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Reinventing the Barbarian: Rhetorical and Philosophical Uses of the Yi-Di in Mid-Imperial China, 600-1300

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Author

Yang, Shao-yun

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Reinventing the Barbarian:
Rhetorical and Philosophical Uses of the *Yi-Di* in Mid-Imperial China, 600–1300

By
Shao-yun Yang

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
History
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:
Professor Michael Nylan, Co-chair
Professor Nicolas Tackett, Co-chair
Professor Robert Ashmore

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Abstract

Reinventing the Barbarian:

Rhetorical and Philosophical Uses of the *Yi-Di* in Mid-Imperial China, 600–1300

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Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Michael Nylan, Co-chair

Professor Nicolas Tackett, Co-chair

This dissertation proposes a new framework for understanding changing Chinese ideas about barbarians (*Yi-Di*) and barbarism during the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1276) periods. Much previous scholarship has drawn a sharp contrast between what is characterized as a “cosmopolitan” early Tang period (618–755) and the growing xenophobic ethnocentrism ascribed to the late Tang (756–907) and Song periods. I argue that this view underestimates the importance of ethnocentric tropes in early Tang political rhetoric and also overlooks the emergence of a new and arguably less ethnocentric interpretation of the classical Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in the late Tang and Song. This new interpretation originated as a rhetorical trope in the ninth century before developing into a true philosophical concept in the eleventh, the key figures in this process being the polemicist Han Yu (768–824) and the *Daoxue* moral philosophers (or “Neo-Confucians”). The new interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy was characterized by a fluid, shifting boundary between Chineseness and barbarism, predicated on Classicist (“Confucian”) moral standards rather than ethnic, racial, or geopolitical boundaries. Modern historians have termed this interpretation of Chinese identity as “culturalism,” on the assumption that it was centered on “culture” instead of “race,” and have followed Han Yu and the *Daoxue* philosophers in identifying Confucius himself as its originator. My dissertation revises this picture by demonstrating that the so-called “culturalist” interpretation was the product of a new discourse on ideological orthodoxy and morality that involved representing any deviation from Classicist values as a descent into barbarism. The core of this new discourse was thus an attempt at making Classicist ideology and morality (not “culture” *per se*) essential to the definition of Chinese ethnic identity, but its users also generally chose not to undermine their ethnic identities by acknowledging the possibility that barbarians could become Chinese by becoming good Classicists. The resulting tension or dilemma between moralistic and ethnocentric understandings of barbarism remained unresolved until the Mongol conquest of the Southern Song (1127–1276) led to the ethnocentric understanding’s temporary eclipse.

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List of Abbreviations

- BHT: Ban Gu 班固, *Bohu tong shuzheng* 白虎通疏證 (Beijing: Zhongshua shuju, 1994).
- BJY: Bai Juyi 白居易, *Bai Juyi ji jianjiao* 白居易集箋校 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988).
- BQS: Li Baiyao 李百葍, *Beiqi shu* 北齊書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- BS: Li Yanshou 李延壽, *Beishi* 北史 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- CFYG: Wang Qinruo 王欽若 *et al.*, *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2006).
- CLJ: Chen Liang 陳亮, *Chen Liang ji* 陳亮集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987).
- CLWJ: Shi Jie 石介, *Culai Shi xiansheng wenji* 徂徠石先生文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984).
- CQFL: Attr. to Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, *Chunqiu fanlu yizheng* 春秋繁露義證 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992).
- CQJJ: Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, *Chunqiu jijie* 春秋集解, in Huang Linggeng 黃靈庚 and Wu Zhanlei 吳戰壘 eds., *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008).
- CQHSZ: Hu Anguo 胡安國, *Chunqiu Hushi zhuan* 春秋胡氏傳 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2010).
- CSCY: Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Chengshi cuiyan* 程氏粹言, in *Ercheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004 [1981]).
- CSJS: Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Chengshi jingshuo* 程氏經說, in *Ercheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004 [1981]).
- CSWJ: Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Chengshi wenji* 程氏文集, in *Ercheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004 [1981]).
- CSWS: Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Chengshi waishu* 程氏外書, in *Ercheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004 [1981]).
- CSYS: Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Chengshi yishu* 程氏遺書, in *Ercheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004 [1981]).
- CZB: Hu Yin 胡寅, *Chongzheng bian* 崇正辯 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993).
- DLBJ: Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, *Donglai bieji* 東萊別集, in Huang Linggeng 黃靈庚 and Wu Zhanlei 吳戰壘 eds., *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008).

- DSGJ: Hu Yin 胡寅, *Dushi guanjian* 讀史管見 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011).
- DTXY: Liu Su 劉肅, *Da Tang xinyu* 大唐新語 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984).
- DTXYJ: Xuanzang 玄奘 and Bianji 辨機, *Da Tang xiyu ji jiaozhu* 大唐西域記校註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985).
- FCWJ: Du Mu 杜牧, *Fanchuan wenji* 樊川文集, in Wu Zaiqing 吳在慶 ed., *Du Mu ji xinian jiaozhu* 杜牧集繫年校註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008).
- FRJ: Hu Yin 胡寅, *Feiran ji* 斐然集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993).
- FYYS: Yang Xiong 揚雄, *Fayan yishu* 法言義疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987).
- GLZS: Fan Ning 范寧 (with subcommentary by Yang Shixun 楊士勛), *Chunqiu Guliang zhuan zhushu* 春秋穀梁傳註疏 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000).
- GYZS: He Xiu 何休 (with subcommentary by Xu Yan 徐彥), *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhushu* 春秋公羊傳註疏 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999).
- HFZ: Han Fei 韓非, *Han Feizi xin jiaozhu* 韓非子新校註 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000).
- HS: Ban Gu 班固, *Hanshu* 漢書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- HHS: Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- JGL: Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Jigu lu bawei* 集古錄跋尾 (Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 2010).
- JS: Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 *et al.*, *Jinshu* 晉書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- JSJ: Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Jushi ji* 居士集, in Hong Benjian 洪本健 ed., *Ouyang Xiu shiwen ji jiaojian* 歐陽修詩文集校箋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009).
- JSWJ: Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Jushi waiji* 居士外集, in Hong Benjian 洪本健 ed., *Ouyang Xiu shiwen ji jiaojian* 歐陽修詩文集校箋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009).
- JTS: Liu Xu 劉煦 *et al.*, *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- JWDS: Xue Juzheng 薛居正 *et al.*, *Jiu Wudai shi* 舊五代史 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- JYJ: Su Xun 蘇洵, *Jiayou ji jianzhu* 嘉祐集箋注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1993).
- JZDSZ: Chao Gongwu 晁公武, *Junzhai dushu zhi jiaozheng* 郡齋讀書志校證 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990).

- KXJW: Wang Yinglin 王應麟, *Kunxue jiwèn* 困學紀聞 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008).
- LCYJ: Su Zhe 蘇轍, *Luancheng yingzhao ji* 樂城應詔集, in *Luancheng ji* 樂城集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987).
- LGJ: Li Gou 李覲, *Li Gou ji* 李覲集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981).
- LJY: Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵, *Lu Jiuyuan ji* 陸九淵集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980).
- LJZY: Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (with subcommentary by Kong Yingda 孔穎達), *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999).
- LYZS: He Yan 何晏 (with subcommentary by Xing Bing 邢昺), *Lunyu zhushu* 論語註疏 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000).
- LZY: Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元, *Liu Zongyuan ji* 柳宗元集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979).
- MXBT: Shen Gua 沈括, *Xin jiaozheng Mengxi bitan* 新校正夢溪筆談 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957).
- NXLYJ: Zhang Shi 張栻, *Nanxuan Lunyu jie* 南軒論語解, in *Zhang Shi ji* 張栻集 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2010).
- NXMZS: Zhang Shi 張栻, *Nanxuan Mengzi shuo* 南軒孟子說, in *Zhang Shi ji* 張栻集 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2010).
- NXWJ: Zhang Shi 張栻, *Nanxuan wenji* 南軒文集, in *Zhang Shi ji* 張栻集 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2010).
- PZWS: Pi Rixiu 皮日休, *Pizi wensou* 皮子文藪 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981).
- QDYY: Zhou Mi 周密, *Qi dongye yu jiaozhu* 齊東野語校註 (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1987).
- QSW: *Quan Songwen* 全宋文 (Shanghai/Hefei: Shanghai cishu chubanshe and Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2006).
- QTW: Dong Gao 董誥 ed., *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983).
- RZL: Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, *Rizhi lu jiaozhu* 日知錄校註 (Hefei: Anhui daxue chubanshe, 2007).
- SCBM: Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘, *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟會編
- SGZ: Chen Shou 陳壽, *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- SJ: Sima Qian 司馬遷, *Shiji* 史記 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- SL: Wang Fuzhi 王夫之, *Song lun* 宋論 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964).

- SS: Toghto 脫脫 *et al.*, *Songshi* 宋史 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- SSHL: Shao Bo 邵博, *Shaoshi wenjian houlu* 邵氏聞見後錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983).
- SSQJ: Su Shi 蘇軾, *Su Shi quanji jiaozhu* 蘇軾全集校註 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 2010).
- SSZY: Kong Anguo 孔安國 (with subcommentary by Kong Yingda 孔穎達), *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000).
- STJH: Liu Su 劉餗, *Sui-Tang jiahua* 隋唐嘉話, in Liu Su 劉餗 and Zhang Zhuo 張鷟, *Sui-Tang jiahua/Chaoye qianzai* 朝野僉載 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979).
- SXBJ: Ye Shi 葉適, *Shuixin bieji* 水心別集, in *Ye Shi ji* 葉適集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961).
- TD: Du You 杜佑, *Tongdian* 通典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988).
- TDZLJ: Song Minqiu 宋敏求 ed., *Tang da zhaoling ji* 唐大詔令集 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1959).
- THY: Wang Pu 王溥, *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1989).
- TLD: Li Linfu 李林甫 *et al.*, *Tang liudian* 唐六典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992).
- TPYL: Li Fang 李昉 *et al.*, *Taiping yulan* 太平禦覽 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1994).
- TWC: Yao Xuan 姚鉉, *Tang wencui* 唐文萃 (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 1998).
- TWSCT: Cai Tao 蔡條, *Tieweishan congtan* 鐵圍山叢談 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983).
- TZY: Wang Dingbao 王定保, *Tang zhiyan* 唐摭言 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959).
- WGCL: Xu Jingzong 許敬宗 ed., *Ricang Hongren ben Wenguan cilin jiaozheng* 日藏弘仁本文館詞林校證 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001).
- WLJ: Wang Ling 王令, *Wang Ling ji* 王令集 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1980).
- WS: Wei Shou 魏收, *Weishu* 魏書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- WZG: Wang Fangqing 王方慶, *Wei Zhenggong jianlu* 魏鄭公諫錄 (Changsha: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1939).
- XCB: Li Tao 李燾, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979).
- XS: Jia Yi 賈誼, *Xinshu jiaozhu* 新書校註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000).

- XTS: Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 *et al.*, *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- XWDS: Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- XXJY: Ye Shi 葉適, *Xixue jiyang xumu* 習學記言序目 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977).
- YHJX: Li Jifu 李吉甫, *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 元和郡縣圖志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983).
- YHL: Zhao Lin 趙璘, *Yinhua lu* 因話錄 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1979).
- YS: Song Lian 宋濂 *et al.*, *Yuanshi* 元史 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- ZCZY: Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚 ed., *Songchao zhuchen zouyi* 宋朝諸臣奏議 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1999).
- ZGZY: Wu Jing 吳兢, *Zhengan zhengyao jijiao* 貞觀政要集校 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003).
- ZJL: Zhang Jiuling 張九齡, *Zhang Jiuling ji jiaozhu* 張九齡集校註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008).
- ZLZS: Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (with subcommentary by Jia Gongyan 賈公彥), *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮註疏 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999).
- ZS: Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 *et al.*, *Zhoushu* 周書 (Zhonghua shuju edition).
- ZSBY: Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, *Zuoshi boyi* 左氏博議, in Huang Linggeng 黃靈庚 and Wu Zhanlei 吳戰壘 eds., *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008).
- ZSZS: Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, *Zuoshizhuan shuo* 左氏傳說, in Huang Linggeng 黃靈庚 and Wu Zhanlei 吳戰壘 eds., *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008).
- ZSZXS: Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, *Zuoshizhuan xushuo* 左氏傳續說, in Huang Linggeng 黃靈庚 and Wu Zhanlei 吳戰壘 eds., *Lü Zuqian quanji* 呂祖謙全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2008).
- ZZTJ: Sima Guang 司馬光 *et al.* (with commentary by Hu Sanxing 胡三省), *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956).
- ZZYL: Zhu Xi 朱熹 (Li Jingde 黎靖德 ed.), *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994).
- ZZZY: Attr. to Zuo Qiuming 左丘明 (with commentary by Du Yu 杜預 and subcommentary by Kong Yingda 孔穎達), *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi* 春秋左傳正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999).

Acknowledgments

Writing this dissertation has sometimes felt like a lonely process, during which much time that could have been spent with family and friends was instead devoted to trying to get into the heads of long-dead thinkers with whom I felt no particular personal, ideological, or even ethnocultural affinity. At such moments, my biggest motivation to press on has come from reading other work (recent or otherwise) in the field of Chinese intellectual history that reminded me that I was writing for the benefit of a future audience of scholars who cared deeply about past ideas and their context.

I have often gained the greatest inspiration from reading scholarly arguments or interpretations with which I strongly disagreed: somewhat paradoxically, that feeling of disagreement or dissatisfaction could be followed by an exhilarating sense that I was glimpsing some aspect of historical reality that the author's own context and background had obscured from his or her view. Since the work that I have produced tends to be overtly or polemically revisionist, I would like to apologize to any historians toward whose work I have been unduly critical or uncharitable, and to acknowledge my debt to them for providing me with a substantial (if imperfect) foundation of research on which to build and, at times, to tear down and rebuild.

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Introduction

This dissertation is about the history of a specific concept or, more precisely, a conceptual dichotomy or polarity that distinguished the Chinese from all other peoples and assumed that the former were superior to the latter. I have used the English word “barbarian,” ultimately derived from the Greek *barbaros* (plural *barbaroi*), to translate the range of terms (most notably *Yi* 夷 and *Yi-Di* 夷狄) by which the Chinese—who usually called themselves *Hua* 華, *Xia* 夏, or the people of *Zhongguo* 中國 (the Central Lands)—referred to the peoples on the non-Chinese side of this dichotomy. In so doing, I follow a longstanding Sinological practice that has recently been called into question. I shall explain my position on that controversy shortly, but let me first account for my choice of *Reinventing the Barbarian* as the dissertation’s title.

My title alludes to Edith Hall’s *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (1989), a study of the depiction of foreigners in Classical Athenian drama and a seminal work in the field of ethnocultural identity in the ancient Mediterranean world. On the first two pages of Hall’s Introduction, she sums up her argument as follows:

[This book] argues that Greek writing about barbarians is usually an exercise in self-definition, for the barbarian is often portrayed as the opposite of the ideal Greek. It suggests that the polarization of Hellene and barbarian was invented in specific historical circumstances during the early years of the fifth century BC, partly as a result of the combined Greek military efforts against the Persians. The notions of Panhellenism and its corollary, all non-Greeks as a collective genus, were however more particularly elements of the Athenian ideology which buttressed first the Delian league, the alliance against the Persians formed in the years immediately after the wars, and subsequently the Athenian empire. The image of an enemy extraneous to Hellas helped to foster a sense of community between the allied states.¹

Hall’s thesis is thus that the idea of a fundamental dichotomy between superior Greeks and inferior non-Greeks (“barbarians”) was invented for the purpose of building a common identity among the Greek city-states during their wars with the Persian Empire: as she explains in her Preface, the book’s title “might therefore almost as well have been *Inventing the Hellene as Inventing the Barbarian*.”²

¹ Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 1–2.

² *Ibid.*, ix. For two important recent critiques of this theory see Erich Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011); Kostas Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 34–41, 161–225.

My dissertation's aim is not to trace the origins of the concept of a Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, as Hall sought to do with the concept of a Greek-barbarian dichotomy, or to compare the two concepts; other scholars have already attempted one or both of these.³ Rather, my main argument concerns the origins of one aspect of pre-modern Chinese discourse on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy that modern historians have tended to emphasize and to contrast with the Greek-barbarian dichotomy—namely, the notion that one could shift from one side of the dichotomy to the other merely by changing one's behavior. These historians generally assume such a notion to have existed in the Eastern Zhou 東周 (770–256 BC) period and to have exercised an enduring influence over imperial Chinese thought through the body of texts that came, in the modern period, to be called the “Confucian” Classics. I will argue, however, that the classical “Confucian” texts that historians routinely read as evidence for this notion's Eastern Zhou origin (notably the *Chunqiu* 春秋, the *Analects* 論語, and the *Mencius* 孟子) have only been interpreted in that manner since the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1276) periods, and that the idea of a fluid, permeable boundary between Chineseness and barbarism did not become influential until the Song.

My central argument is that a new emphasis on the fluid and mutable character of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy emerged in the late Tang (756–907) and Northern Song (960–1127), as a part of rhetorical efforts at redefining Classicism (more commonly, if inaccurately, known as “Confucianism”) as an exclusive ideology that was integral to Chinese identity. The reinterpretation of ideological deviance or heterodoxy as a state of barbarism in turn produced a discourse that interpreted Classicist ideals of morality as the essence of Chineseness, and thus represented Chinese acts of immorality as tantamount to barbarization. These discourses were closely linked to two major intellectual developments in Tang and Song Classicism: the Ancient Style (*Guwen* 古文) ideology associated with the essayist Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) and some of his eleventh-century admirers; and the *Daoxue* (“Neo-Confucian”) tradition of moral philosophy developed by the brothers Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032–1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107).

My argument holds that these new Tang and Song discourses on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy amounted to a *reinvention* of understandings of Chinese identity via a reinvention or redefinition of barbarism. In effect, this reinvention took moral standards, rather than ethnicity and geopolitics, as the definitive boundary between the Chinese and the barbarians. However, late Tang and Song writers never rejected ethnicity and geopolitics as completely irrelevant. Nearly all of the writers analyzed in this dissertation were only interested in using the idea of barbarization and conspicuously avoided the idea of ‘sinicized’ barbarians, although we shall read two late Tang essays that (for very different rhetorical reasons) assert the existence of

³ Most recently Yuri Pines, “Beasts or Humans: Pre-imperial Origins of the ‘Sino-Barbarian’ Dichotomy,” in Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran eds., *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 59–102; Hyun Jin Kim, *Ethnicity and Foreigners in Ancient Greece and China* (London: Duckworth, 2009); Yang Huang, “Perceptions of the Barbarian in Early Greece and China,” *Center for Hellenic Studies Research Bulletin* 2, no. 1 (2013), published online at:

barbarians with “Chinese hearts” in a manner that makes it clear that their readers would have found this assertion radically unconventional. During the Southern Song period (1127–1276) in particular, various thinkers tempered the moral universalism of their new understanding of barbarism by insisting on the ‘original’ barbarians’ innate inferiority, often by invoking older theories of environmental determinism. They were thus able to assert that the Chinese could turn into barbarians by behaving immorally, while denying that barbarians could overcome their moral inferiority and become like the Chinese. If the boundary between Chineseness and barbarism came to be ascribed with greater fluidity and permeability during the late Tang and Song periods, therefore, it was still generally seen as permeable in only one direction until the Yuan conquest of the Southern Song gave stronger political impetus to the formation of a new (if relatively short-lived) mode of Chinese identity that transcended ethnic differences.

Despite the limited moral universalism of late Tang and Song discourse on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, the fact that this discourse became more, not less, fluid than before should still lead us to rethink the conventional view of late Tang and Song society as shifting from the purported “cosmopolitanism” of the early Tang (618–755) toward ever-greater xenophobia and ethnocentrism. Chinese historians frequently claim that the ethnocultural boundary separating the Chinese from the barbarians “became stricter” 轉嚴 over the course of the late Tang and Song.⁴ Yet it seems clear that this claim is usually based on a very superficial reading of evidence, and that it overlooks an important point regarding the nature of the ‘strictness’ in question: instead of calling for the exclusion or expulsion of foreign peoples and cultural influences from the Chinese world, late Tang and Song discourse on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy often held that the true boundary between Chineseness and barbarism was not ethnic or cultural but rather ideological or moral. The mainstream interpretation that reads late Tang and Song discourses on Chineseness and barbarism as a form of ethnic or cultural nationalism is simply inadequate to explain the gradual shift of these discourses in the direction of moral universalism.

Did the Chinese have a word for “barbarian?”

At this point, I should address the question of whether a concept that can be called “the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy” even existed at all. In other words, is it justifiable to translate Chinese terms like *Yi* and *Yi-Di* as barbarian? In recent decades there has been much confusion over this issue among both Sinologists and Classicists. In her *Inventing the Barbarian* Edith Hall, citing Owen Lattimore’s influential but rather dated *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (1940), argued that the Greek-barbarian dichotomy had “no exact equivalent even among the xenophobic ancient Mesopotamians, Chinese, and Egyptians, none of whom invented a term which precisely

⁴For an early and highly influential example from Taiwan see Fu Lecheng 傅樂成, “Tangdai yixiaguan zhi yanbian” 唐代夷夏觀之演變 (1962), reprinted in *Han Tang shi lunji* 漢唐史論集 (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1977), 214.

and exclusively embraced *all* who did not share their ethnicity.”⁵ More recently, Andrew Gillett made a similar claim in an essay on Greek and Roman concepts of the barbarian:

But the languages of neither ancient Egypt nor China developed a word equivalent to Greek *barbarus*, a blanket term for all foreign peoples, of both “inferior” and equivalent status, applicable also as a derogatory term within its own culture.... Both Chinese and Egyptian cultures were very conscious of potentially threatening outsiders, but did not conceptualize the surrounding world by means of a term equivalent to *barbarus*. “The barbarian” was a specifically Hellenistic cultural construct.⁶

Yet Mu-chou Poo, whose comparison of ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Chinese “attitudes toward foreigners” Gillett cites as evidence for this claim, actually asserts that the Egyptians and Chinese *did* have blanket terms for all foreign peoples: “the Nine Bows” in the Egyptian case, and “the Nine Yi barbarians” 九夷 in the Chinese case. Poo argues that in such cases, numbers like nine were “obviously numerical metaphors for ‘many.’”⁷ Unfortunately, he is probably mistaken about the term “the Nine Yi barbarians” (or “nine kinds of Yi barbarians”): it was not fully generic but merely referred to a specific group of eastern peoples.⁸

Poo also directs our attention to two other blanket terms: “The closest term corresponding to ‘barbarian’ in the Chinese concept... would be ‘*Man-Yi*’ or ‘*Rong-Di*.’” As he explains, *Man*, *Yi*, *Rong*, and *Di* were originally distinct terms for different foreign peoples that eventually came to be identified with the four cardinal directions or four ‘quarters’ of the world: the south, the east, the west, and the north respectively.⁹ The *locus classicus* of this system of classification is often held to be a chapter of the *Liji* 禮記, titled “Wangzhi” 王制 (Regulations of the King), but many chapters of the *Liji* may date to the Han period despite their claim to be describing the Zhou. The relevant passage of the “Wangzhi” purports to record ethnographic information on the ways of life and physical appearance of these foreign groups in the time of the early Zhou kings:

⁵ Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 4 (emphasis original to the text). Note that Hall cited the 1962 Beacon Press reprint of Lattimore’s book. She also cited Henri Limet on the Sumerians and Wolfgang Helck on the Egyptians.

⁶ Andrew Gillett, “The Mirror of Jordanes: Concepts of the Barbarian, Then and Now,” in Philip Rousseau ed., *A Companion to Late Antiquity* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), 397.

⁷ Mu-chou Poo, *Enemies of Civilization: Attitudes toward Foreigners in Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 43–44, 46–47.

⁸ See *Erya* 爾雅, *juan* 9 (cf. Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 46); HHS 85.2807.

⁹ Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 45–46.

The peoples of the five regions—the Central Lands and the [four regions of the] Rong-Yi—had each their own nature, which they could not be made to alter. The peoples to the east were called Yi. They left their hair untied and tattooed their bodies. Some of them ate their food without cooking it. Those to the south were called Man. They tattooed their foreheads and were pigeon-toed. Some of them ate their food without cooking it. Those to the west were called Rong. They left their hair untied and wore animal skins. Some of them did not eat grains. Those to the north were called Di. They wore feathers and furs and dwelt in caves. Some of them did not eat grains.

中國戎夷五方之民，皆有其性也，不可推移。東方曰夷，被髮文身，有不火食者矣。南方曰蠻，雕題交趾，有不火食者矣。西方曰戎，被髮衣皮，有不粒食者矣。北方曰狄，衣羽毛穴居，有不粒食者矣。¹⁰

Note that this passage uses the compound *Rong-Yi* synecdochically to refer collectively to the Man, Yi, Rong, and Di. Other such synecdochic combinations are found in early Chinese texts: *Man-Yi* and *Rong-Di* (mentioned by Poo), and also *Rong-Yi* and *Yi-Di* and occasionally *Man-Mo* 蠻貊, *Mo* being a label associated with foreign peoples of the northeast. Like Poo, Nicola Di Cosmo has argued that “[i]n its most general sense, [the term *Yi-Di*] appears to be close to ‘barbarian,’ a word we use in English, with considerable imprecision, to translate any item of the large inventory of Chinese names for foreign peoples.”¹¹ Di Cosmo also claims that besides the directional classification seen in the “Wangzhi,” “another structure existed that consistently categorized the Man and the Yi as ‘allied’ or ‘assimilated’ foreigners, and the Jung [Rong] and Ti [Di] as outer, non-assimilated, and hostile foreigners.”¹² I find this claim unconvincing, however. Although a dichotomy between the less distant Man and Yi and the more distant Rong and Di occurs in two Chinese classical texts, the *Guoyu* 國語 and the *Xunzi* 荀子, it exerted far less influence on later writings about foreign peoples than the directional scheme did.¹³ Di Cosmo’s contention that “a notion of conscious differentiation between close foreigners and far foreigners... is hopelessly obscured when the blanket term ‘barbarian’ is used indiscriminately” would therefore seem to be overstated, given the very limited use of such a differentiation.¹⁴

¹⁰ LJZY 12.398–399.

¹¹ Nicola Di Cosmo, *Ancient China and Its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 100. Yuri Pines cites Di Cosmo to justify his own use of “barbarian” to translate Chinese terms like *Yi* and *Di*: Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 61 n. 8.

¹² Di Cosmo, *Ancient China and Its Enemies*, 96.

¹³ See *Guoyu*, “Zhouyu shang” 周語上; *Xunzi*, “Zhenglun” 正論. Cf. HS 64a.2777, where a Western Han official uses this passage to support an argument against territorial expansion.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 95 n. 7. Di Cosmo also suggests that the supposed close foreigner/far foreigner distinction is “possibly analogous to the dyadic classification of foreigners into *shu*, “tamed, cooked,” and *sheng*, “raw, fierce,” of later times,” but this is groundless as well. The “raw/cooked” 生熟 distinction, which originated in the Tang and became common in the Song, was mainly based not on distance from the Chinese state but on modes of frontier administration, with subdivisions of a frontier people who paid taxes to the state being designated as “cooked” and those who did not being designated as “raw.” For an important Song-period example of this see Zhou Qufei 周去非,

In a 2006 Masters thesis, Uffe Bergeton demonstrated systematically that the Chinese of the Warring States period (ca. 476–221 BC) began to use compounds like *Man-Yi*, *Rong-Di*, and *Yi-Di*, as well as *Yi* and the numerical expression “four Yi” 四夷 (“four kinds of Yi” or “Yi of the four quarters”), as standard synecdochic labels for all foreign peoples.¹⁵ Bergeton notes that *Yi-Di* occurs in a much smaller range of Warring States texts than do *Man-Yi* and *Rong-Di*, but does not propose an explanation for the much greater popularity of *Yi-Di* in later periods. He does, however, mention that the Gongyang 公羊 and Guliang 穀梁 commentaries to the *Chunqiu* contain the majority of the early instances of *Yi-Di*. This opens up the possibility that the compound *Yi-Di* gained greater currency through the field of *Chunqiu* exegesis. Indeed, this dissertation will show that in the late Tang and Song periods, the *Chunqiu* came to be seen as a key text on the nature of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy.

Bergeton’s study thus refutes not only Hall and Gillett, but also Christopher Beckwith’s contention—first put forward in a conference paper in 1987 and recently reiterated in the Epilogue to his book-length narrative of Central Eurasian history—that “Chinese has no generic word equivalent to *barbarian*, or indeed any one word that is even close to it.” On one level, Beckwith overlooks the fact that words like *Yi* could acquire generic or synecdochic semantic functions in addition to their original specific meanings. But he also claims that “it is impossible to translate the word *barbarian* into Chinese because the concept does not exist in Chinese.” By this, he means that a Chinese concept of the barbarian would have to include an entire “complex of the notions ‘inability to speak Chinese’, ‘militarily skilled’, ‘fierce/cruel to enemies’, and ‘non-Chinese in culture’” because the ancient Romans supposedly applied the concept (which they had borrowed from the Greeks) only to people who were linguistically and culturally different from themselves, “militarily adept,” and “fierce or cruel to their enemies.”¹⁶ Obviously, this is a straw-man argument that (ironically) sets the bar for barbarism unreasonably high. The Romans did stereotype certain groups of barbarians as formidable and cruel warriors, but this was never a necessary criterion for categorization as a barbarian. The only essential characteristics of the barbarian in Roman discourse were ethnocultural and geopolitical otherness and moral inferiority—qualities that, I would argue, were also strongly associated with the Chinese concept of the *Yi* or *Yi-Di* by Tang and Song times.

Lingwai daida jiaozhu 嶺外代答校註 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999), 70, where it is stated that the “raw Li” 生黎 of Hainan live on a mountain in the interior of the island and “being far from the prefectures and counties [on Hainan], do not pay taxes and corvée,” whereas the “cooked Li” 熟黎 practice farming within the boundaries of the prefectures and pay taxes and corvée.

¹⁵ Uffe Bergeton, “The Evolving Vocabulary of Otherness in Pre-Imperial China: From ‘Belligerent Others’ to ‘Cultural Others’” (MA thesis, University of Southern California, 2006), 18–43. Bergeton makes a number of other arguments that are more problematic, but I shall not go into them here.

