列傳])

Now, Your Majesty, you acquire jade from the Kun Mountains and possess the treasures of Sui and He. You wear the Moon-Bright Pearl as a pendant and equip yourself with the sword Tai'e; you ride in a carriage drawn by the horse Xianli; you raise a banner of kingfisher and phoenix [feathers]; you set up drums of crocodile skin. Qin did not produce a single one of these several treasures, yet, Your Majesty, you take delight in them. Why is this? If only products of the state of Qin are permissible, then night-gleaming jade rings would not adorn the court, objects of rhinoceros [horn] and ivory would not be your playthings, girls from Zheng and Wey would not fill your privy chambers, fine steeds and *jueti*-horses would not occupy your outer stables. Bronze and tin from south of the Yangzi would not be used; cinnabar and azurite from Shu in the west could not be [exploited] for their colors. If anything that adorns your privy chambers, fills your seraglio, amuses your heart and mind, or delights your ears and eyes is permissible only if it comes from Qin, then hairpins with pearls from Yuan, earrings with suspended oval pearls, robes of white silk from E, and ornaments of brocade embroidery would not be brought before you, nor would seductive and alluring girls from Zhao, such as accommodate our customs but render them more elegant, stand by your side. ...

One who rules as King does not reject the multitude of commoners; thus, he can manifest his power. Therefore, when the earth does not have four quarters and when the people do not have different [native] states, [the realm] is filled with beautiful things throughout the four seasons, and ghosts and spirits send down good fortune. This was how the Five Thearchs and Three Kings were without rival. (Cf. the translations in Nienhauser 1994–: vol. 7, 338–339; Dawson 1994: 28–29; and Watson 1993: 182–183.)

If people could be made to return to the prehistoric order, when no one distinguished between this region or that, it would be easier for them to accept a single and all-encompassing ruler who did not necessarily share their particular heritage. This all-encompassing ruler must take in each region, with all its characteristics, assigning each one its proper role. Tin from the south belongs in the metallurgical workshops; elegant ladies from the Central States belong

in the harem; and a cunning minister from Chu has a place in the administration as well.

The histories inform us that the First Emperor embraced Li Si's agenda, but one would reach the same conclusion, even without such assurances, from circumstantial evidence. One telling detail is that whenever the First Emperor destroyed another kingdom, he would have a simulacrum of its palace built in his capital as a menacing exhibition (*Shiji* 6: 239 ["Qin Shihuang benji" 秦始皇本紀]; cf. Wang Xueli 1985: 72–74). Moreover, Martin Kern has shown that the First Emperor's program of inspection tours and sacrifices parallels the activities attributed to Sage-King Shun 舜 in the "Canon of Shun" ("Shun dian" 舜典)—a text that, as Kern argues in the present volume, the First Emperor might have promulgated as legitimation for his own regime (also Kern 2000a: 110ff.). There could scarcely have been a more suitable model for the sage-ruler who travels to each region of the known world, proclaiming his dominion over all of them.

Nevertheless, Li Si and the First Emperor were under no illusions about the centrifugal threat posed by territorial powers, and they instituted historic reforms to standardize weights, measures, currency, orthography, and even axle widths.³³ When courtiers proposed reinstating the Zhou practice of bestowing land on the sons and younger brothers of the sovereign, Li Si denounced the idea as destabilizing; indeed, blaming such misguided proposals on the influence of private teachers, he took the extreme measure of prohibiting the possession of unauthorized books and ushered in the notorious biblioclasm that sullied Qin in the eyes of centuries of Chinese literati (Kern 2000a: 188ff.; Pines 2009: 181ff.).



The texts examined in this study do not *explain* the problem raised at the outset: namely, why Chu art seems to become more and more distinctive over the course of the Eastern Zhou period. But they do at least suggest the scrim behind these developments. The benefits of expressing fealty to the King of Zhou having waned, artists and their patrons found themselves freer to innovate; perhaps they also incorporated motifs familiar to them from less momentous works of art all around them—motifs that would otherwise remain unattested

33 Once again, the relevant bibliography is too huge to cite in a single note. The best discussion in English is now Sanft 2014a: 58–76; for an informative survey from the perspective of metrology, see Qiu Guangming 2008: 77–91. Traditional conceptions of the Qin standardization of orthography have recently been challenged by Galambos (2006).

today because they were never imprinted on media of any permanence. As the elite of all the territories came to regard themselves not as regional outposts of royal Zhou culture but as competitors in a death struggle among a handful of distinct and threatening kingdoms, the impulse to conform would have ceded to the impulse to assert their haecceity.

Moreover, conformity and haecceity were both constructed. There were certain objective criteria by which regions could be adjudged similar or different—climate, terrain, language, etc.—but geography alone cannot explain a region's self-portrayal in art, which was equally informed by political and rhetorical expedience. Indeed, since the art that has survived tends to be laden with political significance, the pieces by which we analyze the ancient Chinese world may represent the height of its artfulness and guile. If we have come to recognize that historical texts are performative utterances—that is, they *do* at the same time that they *say* (e.g., Skinner 2002: vol. 1, 107–124)—then we must also recognize a corresponding function for visual art as performative representation.³⁴ A work of art is as much an instrument of persuasion as it is a thing of beauty.

34 Compare Kleingärtner 2014 for the Vikings' "deliberate reuse or remodelling" of foreign objects "to express an independent Viking-Age identity."