THE QUESTION OF INTERPRETATION: QIN HISTORY IN LIGHT OF NEW EPIGRAPHIC SOURCES*

Yuri Pines

Extraordinary discoveries of epigraphic materials from pre-imperial and early imperial China during the recent decades have profoundly changed the field of ancient Chinese history. Aside from corroborating or refuting claims made in the received texts, newly obtained materials provide valuable data regarding heretofore largely unknown aspects of ancient Chinese social life, from the functioning of the legal and administrative systems to popular beliefs, sexual life and ancient recipes. In Martin Kern's words, these discoveries not only have "greatly contributed to the dramatic development of the field of early Chinese studies" but also "to the very definition and self-definition of this field in the beginning."[1]

The new discoveries, exciting as they are, pose immense challenges to scholars. Many characters in the newly obtained texts are only partially legible; others are difficult to decipher due to idiosyncratic orthography; and the dubious provenance of certain texts sometimes compromises their reliability. Yet by far the most challenging task is to reconcile the information obtained from some of the newly recovered sources with the bulk of historical knowledge obtained from the received texts. It is at this crucial junction that the historian's task becomes particularly difficult. Should we prefer an occasionally unearthed text to one on which the entire building of traditional Chinese historiography was erected, such as the *Shi ji* 史記? Or should we resolve the possible contradictions between new and traditional sources by reinterpreting a newly discovered text in accord with the received ones? Or, rather, should we

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1. Martin Kern, "Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of Textual Variants and the Modes of Manuscript Production in Early China," *Journal of the East Asian Archaeology* 4.1–4 (2002), 143–44.

attempt to reinterpret the received texts in light of the newly obtained information?

The present paper focuses on the possible implications of the newly obtained data on our understanding of certain aspects of Qin 秦 history. Epigraphic evidence is particularly valuable with regard to Qin history, due to the dearth of Qin-related information in the received texts. Aside from the Qin annals in the *Shi ji*, which in all likelihood incorporated the original Qin records, the affairs of this state are only cursorily mentioned in pre-imperial historical and philosophical writings.[2] This paucity of information in the received texts contrasts sharply with the immense richness of Qin-related epigraphic sources. These are inscribed on almost every possible material – bronze and iron, stone and jade, bamboo and clay – and cover an extraordinarily broad range of topics: local and national administration, legal issues, statutes, popular and elite religion, political declarations, international relations, historiography and many others. Qin epigraphic sources represent views and concerns of different segments of the Qin population: from rulers to petty officials and to simple conscripts. The sheer length of the heretofore excavated documents, which exceeds that of all pre-imperial Qin-related materials in the received texts, explains their exceptional role in reconstructing Qin history.[3]

Excavated Qin materials are particularly valuable with regard to the hotly contested question of Qin's cultural identity. This topic became one of the most debated issues of pre-imperial Chinese history since the beginning of the twentieth century. Some scholars interpreted pejorative

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2. Putting aside for the time being the question of the authenticity and reliability of the received texts, we should immediately notice that accounts about Qin are all but absent from the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 and the *Guo yu* 國語, that Qin is rarely mentioned in the writings of most of the rival thinkers of the Zhanguo age, and that even the five Qin-related *juan* of the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 focus almost exclusively on court intrigues at the expense of information about other aspects of life of this state.

3. For a partial summary of Qin-related epigraphic sources, see Wang Hui 王輝 and Cheng Xuehua 程學華, *Qin wenzi jizheng* 秦文字集證 (Taibei: Yinwen, 1999), and Wang Hui's additions in his "Qin chutu wenxian biannian xubu (yi)"《秦出土文獻編年》續補 (一), *Qin wenhua luncong* 秦文化論叢, ed. Qin Shihuang bingmayong bowuguan *Luncong* bianwei hui 秦始皇兵馬俑博物館《論叢》編委會, 9 (2002), 512–49; see also Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2000). Among later discoveries the most important are doubtless the local archives from imperial Qin unearthed in June 2002 in Liye 里耶, Hunan. For preliminary reports of these materials, see Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiu suo 湖南省文物考古研究所 et al., "Hunan sheng Longshan Liye Zhanguo—Qin dai gucheng yihao jing fajue jianbao" 湖南龍山里耶戰國——秦代古城一號井發掘簡報, *Wenwu* 文物 2003.1, 4–35 and Li Xueqin 李學勤, "Chudu Liye Qin jian" 初讀里耶秦簡, *Wenwu* 2003.1, 73–81.

remarks about Qin's alleged barbarianism scattered throughout Zhanguo (戰國, "Warring States," 453–221 B.C.E.)[4] and Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) texts as evidence of the non-Xia 夏 (i.e., non-"Chinese")[5] origin of the Qin. Later, with the increasing availability of material data and paleographic sources from the state of Qin, a revisionist view appeared that emphasized similarities between the Qin and the Zhou material and written cultures and dismissed textual hints of Qin barbarianism as mere anti-Qin propaganda. Both views are still powerful within the scholarly community in China and abroad, with archeologists and text-oriented historians taking sides and providing continuous reinterpretation of the extant data. The opinions range from assessments that Qin culture was incompatible with the Zhou civilization, to suggestions that Qin was a conservative, Zhou-oriented state whose leaders "preserved the practices and inherent values of the Zhou ritual legacy with at least the same eagerness as their eastern neighbors did."[6]

In what follows I shall try to discuss the place of Qin within the Zhou civilization in light of newly available epigraphic materials. I shall first

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4. Hereafter all dates are Before Common Era unless indicated otherwise.

5. The term "Chinese" is certainly anachronistic with regard to pre-imperial "China" and is used here only as a scholarly convention to designate the Zhou 周 cultural realm, the educated elite of which usually referred to themselves as the Xia 夏.

6. Cited from Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 63. For early statements about Qin's alleged alien features, see Meng Wentong 蒙文通, "Qin wei Rong zu kao" 秦為戎族考, *Yu gong* 禹貢 6.7 (1936), 17–20; cf. Derk Bodde, *China's First Unifier: A Study of the Ch'in Dynasty as Seen in the Life of Li Ssu* 李斯 *280–208 B.C.* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1967), 2ff; for the most radical recent representation of this view, see Liu Yutao 劉雨濤, "Qin yu Huaxia wenhua" 秦與華夏文化, *Kongzi yanjiu* 孔子研究 1988.2, 61–67. For an alternative interpretation of textual data, particularly of the Qin annals in the *Shi ji*, see Yoshimoto Michimasa 吉本道雅, "Shin shi kenkyū josetsu" 秦史研究序說, *Shirin* 史林 78.3 (1995), 34–67; for an attempt to trace changes in Qin's cultural identity on the basis of textual sources, see, e.g., Wang He 王和, *Zhongguo zhengzhi tongshi: Cong bangguo dao diguo de Xian Qin zhengzhi* 中國政治通史: 從邦國到帝國的先秦政治 (Jinan: Taishan chubanshe, 2003), 230–61. For an archeological study that emphasizes Qin's otherness, see, e.g., Huang Xiaofen 黃曉芬, "Shin no bosei to sono kigen" 秦の墓制とその起源, *Shirin* 史林 74.6 (1991), 103–44. For an alternative view based on the exploration of archeological data, see, e.g., Han Wei 韓偉, "Guanyu Qin ren zushu ji wenhua yuanyuan guanjian" 關於秦人族屬及文化淵源管見, *Wenwu* 1986.4, 23–28; Yuan Zhongyi 袁仲一, "Cong kaogu ziliao kan Qin wenhua de fazhan he zhuyao chengjiu" 從考古資料看秦文化的發展和主要成就, *Qin wenhua luncong*, ed. Qin Shi huang bingmayong bowuguan yanjiu shi 秦始皇兵馬俑博物館研究室, 1 (1993), 28–49. Qin cultural identity is comprehensively discussed by Lothar von Falkenhausen in "Diversity and Integration along the Western Peripheries of Late Bronze Age China: Archaeological Perspectives on the State of Qin (771–209 BC)" (unpublished ms), and idem, "Mortuary Behavior in Pre-imperial Qin: A Religious Interpretation," in *Religion and Chinese Society*, vol. 1, ed. John Lagerwey (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2004), 109–72.

analyze Qin relations with the Zhou royal house—an important indicator of the political identity of the Qin rulers—and shall try to show that these relations might have been much more amicable than the prevalent scholarly view holds. In the second section, I shall discuss the broader issue of Qin's self-image during the second half of the Zhanguo period and its apparent estrangement from the Xia ethno-cultural entity. In both parts of my discussion, I shall elucidate the apparent contradiction between the recently obtained data and the conventional textual-based understanding of Qin history, and shall try to provide a new interpretative framework that will help to reconcile this putative incongruity. In the final part of my discussion I hope to show that during the late Zhanguo period Qin ruling elites were engaged in simultaneous processes of constructing a unique Qin identity, on the one hand, and promulgating universalistic claims on the other, and that this apparent contradiction reflects conflicting reactions of different social strata in the state of Qin and in the Zhou world in general to complex political and social developments of the Zhanguo age. Indeed, one of the major contributions of the newly obtained data is the emerging picture of the previously unnoticeable cultural diversity within the Warring States.

Qin versus the Zhou House: The Usurper or a Loyal Ally?

Two jade tablets inscribed with an identical prayer to the Mountain Hua 華山 recently surfaced in a private collection in Beijing; after the authenticity of the inscriptions had been confirmed, their contents were discussed by several eminent specialists of Qin epigraphy.[7] In what follows I shall translate the prayer and focus primarily on its heretofore neglected implications on our understanding of Qin's relations with the

7. See e.g. Li Ling 李零, "Qin Yin dao bing yuban de yanjiu" 秦駟禱病玉版的研究 in Li Ling, *Zhongguo fangshu xukao* 中國方術續考 (Beijing: Dongfang, 2001), 451–74; Li Jiahao 李家浩, "Qin Yin yuban mingwen yanjiu" 秦駟玉版銘文研究, *Beijing daxue Zhongguo guwenxian yanjiu zhongxin jikan* 北京大學中國古文獻研究中心集刊 (2001), 99–128; Li Xueqin 李學勤, "Qin yudu suoyin" 秦玉牘索隱, *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 2000.2, 41–45; Wang Hui 王輝, "Qin Zengsun Yin gao Hua Da shan mingshen wen kaoshi" 秦曾孫駟告華大山明神文考釋, *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報 2001.2, 143–57. I follow these scholars in treating the prayers inscribed on each of the tablets as identical; for minor, albeit interesting orthographical differences between them, see Zeng Xiantong 曾憲通, Yang Zesheng 楊澤生 and Xiao Yi 肖毅, "Qin Yin yuban wenzi chutan" 秦駟玉版文字初探, *Kaogu yu wenwu* 考古與文物 2001.1, 49–54; cf. Wolfgang Behr, "Orison in jade—Reading the Zengsun Yin inscriptions," paper presented at the Second Hamburg Tomb Text Workshop, Hamburg, February 2004. According to Lian Shaoming 連劭名, the tablets were purchased by the Shanghai Museum: see Lian, "Qin Huiwen Wang daoci Huashan yujian wen yanjiu" 秦惠文王禱祠華山玉簡文研究, *Zhongguo lishi bowuguan guankan* 中國歷史博物館館刊, 2001.1, 49.

Zhou house. The translation is based on the transliterations suggested by previous scholars, whose alternative readings of the loan or partly illegible characters are added in angle brackets; □ stand for illegible characters; in the translation, in square brackets are my additions made to facilitate the translation; question marks in round brackets in the original and in the translation indicate a tentative reconstruction of the partly illegible or disputable loan character.

有秦曾孫小子翳曰：孟冬十月，厥氣戕凋，余身遭病，為我感憂。呻呻反瘟，無間無瘳。眾人弗知，余亦弗知，而靡有息（貞？）休。吾窮而無奈之何，永懱憂盩。周世既沒，典法鮮亡。惴惴小子，欲事天地、四極、三光，山川、神祇、五禮、先祖，而不得厥方。犧豭既美，玉帛既精，余毓子厥惑，西東若憃。東方有士，姓為刑法氏，其名曰經。潔可以為法，清可以為正。吾敢告之：余無罪也，使明神知吾情。若明神不□（宥？）其行，而無罪□友（宥？）□（刑？）。擊擊烝民之事鬼神，孰敢不精？小子翳敢以介圭、吉璧、吉璋，以告于華大山。大山又賜□，已吾腹心以下至于足□之病，能自復如故。請□祠用牛犧貳，其齒七，潔之。□及羊豢，路車四馬，三人壹家，壹璧先之；□□用貳犧羊豢，壹璧先之；而覆華大山之陰陽，而□□咎，□咎□□，其□□里，世萬子孫以此為常。苟令小子翳之病日復故，告大令（？）、大將軍、人壹家室、王室相如。

The great-grandson of the Qin [ruler],
a small child Yin declares:[8]
in the beginning of the winter, the tenth month,
the air is freezing and shriveling.
I have fallen ill,
which causes me great distress.
I am moaning, tossing and turning,
having neither rest nor recuperation.[9]
The multitudes do not understand [the cause of my illness],
I also do not understand it,[10]
and I have no rest.

8. Both epithets of Yin should be interpreted ritually: "the great-grandson" was an appropriate designation of the ruler who sacrificed to terrestrial deities; "a small child" here and "a toddler" below are modest expressions which do not indicate Yin's actual age but rather his ritual position versus his ancestors, and perhaps also versus the deity to whom the prayer is addressed. See a detailed discussion in Zhou Fengwu 周鳳五, "'Qin Huiwen Wang daoci Huashan yuban' xintan" 《秦惠文王禱祠華山玉版》新探, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 72.1 (2001), 217–31; cf. Li Jiahao, "Qin Yin yuban," 109–12.

9. Wang Hui interprets these four characters differently; in his version they should read: "The epidemic (or the illness) aggravates, and spreads again."

10. In translating this sentence I follow suggestions of Li Jiahao.

I am exhausted and do not know what to do,
and am constantly bemoaning in fear.
The house of Zhou has now vanished,
the standards and regulations [of sacrifices] have been scattered and lost.
Fearful small child,
I would like to serve Heaven and Earth,
the four apices and the three luminaries,
spirits and deities of mountains and rivers,
five objects of sacrifice,[11] former ancestors—
but cannot obtain the [proper] way [of conducting the sacrifice].
My sacrificial pigs are made beautiful,
jade and silk are purified,
but, a toddler that I am,
I am wavering and am dull regarding [proper sacrifices] to the west and to the east.[12]

There is a Gentleman in the East, his surname is Mr. Punitive Law, his name is Canon.[13] His cleanness can serve as a model,

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11. "Four apices" (*si ji* 四极) are identified by Li Jiahao as "[deities] of the four directions" (*si fang* 四方); three luminaries are Sun, Moon and the stars; for contesting identifications of the "five objects of sacrifice," see Zhou Fengwu, "Qin Huiwen Wang," 223–24.

12. For the importance of the purity of sacrificial objects, see Robin D.S. Yates, "Purity and Pollution in Early China," *Zhongguo kaoguxue yu lishixue zhenghe yanjiu* 中國考古學與歷史學整合研究. Symposium Series of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, 4 (1997), 479–536. Note that below purity is identified as one of the important features of the deity to whom the pledge is addressed.