¹⁶ Beckwith later modifies this set of supposedly essential barbaric characteristics to include “powerful foreigner with uncouth, uncivilized, nonurban culture who was militarily skilled and somewhat heroic, but inclined to violence and cruelty” (p. 360)—an image that clearly reflects his belief that the Western concept of the barbarian is “best summed up by popular European and American fiction and film treatments such as *Conan the Barbarian*” (p. 356, repeated on p. 358). Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 357–362.

Beckwith's insistence on ascribing a fixed set of qualities to the Roman concept of the barbarian effectively ignores much recent scholarship on that concept's varied uses in Roman rhetoric. One particularly cogent example by Guy Halsall is worth quoting at some length:

Roman descriptions of barbarians are not part of a dialogue between 'us' and 'them' ('we are like this whereas *you* are like that') but between 'us' and 'us', between Romans ('we are [or, more often, ought to be] like this because *they* are like that').

This rather obvious point has not always been fully taken into account in studies of late antiquity and the 'barbarian migrations.' Efforts persist to establish an ancient writer's view of the barbarians, as if a writer could have a single 'positive' or 'negative' opinion, and as if the barbarians were such a uniform reality that it could be possible to hold such a view.... Yet the barbarian was a floating, rhetorical category which could be deployed in different ways to support the argument being made at a given point, usually about Romans or Christians. Thus the barbarian is wild, ferocious and cruel when an author wishes to play up the Roman army's, or its commander's, martial prowess or, conversely, to account for a defeat. In the latter circumstance the craftiness or cunning of the barbarian was also adduced. That the Romans saw no difficulty in having barbarians who were both stupid and sly neatly illustrates the rhetorical nature of the barbarian construct.

When a writer wished to denigrate the Romans' corruption or sinfulness, the barbarian became a noble savage: even the barbarians behave better than we do. If barbarians appear virtuous and brave in one part of a work but wild and mad in the next this is not evidence of a contradictory or changeable view. We must examine the precise context and the argument being made, whenever the barbarian is mentioned.¹⁷

To a large extent, it is arguments like these that have inspired me to look more closely at the rhetorical contexts for Tang and Song arguments about barbarians, rather than assume that these are straightforward reflections of their authors' ethnic identities or prejudices. Although late Tang and Song writers never went to the extent of representing barbarians as noble savages, they did become increasingly interested in subverting older notions of barbarian moral inferiority for rhetorical and philosophical purposes. The comparative and methodological perspectives opened up by translating terms like *Yi-Di* as "barbarian" are therefore, in my opinion, more than adequate justification for using this translation despite the absence of a perfect 'fit' between the English and Chinese terms.

Lydia Liu's *The Clash of Empires*, an interpretation of nineteenth-century Anglo-Chinese diplomacy from the perspective of post-colonial theory and semiotics, contains another well-

¹⁷ Guy Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376–568* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 56–57.

known recent attempt at challenging the translation of *Yi* as “barbarian.”¹⁸ Liu argues that when in the 1830s the British began insisting that *Yi* meant “barbarian” and was therefore offensive to non-Chinese (a complaint that led eventually to the word being banned from Chinese diplomatic correspondence with the British government), this translation obscured the efforts made by the Qing court during the eighteenth century to render the words *Yi* and *Yi-Di* inoffensive and semantically neutral in order to counter Ming loyalists’ use of the “classical *hua/yi* distinction” for anti-Manchu propaganda. As Liu points out, “The Yongzheng emperor read his *Mencius* to argue that the idea of *yi* merely named a local region, and therefore scholars should not make a fuss over it by censoring or avoiding its usage.” Likewise, the Qianlong emperor “remained vigilant toward any seditious use of an essentialized *hua/yi* distinction and continued to gloss the meaning of *yi-di* in geographical terms.”¹⁹ In Liu’s reading, then, the British decision to translate *Yi* as “barbarian” was a cynical attempt at picking a fight with the Qing by claiming to have been insulted by a Chinese sense of ethnocentrism that the Manchu emperors had already taken adequate steps to neutralize.

However, Liu downplays the fact that although both Yongzheng and Qianlong decreed that their ministers should stop censoring the character *Yi*, many books in the massive *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (edited by officials at Qianlong’s court) were still bowdlerized to remove not only words like *Yi* and *Yi-Di* but also all language about the moral inferiority of the peoples thus labeled. This censorship frequently involved cutting chunks of text and sometimes went to the extent of deleting entire essays. Clearly, the Qing emperors never succeeded in ridding the words *Yi* and *Yi-Di* of their classical connotations of inferiority and otherness. In the end, classical labels like *Yi* and *Yi-Di* dropped out of the Chinese lexicon not because of a British sensitivity to their use, but because the belief in Chinese superiority that they implied became untenable when the Chinese began to perceive “the West” as no less advanced or civilized than themselves.²⁰ Liu’s focus on an interesting historical irony thus leads her to miss the bigger picture, in which the concept of a dichotomy between the Chinese and the *Yi-Di* was normally predicated on the superiority of the former. In that sense, there was really nothing sinister or ridiculous in the British government’s gradual realization that the label *Yi*, when applied to them, denoted not only foreignness but also inferiority. Even if (as Liu contends) the translation of *Yi* as “barbarian” was “an outcome of hostile encounters between the British and the Qing,” this by itself should not oblige us to reject it as a relic of Western imperialism.²¹ After all, as we shall see in Part 1 of this dissertation, the notion of *Yi* inferiority also has a long history of use as a rhetorical instrument for both justifying and opposing *Chinese* imperialism.

¹⁸ Lydia H. Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 31–96.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 85–87.

²⁰ This process has been traced by Fang Weigui in “*Yi, Yang, Xi, Wai* and Other Terms: The Transition from ‘Barbarian’ to ‘Foreigner’ in Nineteenth-Century China,” in Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung and Joachim Kurtz eds., *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 95–123.

²¹ Liu, *The Clash of Empires*, 95–123.

What about *Hu* and *Fan*?

Although I affirm the validity—and indeed, the usefulness—of translating *Yi*, *Yi-Di*, *Man-Yi*, and similar variants as “barbarian(s),” the same does not apply to other labels in what Di Cosmo called the “large inventory of Chinese names for foreign peoples” that are routinely and unreflectively translated thus. One such term is the amorphous label *Hu* 胡, originally used in Han times for various nomadic peoples of the steppe (e.g., the Xiongnu) and by Tang times more commonly applied to Sogdians and other ‘Western’ peoples of Central Asia, except in deliberately archaizing literary contexts. In the Tang context, *Hu* was never generically applied to all foreigners, nor did it usually connote inferiority. The sense of otherness that *Hu* conveyed was probably more exotic than alienating in character, with the exception of polemical writings by early Tang Daoists who attempted to defame Buddhism via highly negative representations of the ‘Westerners’ whom they assumed to be the original Buddhists. This Daoist polemical strategy was closely related to a myth, already current in late Eastern Han 東漢 (AD 25–220) times, that Laozi became the Buddha after leaving the Central Lands and vanishing into the far west. The Daoist-authored *Laozi huahu jing* 老子化胡經 (Scripture on Laozi Transforming the Westerners) of ca. 300 and later derivatives used this myth to allege that because Laozi designed Buddhism as a way of restraining the inhumane and immoral natures of Westerners (*Hu*), its teachings could hardly be applicable to the Chinese.²²

²² Some versions modify the story by identifying the Buddha with Yin Xi 尹喜, the magistrate of Hangu Pass 函谷關, whom Laozi enlightened before going west. In these versions, Yin Xi goes west with Laozi. The intent was presumably to diminish Buddhism’s prestige further by making its founder a disciple of Laozi, rather than Laozi himself. Kristofer Schipper has argued that stories about Laozi’s (or Yin Xi’s) conversion of the Westerners to Buddhism were originally intended to represent Buddhism and Daoism “as complementary equals” and only acquired an anti-foreign edge during the Tang, when Daoism “became part of Chinese national identity” and “conceived of itself as a national ideology.” I believe this interpretation greatly underestimates the intensity of Buddhist-Daoist rivalry prior to the Tang, as well as the pre-Tang “conversion” stories’ emphasis on the Westerners’ moral inferiority to the Chinese. Schipper also downplays the significance of the *Laozi huahu jing* story by noting that “in the works preserved today, this story is never the main subject of any chapter, much less of a whole scripture,” with the exception of the *Laozi huahu jing* itself, which has not been preserved and moreover “is quoted practically nowhere.” This seems to overlook the real reason for the *Laozi huahu jing*’s ostensible lack of influence: in 1281, the Yuan court ordered the destruction of all anti-Buddhist texts in the Daoist canon, including the *Laozi huahu jing*. As a result, only quotations from these texts have survived, ironically, in Buddhist apologetic texts. Schipper calls the *Taishang dadao yuqing jing* 太上大道玉清經 of ca. 750 “the most violently anti-Buddhist text Taoism ever produced,” but it would probably be more accurate to call it one of the few overtly anti-Buddhist Daoist texts to have survived Yuan censorship, to be restored to the Daoist canon under the Ming. There were many more such texts before 1281, as shown by a list of the titles proscribed by the Yuan court. See Kristofer Schipper, “Purity and Strangers: Shifting Boundaries in Medieval Taoism,” *T’oung Pao* LXXX (1994), 61–81. On the proscription of 1281, see Jan De Meyer, *Wu Yun’s Way: Life and Works of an Eighth-Century Daoist Master* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 128–129; Li Xiaorong 李小榮, ‘*Hongming ji*’ ‘*Guang Hongming ji*’ *shulun gao* 《弘明集》《廣弘明集》述論稿 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2005), 238–239. Chapter 3 of Li Xiaorong’s book is a useful survey and analysis of the various known versions of the “Laozi transforming the Westerners” myth, as well as earlier scholarly literature on the subject.

Marc Abramson has argued that *Hu* can be translated as “barbarian” when it occurs in such anti-Buddhist polemical works because their authors used the term in a manner that “combines the semantic fields of generic ‘barbarian’... and non-Han of the ‘Western Regions.’”²³ On the contrary, I see the anti-Buddhist discourse on *Hu* as a case of ethnic stereotyping that drew on a pre-Tang practice of lumping Indians and Central Asians together as *Hu* rather than as generic “barbarians.” This is evident from efforts by early Tang Buddhist apologists to clarify, on the basis of newer geographical knowledge, that the Buddha and the first Buddhists were not *Hu* but people of India (*Tianzhu* 天竺)—a clarification that would be meaningless if the anti-Buddhist polemicists understood *Hu* as a fully generic category for all foreign peoples.²⁴ That being said, we should also note that a related Buddhist apologetical strategy did attempt to narrow the scope of the generic category “barbarian” so that it applied only to Central Asians and was thus synonymous with *Hu*. This strategy is said to have originated with the Sui-period Buddhist monk and translator Yancong 彦琮 (557–610), who declared the old practice of including Indians in the category *Hu* to be obsolete: “in the past, we called that part of the world by the generic name of ‘*Hu* countries’” 舊喚彼方，總名胡國. Yancong insisted on drawing a distinction between the *Hu* of Central Asia, whom he called “the progeny of the motley Rong barbarians” 雜戎之胤, and the Indians or *Fàn* 梵 (originally an abbreviated Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit *Brāhmana*, i.e., “Brahmins”), whom he called “the people of the true sage (i.e., the Buddha)” 真聖之苗.²⁵

Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), who wrote Yancong’s hagiography, made the same argument in his sutra catalog, the *Da Tang neidian lu* 大唐內典錄 (664):

The motley Rong barbarians known as *Hu* are people of the western frontier, such as the *Dī* and Qiang and other barbarians (Man-Yi). Why should [the language of] the sutras be called a “*Hu* language”? The Buddha was born in India, and the literati of that land, the Brahmins, are collectively called *Fàn*. The meaning of *Fàn* is “clean.”

又胡之雜戎乃是西方邊俗類，此氏羌蠻夷之屬。何得經書乃云胡語？佛生天竺，彼土士族婆羅門者，總稱為梵。梵者，清淨也。²⁶

²³ Marc S. Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 61.

²⁴ E.g., Falin 法琳, “Poxie lun” 破邪論 (T52:2109, CBETA edition), 11–12, 14.

²⁵ Daoxuan 道宣, *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 (T50.2060, CBETA edition), 19.

²⁶ Daoxuan 道宣, *Da Tang neidian lu* 大唐內典錄 (T55.2149, CBETA edition), 10. Daoxuan was mistaken about the etymology of *Brāhmana*—the root *brhā* is believed to mean “to grow.” Note also that the *Dī* 氐, an ethnic group originally from southern Gansu, should not be confused with the classical Di barbarians.

In his catalog, Daoxuan inserts a note under two sutra titles containing the word *Hu* (for example, in the phrase *Huben* 胡本, “*Hu*[-script] edition”) to inform the reader that the correct word should be *Fàn*.²⁷ According to the early Song Buddhist monk-scholar and hagiographer Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001), Yancong and Daoxuan were so successful at dissociating India from the term *Hu* that the Chinese eventually took to referring indiscriminately to foreign Buddhist monks as “*Fàn* monks” 梵僧.²⁸ Thus, the pejorative associations that *Hu* acquired in the special context of the Buddhist-Daoist rivalry do not justify Yang Jidong’s sweeping claim that in the Tang, “the *hu* culture... was commonly thought to be uncivilized”, and that “*hu* always had a very strong racist sense and signified something uncivilized and inherently contradictory to Chinese culture.”²⁹

Whereas numerous modern works of Chinese historical scholarship identify a Tang-period dichotomy between *Hu* and *Han* (the latter being taken to mean ethnically “Chinese”), such a dichotomy is very rarely encountered in Tang texts.³⁰ Instead, the most common term used in a dichotomous relationship with *Han* from Tang to Northern Song times was *Fan* 蕃 (not to be confused with *Fàn* 梵). I have argued elsewhere that *Fan* (unlike *Hu*) was a generic term for all foreign peoples or states, albeit one that only acquired this generic character toward the end of the fifth century or the beginning of the sixth century AD. I argue also that in Tang and Song usage, *Fan* should not be equated with terms like *Yi* because it did not carry connotations of

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11–12, 15 (cf. 68).

²⁸ Zanning 贊寧, *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (T50.2061, CBETA edition), 22. I suspect that Zanning pokes fun at this new tendency in his biography of the Indian monk Vajrabodhi (known in Chinese by the translation *Jingangzhi* 金剛智 (669–741) at *Song gaoseng zhuan*, 4; for a more face-value (and slightly inaccurate) interpretation of the biography see Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, viii–x.

²⁹ In a response to Yang, Daniel Boucher argues against “any simple equation of *hu* and ‘barbarian’” in Buddhist writings, but goes to the opposite extreme of denying that early Tang Buddhists responded to polemical Daoist uses of the label *Hu* at all. According to Boucher, Chinese Buddhist translators and exegetes of the second and third centuries AD used *Hu* and *Fàn* to refer to texts in the Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī scripts respectively; since the Kharoṣṭhī script fell out of use after the fourth century, “[t]he replacement of *hu* with *fan* in the Tang then may well only suggest that medieval scholastics in China saw the term *hu* as imprecise vis-à-vis their knowledge of Indian texts and not necessarily racially charged.” Boucher’s explanation does not take into account the efforts by Yancong and Daoxuan to dissociate Indians from the label *Hu*—efforts that clearly had nothing to do with differences in script. The fact that *Fàn* 梵 was also used to transliterate the word *Brāhmī* seems to have been irrelevant to their motivations. Yang Jidong, “Replacing *hu* with *fan*: A Change in the Chinese Perception of Buddhism during the Medieval Period”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21.1 (1998), 157–170, esp. 165–167; Daniel Boucher, “On *Hu* and *Fan* again: the Transmission of ‘Barbarian’ Manuscripts to China”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 23.1 (2000), 7–28, esp. 16–18.

³⁰ For one of the few instances of such a dichotomy see DTXY 9.138. For a recent example of modern historians’ anachronistic application of a Hu-Han dichotomy to Tang and Five Dynasties history see Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南, *Zuzong zhi fa—Beisong qianqi zhengzhi shulue* 祖宗之法—北宋前期政治述略 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2006), 80–102. Deng effectively claims that the concept of a Chinese-barbarian dichotomy is relevant to Song history but not to Tang history because of the existence of a Hu-Han dichotomy in Tang discourse.

inferiority.³¹ In light of the above points, I do not agree with translating *Hu* and *Fan* as “barbarian” and instead use “Western(er)” and “foreign(er)” respectively to translate these terms in this dissertation. Nor will I use statements referring to foreign peoples as *Hu* or *Fan* in Tang and Song sources as evidence for discourses about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy.

The idea of the barbarians’ moral inferiority and the problem with “culturalism”

Based on Bergeton’s analysis, the practice of differentiating between the Central Lands or “the Chinese states” (*zhuxia* 諸夏) of the Eastern Zhou on one hand and a generic category of “barbarians” on the other seems to have originated during the Warring States period. Bergeton also asserts that “the formation of the concept of ‘cultural others,’ who differed from the Zhou in cultural heritage and ritual practices” took place around the beginning of the Warring States, after the Zhou states “developed a strongly defined sense of cultural unity.”³² However, Yuri Pines’s contention that ritual norms were “the major delineating line between Self and the Other in pre-imperial China” seems an oversimplification.³³ Pines cites the “Tan Gong” 檀弓 chapter of the *Liji*, where Confucius’s disciple Yan Yan 言偃 (better known by his style Ziyou 子游, b. 506 BC) does make the assertion that expressing one’s feelings without restraint when mourning the dead is the “way of the barbarians (Rong-Di)” 戎狄之道 rather than the “way of ritual” 禮道.³⁴ But it is very difficult to know if this chapter truly dates to the Warring States and not the Han.³⁵ A more relevant example (which Pines does not use) would be the anecdote in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 about an Eastern Zhou minister in ca. 770 BC who, seeing “someone making sacrifices in the fields with his hair untied” 被髮而祭於野者 near the new Zhou capital, exclaims: “Will this not be [a land of] the Rong barbarians in less than a hundred years? Our rites have already been lost” 不及百年，此其戎乎？其禮先亡矣。³⁶

However, several other Warring States texts that speak of the difference between the Chinese states and barbarian polities do so on the basis of material culture, dietary customs, language, and kinship, not ritual. We see this, for example, in the well-known *Zuozhuan* account of the confrontation between a Rong barbarian leader and a Jin noble at an inter-state conference in 559 BC—an account that ironically seems to credit the Rong leader with greater familiarity

³¹ Shao-yun Yang, “*Fan* and *Han*: The Origins and Uses of a Conceptual Dichotomy in Mid-Imperial China, ca. 500–1200,” in Francesca Fiaschetti and Julia Schneider eds., *Political Strategies of Identity-building in Non-Han Empires in China* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, forthcoming).

³² Bergeton, “The Evolving Vocabulary of Otherness in Pre-Imperial China,” 3–4.

³³ Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 66.

³⁴ LJZY 9.283.

³⁵ Besides this passage, Pines quotes another *Liji* passage that says nothing about barbarians, and two *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 passages on the anarchy of the barbarians that say nothing about ritual norms. Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 67–69.

³⁶ ZZZY 15.401.

with Zhou high culture than he claims to possess.³⁷ As we shall see in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, *Chunqiu* commentators came to represent the southern state of Chu 楚 as a barbarian polity partly because of its supposed unfamiliarity with the ritual protocols required for diplomacy between the Zhou states.³⁸ But the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries—the two works of *Chunqiu* exegesis that may pre-date the Han period—also link Chu’s barbaric image to its spirit of insubordination, which purportedly made it especially reluctant to submit to the authority of a true king or a sage and prone to rebel when no such ruler was on the throne.³⁹ Political allegiance was thus at least as important as ritual culture in determining who was a barbarian and who was not. Even Confucius’s disciples’ famous denigration of the nine kinds of Yi barbarians as “crude” 陋 in *Analects* 9:13 may have had more to do with material culture (e.g., eating uncooked food) than with ritual. After all, the *Zuozhuan* also reveals that the Yi of the Shandong peninsula had their own ritual culture and that at least one neighboring Chinese state was prepared to adopt it for use in interstate diplomacy.⁴⁰ In most Warring States texts, the barbarians are represented as geopolitical and ethnocultural others but not as uncultured primitives, contrary to Huang Yang’s claim that the barbarians “were now seen as clearly inferior culturally to the Chinese who saw themselves as the center of the civilized world.”⁴¹

If Warring States texts provide little support for the idea that the barbarians’ inferiority to the Chinese was rooted in a lack of proper ritual norms, when might it have originated? I would propose that it developed among Classicists of the late Western Han 西漢 (206 BC–AD 9) and early Eastern Han—the period when various aspects of Han thought fully coalesced as a coherent Classicist ideology. Of course, by this time the category “the barbarians” was being applied to an entirely different set of foreign peoples and polities that the expansion of the Qin and Han empires had brought into contact with the Chinese. The earliest extant evidence for a ritual-centered definition of barbarism can be found in Yang Xiong’s 揚雄 (53 BC – AD 18) *Fayan* 法言, which makes the following statement:

The sages governed all under heaven by setting constraints with the rites and ritual music. Those without [rites and ritual music] are animals (literally “birds”), and those with different [rites and ritual music] are barbarians (Mo).

聖人之治天下也，礙諸以禮樂。無則禽，異則貉。⁴²

³⁷ ZZZY 32.918; see also the analyses of this account in Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 70–71 and Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 89–91.

³⁸ Pines has cited archaeological evidence to argue that Chu initially practiced the same ritual and material culture as the Zhou states and only adopted different ritual norms from the sixth century BC onwards. Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 88.

³⁹ GYZS 10.213; GLZS 5.89. As we shall see in Chapter 6, Song-period *Chunqiu* commentaries also argued that Confucius regarded Chu as barbaric because of its rulers’ usurpation of the royal title in defiance of the Zhou kings.

⁴⁰ ZZZY 16.435 (see also the discussion of this passage in Chapter 3).

⁴¹ Huang, “Perceptions of the Barbarian in Early Greece and China.”

⁴² FYYs 6.122.

In the passage preceding this one, Yang Xiong is posed a question about how to assess the rites and ritual music of “the remote lands” 八荒: which are “correct” 是 and which are not? He answers that one measures them by taking the Central Lands as the correct standard.⁴³ Obviously, then, Yang’s definition of “different [rites and ritual music]” is anything that differs from the ritual culture of the Han dynasty, which he regards as the legacy of the ancient sage-kings.

The *Bohu tongyi* 白虎通義, Ban Gu’s 班固 (32–92) record of the proceedings of an important conference of Eastern Han Classicists at the White Tiger Hall 白虎觀 in AD 79, goes further than Yang Xiong by claiming that because “the barbarians (Yi-Di) are simple and not as refined as the Central Lands” 夷狄質，不如中國文，they therefore “do not have ritual and moral duty” 無禮義 and “are unable to practice the rites” 不能行禮. For this reason, the *Bohu tongyi* argues, the “former sage-kings” 先聖王 created different styles of music and dance for the barbarians to perform as a means of enjoyment, but did not create proper rites for them.⁴⁴ The implication is that any rituals that the barbarians now practice would be their own invention, and therefore far inferior to the rites that the sages created for the Chinese in antiquity. This presumably reflects a consensus arrived at by the Classicists participating in the conference.

The phrase “ritual and moral duty” became central to the discourse of barbarian inferiority or barbarism in later periods, particularly from the Song onwards, and is therefore worth further discussion at this point. Ritual (*li* 禮) and moral duty (*yi* 義) were two of the core Classicist values. *Li* literally means “rites” or “ceremonies,” but the Classicist concept encompasses an entire way of relating to others, and a concern with the spirit and attitude with which rites are performed, that corresponds closely to the Western idea of “civility.” *Yi*, often translated as “righteousness” or “rightness,” conveys the idea of doing what one knows is right and moral in every particular situation, even when it is unprofitable or even costly to oneself—hence my choice of “moral duty” as a translation. The Classicists held that a person who acts without ritual and moral duty is not only ill-mannered but also self-seeking and untrustworthy. This reflects a belief that a morally superior man (*junzi* 君子) will choose moral duty over personal gain when the two are in conflict, whereas a morally inferior man (*xiaoren* 小人) will most likely do the opposite.⁴⁵ To a large extent, Han Classicist discourse on the moral inferiority of barbarians simply applied the *junzi-xiaoren* dichotomy to the difference between the Chinese and the barbarians. In an early example, Sima Qian’s 司馬遷 (d. ca. 90 BC) account of the Xiongnu in the *Shiji* 史記 claims that they “do not understand ritual and moral duty” 不知禮義

⁴³ FYYS 6.119.

⁴⁴ BHT 3.110–111.

⁴⁵ E.g., *Analects* 4:16.

because they will do anything that is advantageous (*li* 利) to them, even if it is dishonorable or unethical.⁴⁶ Later Han Classicists extended this characterization to encompass all foreign peoples.

In modern studies of the concept of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, the idea that the Chinese have ritual and moral duty and the barbarians do not has frequently been misinterpreted as a discourse on cultural difference or cultural superiority. Numerous modern Chinese scholars—including such eminent twentieth-century figures as the historian Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895–1990) and the political scientist Hsiao Kung-chuan 蕭公權 (1897–1981)—have asserted that the ancient Chinese differentiated themselves from other peoples on the basis of “culture” (*wenhua* 文化) and not “race” (*zhongzu* 種族 or *zhonglei* 種類) or “blood lines” (*xuetong* 血統, i.e., “ancestry”), and that for this reason it was always thought possible for barbarians to become Chinese by becoming civilized, just as the Chinese could become barbarians by behaving in an uncivilized manner.⁴⁷ Such arguments are probably at least partly motivated by a desire to deny that the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy was a racist or racialist concept, especially after race theory was brought to disrepute by Nazi German atrocities—although the makers of these arguments have not seemed to worry about the ethnocentrism of the underlying assumption that Chinese civilization was inherently more advanced than surrounding cultures. In the 1950s, Joseph Levenson coined a term for this way of understanding Chineseness: “culturalism.” Levenson proposed that the Chinese assumed the practice of Chinese culture to be synonymous with Chinese identity until the early twentieth century, when some Chinese intellectuals came to the conclusion that the Chinese had to let go of their culture and adopt Western ways if China was to survive as an independent nation. In short, Levenson believed Chinese nationalism was born when the Chinese could no longer claim to have the world’s only true civilization, making the logic of Chinese culturalism impossible to sustain.⁴⁸

I would argue that the biggest flaw in these models of “culture not race” and “culturalism not nationalism” is their reliance on modern concepts like culture, nation, and race, and the resulting assumption that premodern Chinese discourses on Chineseness have to belong in one of these categories.⁴⁹ In this dissertation, I shall demonstrate that when *Daoxue* philosophers

⁴⁶ SJ 110.2879. However, much of the rest of Sima Qian’s account of the Xiongnu is surprisingly sympathetic and even-handed. On this see Tamara T. Chin, “Defamiliarizing the Foreigner: Sima Qian’s Ethnography and Han-Xiongnu Marriage Diplomacy,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 70.2 (2010), 311–354.

⁴⁷ For relevant quotations from Qian and Hsiao see Qian Mu 錢穆, *Zhongguo wenhuashi daolun* 中國文化史導論 (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1988 [1948]), 35; Hsiao Kung-chuan 蕭公權, *Zhongguo zhengshi sixiang shi* 中國政治思想史, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1946), 55–57.

⁴⁸ For a useful summary and critique of Levenson’s theory see James Townsend, “Chinese Nationalism,” *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 27 (1992), 97–130.

⁴⁹ For a very relevant example of the difficulty involved in trying to classify one such discourse as “nationalism,” “racism,” or “culturalism,” see John Fincher, “China as a Race, Culture, and Nation: Notes on Fang Hsiao-ju’s Discussion of Dynastic Legitimacy,” in David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote eds., *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture* (Hong Kong: Cathay Press, 1972), 59–69.

warned that the Chinese could become barbarians by ceasing to practice ritual and moral duty, they were equating Chineseness with their understanding of *morality*, rather than equating it with Chinese *culture* as we would understand that term today. Subsuming concepts like ritual and moral duty within the broad modern concept of “Chinese culture” has led historians to overlook their moral significance and to assume incorrectly that the Chinese spoke of barbarization in terms of *cultural* change rather than *moral* degeneration.

In this dissertation, I will also engage with a theory that originated in the 1970s when Rolf Trauzettel and Hoyt Tillman proposed tracing the origins of Chinese ethnic nationalism to the Song period, particularly the Southern Song. I should note that there are differences of opinion between these two historians over how much nationalism or “proto-nationalism” there was in the Song. Trauzettel believed that except for the *Daoxue* philosophers, who “clung steadfastly to cultural universalism,” everyone else in the Southern Song subscribed to a kind of proto-nationalistic patriotism that had been solidified by the Jurchen conquest of north China. Tillman, on the other hand, seems to have felt that Southern Song proto-nationalistic thinking was limited to the revanchist Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143–1194) and that the mainstream continued to be occupied by the “culturalistic” thinking that Trauzettel associated with the *Daoxue* thinkers—although Tillman also argues that this “culturalism” or “universalism” was not complete enough in *Daoxue* philosophers like Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) to make them free of ethnocentrism.⁵⁰ Two variants of the Song protonationalism theory have lately also appeared in Chinese-language scholarship. The mainland Chinese intellectual historian Ge Zhaoguang has argued in an essay that Chinese nationalism has “distant origins” 遠源 in a growing consciousness of the political and cultural boundaries of the “Central Lands” among Northern Song literati.⁵¹ The Taiwanese political scientist Chang Chishen’s doctoral dissertation argues (building on Tillman’s work) that a mainstream “culturalist” discourse on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy prevailed throughout the Tang and Northern Song periods, but came under challenge during the Southern Song from a new discourse of “geographism” (*dili zhuyi* 地理主義) that emphasized the geographically-determined differences between Chinese *qi* and barbarian *qi*. According to Chang, this new discourse gradually developed into a kind of “quasi-nationalism” (*leisi minzu zhuyi* 類似民族主義) under the Ming dynasty (1368–1644).⁵²

⁵⁰ Rolf Trauzettel, “Sung Patriotism as a First Step toward Chinese Nationalism,” in John Winthrop Haeger ed., *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1975), 199–213; Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China? The Case of Ch’en Liang,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 39.2 (1979), 403–428.