13. Although the characters are generally legible, this sentence is one of the most debated in the entire inscription. First, both Li Ling and Li Xueqin read *shi* 士 (Gentleman) as *tu* 土 (earth, local). Second, Li Xueqin reads *shi* 氏 ("Mister, lineage name") as *min* 民 ("people"), while Wang Hui considers it as a substitute for *shi* 是 ("thus; therefore"). Li Xueqin, Wang Hui and Li Jiahao are evidently misled by the reference to the punitive law in a Qin inscription, which immediately suggests in their eyes a reference to one of the so-called Legalists (*fa jia* 法家). Therefore, Li Xueqin suggests: 東方又（有）土姓，為刑法民，其名曰經 ("There is a person from a local family in the east, who models the people by the punitive law; his name is Canon"). Wang Hui suggests: 東方又（有）士，姓（生）為刑法，氏（是）其名曰經 ("There is a Gentleman in the East, who gave birth to the punitive law; thus his name is Canon"). I follow Li Ling's assertion that the topic of the sentence is a deity (to whom a declaration follows in the next sentence); but I accept Wang Hui's reading of the disputed third character as *shi* and not *tu*, and also slightly modify Li Ling's punctuation. It should be noted that by the late Zhanguo period the initial difference between *xing* 姓 ("family, i.e., clan name") and *shi* 氏 ("lineage name") had largely disappeared, and the phrase A's *xing* is B *shi* became relatively widespread. See Yanxia 雁俠, *Zhongguo zaoqi xingshi zhidu yanjiu* 中國早期姓氏制度研究 (Tianjin: Guji, 1996), 193–99. Lian Shaoming in the revision of his

his purity can be turned into [a standard of] correctness.[14] I dare announce to him: I am without crime and would like the numinous deity to understand my true state. If the numinous deity would not behave □ and spare (?) the one without crime,[15] then multitudes of people would in great piety serve the numinous deity; who would dare not be sincere?

I, the small child Yin, dare to submit a great jade scepter, an auspicious jade disk, and an auspicious precious stone,[16] declaring thereby to the spirit of the Great Mountain Hua: May the Great Mountain confer [blessing] and stop my illness which begins in my heart and stomach and goes down to my feet, so that I might be able to recover to my original condition![17] In my devotional plea, I use two sacrificial seven-year-old oxen, which have been purified, □ and also a sheep and a pig. [I also sacrifice] a four-horse grand ritual chariot, and a family of three persons (?), preceding them with one jade disk.[18] I sacrifice two □□; [adding?] sacrificial sheep and

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earlier reading suggested that the sentence refers to the deity, whom he identifies not as the deity of the Mountain Hua, but as a spirit of Gao Yao 皋陶. See his "Qin Huiwen Wang daoci Huashan yujian wen yanjiu buzheng" 秦惠文王禱祠華山玉簡文研究補正, *Zhongguo lishi bowuguan guankan*, 2001.2, 52–54.

14. It is possible to read here 正 as 政, in which case "correctness" should be emended to "proper rule."

15. This is an approximate translation, the characters are partly illegible.

16. I follow Wang Hui's identification of the character after *ji* 吉 as *zao* 璪, which is identified in the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字as a "jade-like" stone 石之似玉者 (Xu Shen 許慎, *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注, annotated by Duan Yucai 段玉裁 [Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1991], 1.17).

17. The sentence is problematic due to the highly contested group of characters that follow the character *ci* 賜 ("confer, grant, bestow"). Li Jiahao, Lian Shaoming and Wang Hui suggest that the first two characters of the group are *bayue*八月 ("eighth month"), which is then followed by a date (Lian Shaoming reads it as *jisi* 己巳, while Wang Hui suggests *jiyou* 己酉). But this reading makes the text partly meaningless: it is unclear why the date should interrupt a sentence in which the donor hopes that the Mountain will cure his illness. Li Xueqin, whose transliteration I follow here, leaves a lacuna after *ci*, reading the next character not as *ji* 己, but as *yi* 已 ("to stop").

18. The sentence is unclear. Li Jiahao suggests that "a family" (*jia* 家) refers here and below in the text to a sacrificial unit submitted by the commoners, but this explanation is problematic. Two sentences which end with identical "preceding them with one jade disk" clearly enumerate different sacrificial items submitted by the author of the prayer, and it is unlikely that some mysterious "three persons" would suddenly become a subject of the sentence. Wang Hui asserts that the sacrificial item of one *jia* consisted of three human figurines. Li Ling, followed by Zeng Xiantong et al., read 家 as 駕, which in this case will refer to the chariot mentioned earlier. It is not impossible that humans were sacrificed to the mountain, since evidence of human sacrifices in non-mortuary contexts exists in the Chunqiu-Zhanguo state of Qin, as exemplified by the presence of a pit of human victims near the Qin ancestral temple at Yong 雍, the

pigs, preceding them with one jade disk. I bury[19] them to the north and south of Great Mountain Hua, to □□ the punishment;[20] □ punishment □□, it □□ *li*. For ten thousand generations, let sons and grandsons make this the regular [standard]. If you will let me, small child Yin, recover from my illness, I shall declare to the local officials, to the great generals, to each family (?) and to the royal family that they should do the same.[21]

The text, one of the lengthiest of pre-imperial Qin inscriptions, raises several important questions. First, what is the date of the prayer? The text mentions "the royal family" which clearly suggests that it was written after the appropriation of the royal title by Lord (later King) Huiwen of Qin 秦惠文王 (r. 337–311) in 325. Second, it mentions the annihilation of the Zhou house, which occurred in 256. Third, it does not avoid the tabooed character Zheng 正, which is the personal name of the First Emperor of Qin 秦始皇帝 (r. 246–221–210), and which was generally avoided after the imperial unification.[22] If all these suppositions are correct, then the

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Qin capital between 677 and 383 (see Lothar von Falkenhausen, "The Waning of the Bronze Age: Material Culture and Social Developments, 770–481 B.C.," in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 459; Huang Zhanyue 黃展岳, *Zhongguo gudai de rensheng renxun* 中國古代的人牲人殉 [Beijing: Wenwu, 1990], 210). I am unaware, however, of sacrificial rites in which the entire family would be sacrificed.

19. The character before the name of Mt Hua is unclear, I accept Li Jiahao's reading of this character as *fu* 覆 ("to bury").

20. Zeng Xiantong et al. interpret the term *jiu* 咎 here not as a "punishment" but as 咎徵, an "evil portent"; Wolfgang Behr suggests "inauspicious."

21. The last sentence is again extremely problematic, since many characters are only partly legible; I tentatively follow Li Xueqin's suggestions, adopting Wang Hui's reading for the two partly illegible characters after 人壹 as *jiashi* 家室. An alternative reading divides the last sentences differently: 故告大令、大將軍：人壹家室，王室相如 ("Thus, I declare to the great leader, the great commander: each family and the royal family will do the same"). In that case the terms *da ling* 大令 (or, as Li Ling suggests, *Taiyi* 大一) and *da jiangjun* 大將軍 are the names of the deity. Yet another, albeit not very convincing, option was proposed by Liu Jinhua 劉金華, who suggested that the *da* X (he did not identify the problematic character) and *da jiangjun* are the names of yet another two deities, to whom the sick king turns after his illness was not cured by the spirit of Mountain Hua. See his "Lun Qin Yin yudu yanjiu sizhong ji qi xiangguan wenti" 論秦駰玉牘研究四种及其相關問題, *Hanzhong shifan xueyuan xuebao* 漢中師範學院學報 20.1 (2002), 42–48. For more about worship of the Mount Hua deities, see Glen Dudbridge, *Religious Experience and Lay Society in T'ang China: A Reading of Tai Fu's Kuang-i chi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 86–116.

22. The nature of the character tabooing during the Qin period is still a controversial matter. Wang Hui ("Qin Zengsun Yin," 154) asserts that the character *zheng* 正 was strictly avoided in the official publications, and hence its presence in the prayer suggests its pre-imperial origin. Alternatively, Kageyama Terukuni 影山輝國 opines that the strict avoidance of the character 正 began only after the death of the First Emperor

text was written between 256 and 221. This dating is supported also by Wang Hui's analysis of the form of the characters employed throughout the text: these, according to his analysis, postdate those of the 334 Qin "Clay Document" (*Wa shu* 瓦書), but predate the script of Shuihudi documents (ca. 250–217) and that of the imperial Qin texts.[23]

Who is the author of the inscriptions? Yin identifies himself as a descendant (or great-grandson) of a Qin ruler; thus he must belong to the royal family. But is he a reigning king? This identification seems most probable. First, the ritual language of the inscription, such as self-appellation "great-grandson" (*zengsun* 曾孫) is identified in ritual classics as peculiar to the overlord who performs sacrifices to terrestrial deities.[24] Second, the right to sacrifice to "Heaven and Earth, to the four apices and the three luminaries, to spirits and deities of mountains and rivers, and to five objects of sacrifice" mentioned in the inscription is also identified as the exclusive prerogative of the ruler.[25] Of course, ritual compendia often depict idealized reality, and it is possible that occasionally certain ritual functions were "usurped" by the ruler's siblings, but it is difficult to support such a supposition with regard to the highly centralized polity such as the late Zhanguo state of Qin. Moreover, the donor's promise that in case his illness is cured he will make the rest of the Qin population, including the members of the royal family, sacrifice to the spirit of Mountain Hua, further indicates his royal status. If so, Yin is one of the Qin kings.

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in 210 (see his "Shindai hiki shotan" 秦代避諱初探, *Sochi shutsudo shiryō to Chūgoku kodai bunka* 楚地出土資料と中國古代文化, ed. Kakuten Sokan kenkyūkai 郭店楚簡研究會 [Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2002], 571–94).

23. See Wang Hui, "Qin Zengsun Yin," 153–54. Zeng Xiantong et al. and Xu Jiuting 徐筱婷 ("Qin Yin yuban yanjiu" 秦騩玉版研究, *Di shisanjie quanguo ji haixia liang'an Zhongguo wenzixue xueshu yantaohui* 第十三屆全國暨海峽兩岸中國文字學學術研討會 [Taibei: Wanjuan lou, 2002], 77–88) agree with Wang's dating, while Zhou Fengwu suggests that the characters are roughly identical with those of the "Clay Document"; hence, he concludes that the jade tablets should be dated to King Huiwen's reign.

24. See Sun Xidan 孫希旦, *Li ji jijie* 禮記集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1996), 6.141 ("Qu li xia" 曲禮下).

25. See the detailed discussion in Zhou Fengwu, "Qin Huiwen Wang," 219–24; Li Jiahao, "Qin Yin yuban," 109–14. Moreover, Wang Hui ("Qin Zengsun Yin," 154–55) identifies the sacrifice to Mountain Hua as a *wang* 望 sacrifice, i.e., a sacrifice to the spirits of mountains and rivers under the jurisdiction of the local overlord. Such prayers, which were performed particularly in cases of state emergency, were also the exclusive prerogative of the ruler. See *Zhou li zhushu* 周禮注疏, annotated by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 and Jia Gongyan 賈公彥, *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏, ed. Ruan Yuan 阮元 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 18.763–64. Alternatively, it is possible to interpret the prayer as a personal appeal by the king (or one of his siblings) to the deity, and not a public *wang* sacrifice (I am grateful to Lothar von Falkenhausen for making this suggestion); but even in that case the ritual language of the prayer strongly supports the identification of the donor as a reigning king.

The problem is still unresolved, however. The only king whose name is written in the character that resembles Yin 駟, is Si 駟, i.e., King Huiwen. It is possible that the graph Si, which is first mentioned in the third century C.E. texts, is a graphic variant of the king's true name, Yin.[26] But if the author is indeed King Huiwen, who died in 311, then it is not clear why he laments the demise of the Zhou house, which occurred more than half a century later.[27] And if the donor is one of the later kings, then why does his name differ strikingly from the personal names of the Qin rulers known from the glosses to the *Shi ji*?[28] It seems then that the riddle of the author's identity remains at present irresolvable. For the matter of the current discussion, we shall assume that the donor is one of the Qin kings who reigned between 256 and 221, or, less likely, one of the royal siblings.

The inscriptions on the jade tablets yield much precious information regarding Qin written culture and religious rites, and, moreover, shed new light on Qin relations with the Zhou royal domain in the last decades

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26. The first mention of Si as King Huiwen's name is by Gao You 高誘 (fl. 205 C.E.) in his glosses on the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋. See Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷, *Lüshi chunqiu jiaoshi* 呂氏春秋校釋 (Shanghai: Xuelin, 1990), 59n20 ("Qu si" 去私 1.5); see also Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, annotated by Li Xian 李賢 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1997), 87.2876 and Sima Zhen's 司馬貞 gloss in Sima Qian 司馬遷 et al., *Shi ji*, annotated by Zhang Shoujie 張守節, Sima Zhen 司馬貞 and Pei Yin 裴駰 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1997) 5. 205. Xu Jiuting ("Qin Yin yuban yanjiu," 79–80) argues that the difference between Yin 駟 and Si 駟 is too obvious to allow for a substitution of one character for another.

27. Li Xueqin ("Qin yudu," 42–44), who dates the inscription to King Huiwen's age, suggests that the sentence "the Zhou house has now vanished" refers to the ritual "destruction" of the Zhou as a result of massive usurpation of the royal title by contending overlords in the years 334–18; Li Jiahao ("Qin Yin yuban," 116–19), in turn, suggests that the demise of Zhou refers to the division of the royal domain into two competing parts in the mid-fourth century. Both assertions are problematic, however, since they are not supported by any textual evidence. Both scholars furthermore do not explain why then the script of the jade tablets is visibly later than that of the "Clay Document" from King Huiwen's age.

28. Wang Hui ("Qin Zengsun Yin," 153–54) suggests that the donor may be either an unidentified member of the royal house or one of the kings, in which case Yin would be the donor's cognomen (*zi* 字). The first supposition is at odds with the donor's ritual position. The second is not supported by any corroborative evidence. Alternatively, Zeng Xiantong et al. ("Qin Yin yuban wenzi chutan") identified the donor as King Zhuang 秦莊王 (r. 249–247), whose known name is Zi Chu 子楚. The authors argue that Zi Chu should be a cognomen, while the king's given name is Yin 駟. The major flaw in this otherwise convincing argument, is that we know that under King Zhuang's son, the future First Emperor, Qin tabooed the character "chu" 楚—and this taboo would not have existed if the character "chu" had not been a part of the late king's name. If, however, Kageyama is right in his assertion that we cannot prove the existence of the taboo on the character "chu" ("Shindai hiki shotan"), then Zeng's suggestion may be adopted.

of the Zhanguo period. While the present study focuses on the latter issue, some preliminary notes regarding other aspects of the inscriptions should be made. The inscriptions are written in a highly ritualistic language that shows, as Martin Kern observed, remarkable continuity throughout the history of the state of Qin.[29] The first part of the prayer is written in a tetrasyllabic (albeit irregularly rhymed) style, somewhat reminiscent of the *Shi jing* 詩經.[30] The phrase "the house of Zhou has now vanished" 周世既沒 may refer to the phrase "Ancestral Zhou has been destroyed" 周宗既滅 from the *Shi jing*;[31] and the archaism is further strengthened by the resort to the ancient pronoun *jue* 厥 which appears three times in the first part of the inscription, adding, as Takashima suggests, dignity and solemnity to the text.[32] The structure of the prayer somewhat resembles that of other Qin ritual texts, as it adopts the same "past-present-future" division which was observed by Falkenhausen with regard to bronze inscriptions and by Kern with regard to Qin imperial steles:[33] namely, it begins with the depiction of the king's illness and the state of religious turmoil due to the demise of the Zhou house, then depicts the sacrificial ceremony, and finally promises future rewards for the deity provided the donor's disease were cured. Significantly, however, the last part of the prayer differs from the usual formulae of the bronze inscriptions. Instead of the "auspicious words" (*guci* 嘏辭) which end many bronze inscriptions, the donor of the jade tablets promises to benefit the deity by encouraging his subordinates to sacrifice to the spirit of Mountain Hua in return for the cure of his illness.

This brings us to another interesting aspect of the inscription, namely its bureaucratic reinterpretation of the centuries-old *do-ut-des* principle of human relations with the deities. The donor might have feared that the ordinary exchange of food and gifts for supernatural protection would not satisfy the deity; hence he promised that, should the deity respond positively to his plea, the multitudes would be ordered to serve it reverently, while the officials and members of the royal family would also be instructed to sacrifice to it. It is the power of the Qin ruler to manipulate

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29. See Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*.

30. For the reconstruction of the inscription's original phonetics and the discussion of its rhymes, see Behr, "Orison in jade."

31. See *Mao shi zhengyi* 毛詩正義, in *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏, ed. Ruan Yuan 阮元, 12.447c ("Yu wu zheng" 雨無正) (Mao 194).

32. For the earlier usage of the pronoun *jue*, see Ken'ichi Takashima, "The So-called 'Third'-Person Pronoun *jue* 𠂤 (= 厥) in Classical Chinese," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119.3 (1999), 404–31.

33. For the tripartite division of bronze inscriptions, see Lothar von Falkenhausen, "Issues in Western Zhou Studies: A Review Article," *Early China* 18 (1993), 154; for the Qin steles, see Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 146–47.

the multitudes, and not only his personal sacrifices, which should have made his devotional plea attractive to the deity. If this interpretation is correct, then the prayer may be considered as a concealed negotiation, in which the donor fixes the price for the divine support.[34]

From the point of view of political history and thought, the most interesting part of the prayer is that in which the donor laments the demise of the Zhou house and the resultant ritual void. This passage strikingly resembles a similar lamentation from the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (ca. 240):

> 今周室既滅，而天子已絕。亂莫大於無天子，無天子則彊者勝弱，眾者暴寡，以兵相殘，不得休息
> Nowadays, the house of Zhou has been destroyed, [the line of] the Sons of Heaven has been severed. There is no turmoil greater than the absence of the Son of Heaven; without the Son of Heaven, the strong overcome the weak, the many lord it over the few, they use arms to harm each other having no rest.[35]

The *Lüshi chunqiu* passage focuses on the sociopolitical implications of the Zhou demise, while the donor of the jade tablets laments its ritual consequences, but in both cases the extremely negative attitude toward the annihilation of the Zhou is evident. What is remarkable is that both texts were produced in the state of Qin, the ruler of which, King Zhao 昭王 (r. 306–251), is considered to be the one who delivered the coup de grâce to the Zhou house when he annexed the western part of the divided Zhou domain in 256; seven years later, under King Zhuangxiang 秦莊襄王 (r. 249–247), the Qin chancellor Lü Buwei 呂不韋, the patron of the *Lüshi chunqiu* authors, annexed the eastern half of the former domain. Laments for the Zhou house may indicate therefore implicit criticism of the Qin rulers. Yet while the *Lüshi chunqiu* was compiled by scholars from different parts of the Zhou world, who were not obliged to support the policy of Qin and were at times highly critical of the for-

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34. It is interesting to compare this negotiation with the deity with an anecdote told in the *Han Feizi*, according to which King Zhao of Qin 秦昭王 (r. 306–251) punished the heads of local communities for independently deciding to sacrifice oxen in a pledge to relieve the ruler of his illness (Wang Xianshen 王先慎, *Han Feizi jijie* 韓非子集解 [Beijing: Zhonghua, 1998], 35.335–37 ["Wai chushuo youxia" 外儲說右下]). Han Feizi interprets this odd behavior of the king as a manifestation of the "Legalist" principle of eradicating the need in the people's affection toward the ruler; but in light of the Mountain Hua's prayer, a new interpretation may be offered. By offering oxen to the deities for the sake of the ill king on their own initiative, the community leaders effectively decreased the bargaining power of the king, who could have hoped to trade his power to order universal performance of the sacrifices for the deity's help.

35. *Lüshi chunqiu*, 705 ("Jin ting" 謹聽 13.5).

mer Qin leaders,[36] the pro-Zhou sentiment of the author of the prayer on the jade tablets comes as a real surprise. Does it mean that one of the last Qin kings continued to believe in Zhou superiority even after the elimination of the line of the Sons of Heaven? And what are the implications of such an assertion on our understanding of Qin-Zhou relations, and, more generally, of Qin's legitimation on the eve of imperial unification?

The pro-Zhou sentiment of the inscriptions cannot be understood properly before we consider its ritual context. Some scholars indeed seem to interpret the donor's lamentation for the Zhou as a purely ritual formula, a kind of genre convention that should be understood narrowly within the framework of its ceremonial context.[37] According to this interpretation, the donor merely lamented the ritual void due to the eventual extinction of the house of Zhou; the void that could invalidate the donor's prayer thereby endangering his health. This assertion might have discouraged those scholars who studied the content of the inscriptions from paying sufficient attention to political implications of the pro-Zhou declaration.

In my eyes, the reduction of the inscriptions' pro-Zhou statements to nothing but a rhetorical formula is untenable. Such an interpretation presumes a complete separation between the ritual and political realms, a suggestion that is clearly at odds with the realities of pre-imperial (as well as imperial) China. While the lamentation for the Zhou should not be necessarily taken at face value, it is at the very least a significant indicator of a Qin ruler's view of his ritual inferiority. Rather than proclaiming his ritual equality to the Zhou king, a ruler of Qin (or, less likely, one of his siblings) placed himself at an undeniably lower position than that of the Zhou Son of Heaven; nor dared he to proclaim himself a legitimate heir to the Zhou ritual position. It is clear therefore that the appropriation of the royal title by Qin rulers since 325 was not conceived by them as a declaration of equality with, not to say superiority to, the Zhou kings. Being politically independent for centuries, Qin rulers remained ritually inferior to the Zhou kings well into the end of the Zhanguo period.

Analyzing the inscriptions from a religious angle further suggests the importance of their pro-Zhou sentiments. While it is impossible to ascertain whether or not these statements reflected the king's true feelings regarding the demise of the Zhou, it is clear, nonetheless, that a certain degree of sincerity was required to appease the deity of the mountain

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36. See, e.g., *Lüshi chunqiu*, 979–80 ("Hui guo" 悔過 16.4); 1013 ("Qu you" 去宥 16.7); 1212 ("Ying yan" 應言 18.7); 1491–92 ("Wu yi" 無義 22.2).

37. I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers of this article for this suggestion.

that was located once under the jurisdiction of Zhou kings.[38] If Qin was indeed responsible for the elimination of the Zhou (an assertion that I shall question below), then its king could hardly hope to deceive the "numinous deity" by shedding crocodile tears over the fate of the royal house. A prayer would not be expected to be effective were the donor to pronounce pure lies. Thus, when considering the religious aspects of the inscriptions, we may assume that the lamentation may reflect to a certain extent genuine sentiments of the king.

The importance of the pro-Zhou statement in the prayer is further enhanced when we take into consideration its expected audience. The inscriptions were not designed as political propaganda aimed at foreign or domestic supporters of the Zhou legitimacy. Their content might have been known only to the narrow circle of the donor's close kin and advisors, who perhaps shared the king's belief that the pro-Zhou statement would please the deity. Thus, even if the inscriptions do not necessarily reflect actual convictions of Qin's leaders, it is unlikely that they would utterly contradict these convictions. If so, then they provide us with a unique glimpse of Qin's attitude toward the Zhou house, and, more broadly, of Qin-Zhou relations during the last pre-imperial century. Since the prayer's content appears to be at odds with the traditional image of Qin as an arch-villain that had put an end to the eight-centuries-old line of the Sons of Heaven, its political implications had been heretofore largely ignored. In what follows, I shall try to focus the discussion on the political implications of this new evidence.

The *Shi ji*, our major source for both Qin and Zhou history, presents a relatively straightforward narrative of the relations between the two countries. This narrative is well summarized by the putative prediction by the Great Scribe Dan 太史儋 of Zhou in 374:

始周與秦國合而別，別五百載復合，合十七歲而霸王者出焉
Originally, Zhou and Qin were united, and then separated; after

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38. Mountain Hua and the adjacent territory of Yin Jin 陰晉 (renamed later into Ning Qin 寧秦) was acquired by Qin in 332 or 331 from the state of Wei 魏; originally the territory belonged to the Zhou royal domain; later it was contested by Jin and Qin (see Glen Dudbridge, *Religious Experience and Lay Society*, 86–87 text and note 2). The spirit of the mountain was perhaps supposed to be particularly supportive of the Zhou house. The need in "sincerity" and "trustworthiness" when dealing with the deities was considered, at least from the Chunqiu period onwards, as the most crucial precondition for obtaining a positive response to the sacrificial pledge; see, for instance Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, *Chun qiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1981), Huan 6.111–12, Zhao 20.1415–16 (hereafter *Zuo*). For the emphasis on "sincerity" in the Chunqiu bronze inscriptions, see Emura Haruki 江村治樹, "Shunjū jidai seidōki meibun no shoshiki to yōgo no jidaiteki hensen" 春秋時代青銅器銘文の書式と用語の時代變遷, *Nagoya daigaku bungakubu kenkyū ronshū*, 37 (1991), 55–56.

being separated for five hundred years they will reunite, and seventeen years after this unification the hegemon-king will appear [in Qin].[39]

Putting aside for the time being the precise meaning of the prediction and the calculation of the years,[40] we may observe that it basically reflects the story of Zhou-Qin relations as presented by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145–90). According to this story, Qin was a loyal and important ally of Zhou from the very beginning of the Qin polity in the eighth century; this alliance continued well into the years of Lord Mu of Qin 秦穆公 (r. 659–621), who actively supported the reinstatement of the ousted King Xiang of Zhou 周襄王 (r. 651–618). After Lord Mu's death and until Dan's prediction, for almost 250 years the *Shi ji* does not record a single instance of Zhou-Qin contacts. Such silence suits well Sima Qian's conviction that, prior to Lord Xian's 秦獻公 (r. 384–362) reign, Qin was a remote polity, which did not participate in the political life of the Central Plain states.[41]

Grand Scribe Dan's visit to Qin inaugurated a period of almost half a century of Qin-Zhou rapprochement. Zhou kings recognized Qin's successes by granting its rulers tokens of royal approval, and perhaps even cherished hopes that powerful Qin would bolster their declining prestige. The last recorded accord of the Qin-Zhou alliance occurred in 334, when King Xian of Zhou 周顯王 (r. 368–321) granted sacrificial meat to Lord Huiwen of Qin hoping thereby to counterbalance a ritual offensive by the rulers of Wei 魏 and Qi 齊 who usurped the royal title earlier the same year. These hopes were futile, however; in 325 Lord Huiwen also proclaimed himself king, apparently putting an end thereby to the amicable relations with the Zhou house. For the next seventy years the *Shi ji* records intermittent wars and alliances between Qin and the two tiny Zhou principalities (the so-called Western and Eastern Zhou into which the royal domain had divided), but nothing is known about Qin contacts with the Zhou kings until the annexation of Zhou lands after the death of King Nan 周王赧 (r. 314–256). We shall return later to the events of that last period, immediately after which the jade inscriptions were made; but for now let us turn to other sources that may provide additional information about Qin relations with the Zhou house.

Paleographic evidence can significantly modify and supplement the *Shi ji* narrative. The inscription on the eight Qin bells tentatively dated to

39. *Shi ji* 4.159; cf. 5.201.

40. For these, see the discussion by Zhu Zhongxi 祝中熹, "Chunqiu Qin shi sankao" 春秋秦史三考, *Sichou zhi lu* 絲綢之路 (1999), 55–59.

41. *Shi ji* 5.202; 15.685; for Sima Qian's views of Qin history, see Yuri Pines, "Biases and their Sources: Qin History in the *Shiji*," *Oriens Extremus* 45 (2005, forthcoming).

the reign of Lord Wu 秦武公 (r. 697–678) states that the lord of Qin had inherited Heaven's Mandate from his ancestors. This statement, echoed in later Qin bronze inscriptions, may testify to the lords of Qin challenging Zhou authority; but the matter is far more complex. Immediately after proclaiming that the brilliance of his ancestors "matches august Heaven," Lord Wu mentions the presence of his "royal wife" (*wang ji* 王姬, i.e., a spouse from the Zhou domain) who attended the ceremony and addressed the former lords of Qin together with her husband.[42] This exceptional emphasis on the royal wife's presence is not incidental; not only does it show ongoing marital ties between Qin and Zhou, but also indicates that these ties were crucial in bolstering the prestige of the Qin lords. Rather than challenging the Zhou superiority, early Qin rulers apparently developed symbiotic relations with the royal house, which did not prevent them, however, from asserting their singular position as the bearers of Heaven's mandate.[43]

Pace the *Shi ji*, which implies the cessation of Qin-Zhou ties after the death of Lord Mu, inscriptions from the sixth and fifth centuries suggest that these ties grew ever tighter. An inscription on chime-stones dating from the reign of Lord Jing 秦景公 (r. 576–537) mentions the feast made by the lord of Qin in honor of the Zhou Son of Heaven. Similarly, an inscription on Qin stone drums mentions the royal visit to the Qin lands, which occurred either in the sixth or the fifth century.[44] The importance

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42. For the text of the inscription on the eight Qin bells, see Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 85–86; for other inscriptions that proclaim Qin's possession of the Mandate, see Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 73–92. I follow Kern's dating of these inscriptions.

43. For more about Qin rulers' views of Heaven's mandate, see Zang Zhifei 臧知非, "Qin ren de shouming yishi yu Qin guo de fazhan—Qin Gong-*zhong* mingwen tanwei" 秦人的受命意識與秦國的發展——秦公鐘銘文探微, *Qin wenhua luncong* 8 (2001), 243–60. An apparent contradiction between claims of the Qin rulers to the mandate and their continuous alliance with the Zhou may be resolved should we take into consideration that during the Chunqiu-Zhanguo periods the compound *Tian ming* 天命 was employed in a variety of contexts, beginning with personal destiny and ending with an overlord's right to reign in his state. Assertive as they are, the declarations of the lords of Qin do not necessarily hint at replacing the Zhou kings. For these reasons I disagree with Yoshimoto Michimasa who argues ("Shin shi kenkyū josetsu," 55–58) that Qin rulers viewed themselves as "Sons of Heavens" (*tianzi* 天子), whose Mandate extended to "All under Heaven" (*tianxia* 天下). Yoshimoto neither explains why throughout Qin's history its rulers refrained from explicitly naming themselves "Sons of Heaven," nor does he notice a basic contradiction between the Qin rulers' self-reference in the Mandate-claiming inscriptions as mere "lords" (*gong* 公), and the supposed usurpation of the *tianzi* title.

44. For the discussion of this epigraphic evidence, see Wang and Cheng, *Qin wenzi jizheng*, 89–90 and 133–35; for the dating of the chime-stones and the drums' inscriptions, see Wang and Cheng, 81–143; for a detailed discussion of Qin stone drums, see Gilbert L. Mattos, *The Stone Drums of Ch'in* (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1988); Mattos

of these royal visits, about which the received texts are silent, is immense. From the early Chunqiu period 春秋 (722–453) on, weakening Zhou kings ceased "touring" (*xun* 巡) other states, and did not leave their domain, except under duress.[45] Visits to Qin manifest, therefore, the exceptional trust the Sons of Heaven had in the state that occupied the cradle of the Zhou dynasty.[46] We do not know whether such visits were routine or not, but even if these were isolated cases, they indicate that the Zhou-Qin alliance in the early fourth century did not come all of a sudden, but was a logical continuation of amicable relations between the two states.[47]

The reasons for the ongoing Qin-Zhou alliance may be both historical and geographical. First, Qin was one of the few allies who supported the battered royal house during the disastrous flight to the east in 771; this support resulted in the official enfeoffment of Lord Xiang of Qin 秦襄公 (r. 777–766). The very legitimacy of Qin rulers was therefore closely tied to their support of the royal house. Second, Qin's location in the ancient Zhou lands might have been of particular significance for the ongoing ties between Qin rulers and the Zhou kings. These territorial bonds are frequently overlooked, perhaps due to Sima Qian's pejorative remark about Qin "remoteness,"[48] but the evidence of royal visits to the

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tentatively dates the drums' inscription to the sixth to fifth century (see the discussion on pp. 325–63); for the translation of the inscription on the chime-stones, see Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 89–92.

45. The *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 records a single routine foreign visit of the Zhou king, to the state of Guo 虢 in 673 (*Zuo*, Zhuang 21.217–18).