⁵¹ Ge Zhaoguang 葛兆光, “Songdai ‘Zhongguo’ yishi de tuxian—guanyu jinshi minzu zhuyi sixiang de yige yuanyuan” 宋代‘中國’意識的凸現—關於近世民族主義思想的一個遠源 (2004), reprinted in *Gudai Zhongguo de lishi, sixiang yu zongjiao* 古代中國的歷史、思想與宗教 (Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue chubanshe, 2006), 135–151.

⁵² Chang Chishen 張其賢, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao” 「中國」概念與「華夷」之辨的歷史探討 (Ph.D dissertation, National Taiwan University, 2009), esp. 256, 325–327.

These theories of Song proto-nationalism have, to a large extent, been reacting to Levenson's theory that Chinese identity was always "culturalistic," not nationalistic, until the early twentieth century. In my opinion, the choice to take Levenson's theory as a starting point has been unfortunate, because Levenson assumed (on the basis of earlier Chinese scholarship) that what he called "culturalism" was a *traditional* mode of Chinese identity that had been around since the time of Confucius. Even scholars explicitly attempting to refute his 'modernist' view of Chinese nationalism's origins (Chang Chishen is one such example) have uncritically accepted his 'traditionalist' view of culturalism's origins. My own analysis of Tang and Song intellectual history has led me to the conclusion that the so-called 'traditionalist' view is itself an ahistorical fiction. The relativistic and moralistic discourse on Chineseness and barbarism that Levenson termed "culturalism" (erroneously, in my view) was itself a product of the Tang-Song transition, although this discourse's inventors made efforts to claim much greater antiquity for it, a claim that most historians have accepted down to the present day.

These efforts at projecting a new discourse onto classical antiquity have been so successful that it is now very difficult for historians to avoid reading the Classics through a "culturalist" lens. Yuri Pines, Poo Mu-chou, and Huang Yang have followed many other historians of early China in arguing that the idea of 'sinicizing' or civilizing barbarians is prevalent in texts like the *Analects* and the *Mencius*.⁵³ These texts do appear to claim that barbarians can, through the example of a morally superior man (*junzi*), cease to be "crude" (*Analects* 9:13), that "using Chinese [ways] to change barbarians (Yi)" 用夏變夷 is possible and perhaps even desirable (*Mencius* 3A:4), and that some of the sage-kings were barbarians (*Mencius* 4B:1). In Pines's reading, such passages "reflect a prevalent conviction of ancient Chinese statesmen and thinkers—any human being is transformable and changeable, and even the erstwhile barbarian can become a sage."⁵⁴ However, none of the passages that Pines and Poo cite as evidence for this position actually asserts the possibility of barbarians *becoming Chinese*.⁵⁵ The argument that a kind of Chinese *identity* is open to all human beings who observe Classicist standards of morality is actually a relatively late development that arguably did not become prominent until the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). We occasionally see earlier forms of it in the late Tang and Song, but even these are generally overshadowed by a much stronger

⁵³ See Pines, "Beasts or Humans," 69–75; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 121–126; Huang, "Perceptions of the Barbarian in Early Greece and China."

⁵⁴ Pines, "Beasts or Humans," 73.

⁵⁵ I would also argue that the universalism of *Mencius* 3A:4 has been overestimated or exaggerated by most modern analyses, in part due to influence from Qing-period uses of the passage. Mencius's point is not about the transformability or improvability of barbarians. Rather, he is using examples of sages from the extreme poles of the Chinese world (the far east and the far west) and born more than a thousand years apart to show that the principles for sagely governance do not differ according to time and place. This is Pamela Crossley's reading, which I find much preferable to that of Yuri Pines who claims that the passage "epitomizes [Mencius's] belief in an equal opportunity for every human being, including erstwhile barbarians, to attain sagehood." Crossley also demonstrates, however, that the Qing emperors eventually used this passage in the *Mencius* to counter ethnocentric Chinese claims about the illegitimacy of Manchu rule. Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 260–261; Pines, "Beasts or Humans," 73–74; also Liu, *The Clash of Empires*, 81–82, 84–86.

interest in the other side of the “culturalist” discourse: namely, the idea of barbarization. This imbalance stands in stark contrast to modern Chinese historical scholarship which, for political reasons, has stressed the idea of sinicization and its supposedly ancient origins in order to show that it has always been possible for different ethnic groups to be absorbed into a common Chinese identity through a process of assimilation. One of this dissertation’s main aims is thus to call historians’ attention to the idea of moral barbarization as a new and important development in late Tang and Song discourses on Chinese identity.

Structure of the dissertation, sources, and methodology

The main text of this dissertation is divided into four parts, each consisting of a preamble, two chapters, and a conclusion. An organizational structure of this kind is unconventional, but necessary due to the fact that I cover four distinct periods in Tang and Song intellectual history:

1. The reign of Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (r. 626–649) and more broadly, the early Tang
2. The ninth century, focusing on Han Yu and his literary imitators in the late Tang
3. The period of ca. 970–ca. 1070 in Northern Song history, which saw a revival of interest in Han Yu’s Ancient Style prose and ideology
4. The period of ca. 1072–ca. 1223, during which *Daoxue* philosophy emerged and became influential in the Southern Song

In order to achieve the necessary depth of analysis for each of these periods, I have chosen to write two chapters on each and link them with a preamble and a conclusion. Each two-chapter set follows a chronological sequence except for Part 1 (on Tang Taizong’s reign), in which the two chapters deal with contemporaneous events but different themes.

Whereas Parts 2 to 4 trace the main development of a new discourse on barbarism and barbarization from the ninth century to the thirteenth, Part 1 serves a different but complementary purpose. In the process of moving from Part 1 to the rest of the dissertation, the reader may wonder at the jarring contrast between the intensely geopolitical focus of early Tang foreign policy rhetoric on barbarians and the highly ideological or philosophical emphasis of Ancient Style and *Daoxue* discourse on barbarism. This contrast is deliberate: it alerts us to an inherent logical disjuncture in the typical contrast posited between Tang Taizong’s rhetoric about barbarians and Han Yu’s rhetoric about Buddhism. Taizong’s rhetoric is generally interpreted as an expression of early Tang “cosmopolitanism” and universalism, in which the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy becomes all but irrelevant. Han Yu’s anti-Buddhist rhetoric, on the other hand, is interpreted as a reflection of a late Tang turn toward xenophobia and intolerance. Yet these two men’s rhetorical aims and contexts are too different to make any such comparison meaningful. Thus, in Part 1, I seek to refute the common notion that the idea of barbarian inferiority was unimportant to early Tang discourse by exploring two aspects of Tang court rhetoric, centering on Taizong’s disagreements with his ministers over his expansionist foreign policy. I build on the approach recently taken by Marc Abramson, who used Tang sources to

identify “articulated stereotypes... in the context of debates among officials over policies for dealing with non-Han external to or autonomous of central control.”⁵⁶ The more narrowly-defined topics of the chapters in Part 1 intentionally adopt a different approach from the rather omnivorous or eclectic comprehensiveness that was both Abramson’s book’s greatest strength and its greatest weakness, in that it led him to sacrifice analytical depth for breadth of coverage, skimming over many issues of context and genre.

The sources for this dissertation come mainly from five genres: essays on history, political rhetoric, polemical essays, commentaries on the Classics, and the collected oral statements of *Daoxue* philosophers. Part 1 is almost wholly concerned with political rhetoric as found in memorials, edicts, and recorded conversations, but also considers passages of historical analysis in court-commissioned dynastic histories. These constitute the bulk of the early Tang sources that engage in discourse about “the barbarians” as a generic category, as opposed to speaking of specific ethnic groups. In the Conclusion to Part 1, I will address the question of what we can learn from the sharp contrast between these sources’ seeming ethnocentrism and another body of texts that historians frequently use as evidence for the Tang empire’s ethnocultural diversity. Part 2 deals mostly with polemical essays (including valedictory prefaces used for polemical purposes) but also considers the influence that trends in classical exegesis may have had on Han Yu’s treatment of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. Part 3 contains a chapter on various polemical essays and a piece of historical analysis in a dynastic history, and a chapter on classical exegesis. Part 4 has the most diverse source base: the majority of its sources are classical commentaries and oral statements by *Daoxue* philosophers, but we shall also look at a work of anti-Buddhist polemic, numerous passages of historical commentary, and a few memorials or essays on foreign policy. The diversity of sources available for Part 4 may in part reflect the proliferation of printed sources in the Southern Song and thus a higher survival rate in non-official genres of writing. But I suggest that it also reflects steadily growing interest in using the concept of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy for a wider range of rhetorical and philosophical purposes.

My approach to these sources is to contextualize them in several ways, noting their rhetorical and intellectual models or influences, their intentions and intended audience or readers, and their internal and intertextual inconsistencies. Paying attention to each of these contexts helps us to assess whether a text is appealing to its audience’s assumptions about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy or is instead challenging or subverting them. We may also be able to tell whether the author of a given passage is expressing a central philosophical or ideological argument or merely using a rhetorical strategy to advance another argument. The relationship between rhetoric and philosophy is far from simple, since rhetoricians will borrow ideas from philosophers and philosophers will use rhetorical devices to advance their ideas. Quentin Skinner, a leading figure in the contextualist approach to intellectual history, commented in an interview in 2001 that “one of the most valuable insights of deconstructionist criticism... is that what passes for argument in philosophical texts often proves on more sceptical inspection to amount to

⁵⁶ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 23.

little more than a tissue of metaphors and other rhetorical devices employed to lend authority to what is asserted.”⁵⁷ A key challenge in interpreting pre-modern Chinese discourses on barbarism is therefore to discern *when* and *how* the barbarians are being used as a metaphor or rhetorical device, and *why* the author is doing this.

In this regard, I have repeatedly been impressed by the sophistication and nuance in recent work by European and American scholars on Greek and Roman discourses about the barbarians. I have already quoted Guy Halsall’s view of the barbarian in Roman texts as “a floating, rhetorical category which could be deployed in different ways to support the argument being made at a given point.” Another example is Kostas Vlassopoulos’s concept of an “expanded Barbarian repertoire” in Classical Greek culture that employed the barbarian for a much wider variety of literary and rhetorical purposes than identity-building, including the “use of the Barbarian as a means of internal self-criticism.”⁵⁸ Likewise, Anthony Kaldellis’s excellent new study of Byzantine ethnographic writing points out: “Ethnography could serve to reinforce (or create) the distinction between Roman and barbarians, but it could also question that distinction or even critique Roman preconceptions of it.”⁵⁹ By contrast, much scholarship on the intellectual history of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy remains crudely reductionist. Too much work continues to revolve endlessly around the tired dichotomies of culture and race or culturalism and nationalism; too many historians are still overly eager to use texts as evidence of their writers’ ethnic identities or prejudices (or lack thereof) without first thinking critically about what ideas about barbarians or barbarism are being used to *do* rhetorically in each case. My dissertation is, in large part, an effort at opening up new possibilities for the field by situating writings on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy firmly in their individual rhetorical contexts but also in the context of the key intellectual transitions of the Tang and Song period.

Having mentioned intellectual transitions, it would seem appropriate for me to end this Introduction by bringing up Peter Bol’s classic *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China*, which covers nearly the same span of historical time as my dissertation and deals with some of the same personalities, including the Ancient Style writers and the founding figures of *Daoxue*.⁶⁰ Bol’s book is wide-ranging in scope but nonetheless centered on a conceptual pairing of *wen* 文 (literary culture) and *dao* 道 (the Way) that originated with the Ancient Style writers and also influenced the *Daoxue* thinkers. Bol traces growing tensions over the balance and relation between *wen* and *dao* from the early Tang to the late eleventh century, when Cheng Yi chose to sever the link between the two and emphasize *dao* alone. This is an important story, and Bol integrates it with a persuasive interpretation of changes in the literati

⁵⁷ Quoted in Kari Palonen, *Quentin Skinner: History, Politics, Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 145.

⁵⁸ Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, 224.

⁵⁹ Anthony Kaldellis, *Ethnography After Antiquity: Foreign Lands and Peoples in Byzantine Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 11.

⁶⁰ Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

(*shi* 士) elite's sense of social identity and relationship with the state. But in order to maintain this focus on the *wen-dao* duality and the transformation of the *shi*, Bol made the choice to omit foreign relations and ethnocultural identity from his narrative. In a way, this was a refreshing departure from the older narrative of late Tang and Song xenophobia or ethnocentrism, which had reduced intellectually pivotal developments like the Ancient Style and *Daoxue* to mere reactions to geopolitical crisis and turned complex personalities like Han Yu and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) into caricatures of ethnocentric bigotry. Nonetheless, the older narrative has continued to dominate the Chinese-language historiography in recent years, evidently because it has never been called into question explicitly.⁶¹ For this reason, I see this dissertation as both a supplement to Bol's arguments and a first step toward establishing a credible alternative to the standard Chinese account of intellectual change in the Tang and Song.

⁶¹ Consider, for example, Ge Zhaoguang's reliance in 2004 on the presumed authority of versions of that narrative that Fu Lecheng wrote in 1962 and 1972. Ge, "Songdai 'Zhongguo' yishi de tuxian," 136.

Part 1

The rhetoric of barbarophilia and barbarophobia at Tang Taizong's court

Preamble

In modern Chinese historiography, Tang Taizong is frequently credited with an exceptional ability to recognize the humanity of “barbarians” and accord them equality with the Chinese. Somewhat paradoxically, Taizong is also frequently seen as just the most prominent example of the early Tang elite’s generally positive attitude toward foreign peoples and cultures. This attitude is in turn taken as an important reason for the early Tang’s success as an expansionist and increasingly multi-ethnic empire. John Seeley famously quipped in 1883 that the British empire seemed to him to have “conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind.” By this, he meant to chide his compatriots for failing to develop the mental habit of recognizing the empire’s colonies as being part of England.¹ In contrast, it sometimes feels like historians believe the early Tang empire accomplished its conquests in a fit of open-mindedness, during which Taizong’s force of personality temporarily overcame the Chinese ethnocentrism that had (it is assumed) previously prevented the creation of a “joint Sino-barbarian polity.”² For example, Charles Hartman (citing earlier scholarship) has asserted that “equality of ‘Hua’ (‘Chinese’) and ‘I and Ti’ (‘non-Chinese,’ or ‘barbarian’) was more than a theoretical innovation of the T’ang founder; it was a concrete policy he consistently maintained, often over the opposition of his advisers.”³

Such a perception of the early Tang ultimately rests on two rhetorical pronouncements that Taizong made in the last years of his reign.⁴ Unfortunately, most historians have neglected

¹ J. R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1883), 8–9.

² The phrase “joint Sino-barbarian polity” comes from Edwin Pulleyblank, who also endorses the aforementioned interpretation of Taizong: “the assumption, quite contrary to Chinese traditional attitudes, of the equality of barbarian and Chinese as subjects... was a point of view consciously maintained and expressed by [Taizong].” See E.G. Pulleyblank, “The An Lu-shan Rebellion and the Origins of Chronic Militarism in Late T’ang China,” in J.C. Perry and B.L. Smith eds., *Essays on T’ang Society: The Interplay of Social and Political and Economic Forces* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 38–39.

³ Note that Hartman’s description of Taizong as “first architect of the T’ang state” and “T’ang founder” reflects a traditional view that gives far too little credit to Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618–626) for the Tang dynasty’s rise to power. This view has been quite persuasively refuted by Lo Hsiang-lin, Li Shu-t’ung, and Howard Wechsler. Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 119–120, 314 n. 2; Howard J. Wechsler, *Mirror to the Son of Heaven: Wei Cheng at the court of T’ang T’ai-tsung* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 8–32.

⁴ One of the first modern studies to highlight Taizong’s rhetorical claims and take them as evidence of a coherent policy was a 1962 article by Fu Lecheng: see Fu, “Tangdai yixiaguan zhi yanbian,” 209–226, esp. 209–210. Hartman’s cites both Fu and Pulleyblank as sources for his interpretation of Taizong: Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 314–315 n. 2.

to assess the larger political context for these statements and the extent to which they are consistent with what Taizong did and said on other occasions. Those who did attempt such an assessment have noticed glaring inconsistencies that call the sincerity of his statements into question, or at least make it impossible for us to take these statements at face value. The two chapters in Part 1 aim to recontextualize Tang Taizong's "barbarophilic" statements by interpreting them as part of a rhetorical contest, in which his ministers constructed arguments to restrain his militaristic or expansionist tendencies and Taizong in turn maneuvered to deny intellectual legitimacy to their arguments. The word "contest" should not be taken to imply triviality, as the stakes were high from the perspective of either side: to the ministers, continuous expansion threatened the stability and longevity of the Tang empire; to Taizong, it was the foundation for his carefully constructed self-representation as both a sage ruler and the greatest conqueror in history.

While many modern historians have interpreted Taizong's barbarophilic statements as encapsulating the spirit of the early Tang, we shall find that rhetorical tropes that can be characterized as "barbarophobic" were much more commonly used by both hawkish and anti-expansionist ministers at Taizong's court, and even by Taizong himself. Moreover, these tropes have roots in Han-period discourses on frontier warfare and imperial expansion, which Taizong and his ministers commonly took as a point of reference. Early Tang court debates that are frequently read as a clash between ethnocentric (or ethnic exclusionist) and cosmopolitan attitudes⁵ are thus better seen as illustrating certain inherited conventions of foreign policy rhetoric, as well as the versatility of barbarian inferiority as a trope within the boundaries of these conventions. I will conclude Part 1 by evaluating my arguments' implications for the now prevalent picture of the early Tang as a uniquely "cosmopolitan" period when the classical notion of a Chinese-barbarian dichotomy was relatively unimportant.

⁵ See for example Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 141–142.

Chapter 1

The barbarian in early Tang expansionist and anti-expansionist rhetoric

“We alone love them equally”

Toward the end of 644, Tang Taizong and his retinue arrived in the eastern capital Luoyang on the first leg of a journey to Youzhou 幽州 (modern Beijing), where he was to assume overall command of an expeditionary army of about 100,000 men and lead them across the Liao River on an invasion of Goguryeo (Ch. Gaogouli 高句麗).¹ Recent events had provided Taizong with two convenient pretexts for such an invasion. A crisis of political legitimacy had emerged in Goguryeo in 642, after the minister Yeon Gaesomun 淵蓋蘇文 (603–666) seized power by murdering the king and installing a puppet in his place. Meanwhile, the king of Silla (Ch. Xinluo 新羅) had appealed for Tang intervention to protect his borders from attacks by Goguryeo and its ally, Baekje (Ch. Baiji 百濟). However, various ministers in Taizong’s court objected to his expedition, mainly because it was disturbingly reminiscent of Sui Yangdi’s 隋煬帝 (r. 604–618) three invasions of Goguryeo in 612–614. Yangdi’s invasions had not only failed but also imposed intolerable burdens of taxation and conscription on the populace, triggering the wave of rebellions that finally destroyed his empire. It was also believed that Yangdi had endangered himself unnecessarily and neglected the governance of the empire by insisting on leading the invasions in person.

Prior to Taizong’s departure from Chang’an, Chu Suiliang 褚遂良 (597–658) had submitted a memorial that began by likening the Tang empire to a human body, with the two capitals (Chang’an and Luoyang) as its heart and belly and the frontiers as its limbs; “other lands and remote regions are like objects outside the body” 他方絕域若在身外. Chu urged Taizong to remain at the heart of the empire and supervise the Goguryeo expedition from there rather than place himself in danger in Liaodong, but there was a clear subtext to the metaphor: the Tang empire was already a complete body that needed no additional appendages.² Indeed, it was the second time that Chu was using a physiological metaphor for this purpose. Two years earlier, he had attempted to persuade Taizong to reverse his recent decision to annex Gaochang as a prefecture by arguing that since Gaochang was separated from the Gansu Corridor (then known

¹ TD 186.5016–5017; THY 95.1705; CFYG 117.1278, 135.1503; JTS 199.5322–5323; XTS 220.6189–6190; ZZTJ 197.6213–6214.

² Interestingly, Chu Suiliang also claimed that he had referred to the historical sources “up to recent times” 迄乎近代, and found that no previous emperor had ever led an invasion of Liaodong and the Korean peninsula in person. This is blatantly disingenuous, since everyone in Taizong’s court knew that Sui Yangdi had done so. But since Taizong was now extremely sensitive to comparisons with Yangdi on the matter of Goguryeo, this conspicuous omission may have been the only safe way for Chu Suiliang to remind him not to repeat Yangdi’s mistake. CFYG 117.1278, 543.6208–6209; JTS 80.2734–2735 (cf. ZZTJ 197.6207).

as Hexi 河西) by desert, it could contribute nothing to the Corridor's defense in a military emergency. In that sense, "Hexi is like [the empire's] own belly and heart, while Gaochang is like another person's limbs; why should [the resources of] the Central Lands of the Chinese be wasted on attending to something useless?" 此河西者方己腹心，彼高昌者他人手足，豈得靡費中華，以事無用?³

Taizong himself was confident that his expedition against Goguryeo would be different from Yangdi's, given that his armies had succeeded in vanquishing the Eastern Türk khaganate in 630, the *Tuygun 吐谷渾 khaganate in 635, and the Gaochang 高昌 (Turfan/Turpan) kingdom in 640. Many others outside the imperial court seem to have shared his confidence, as a steady stream of enthusiastic subjects came to Luoyang to enlist in the expeditionary army or present siege engines that they had built for its use.⁴ At the beginning of 645, Taizong proclaimed his reasons for invading Goguryeo with an edict written in his own hand. In it, he pushed back against comparisons with Yangdi by claiming that Yangdi's invasions had ended in disaster only because Goguryeo's people had remained loyal to their benevolent king, whereas Yangdi's tyrannical misrule had cost him the loyalty of his own subjects. Now the roles were reversed, Taizong argued, since he was a legitimate ruler beloved by his subjects and Yeon Gaesomun was a usurper oppressing his countrymen. Taizong also boasted that unlike Yangdi, he had proven his prowess as history's greatest conqueror of foreign lands:

I enclosed the remote [northern] desert and made it my garden; strode across the shifting sands and made them my pond. Peoples who did not submit to Huangdi and lands that were not subject to Yao all sent hostages and presented tribute [to the imperial court], turning to my wind-like influence and submitting to [the empire's] regulations. Thus my way of using awe-inducing military strength to initiate my transformative influence [in foreign lands] has become known to all under heaven.

³ Marc Abramson claims that this metaphor was a "frequent trope" in the Tang, but the only other known instances of its use are two memorials written by Di Renjie 狄仁傑 (630–700) in 697 and 699. Wang Zhenping's use of Chu Suiliang's metaphor to argue that "[i]n the minds of some Tang officials, China was like a human body" seems to miss the distinction between a metaphor and a worldview. I doubt we can assume from Chu's rhetoric that an anthropomorphic understanding of the empire was central to his political philosophy, especially if the empire's heart could change places depending on the argument being made. Modern Chinese state ideology only further muddies the waters: for example, a recent book by Cui Mingde and Ma Xiaoli sharply criticizes Chu Suiliang's human body metaphor as "narrow" 狹隘, "backward and obsolete" 落後陳腐, "one-sided" 片面, and "pedantic" 迂腐. This is clearly an effort at conforming to the Chinese government's policy of defining China as a multi-ethnic nation-state and vehemently rejecting any language that condones ethnic separatism. TD 191.5206; THY 95.1703; ZGZY 9.507; JTS 80.2736–2737; CFYG 327.3696–3697 (cf. ZZTJ 196.6176); Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 119 (cf. 149); Wang Zhenping, "Ideas concerning Diplomacy and Foreign Policy under the Tang Emperors Gaozu and Taizong," *Asia Major* 22.1 (2009), 267–268; Cui Mingde 崔明德 and Ma Xiaoli 馬曉麗, *Sui Tang minzu guanxi sixiangshi* 隋唐民族關係思想史 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2010), 146–147.

⁴ CFYG 117.1278–1279; ZZTJ 197.6214.

包絕漠而爲苑，跨流沙以爲池，黃帝不服之民，唐堯不臣之域，並皆委質奉貢，歸風順軌。然則崇威啓化之道，此亦天下所共聞也。⁵

Whereas Chu Suiliang hoped to discourage expansionism by representing the Tang empire as a human body, Taizong preferred to liken it to a palace complex that could be enlarged and improved with some external landscaping.

Jack Chen has recently borrowed Stephen Greenblatt's concept of "self-fashioning" to explain "Taizong's attempt to create himself through reference to the moral ideals of sagely rulership." Chen argues that in some cases, Taizong's desire to sustain this constructed image paradoxically served to constrain his freedom of action as a ruler.⁶ If such constraints existed, they do not seem to have extended to Taizong's foreign policy by the 640s, when he was prepared to claim to be surpassing, and not just emulating, the ancients. Chu Suiliang and other anti-expansionist ministers had recently cited deserts and other geographical barriers, the non-expansionist policies of sage-kings like Huangdi and Yao, and the greater efficacy of transformative "moral power" (*de* 德) over "awe-inducing military strength" (*wei* 威) as reasons not to expand the Tang empire beyond certain limits that they then sought to define as marking an age-old, normative boundary between the Central Lands of the Chinese and the lands of the barbarians. For example, Cen Wenben 岑文本 (595–645) had criticized the idea of expansion into Goguryeo and other foreign lands by writing, "Even when the journeys of [the sage-king] Yu extended into the east and west, he did not cross the sea and the shifting sands" 雖禹迹之東漸西被，不過海及流沙。⁷ Chu Suiliang's 642 memorial on Gaochang had also begun with the following:

Your subject has heard that the enlightened rulers of antiquity would always [concern themselves with] the Chinese first and the barbarians (Yi-Di) later. They sought to extend their transformative moral power and did not concern themselves with [conquering] remote lands.

⁵ WGCL 662.217–218; CFYG 117.1278–1279; TDZLJ 130.703 (cf. ZTJ 197.6214).

⁶ Jack W. Chen, *The Poetics of Sovereignty: On Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010), 4, 81.

⁷ ZS 49.883–884. This text will be analyzed in full later in this chapter.

臣聞古者哲后，必先華夏而後夷狄，務廣德化，不事遐荒。⁸

Taizong's Luoyang edict suggests that he wished to relegate such arguments to obsolescence by asserting that he had simply transcended the sage-kings' limitations and established a new, superior model of universal rule: one in which awe-inducing military strength would be the vehicle for the broader projection of transformative moral power.

Much to Taizong's chagrin, however, his Goguryeo expedition achieved only slightly more success than any of Yangdi's. In the summer and autumn of 645, Taizong's army captured several forts on the Liaodong peninsula and defeated a large Goguryeo army in battle. But it then failed to take an unusually well-defended fortress and was forced to withdraw when supplies ran low at the onset of winter.⁹ Although the Tang retained control over some of the captured forts and at least 70,000 of their inhabitants, a chastened Taizong is said to have regretted launching the expedition and lamented that Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580–643), who had died two years before, was not around to dissuade him from doing so.¹⁰ This can be read as an indirect and quite unfair attempt by Taizong to blame his other ministers for failing to equal Wei's famed propensity for blunt and uncompromising remonstrance, while asserting his ability to accept such remonstrance. In reality, Taizong's attitude toward Wei Zheng had become decidedly hostile soon after Wei's death. This and Taizong's growing intolerance of dissent had forced Chu Suiliang and other surviving ministers to remonstrate against the Goguryeo expedition in subtle language couched in ironic flattery.¹¹ In the spring of 644, moreover, the hawkish general Li Shiji 李世勣 (594–669)

⁸ The *locus classicus* for these lines appears to be the *Hanshu* (HS 78.3282), where two Western Han ministers used it to support an *expansionist* attitude toward the Xiongnu. See below for further analysis. TD 191.5206; THY 95.1702; JTS 80.2736; CFYG 327.3696–3697 (cf. condensed versions in ZGZY 9.507 and ZZTJ 196.6176).

⁹ TD 186.5017; THY 95.1705–1706; CFYG 117.1280–1283, 135.1503; JTS 199.5323–5326; XTS 220.6190–6194; ZZTJ 197.6219–198.6230; summary and analysis in David A. Graff, *Medieval Chinese Warfare, 300–900* (London: Routledge, 2002), 197–198.

¹⁰ 70,000 people from the captured forts were forcibly resettled within the Tang empire, but in an edict issued shortly after the expeditionary army's withdrawal, Taizong claimed he had gained 180,000 new subjects from the expedition. The *Zizhi tongjian kaoyi* tries to resolve the discrepancy by suggesting that the larger number includes Liaodong inhabitants who were not resettled. STJH 1.11; THY 95.1706; ZZTJ 198.6230; CFYG 117.1283–1284, 135.1503.

¹¹ In the late 630s, Wei Zheng seems to have tried to compensate for his declining influence over Taizong by passing transcripts of his oral remonstrances to Chu Suiliang so that they would be recorded in the Court Diary for reference by future emperors. By 642, Taizong was already openly concerned about how his image was represented in the Court Diary. He was therefore greatly displeased upon finding out what Wei Zheng had done. This is said to have contributed to Wei's posthumous fall from grace. Ironically, the preservation of these transcripts by the Court Diary probably made it possible for later texts to establish Wei Zheng's reputation as an exemplar of forthright remonstrance. Wechsler, focusing on Chu Suiliang's fame as a calligrapher rather than his position as Court Diarist, suggests that Wei Zheng hoped to have a collection of his remonstrances copied in Chu's hand, thus showing disrespect for Taizong who had chosen not to circulate a collection of *his* writings. Wechsler also argues that the ineffectiveness of Wei Zheng's remonstrance was due to his excessive moralizing and sees a contrast with Chu Suiliang's "generally pragmatic and reasonable approach to policy making." Even if this antithesis between

had sought to silence Chu and other critics of the expedition by blaming Wei's over-cautious advice for costing the Tang a golden opportunity to destroy the *Syr-Yanda 薛延陀 khaganate in 641. Taizong had expressed wholehearted agreement with Li at the time.¹²

It was not long before Taizong's regrets morphed into a desire to avenge his humiliation by Goguryeo, particularly after the Tang army salvaged some of his pride by invading the Mongolian steppe and precipitating the Syr-Yanda khaganate's collapse in the summer of 646.¹³ In a situation nearly identical to the destruction of the Eastern Türk khaganate in 630 (more on which later), a revolt by disgruntled *Tegreg 鐵勒 vassal divisions had already crippled the Syr-Yanda, and Tang forces simply swooped in to deliver a killing blow.¹⁴ Nonetheless, none of the Tegreg divisions was strong enough to fill the vacuum of power left by the Syr-Yanda collapse. Their chieftains therefore submitted to Tang suzerainty and offered Taizong the title of khagan, an honor he gladly accepted.¹⁵ Taizong's assumption of the khagan title was not unprecedented,

moralism and pragmatism is valid, I would argue that Wei Zheng's remonstrance was not necessarily more moralistic and less pragmatic than Chu Suiliang's. The key difference seems to have been Chu's willingness to temper his criticism of Taizong's decisions with strategically placed flattery. Wechsler, *Mirror to the Son of Heaven*, 142–154, 164, 194–195. On the reasons for Taizong's displeasure with Wei Zheng, see JTS 71.2563; XTS 97.3881. For Taizong's unsuccessful attempt in 642 to gain access to the Court Diary, in violation of standard court protocol, see ZGZY 6.348, 7.390 (note the error in the date); THY 63.1102–1103; JTS 80.2730; XTS 105.4025; CFYG 554.6346–6347, 844.9810; ZZTJ 196.6175.