46. It is clear that these visits did not result from Qin rulers' bullying the Zhou kings in the manner reminiscent of Lord Wen of Jin 晉文公 (r. 636–628), who had *summoned* King Xiang of Zhou to the inter-state meeting in 632 (*Zuo*, Xi 28.473). During the sixth and especially the fifth centuries Qin's power was at its nadir, and it was certainly not in a position to impose its will on the Zhou kings. Suffice it to mention that Mozi 墨子 (c. 460–390) omits Qin from his discussions of the contemporary superpowers, indicating thereby its relative weakness. See Wu Yujiang 吳毓江, *Mozi jiaozhu* 墨子校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 18.203–4 ("Fei gong zhong" 非攻中).

47. Another piece of evidence for continuation of Qin-Zhou amicable ties throughout the Chunqiu period is the Huaihou 懷后 chime-stones inscription. This inscription, fragments of which survived only in Song 宋 (960–1279 CE) collections of rubbings, was recently discussed by Li Xueqin, who approved its authenticity and identified the author as the spouse of one of the Chunqiu period Qin lords. The inscription mentions a grant of a token of approval to the lord of Qin (or to his spouse) by the Zhou queen, adding thereby another dimension to our perspective of Qin-Zhou relations. See Li Xueqin, "Qin Huaihou qing yanjiu" 秦怀后磬研究, *Wenwu* 2001.1, 53–55.

48. Sima Qian (*Shi ji* 5.202, echoed in *Shi ji* 15.685) opined: 秦僻在雍州，不與中國諸侯之會盟 "Qin was remote in Yongzhou and did not participate in meetings and alliances with overlords from the Central States." This well-known remark is puzzling, since by recognizing Qin's location as "remote" Sima Qian did not only ignore Yongzhou being an old Zhou heartland but seemingly passed a negative judgment on the location of his own Han capital, Chang'an 長安, located as it was in the old Qin lands.

state of Qin, mentioned above, suggests that Qin's location might have contributed significantly to its intimate ties with the royal house.

This tradition of amicable relations with Zhou kings may explain Qin's continuous respect toward the ever-weakening royal house well into the middle Zhanguo period. A clay document (*washu* 瓦書) discovered in the 1930's records the enfeoffment of a Qin minister; for us the most interesting part of the text is its initial sentence:

> 四年。周天子使卿大夫辰來致文武之胙
> The fourth year. Zhou Son of Heaven dispatched his *qing dafu* Chen to come and deliver sacrificial meat from the sacrifices to Kings Wen and Wu.[49]

This sentence is almost identical to an entry from the *Shi ji* from the year 334.[50] The subsequent text of the "Clay document" deals with the enfeoffment ceremony of a Qin minister, and is unrelated to the royal envoy's visit; we should ask then why it begins with the record of Chen's mission. Was it used for the dating of the enfeoffment? Signifying the year by the most important event was a common practice in several Chunqiu and Zhanguo states, such as Chu 楚, but in Qin it was not widespread. Numerous Qin bronze vessels from the fourth and third centuries are routinely dated by the reign year of the current Qin ruler. Only exceptionally does the vessel contain additional information about the major event of that year, such as a visit of Qi 齊 dignitaries that occurred in 344 and is recorded on the measure vessel produced by the orders of Shang Yang 商鞅 (d. 338) in the same year.[51] That the royal envoy's visit was added to the normal year designation (the fourth year of Lord Huiwen) indicates its exceptional importance for the state of Qin. The wording of the document further implies Qin's unwavering respect to the Zhou, whose ruler is named the "Zhou Son of Heaven." This respectful designation contrasts markedly with a slightly later Chu record of a similar visit by the royal envoy: the Baoshan 包山 slips simply mention "a guest from the Eastern Zhou" (*Dong Zhou ke* 東周客) who "brought" (*gui* 歸) and not "delivered" (*zhi* 致) sacrificial meat.[52] Chu rulers evidently considered this visit part of routine diplomatic intercourse and not a manifestation

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For possible reasons for Sima Qian's adoption of the "eastern" outlook, see Pines, "Biases and their Sources."

49. For the discussion of this document, see Yuan Zhongyi 袁仲一, "Du Qin Huiwen wang sinian washu" 讀秦惠文王四年瓦書, *Qin wenhua luncong* 1 (1993), 275–85.

50. *Shi ji* 5.205; 15.727.

51. See the transcription in Yang Kuan 楊寬, *Zhanguo shi* 戰國史 (Shanghai: Renmin, 1998), 208.

52. See Hubei sheng Jingsha tielu kaogu dui 湖北省荊沙鐵路考古隊, *Baoshan Chu jian* 包山楚簡 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1991), 17ff.

of royal munificence. In comparison, the Qin record indicates the lasting prestige of the Zhou house in the eyes of the Qin ruling elite.

The "Clay document" shows Qin's unwavering respect for the Zhou royal house well into the reign of Lord Huiwen. If so, what was the impact of the usurpation of the royal title by Lord Huiwen in 325 on Qin-Zhou relations? This step, quickly emulated by the leaders of other Zhanguo states, could not be welcomed by the Zhou kings; hence, after 325 we have no records of amicable ties between the Zhou and the Qin.[53] But does this mean that the royal house became meaningless in the eyes of Qin leaders? A conventional interpretation of the *Shi ji* account would lead to an affirmative answer. A closer scrutiny of the *Shi ji* in light of the pro-Zhou sentiments expressed in the jade tablets' prayer may lead to a more complex picture.

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To understand the nature of Qin-Zhou relations during the last seventy years of the Zhou, we should first clarify the political dynamics within the divided royal domain. In the mid-fourth century, the royal domain was divided between the western and eastern principalities, the heads of which held the title of lord (*gong* 公). The kings originally resided in the eastern principality, but upon his ascendancy, King Nan relocated his court to the western one, which is why many later scholars assumed that the latter became the new royal domain. This misreading of the Zhou annals in the *Shi ji* is based on the later concepts of legitimate succession (*zheng tong* 正統) and neglects the important peculiarity of the late Zhou situation: King Nan apparently lacked a territorial basis for his power, and was hosted by the Western Zhou lord. Both Western and Eastern Zhou principalities were not royal domains in the strict sense, because they were ruled independently by the minor lines of the royal house, acted as independent polities, and were engaged in diplomacy and warfare like any other of the Warring States. King Nan was not the ruler of the Western Zhou principality; he was not engaged in its domestic and foreign affairs, and "the ruler of Zhou" (*Zhou jun* 周君) mentioned in the *Shi ji* and other texts that record the last years of the dynasty is not the king, but rather the lord of the Western Zhou (for longest part of King Nan's reign, this was Lord Wu 武公).[54]

Lacking the aura of dynastic legitimacy, both Zhou principalities could

53. For the impact of Lord Huiwen's usurpation of the royal title on contemporary political dynamics, see Ishii Kōmei 石井宏明, *Dong-Zhou wangchao yanjiu* 東周王朝研究 (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue, 1999), 98–103.

54. See detailed discussion in Wu Rongzeng 吳榮曾, "Dong Zhou Xi Zhou liangguo shi yanjiu" 東周西周兩國史研究, in Wu Rongzeng, *Xian Qin liang Han shi yanjiu* 先秦兩漢史研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1995), 133–47.

be invaded or otherwise humiliated by their powerful neighbors, including Qin. There was, however, a certain advantage in hosting the Son of Heaven and his sacred vessels: their presence protected the Zhou statelets from complete annexation. The *Shi ji* records several instances in which Zhou rulers protected themselves by reminding the potential aggressors that the elimination of the royal house would arouse resentment among other states and would thereby backfire against the aggressor.[55] The veracity of these statements is impossible to confirm; but these arguments cannot be dismissed as a Han fabrication. There are further indications that despite the dire straits of the royal house, Zhou kings preserved their unparalleled standing in All under Heaven (*tianxia* 天下). For instance, none of the rulers of the Warring States, including Qin, dared proclaim himself "Son of Heaven," reserving this highest status exclusively for the Zhou king.[56] This ritual prestige evidently allowed a certain degree of manipulation that facilitated the survival of the Zhou house long after its rulers lost the semblance of former military prowess.[57]

What happened then in 256? At the beginning of that year Lord Wu of the Western Zhou principality allied himself with Qin adversaries; Qin retaliated with the military expedition and the frightened lord arrived

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55. See, for example, *Shi ji* 4.167; 40.1733–34. For the political importance of the Zhou kings during the last century of the royal house, see also He Jianzhang 何建章, *Zhanguo ce zhushi* 戰國策注釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1991), 3.7, 102–3 ("Qin ce" 秦策 1); 12.1, 422–23 ("Qi ce" 齊策 5).

56. See Ishii, *Dong-Zhou*, 127–79. The only exception was the attempt by the notorious King Min of Qi 齊閔王 (r. 300–283) to usurp the title of Son of Heaven, but his claims were rejected even by the weakest of his neighbors, Lu 魯 and Zou 鄒; see *Zhanguo ce*, 20.13, 737 ("Zhao ce" 趙策 3).

57. The ongoing ritual prestige of the Zhou kings explains the lasting political importance of the Sons of Heaven well into the reign of King Nan. Thus, when the state of Zhongshan 中山 planned an invasion of its neighbor, Yan 燕, in the wake of the usurpation of Yan's throne by Zi Zhi 子之 in 316–314, King Cuo of Zhongshan 中山王譽 evidently sought approval of King Nan of Zhou; hence the inscription on Cuo's *fang hu* 方壺 tells that after the successful invasion led by Zhongshan's minister, Zhou 賙, "the Son of Heaven did not forget [Zhou's] achievements, and dispatched his Elder to grant reward to my Uncle [Zhou 賙], while all the overlords congratulated [us]" (天子不忘其有勛，使其老策賞仲父，諸侯皆賀. *Cuo mu—Zhanguo Zhongshan guo guowang zhi mu* 譽墓——戰國中山國國王之墓, ed. Hebei Sheng wenwu yanjiu suo 河北省文物研究所 [Beijing: Wenwu, 1995], 1.379; see also glosses on p. 382). Elsewhere, the inscription on the Zhongshan hou-*tong yue* 中山侯銅鉞 states, "the Son of Heaven established the state, Lord Yin of Zhongshan created this military *yue* to make his multitudes respectful" (天子建邦，中山侯𤔔作茲軍鉞，以敬厥眾, *Cuo mu*, 396; for Yin 𤔔 being Cuo's cognomen, see the editors' gloss on p. 398). This inscription is doubly remarkable, as it shows that despite the usurpation of the royal title by Zhongshan's kings, in their interaction with the Zhou Son of Heaven they degraded themselves to the position of mere "lords" (*hou* 侯), in accord with ritual norms. See the further discussion in *Cuo mu*, 530.

at the Qin court and submitted part of his tiny territory to Qin. He then was pardoned and allowed to return to his state. Then the laconic *Shi ji* says:

> 周王赧卒，周民遂東亡．秦取九鼎寶器，而遷西周公於憚狐．後七歲，秦莊襄王滅東周．東西周皆入于秦，周既不祀．
> King Nan of Zhou died,[58] and then the people of [Western] Zhou fled to the east. Qin had taken the nine cauldrons[59] and precious vessels, and transferred the Lord of Western Zhou to Danhu. Seven years later King Zhuangxiang eliminated Eastern Zhou. Both Eastern and Western Zhou became parts of Qin, and there were no more sacrifices to the Zhou [house].[60]

What happened in the Western Zhou principality after King Nan's death? Had the king appointed an heir? And if so, what was this heir's destiny: was he enfeoffed, as the rulers of both principalities, or was he demoted?[61] Why did the Zhou people scatter after King Nan's death and apparently *before* Qin's invasion? And how was the elimination of the centuries-old dynasty completed with such ease? The *Shi ji* records no hints of protest against Qin's alleged destruction of the remnants of the legitimate royal system; on the contrary, in the years after the annexation of Zhou, Qin was shown unusual respect by the overlords who arrived at its court and then mourned the putative arch-villain, King Zhao, who died in 251.[62] How is it that nobody took upon himself the role of guardian of Zhou legitimacy? And why does no Zhanguo or early Han text, including those that lament the demise of the royal line, blame Qin for this crime?

The scanty *Shi ji* narrative leaves all these questions unanswered, perhaps due to the lack of relevant sources.[63] Many traditional scholars did

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58. The current text says, "The ruler of Zhou and King Nan [both] died" 周君、王赧卒, but the character *jun* 君 (ruler) was apparently misplaced in the text. See the discussion by R. M. Viatkin in his translation of *Istoricheskie Zapiski* (*Shi ji*) (Moscow: Nauka, 1972), 1. 341n250.

59. The nine cauldrons were the major sacred vessels of the Zhou house.

60. *Shi ji* 4.169. *Shi ji* 15.748 suggests that the Western Zhou was annexed in 255 and not in 256.

61. The enfeoffment of the ruler of Eastern Zhou principality is mentioned in the *Shi ji* 5.219; fiefs of both former rulers were located in the vicinity of their former domains. See Li Daoyuan 酈道元, *Shui jing zhushu* 水經注疏, annotated by Yang Shoujing 楊守敬 and Xiong Huizhen 熊會貞 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji, 1999) 21.1747–49. No text, so far as I know, mentions the fate of the possible heir(s) of King Nan.

62. See *Shi ji* 4.218–19; 40.1736. It is unlikely that the overlords' silence was a result of their fear of Qin power: in 256 Qin's power was relatively contained due to its unsuccessful campaign against the state of Zhao. See Yang Kuan, *Zhanguo shi*, 420.

63. Sima Zhen 司馬貞 (fl. 745 C.E.) complained: 蓋周室衰微，略無紀錄，故太史

not bother themselves with these issues, since the picture appeared to be clear enough: Qin, a ruthless villain, continuously intimidated Zhou kings and finally eliminated the Zhou, while other overlords were too cowardly to react.[64] But this picture can be modified by an unprejudiced reading of the *Shi ji*. Let us assume, rather, that for some *internal* reasons the royal line was discontinued after the death of King Nan: then our understanding of the last events in the life of the Zhou house would radically change. In such a case, the Qin annexation of the kingless principalities would not have been considered an extraordinary event and would not have incited international outrage. This hypothesis has obvious advantages over the traditional interpretations of the *Shi ji*. Not only can it answer the questions posed above, but it is also in perfect accord with the pro-Zhou sentiment expressed in the jade tablets' prayer and later in the *Lüshi chunqiu*. Laments for the Zhou were not aimed at criticizing the Qin rulers because these rulers were not murderous villains who eliminated the Zhou, but rather potential heirs of the deceased line of the Zhou kings.[65] The paradox of the authors of the *Lüshi chunqiu* criticizing their patron, Lü Buwei, would then also be easily resolved. The hypothesis of a non-violent end of the Zhou house would furthermore explain the relative ease with which Qin attained legitimacy as a new universal ruler within the subsequent two-and-a-half decades.[66]

The above hypothesis is an attempt to reinterpret the scanty information of the *Shi ji*, but this is also why it cannot be proved solely from the *Shi ji*. If, however, we take the newly discovered sources into account, we can see the new opportunities they give for reinterpreting traditional

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公雖考眾書以卒其事，然二國代系甚不分明 "It seems that as the Zhou house deteriorated, it had almost no records; hence, although the Grand Astrologist (Sima Qian) surveyed numerous books to finish (the depiction of the Zhou) affairs, the sequence of the rulers of both principalities is extremely unclear [in his book]" (*Shi ji* 4.170n2).

64. See, e.g., the depiction of the end of the Zhou by Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086), *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1992), 5.185. Like many others, Sima Guang confuses the Zhou king and the lord of the Western Zhou principality, presenting, therefore, a highly skewed picture of the end of the Zhou domain. This confusion can be traced already to Wang Chong 王充 (c. 27–97 C.E.). See *Lun heng jiaoshi* 論衡校釋, ed. Huang Hui 黃暉 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1995), 8.377 ("Ru zeng" 儒增); see also a gloss by Yu Yue 俞樾 (1821–1907) who explains Wang Chong's mistake on p. 378.

65. Is it possible that Qin rulers contemplated inheriting the Zhou mandate just in the way they had inherited the Zhou heartland five centuries earlier?

66. Noteworthy, despite the wide-spread hatred of Qin (on which see in the next section), its annexations of eastern states was remarkably smooth: aside from two ill-prepared attempts to restore the extinguished states of Zhao 趙 and Chu in 228 and 224 respectively, and a rebellion in the former Han 韓 lands in 226, no major uprisings against the Qin rule are recorded until the beginning of the self-destructive rule of Hu Hai 胡亥, the notorious Second Emperor 二始皇帝 (r. 210–207).

texts. Thus we may conclude that the prayer on the jade tablets provides us with crucial information about one of the most complicated issues in pre-imperial political history. It testifies that the ritual supremacy of the Zhou house remained unshaken to the very end of its existence, and even beyond. The Zhou symbolic superiority was not, as is sometimes assumed, a post-factum Han construction; Zhou and other states were not equal. The Zhou house had lost its lands, its military power, and its ability to interfere in contemporary political intercourse; but it never lost its sacral position and its religious and ritual superiority. The Warring States were independent *de facto*, but not *de jure*.[67] Hence, the end of the Zhou dynasty left a ritual and not only a political void, and it was the task of Qin rulers to fill it. After the task was completed, there was no longer need to lament the bygone Zhou house; hence there are no references to the Zhou in Qin imperial stele inscriptions.

Jia Yi 賈誼 (c. 200–168), who analyzed the successes and failures of Qin, opined that its amazingly successful unification campaigns reflected the universal desire for the restoration of a single locus of political legitimacy.[68] In light of the inscriptions on the jade tablets we may add that the ritual dimension of the unification was a no less important factor in facilitating the successful achievement of the Great Unity—*da yitong* 大一統. Thus, the extraordinary active efforts of the First Emperor and his aides to create a new universal religious and ritual system come as no surprise.[69]

Image and Self-image: Qin and the Xia

The discovery of Qin bamboo slips in Tomb no. 11, at Shuihudi, Yunmeng, Hubei province, in 1975 was a major breakthrough in twentieth-century Qin-related research. While most studies focused on the data concerning Qin's administrative, legal and social systems in the Shuihudi texts, these documents provide us also with a singular glimpse of Qin's self-image on the eve of the establishment of the unified empire. I refer here primarily to the two brief items from "Answering Questions about Qin Statutes" (*Qin lü dawen* 秦律答問). The first states:

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67. The present discussion therefore calls into question the assertion by Mark E. Lewis in *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 355, that the elevation of the Zhou house above other Warring States was a post-factum creation by Sima Qian.

68. See *Shi ji* 6.283; see also my detailed discussion of the *Da yitong* ideal in Pines, "'The One that Pervades All' in Ancient Chinese Political Thought: Origins of 'the Great Unity' Paradigm," *T'oung Pao* 86.4–5 (2000), 280–324.

69. For these activities, see Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*; Li Ling, "Qin Han liyi zhong de zongjiao" 秦漢禮儀中的宗教, in *Zhongguo fangshu xukao*, 131–86.

臣邦人不安其主長而欲去夏者，勿許。何謂「夏」？欲去秦屬謂「夏」。

When persons of vassal states are not at peace under their lords and chiefs and wish to leave Xia, this is not to be permitted. What is the meaning of "[to leave] Xia"? Wishing to leave the Qin dependencies, that is the meaning of "[to leave] Xia."[70]

The second passage states:

真臣邦君公有罪，致耐罪以上，令贖。何謂「真」？臣邦父母產子及產它邦而是謂「真」。何謂「夏子」？臣邦父，秦母謂也。

When princes and leaders of genuine vassal states commit crimes that go so far as [warranting] shaving off the beard and higher, they must be made to redeem these. What is the meaning of "genuine"? Children born of a vassal state father and mother, as well as born in another state, these are called "genuine." What is the meaning of a "Xia child"? [Children born of] a vassal state father and a Qin mother are meant.[71]

What can we learn from these slips of the relations between Qin and the Xia? The apparent difference between the two entities and the subordinate status of the Xia (i.e., the "Chinese" dwellers of the Central States) to the Qin promulgated in slip 176 are unattested in the received texts. Perhaps for this reason many scholars, beginning with the editorial team of the Shuihudi slips, attempted to interpret the slips in the way that would turn Qin into Xia. This interpretation is largely based on two arguments. First, the term "dependencies" (*shu* 屬) in slip 176 is identified as referring to the "barbarian" (*manyi* 蠻夷) polities. This explanation, which is based on Ban Gu's 班固 (32–92 C.E.) entry in the *Han shu* 漢書, allows interpreting the phrase "leaving Xia" as "leaving Qin." Second, for the pejoratively-sounding "Xia child" (*Xia zi* 夏子) in slip 178, it is argued that the child's Xia identity was defined not due to his "vassal state father," but due to a "Qin mother"—the mother's Qin blood turned him into a Xia descendant.[72]

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70. *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian* 睡虎地秦墓竹簡, ed. Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian zhengli xiaozu 睡虎地秦墓竹簡整理小組 (Beijing: Wenwu, 2001, 2nd ed.), 135, slip 176. I slightly modify the translation by A.F.P. Hulsewé, *Remnants of Ch'in Law: An Annotated Translation of the Ch'in Legal and Administrative Rules of the 3rd Century B.C. Discovered in Yün-meng Prefecture, Hu-pei Province, in 1975* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 170.

71. *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian*, 135, slips 177–78; Hulsewé, *Remnants*, 171.

72. The editors of the Shuihudi slips volume plainly stated that Xia is Qin's self-appellation (*Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian*, 135). Later scholars relied in their interpretation on the following *Han shu* passage: "Dependencies are a Qin institution to deal with the

The weaknesses of both explanations are apparent. To begin with, the automatic identification of Qin's "vassal states" with Han's dependencies (*shudian guo* 屬典國) is methodologically problematic. The Han knowledge of Qin institutions was vague, and recent discoveries of Qin administrative documents at Liye 里耶, Hunan, indicate that even basic administrative divisions of the Qin were not known to the Han scholars.[73] Ban Gu's assertion that the Qin dependencies were established for the "submitted barbarians" may well be based on a backward projection of the Han experience. Besides, even if the dependencies were established for the aliens, this does not preclude the possibility of similar institutionalization for the submissive Xia states. And most importantly, the proponents of the identification of Xia in slip 176 as Qin fail to explain why Qin is not named Xia in any other received or discovered contemporary text.

Moreover, Qin's identification of the eastern (Xia) states as "dependencies" can be corroborated by the received texts. Both *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 and the *Shi ji* contain abundant references to the subordinate position of Qin's weaker neighbors, particularly Han 韓 and Wei 魏. Being in dire straits, the rulers of these states occasionally adopted the stance of being Qin dependencies, perhaps considering this as a temporary measure to relieve their countries from Qin's pressure. While the exact dynamics of the third century inter-state relations is frequently blurred

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submitted *manyi* 'barbarians'" 典屬國，秦管，掌蠻夷降者. See Ban Gu, *Han shu*, annotation by Yan Shigu 顏師古 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1997), 19.735. Certain disagreements notwithstanding, scholars almost unanimously use this phrase to interpret the content of slip 176 in a way that suggests identity between Qin and Xia. See, for example, Yu Haoliang 于豪亮, "Qin wangchao guanyu shaoshu minzu de falü ji qi lishi zuoyong" 秦王朝關於少數民族的法律及其歷史作用, in *Yunmeng Qin jian yanjiu* 雲夢秦簡研究, ed. Zhonghua shuju bianji bu 中華書局編輯部 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1981), 316–23; Wu Yongzhang 吳永章, "Cong Yunmeng Qin jian kan Qin de minzu zhengce" 從雲夢秦簡看秦的民族政策, *Jiang Han kaogu* 江漢考古 1983.2, 68–73; Kudō Motoo 工藤元男, *Suikochi Shinbo yori mita Shin dai no kokka to shakai* 睡虎地秦簡よりみた秦代の國家と社會 (Tōkyō: Sōbunsha, 1998), 85–118; Liu Rui 劉瑞, "Qin shubang, chenbang, yu shudian guo" 秦屬邦、臣邦與屬典國, *Minzu yanjiu* 民族研究 1999.4, 89–97; Takatsu Junya 高津純也, "*Natsu* ji no *Chūka* teki yōhō ni tsuite"《夏》字の《中華》的用法について, *Ronshū: Chūgoku kodai no moji to bunka* 論集：中國古代の文字と文化 (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1999), 269–86. Even for Gao Min 高敏, who correctly interpreted the relevant slips, the notion that Qin are not Xia seems inconceivable; see his *Shuihudi Qin jian chutan* 睡虎地秦簡初探 (Taibei: Wanjuan lou, 2000), 274–77. My reading of the Shuihudi slips is supported only by Ōkushi Atsuhiro 大櫛敦弘, "Shin hō—Unmei Suikochi Shin kan yori mita toitsu zenya" 秦邦—雲夢睡虎地秦簡より見た「統一前夜」, *Ronshū: Chūgoku kodai no moji to bunka*, 319–32, and by Zhang Zhenglang 張政烺, "Shi you er gong ji qi xiangguan wenti" 十又二公及其相關問題 (http://www.guoxue.com/xstj/gxjl/gx_syeg.htm).

73. See Li Xueqin, "Chudu Liye Qin jian," 76–77.

with political rhetoric, propaganda and outright fiction in the *Zhanguo ce* and other texts, the general pattern of occasional non-equal relations between Qin and its weaker neighbors is undeniable.[74] Alternatively, a reference to the Xia states as dependencies should not necessarily reflect the actual situation but could have been a kind of internal propaganda, reminiscent of the later imperial China's rendering of foreign merchants and diplomats as tribute-bearing missions.[75] In any case, that the Xia are referred to in Qin slips as vassal states should not come as a surprise.

The analysis of the Qin statute cited on slip 176 further undermines the claim that Xia is Qin's self-appellation. Should Qin be considered Xia, as suggested by the editorial team, why then would those of the vassal state dwellers who were not at peace under *their* rulers like to leave Qin? Such a supposition makes no sense. It is more plausible that to the contrary—the intention of the Qin laws was to prevent the flight of the dwellers of its "dependencies" into Qin's land. Such a regulation would promulgate amicable relations with the "dependent" (but probably quite autonomous) polities, and would be in accord with the common international obligation of pre-imperial and imperial polities to provide no shelter to the fugitives from other states. It is even possible that the haughty language of the statute was aimed at concealing a regular Qin obligation toward its allies and not "dependencies."

The above arguments strongly suggest that a "Xia child" born of "a vassal state father and a Qin mother" was named so because of his father's and not his mother's blood. An assertion by Kudō Motoo that the matrilineal line of descent determined the child's identity seems untenable in light of the known patterns of Qin social organization. The "Xia child" was not an ordinary Qin citizen, but evidently a person with a special status, and his position was intermediate between the ordinary Qin subjects and the "genuine" population of the vassal states. Qin, thus, did not consider themselves as the Xia; their identity was different.

In light of this analysis of both passages we may conclude that, first, at least some of the Xia states were treated by Qin law-makers as dependencies, distinct from the Qin; and, second, that the Xia people were conceived of as a separate entity, distinguished from the Qin people in both location and blood descent. Besides, Qin appears as a lenient ruler

74. See the detailed discussion in Ōkushi Atsuhiro, "Toitsu zenya—Sengoku kōki no kokusai chitsujo" 統一前夜—戰國後期の國際秩序, *Nagoya daigaku tōyōshi kenkyū hōkōku* 名古屋大學東方史研究報告 19 (1995), 1–25.

75. See, for example, the misidentification of Central Asian merchants as a tribute-bearing mission from the Timur empire (Morris Rossabi, "The Ming and Inner Asia," in *The Cambridge History of China. Volume 8: The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part 2*. ed. Denis Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 247–48).

of the Xia: it recognizes the limited sovereignty of its putative vassals, preventing their subjects from entering Qin's territory, and it grants judicial privileges to the elites of the vassal states. Putting aside for the time being the implications of these passages for the analysis of Qin's international relations on the eve of the unification, we should turn back to their most surprising aspect: namely, they testify that in the late Zhanguo period Qin people conceived themselves as both distinct from and superior to the Xia, e.g., to the dwellers of the Central Plain.

The contradiction between the content of the above slips and the conventional wisdom about Qin identity is striking. Indeed, while scholars continuously debate the cultural and ethnic origins of Qin, none doubt that on the eve of the unification this state was a part of the "Chinese" (Xia, or, more precisely, Zhou) culture. Those who based themselves on the *Shi ji* assumed that Qin was an alien, backward or non-Zhou state that was gradually absorbed into the "advanced" Zhou culture under the impact of guest ministers from the Zhou states. Others, who focused particularly on the archeological and epigraphic data, emphasized both the continuity in Qin culture and its proximity to the Zhou; for these scholars textual evidence of Qin's otherness could be dismissed as either anti-Qin propaganda by its Zhanguo rivals or as an ideologically biased, Han period, misconstruction.[76] In both cases, however, strongly pronounced differences between the late pre-imperial Qin and the Xia remain inexplicable, which, as mentioned above, encouraged many scholars to reinterpret "problematic" slips, eliminating thereby the apparent contradiction.

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In what follows I shall try to analyze the non-Xia self-identification of Qin in the Shuihudi slips in the context of late Zhanguo period cultural dynamics in that state. My hypothesis is that, contrary to prevalent views, Qin was neither a formerly "barbarian" state that gradually adopted Zhou culture, nor was it an immutable part of the Zhou cultural realm. The evidence suggests that the new, non-Zhou image of Qin was largely a late Zhanguo construction, and that the creation of this image was part of an overall change in the life of Qin during the last pre-imperial century.

My discussion focuses on the issue of Qin's self-identification and its image in the eyes of its neighbors; it is not my intention here to explore the more objective aspects of Qin's cultural affiliations. Because relations between Qin's material and written culture and that of the Zhou states

76. For a summary of different views about Qin's culture and its relations with the Zhou cultural realm see n.6 above. For the clearest exposition of Qin's "acculturation" theory, see Bodde, *China's First Unifier*, 2 ff.

have been extensively discussed elsewhere, in what follows I will only briefly summarize major conclusions of the scholars who explored the issue. While the question of the primordial origins of "Qin culture" (or more correctly, of the Qin ruling elite) is still contested and it is unlikely that any decisive answer will be reached in the near future, it is clear that, as early as the eighth century, Qin elite shared basic cultural characteristics with their Zhou neighbors. Qin mortuary practices, secular and cultic architecture, and its written language from the late Western Zhou period on, definitely belong to the common Zhou culture, minor idiosyncrasies notwithstanding. The situation began changing in the mid-fourth century, when Qin elites abandoned many of the previous practices, particularly with regard to burial patterns.[77] The pace of changes was not uniform: in many important aspects, such as written culture and perhaps court rites as well, one can discern significant continuity throughout the Zhanguo period and, as Martin Kern's book shows, well into the imperial age. Simultaneously, however, profound religious and social changes in the state of Qin brought about, as we shall see later, radical changes in Qin's image in the eyes of its neighbors. But first, let us look at Qin's image and self-identification at the early stages of its history.

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Inscriptions on seventh and sixth century Qin bronze vessels provide us with crucial information regarding the self-image of early Qin lords. Aside from proclaiming themselves recipients of Heaven's mandate, the lords of Qin further identify their role as the leaders and protectors of the Xia. For instance, the inscription on Qin Gong-*gui* 秦公簋 (ca. 600) states:

> 秦公曰：丕顯朕皇祖，受天命，鼏宅禹蹟，十有二公在帝之坏。嚴恭夤天命，保業厥秦，虩事蠻夏。
> The lord of Qin said: "Greatly radiant is my august ancestor! He received Heaven's mandate, secured his residence [within the realm] of the merits of Yu 禹. The twelve lords reside in the lofty heights of the Thearch (*Di* 帝). Solemn and reverential in awe of Heaven's mandate, they protected and ruled our Qin, cautiously caring for the Man 蠻 and the Xia."[78]

77. This summary is largely based on the studies of Han Wei, Yuan Zhongyi, Martin Kern and Falkenhausen, mentioned in n.6 above; many insightful observations appear in several articles by Huang Liuzhu 黃留珠 collected in his *Qin Han lishi wenhua lungao* 秦漢歷史文化論稿 (Xian: San Qin chubanshe, 2002); see, e.g. his "Qin wenhua suoyi" 秦文化瑣議 (pp. 103–15). See also a detailed discussion in Gideon Shelach and Yuri Pines, "Power, Identity and Ideology: Reflections on the Formation of the State of Qin (770–221 BC)," in *An Archaeology of Asia*, ed. Miriam T. Stark (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 202–30.