¹² TD 186.5016; CFYG 543.6208, 991.11477; JTS 80.2733–2734; THY 95.1705; ZZTJ 197.6207 (cf. ZGZY 9.481–482). For the battle with the Syr-Yanda in 641, see CFYG 982.11403–11404; JTS 199.5345; XTS 217.6135–6136; ZZTJ 196.6170–6172. None of these accounts mentions Wei Zheng's advice, however. Li Shiji claimed that Wei persuaded Taizong not to order a Tang army under Li's overall command to pursue and exterminate the retreating Syr-Yanda army. But these accounts state instead that Li's deputy did pursue the Syr-Yanda and failed to catch up with them.

¹³ According to Chinese sources, the Syr-Yanda were formed from the merging of two divisions. While the identification of 薛 with the Syr division is generally accepted, the original Turkic form of the tribal name transliterated as 延陀 remains uncertain. As Bao Wensheng has recently argued, Friedrich Hirth's theory that 延陀 is a mistranscription of 誕陀 and refers to the Tardush (a tribal grouping mentioned in later Old Turkic inscriptions), while often repeated, is problematic from a phonological point of view. Bao suggests *Yund* (horse) as the Turkic form, but I have opted for a more conservative reconstruction based on the Middle Chinese reading of 延陀. TD 199.5464–5465; THY 96.1726; JTS 199.5343; XTS 217.6134; Bao Wensheng 包文勝, "Xueyantuo bu mingcheng yu qi yuan kao" 薛延陀部名稱與起源考, *Neimenggu daxue xuebao* 內蒙古大學學報 42.4 (2010), 132–136. See also the similar reconstruction *Ser-Yianda* at Christopher P. Atwood, "The Notion of Tribe in Medieval China: Ouyang Xiu and the Shatuo Dynastic Myth," in *Miscellanea Asiatica: Festschrift in Honour of Françoise Aubin*, eds. Denise Aigle, Isabelle Charleux, Vincent Goosaert, and Roberte Hamayon (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 2010), 602.

¹⁴ The Uyghurs, one of these divisions, ambushed the Syr-Yanda as they fled from the Tang, killing their khagan and most of their aristocracy; the survivors soon surrendered to a second Tang expedition commanded by Li Shiji. THY 96.1727–1728; CFYG 985.11404, 991.11477; JTS 199.5346–5348; XTS 217.6138; ZZTJ 198.6236–6238.

¹⁵ According to various sources, the rulers of the "various foreign peoples" 諸蕃 had already given Taizong the title "Celestial Khagan" (*Tian Kehan* 天可汗, presumably *Tängri Khagan* in Old Turkic), often translated as "Heavenly Khagan," soon after the surrender of the Eastern Türks in 630. However, the relevant sources are surprisingly short on detail and mutually contradictory with regard to dates. Almost all modern scholars of Tang history accept the

as the Sui emperors had also used the titles Sage Khagan 聖人可汗 and Bayan Khagan 莫緣可汗 in relations with the Eastern Türks and Western Türks in 600–612; the Sui empire had even extended suzerainty over the temporarily weakened Eastern Türks during this period.¹⁶ However, Taizong seems to have interpreted, or at least represented, the submission of the Tegreg as yet more evidence that he was destined to conquer all the world's peoples in spite of the momentary setback in Liaodong. In the spring of 647, Taizong felt ready to launch a second invasion of Goguryeo, but his ministers recommended a less risky strategy of launching simultaneous land and sea raids on Liaodong to wear out its defenders. Taizong grudgingly agreed to this plan.¹⁷ While the raiding parties prepared to depart, he began boasting to the court about his unprecedented knack for bringing barbarians to heel:

When it comes to barbarians (Rong-Di), the reason why We could conquer those whom the ancients could not conquer, and make subjects of those whom the ancients could not rule, is just that We followed the desires of the people. In the past, Yu led the people of the Nine Provinces to dig through mountains and chop down trees, diverting a hundred rivers into the sea. The labor was extreme, but the people did not resent it, because Yu accorded with the hearts of the people, followed the lay of the land, and saw the people's benefit as his own.

Zizhi tongjian account, which has Taizong receiving the title of Celestial Khagan twice: first from “the rulers of the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters” 四夷君長 in 630, and again from the Tegreg divisions in 646. Yet all earlier sources for the 646 incident only mention the title of Khagan, not “Celestial Khagan.” Many modern historians have also interpreted Taizong's assumption of the title in 630 as a highly significant act symbolizing the transformation of the early Tang into an empire that encompassed both China and the steppe. However, neither Taizong nor any other Tang emperor refers to himself as “Emperor and Celestial Khagan” in surviving Tang edicts or state letters addressed to foreign rulers, even though the sources claim that Taizong began to do so in 630. Instances of foreign rulers or dignitaries referring to the Tang emperor as the Celestial Khagan do occur in sources for the reigns of Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–756), Suzong 肅宗 (r. 756–762), and Daizong 代宗 (r. 762–779). In that case, could it be that the title “Celestial Khagan” actually originated in the interstate diplomacy of Xuanzong's reign, but was either deliberately or accidentally misattributed to Taizong's reign? In recent analyses of the sources for the “Celestial Khagan” title, both Chu Chen-hung and Jonathan Skaff acknowledge the dearth of evidence for Taizong's use of the title “Celestial Khagan” but nonetheless accept the *Zizhi tongjian* account of Taizong receiving it twice. Chu argues that the “Celestial Khagan” title does not appear in Tang edicts or state letters to foreign rulers because the title “emperor” was more prestigious, but this argument contradicts the sources by reducing the title “Celestial Khagan” to a state of redundancy. Skaff blames the lack of evidence on deliberate omission by Tang and Song historians who supposedly disapproved of a Chinese emperor assuming a foreign title. I find this argument unpersuasive as well, as nearly all extant Tang and Song accounts of Taizong's assumption of the title depict it in a positive light. See Chu Chen-hung 朱振宏, *Da Tang shijie yu 'Huangdi • Tiankehan' zhi yanjiu* 大唐世界與「皇帝 • 天可汗」之研究 (Taipei: Hua Mulan wenhua chubanshe, 2009), 28–30, 88–90, 100–102, 217–218 and *Sui Tang zhengzhi, zhidu yu duiwai guanxi* 隋唐政治、制度與對外關係研究 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 2010), 183–208; Jonathan Karam Skaff, *Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors: Culture, Power and Connections, 580–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 119–122, 124.

¹⁶ Wei Zheng 魏徵 *et al.*, *Suishu* 隋書 (Zhonghua shuju edition) 84.1873–1874, 1878–1879; Chu, *Da Tang shijie*, 94–96; Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 117–118.

¹⁷ CFYG 985.11404–11405 (cf. ZZTJ 198.6245–6246).

朕於戎狄所以能取古人所不能取，臣古人所不能臣者，皆順眾人之所欲故也。昔禹帥九州之民，鑿山槎木，疏百川注之海，其勞甚矣，而民不怨者，因人之心，順地之勢，與民同利故也。¹⁸

Essentially, Taizong was claiming to be the equal of the sage-king Yu and asserting that the people of the Tang empire desired the conquest of Goguryeo as much as Yu's subjects—who inhabited the legendary Nine Provinces—had wanted an end to the great flood at any cost.

Two months later, when Taizong was touring his newly-completed summer palace, he expanded on the theme of surpassing the ancients by posing a question to his ministers:

Since antiquity, rulers have pacified the Central Lands of the Chinese but have not been able to bring the barbarians (Rong-Di) to submission. Our talent is not equal to that of the ancients, yet Our success has surpassed theirs. We will not ourselves reveal the reasons; you are to speak of them truthfully, each according to his inclination.

自古帝王雖平定中夏，不能服戎狄。朕才不逮古人而成功過之，自不論其故，諸公各率意以實言之。

Taizong's ministers—or more likely, one high-ranking minister speaking for them all—responded prudently with flattery instead of the requested truthfulness:

Your Majesty's accomplishments are as great as heaven and earth, such that the myriad creatures have no words to describe them.

陛下功德如天地，萬物不得而名言。

Taizong then answered his own question by claiming, with false modesty, to have achieved his successes by surpassing the rulers of the past in “only” five ways. First, he was not jealous of men better than himself. Second, he was able to use his ministers' abilities to their full potential. Third, he had compassion and tolerance for incompetent people. Fourth, he had never persecuted

¹⁸ ZZTJ 198.6246.

upright and honest ministers, even though his court was full of them. But the fifth and last reason was probably the one Taizong most wanted to emphasize:

Since antiquity, everyone has seen the Chinese of the Central Lands as superior and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as inferior. We alone love them equally, and that is why their clans and divisions have all cleaved to Us as if to their own parents.

自古皆貴中華，賤夷狄，朕獨愛之如一，故其種落皆依朕如父母。

Taizong next turned to Chu Suiliang, who had been involved in recording his words and deeds in the Court Diary 起居注 since 636, and asked, “You have been a court historian; do Our words tell the truth?” 公嘗爲史官，如朕言，得其實乎？ It is possible that Taizong was taking a direct swipe at Chu’s rhetoric of “Chinese first and barbarians later” from five years before. But Chu, knowing that Taizong was not in a mood to be contradicted, simply replied, “Your Majesty’s virtues are too many to be recorded; it must be out of humility that you claim to possess these five alone!” 陛下盛德不可勝載，獨以此五者自與，蓋謙謙之志耳！¹⁹

Taizong’s words implied that the barbarians were only too happy to submit peacefully to a Chinese ruler who would love and treat them as equals of the Chinese. But the irony of these claims would not have been lost on the editors of the *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (completed in 1084), the only extant source that reports them. Whereas modern historical scholarship frequently quotes Taizong’s words in a wholly decontextualized form, the annalistic format of the *Zizhi tongjian* shows us clearly that his exchange with his ministers took place in the same month that a raiding party commanded by Li Shiji crossed the Liao River to raze Goguryeo forts in Liaodong—clearly not a gesture of parental affection.²⁰ Nor is this an isolated case of Taizong’s rhetoric being at odds with reality. In the spring of 648, Taizong received a group of foreign ambassadors at court and declared to his assembled ministers that unlike Han Wudi 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BC), who had exhausted the Central Lands with over thirty years of expansionist warfare, he had pacified distant lands and turned their inhabitants into his subjects through the use of moral, not military, power. We can see from the *Zizhi tongjian*, however, that even as Taizong spoke, more than 30,000 Tang troops were preparing to sail across the Bohai 渤海 Gulf for another raid on Goguryeo, while over 100,000 Tegreg cavalry under the command of Tang generals were en route to the Tarim Basin, where they would attack and overrun the kingdom of

¹⁹ ZZTJ 198.6247.

²⁰ ZZTJ 198.6247 (cf. XTS 2.46, 220.6194).

Kucha 龜茲 (modern Kuche 庫車) in an effort to sever its close vassalage relationship with the Western Türks by force.²¹

Instead of reading Taizong's barbarophilic rhetoric as evidence of a coherent policy or perspective on empire-building and ethnocultural difference, we should probably accord it the same level of skepticism warranted by his claims to have conquered foreign lands by following the desires of the people and relying on moral power alone. I am also inclined to reinterpret it as a self-serving and somewhat disingenuous rhetorical attempt at neutralizing his ministers' use of barbarian inferiority as an argument against his wars of imperial expansion. Indeed Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (579–648), one of Taizong's chief ministers, produced a striking example of 'barbarophobic' rhetoric for anti-expansionist purposes in the summer of 648, when Taizong decided that the raids on Goguryeo had served their purpose and ordered the mobilization of an army of 300,000 men for a second full-scale invasion.²² Fang was so perturbed by this that he wrote a long memorial of remonstrance despite being in the final months of a terminal illness. Recognizing that "His Majesty is seething with anger [toward Goguryeo], his mind is made up, and none of his ministers dares offend his dignity" 主上含怒意決, 臣下莫敢犯顏, Fang used every conceivable tactic of persuasion in a desperate attempt at averting what he believed would be a repeat of Sui Yangdi's folly. His memorial began with fulsome praise for Taizong's accomplishments and personal qualities—even claiming that the 645 campaign was a resounding success—and continued with classical quotations from the *Yijing* 易經 and *Daodejing* 道德經 about the value of contentment and the danger of overreaching. Fang then asserted that it was not necessary to punish Goguryeo's recalcitrance, since barbarians could not be held to the same standards as normal human beings:

²¹ Modern historiography has tended to represent the Kucha expedition as a Tang conquest of the Tarim Basin, in part due to inaccurate sources linking the expedition to the establishment of the so-called Four Garrisons of the Pacified West 安西四鎮. In fact, the Tang settled for a loose suzerainty over the Tarim Basin states in 648 and only established a lasting military presence in the form of the Four Garrisons at least a decade later, under Gaozong. The 648 expedition simply replaced the Kuchean king with his younger brother, erected an inscribed stele to commemorate its victory, and returned to Chang'an with a trio of high-profile prisoners: the former king, his chief minister, and his top general. All three were given sinecures and kept at the imperial court until 650, when they were sent back to Kucha after it became clear that the vacuum of power created by their absence had reduced the kingdom to a state of civil war and anarchy. The Kucha expedition also killed the pro-Türk king of *Agni 焉耆 (modern Yanqi 焉耆 or Karasahr) and replaced him with a cousin, and intimidated the king of Khotan 于闐 (modern Hetian 和田) into following the expeditionary army back to Chang'an. The Khotanese king arrived about forty days after Taizong's death and offered his submission to Gaozong. Gaozong rewarded him with numerous gifts and sent him back to Khotan some months later, but deployed no troops to either Khotan or Agni. ZZTJ 198.6250–6253, 6262–6265, 6268–6269, 6271; CFYG 966.11192, 973.11264, 985.11405–11406, 999.11555; JTS 198.5302–5305, 199.5326; XTS 220.6195, 221.6229–6232, 6235. For the dating of the Four Garrisons, see Zhang Guangda 張廣達, *Xiyu shidi conggao chubian* 西域史地叢稿初編 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), 144–147.

²² XTS 220.6195; ZZTJ 199.6258–6259.

The people of Goryeo (i.e., Goguryeo) are frontier barbarians (Yi) and inferior wretches. We cannot expect them to practice humaneness and moral duty, nor can we blame them for not observing common ritual norms. Since antiquity, [Chinese rulers] have reared them like fish and turtles, and it is best to deal with them in a spirit of leniency. If we were to insist on exterminating all of their kind, it is deeply to be feared that they would fight desperately like cornered beasts.

彼高麗者，邊夷賤類，不足待以仁義，不可責以常禮。古來以魚鱉畜之，宜從闊略。必欲絕其種類，深恐獸窮則搏。

Finally, Fang Xuanling also appealed to Taizong's compassion for the Tang soldiers who would be killed in the invasion and for their families; he also argued that the Tang had no compelling *casus belli* against Goguryeo. He ended by beseeching the emperor to grant his dying wish and call off the expedition. Taizong was moved by the depth of the ailing chief minister's concern for the empire, but rejected his advice nonetheless.²³ Only Taizong's own death in 649 spared the Tang and Goguryeo from another major war until the 660s.

Han origins of an anti-expansionist discourse

Fang Xuanling's comparison of Goguryeo's people to fish and turtles may have been inspired by a memorial of 48 BC which successfully persuaded Han Yuandi 漢元帝 (r. 49–33 BC) to abandon one of Han Wudi's conquests, the island of Hainan, rather than continue wasting lives and resources on efforts to quell incessant revolts by the native population. The memorialist, Jia Juanzhi 賈捐之 (d. 43 BC), argued that the bizarre customs of the Hainanese (for example, fathers and sons taking baths in a river together) made them “no different from birds and beasts” 與禽獸無異 and “similar to fish and turtles” 譬猶魚鱉, and therefore not worth keeping in the Han empire.²⁴ This and some other strikingly barbarophobic rhetoric in Han sources probably served as the early Tang anti-expansionists' model for an anti-war or anti-expansionist rhetorical strategy of dehumanizing foreigners and dismissing them as worthless. Not surprisingly, that strategy first emerged during Han Wudi's reign, and it is noteworthy that none of its earliest users, including Liu An 劉安 (179–122 BC), Han Anguo 韓安國 (d. 127 BC), and Zhufu Yan 主父偃 (d. 126 BC), was known to be partial to Classicism.²⁵ But the strategy was apparently

²³ ZGZY 9.485–492; TD 186.5017–5018; THY 95.1706–1707; JTS 66.2464–2466; CFYG 548.6280–6281 (cf. XTS 96.3855–3857; ZZTJ 199.6260).

²⁴ HS 64.2830–2834.

²⁵ SJ 112.2954; HS 52.2398, 2401, 64.2777–2785, 2801. On these and other Western Han examples see the analysis in Hoshina Sueko 保科季子, “Kanju no gaikō kōsō—‘Itēki fushin’ ron wo chūshin ni” 漢儒の外交構想—「夷狄不臣」論を中心に, in Fuma Susumu 夫馬進 ed., *Chūgoku higashi ajia gaikō kōryūshi no kenkyū* 中国東アジア外交交流史の研究 (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2007), 44–47.

developed to its full potential by Eastern Han Classicists during the reign of Zhangdi 章帝 (r. AD 75–88).

As we saw in the Introduction, one outcome of the White Tiger Hall conference's discussions in AD 79 was a consensus that barbarians lacked the cardinal virtues of “ritual and moral duty.” In fact, the Eastern Han classical scholars gathered at the conference went further and asserted that barbarians were incapable of learning these virtues from even the most sagely Chinese ruler. This happened when the scholars turned to discussing the normative limits of a Han emperor's sovereignty. According to Ban Gu's *Bohu tongyi*, the answer agreed upon by the Classicists in attendance was that a “true king” 王者 (i.e., an ideal ruler) should not under any circumstances consider three categories of people to be his subjects. These categories were: the officially designated heirs of the Shang and Zhou kings; the parents of the empress; and the barbarians (Yi-Di). Although the first two categories are interesting in themselves, I will focus on the explanation provided for the third:

The lands of the barbarians (Yi-Di) are cut off from the Central Lands, and their customs are different. They are not born from balanced *qi* and cannot be transformed by ritual and moral duty. That is why [a true king] does not consider them his subjects. The [Gongyang] commentary to the *Chunqiu* says, “When barbarians (Yi-Di) deceive one another, a morally superior man does not abhor it.” The Great Commentary to the *Shangshu* says, “Those to whom the standard calendar has not been granted [as a symbol of suzerainty], a morally superior ruler does not consider his subjects.”

夷狄者，與中國絕域異俗，非中和氣所生，非禮義所能化，故不臣也。《春秋傳》曰：「夷狄相誘，君子不疾。」《尚書大傳》曰：「正朔所不加，即君子所不臣也。」²⁶

This passage is the first known attempt at identifying an ideological basis for regarding the boundaries of the Chinese empire to be both conterminous with the classical geopolitical concept of the Central Lands and exclusive of the opposite category, “the barbarians.” The *Xiaojing gouming jue* 孝經鉤命決, a slightly earlier text quoted elsewhere in the *Bohu tongyi*, had already identified these three categories of non-subjects. But its explanation for the third category was that the Son of Heaven “does not consider the rulers of the barbarians (Yi-Di) as his subjects because they have not been granted his governance and teaching; out of modesty, he

²⁶ BHT 7.316, 318. The line quoted from the Gongyang 公羊 commentary is actually followed by the typically convoluted explanation, “He shows his abhorrence by acting as if he does not abhor it” 若不疾乃疾之也: see GYZS 23.505. The Great Commentary to the *Shangshu* was lost during or after the Tang period; only fragmentary quotations have survived. A longer fragment containing the line quoted here can be found at TPYL 785.314; see also Hoshina, “Kanju no gaikō kōsō,” 51 n. 16.

does not consider them his subjects” 不臣夷狄之君者，此政教所不加，謙不臣也。²⁷ This places the responsibility for the barbarians’ non-subject status on the emperor’s inability to extend his governance to them—a practical limitation that was conditional rather than absolute. In contrast, the *Baihu tongyi* cites geographical separation, cultural difference, and most importantly, the barbarians’ inborn moral inferiority and untransformability (originating from their imbalanced *qi*) as reasons why even the most powerful ruler should never try to make good subjects out of them.²⁸ As all good Classicists would do, Ban Gu goes on to quote classical texts in support of this position. But such a comprehensive theory of barbarian inferiority and otherness is found in none of the Classics and may well have originated from the White Tiger Hall conference itself.

This theory’s implications were not solely academic. In the years leading up to the conference, the leading ministers of the Eastern Han court were divided over the question of whether to reestablish the earlier Western Han protectorate over the oasis states of the Turpan-Hami, Tarim, and Dzungarian basins, which had ended when several states revolted against Wang Mang’s 王莽 (45 BC–AD 23) Xin 新 regime (AD 9–23).²⁹ These desert areas, which the Han and subsequent dynasties knew as the Western Regions 西域, were now under the suzerainty of the Northern Xiongnu 北匈奴.³⁰ Han troops returned to the Western Regions, drove the Northern Xiongnu out, and established a new protectorate in 73, but were ordered to pull out three years later under pressure from a fierce Xiongnu counterattack.³¹ Although the *Bohu tongyi* makes no reference to these recent events, it may not be a coincidence that Yang Zhong 楊終 (d. 100), the minister who convinced the newly enthroned Zhangdi to abandon the Western Regions protectorate in 76, also mooted the idea of the White Tiger Hall conference in 79.³²

²⁷ Only fragments of the *Xiaojing gouming jue* have survived; the relevant fragment in this case is preserved in the *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義: see LJZY 36.1066.

²⁸ Hoshina Sueko points out the similarity between the *Xiaojing gouming jue* and *Baihu tongyi* passages, attributing both to the “Modern Script School” 今文學派 of Eastern Han classical scholarship, but does not dwell on their differences. See Hoshina, “Kanju no gaikō kōsō,” 43–44.

²⁹ The Western Han protectorate was established sometime between 68 BC and 59 BC and ended in AD 16–23. On the date of the protectorate’s establishment, see Liu Guofang 劉國防, “Han xiyu duhu de shizhi jiqi niandai” 漢西域督護的始置及其年代, *Xiyu yanjiu* 西域研究 2002(3), 18–22. On the end of the protectorate, see HS 96.3927, 99.4146; Sun Zhanyu 孫占宇, “Dunhuang Hanjian Wang Mang zhengfa xiyu zhanzheng shiliao yanjiu zongshu” 敦煌漢簡王莽征伐西域戰爭史料研究綜述, *Xiyu yanjiu* 西域研究 2006(3), 105–110.

³⁰ The Xiongnu confederation was split into two by a succession dispute in AD 48; the Southern Xiongnu submitted to Eastern Han suzerainty and were resettled on the Ordos plateau, while the Northern Xiongnu remained in control of the Mongolian steppe. See HHS 89.2941–2944; also Rafé de Crespigny, “Some Notes on the Western Regions in Later Han,” *Journal of Asian History* 40.1 (2006), 1–9.

³¹ HHS 88.2909–2910; De Crespigny, “Some Notes on the Western Regions in Later Han,” 9–12.

³² HHS 48.1597–1599.

Although we cannot assume that every Classicist at the conference shared Yang Zhong's anti-expansionist inclinations, we can be reasonably certain that Ban Gu did. This is because Ban expresses very similar inclinations in his history of the Western Han empire, the *Hanshu* 漢書, most of which he completed around the same time as the *Bohu tongyi*. The chapter of the *Hanshu* dedicated to the Western Regions ends with an Appraisal (*zan* 贊) that argues strongly against westward expansion, using the reign of Han Wudi as a cautionary tale of the high cost in blood and treasure it would entail.³³ The Appraisal also praises Zhangdi's decision to withdraw Han forces from the Western Regions as both a correct response to the needs of the time and a wise policy worthy of the sage-kings of antiquity. It describes Zhangdi's policy using the term “bridling” (*jimi* 羈縻, often translated as “keeping on a loose rein”), borrowed from animal husbandry. In Han-period foreign policy discourse, the metaphor of “bridling” served to characterize the maintenance of loose ties and indirect influence with foreign states and peoples. This was sometimes represented as a middle way between expansionism and isolationism—the latter policy being conveyed by the single character *jue* 絕, “cutting [them] off.”³⁴

But *jue* could also denote an effect of physical geography rather than one of government policy. The Appraisal cites, approvingly, three Western Han scholars who supposedly identified the Pamir Mountains 蔥嶺 and the White Dragon Dunes 白龍堆 as topographical barriers “by which heaven and earth have set boundaries between different regions of the world and cut off (*jue*) the outer from the inner” 天地所以界別區域，絕外內. It should be noted that none of these three actually spoke of the White Dragon Dunes or the Pamirs in terms of heaven and earth or *jue*. The closest was Yang Xiong, whose *Fayan* contains the following assertion: “To the west of the [White] Dragon Dunes and to the north of the great (Gobi) desert are the bird[-like] barbarians (Yi) and beast[-like] barbarians; to burden the imperial armies with [establishing] commanderies [over them] is something the House of Han should not do” 龍堆以西，大漠以北，鳥夷、獸夷；郡勞王師，漢家不為也. Incidentally, Yang went on to praise Jia Juanzhi's anti-expansionist arguments for preventing the Han from “exchanging the [lives of] our clothed [people] for [creatures with] shells and scales” 介鱗易我衣裳—an elegant paraphrase of Jia's

³³ HS 96.3928–3929. Han Wudi's belated renunciation of expansionism is narrated in HS 96.3912–3914.

³⁴ HS 96.3930. A memorial composed by Ban Gu and preserved in his *Hou Hanshu* biography shows that unlike some other officials in Zhangdi's court, he was not in favor of the Han empire cutting off all contact with the Northern Xiongnu. The “bridling” metaphor also occurs in this memorial, but it did not originate with Ban Gu. It appears already in a memorial on relations with the Northern Xiongnu that Ban Gu's father Ban Biao 班彪 (AD 3–54) composed in AD 52, as well as three Western Han memorials written in 52 BC, 44 BC, and 3 BC, all dealing with relations with the Xiongnu. It was possibly also used in an essay by Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179–117 BC) that is quoted in his *Shiji* 史記 (ca. 90 BC) biography, but Martin Kern has recently argued that the biography contains much fanciful and anachronistic content and may postdate the original text of the *Shiji* “by at least a century,” perhaps even being based on the Sima Xiangru biography in the *Hanshu*. If that is so, it is difficult to be sure whether the “bridling metaphor” was in the original essay or added later on. See Martin Kern, “The ‘Biography of Sima Xiangru’ and the Question of the *Fu* in Sima Qian's *Shiji*,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 123.2 (2003), 303–316; SJ 117.3049 (cf. HS 57.2583); HS 70.3008, 78.3282, 94.3814; HHS 40.1374, 89.2946.

“fish and turtles” argument, and one that Yang Zhong in turn borrowed for his own anti-expansionist rhetoric in AD 76.³⁵

Ban Gu’s Appraisal for the *Hanshu* chapter on the Xiongnu contains arguments similar to the Western Regions Appraisal. It describes “bridling” as “the constant way by which the sage-kings controlled the barbarians (Man-Yi)” 聖王制御蠻夷之常道. It interprets the mountains, valleys, and deserts on the northern and northwestern edges of the Han empire as “that by which heaven and earth have cut off (*jue*) the outer from the inner” 天地所以絕外內.³⁶ It also claims that Confucius, when writing the *Chunqiu*, “regarded the Chinese states as inner and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer” 內諸夏而外夷狄. But the rhetorical point being made here deliberately misreads the context of the original line from the Gongyang commentary. The Gongyang commentator argued that when Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu*, he “regarded his home state [of Lu 魯] as inner and the [other] Chinese states as outer [when speaking of interstate relations], but regarded the Chinese states as inner and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer [when speaking of relations between the Chinese states and the barbarians]” 內其國而外諸夏，內諸夏而外夷狄. To the commentator, this formulation raised a question: “A true king would wish to unify all under heaven, so why speak in terms of outer and inner?” 王者欲一乎天下，曷爲以外內之辭言之? The commentator himself then supplied the answer: “This means that he begins [the unification] from the places closer to him” 言自近者始也. The logical conclusion from this answer would be that no imperial unification was complete until the barbarians, too, became part of the empire.³⁷ In fact, two high-ranking ministers at the Western Han court in 52 BC had used a very similar formulation to advocate formally incorporating a submitting faction of the Xiongnu into the Han empire: “The institutions of the sage-kings were that in extending their moral power and spreading [the knowledge of] ritual, the capital came first and the Chinese states later, [after which] the Chinese states came first and the barbarians (Yi-Di) later” 聖王之制，施德行禮，先京師而後諸夏，先諸夏而後夷狄.³⁸

³⁵ The White Dragon Dunes were a topographical feature near the salt lake of Lop Nor, on the eastern edge of the Tarim Basin. See HS 64.2777–2785, 96.3929, 3886–3887; FYYS 20.554–555 (cf. HS 94.3816); HHS 48.1598.

³⁶ HS 94.3834.

³⁷ Ibid.; GYZS 18.400–401. Pan Yihong translates the phrase 外夷狄 as “keeping the Yi and Di barbarians without,” but this was clearly not the Gongyang commentator’s original meaning. Pan also argues that anti-expansionists like Ban Gu used this line from the Gongyang commentary as “a perfect ideological basis for retreat from claims of Chinese superiority and for adopting whatever measures were expedient for achieving China’s own security and stability.” This underestimates the amount of creativity and disingenuity involved in Ban Gu’s use of a classical quotation in a manner contrary to its actual context. Pan Yihong, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan: Sui-Tang China and its Neighbors* (Bellingham, WA: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 1997), 22, 29–30; on the implications of the Gongyang passage, see also Yuri Pines, “Changing views of *tianxia* in pre-imperial discourse,” *Oriens Extremus* 43.1/2 (2002), 108–109.