78. Cited from Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 79. I slightly modify Kern's translation.

The same topic of "caring for the Man and the Xia" reappears on the contemporaneous Qin Gong-*bo* 秦公鎛 and on the slightly later fragments of the Qin chime-stones, where the tone becomes even more confident: the ruler of Qin claims that he "broadly spreads over the Man and the Xia" 奄敷蠻夏 and ends with "[Let them] hurry to serve the Qin and take up [their duties]" 亟事于秦即服.[79] It is clear that the Qin rulers considered themselves leaders of the Xia. But did they see themselves as a part of the Xia or an external and superior entity? The answer is not unequivocal, although the lord of Qin's proclamation that his ancestors secured the realm of Yu, the legendary progenitor of the Xia dynasty, may lend support to the former option.[80] Although the epigraphic evidence is inconclusive, it shows that, at the very least, Qin leaders did not consider themselves cultural outsiders, as is implied in the *Shi ji*.

We should turn now to textual evidence to investigate the image of Qin in the eyes of its eastern neighbors. Early to mid-Zhanguo texts, such as the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, *Lun yu* 論語, *Guo yu* 國語, *Mozi* 墨子 and *Mengzi* 孟子, rarely, if ever, discuss Qin matters.[81] In the *Zuo*, the largest depository of pre-imperial history, Qin is mentioned almost exclusively within the context of Jin and Chu affairs. Neither the *Zuo* nor any other pre-300 B.C.E. text contains any hint of Qin's alleged cultural otherness, although the *Zuo* records the surprise of a Lu 魯 statesman when a Qin guest displayed versatility in sophisticated rites.[82] The overall picture

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79. See Kern, *Stele Inscriptions*, 90; see page 73 for the Qin-*bo* citation. Interestingly, in the earlier (early seventh century) inscription on Qin's bells, the lord of Qin promises to "rectify the hundred Man tribes" 盜百蠻 but makes no mention of the Xia. It is evident that the four Qin inscriptions analyzed by Kern reflect the increasing assertiveness of the Qin rulers from the early seventh to mid-sixth century; see Pines, "Biases and their Sources."

80. It should be mentioned, however, that self-identification as heirs of Yu may refer to the general notion of the receipt of the mandate by Qin, and should not necessarily indicate Qin's identity with the Xia.

81. Eastern provenance of the above texts explains their relative lack of interest in Qin. Thus none of these texts, nor even the later and more informed *Shi ji*, display any awareness of the self-confident tone of the early Qin lords, and of their claims of being recipients of the Mandate and the leaders of the Xia. Perhaps this language of self-aggrandizement was designed for a limited circle of Qin top leaders, and was not employed in Qin's contacts with the rest of the Zhou world.

82. 國無陋也！"There are no remote states!" exclaimed the Lu host (*Zuo*, Wen 12.589). The *Zuo* contains another puzzling reference to Qin, in which it is identified as the Xia. In 544, Prince Ji Zha 季札 of Wu 吳 exclaimed, after listening to "The Airs of Qin" 秦風 section from the *Shi jing* 詩經: "This is called the melodies of Xia! One who is able to be Xia will become great – [will attain] the utmost greatness! It is [from] the old Zhou [lands]!" 此之謂夏聲。夫能夏則大，大之至也。其周之舊乎！ (*Zuo*, Xiang 29.1163). This saying could have testified to Qin's identification with the Xia, but there are manifold problems that prevent me from relying on this passage. First, the

we have from these texts is that Qin was an entirely normal, albeit not very important state within the Zhou realm.

A revolution in the image of Qin apparently occurred after the end of the fourth century. As noted above, this was the age when Qin society underwent a series of radical changes in most walks of life triggered by the reforms associated with Shang Yang. The resultant new image of the state of Qin is reflected in late Zhanguo texts, which, in sharp contrast with earlier writings, abound with pejorative remarks about Qin's alleged cultural backwardness and otherness. This attitude is observable, for instance, already in the late Zhanguo commentaries of the Lu *Chun qiu* 春秋, the *Guliang zhuan* 穀梁傳 and *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳. The latter text, which is notorious for its emphasis on the "Sino-barbarian" dichotomy, unequivocally places Qin among the Yi 夷, the "barbarians."[83] Elsewhere the *Gongyang* claims that Qin lacked ranked nobles (*dafu* 大夫), which suggests that this text was compiled in the aftermath of Shang Yang's reforms that abolished the ancient hereditary rank system.[84] A similar, if less definitively pronounced picture of Qin's otherness, emerges from the *Guliang zhuan*.[85]

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meaning of "Xia" here is not unequivocal. While many readers would automatically consider it identical to the "Huaxia" 華夏 ("Chinese"), Yang Bojun convincingly argues in his gloss that the term refers to the geographic location of Qin in the Western lands. Alternatively, the term "Xia" may stand in this context as a loan character for its cognate, *ya* 雅 (meaning "standard, elegant"; see Kern, *Stele Inscriptions,* 105n104). Finally, and most importantly for the present discussion, the entire story of Ji Zha's visit to the Central States and his semi-prophetic discussion of the future of different states based on their music is doubtless of much later origin than the bulk of the *Zuo zhuan*; indeed Ji Zha's prophecy of Qin's "utmost greatness" strongly suggests the post-unification (i.e., post-221) origin of his speech. See the detailed discussion by Zhao Zhiyang 趙制陽, "*Zuo zhuan* Ji Zha guan yue youguan wenti de taolun" 《左傳》季札觀樂有關問題的討論, *Zhonghua wenhua fuxing yuekan* 中華文化復興月刊 18.3 (1985), 9–20. Thus, the cited passage is irrelevant to the present discussion.

83. See *Chun qiu Gongyang zhuan zhushu* 春秋公羊傳注疏, annotated by He Xiu 何休 and Xu Yan 徐彥, *Shisanjing zhushu*, 22.2319.

84. See *Chun qiu Gongyang zhuan* 14.2272; 22.2316. For the dating of the *Gongyang*, see Joachim Gentz, *Das Gongyang zhuan: Auslegung und Kanoniesierung der Frühlings und Herbstannalen (Chunqiu)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), 345–403. Gentz assumes that the bulk (*Kerntext*) of the *Gongyang zhuan* was composed between 320 and 233, i.e., when Shang Yang-inspired changes in Qin social structure had long become a *fait accompli*.

85. Both texts point at Lord Mu's arrogant and ill-prepared campaign against the state of Zheng 鄭 in 627 and his subsequent struggle against Qin's erstwhile ally, the state of Jin, as the major reason for Qin's degradation to the status of "barbarian"; the *Guliang zhuan* states explicitly that "Qin became identical with the Di ('barbarians') since the (anti-Jin) Yao battle" 秦之為狄， 自殽之戰始也 (*Chun qiu Guliang zhuan zhushu* 春秋穀梁傳注疏, annotated by Fan Ning 范寧 and Yang Shixun 楊士勳, in *Shisanjing zhushu* 9.2403). Is it possible that the *Guliang zhuan* authors (ca. fourth century) were aware of Qin's erstwhile status as a normal Zhou state?

Late Zhanguo texts are permeated with pejorative remarks about Qin. Even Xunzi 荀子 (ca. 310–218), who generally praised Qin's efficient government and military prowess, criticized the people of this state for unrestrainedly following their natural feelings, being cruel, and negligent in ritual and propriety, in other words, qualities frequently attributed to the "barbarians."[86] Xunzi, who witnessed Qin's achievements and sought an office there, was mild in his criticism; other thinkers and statesmen were much harsher. For instance, the *Zhanguo ce* contains accusations that Qin "has common customs with the Rong 戎 and Di 狄; a state with tiger's and wolf's heart; greedy, profit-seeking and untrustworthy, which knows nothing of ritual, propriety and virtuous behavior" 秦與戎、翟同俗，有虎狼之心，貪戾好利而無信，不識禮義德行.[87] Some of the *Zhanguo ce* anti-Qin philippics go to the extreme of designating Qin as "the mortal enemy of All under Heaven" 秦，天下之仇讎也.[88] Here and elsewhere Qin is portrayed as an outsider to the civilized world, a state that is external to the Zhou All under Heaven (*tianxia* 天下), the cultural Other which exists beyond the pale of humanity.[89] While these statements may be dismissed as politically tendentious, it is possible that they reflect a broader cultural trend. Apparently, even some Qin courtiers accepted the exclusion of their state from the civilized All under Heaven. In a memorandum allegedly submitted by Han Feizi 韓非子 (d. 233), or by some other "guest minister," to the king of Qin, the author discusses at great length Qin's advantages in comparison to the *tianxia*, which is treated as an enemy to be invaded and annexed.[90] Whatever the provenance of this memorandum, it must have been formulated in accord with the argumentation acceptable at the court of Qin during the late

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86. See Wang Xianqian 王先謙, *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1992), 23.442 ("Xing e" 性惡); for Xunzi's positive remarks about Qin, see, e.g., *Xunzi*, 16.303–4 ("Qiang guo" 彊國); for a summary of Xunzi's views of Qin, see Zhang Liwen 張立文, "Xunzi lun Qin lun" 荀子論秦論, *Qin wenhua luncong* 9 (2002), 17–35. For identification of unrestrainedly following one's feelings as a characteristic of "barbarians," see *Guo yu* 國語 (Shanghai: Guji, 1990), 2.6, 62 ("Zhou yu" 周語 2); Sun Xidan 孫希旦, *Li ji jijie* 禮記集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1996), 10.271 ("Tan Gong xia" 檀弓下).

87. He Jianzhang 何建章, *Zhanguo ce zhushi* 戰國策注釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1991), 24.8, 907 ("Wei ce" 魏策 3); a similar passage appears in the *Zhanguo zonghengjia shu* 戰國縱橫家書 unearthed at Mawangdui 馬王堆 tomb no. 3 in 1973. See *Mawangdui Han mu boshu (san)* 馬王堆漢墓帛書 (三), ed. Mawangdui Han mu boshu zhengli xiaozu 馬王堆漢墓帛書整理小組 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1983), 16.52.

88. *Zhanguo ce* 14.17, 508 ("Chu ce" 楚策 1).

89. See a detailed discussion on Qin's exclusion from *tianxia* in Yuri Pines, "Changing Views of *tianxia* in Pre-Imperial Discourse," *Oriens Extremus* 43.1–2 (2002), 109–13. For other instances of pejorative remarks about Qin in the *Zhanguo ce*, see 2.3, 49 ("Xi Zhou ce" 西周策); 20.10, 726 ("Zhao ce" 趙策 3).

90. *Han Feizi*, 1.2–3 ("Chu xian Qin" 初見秦).

Zhanguo period.[91] As such it suggests that even some of the Qin leaders accepted its exceptional position as a state beyond All under Heaven, and a singular enemy of *tianxia*.

The increasingly pronounced anti-Qin sentiments in late Zhanguo texts do not mean, however, that the negative attitude toward Qin became uniform. More often than not pejorative remarks about Qin's alleged "barbarianism" are intermingled with neutral or even positive sayings about Qin, as presented, for instance, in the *Xunzi* and also in the *Zhanguo ce*. It seems that Zhanguo and early Han thinkers tried to reconcile the notion of Qin's otherness with the understanding that many aspects of Qin culture remained similar to that of other Zhou states. They suggested different solution for this apparent contradiction: some, as the authors of the *Guliang zhuan*, argued that Qin's degradation into "barbarianism" began only due to negative political developments by the end of the reign of Lord Mu (r. 659–621); others, like Jia Yi attributed Qin's deterioration to the corruptive impact of Shang Yang's reforms; while yet others, like Sima Qian, argued to the contrary, that Shang Yang tried to improve Qin's "barbarian" nature and to introduce the advanced culture of the East to this remote state.[92] These conflicting assessments may reflect contradictory aspects of Qin's social and cultural policy as well as its complex relations with eastern neighbors, as we shall discuss below.

In a recent insightful study Zang Zhifei 臧知非 suggested that conflicting assessments of Qin in late Zhanguo and early Han texts reflect largely contemporaneous political and ideological polemics and should not be taken at their face value.[93] The actual situation, however, may have been more complex, as it is evident that deeper cultural processes were involved. We have mentioned above that even certain Qin courtiers had internalized its image as an outsider to the civilized "All under Heaven." Other sources further confirm that, by the end of the Zhanguo period,

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91. The same memorandum appears also in the *Zhanguo ce*, where it is erroneously attributed to an earlier Qin statesman, Zhang Yi 張儀 (d. ca. 310). See a summary of distinct views regarding the authenticity of "Han Feizi's" memorandum in Jiang Zhongyao 蔣重躍, *Han Feizi de zhengzhi sixiang* 韓非子的政治思想 (Beijing: Shifan daxue, 2000), 14–25.

92. For the *Guliang zhuan*, see n.84 above; for Jia Yi's assertion, see *Han shu* 48.2204; for Sima Qian's views (more precisely, his citation of the alleged Shang Yang's words), see *Shi ji* 68.2234. A more extreme attitude toward Qin is reflected in the mid-second century *Huainanzi* 淮南子, the authors of which assert that Qin's innate greediness and aggressiveness "could not be transformed by positive means" 不可化以善; hence the harsh laws of Shang Yang were implemented there. See Liu Wendian 劉文典, *Huainan Honglie jijie* 淮南鴻烈集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 21.711 ("Yao lue" 要略).

93. See his "Zhou Qin fengsu de rentong yu chongtu—Qin Shi huang 'Kuang chi yi su' tanlun" 周秦風俗的認同與衝突—秦始皇 "匡飭異俗" 探論, *Qin ling Qin yong yanjiu dongtai* 秦陵秦俑研究動態 4 (2002), 8–18.

some Qin statesmen might have adopted the eastern outlook according to which their state was the cultural Other. The *Lüshi chunqiu* attributes to Lord Mu of Qin a saying: "Qin is a remote and uncouth state (similar to the) Rong and Yi" 秦國僻陋戎夷.[94] While this statement was made for rhetorical purposes and should not be read too literally, it nevertheless suggests that the *Lüshi chunqiu* authors, and perhaps their audience, were under the impression that this was how the Qin rulers saw themselves four centuries earlier, which means that by their time the memory of the Zhou-oriented Qin culture had largely vanished. Even more puzzling is the attitude revealed in a famous memorandum against the expulsion of alien statesmen by Li Si 李斯 (d. 208), who argued:

> 夫擊甕叩缶，彈箏搏髀，而歌呼嗚嗚快耳者，真秦之聲也；鄭、衛、桑 閒，昭、虞、武、象者，異國之樂也。今 擊甕叩缶而就鄭衛，退彈箏而取昭虞。
>
> To thump a water jar and bang a pot, to twang a zither, slap one's thigh and sing *woo-woo* as a means of pleasing the ear and the eye—this is the true Qin sound. But the songs of Zheng and Wei, the *Sangjian*, *Zhao*, *Yu*, *Wu*, and *Xiang*—these are the music of other states. Yet now you set aside the jar-thumping and the pot-banging and turn to the music of Zheng and Wei, you reject the zither-twanging and accept *Zhao* and *Yu*.[95]

This text, one of the classical references to Qin's alleged "barbaric" culture, was submitted to Qin officials, and certainly was not designed to harm their feelings. Yet, putting aside a puzzling reference to the music of Zheng 鄭 and Wei 衛 as the hallmark of proper Eastern culture, we know archeologically, that Li Si's presentation of Qin's musical past is incorrect: in the Chunqiu period, Qin's musical culture was largely akin to Zhou ritual music.[96] That Li Si and apparently other Qin courtiers were not aware of this and believed that Zhou music at the Qin court was a

94. *Lüshi chunqiu*, 24.1, 1584 ("Bu gou" 不苟).