³⁸ HS 78.3282; see also Hoshina, “Kanju no gaikō kōsō,” 41.

Ban Gu's decontextualized use of a part of the Gongyang commentary passage gives the inner-outer distinction between the Chinese and the barbarians an absolute character rather than a sequential nature, and thus a decidedly anti-expansionist meaning. We have seen that Chu Suiliang's use of the "Chinese first and barbarians later" formulation, almost certainly derived from reading the *Hanshu*, similarly redirected the sequence to assert that the sage-kings stopped at ruling the Chinese and left the barbarians alone. Such examples of classical passages or historical precedents being manipulated, distorted, and cherry-picked to serve new ends are simply too numerous in the sources for the common image of "Confucian" ideological conservatism or dogmatism to be anything but a misleading stereotype. To a large extent, the rhetoricians were themselves responsible for creating and fostering this stereotype, since what would today be criticized as dogmatism was esteemed in their political culture as a mark of reverence for the authority of the Classics. Imperial Chinese political rhetoric was, on the surface, heavily reliant on classical texts and historical examples drawn from earlier dynasties. But in a literary culture that placed much value on precedent and little on originality, selective citing of the Classics and histories was often just a necessary vehicle for new arguments. Indeed, the emergence of an anti-expansionist discourse in the Han period is itself a case in point, since the "Confucian" Classics do not contain any strong, unequivocal condemnation of offensive warfare and military conquest like that found in the *Mozi* 墨子. When Han Classicists eventually found such a discourse to be necessary for purposes of political persuasion, they had to create it themselves, while giving it the semblance of antiquity through the strategic use of classical quotations and claims about the exemplary ways of the sage-kings.³⁹

The Xiongnu Appraisal also presents a famously dehumanizing or 'othering' depiction of the Xiongnu that combines ethnographic tropes with phrases borrowed from the *Xiaojing gouming jue* and of course, the *Bohu tongyi*:

³⁹ In a recent study of Song and Ming foreign policy from the perspective of international relations theory, the political scientist Wang Yuan-kang supports Alastair Iain Johnston's earlier argument—based on analysis of Ming foreign policy debates—that the dominant strategic preference in imperial Chinese foreign policy was not pacifism or even passive defense, but rather the use of violence to achieve security through the military destruction of the enemy. Wang disagrees with Johnston's accompanying theory of "cultural realism," favoring a more conventional "structural realist" explanatory model. Despite this difference, Wang and Johnston essentially agree that in the Chinese empires, both expansionism and anti-expansionism tended to be based on pragmatic considerations but, for "symbolic," political, or rhetorical reasons, often had to be justified using language and themes taken from the "Confucian" Classics. However, both studies also suffer from a common flaw of assuming that a distinct "Confucian culture" (or, as Johnston terms it, a "Confucian-Mencian paradigm") of pacifism actually exists in the Classics, even if it did not dominate later strategic thinking. In fact, absolute pacifism (in the sense of considering all violence and warfare to be immoral, even when used in self-defense) does not exist in any strand of classical Chinese thought; instead, there is only a general preference for restraint and moderation in the use of military force. Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Wang Yuan-kang, *Harmony and War: Confucian Culture and Chinese Power Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

The barbarians (Yi-Di) are avaricious and given to pursuing benefits [at the expense of others]. They wear their hair untied and fasten their robes on the left side⁴⁰; they have the faces of men and the hearts of beasts. Their ritual clothing and customs are different from those of the Central Lands; their diet, too, is different, and their language is unintelligible to us. They live far away in the cold, dew-watered northern wilderness, following their livestock in search of pasture, feeding themselves by hunting with bow and arrow.... For these reasons, the sage-kings reared them like birds and beasts, neither making covenants with them nor attacking them. When we make covenants with them, we buy them off at much cost, only to be deceived. When we attack them, we exhaust our armies and invite more raids. Their land cannot be ploughed to grow food, and their people cannot be reared like imperial subjects. That is why [the sage-kings] kept them outside and not inside, far off and not close by; they neither granted these people their governance and teaching, nor granted their country the standard calendar; they punished and repelled them when they came close, and guarded and defended against them when they fled.

夷狄之人貪而好利，被發左衽，人面獸心。其與中國殊章服，異習俗，飲食不同，言語不通。辟居北垂寒露之野，逐草隨畜，射獵爲生。... 是故聖王禽獸畜之，不與約誓，不就攻伐。約之則費賂而見欺，攻之則勞師而招寇。其地不可耕而食也，其民不可臣而畜也。是以外而不內，疏而不戚，政教不及其人，正朔不加其國，來則懲而禦之，去則備而守之。⁴¹

Recent studies by Yuri Pines and Tamara Chin have interpreted Ban Gu's Xiongnu Appraisal as evidence of an "exclusive" or "phobic" side to Han discourse about foreigners, resulting from centuries of conflict with the Xiongnu. According to these interpretations, Ban saw no potential for moral or cultural common ground between the Han and the Xiongnu enemy, although Pines and Chin clearly differ over whether he was indebted to pre-imperial models of thought and whether he was an isolationist or a hawk. In light of the geopolitical context within which Ban wrote the Appraisal, however, I would read it as another example of the anti-expansionist rhetoric directed toward Zhangdi. The anti-expansionist rhetorical agenda so dominates Ban Gu's denigration of the Xiongnu in the *Hanshu* that it may be impossible to ascertain his actual sentiments toward them, but Pines does note perceptively his highly positive portrayal of Wudi's faithful Xiongnu courtier, Jin Midi 金日磾 (134–86 BC).⁴²

⁴⁰ Unlike Chinese men, who tied their hair in a topknot and fastened their robes on the right side. See *Analects* 14:17, where Confucius identifies untied hair and a robe fastened on the left side as a way of dress that the Chinese would have had to adopt under barbarian rule. "Wearing one's hair untied and fastening one's robes on the left side" eventually became a stock description of foreign styles of clothing, often with derogatory connotations.

⁴¹ HS 94.3834.

⁴² Pines, "Beasts or Humans," 79–81, 90–91; Chin, "Defamiliarizing the Foreigner," 316–320. Nicola Di Cosmo claims, incorrectly in my opinion, that Ban Gu "explicitly supported a more militant, forward policy" toward the Xiongnu—see his *Ancient China and Its Enemies*, 271. Paul Goldin, in an essay strongly influenced by Pines, attributes the use of barbarophilic rhetoric as an anti-expansionist strategy to Zhufu Yan and, less directly, to Sima Qian, but does not do the same for Ban Gu—see Paul R. Goldin, "Steppe Nomads as a Philosophical Problem in Classical China," in Paula L.W. Sabloff ed., *Mapping Mongolia: Situating Mongolia in the World from Geologic*

Ironically, it was Ban Gu's own younger brother Ban Chao 班超 (32–102) who undermined his rhetorical efforts. Ban Chao had played a leading role in the Western Regions protectorate of 73–76 and chosen to remain behind when the other Han troops pulled out. In 80, he submitted a memorial that convinced Zhangdi to support a second attempt at restoring the protectorate. After more than a decade of warfare and diplomacy with the oasis states, Ban Chao finally brought most of them back under Han suzerainty.⁴³ In 89, ten years after the White Tiger Hall conference, Ban Gu himself participated in a major military expedition by which Han and Southern Xiongnu armies together drove the Northern Xiongnu out of the Mongolian steppe. We can infer that Ban violated his own injunctions from the *Hanshu* mainly because the expedition's commander was his patron Dou Xian 竇憲 (d. 92), whose political survival had come to depend on its success.⁴⁴ But several other officials at the Han court remonstrated strongly against the steppe expedition, citing the economic burdens and disruptions that a war with the Northern Xiongnu would impose on the populace. Although the expedition's purpose was not territorial expansion *per se*, the ministers Lu Gong 魯恭 (32–112) and Le Hui 樂恢 (d. ca. 90) apparently found Ban Gu's earlier anti-expansionist arguments to be useful for adding rhetorical weight to their memorials.

Lu Gong argued that the Xiongnu “barbarians” (Rong-Di 戎狄) were made of “abnormal *qi* from the four quarters of the world” 四方之異氣, and declared them to be “no different from birds and beasts” 與鳥獸無別 on account of their uncouth habits of squatting and sitting with their legs splayed out. The way of the sage-kings, Lu averred, was “merely to bridle them without cutting them off” 羈縻不絕而已, because they would “throw the natural *qi* into disorder and defile good people” 錯亂天氣, 汙辱善人 if allowed to reside in the Central Lands. Le Hui paraphrased both the *Bohu tongyi* and the *Hanshu* by arguing:

The principle established in the *Chunqiu* is that the true king does not rule over barbarians (Yi-Di). Even if their lands are conquered, they cannot be reclaimed for farming, and even if their people are conquered, they would be of no benefit to the

Time to the Present, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2011), 228–234.

⁴³ This second protectorate was ended by a rebellion of the oasis states in 107, but in 123, Ban Chao's son Ban Yong 班勇 (d. ca. 128) established a third protectorate that, while significantly looser than the second, did last to the end of the Eastern Han dynasty. HHS 47.1575–1582, 1587–1590; 88.2910–2912; De Crespigny, “Some Notes on the Western Regions in Later Han,” 12–25. Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 80–81 n. 62 briefly notes the differing aims of Ban Gu and Ban Chao.

⁴⁴ HHS 40.1385. De Crespigny argues that the expedition, although successful, left the Eastern Han court with greatly depleted financial resources; see Rafe de Crespigny, “The Military Culture of the Later Han,” in Nicola Di Cosmo ed., *Military Culture in Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 101, 103, 109–110.

governance [of the empire.] That is why an enlightened ruler's relationship with the barbarians (Yi-Di) is only one of bridling.

《春秋》之義，王者不理夷狄。得其地不可懇發，得其人無益於政，故明王之於夷狄，羈縻而已。

Quoting Confucius' statement in the *Analects* that when “people from afar do not submit” 遠人不服, a ruler should then draw them into allegiance to him by cultivating “culture and moral power” 文德 in his realm, Le Hui claimed to be baffled as to why the Han empire would choose to start wars for the sake of acquiring “useless things” 無用之物 when it could instead use its prosperity to cultivate moral power equal to that of the sage-kings.⁴⁵

Barbarophobic and barbarophilic rhetoric in early Tang discourse on Goguryeo

Just as Eastern Han anti-expansionists were anxious to prevent their emperors from repeating what they believed to be Han Wudi's near-disastrous mistakes, early Tang anti-expansionists were mindful of the consequences of Sui Yangdi's Goguryeo invasions and keen to warn their rulers against taking similar risks. To that end, they looked to Han anti-expansionist arguments for inspiration, but also combed the corpus of classical texts more widely for rhetorical resources. We see this reflected in the *Zhoushu* 周書, one of several court-commissioned “dynastic histories” completed in 636, which borrows widely from earlier texts to construct an argument demonstrating the folly of attempts at conquering barbarians. In the first of two Discourses (*lun* 論) for its ethnographic chapter on foreign lands (*yi* 異域), the assistant editor Cen Wenben describes the difference between Chinese and barbarians⁴⁶:

All human beings are formed in the image of heaven and earth and receive their intelligence from a combination of *yin* and *yang*. Their foolishness and wisdom are based on the natural order, and their hardness and softness are tied to the water and the soil. Therefore those lands where rain and dew are plentiful and the wind-like influence [of the sages] spreads freely, that are crisscrossed by the nine rivers and bounded by the five

⁴⁵ HHS 25.876, 43.1478–1479; for the *Analects* quotation, see *Analects* 16:1. For another example of remonstrance against Dou Xian's expedition, see HHS 41.1415–1416.

⁴⁶ According to Cen Wenben's biography in the *Jiu Tangshu*, it was he and not the primary editor Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 (582–666) who wrote most of the Discourses in the *Zhoushu*. My analysis of this Discourse thus identifies him as the author as well, although the identification is only probable rather than certain. In 636, Cen was also serving as Assistant Director of the Secretariat 中書侍郎 in the Tang imperial court. See JTS 70.2536.

mounts—these are called the Chinese states.⁴⁷ From the people living in these lands come humaneness and moral duty.

凡民肖形天地，稟靈陰陽，愚智本於自然，剛柔繫於水土。故雨露所會，風流所通，九川爲紀，五嶽作鎮，此之謂諸夏。生其地者，則仁義出焉。

The Valley of Darkness [in the far west], the barbarians (Yi) of the seacoast [in the far east], Guzhu [in the far north], and [the land in the far south] where doors face northwards [toward the sun]—these are separated from us by the red border [in the south], the purple wall [in the north], the cerulean sea [in the east], and the joined rivers [in the west], and are called the remote lands.⁴⁸ In people affected by the *qi* of such lands, a malevolent character is formed.

昧谷、嶠夷、孤竹、北戶，限以丹徼紫塞，隔以滄海交河，此之謂荒裔。感其氣者，則凶德成焉。

As for the nine kinds of Yi barbarians and eight kinds of Di barbarians, their clans and divisions have proliferated in great number, and the seven kinds of Rong barbarians and six kinds of Man barbarians fill up our frontiers. Although their customs vary from place to place and their desires are different, when it comes to being greedy and insatiable, cruel and fond of rebellion, defiant when strong and submissive when weak, the principle [that defines them] is one and the same. Heaven must have decreed that this should be so!

若夫九夷八狄，種落繁熾；七戎六蠻，充牣邊鄙。雖風土殊俗，嗜欲不同，至於貪而無厭，狠而好亂，彊則旅拒，弱則稽服，其揆一也。斯蓋天之所命，使其然乎！
49

Cen Wenben's explanation for the inferiority of barbarians reads like an elaboration of the *Bohu tongyi* passage seen earlier, with a strong additional element of environmental determinism. But Cen has also taken terms and concepts from much older texts—including the “Yaodian” 堯典 chapter of the *Shangshu* 尚書, the *Erya* 爾雅 dictionary, and the encyclopedic *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (ca. 140 BC)—while imbuing them with barbarophobic meanings that they

⁴⁷ The term “Chinese states” originated in the Zhou kingdom, which was divided into numerous feudal states. Under the Han, Tang, and other centralized Chinese empires, however, this term continued to be used because of its prestigious classical origins.

⁴⁸ According to the *Gujin zhu* 古今注 by Cui Bao 崔豹 (fl. 290–306), the red border was thus named because red was the color cosmologically associated with the south, while the purple wall was the Qin-Han Great Wall, reputed to have been built from purplish soil. According to the *Hanshu* chapter on the Western Regions, the joined rivers were a pair of rivers that surrounded an ancient city in the Turpan-Hami Basin, hence its name “the City of the Joined Rivers” (*jiaohe cheng* 交河城). See Wang Genlin 王根林, Huang Yiyuan 黃益元, and Cao Guangfu 曹光甫 eds., *Han Wei Liuchao biji xiaoshuo daguan* 漢魏六朝筆記小說大觀 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1999), 236; HS 96.3921.

⁴⁹ ZS 49.899.

did not originally convey.⁵⁰ According to the “Yaodian,” the Valley of Sunrise 暘谷—where the barbarians of the seacoast dwelt—and the Valley of Darkness were locations where the sage-king Yao 堯 stationed officials to observe the rising and setting of the sun respectively.⁵¹ The authors of the *Huainanzi* believed that the sun literally rose out of the Valley of Sunrise and descended into the Valley of Darkness, making these the eastern and western boundaries of that part of the world that was lit by the sun.⁵² The land of Guzhu, the land where doors faced northwards toward the sun (what we would understand as the southern hemisphere), and the notion of thirty different kinds of barbarian all appear in the same passage of the *Erya*:

Guzhu [in the far north], [the land in the far south] where doors face northwards [toward the sun], the [land of the] Queen Mother of the West, and the [land] under the [rising] sun are called the four remote lands. The nine kinds of Yi barbarians, eight kinds of Di barbarians, seven kinds of Rong barbarians, and six kinds of Man barbarians are called the [people of the] four seas.

觚竹、北戶、西王母、日下，謂之四荒。九夷、八狄、七戎、六蠻，謂之四海。

This passage identifies the edges of the known world and their inhabitants, but does not ascribe any negative characteristics to them. In fact, although the “Yaodian” and *Huainanzi* do not describe the people living around the Valley of Sunrise and Valley of Darkness, this section of the *Erya* does go on to describe the people of Daping 大平 (Great Peace)—the land where the sun rises—as humane (*ren* 仁), and the people of Dameng 大蒙 (Great Darkness)—the land where the sun sets—as trustworthy (*xin* 信).⁵³

Cen Wenben’s characterization of the lands of the Chinese as a place “where rain and dew are plentiful and the wind-like influence [of the sages] spreads freely” can also be traced to a chapter of the *Huainanzi* explaining how the *qi* of the different cardinal directions and types of terrain determine the intellectual, physical, and moral capacities of their inhabitants. There, we find the Central Lands described as a place that “has many sages” 多聖人 and whose people are “wise and sagely and lovers of good order” 慧聖而好治 because “the wind moves freely and the rain and dew are plentiful” 風氣之所通，雨露之所會—note how Cen subtly gives more credit

⁵⁰ The dates of composition of the “Yaodian” and *Erya* remain highly controversial, but a relatively late dating of the “Yaodian” to the third century BC appears most plausible, while the *Erya* may have been compiled in its present form only as late as the Western Han.

⁵¹ SSZY 2.29–30.

⁵² The *Huainanzi* calls the Valley of Darkness *menggu* 蒙谷 rather than *meigu* 昧谷. See *Huainanzi*, chapter 3 (“Tianwen xun” 天文訓).

⁵³ *Erya*, *juan* 9.

to the sages by changing “wind” (*fengqi* 風氣) to “wind-like influence” (*fengliu* 風流). But apart from this mild display of ethnocentrism, the *Huainanzi* method for characterizing people from other regions balances strengths and weaknesses with remarkable evenhandedness. Easterners are precocious but short-lived, southerners have accelerated physical development but die young as well, westerners are brave but inhumane, and northerners are stupid and bestial but have long lives. Each group is potentially superior to the people of the central lands in one aspect while significantly inferior in one other. Furthermore, the author of the text does not use classical terms connoting the image of the barbarian, preferring the universal category *ren* 人 (“human being”).⁵⁴

The point of Cen Wenben’s barbarophobic rhetoric, which stands in such stark contrast to the *Erya* and *Huainanzi*, becomes evident when we turn to his preface (*xu* 序) to the *Zhoushu* chapter on foreign lands. Here, Cen obliquely likens Sui Yangdi to Han Wudi and the First Qin Emperor 秦始皇 (r. 221–210 BC), whose wars of territorial expansion against the Xiongnu and the Yue 越 peoples were often blamed for the rebellions that caused the fall of the Qin empire⁵⁵:

The [First] Qin Emperor ruled his empire (literally “all under heaven”) by force and recklessly used military power against distant lands; Han Wudi, with his great strength in soldiers and horses, indulged himself in conquering faraway places. By the time the Xiongnu retreated, [these two emperors’] own realms were drained of their wealth; by the time the celestial horses [of Fergana] arrived [at the Han court], [Wudi’s] own people were exhausted and impoverished.⁵⁶

秦皇鞭笞天下，黷武於遐方；漢武士馬強盛，肆志於遠畧。匈奴既卻，其國已虛；天馬既來，其民亦困。

From this we know that the Wild Goose Sea and the White Dragon Dunes are that by which Heaven has cut the barbarians (Yi) off from the Chinese, and that the fiery hot [southern] region and the northern desert are that by which the earth has set boundaries between the inner and the outer.⁵⁷ How much more so in the case of [a ruler whose] time

⁵⁴ *Huainanzi*, chapter 4 (“Zhuixing xun” 墜形訓).

⁵⁵ The earliest examples of this argument might be the memorials of Zhufu Yan and Zhuang An 莊安 (also known as Yan An 嚴安, n.d.) at SJ 112.2954, 2958; HS 64.2799–2800, 2811–2812. Significantly, both memorials were aimed at dissuading Han Wudi from initiating wars of territorial expansion.

⁵⁶ This is a reference to Wudi’s two military expeditions against the Central Asian kingdom of Fergana (known to the Han as Dayuan 大宛), which were aimed at acquiring that kingdom’s famed “celestial horses 天馬.” See SJ 123.3160, 3170, 3174–3177.

⁵⁷ The Wild Goose Sea was most probably Lake Baikal, also known to the ancient Chinese as the Northern Sea 北海 or the Vast Sea 瀚海. The reference to wild geese may be an allusion to the story of the Han envoy Su Wu 蘇武 (ca. 142–60 BC), whom the Xiongnu kept under detention on the shores of Lake Baikal—see HS 54.2466. “Fiery hot” is a reference to the humidity and heat of the tropics. The “northern desert” is the Gobi.

was not that of the Qin and Han, but whose ambitions exceeded those of the First Emperor and Wudi? He sought achievements in going against the Way of Heaven, expending all the strength of the people in indulging his desires. Hence the disaster of his empire's collapse came in less time than it takes to turn on one's heels.

是知鴈海龍堆，天所以絕夷夏也；炎方朔漠，地所以限內外也。況乎時非秦、漢，志甚嬴、劉，違天道以求其功，殫民力而從所欲，顛墜之釁，固不旋踵。

Thus when the sage-kings set down their teachings, they regarded the Chinese states as inner and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer, and when the wise men of the past handed down their models, they praised the establishment of moral power and denigrated the expansion of territory.

是以先王設教，內諸夏而外夷狄；往哲垂範，美樹德而鄙廣地。⁵⁸

Part of the last line is clearly derived from Ban Gu's *Hanshu* Appraisal on the Xiongnu, which (as we saw earlier) detached the Gongyang commentary's inner-outer formulation from its original expansionist context to make the opposite argument. But Cen Wenben himself was fully capable of manipulating the language of the Classics to make points contrary to their original intent. Consider the next two lines of the preface, which allude to the "Wangzhi" chapter of the *Liji* and the "Yugong" 禹貢 (Tribute Paid to Yu) chapter of the *Shangshu*:

Even when the journeys of [the sage-king] Yu extended into the east and west, he did not cross the sea and the shifting sands, and even when the regulations of the [Zhou] king extended from north to south, it excluded the cave-dwelling [Di barbarians] and the pigeon-toed [Man barbarians]. Is this not the Way that runs through remote antiquity, and a truth whose validity has endured for a hundred ages?

雖禹迹之東漸西被，不過海及流沙；王制之自北徂南，裁稱穴居交趾。豈非道貫三古，義高百代者乎？⁵⁹

The "Wangzhi" credits the early Zhou kings with the wisdom needed to rule cave-dwelling and pigeon-toed barbarians without having to change their ways of life: "They were taught, but without changing their customs; their methods of governance were made uniform, but without changing what was most appropriate to each" 修其教，不易其俗，齊其政，不易其宜。⁶⁰ Cen Wenben, however, changes their wisdom to one of not trying to rule the barbarians at all. Similarly, when the author of the "Yugong" praised the sage-king Yu's authority as "extending

⁵⁸ ZS 49.883.

⁵⁹ ZS 49.883–884 (cf. LJZY 12.398–399; SSZY 6.171).

⁶⁰ LJZY 12.398.

eastward to the sea and westward to the shifting sands” 東漸于海，西被于流沙， he understood these to be the furthest reaches of the known world.⁶¹ But since the known world of the Tang period stretched from Japan in the east to the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire in the west, Cen Wenben could now claim, with a great deal of anachronism, that Yu’s territorial ambitions were really quite modest.

Indeed, Cen Wenben’s preface and first Discourse for this chapter of the *Zhoushu* are the earliest known Chinese attempts at representing an idealized world in which the Central Lands are (in Jonathan Skaff’s words) “a ‘culture island’ surrounded by geographical barriers” like the sea, the shifting sands, the Gobi Desert, and even the Great Wall, although Ban Gu’s rhetoric about the White Dragon Dunes and the Pamirs had already laid a foundation for this ideal. Skaff notes correctly that “these physical obstructions were far more permeable than the rhetoric would suggest,” but it is important to note that when a Han or Tang text emphasizes such barriers for rhetorical reasons, they are almost always represented not as barriers to barbarian invasion but rather as barriers to Chinese expansion into barbarian lands. In other words, the discourse of Heaven-ordained geographical barriers between Chinese and barbarians has its roots in anti-expansionist rhetoric. We should therefore be wary of assuming that men like Cen Wenben were unaware of the discourse’s “weak basis in reality,” since they were actually trying to construct a classical ideal for the sake of criticizing a current reality of frontier expansion. It was not until the early eleventh century that some Northern Song literati, notably Shi Jie 石介 (1005–1045), expressed an idea that barriers like the sea and the shifting sands were the Central Lands’ main *protection* against barbarians in the time of the sage-kings. That idea was the product of a new strategic reality in which the last truly defensible frontier to the north, marked by the Yan Mountains 燕山 and the Northern Qi 北齊 (550–577) Great Wall, had been lost to the Kitans.⁶²

⁶¹ In the *Hanshu* “Treatise on Geography,” Ban Gu identified the “shifting sands” of the “Yugong” chapter as the Juyan Lake 居延澤, now also known by the Mongolian name Gashun Nor. The early Tang *Zhengyi* 正義 commentary to the *Shangshu* (ca. 642) rejected this identification on the grounds that the Juyan Lake was not far enough in the west to mark the westernmost limit of Yu’s authority. But the *Tongdian* 通典 (ca. 801) and *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 元和郡縣圖志 (ca. 813) both identified the Juyan Lake with the shifting sands mentioned in classical texts like the “Yugong,” suggesting that Ban Gu’s interpretation remained commonly accepted in the Tang period. Note, however, that another passage in the *Tongdian* claimed that Dunhuang 燉煌—which lay further west than the Juyan Lake—“was also the land of shifting sands in antiquity” 亦古流沙地. HS 28.1613; SSZY 6.160, 171; TD 147.4553, 4556; YHJX 40.1022, 1025.

⁶² The reader will recall that Cen Wenben’s Discourse identifies the “purple wall” (i.e., the Great Wall) as one of the northern boundaries of the Central Lands. The original Great Wall, far from being a natural obstacle created by Heaven, was a man-made structure built under the First Qin Emperor (supposedly at the cost of many lives) and lengthened under Han Wudi. But the paradox of these two arch-expansionists being responsible for defining a boundary between the Chinese and the barbarians does not seem to have troubled Cen Wenben, probably because he was merely aiming for literary symmetry with the “red border” in the south and the “cerulean sea” in the east rather than trying to create a definitive list of boundaries. Moreover, the Great Wall in use during Cen Wenben’s time was not the Qin-Han wall but rather the Northern Qi wall, which lay further south. It is also somewhat surprising that Cen Wenben would identify the sea as the eastern boundary of the Central Lands in both the preface and the Discourse. After all, although the Korean peninsula is surrounded by sea on three sides, it is nonetheless connected to the Eurasian mainland, and the fact that Goguryeo also controlled the Liaodong peninsula meant that it was really the Liao River that effectively marked its border with the Tang empire in Cen’s day. From that perspective, it would

We should not ascribe too much typicality to Cen Wenben's barbarophobic rhetoric regarding Goguryeo. A very different but equally anti-expansionist approach can be found in the exactly contemporaneous Discourse to the *Suishu* 隋書 ethnographic chapter on eastern Yi barbarians (*Dongyi* 東夷). The author of this Discourse is probably Wei Zheng, who served as chief editor of the *Suishu*.⁶³ Wei claimed in the Discourse that the people most commonly known as “eastern Yi barbarians” in his day (namely, the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula) had customs similar to the Chinese thanks to Jizi 箕子—a member of the Shang dynasty aristocracy who, according to a legend circulating among the Chinese by the end of the second century BC, went east and founded the Joseon (Ch. Chaoxian) state soon after the Shang fell to the Zhou.⁶⁴ But he also implied that in the first place, the Koreans' inherent receptivity to such a civilizing influence was due to their having an inborn nature superior to other barbarians:

The lands where the nine kinds of Yi barbarians dwell are a great distance from the Central Lands of the Chinese, but they are by their inborn nature gentle and submissive, without a spirit of ferocity and violence. Although they live far away among the mountains and seas, they are easily controlled by means of the Way [of the sages]. Under the Xia (? – ca. 1600 BC) and Yin (i.e., Shang) dynasties, their rulers occasionally came to court to pay homage. After Jizi took refuge in Chaoxian, they began to have the eight prohibitions⁶⁵, which were broadly defined without omitting the essentials, and simple enough to stand the test of time. His transforming influence on them has endured for a thousand years.

九夷所居，與中夏懸隔，然天性柔順，無獷暴之風，雖綿邈山海，而易以道禦。夏、殷之代，時或來王。暨箕子避地朝鮮，始有八條之禁，疏而不漏，簡而可久，化之所感，千載不絕。

Today, in the various states to the east of the Liao River, some wear [Chinese-style] caps and hats, and some eat and drink from ritual vessels. They are fond of classical learning, literature, and history, and their students are constantly traveling to and from our capital in order to receive an education, some dying en route and never returning home. If not for the influence left behind by that ancient worthy (i.e., Jizi), how could they have come so

have served Cen Wenben's rhetorical purposes better to represent this river as an absolute boundary of separation between Chinese and barbarians. I suspect that Cen did not do so because the idea of the sea as defining the eastern limits of a sage-king's influence had a well-known classical precedent in the “Yugong,” which after all was written at a time when Liaodong was barely known to the Chinese. Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 53; CLWJ 3.24; Nicolas Tackett, “The Great Wall and Conceptualizations of the Border under the Northern Song,” *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 38 (2008), 99–138.

⁶³ According to Wei Zheng's official biography in the *Jiu Tangshu*, he composed all the prefaces and Discourses in the *Suishu*. See JTS 71.2549–2550.

⁶⁴ SJ 38.1620.

⁶⁵ The “eight prohibitions” are a set of laws Jizi was believed to have promulgated in Joseon; see HS 28.1658.

far? Therefore Confucius said, “Sincerity and trustworthiness in speech and decency and respectfulness in action can be practiced even in the countries of the barbarians (Man-Mo).” These words are true indeed! How can it be said that of their customs, only the tribute of *hu* wood arrows was worthy of acceptance?