95. *Shi ji* 87.2544; I slightly modify Burton Watson's translation in *Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 1993), 183.

96. Qin musical culture can be partly reconstructed from the excavated bells and chime-stones and their inscriptions; see a brief discussion by You Gengxin 由更新 and Shi Dangshe 史黨社, "Cong kaogu cailiao kan Zhou Qin lizhi de guanxi" 從考古材料看周秦禮制的關系, *Qin wenhua luncong* 5 (1995), 299–300. The "music of Zheng and Wei" was usually employed in a pejorative meaning as licentious, unorthodox music. See, for example, Yang Bojun, trans. and annot., *Lun yu yizhu* 論語譯注 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1991), 15.11, 164 ("Wei Ling gong" 衛靈公); *Lüshi chunqiu*, 1.2, 21 ("Ben sheng" 本生); *Shi ji* 24.1176. It is puzzling that in Li Si's memorandum it is treated as a hallmark of positive, Eastern, culture. Is it possible that Li Si believed that it is better for Qin to be attached to the licentious music of the East than to its own "barbaric" sounds?

new phenomenon, proves that in the late Zhanguo period not only Qin's image in the eyes of outsiders, but perhaps its own sense of identity had profoundly changed.[97]

The above discussion clarifies the intellectual background behind the Qin legal statutes that distinguish this state from the Xia polities. It is impossible to know how deep the cleavage between Qin and the Xia was, but its existence in the late Zhanguo period seems to be beyond doubt. Interestingly, Qin-related late Zhanguo texts never employ the term Xia as a designation of a cultural entity. Although it is difficult to draw far-reaching conclusions from this *argumentum ex silentio* given the relative paucity of references to the Xia in late Zhanguo texts in general, the apparent avoidance by Qin-related thinkers of the term "Xia" may be nonetheless revealing.[98] In all likelihood, these thinkers, most, if not all, of whom came from eastern states, were consciously avoiding a term that could alienate them from parts of their audience.

We may conclude then, that far from being isolated cases of prejudice and propaganda, anti-Qin statements in the third century texts reflect a broader cultural phenomenon of increasing variance between the state of Qin and the rest of the Zhou world. The Shuihudi slips, albeit irreconcilable with the skewed picture of "barbarian" Qin's acculturation as presented in the *Shi ji*, are perfectly in accord with changes in Qin's image that are reflected in major Zhanguo texts. The continuing similarity between Qin's written and material culture and that of the other Zhou states notwithstanding, it is clear that during the last century of the Warring States Qin was treated by the inhabitants of the Zhou states as very

97. For another anecdote that shows that "tapping the pot" was considered in the late Zhanguo period as standard Qin music, see *Shi ji* 81.2442; for an assertion of the Western origins of Qin's old music see *Lüshi chunqiu*, 335 ("Yin chu" 音初 6.3). For an alternative tradition that emphasizes "Chineseness" of Qin's old music, see *Han Feizi*, 10.70–72 ("Shi guo" 十過) and *Shi ji* 5.193.

98. The term "Xia" as a reference to the "Chinese" entity (i.e., dwellers of the Central States) is never mentioned in the *Shangjun shu* 商君書, *Han Feizi*, and the *Lüshi chunqiu*, although in the latter text Xia is mentioned twice as a designation of the Central States as opposed to the state of Chu. In comparison, the term "Xia" as a designation of the cultural entity appears ten times in the *Zuo zhuan*, once in the *Lun yu* and the *Mozi*, twice in the *Mengzi*, *Gongyang zhuan* and the *Guanzi*, and five times in the *Xunzi*. The paucity of the appearance of this term in the Zhanguo texts deserves a special discussion; in all likelihood it is related to the relative lack of the pronounced notion of "Sino-barbarian" dichotomy in the late pre-imperial China. See details in Yuri Pines, "Beasts or Humans: Pre-Imperial Origins of the 'Sino-Barbarian' Dichotomy," in *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran, (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 59–102. For more about the early usage of the term Xia, see Takatsu, "*Natsu* ji." Takatsu's article has many useful observations, although problematic dating of the pivotal texts and several inaccurate interpretations somewhat undermine his conclusions.

different, as the Other—and it was also developing a unique, non-Xia self-image. The question to be answered now is how this process can be related to Qin's continuous proximity to the Zhou house, as discussed in the first section?

Contested Identity: Qin's Place in the Warring States' World

The picture presented so far is puzzling. In the first section we saw that Qin rulers continued to adhere to certain pivotal aspects of the Zhou legacy, particularly in recognizing the supremacy of the Zhou kings. Had they deliberately tried to create a separate non-Zhou Qin identity, we may plausibly assume that they would have behaved differently with regard to the kings, and possibly with regard to Zhou written culture as well.[99] The new image of Qin, discussed in the second section, was therefore not just a result of elite manipulation, and its roots should be searched for elsewhere. Where? To answer this question we must focus on deeper cultural processes that encompassed both elite and commoners in most Warring States.

Two major developments contributed decisively toward the reshaping of the Zhou cultural landscape and the strengthening of local identities. First was the demise of the hereditary aristocracy—the principal agent of cultural homogeneity from the Western Zhou to the early Zhanguo period. The second was the territorial and institutional consolidation of the Warring States, which brought about increasing cultural cohesiveness in each state's population, on the one hand, and a growing sense of alienation from the people of the neighboring states, on the other. Yet these processes were counterbalanced by two opposing phenomena that limited in the final account the impact of particularistic identities. First was the powerful "universal consciousness" of the educated elite which largely lacked the notion of allegiance to a single state, and whose members were constantly crossing boundaries, reinforcing thereby cultural ties across the Zhou world. Second, particularly strong in the state of Qin, the ongoing territorial expansion dictated policies that would not alienate the newly conquered population, but rather help incorporating

99. Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭 noticed that, while during the second half of the Zhanguo period Qin script underwent similar process of changes as that of the eastern states, this new "popular script . . . never played havoc with the standard-script system," which itself "was the most faithful in carrying on the written tradition of the Zhou dynasty." This situation differed markedly from the development in the eastern states, where the advent of "popular" script resulted in significant divergences from the traditional forms. See Qiu, *Chinese Writing*, translated by Gilbert L. Mattos and Jerry Norman (Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China, 2000), 78–89.

it into the state of Qin. The resultant tension between "localism" and "universalism" explains the complexity of the cultural picture of the Zhanguo world in general and the state of Qin in particular.

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When we speak of cultural identities in the Zhou world prior to the Zhanguo period, we must distinguish between the identities of the nobles and those of the commoners. The latter remain largely invisible, archeologically and textually speaking. As our data for the Western Zhou and Chunqiu periods is confined primarily to the excavations of the aristocratic lineages' cemeteries and to the texts written by nobles about nobles and for nobles, we have an extremely limited understanding of the commoners' lives, beliefs, customs and even of their language. On the other hand, we possess rich material, epigraphic and textual data about the members of the noble lineages. These formed a hereditary stratum, effectively closed to outsiders, a stratum the members of which possessed many cultural characteristics common throughout the Zhou world. Aristocrats from different states routinely intermarried, but never married the commoners of their own state; they shared common ritual and textual culture, they spoke a mutually intelligible language, and routinely communicated during the inter-state meetings. Political cleavages notwithstanding, culturally the nobles belonged to a common Zhou aristocratic world. Even the frequent military conflicts between the nobles did not decrease their strong feeling of commonality: the war was, for the most part, conceived of as a mere game, a noble play.[100]

By the mid-Zhanguo period the situation had profoundly changed. A series of radical reforms in each of the major Warring States effectively

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100. Lothar von Falkenhausen (*Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1050–250 BC): The Archeological Evidence* [Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, forthcoming]) systematically analyzes similarities in material and ritual culture, particularly mortuary practices, between the nobles from different Chunqiu and early Zhanguo states. This archeologically obtained picture is largely supported by the *Zuo zhuan* which depicts sophisticated rules of inter-state intercourse that were evidently shared by members of the ruling elites from all major Chunqiu states. For the military culture of the Chunqiu nobles, see Hsu Cho-yun, *Ancient China in Transition* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1965), 53–62; Takagi Satomi 高木智見, "Shunjū jidai no gunrei ni tsuite" 春秋時代の軍禮について, *Nagoya daigaku tōyōshi kenkyū hōkōku* 名古屋大學東方史研究報告 11 (1986), 1–33. For the decline of the aristocratic ritual culture during the Zhanguo period, see a brief but brilliant discussion by Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), "Zhou mo fengsu" 周末風俗, *Rizhi lu jishi* 日知錄集釋, ed. Huang Rucheng 黃如成 (Changsha: Yuelu, 1994), 13.467. For a general overview of the Chunqiu aristocratic society, see Zhu Fenghan 朱鳳瀚, *Shang Zhou jiazu xingtai yanjiu* 商周家族形態研究 (Tianjin: Guji, 1990), 450–593; cf. Yoshimoto Michimasa, "Shunjū seizoku-kō" 春秋氏族考, *Tōyōshi kenkyū* 東洋史研究, 53.4 (1995), 1–29.

brought the aristocratic age to an end. The new elite was losing its hereditary nature, and absorbing members from the low aristocracy, the *shi* 士, as well as from ordinary commoners. Nowhere were these processes as comprehensive and thorough as in the state of Qin. In the course of the reforms associated with Shang Yang, a new meritocratic elite was established, in which ranks were granted for military achievements and high tax yields. These reforms effectively eradicated the formerly impenetrable boundaries between the lower and upper strata of the populace. By the late Zhanguo period, Qin achieved remarkable social mobility. Thus, predictions of a child's future that appear in the *Almanacs* (*Ri shu* 日書) unearthed at Shuihudi and at Fangmatan 放馬灘, Gansu, display the extraordinarily wide range of possibilities that faced a new born Qin baby: from becoming a high-ranking minister (*qing* 卿) or a noble (*dafu* 大夫), to becoming an official (*li* 吏) or a local bravo (*yijie* 邑傑), or, in the opposite direction, becoming a mere servant or (in the case of females) a concubine.[101] Fragmented as they are, extant data suggest the existence of highly mobile society in the state of Qin during the last Zhanguo century.[102]

The opening of upward mobility routes for the commoners had a far-reaching impact on Qin's cultural life. The old aristocratic culture, with its roots in the Zhou past, did not disappear entirely, but it was partly submerged by the popular culture that was based on local habits, customs and beliefs. These tendencies are apparent, for instance, from the fourth-century changes in Qin mortuary practices, such as the rapid introduction of catacomb burials, and the significant increase in the so-called flexed burials at the expense of the more Zhou-like extended posture burials; these changes may have been introduced under the

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101. For social mobility as reflected in Qin almanacs, see *Ri Shu* yanjiu ban 日書研究班, "*Ri shu*: Qin guo shehui de yimian jingzi" 日書：秦國社會的一面鏡子, in *Qin jian Ri shu jishi* 秦簡日書集釋, ed. Wu Xiaoqiang 吳小強 (Changsha: Yuelu, 2000), 291–311; for a slightly different perspective, see Pu Muzhou (Poo Mu-chou) 蒲慕州, "Shuihudi Qin jian *Ri shu* de shijie" 睡虎地秦簡《日書》的世界, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 62.4 (1993), 623–75. Simultaneously, a strong downward mobility existed as well; despite occasional grants of hereditary appointments and fiefs, and despite certain perpetuation of the ruling family's power, Qin aristocrats generally could not secure their position for more than one generation, as suggested from the regulations regarding unranked descendants of the ruling house in the Shuihudi slips: see *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian*, 137; Hulsewé, *Remnants*, 174.

102. Perhaps the most amazing example of potential social mobility in the state of Qin is a statute which stipulates that a bondservant could receive an aristocratic rank in exchange for his military achievements ("Junjue lü" 軍爵律, *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian*, 55; Hulsewé, *Remnants of Ch'in Law*, 83); see a detailed discussion in Robin D.S. Yates, "Slavery in Early China: A Socio-Cultural Approach," *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 3.1–2 (2001), 313.

impact of local population.[103] These are not the only manifestations of the probable upward dissemination of popular customs. Almanacs, exorcist and resurrection texts unearthed in late-Zhanguo Qin tombs at Shuihudi and Fangmatan reflect heretofore largely unknown beliefs of the lower strata; these beliefs may have existed for centuries, but their written codification and their presence in low-ranking officials' graves reflect a partial merging of elite and popular culture.[104] The concomitant advent of popular music, depicted by Li Si, had evidently obliterated an earlier Zhou-oriented musical culture, until in the late Zhanguo period the political imperative of reintegrating with the soon-to-be-unified Zhou world might have encouraged reintroduction of eastern music to the Qin court. This new popular-based non-aristocratic (i.e., non-Zhou) elite culture probably brought about an entirely new image of Qin in the eyes of its neighbors. Many members of the new Qin elite were becoming cultural strangers to their eastern peers.

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A second significant development of the Zhanguo age that effected profound changes in local identities throughout the Zhou world was the creation of a new state. In the Chunqiu period, the state was primarily a hierarchically organized network of semi-independent settlements of major aristocratic lineages, surrounded by rural hinterland. The relative autonomy of these units, however, was all but extinguished in the process of Zhanguo reforms. The newly formed state sought to mobilize all its population for economic production and warfare; individual households became major tax-paying units, and the almost universal conscription mobilized huge masses of peasants to the new, infantry-based army. Both tax collection and mass mobilization required much tighter ties between

103. For the new developments in Qin burial customs, see Han Wei, "Guanyu Qin ren zushu," and Pines and Shelach, "Power, Identity and Ideology;" for locating these cultural traits among the indigenous population of north-west China, see Huang Xiaofen, "Shin no bosei"; for more about cultural ties of Qin with its non-Xia neighbors, see Tian Yaqi 田亞岐, "Dong-Zhou shiqi Guanzhong Qin mu suo jian 'Rong Di' wenhua yinsu tantao" 東周時期關中秦墓所見"戎狄"文化因素探討, *Wenbo* 文博 2003.3, 17–20; cf. Zhao Huacheng 趙化成, "Shi lun Qin wenhua yu yuwai wenhua de jiaoliu" 試論秦文化與域外文化的交流, *Qin wenhua luncong* 12 (2005), 30–38.

104. This phenomenon of the adaptation of the lower elite to popular beliefs may have a twofold explanation: some of the officials who came from the lower strata might have inherited their original beliefs; others perhaps had to learn the beliefs of the local population in order to be able to control and if necessary modify them (a famous non-Qin anecdote of the partial accommodation to the local beliefs as a tool of future suppression is a story of Ximen Bao 西門豹, [fl. c. 400] from the state of Wei 魏, who ostensibly accepted the local cult to the God of the Yellow River [He Bo 河伯] in the Ye 鄴 district only to be able to eradicate it [*Shi ji* 126.3211–12]; for Qin officials' need to learn and to control the local customs, see the *Yu shu* 語書discussed below in n. 118).

the state apparatus and the population than had ever existed before; and the rapidly expanding bureaucracy maintained an increasingly effective census, trying to control the movements of the population and its everyday activities.[105] The intrusive state apparatus became a vivid reality in the lives of the elite and commoners alike, strengthening the sense of belonging to the state and solidifying common identity.[106]

For the purpose of our discussion, the single most important development that had far-reaching impact on the sense of identity of the Qin (and other states') populace was doubtless the appearance of mass conscription. Aside from effecting a series of administrative reforms,[107] the transformation of the Zhanguo military contributed decisively to the consolidation of the inhabitants of Qin. Prolonged military service, frequent bloody conflicts with rival armies, violent conquest of neighboring territories and inevitable confrontations between the occupied and the occupiers—all these could not but enhance the sense of common

105. The need for a precise census is articulated already in the *Shangjun shu* (Jiang Lihong 蔣禮鴻, *Shangjun shu zhuizhi* 商君書錐指 [Beijing: Zhonghua, 1996], 4.34 ["Qu qiang" 去彊]), and it is highly likely that such a census had been conducted in the state of Qin already in the first half of the fourth century (see Robin D.S. Yates, "Cosmos, Central Authority, and Communities in the Early Chinese Empire," in *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, et al. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001], 363–66). The precision of the fourth century census may be learnt from the Baoshan documents, which tell of the efforts of the state of Chu to verify the population registers and of punishment of the officials guilty of incomplete registration of "two youths of *junzi* 君子 rank" in one case, and of several other persons in the other. See Susan R. Weld, "Chu Law in Action: Legal Documents from Tomb 2 at Baoshan," in *Defining Chu: Image and Reality in Ancient China*, eds. Constance A. Cook and John S. Major (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 85–86; *Baoshan Chu jian*, 17.

106. These developments are discussed in great detail in several major studies, such as Masubuchi Tatsuo 增淵龍夫, *Chūgoku kodai no shakai to kokka* 中國古代の社會と國家 (Tōkyō: Kōbun, 1963); Hsu, *Ancient China in Transition*; Zhao Boxiong 趙伯雄, *Zhoudai guojia xingtai yanjiu* 周代國家形態研究 (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu, 1990); Yang Kuan, *Zhanguo shi*; Mark E. Lewis, "Warring States: Political History," in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 587–650. Qin legal documents from Shuihudi and Liye and Chu documents from Baoshan present a picture of an extraordinarily active and intrusive state apparatus that tried to control every aspect of the life of the local people, beginning with their movements and ending with their everyday economic life and even their domestic affairs. See, for example, Robin D.S. Yates, "Social Status in the Ch'in: Evidence from the Yün-meng Legal Documents. Part One: Commoners," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 47, 1 (1987), 197–237. For many insights about the nature of Qin's state dominance of local communities, written before the age of major archeological discoveries, see Leonard S. Perelomov, *Imperiia Tsin'—Pervoe Tsentralizovannoe Gosudarstvo v Kitae* (Moscow: Nauka, 1961), 66–84.

107. For the composition of Zhanguo armies and its impact on extra-military matters, see Mark E. Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Ancient China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 53–96.

identity among Qin peasant-soldiers. Looking at military engagements of the Zhanguo age from this perspective we may better understand not only political but also the cultural dynamics of that age.

Our analysis of cultural and political tensions among the inhabitants of the Warring States is frequently skewed either due to the anachronistic adoption of the perspective of unified China, or to the over-emphasis on the writings of Zhanguo thinkers, who routinely crossed state boundaries in search of better appointments, and had a stronger feeling of belonging to the common *tianxia* than to any individual state.[108] Looking at the commoners we may discern a different picture. An interesting perspective, for instance, is given by Qin conscripts' letters unearthed in Tomb no. 4 at Shuihudi. The author of the second letter, Jing 驚, complains that the natives in the recently occupied Chu lands do not obey the occupying army's orders, warning his addressee not to travel to the "new territories" 新地, the inhabitants of which are "bandits" 盜.[109] Such letters are unique, but not the feelings of anti-Qin resentment reflected in them. The *Zhanguo ce* citation of a Qin statesman who realistically observed that "the people of All under Heaven are extremely unhappy to become Qin subjects" 天下之民不樂為秦民之日固久矣 is but the tip of the iceberg.[110]

Unsurprisingly, the anti-Qin sentiments elicited harsh reactions from the Qin authorities, who went as far as exiling native populations from the conquered lands, replacing them with Qin settlers.[111] These ongoing conflicts between the occupiers and the occupied fueled the sense of local identity among the dwellers of each of the Warring States.[112]

Other developments further contributed toward the consolidation of

108. For the strong commitment of the educated elite in the Zhanguo states to the ideal of political unification as the only means to bring order to All under Heaven, see Pines, "'The One that Pervades All'."

109. See *Yunmeng Shuihudi Qin mu* bianxie zu 雲夢睡虎地秦墓編寫組, *Yunmeng Shuihudi Qin mu* 雲夢睡虎地秦墓 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1981), 25–26; see also the translation of the letters by Edward L. Shaughnessy, "Military Histories of Early China: A Review Article," *Early China* 21 (1996), 181.

110. *Zhanguo ce* 5.15, 194–95 ("Qin ce" 3). A clear manifestation of the widespread anti-Qin feeling was a decision by the people of Shangdang 上黨, whose territory was yielded by the state of Han 韓 to the state of Qin, to surrender to the state of Zhao instead: the aggressive Qin was strongly hated. For Chu's hatred of Qin and the saying "even if only three households remain in Chu, it will be Chu that destroys Qin" 楚雖三戶，亡秦必楚也, see *Shi ji* 7.300.

111. *Shi ji* 5.206 ff.

112. It is worth remembering that universal military service, particularly that which involves occupation of the hostile native population, serves as a strong consolidating force in many states throughout the globe well into the present. For a general discussion of the impact of military engagements on identity-building, see Anthony D. Smith, "War and Ethnicity: The Role of Warfare in the Formation, Self Images and Cohesion of Ethnic Communities," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 4.4 (1981), 375–97.

the state and its populace. Among these, particularly important was the territorial integration of the state and its physical demarcation from its neighbors. The erection of long protective walls, one of the hallmarks of the Warring States period, changed not only the physical but also the mental landscape. The territory beyond the walls became dangerous *terra incognita*; and for the authors of the Qin almanacs departure from the native state was considered to be a most inauspicious event.[113] A special exorcist ritual had to be performed upon leaving the state, similar to the ritual performed upon leaving one's native settlement.[114] This ritual identity between the state (*bang* 邦) and a native settlement (*yi* 邑) indicates that an affiliation to Qin began replacing the parochial identities of the earlier age.[115]

Aside from visible boundaries between the states, powerful bureaucratic boundaries separated Qin people from their neighbors. Qin statutes clearly distinguish between the native population (*gu Qin min* 故秦民), the people from various dependencies, including those inhabited by the Rong people, and subjects of foreign powers who had the status of guests (*ke* 客 or *bang ke* 邦客). The Shuihudi documents cited above suggest that descent as well as place of birth played an important role in defining one's relationship to Qin. While speaking of citizenship would certainly be an anachronism, there are undeniable common aspects shared by Qin, and other of the Warring States, and the modern nation-state.

These similarities notwithstanding, as is well-known, the subsequent development trajectory of the Warring States differed markedly from that of the modern Europe. Why localism did not prevail in the final account? Perhaps the answer should be sought mostly in the different behavioral patterns of the educated elite. Unlike in the modern Europe, Zhanguo elite members did not endorse centrifugal tendencies of their age. Zhanguo *shi*, who were routinely crossing the boundaries in search of better appointment, developed what may be called a "universal consciousness": they were seeking peace and stability for the entire realm "under Heaven" and not for a single state. Their loyalty focused not on the "altars of soil and grain" (*sheji* 社稷, i.e., a single state), but either on

113. See, e.g. "Ri shu" 日書 in *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian* 睡虎地秦墓竹簡, slips 145 and 144, 203.

114. See Hu Wenhui 胡文輝, "Mawangdui 'Taiyi chu xing tu' yu Qin jian 'Ri shu—chu bang men'" 馬王堆《太一出行圖》與秦簡《日書——出邦門》, *Jiang Han kaogu* 1997.3, 83–88, and Hu Wenhui, "Qin jian 'Ri shu—chu bang men' xinzheng" 秦簡《日書——出邦門》新證, *Wenbo* 文博 1998.1, 91–94.

115. For the importance of the border-line fixation for creating conceptual demarcations between different groups and its consequent impact on individual allegiances later in Chinese history, see Naomi Standen, *Borders and Loyalties: Frontier Crossings from North China to Liao, c. 900–1005* (forthcoming ms).

a ruler's person, or, in the case of particularly highly-aspiring *shi*, on *Dao*, i.e., the normative ideal of behavior. Leaving one's state in search of better appointment, or in search of full realization of one's ideals, was both widespread and entirely legitimate.[116] In the state of Qin in particular, the increasing number of the highest officials were drafted from among the so-called "guest ministers" (*ke qing* 客卿), who were gradually supplanting the ruler's agnates and marital relatives at the apex of the state apparatus.[117] Expectedly, these "guest ministers" were bearers of the "universal" Zhou ideals and not of Qin's localism.

A second factor that impeded maturation of particularistic tendencies, especially in the state of Qin, was its ongoing territorial expansion. Since the mid-fourth century Qin's boundaries were less stable than that of any other major state. Aside from fuelling anti-Qin sentiments and strengthening Qin soldiers' sense of identity, as depicted above, the expansion was simultaneously eroding the clear-cut demarcation between Qin and its neighbors. In the situation when former enemies could become tomorrow's subjects, Qin rulers had to adopt flexible policies that would lessen rather than strengthen the alienation of its neighbors from the state of Qin. Thus, while Qin leaders were energetically incorporating the newly conquered population into Qin's cultural entity, eliminating when necessary native customs,[118] they also tried to present a more ami-

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116. See the detailed discussion of Chunqiu-Zhanguo patterns of loyalty, including the political implications of the notion of "loyalty to *Dao*" in Yuri Pines, "Friends or Foes: Changing Concepts of Ruler-Minister Relations and the Notion of Loyalty in Pre-Imperial China," *Monumenta Serica* 50 (2002), 35–74.

117. For the gradual increase in the power of the guest ministers at the expense of the ruler's relatives in the state of Qin, see Moriya Kazuki 森谷一樹, "Senkoku Shin no sōhō ni tsuite" 戰國秦の相邦について, *Tōyōshi kenkyū* 60.1 (2001), 1–29; cf. Huang Liuzhu 黃留珠, "Qin keqing zhidu jianlun" 秦客卿制度簡論, in Huang Liuzhu, *Qin Han lishi wenhua*, 41–50. The question of the guest ministers' interaction with two other segments of Qin elite, namely the ruler's kin and the local upstarts who attained high status thanks to military merits, deserves separate discussion. Noteworthy, aside from ordinary "guest ministers," the state of Qin benefited from another segment of alien advisors, namely the kin of the queens, the most famous of whom was Wei Ran 魏冉, the Marquis of Rang 穰侯 (see his biography in the *Shi ji* 72. 2323–30).

118. Qin's efforts to impose its culture on the occupied population, and the difficulties it faced in this process, are demonstrated by the "Speech document" (*Yu shu* 語書) discovered in Tomb no. 11 at Shuihudi. The document records a speech made in 227 by the Qin governor of the Jiangling 江陵 area, acquired by Qin from the state of Chu half a century earlier. In the speech Governor Teng 騰 complains bitterly of the difficulties faced by Qin bureaucrats in their attempt to unify popular customs, and urges fellow officials to do their best to implement uniform laws and eradicate deviant customs: see *Yu shu* 語書 in *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian*, 13–16. For archeological reflections on the complexity of cultural interaction in the newly conquered Chu territories, see Wang Xianfu 王先福, "Xiangyang Qin mu chutan" 襄陽秦墓初探, *Kaogu yu wenwu zengkan:*

cable face to the soon-to-be-incorporated neighbors. This consideration perhaps was one of the major factors behind Qin's continuous respect of the Zhou house, as depicted in the first section of the present essay.

The Qin ruling elite of the late Zhanguo period was facing, then, highly contradictory tasks. Qin leaders apparently realized that the growth of local identity would strengthen the people's allegiance to their state and encourage the peasant conscripts to fight better. Concomitantly, however, over-emphasis on particularistic Qin identity at the expense of the more universal Zhou one was counterproductive for the state that was steadily annexing the lands of its neighbors, planning eventually to unify the entire realm under Heaven under its aegis. This conflict between short-term gains and long-term benefits may explain the ambiguous picture of Qin identity building on the eve of the imperial unification.

The coexistence of contradicting centripetal and centrifugal impetuses in Qin policy-making on the eve of imperial unification brought about immense complexity to Qin's interaction with eastern states. Thus, on the one hand, Qin rulers continued to enlist foreign advisors, whose role in ensuring Qin's eventual success cannot be underestimated. Their policy of building Qin's image as the cultural leader of the Zhou world, rather than its pariah, culminated under Lü Buwei, who summoned the best intellectuals from all over the *tianxia* in order to improve the cultural image of Qin in the eyes of its neighbors. On the other hand, the dynamics of late Zhanguo politics inevitably widened rather than narrowed the gap between the Warring States, arousing mutual mistrust and suspicion between the people of Qin and the newcomers from the east. Not incidentally, the "Lai min" 徠民 chapter of the *Shangjun shu* 商君書 (composed ca. 250) stipulates that only native (*gu* 故) Qin population would be drafted to military service, while the new immigrants should be confined to land tilling.[119] This position apparently reflects

Xian Qin kaogu 考古與文物增刊: 先秦考古 (2004), 219–25. Qin's cultural unification policies appear to be particularly successful with regard to the imposition of Qin's script on the areas under their control: see Chen Zhaorong 陳昭容, "Qin 'Shu tong wenzi' xintan" 秦「書同文字」新探, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 68.3 (1997) 589–641; for the discussion of pre-imperial Qin script unification measures, see particularly pp. 605–12.

119. *Shangjun shu zhuizhi*, 15.92 ("Lai min" 徠民). For the dating of this chapter based on the events mentioned therein, see Zheng Liangshu 鄭良樹, *Shang Yang ji qi xuepai* 商鞅及其學派 (Shanghai: Guji, 1989), 51–59; cf. Yoshinami Takashi 好并隆司, *Shōkun sho kenkyū* 商君書研究 (Hiroshima: Keisuisha, 1992), 103 ff. It is difficult to estimate whether or not such a recommendation was actually heeded. At the very least, the Shuihudi "Statutes on Military Ranks" mentioned above tell of the service of convicts (including probably former captives) in the ranks of the Qin military, and even of the possibility of these former captives to gain low aristocratic ranks due to their military merits. See Yates, "Slavery in Early China," 312–14.

an increasing mistrust of the natives of the foreign states, who were not considered sufficiently "patriotic" or trustworthy. The atmosphere of mistrust toward foreigners matured by the end of the Zhanguo period, when Qin ministers who were members of the ruling lineage suggested the expulsion of all foreign advisors, charging them with subversive activities on Qin's soil.[120] This plan was foiled by Li Si, by far the most important foreigner in Qin service, but the very possibility that such harsh measures were proposed is revealing. Free crossing of boundaries by members of the educated elite was one of the hallmarks of the Warring States period, and Qin benefited more than any other state from the services of foreigners. The very willingness to sacrifice these benefits for the sake of native (i.e., properly "patriotic") cadres reflects increasing mistrust toward aliens and the increasing resentment toward the foreign competitors for the lucrative positions at court. Curiously, on the very eve of imperial unification conditions might have been ripe for the fixing of a distinct Qin identity—both political and cultural.

Concluding Remarks

The detailed exploration of the interplay between particularistic and universal identities during the brief period of the unified Qin empire (221–207) deserves a separate study. In the present essay, I have confined myself to the more modest goal of demonstrating the possibility of new approaches to Chinese history in light of newly discovered epigraphic sources. To utilize these sources, we must overcome the widespread biases of the past, such as the presupposition of the eternal and immutable "unity of the Chinese nation," the regionalist paradigm, or the recently fashionable texto-clasm. The future success of our studies depends on effective integration of the available textual, epigraphic and material data, of which the present study is but a small step.

120. *Shi ji* 87.2541–46. Similar mistrust of the aliens was evoked several years later by Li Si, who reportedly opposed employing Han Feizi on the ground that "it would be only natural" for a royal scion from Han to serve his native state and not the state of Qin, and hence he should not be trusted (*Shi ji* 63.2155). Interestingly, there is no evidence for similar mistrust of foreigners prior to the reign of King Zheng, the future First Emperor.