今遼東諸國，或衣服參冠冕之容，或飲食有俎豆之器，好尚經術，愛樂文史，遊學於京都者，往來繼路，或亡沒不歸。非先哲之遺風，其孰能致於斯也？故孔子曰：「言忠信，行篤敬，雖蠻貊之邦行矣。」誠哉斯言！其俗之可採者，豈徒楛矢之貢而已乎？⁶⁶

The original meaning of Confucius’ words (as quoted in *Analects* 15:6) was probably, “If your words are sincere and trustworthy and your actions (*xing*) are decent and respectful, you will be able to travel (*xing*) [safely] even in the countries of the barbarians.” The passage revolves around the theme of travel abroad, playing on the dual meanings of *xing* 行 as “act/practice” and “travel.” Wei Zheng’s use of the quotation to argue for certain barbarians’ ability to practice these virtues is another example of the strategic misquoting of the Classics that was the Chinese literati’s stock in trade. His allusion to *hu* wood arrows is a similar case of rhetorical sleight of hand. The allusion conflates Goguryeo with an ancient people called the Sushen 肅慎 who presented such arrows as tribute to the first Zhou king. But earlier in the same chapter, Wei Zheng identified the Sushen as the ancestors not of Goguryeo but of the *Makhat 靺鞨 people to its north. According to him, the Makhat were “the most unclean of barbarians (Yi)” 於諸夷最爲不潔 because they had a habit of washing their hands and faces with their urine—a far cry indeed from the “clean and self-admiring” 潔淨自喜 people of Goguryeo.⁶⁷

Ironically, the actual ethnographic descriptions of Goguryeo in the *Zhoushu* and *Suishu* are remarkably similar, suggesting that their authors used the same sources. According to both descriptions, the people of Goguryeo are devious by nature, the women are sexually promiscuous and bear no stigma for it, they do not observe proper boundaries within the family (e.g., father and son will bathe in a river together), and they worship a variety of local gods not recognized by the state (*yinsi* 淫祀 or *yinci* 淫祠). Their marriage rites are also completely different from the Chinese; only the mourning rites for parents and husbands are similar.⁶⁸ The ethnographic data

⁶⁶ Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 81.1828.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 81.1814, 1821. For the source of the Sushen allusion, see *Guoyu* 國語, “Luyu xia” 魯語下. 靺鞨 was read as *Mat hat* in Middle Chinese and *Maka* in Middle Japanese; it is read as *Mohe* in modern Chinese, *Makkatsu* in modern Japanese, and *Malgal* in modern Korean. My phonetic reconstruction of the ethnonym as *Makhat* synthesizes the Middle Chinese and Japanese readings and does not privilege the widely-used modern Korean reading, since this ethnic group probably spoke a proto-Tungusic rather than a proto-Korean language. Christopher Atwood has proposed the alternative reconstruction *Markat*. See Ma Yihong 馬一虹, “Gudai Riben dui Mohe de renshi” 古代日本對靺鞨的認識, *Beifang wenwu* 北方文物 2004(3), 63–64; Atwood, “The Notion of Tribe in Medieval China,” 599 n. 18.

⁶⁸ ZS 49.885; Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 81.1814–1815.

available to Wei Zheng thus did not support his contention that the Koreans' customs were very similar to those of the Chinese. Instead, the notion that Koreans were an exception among barbarians was based on Han-period sources—the earliest being, strangely enough, in Ban Gu's *Hanshu*. The *Hanshu* "Treatise on Geography" 地理志 credits Jizi for the superior (i.e., more Chinese) customs practiced by the indigenous people of the Han empire's commanderies on the Korean peninsula, commenting: "The eastern Yi barbarians are by their inborn nature gentle and submissive, unlike those on the three other sides [of the Central Lands]" 東夷天性柔順，異於三方之外。 Ban Gu then uses the supposedly exceptional character of the Koreans to explain two rather surprising passages in the *Analects*: one (9:13) where Confucius expresses interest in going to live among the "nine kinds of Yi barbarians" 九夷 despite the common perception of them as "crude" (*lou* 陋), and another (5:7) in which he expresses a desire to go to sea on a raft, out of despair at the moral degeneracy of Chinese society in his time.⁶⁹

Ban Gu's conflation of these two *Analects* passages obscures the fact that the "eastern Yi barbarians" of Confucius's day were not Koreans at all, but rather indigenous peoples of the Shandong peninsula and the Huai River region.⁷⁰ By the time the *Hanshu* was written, however, these peoples had long ceased to be regarded as distinct from the Chinese, and the identification of the far east with the Korean peninsula was conventional enough that Ban Gu simply assumed Confucius could only reach the eastern Yi by sea.⁷¹ Perhaps due to influence from the *Hanshu*, Xu Shen's 許慎 (ca. AD 58–147) *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (ca. AD 100) and Ying Shao's 應劭 (ca. AD 153–196) *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義 (ca. AD 190), two important sources for Eastern Han etymological scholarship, both contain glosses interpreting the word *Yi* 夷 itself as reflecting the idea that eastern Yi barbarians are "humane" (*ren* 仁) by nature, although the two texts do so on quite different grounds.⁷² Etymological glosses on the words *Yi* and *Di* 狄 in the *Bohu tongyi*

⁶⁹ Ban Gu's more iconoclastic contemporary Wang Chong 王充 (AD 27–ca. 100) found the first of these passages to be absurd: if Confucius' attempt to revive the Way of the sage-kings had failed in the Central Lands, how could it succeed among the barbarians, whom Confucius himself recognized (in *Analects* 3:5) to be morally inferior to the Chinese? HS 28.1658; Wang Chong, *Lunheng* 論衡, *juan* 9, chapter 28 ("Wen Kong" 問孔).

⁷⁰ Very little can be known about the original Yi from received texts. The "Wangzhi" is the only text that attempts to describe their customs, but its description is difficult to corroborate with the relatively sophisticated ancient material culture that modern Chinese archaeologists identify as "Eastern Yi." A comprehensive collection of excavated oracle bone and bronze inscriptions relevant to the history of the Yi was recently published as Chen Bingxin 陳秉新 and Li Lifang 李立芳, *Chutu Yizu shiliao jikao* 出土夷族史料輯考 (Hefei: Anhui daxue chubanshe, 2005).

⁷¹ This interpretation became standard and was not rejected until the Song period, first by Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019–1068) and later by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200). See Liu Chang 劉敞, *Qijing xiaozhuan* 七經小傳, (*Sibu congkan xubian* 四部叢刊續編, vol. 63), *juan* 3; ZZYL, 36.972.

⁷² Xu Shen makes this interpretation (which also cites and conflates the two *Analects* passages) as part of a larger argument about why *Yi* and the ethnonyms used for certain southwestern peoples are written in characters with the human classifier (or radical), whereas several other ethnonyms for foreign peoples are written with animal classifiers. Strangely, Zhu Xi seems to have missed this philological issue more than a millennium later when he claimed, inaccurately, that "[t]he characters *Yi* and *Di* both have animal classifiers" 「夷」、「狄」字皆從禽獸旁. Ying Shao claims that the word *Yi* is phonologically cognate with *Di* 抵 ("strike against") and indicates that in the lands of

also claim that although the eastern Yi barbarians lack ritual and moral duty, they “have a little more *yang* [*qi* than other barbarians] and are therefore easy to transform [morally]” 少陽易化, whereas the Di barbarians are difficult to transform because of the “extreme *yin*” 太陰 of the north. We have seen that a later passage of this text attributes the barbarians’ moral inferiority to imbalanced *qi*. The etymological glosses shed more light on this theory by showing that the imbalance was assumed to involve an excess of *yin* resulting from environmental factors.⁷³

The second part of Wei Zheng’s Discourse is explicitly anti-expansionist and refers to Yangdi as “the second emperor” of the Sui, thus drawing a damning analogy with the Second Emperor 二世 (r. 210–207 BC) who presided over the collapse of the short-lived Qin empire⁷⁴:

The military texts have a saying, “He who seeks to expand his moral power will flourish, but he who seeks to expand his territory will perish.”⁷⁵ It has been a long time since the lands east of the Liao River were included among the commanderies and counties [of the Chinese empire], and the various [Korean] states never failed to send tribute embassies to the imperial court at the beginning of each year. But the second emperor arrogantly believed that no one could compare to him, so when he was unable to draw them into his embrace with culture and moral power, he immediately resorted to the weapons of war.⁷⁶ Trusting in his empire’s wealth and military strength, he thought of expanding its territory. His pride provoked the resentment of others, and he then sent his armies out to assuage his rage. Since antiquity, we have never heard of [a ruler] who did not perish from behaving like this. That being so, how can we not ponder deeply the warnings [of history] about [ambitions to conquer] the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters?

the eastern Yi barbarians, “the myriad things emerge from the ground as soon as it is struck” 萬物抵觸地而出 because of the inhabitants’ humaneness and love for living things. Interestingly, neither Xu Shen nor Ying Shao links the humaneness of the eastern Yi barbarians with that of the people in the land of Daping, mentioned in the *Erya*. Xu Shen 許慎, *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, *juan* 5, “Sheep radical: Qiang” 羊部: 羌; HHS 85.2807; ZZYL 140.3336.

⁷³ BHT 3.114–115.

⁷⁴ Wei changes the character *shi* 世 to the synonymous *dai* 代 in order to observe a taboo on the characters used in Tang Taizong’s given name, Shimin 世民, although this taboo was not strictly enforced before Taizong’s death in 649. On this subject see Feng Hejun 馮賀軍, “Tangchu bihui erli” 唐初避諱二例, *Zhongguo dianji yu wenhua* 中國典籍與文化 2005(1), 99–102.

⁷⁵ This modifies an anti-expansionist maxim from *juan* 3 of the ancient military treatise *Huangshigong sanlue* 黃石公三略: “He who seeks to expand his territory will end with desolation, but he who seeks to expand his moral power will end with strength” 務廣地者荒, 務廣德者強. Wechsler incorrectly reads it as “an echo of themes in the *Motzu*”: see Wechsler, *Mirror to the Son of Heaven*, 171 n. 15.

⁷⁶ A subtle allusion to *Analects* 16:1.

兵志有之曰：「務廣德者昌，務廣地者亡。」然遼東之地，不列於郡縣久矣；諸國朝正奉貢，無闕于歲時。二代震而矜之，以爲人莫若己，不能懷以文德，遽動干戈。內恃富強，外思廣地，以驕取怨，以怒興師。若此而不亡，自古未之聞也。然則四夷之戒，安可不深念哉！⁷⁷

Whereas Cen Wenben seems to argue that the people of Goguryeo, like other barbarians, are too inferior to be worth the trouble of conquering, Wei Zheng seems to be asserting that the Koreans are cultured and obedient vassals and therefore can be conquered with moral power alone. Yangdi's mistake was to not realize this and rely on military force.

Wei Zheng's Discourse may be indirectly responding to arguments by Pei Ju 裴矩 (ca. 546–627) that are recorded elsewhere in the *Suishu*. In 607, Pei managed to persuade Yangdi that Goguryeo's conquest was necessary by reminding him that much of its territory had technically been under Chinese rule in earlier times:

The territory of Goryeo was originally the state of Guzhu. The Zhou dynasty gave it as a fief to Jizi, and under the Han it was divided into three commanderies. The [Western] Jin dynasty, too, ruled the lands east of the Liao River. Now [the king of Goguryeo] does not acknowledge himself as our subject, and [Goguryeo] has become a foreign land. That is why the late emperor was displeased [with Goguryeo] and wanted for a long time to send an expedition against it. It is just that Yang Liang was incompetent, and his army therefore met with no success. Now that Your Majesty reigns, how can we not attend to this matter and let this former land of caps and sashes remain a country of barbarians (Man-Mo)?

高麗之地，本孤竹國也。周代以之封於箕子，漢世分爲三郡，晉氏亦統遼東。今乃不臣，別爲外域，故先帝疾焉，欲征之久矣。但以楊諒不肖，師出無功。當陛下之時，安得不事，使此冠帶之境，仍爲蠻貊之鄉乎？⁷⁸

As we have seen, the *Erya* identifies Guzhu with the northernmost reaches of the inhabited world; modern Chinese historians believe it to have been located in an area between present-day Tangshan 唐山 and Qinhuangdao 秦皇島 during the Shang and Zhou periods. But Pei Ju stretches Guzhu eastwards to conflate it with the Liaodong and Korean peninsulas, the better to

⁷⁷ Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 81.1828–1829.

⁷⁸ In 598, during the reign of Sui Wendi 隋文帝 (r. 581–604), an expedition of 300,000 soldiers commanded by Yangdi's brother Yang Liang 楊諒 (d. ca. 605) had invaded Goguryeo but failed to capture any territory, instead suffering heavy losses. Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 2.43, 67.1581, 81.1816.

assert an irredentist claim to those areas. From Pei's perspective, Goguryeo's existence as an effectively independent state posed a problem for the Sui dynasty's claim to have reunified the Chinese empire after nearly three centuries of fragmentation, since Goguryeo had seized control of the Chinese-ruled commanderies in Korea and the Liaodong peninsula during those centuries.⁷⁹ Pei's memorial also uses Jizi's founding of Joseon as a key link in a narrative of continuous Chinese rule over Koreans from Guzhu to the Western Jin 西晉 (266–316), but Wei Zheng uses the legend to make a very different point: contrary to Pei Ju's rhetoric about "a country of barbarians," Jizi's legacy was so profound that Korea had managed to remain a "land of caps and sashes" despite slipping from Chinese control for centuries. Goguryeo was therefore in no need of rescue from barbarism through forced unification with the Sui or Tang. Clearly, the question of whether Goguryeo was properly a part of Chinese history was already contentious in the seventh century, although the current controversy between China and South Korea has very different ideological roots.⁸⁰

The above analysis of the rhetorical context for the *Zhoushu* and *Suishu* Discourses shows that Cen Wenben and Wei Zheng adopted opposite strategies to convey the same message: it is unnecessary, futile, and ultimately self-destructive for the Chinese to try and conquer foreign lands. This message carried exceptional weight for Cen and Wei, since both had spent their formative years witnessing the brief glory of the Sui empire and its swift and chaotic disintegration as a result of Yangdi's Goguryeo expeditions. I would go further and argue that the political views of many prominent men from the Tang dynasty's first generation of high-ranking officials were almost certainly shaped by first-hand experience of the rebellions and civil wars that characterized the Sui-Tang transition. This gave them an acute sense of the fragility of empires and the dangers of unrestrained expansionism, as well as a sense of anxiety that the same fate would befall the Tang under Taizong. As we have seen, Wei Zheng died before Taizong decided to invade Goguryeo. There is no record of Cen Wenben remonstrating against the Goguryeo expedition of 645. Instead, he had the misfortune to be assigned to manage the supply lines during Taizong's expedition. This was a massive challenge and an exceptionally heavy responsibility, since breakdowns in food supply had much to do with the failure of the Sui expeditions against Goguryeo. Overworked and under extreme stress, Cen died from a sudden illness at Youzhou shortly after the expeditionary army embarked for the Liao River.⁸¹ Perhaps he had sensed that remonstrance would have no effect on Taizong, and had therefore thrown himself into trying to prevent the expedition from ending in disaster.

⁷⁹ On the fall of the Korean commanderies to Goguryeo see ZZTJ 88.2799. The Goguryeo conquest of Liaodong is not well-documented or securely dated, but an early sixth-century source, the *Shiliuguo chunqiu* 十六國春秋, mentions the presence of a Goguryeo-held fortress in Liaodong in 405. JS 224.3106; Tang Qiu 湯球, *Shiliuguo chunqiu jibu* 十六國春秋緝補 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2000), 371.

⁸⁰ On the ideological background to the current Goguryeo controversy, see for example Dingding Chen, "Domestic Politics, National Identity, and International Conflict: the case of the Koguryo controversy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 21:74 (2012), 227–241.

⁸¹ JTS 70.2539; XTS 102.3966; ZZTJ 197.6219.

It is important not to take an overgeneralized or deterministic view of the factors that went into making someone anti-expansionist, however. Pei Ju, too, had difficult experiences during the collapse of the Sui and yet continued to hold hardline views on the question of Goguryeo after Tang Gaozu 唐高祖 (r. 618–626) appointed him Chancellor 侍中 at nearly eighty years of age. Pei was at least thirty years older than Wei Zheng and nearly fifty years older than Cen Wenben, and thus belonged to a different generation. But Wen Yanbo 溫彥博 (575–637), who was only five years older than Wei Zheng, seems to have held similar views. We know this from an incident that occurred in 625, when an embassy from Goguryeo arrived at the Tang court. Gaozu expressed a wish to grant Goguryeo a status of diplomatic equality with the Tang by issuing an edict exempting its king from tributary obligations. A year before, Gaozu had symbolically asserted Tang suzerainty over Goguryeo by conferring the title of Prince of Liaodong Commandery 遼東郡王 on its king.⁸² But he now explained his change of heart to his ministers by commenting that continuing to treat Goguryeo as a tributary state was a meaningless exercise in self-aggrandizement, given Yangdi's failure to conquer it. Wen Yanbo then expressed his objection to Gaozu's decision with strong rhetoric reminiscent of Pei Ju's memorial to Yangdi:

The lands east of the Liao River were Jizi's kingdom in the Zhou and the commandery of Xuantu under the Han. Before the Wei and Jin dynasties, they lay within the boundaries of the empire, and we cannot allow them to not acknowledge themselves as our subjects. If we accept equality with Goryeo, then the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters are sure to lose respect for the Han (i.e., the Tang). Besides, [the difference between] the Central Lands and the barbarians (Yi-Di) is akin to that between the sun and the stars. There is no reason to lower ourselves to the same level as our tributary states.

遼東之地，周爲箕子之國，漢家之玄菟郡耳。魏、晉已前，近在提封之內，不可許以不臣。若與高麗抗禮，四夷必當輕漢。且中國之於夷狄，猶太陽之於列星，理無降尊，俯同藩服。⁸³

Modern astronomy has established that the perceived difference in brightness between the sun and the stars is a result of the sun's much greater proximity to the Earth, and therefore exists only in the subjective perspective of the Earth's inhabitants. To Wen Yanbo and his contemporaries, however, the difference was objective and absolute. The sun was not just the closest star; it was an altogether different entity, inherently and immeasurably brighter and larger than the stars. Wen was thus asserting that a Chinese empire's superiority to its neighbors was as much an

⁸² CFYG 964.11167; JTS 1.14, 199.5321; XTS 220.6187; ZZTJ 190.5976.

⁸³ TD 186.5016; JTS 61.2360, 199.5321 (cf. XTS 91.3782, 220.6187); THY 95.1705; CFYG 990.11470.

objective reality as the sun's superiority to the stars.⁸⁴ With support from none other than Pei Ju, Wen Yanbo succeeded in changing Gaozu's mind, and the Tang claim to suzerainty over Goguryeo remained in place. Twenty years later, Taizong would use this claim as an excuse to intervene forcefully in Goguryeo's internal politics and its conflict with Silla.

Rethinking anti-expansionism

As mentioned earlier, modern historians have tended to take the two cases in which Tang Taizong rhetorically denied the inferiority and otherness of barbarians as evidence that his success in empire-building was rooted in a belief in the equality and brotherhood of peoples.⁸⁵ Conversely, historians often take the appearance of denigrating or "othering" rhetoric about barbarians in an anti-expansionist argument as evidence that its author's anti-expansionism was based on an ethnocentric, insular, or xenophobic worldview that could not conceive of foreign peoples as fundamentally similar to themselves, let alone as potential members of a Chinese-ruled empire. For example, Pan Yihong has argued that in spite of the "open, cosmopolitan air" of the Tang empire, "there were always many advocates of the inward-looking attitude, the attitude of 'having all the Chinese within and keeping all the barbarians without' and drawing a clear line between the 'civilized Middleland' and the 'savage, useless' land of the 'barbarians,' and between the Chinese as 'roots' and the non-Chinese as 'branches and leaves.'"⁸⁶ More recently, Marc Abramson has written:

Many in the Tang Empire, particularly literate elites who stressed genealogy and cultural achievement, viewed the ethnocultural Self and Other as eternally in opposition and,

⁸⁴ For a later use of the same astronomical metaphor to argue for the Tang empire's inherent military superiority over the Tibetan empire, see a memorial written in 678 by Wei Yuanzhong 魏元忠 (d. ca. 707) at CFYG 991.11481 (cf. XTS 122.4342).

⁸⁵ To my knowledge, no scholar has attempted a comparison between this representation of Taizong and the early twentieth-century image of Alexander the Great as a champion of the "brotherhood of man," first promoted by Tarn and since largely discredited by Badian. The results of such a comparison could be illuminating. I should add that whereas Alexander's genius as a military commander is not a matter of serious dispute, much of Taizong's reputation as a great conqueror can be attributed to unusual good luck. The powerful Eastern Türk and Western Türk khaganates both suddenly imploded in the early years of Taizong's reign, and the same fate befell the Syr-Yanda khaganate just when he needed an easy victory to make up for the failure of his Goguryeo expedition. I will concede, however, that Taizong probably did possess a genius for rhetoric and self-promotion that enabled him to derive maximum political capital from his luck. On Alexander see Ernst Badian, "Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind," *Historia* 7.4 (1958), 425–444; Richard A. Todd, "W.W. Tarn and the Alexander Ideal," *The Historian* 27 (1968), 48–55.

⁸⁶ The "roots and branches" metaphor comes from a 630 memorial by Li Daliang 李大亮 (586–645), more on which below. Pan, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, 347.

therefore, the categories of Han and non-Han as inextricably separate.... Beyond policy debates, the “separate and unequal” discourse likely prevailed at many levels of society.⁸⁷

More ambivalently, a recent article by Peter Bol recognizes that late Tang and Song anti-expansionists were concerned about the “tremendous human cost” and “self-destructive” nature of imperial expansion, but nonetheless concludes from their rhetoric about the superiority of the Central Lands that they “opposed an expansionist foreign policy because they denied that historically different cultures could be harmoniously absorbed into a single polity.”⁸⁸

I do not think such interpretations take the uses and contexts of the relevant rhetoric sufficiently into account. Anthony DeBlasi has argued, “Tang writers certainly knew that there were things that they were expected to say on a given occasion or in a certain genre of writing, but I have yet to find evidence for the proposition that Tang authors made theoretical statements that they did not believe simply because the situation demanded it.”⁸⁹ But it seems to me that such evidence could only come in the form of a writer’s explicit admission that he had made an argument contrary to his actual beliefs for purely expedient reasons. Besides the improbability that anyone would admit this except under duress (in which case the admission would be suspect anyway), it is also highly unlikely that such embarrassing or incriminating revelations would be preserved in his collected works. Therefore, rather than argue *ex silentio* that Tang writers of political rhetoric believed everything that they wrote in equal measure, it would be more useful to try and discern the stronger beliefs that motivated their rhetoric. I would propose that if we consider the contents of each recorded anti-expansionist argument in its entirety, we will usually find that its author placed more emphasis on the practical problems associated with expansion—such as material and human costs, fiscal unsustainability, and the consequent risk of sociopolitical instability—than on notions of the barbarians’ innate inferiority and immutable otherness. Debates over expansion were thus primarily disagreements about the amount of investment an empire could afford to make on territorial expansion and other forms of frontier adventurism before the long-term costs outweighed the benefits. The idea of barbarian inferiority was only a strategically expedient aspect of such debates, rather than an ideological foundation or a determinative factor.

⁸⁷ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 148–149. For a similar and equally recent argument that attributes Di Renjie’s anti-expansionism to “conservative, inward-turning attitudes,” see N. Harry Rothschild, *Wu Zhao: China’s Only Female Emperor* (New York: Pearson, 2008), 155, 173–174, 207.

⁸⁸ Peter Bol, “Geography and Culture: The Middle-period Discourse on the *Zhong guo*—the Central Country,” in Huang Ying-kuei 黃應貴 ed., *Kongjian yu wenhua changyu: Kongjian zhi yixiang, shijian yu shehui de shengchan* 空間與文化場域：空間之意象、實踐與社會的生產 (Taipei: Hanxue yanjiu zhongxin, 2009), 84–90, 100.

⁸⁹ Anthony DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance: The Defense of Literary Culture in Mid-Tang China* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 5–6.

I would also argue that anti-expansionists only felt a need to appeal to pseudo-classical tropes about barbarians—tropes that, in reality, were products of Han-period anti-expansionism—because imperial expansion itself tended to be justified with classicizing or ‘moralistic’ rhetoric: language about spreading a sagely emperor’s transformative or civilizing influence beyond the Central Lands, about punishing a foreign state for treachery or aggression against its neighbors, or about liberating a foreign people from an oppressive ruler or usurper. This forced anti-expansionists to aim for an equally high ideological register, rather than simply point to the high costs and limited benefits of expansion.⁹⁰ A line from the ancient military treatise *Sima fa* 司馬法 illustrates the expansionist rhetorical agenda succinctly: “If one attacks another state out of love for its people, it is permissible to attack it” 攻其國愛其民，攻之可也。⁹¹ Faced with such rhetoric, and unable to question the sincerity of the love being professed, anti-expansionists had to resort to claiming that the other state’s people were not worth loving. Although they sometimes went as far as likening foreign peoples to animals, this should not lead us to assume that their anti-expansionism went hand in hand with, or arose from, an ideology of racist bigotry that denied the humanity of foreigners.⁹²

In the specific cases of Gaochang and Goguryeo, moreover, “othering” rhetoric was made even more necessary because expansionists tended to represent them as Chinese colonies that had fallen under the control of barbarians and should be reunified with the Central Lands. We have already seen such attempts by Pei Ju and Wen Yanbo with regard to Goguryeo. In an edict issued to the elite of Gaochang shortly after its conquest by the Tang, Taizong cited their Chinese origins as his reason for “treating [Gaochang] like the Chinese states” 同之諸夏 by annexing it as a prefecture. The edict also claimed that since coming under Tang rule, Gaochang’s people had “all changed their barbarian (Yi) customs, embracing the transforming influence of the true king” 並變夷俗，服習王化. An earlier edict sought to remind them that they “were formerly people of the Central Lands” 舊是中國之人 but had been separated from their homeland as a result of centuries of political fragmentation: “Even though you live among

⁹⁰ As Pan Yihong notes quite correctly, “Chinese expansionist rulers did not openly glorify conquest as a legitimate ambition for its own sake; they always sought to give moral justification for their conquests.” Nadine Godehardt has recently made the observation that in the “Chinese tradition of Just War,” offensive campaigns against enemy states were usually justified rhetorically as “punitive expeditions” necessary for punishing their rulers’ crimes and restoring order to the world. Godehardt’s argument builds on Johnston’s insightful but brief discussion of the classical Chinese discourse of “righteous war.” Pan, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, 58; Nadine Godehardt, “The Chinese Meaning of Just War and Its Impact on the Foreign Policy of the People’s Republic of China,” working paper no. 88, German Institute of Global and Area Studies [GIGA] (September 2008), 13–26; Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 68–71.

⁹¹ *Sima fa*, Chapter 1 (“Renben” 仁本).

⁹² Marc Abramson argues: “Despite the constant references to animality and bestiality, particularly in the polemical rhetoric of court discussions when the interests of the dynasty or the educated Han elites were threatened by recalcitrant barbarians, there seems to have been little doubt of the basic humanity of the non-Han peoples living within or near the Tang Empire.” This is essentially correct, but Abramson probably overestimates the extent to which foreigners were compared to animals outside the sphere of foreign policy rhetoric. Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 31.

the customs of the barbarians (Yi), you still practice ritual and moral duty” 雖居夷俗，仍習禮義。⁹³ Tsuji Masahiro doubts the sincerity of Taizong’s rhetoric, pointing out that he did not earlier cite Gaochang’s Chinese roots as a justification for invading it; furthermore, he must have known that Gaochang’s population also included many Sogdians and Türks. In Tsuji’s view, the supposed Chineseness of Gaochang was an ex post facto justification for its annexation, not a motivating factor.⁹⁴ I am inclined to agree and to further interpret Taizong’s emphasis on Gaochang’s Chineseness as an attempt at countering his anti-expansionist ministers’ characterization of the oasis state as a barbarian land extraneous to the Tang empire.

In most other cultural contexts, rhetorical denigration and dehumanization of the enemy is used to justify warfare and conquest, not to discourage it.⁹⁵ As a result, even some of the most incisive and influential scholarship on imperial Chinese political rhetoric has mistakenly assumed derogatory representations of foreign peoples to be the sole preserve of arguments justifying their conquest or extermination.⁹⁶ But in the Chinese case, denigrating or

⁹³ WGCL 664.247–249.

⁹⁴ Wang Zhenping misidentifies the earlier edict as “an edict to the ruler of Gaochang” that represents “Taizong’s justification for impending military action against Gaochang.” The edict explicitly states that at the time of its writing, Gaochang had surrendered and had been annexed as a prefecture. Taizong’s actual edict justifying the invasion of Gaochang accused its ruler of refusing to repatriate Chinese refugees who had first fled to the Eastern Türks during the civil wars of the Sui-Tang transition and later found refuge in Gaochang after the Eastern Türk khaganate’s destruction. But the edict made no mention of the ethnic composition of Gaochang’s original population. Tsuji Masahiro 辻正博, “Kikuji Kōshōgoku to Chūgoku ōchō—Chōkō • kibi • sakuhō • seifuku” 麴氏高昌国と中国王朝—朝貢 • 羈縻 • 冊封 • 征服, in Fuma Susumu 夫馬進 ed., *Chūgoku higashi ajia gaikō kōryūshi no kenkyū* 中国東アジア外交交流史の研究 (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2007), 74; Wang, “Ideas concerning Diplomacy and Foreign Policy,” 282; TDZLJ 130.702–703; CFYG 985.11402; JTS 198.5294; XTS 221.6221; ZZTJ 195.6146.

⁹⁵ A brief comparison with the ancient Greeks may serve to illustrate how unique the Chinese were in using the idea of barbarian inferiority as a trope in anti-expansionist rhetoric. According to Plutarch, Aristotle once advised Alexander to treat Greeks as a leader but barbarians as a master, and to care for Greeks as for friends and kindred, while behaving toward barbarians as though they were plants or animals. But Plutarch goes on to reason that had Alexander followed Aristotle’s advice, it would have led to numerous wars, banishments, and rebellious plots within his empire. Such reasoning clearly assumes that Alexander would already have many barbarians under his rule by the time he put Aristotle’s counsel into practice; likewise, Alexander could only be in a position to behave as a master toward barbarians if they were first constrained to serve him as slaves. Moreover, as is well known, Aristotle’s *Politics* endorses the argument (found in a play by Euripides) that it is right and proper for Greeks to rule over barbarians, reasoning that the former are characterized by freedom and the latter by slavishness. Later in the same text, Aristotle further asserts that the Greeks would be well-suited to ruling over all humankind if their city-states could only be unified politically. See Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute* (On the Great Fortune or Virtue of Alexander), I.6, in *Moralia* IV.24; Aristotle, *Politika* (Politics), I.1252b, VII.1327b; Euripides, *Iphigeneia en Aulidi* (Iphigeneia at Aulis), 1400; also Badian, “Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind,” 433–444.

⁹⁶ Wang Gungwu claims that in early Tang edicts and memorials “derogatory language justifying the use of force... derived from increasingly hostile Chinese attitudes toward non-Chinese cultures and the ‘inferior’ people such cultures produced... [and] led to the view that China could not depend on virtue and moral superiority, but needed to use force against recalcitrance and barbarism.” Iain Johnston interprets all “racialist” rhetoric likening barbarians to animals as advocating the use of violence against them, while assuming that the “Confucian-Mencian” opposition to expansionist warfare was based on a belief that the Chinese and barbarians were “one family” and that barbarians could be incorporated peacefully into the Chinese realm through conversion to “Sino-Confucian cultural norms.”

dehumanizing barbarians was also one of the few available arguments for delegitimizing an emperor's ambitions to invade and conquer them, or for justifying withdrawal from their already conquered lands. Since it was ideologically unthinkable that foreign peoples might be better off ruling themselves and politically unwise to suggest that the emperor lacked the moral authority to impose his rule on them, the logical alternative was to argue that they did not deserve to benefit from his rule, or at least deserved it much less than the Chinese did. Anti-expansionists hoped thereby to give the emperor enough of a symbolic victory to dissuade him from seeking personal glory with an actual victory—or, if an actual victory was felt to be out of reach, to allow him to concede defeat in a face-saving manner by making a virtue of bitter necessity. How strongly these anti-expansionists actually believed in Chinese superiority to foreign peoples is, in such cases, beside the point. What matters is that they believed strongly that a Chinese empire should resist the temptation to prove its superiority through needless wars and annexations, lest the very basis of that superiority—that is, material wealth, social order, and political stability—be squandered in the process.

In contemporary English parlance, the only way for a country to extricate itself from an unsuccessful and costly military foray overseas without overt humiliation is to “declare victory and get out.”⁹⁷ In imperial Chinese court rhetoric, one could say the equivalent strategy was to “declare superiority and get out” or, if a planned invasion had not yet begun, to “declare superiority and stay out.” Wei Zheng's Discourse on the Western Regions in the *Suishu* exemplifies this line of argument, as well as the practical preoccupations with cost and stability that motivated it:

In antiquity the sage-kings limited their kingdoms to a size of only five thousand *li* across. They sought to keep the Chinese states at peace and did not concern themselves with remote lands. How could this be because they could not extend their awe-inducing military strength and moral power that far? It is only that they would not exhaust the Central Lands for the sake of the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters, or harm the useful for the sake of the useless. That is why when the Qin [under the First Emperor] set up garrisons on the five mountain ranges [of the far south]⁹⁸, people starved to death in droves on the streets, and when the Han [under Wudi] went to war on three frontiers, its registered population decreased by half. The Sui dynasty, too, trusted in its military

Wang Gungwu, “The Rhetoric of a Lesser Empire: Early Sung Relations with Its Neighbors,” in Morris Rossabi ed., *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th–14th Centuries* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), 48–49; Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 65, 186–193.

⁹⁷ This saying is widely believed to have been invented by US Senator George Aiken (1892–1984) in 1966, with reference to US involvement in the Vietnam War. But see Mark A. Stoler, “What Did He *Really* Say? The ‘Aiken Formula’ for Vietnam Revisited,” *Vermont History* 46.2 (1978), 100–108.

⁹⁸ “The Qin set up garrisons on the five mountain ranges” was a conventional way of referring to the Qin empire's conquest of the Yue peoples of the Lingnan 嶺南 region in 214 BC. The five mountain ranges are a series of ranges that separate Lingnan (literally “south of the ranges”) from the rest of south China. On the Qin conquest of Lingnan see SJ 6.253; *Huainanzi*, chapter 18 (“Renjian xun” 人間訓).

power and squandered its strength at Kokonor. These are all cases in which one man lost the Way [of rulership] and countless others suffered the consequences.

古者哲王之制，方五千里，務安諸夏，不事要荒。豈威不能加，德不能被？蓋不以四夷勞中國，不以無用害有用也。是以秦戍五嶺，漢事三邊，或道殣相望，或戶口減半。隋室恃其強盛，亦狼狽於青海。此皆一人失其道，故億兆罹其毒。

Here, Wei is harshly condemning Sui Yangdi's conquest of the Tuygun khaganate in 609 as a deviation from the ways of the sage-kings, who purportedly refused to sacrifice the welfare of their Chinese subjects on the altar of expansionist ambition. Wei goes on to claim that even though Yangdi failed to conquer Goguryeo, he would not have been assassinated in 618 had he refrained from overburdening the populace with his attempt to secure the allegiance of the Western Regions. Conversely, if Yangdi *had* conquered Goguryeo, he would still have brought his empire to bankruptcy and ruin by trying to conquer the Western Regions in order to satisfy his lust for exotic treasures.⁹⁹ As with the Discourse on the “eastern Yi barbarians,” Wei Zheng clearly intended these criticisms of Yangdi as a warning to Tang Taizong. It is probably not a coincidence that in 635—the year before the *Suishu* was completed—Taizong had carried out his own conquest of the Tuygun, who had regained independence during the collapse of the Sui empire. Although no extant source sheds light on Wei Zheng's attitude toward this conquest, it is quite likely that he had some influence on Taizong's subsequent decision to rule the Tuygun indirectly through a compliant client khagan, rather than annex their lands as Yangdi had done.

The earliest extant anti-expansionist memorial from the early Tang may serve to further illustrate the anti-expansionists' fundamentally practical orientation. In 630 a band of Eastern Türk refugees fleeing the collapse of their khaganate took advantage of civil war among the Western Türks by seizing control of the Dzungarian Basin. They then proclaimed their leader, Ashina *Zhanir 阿史那社爾 (ca. 609–655), the new khagan of the Eastern Türks. Taizong had just destroyed the Eastern Türk khaganate by military means, but he opted for a non-military response to its revival in the Dzungarian Basin. He ordered an expedition to the oasis state of Yiwu 伊吾 (modern Hami 哈密 or Kumul) for the purpose of establishing a supply depot, which was then to be stocked with grain transported across the notoriously inhospitable *Baghayan Desert 莫賀延磧 (the present-day Gashun Gobi 噶順戈壁) by a convoy of corvée laborers. The grain would be offered to the Türks as an inducement to surrender to the Tang; presumably, their submission would also bring the Dzungarian Basin under Tang control. Taizong appointed Li Daliang 李大亮 (586–645), the area commander 都督 of Liangzhou, to command of this expedition.¹⁰⁰ Yiwu, a Sogdian colony, was then a tributary of the Western Türks, but the local

⁹⁹ Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 83.1860.

¹⁰⁰ THY 94.1689; CFYG 995.11520; JTS 62.2388, 109.3288–3289; XTS 99.3911, 110.4114; ZZTJ 193.6081, 194.6117–6118. There has been some confusion as to the nature of Li Daliang's mission because some versions of the *Zhenguan zhengyao* mistranscribe Zhanir's pre-630 title *Tak Shad 拓設 as 拓拔. The *Tang huiyao*, copying this passage from the *Zhenguan zhengyao*, further changes this to *Tuoba* 拓跋, a prominent tribal name among the Xianbi and Mi'nia/Tangut/Dangxiang 黨項 peoples. The *Tongdian* mistranscribes the title as 柘羯, a term that

ruler responded to the Tang expedition's arrival by submitting to Tang suzerainty.¹⁰¹ Despite this promising start, Li Daliang was unenthusiastic about his mission and soon wrote a memorial to advise that it be aborted because neither Yiwu nor the Türks in the Dzungarian Basin were worth its cost.

Li Daliang began his memorial with the following argument:

Your subject has heard that he who would pacify distant regions must first bring peace to those close at hand. The people of the Central Lands are the roots of the empire (literally “all under heaven”), while the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters are like branches and leaves. No [ruler] has ever achieved lasting peace by disturbing the roots out of generosity toward the branches.

臣聞欲綏遠者，必先安近。中國百姓，天下本根；四夷之人，猶於枝葉。擾於根本，以厚枝附，而求久安，未之有也。¹⁰²

He then used classical quotations to posit an essentially moral distinction in the means by which Chinese and barbarians should be ruled:

elsewhere refers to elite troops of the Sogdian kingdoms. Chen Yinke and Pulleyblank believed the original text read 柘鞬. Xie Baocheng's annotated edition of the *Zhenguan zhengyao* takes 拓拔 as the original in this passage, while accepting 拓設 instead of 拓跋 in another passage relating to Zhanir. However, the contexts of Li Daliang's biography and Ashina Zhanir's biography make it certain that the second character is a transliteration of the Turkic title *Shad*. Note that Chen Yinke interpreted 柘鞬 as an alternative ethnonym for the Sogdians, whereas Xiang Da earlier interpreted it as a transliteration of *Chach*, the name of a Sogdian kingdom (now Tashkent). However, Pulleyblank followed Marquart and Chavannes in recognizing 柘鞬 as a transliteration of the Sogdian word *čākar*, and most scholars now do so as well. See THY 73.1311; ZGZY 9.503, 505 n. 8 (cf. 1.44, 45 n. 1); TD 197.5413; Chen Yinke 陳寅恪, *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao* 唐代政治史述論稿 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1994 [1943]), 32–33, 51; Xiang Da 向達, *Tangdai Chang'an yu xiyu wenming* 唐代長安與西域文明 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001 [1933]), 99–100; E.G. Pulleyblank, “A Sogdian colony in Inner Mongolia,” *T'oung Pao* 41.4/5 (1952), 347–350.

¹⁰¹ The Dunhuang manuscript S.367 names the Yiwu ruler in 630 as Shi Wannian 石萬年, which indicates he was a Sogdian from Chach (Tashkent). Because Chach means “stone” in Sogdian and this city-state was therefore known to the Chinese as Shi 石 (“stone”), its people typically adopted Shi as a surname in their interactions with the Chinese. TD 191.5198; JTS 40.1643; XTS 215.6036; ZZTJ 193.6082 (cf. CFYG 999.11555); Pulleyblank, “A Sogdian colony,” 350–353; Lionel Giles, “A Chinese Geographical Text of the Ninth Century,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 6.4 (1932), 833 (see Plate X for a photograph of the original text); Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, *Zhongguo Zhongguo yu wailai wenming* 中古中國與外來文明 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001), 51–53.

¹⁰² ZGZY 9.503 (cf. TD 197.5413; THY 73.1311; CFYG 407.4619; JTS 62.2388; XTS 99.3911–3912; ZZTJ 193.6081).

Since antiquity, enlightened rulers have used trustworthiness to transform the Central Lands but used expedient means to control the barbarians (Yi-Di). That is why the *Chunqiu* says, “The barbarians (Rong-Di) are jackals and wolves whose greed cannot be satisfied; the Chinese states are our close kin who cannot be abandoned.”

自古明王，化中國以信，馭夷狄以權。故《春秋》云：「戎狄豺狼，不可厭也；諸夏親暱，不可棄也。」¹⁰³

The first of these lines seems to have been adapted from the *Zuozhuan*, where the distinction is stated thus by Cang Ge 蒼葛 (n.d.): “Moral power is used to rule the Central Lands with gentleness, and punishments (i.e., punitive expeditions) are used to rule the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters with awe-inducing military strength” 德以柔中國，刑以威四夷。¹⁰⁴ Li Daliang’s point, however, was not that Taizong should subdue Ashina Zhanir’s khaganate by force rather than with a gift of grain.¹⁰⁵ Instead, the second line (also a well-known quotation from the *Zuozhuan*¹⁰⁶) seems to be arguing that because the Türks were incorrigibly avaricious and perfidious, Taizong had no responsibility to show them the same kindness, good faith, and generosity that he lavished on his Chinese subjects. It would be better simply to leave them to their own devices. This attitude toward the Türks is also implied by the next two lines, which begin with flattery before proceeding to a criticism softened by self-deprecation:

Since Your Majesty began to rule the empire, the roots have grown deep and firm: the people enjoy lives of ease and the army is strong, the Nine Provinces are flourishing, and the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters submit of their own free will. Now we are inviting the Türks [to submit], but even if their lands come within the boundaries of the empire, your subject is foolish and, while sensing that much effort and expense have been committed, still does not understand what benefit it would bring.

自陛下君臨區宇，深根固本，人(民)逸兵強，九州殷盛，四夷自服。今者招致突厥，雖入提封，臣愚稍覺勞費，未悟其有益也。¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ ZGZY 9.503 (cf. THY 73.1311; JTS 62.2388, CFYG 407.4619). Three other versions of the memorial omit these two lines.

¹⁰⁴ ZZZY 16.428.

¹⁰⁵ This seems to be the misinterpretation made by Wang Zhenping, who identifies Li Daliang as one of the “meddlesome officials and generals” who “happily endorsed Taizong’s adventurous thinking.” Wang, “Ideas concerning Diplomacy and Foreign Policy,” 283–284.

¹⁰⁶ The quotation was attributed to Guan Zhong 管仲 (ca. 720–645 BC), who was urging Lord Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (r. 685–643 BC) to defend the state of Xing 邢 against a Di 狄 barbarian raid: see ZZZY 11.303. Li Daliang identifies the *Chunqiu* as its source because the *Zuozhuan* was by this time generally regarded as an extended commentary to the *Chunqiu*.

¹⁰⁷ ZGZY 9.503 (cf. JTS 62.2388; CFYG 407.4619; TD 197.5413; THY 73.1311; ZJTJ 193.6081). Only the *Zhenguan zhengyao*, *Jiu Tangshu*, and *Cefu yuangui* versions of Li Daliang’s memorial contain the flattering first

At this point, Li Daliang explained in fully practical terms what he meant by “disturbing the roots to value the branches”: the Gansu Corridor was still recovering demographically and economically from the effects of the Sui imperial collapse, and he feared jeopardizing this recovery by taking men away from their fields to transport precious grain across the desert to feed the Türks.¹⁰⁸

The Chinese historian Li Dalong has argued that Li Daliang’s use of the “roots and branches” metaphor was fundamentally similar in nature to Wen Yanbo’s use of the “sun and stars” metaphor in 625, since both reflected a “traditional” (*chuantong* 傳統) notion of barbarian inferiority.¹⁰⁹ This interpretation overlooks the very different rhetorical intent of the two metaphors, as well as the associated implication that barbarian inferiority as a trope, while “traditional” or classical, could be used in widely varying ways. Wen Yanbo’s astronomical metaphor makes a point about hierarchy: a Chinese empire is always superior to foreign states and must assert that superiority even when a foreign state does not acknowledge it. Li Daliang’s botanical metaphor, on the other hand, makes a point about priorities: a Chinese empire should always put the Chinese first rather than try to extend its rule over barbarians at the expense of the Chinese. Since a tree’s branches and leaves are still connected to the roots, Li Daliang’s botanical metaphor does not go as far as advocating absolute physical and political separation between the Central Lands and the barbarians. But the metaphor does imply that conquered foreign lands are expendable to the empire, just as a tree can always grow new branches and leaves to replace those that have fallen or been broken off, as long as its roots are firmly planted in the ground.

In the memorial’s second part, Li Daliang urged Taizong not to incorporate Yiwu into the Tang empire. To this end, he used historical examples to illustrate the perils of expansionism and the merits of a defensive approach to the frontier. The Zhou dynasty, he claimed, had adopted a purely defensive frontier policy and thus ruled for seven centuries; the Qin, in contrast, recklessly went on the offensive against the Xiongnu and fell within forty years. Likewise, the Han empire had enjoyed peace and plenty under the defensive-minded Wendi 文帝 (r. 180–157 BC) but Wudi squandered the wealth thus accumulated on campaigns against distant lands. Even the short-lived prefectures that Sui Yangdi had established with relative ease at Yiwu, *Charchan 鄯善 (or Krorayina 樓蘭, modern Charklik or Ruoqiang 若羌) and *Chalmdana 且末 (modern Cherchen/Charchan) in 609–610 were “all loss and no benefit” 竟損無益, an unnecessary drain

line in this passage. The *Xin Tangshu* version omits the passage altogether. The *Cefu yuangui* mistranscribes 招致 as 拓跋.

¹⁰⁸ ZGZY 9.504 (cf. JTS 62.2388; CFYG 407.4619; XTS 99.3912; TD 197.5413; ZJTJ 193.6081). The *Tang huiyao* version of the memorial omits this detail, while the *Xin Tangshu* version moves it to the end of the text.

¹⁰⁹ Li Dalong 李大龍, *Han Tang fanshu tizhi yanjiu* 漢唐藩屬體制研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2006), 307.

on the Sui empire's resources.¹¹⁰ Even though Yiwu had now submitted to Tang rule, its inhabitants were “not Chinese” 非夏人, its soil sandy and infertile—in other words, it could have no practical value to the Tang as a prefecture. It would thus be better to leave Yiwu “bridled” (*jimi* 羈縻) as a tributary state beyond the northern frontier, thus gaining its undying loyalty through a seeming act of generosity—or, in Li Daliang's words, deriving an “actual benefit” 實福 from an “empty kindness” 虛惠.¹¹¹

Li Daliang was a veteran of many battles during the Sui-Tang transition and would go on to command troops in Taizong's conquest of the Tuygun in 635. On his deathbed at the beginning of 645, he wrote a memorial urging Taizong (then in Luoyang) to give up his plans to invade Goguryeo.¹¹² His largely military career does not fit the common stereotype of anti-expansionists as pacifistic scholars or civil bureaucrats driven by an irrational antipathy toward warfare and the military, and as moralizing ‘armchair experts’ who combined a lack of practical experience of the frontier with a surfeit of ethnic chauvinism.¹¹³ Li's biographies state that he

¹¹⁰ After conquering the Tuygun khaganate in 609, the Sui established four new prefectures stretching from Kokonor (Lake Qinghai) across the Qaidam Basin to Charchan and Chalmadana on the southeastern edge of the Tarim Basin. Chinese convicts were sent to these prefectures as colonists to farm the land, since the Tuygun divisionsmen, as pastoral nomads, could not by themselves sustain a Chinese-style prefectural administration. In the same year, the ruler of Yiwu paid homage to Yangdi and ceded a large part of his territory to the Sui in return for generous gifts. He apparently assumed the cession was merely symbolic, but in 610 a Sui expedition, led jointly by Pei Ju and the general Xue Shixiong 薛世雄 (554–617), crossed the Baghayan Desert and forced him to hand over the ceded territory. Before returning east, the Sui expedition built a fort and left more than a thousand troops behind to defend it from the Yiwu ruler, who apparently had more than a thousand troops of his own. Soon afterwards, Yangdi designated the Yiwu fort as the seat of another new prefecture. These new western prefectures were all abandoned during the collapse of the Sui empire. Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 3.73, 65.1533–1534, 67.1580–1581; 83.1845; JTS 40.1643; TD 191.5198. According to the Dunhuang manuscript S.367, the Yiwu prefecture was established on land purchased from the ruler of Yiwu, possibly a reference to the gifts he received from Yangdi in 609—see Giles, “A Chinese Geographical Text of the Ninth Century,” 833 (see Plate X for a photograph of the original text). For the reconstructions *Charchan* and *Chalmadana* see A.F.P. Hulswé, *China in Central Asia—The Early Stage: 125 BC–AD 23* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 81 n. 77, 92 n. 125.

¹¹¹ ZGZY 9.504 (cf. JTS 62.2388–2389; CFYG 407.4619; XTS 99.3911–3912; TD 197.5413–5414; THY 73.1311–1312; ZZTJ 193.6081–6082). Most versions of the memorial's second part are highly condensed; only the *Zhenguan zhengyao*, *Jiu Tangshu*, and *Cefu yuangui* versions are complete.

¹¹² Taizong had put Fang Xuanling and Li Daliang in charge of Chang'an's security during his absence. Unfortunately, Li's memorial has not been preserved; we are thus unable to compare it with Fang Xuanling's last memorial of remonstrance, composed under similar circumstances in 648. JTS 62.2390; CFYG 548.6280; XTS 99.3912; ZZTJ 197.6213, 6215.

¹¹³ For example, Skaff claims that the “literati Confucians” at the Tang court had an “ideological bias against the army and imperial expansion” that made them “inclined to ignore or downplay the importance of provincial and foreign affairs,” and that their writings “treat Turko-Mongols and other inhabitants of the borderlands with attitudes ranging from suspicion to outright hostility.” Skaff's interpretation is strongly influenced by Howard Wechsler's 1980 study dividing ministers at the courts of Tang Gaozu and Tang Taizong into “Type 1 Confucians” and “Type 2 Confucians”; Skaff has adopted these categories and relabeled them as “moralistic/literati Confucians” and “pragmatists” respectively. Wechsler theorized that “Type 1 Confucians” would follow similar career paths of “extensive scholarly, literary, and moral as opposed to more executive and administrative roles in government,” including membership in academic and advisory councils, appointment to scholarly projects, and appointment as tutors to the Heir Apparent. He also believed that men whose biographies are found in the *Ruxue* 儒學 (“classical

demonstrated both literary and martial talents from a young age, and an interpretation along the lines of the conventional stereotype might infer that he was an atypical case in which a classical education had instilled a “moralistic” mentality that later coexisted uneasily with his military experience. But closer reading of the Yiwu memorial suggests that Li merely used his classical literacy and historical learning to dress up a pragmatic cost-benefit analysis based on his own observations of conditions on the Gansu Corridor and at Yiwu—in other words, based on the kind of practical frontier experience that some historians have assumed would incline a person toward expansionism. Although Li Daliang is the only military man from Taizong’s reign whose anti-expansionist rhetoric has been preserved, two of Taizong’s other generals—Zhang Liang 張亮 (d. 646) and Jiang Xingben 姜行本 (d. 645)—are known to have remonstrated unsuccessfully against the planned Goguryeo expedition in 644. Duty and loyalty later led both men to participate in the expedition despite their personal misgivings, and Jiang Xingben even died in battle in Liaodong.¹¹⁴ I would argue from these cases that there is simply no demonstrable incompatibility between a military career and anti-expansionism in Taizong’s court.¹¹⁵

Li Daliang was only temporarily successful at halting Tang expansion in the Western Regions.¹¹⁶ Taizong soon established a new prefecture called West Yizhou 西伊州 at Yiwu, but

scholarship”) chapters of the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* would tend to be “dyed-in-the-wool Type 1 Confucians.” Based on these criteria, Wechsler identified 68 early Tang officials as “potential Type 1 Confucians.” But his assumption that “Type 1 Confucians” would be anti-expansionists is problematic in light of the fact that his list includes not only Wei Zheng, Chu Suiliang, Fang Xuanling, and Cen Wenben but also Pei Ju and Wen Yanbo. Skaff has emphasized the equation of “Type 1” or “moralistic/literati” with anti-expansionist and anti-military sentiments to an even greater degree than Wechsler did. Howard J. Wechsler, “The Confucian Impact on Early T’ang Decision-Making,” *T’oung Pao* 66 (1980), 1–40; Jonathan Karam Skaff, “Tang Military Culture and Its Inner Asian Influences,” in Di Cosmo ed., *Military Culture in Imperial China*, 170–175 and *Sui-Tang China*, 52–53.

¹¹⁴ Zhang Liang, after realizing Taizong’s mind was made up, volunteered his services to the Goguryeo expedition and was given command of the naval forces. According to Zhang’s official biographies, his performance during the expedition was marked by an attack of fear-induced paralysis that his troops misinterpreted rather fortuitously as extreme coolness in the face of danger. But this may reflect efforts at smearing his reputation after his later execution on a charge of treason; there is no reason to assume that his coolness was not in fact genuine. Wechsler recognized that Zhang Liang had “affinities” with the “Type 1 Confucians” because of his remonstrance against the Goguryeo expedition, but classified him as a “Type 2 Confucian” based solely on his career path. Jiang Xingben, an expert in the construction of siege engines, was involved in one of the expedition’s first attacks on a Goguryeo fort in Liaodong. Although the fort eventually fell, Jiang was killed by a stray arrow during the assault, thus becoming the only high-ranking Tang official to die in battle during the Goguryeo expedition. JTS 59.2334, 69.2516; XTS 91.3792, 94.3829; Wechsler, “The Confucian Impact on Early T’ang Decision-Making,” 34.

¹¹⁵ I believe that the prevalent stereotype of a “Confucian” aversion to war and violence has prevented scholars from drawing a necessary distinction between pacifism and anti-expansionism. In this regard, see an important article by Anthony William Sariti, “A Note on Foreign Policy Decisionmaking in the Northern Sung,” *Sung Studies Newsletter* 8 (1973), 3–11. Sariti’s assertion that professional military men are philosophically averse to expansionism—which owes much to Samuel Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* (1957)—is perhaps over-idealized, anachronistic in relation to the imperial Chinese context, and influenced by contemporary American debates about the Vietnam War. But there is much sense to his observation (on p. 4) that “Sung officials who argued against military expansion and against the existing military institutions and policy were by no means necessarily antimilitary or pacifist.”

¹¹⁶ The earliest source for Li Daliang’s memorial, the *Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要 (ca. 722–729), states that Taizong did not accept his recommendations, but the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu*, and *Zizhi tongjian* state that he did.

some historians believe he initially left the local ruler in place as its prefect or area commander and only annexed the prefecture to direct Tang rule in 632, when it was renamed Yizhou 伊州. In other words, in 630–632 Yiwu was a tributary state disguised as a Tang prefecture through the symbolic conferment of an official post on its ruler.¹¹⁷ If so, it was among the first (and possibly the most short-lived) in a category of autonomous vassal polities that came to be labeled as “bridled prefectures” (*jimi zhou* 羈縻州, often translated as “loose-rein prefectures”) in Tang administrative terminology—a creative appropriation of the anti-expansionist bridling metaphor (one that Li Daliang himself had used) to legitimate a kind of symbolic, low-cost expansion. The Tang reportedly collected about eight hundred such vassal polities within a century of Yiwu’s annexation.¹¹⁸ Taizong apparently also ceased the effort to secure Ashina Zhanir’s submission through material enticements. Zhanir remained in control of the Dzungarian Basin until 635 or 636 when, having been deserted by most of his subjects and defeated by the Syr-Yanda, he and his remaining followers headed east and surrendered to the Tang. He was promptly rewarded with marriage to one of Taizong’s sisters and appointment as a general. Zhanir soon went on to command Tang armies in the invasions of Gaochang (640), Goguryeo (644–645), and Kucha (648)—the very sort of expansionist campaign that Li Daliang and many of his colleagues (both civilian and military) had been so worried about.¹¹⁹

The *Zhenguan zhengyao* may be referring to the memorial’s long-term effectiveness, the three other sources to its short-term effectiveness. The *Tongdian* and *Tang huiyao* do not state whether or not the memorial was effective. See ZGZY 9.504; JTS 62.2389; XTS 99.3912; ZZTJ 193.6082.

¹¹⁷ Zhang Guangda, citing earlier work by Kurihara Masuo, makes this interpretation of the change in nomenclature, as does Tsuji Masahiro in a more recent article. See JTS 40.1643; XTS 40.1046; Zhang, *Xiyu shidi conggao chubian*, 113; Tsuji, “Kikuji Kōshō to Chūgoku ōchō,” 76.

¹¹⁸ Despite the generalizing label, the “bridled prefectures” were always a very mixed bag that included conquered territories ruled as protectorates, immigrant or displaced peoples, client divisions and tributary states beyond the frontier, and distant polities to which Tang claims of suzerainty were nominal at best. For the term “bridled prefectures,” see TLD 3.64, 6.194; THY 70.1232; TD 187.5041, 5049–5050; JTS 38.1393, 39.1527, 40.1650; XTS 43.1119–1120, 1146, ZZTJ 215.6847. For recent discussions of the “bridled prefecture” concept, see Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 61–62; Chu, *Sui-Tang zhengzhi*, 245–285.

¹¹⁹ JTS 109.3289–3290; XTS 110.4114–4115 (cf. CFYG 977.11311, 995.11520; ZZTJ 194.6117–6118).

Chapter 2

The trope of barbarian perfidy in early Tang foreign policy rhetoric

“Barbarians, too, are human beings”

Let us turn to the other barbarophilic statement that Taizong is now widely praised for. In early 645, a few weeks after issuing the Luoyang edict justifying the invasion of Goguryeo, Taizong received a petition from the Eastern Türks. Their newly restored khaganate had collapsed because of ineffectual leadership by Ashina *Semurg 阿史那思摩 (583–647), the client khagan whom Taizong had installed just five years earlier. Under the constant threat of attack by their much stronger nemesis, the Syr-Yanda khaganate, nearly all of the Eastern Türks had deserted Semurg and fled the southern edge of the Gobi Desert to return to the Ordos plateau, where they had previously been resettled in the 630s after surrendering to the Tang. They now appealed to Taizong for permission to remain on the Ordos; Taizong granted their request since there seemed to be no other choice.¹

Taizong’s ministers now seized on the Eastern Türks’ return to the Ordos as another reason for him to cancel the Goguryeo expedition, lest they rebel and mount an attack on Chang’an while he was on campaign. This argument should have been difficult for Taizong to ignore, since he had received a rude shock in 639 when more than forty Eastern Türks from his entourage stormed his summer palace with the intention of killing him.² Although the assassination attempt failed, Taizong and his ministers had reached a consensus that it was “inexpedient” 不便 to allow the Eastern Türks to remain on the Ordos plateau and therefore proceeded to move them back to the edge of the Gobi. Taizong is said to have “distrusted the Türks” 不直突厥 as a result of the assassination incident, and even to have repeated Li Daliang’s “roots and branches” metaphor (without crediting him) when expressing regret for resettling them on the Ordos.³

¹ TD 197.5416; THY 94.1690; CFYG 46.449; JTS 194.5164–5165; XTS 215.6040–6041; ZZTJ 197.6215–6216. For Semurg’s background and dates see Ai Chong 艾冲, “Tang Taizong chao Tujue zu guanyuan Ashina Simo shengping chutan—Yi ‘Li Simo muzhi’ wei zhongxin” 唐太宗朝突厥族官员阿史那思摩生平初探—以‘李思摩墓誌’为中心, *Shaanxi shifan daxue jixu jiaoyu xuebao* 陝西師範大學繼續教育學報 24.2 (2007), 59–63.

² For a detailed analysis of the assassination incident and its impact, see Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 141–182.

³ Abramson’s claim that the “roots and branches” metaphor was one of the “time-honored tropes” of Tang discourse on foreigners is not entirely correct. While the metaphor was used in earlier periods to express ideas about priorities or the distribution of power, Li Daliang’s memorial is the first known instance of it being used to describe the difference between Chinese and foreigners. ZGZY 9.500; ZZTJ 195.6149; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 149.

But now, on the eve of Taizong's Goguryeo expedition, he dismissed the anti-expansionists' warnings by claiming that the Eastern Türks could be trusted not to turn against the Tang because even barbarians would respond to a sagely emperor's moral power with loyalty and gratitude. This was effectively the same argument that Wen Yanbo had used in 630 to persuade Taizong to resettle the Türks on the Ordos plateau, against the objections of Wei Zheng and other ministers who wanted them returned to the edge of the Gobi where they would pose less of a direct threat to Chang'an.⁴ Four different versions exist of this dialogue between Taizong and his ministers.⁵ The *Cefu yuangui* version is the longest and therefore probably the least abridged:

The ministers argued that the emperor had only just begun an expedition to the east, and the Ordos plateau was not far from the capital. Now he was resettling these formidable nomads near [the capital], and this was not a sound strategy. They asked the emperor to guard Luoyang and not [continue the] expedition to the east.⁶ The emperor replied, "A ruler of men should rely on his moral power and integrity, instead of suspecting and distrusting his subjects. Under the transforming influence of Yao's moral power, every household in his realm was worthy of enfeoffment. Under the transforming influence of [the wicked King] Zhou [of the Shang dynasty], every household in his realm deserved to be punished by death.⁷ In antiquity, King Tang [of the Shang dynasty] and King Wu of the Zhou dynasty exerted their transforming influence on the former subjects of King Jie [of the Xia dynasty] and King Zhou [respectively], and all changed their ways to good because of this influence. Confucius said, "Where there is [good] teaching, [people] will no longer be divided into categories [of superior and inferior]." How could this be an empty claim?

群臣或以帝方東征，河南去京不遠，今近處強胡，非計之得。請帝鎮雒陽，無東征。帝曰：「夫為人君者，當從德義而無猜疑。比屋可封，化堯之德也。比屋可

⁴ See below for detailed analysis of Wen's arguments. Pan Yihong suggests, "Taizong's real motive may have been to preserve [Semurg's] tribe so that they could continue to function as a force defending the Tang frontier." This overestimates the effectiveness of Semurg's mutinous followers as a fighting force, and also overlooks the context of the ministers' attempts at restraining Taizong's ambition for the conquest of Goguryeo. Pan, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, 189.

⁵ THY 94.1690; CFYG 46.499; XTS 215.6041; ZZTJ 197.6215–6216.

⁶ Cui Mingde and Ma Xiaoli, relying solely on the *Zizhi tongjian* version of the dialogue, misinterpret the phrase "Please stay and guard Luoyang" 願留鎮洛陽 (ZZTJ 197.6215) as meaning that the ministers advised Taizong to resettle the Eastern Türks in Luoyang as a military garrison. This interpretation makes no sense from a strategic point of view—if it was too dangerous to let the Türks stay on the Ordos plateau, how much worse would it be to leave them in the empire's eastern capital? Moreover, it is plainly contradicted by the *Cefu yuangui* version, which states that the ministers "asked the emperor to guard Luoyang" 請帝鎮雒陽. See Cui and Ma, *Sui Tang minzu guanxi sixiangshi*, 112.

⁷ The *Xinyu* 新語, written by the early Han Classicist Lu Jia 陸賈 (ca. 228–ca. 140 BC), contains an early occurrence of this saying. See *Xinyu*, *juan* 1, chapter 4 ("Wuwei" 無為).

誅，化紂之惡也。昔成湯、周武化桀紂之遺氓，各從其化，無不遷善。孔子云：「有教无类。」豈徒言哉！

The rhetorical connection to Wen Yanbo is clear from the Confucius quotation, which Wen had also deployed in the resettlement debate of 630.⁸ Taizong also took the opportunity to reassert that his Goguryeo expedition was in no way similar to Sui Yangdi's, while making a larger point about trust and loyalty being universal values:

Formerly, when Sui Yangdi did not practice the Way [of rulership], his people seethed and sighed with resentment. It was Yang Xuangan, and not the barbarians (Yi-Di), who then rebelled against him.⁹ If a ruler will only be free of distrust, then even barbarians (Yi-Di) can serve him loyally, but if a ruler is always distrustful of his subjects, even his ablest ministers will surely [rebel and] cause disaster [for the realm]. We may not have the quickest of minds, but We are familiar enough with such principles of common sense. Formerly when the Sui dynasty conscripted the people for expeditions across the Liao River, everyone cut off a hand or mutilated a foot [to avoid the draft], or fled into the mountains and the wilderness. Now We are leading an expedition that recruits only willing volunteers. A call for ten volunteers is answered by a hundred; a call for a hundred is answered by a thousand. Those who need not join the army fill the roads with cries of jubilation.¹⁰ That is what is called beginning an enterprise without going against [the people's wishes].

昔隋煬帝無道，百姓嗟怨。玄感作亂，非夷狄者也。但君無疑貳，夷狄可以效忠，君多猜嫌，股肱必至構禍。朕雖不敏，頗識機宜。昔隋氏伐遼，徵發百姓，人皆斷手壞足，亡命山野。朕今征行，取其情願。募十得百，募百得千，不預從軍者懽聲盈路，所謂創事而不違。

⁸ The pithy phrase 有教無類 appears without context in *Analects* 15:39, and has been variously interpreted. The most common modern interpretation is that all men have a right to education regardless of birth, class, social status, or ethnic origin. However, Xie Zhibin has argued persuasively that the original meaning was that a good education should enable people to overcome their intellectual and moral deficiencies, so that no one is left intellectually and morally inferior. For more on Wen Yanbo's use of the *Analects* quotation, see below. Xie Zhibin 謝質彬, "Youjiao wulei' jie" 有教無類' 解, *Wenshi zhishi* 1989(11), 79–82.

⁹ In the summer of 613, while Yangdi was engaged on his second Goguryeo expedition, his minister Yang Xuangan 楊玄感 (d. 613)—who had been put in charge of the expedition's grain supply—launched a rebellion and attempted to capture Luoyang. After repeated defeats by loyal Sui armies, Yang committed suicide. However, Yangdi had to abort his expedition in a hurry because of the danger that Yang's rebellion posed to his rear. See Wei *et al.*, 4.84, 70.1616–1619, 81.1817.

¹⁰ The *Zizhi tongjian* version has the opposite, "Everyone who missed the chance to join the army sighs with disappointment and dismay 其不得從軍者，皆憤歎鬱邑." ZZTJ 197.6216.

Finally, he addressed the specific issue of whether the Türks could be trusted and made a prediction that amounted to a bet with Chu Suiliang:

Our heart and mind tirelessly cares for the welfare of all human beings. Even though [the Türks now] reside on the Ordos plateau, We have relieved their poverty and provided them with sustenance when they were weak. Their gratitude will surely have gone as deep as the marrow of their bones. Besides, the way of life of the Syr-Yanda is similar to theirs, yet they did not flee to the Syr-Yanda who were close by and instead returned to We who were far away. One can easily see their [loyal] sentiments from this.” He then said to the Assistant Director of the Chancellery, Chu Suiliang, “You are in charge of the Court Diary, and should record this: I guarantee that for the next fifteen years, there will be no trouble from the Türks.”

朕但憂念蒼生，心嘗不懈。虽居河南，濟貧贍弱，想其懷恩，入於骨髓。又延陀嗜欲且同，今不近走延陀，而遠來歸朕，其情易見。」因謂黃門侍郎褚遂良曰：「爾知起居，宜記之：我保十五年中，突厥无事矣。」¹¹

Two other versions of Taizong’s words, while significantly more condensed, contain lines that much recent scholarship has interpreted as evidence that he possessed an unusually broad-minded attitude toward foreigners. The *Tang huiyao* version reads:

Barbarians (Yi-Di), too, are human beings. If they are governed with moral power, they can become like members of the family.

夷狄亦人，以德治之，可使如一家。

The *Zizhi tongjian* version is more elaborated and seems to incorporate material from the *Cefu yuangui* version:

¹¹ CFYG 46.499. “Fifteen years” in the last line is “fifty years” in the *Xin Tangshu* version (XTS 215.6041), but not the *Zizhi tongjian* version. It is unclear which is correct, since the *Cefu yuangui* is earlier than the *Xin Tangshu* but is quite prone to errors of transcription. The “fifty years” prediction would seem to fit better with Taizong’s penchant for making grandiose claims, and it may have been scaled downwards in some later sources as a result of its being proven wrong by subsequent history—namely, the Eastern Türks’ ultimately successful rebellion against Tang domination in 679–682. Interestingly, the *Sui Tang jiahua* 隋唐嘉話 and the *Da Tang xinyu* 大唐新語 contain another “fifty years” prediction of this kind: the general Li Jing 李靖 (571–649), after routing the Eastern Türks in the spring of 630, warns Taizong that they will again be a threat to the northern frontier in fifty years’ time. In this case, the prediction was spot-on, but the anecdotal nature of these two sources makes it likely that the story was fabricated by someone with the benefit of hindsight. See STJH 1.5; DTXY 7.111.

Barbarians (Yi-Di), too, are human beings, so their emotions are no different from the Chinese of the Central Lands. A ruler of men should fear only that the grace of his moral power does not extend to them, and need not be suspicious of those who are not of his kind. If the grace of his moral power extends far enough, then even the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters can become like members of the family; but if he is overly suspicious, then even his own kin cannot help but become his enemies.

夷狄亦人耳，其情與中夏不殊。人主患德澤不加，不必猜忌異類。蓋德澤洽，則四夷可使如一家；猜忌多，則骨肉不免爲讎敵。¹²

As I mentioned in the preamble to Part 1, it is common for historians to pair these statements with Taizong's claim to love Chinese and barbarians equally, and then conclude that they together reveal the secret of Taizong's success as an empire-builder, as well as the essence of a "cosmopolitan" early Tang *zeitgeist*.¹³ Avoiding this generalizing and essentializing approach, I would argue that Taizong's rhetoric of barbarian humanity and trustworthiness should be read as part of an ongoing debate over the strategic merits of the Goguryeo expedition; furthermore, this rhetoric can only be fully understood in the context of dehumanizing rhetorical tropes about barbarian ingratitude and perfidy that were frequently used during and immediately after the short but momentous Tang conflict with the Eastern Türks in 625–630. I turn now to tracing the rhetorical dimensions of that conflict and their tenuous relationship with reality.

The trope of barbarian perfidy in Tang relations with the Eastern Türks

During Tang Gaozu's rebellion against the Sui, he established a relationship of either diplomatic equality (known as "the ritual protocol of equally-matched states" 敵國禮) or vassalage with the Eastern Türk khaganate in exchange for military support. As a result, he wrote to the khagan of the Eastern Türks in the language of state letters, rather than that of imperial edicts.¹⁴ By 625, the Tang had eliminated all its major Chinese rivals, and Gaozu consequently

¹² THY 94.1690; ZZTJ 197.6215–6216.

¹³ Even Skaff's more cautious analysis, which uses only the *Zizhi tongjian* version, claims that "a cosmopolitan perspective is stressed, justifying the inclusion of people of different ethnicities in the family." Skaff also uses this passage as evidence that Tang emperors had a "patrimonial conception" of the empire as a big family, but I would argue against reading too much into Taizong's familial metaphor. Taizong's intention seems to have been to set up a rhetorical contrast between completely foreign barbarians on one hand and a ruler's own kin or ministers (depending on the version used) on the other. Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 92.

¹⁴ There are hints in the sources that some "strategic ambiguity" in this arrangement allowed the Eastern Türk khagan to regard Gaozu as a vassal, rather than an equal. Alternatively (as Chu Chen-hung argues), Gaozu may have originally established a relationship of vassalage to the Eastern Türks but unilaterally switched to one of diplomatic equality at a later point, perhaps around 621. During the Sui-Tang transition, some of Gaozu's warlord rivals received the title "khagan" from the Eastern Türk khagan as a symbol of their submission to his suzerainty, but if

decided to change his foreign policy and began making military preparations for a major war with the Eastern Türks. A few months after receiving the Goguryeo embassy mentioned earlier, Gaozu renounced the protocol of diplomatic equality with the Eastern Türks, instructing his ministers that henceforth, the ‘Il Khagan 頡利可汗 (d. 634)¹⁵ was to be addressed as a vassal of the Tang empire. Gaozu justified this decision to his ministers with the following pronouncement:

In the past, because the Central Plains remained unstable and the Türks were still strong, I was concerned that they might raid the frontier, and therefore accorded them a ritual protocol equivalent to that of an equally-matched state. Now, since they have the faces of men and the hearts of beasts, and have disregarded their covenant [with us], [I am] finally making plans to attack and conquer them; there is no place for further forbearance [toward them.] From now on, state letters [to their khagan] are to be changed to the form of edicts.

往以中原未定，突厥方強，吾慮其擾邊，禮同敵國。今既人面獸心，不顧盟誓，方爲攻取之計，無容更事姑息。其後書改爲敕詔。¹⁶

As we have seen, Ban Gu’s denigration of the Xiongnu “barbarians” as having the hearts of beasts had been part of a larger argument about the pointlessness of warring with them over control of the Western Regions. Gaozu’s rhetoric turned it into an argument that the Türks, not having human hearts, therefore lacked something fundamental to proper human relationships: the ability to keep one’s word. But this association of faithlessness with both barbarism and animalistic behavior was not a Tang innovation and in fact predates Ban Gu: it appears already in a fictionalized account of the famous “salt and iron” debate at the Han court in 81 BC. This account, which may have been written decades after the actual event, depicts Sang Hongyang 桑弘羊 (152–80 BC) and other ministers who supported the continuation of Han Wudi’s expensive policy of war against the Xiongnu, sparring rhetorically (and largely unsuccessfully) with Classicist critics who favored a reversion to the former *heqin* 和親 peace treaty. At one point, Sang Hongyang dismisses the idea of *heqin* as naïve and futile by claiming classical authority for the idea of barbarian perfidy:

Gaozu did so as well, Tang records avoided any mention of it. See the recent discussions of this issue in Li, *Han Tang fanshu tizhi yanjiu*, 329–331, 335–337; Wang, “Ideas concerning Diplomacy and Foreign Policy,” 240–243; Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 50–82, 114–115. On the Chinese “khagans” of the Sui-Tang transition, see Michael R. Drompp, “Chinese ‘Qaghans’ Appointed by the Türks,” *T’ang Studies* 25 (2007), 188–195.

¹⁵ I have followed Christopher Atwood’s recently proposed reconstruction of this title rather than the more common reconstruction *Illig*, which he finds “quite impossible.” Beckwith’s *Hellig and Ellig* would seem to be variants of *Illig*. See Atwood, “The Notion of Tribe in Medieval China,” 609 n. 52; Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, 125.

¹⁶ CFYG 990.11470 (cf. THY 94.1688; XTS 215.6033; ZZTJ 191.5996). The second and third lines of this passage are wrongly punctuated in the new edition of the *Cefu yuangui*. The *Tang huiyao* misdates the pronouncement to 626.

The *Chunqiu* does not approve of barbarians (Yi-Di) capturing [rulers or ministers of] the Central Lands, because of their faithlessness.¹⁷ The Xiongnu are greedy wolves who move to attack whenever an opportunity presents itself, rising like a tempest and arriving like lightning. You wish to rely on a heart of sincerity and trustworthiness, as well as gifts of gold and silk, and to trust the devious ways of those without integrity. But that is like being friendly with [the infamous rebel leaders] Bandit Zhi and Zhuang Qiao, or rearing a ferocious tiger.

《春秋》不與夷狄之執中國，爲其無信也。匈奴貪狼，因時而動，乘可而發，飄舉電至。而欲以誠信之心，金帛之寶，而信無義之詐，是猶親跼躄而扶猛虎也。¹⁸

It should be noted that the Classicists in this account were, like Ban Gu later on, no less prepared to denigrate the Xiongnu in the interests of peace. Whereas pro-war arguments in the debate dehumanized the Xiongnu in order to allege their perfidy and the impossibility of lasting peace, the anti-war or anti-expansionist arguments dismissed these tent-dwelling, fur-wearing nomads as “no better than the elaphures of the Central Lands” 如中國之麋鹿耳 in order to assert that they were not worth the effort and expense of conquering.¹⁹

¹⁷ The line 不與夷狄之執中國 is found in the Gongyang commentary to the *Chunqiu* record for Lord Yin Year 7 隱公七年 (716 BC) and Lord Xi Year 21 僖公二十一年 (639 BC). In both cases, the “barbarians” are the southern state of Chu. The second part about faithlessness is not found in the Gongyang commentary and was tacked on in order to adapt the classical quotation to the argument that follows. See GYZS 3.57, 11.243.

¹⁸ YTL 8.508, cf. 8.514. On Bandit Zhi, see the “Dao Zhi” 盜跖 chapter of the *Zhuangzi*; on Zhuang Qiao, see the recent article by Xu Fuhong 許富宏, “Zhuang Qiao bao Ying’ kao,” “莊躄暴郢” 考, *Chuanshan yuekan* 船山月刊 2010(1), 105–107. David Honey argues that the stereotype of steppe nomads as motivated by greed “appears early and often in Chinese historical literature,” citing statements made about the Xiongnu by Sima Qian, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (ca. 198–ca. 107 BC), and Ban Gu at SJ 110.2879, HS 94.3831, and HS 94.3834 respectively. It should be noted, however, that the stereotype of the avaricious nomad is not equivalent to that of the perfidious or disloyal barbarian, and Honey himself distinguishes between the two stereotypes. In particular, Dong Zhongshu’s argument assumes that despite Xiongnu disregard for humaneness and moral duty, their greed was matched by their respect for oaths made to Heaven and their love for their sons. Hence his argument that peace with the Xiongnu could be secured through a combination of gift-giving, formal covenants, and exchange of princes as political hostages. The only Han-period instances of an overlap between stereotypes of Xiongnu greed and Xiongnu perfidy are the pro-war arguments in the *Yantie lun* and a pro-war memorial from AD 51 (HHS 18.695–696). See David B. Honey, “History and Historiography on the Sixteen States: Some T’ang *Topoi* on the Nomads,” *Journal of Asian History* 23-24 (1989–1990), 172–173; also Denis Sinor, “The Greed of the Northern Barbarians,” in Larry V. Clark and Paul Alexander Draghi eds., *Aspects of Altaic Civilization II* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Studies, 1978), 171–182.

¹⁹ The elaphure is also known as Père David’s Deer. Wang Liqi’s modern annotation to this passage makes a point of alerting the reader that this is “ethnic chauvinist speech that is insulting to ethnic minorities.” A recent study of the “salt and iron” debate claims that the two sides were “fundamentally divided by their differing convictions about non-Han people,” overlooking the fact that the “Confucian” pro-*heqin* party’s rhetoric could be as ethnocentric as the pro-war party’s. See YTL 7.444–445, 448; Xiaoye You, “Building Empire through Argumentation: Debating Salt and Iron in Western Han China,” *College English* 74.2 (2010), 376–377.

The same trope of barbarian perfidy acquired great importance in early Tang foreign policy rhetoric, mainly in the Tang court's efforts to justify breaking peace agreements with the Eastern Türks by accusing them of being incapable of honoring such agreements in the first place.²⁰ Chinese sources, which are based on Tang court records, naturally give a distinctly one-sided picture of the deteriorating relationship between the Tang and the Eastern Türks. They blame the 'Il Khagan for constantly launching raids on Tang-controlled prefectures—often in concert with Chinese warlords on the northern frontier—and for making arrogant and insatiable demands for tribute that Gaozu always bent over backwards to meet. Some sources also claim that both the 'Il Khagan and his predecessor, the *Chora Khagan 處羅可汗 (d. 620), had hopes of restoring the Sui dynasty to power under one of Yangdi's grandsons, to whom the Eastern Türks had given asylum in 620.²¹

But a more likely root cause for the downward spiral in relations is that Gaozu was no longer content to remain a vassal to the Eastern Türks and had adopted an increasingly defiant stance toward the Türks in the years leading up to his renunciation of diplomatic equality. As Chu Chen-hung has shown, Gaozu had begun cutting back on symbolic but obligatory gestures of obeisance to the 'Il Khagan and making efforts to secure a strategic alliance with the Eastern Türks' strongest rival, the Western Türk khaganate. Moreover, there is good reason to suspect that Gaozu was not as cooperative with tribute payments as the sources claim: his last recorded payment was in the spring of 622, and came at the end of a prolonged diplomatic standoff. Gaozu's provocative actions forced the 'Il Khagan into a pattern of making raids on the Tang, followed by offers of peace, in order to pressure him into honoring the vassalage agreement. From 622 to 625, the Eastern Türks made an offer of peace to the Tang at least once every year, usually after a major raid.²² It was thus Gaozu who first broke the covenant he had made with the

²⁰ A slightly earlier precedent for the stereotype may exist in a memorial by the Sui general Duan Wenzhen 段文振 (d. 612) at Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 60.1459, but this could well be a result of editorial intervention by Wei Zheng. Much of the memorial's rhetoric and reasoning are suspiciously reminiscent of Wei's arguments from the Eastern Türk resettlement debate of 630 (more on which below).

²¹ The Chora Khagan set up a Sui "royal court" at Dingxiang 定襄 (modern Horinger county 和林格爾縣), and allegedly made plans to seize Bingzhou 并州 (Taiyuan 太原) as a new base for it. But this plan was disrupted by his sudden death, and the 'Il Khagan—despite expressing agreement with the idea of a Sui restoration—seems to have made no concerted effort to reestablish Sui rule further south than Dingxiang. It is interesting that the Chinese sources claiming a Sui restorationist agenda for the two khagans (who were brothers) represent their motivation as one of gratitude to Sui Wendi, who had given sanctuary and military support to their father at a crucial point in a civil war among the Eastern Türks. After the Eastern Türk khaganate collapsed, Taizong claimed that this was divine retribution for the ingratitude that the 'Il Khagan and Chora Khagan had shown to Sui Wendi's descendants. But Taizong's claim is clearly not borne out by the facts; it was probably aimed at whitewashing his own betrayal of the peace covenant he had made with the 'Il Khagan in 626. TD 197.5407–5408; THY 94.1688; JTS 194.5154–5155, 5159–5161; XTS 215.6029–6030, 6036, 6038; ZZTJ 188.5878, 5896, 189.5907. See also Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 39–41.

²² The diplomatic standoff began in 620 when the Eastern Türks detained the Tang ambassador Zheng Yuanshu 鄭元璿 (d. 646) on suspicion of assassinating the Chora Khagan by poison—an intriguing accusation but unfortunately now unprovable. The Türks later detained two other Tang ambassadors, at least one of them for refusing to perform ceremonial prostration before the 'Il Khagan. Gaozu detained at least two Eastern Türk ambassadors in retaliation, but in the spring of 622, he released them and made a tribute payment in order to secure the return of the three Tang ambassadors. Gaozu also agreed to give a Tang princess in marriage to the 'Il Khagan, but did not follow through on

Eastern Türks, and it was the Türks who were interested in restoring the covenant. But Gaozu clearly felt a need to assert the justness of his cause by claiming the opposite to be true.

The last straw for the ‘Il Khagan probably came in the late spring of 626, when a Tang embassy was found plotting to assassinate him. That autumn, the Eastern Türks’ last and largest raid on the Tang reached the Wei River immediately north of Chang’an. The raid coincided with Gaozu’s forced abdication and Taizong’s accession, and left Taizong with no choice but to reverse the policy of armed confrontation and personally renew the vassalage relationship with the ‘Il Khagan via a formal covenant.²³ But the balance of power between the two sides suddenly changed in the winter, when heavy snow on the Mongolian steppe made grazing impossible and thus wiped out large numbers of livestock. The resulting famine among the Eastern Türks forced the ‘Il Khagan to impose levies of food on the eastern Tegreg divisions, who were themselves suffering from starvation and bitter cold. The resentful Tegreg rose in revolt, plunging the Eastern Türk khaganate into a major crisis.²⁴ In the autumn of 627, news of this crisis prompted calls at the Tang court for an attack on the Eastern Türks. Taizong summoned his chief ministers Xiao Yu 蕭瑀 (574–647) and Zhangsun Wuji 長孫無忌 (d. 659) to a private consultation, and asked them whether the empire should honor the recently renewed peace agreement or seize the opportunity to launch an attack. Xiao Yu favored the latter option, which both he and Taizong justified by invoking a line from the *Zuozhuan* and the *Shangshu*, “conquer [enemy states when they are] weak and attack [them when they are] confused” 兼弱攻昧.²⁵ Zhangsun Wuji, on the

this. Note that in the autumn of 622, when Zheng Yuanshu met the ‘Il Khagan to negotiate peace after one of the Eastern Türk raids, each accused the other side of bad faith, listing examples to substantiate his case. According to our sources, Zheng won the argument and reduced every Türk at the scene to a state of mortified speechlessness. We have no way of knowing what actually happened, since Zheng’s report to the Tang court was obviously prone to self-promotion and exaggeration. TD 197.5408–5409; THY 94.1688; CFYG 980.11344, 990.11469 (cf. JTS 63.2397; XTS 100.3930); JTS 60.2350, 62.2379–2380, 194.5155–5156; XTS 1.16–19, 78.3525, 100.3938, 215.6030–6032; ZZTJ 189.5911–5912, 190.5948, 5954–5955, 5973, 5991–5993, 5997. Chu Chen-hung’s analysis of the reasons for the Eastern Türk raids is in *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 109–116. Beckwith is essentially correct that “there was usually a good reason for the Türk actions,” but it is unclear what he means by the assertion, “When more historical information is available, it is clear that they were not raids”—see *Empires of the Silk Road*, 125.

²³ For the assassination plot, see ZZTJ 191.6000. For the Wei River raid and covenant, see THY 94.1688–1689; TD 197.5409–5410; CFYG 990.11470, 991.11474–11475; JTS 194.5157–5158; XTS 215.6032–6034; ZZTJ 191.5996, 6018–6020. See also the recent reinterpretations of these events in Wang, “Ideas concerning Diplomacy and Foreign Policy,” 251–254; Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 97–140.

²⁴ The Mongols refer to this kind of snowfall-induced famine as a *zud*. TD 197.5411; JTS 109.3289, 194.5158–5159; XTS 111.4114, 215.6034; ZZTJ 192.6037, 6045–6046.

²⁵ The *Shangshu* chapter containing this line, “Zhonghui zhi gao 仲虺之誥” (The Announcement of Zhonghui), was actually a forgery from the early fourth century AD, but its authenticity went unquestioned in the Tang period. The forger copied this line from *Zuozhuan* 左傳, Lord Xuan, Year 12 宣公十二年 (597 BC): “To conquer [enemy states when they are] weak and attack [them when they are] confused is a good military strategy” 兼弱攻昧, 武之善經也, and paired it with another phrase, “Conquer [enemy states when they are] in disorder and invade [them when they are close to] destruction” 取亂侮亡, which the same *Zuozhuan* passage directly attributes to Zhonghui. Tang Taizong’s initial question to Xiao Yu and Zhangsun Wuji uses the latter phrase as well. See SSZY 8.197; ZZZY 23.638.

other hand, argued that it was better to preserve the peace agreement and maintain a defensive strategy, as the Tang army was not ready for a long range expedition to the steppe. Taizong accepted Zhangsun's advice.²⁶

Soon afterward, the 'Il Khagan led a large hunting expedition to the Tang frontier prefecture of Shuozhou 朔州, incurring allegations that he was trying to pre-empt a Tang invasion by keeping an eye on its most likely staging point. It is possible that the khagan was indeed hunting for wild game south of the Gobi Desert, but even if he was indeed motivated by concerns about Tang intentions, these concerns were not unfounded. The same members of Taizong's court who had earlier urged an attack on the weakened Türks now sought to use the Shuozhou incident as a pretext for it:

The barbarians are faithless, and [yet] they were the first to have groundless suspicions [toward us]. After making a covenant with us, they suddenly brought an army to trample on our frontier territory. We can take advantage of this opportunity to rebuke them for breaking the agreement, and then attack them.

夷狄無信，先自猜疑。盟後將兵，忽踐疆境。可乘其便，數其背約，因而討之。

Despite having decided against such an expedition for pragmatic reasons, Taizong replied to his courtiers' warmongering with a stirring homily on the importance of trustworthiness:

Even a commoner who makes a promise has to keep it—how much more so for the lord of all under heaven! To make peace with [the Türks] in person, then seek to profit from their calamity, taking advantage of a time of crisis and danger to conquer them—how could this be done? You honorable sirs may find it acceptable, but We will not do it. Even if all the divisions of the Türks revolt and all their livestock die, We will still show them good faith and not attack them without cause. [We shall] wait until they give offense (literally “lack ritual”) before conquering them.

匹夫一言，尚須存信，何況天下主乎！豈有親與之和，利其災禍而乘危迫險以滅之耶？諸公爲可，朕不爲也。縱突厥部落叛盡，六畜皆死，朕終示以信，不妄討之。待其無禮，方擒取耳。²⁷

²⁶ JTS 65.2447; CFYG 991.11475 (cf. XTS 105.4018; ZZTJ 192.6037).

²⁷ JTS 194.5158 (cf. XTS 215.6034; ZZTJ 192.6046).

That Taizong expressed no such noble convictions in the earlier conversation with his chief ministers strongly suggests that this was all rhetorical posturing. We are fortunate that Zhangsun Wuji's official biographies—in the interest of demonstrating his sense of prudence—preserved a record of that conversation, thus inadvertently revealing the reality behind the idealized image that Taizong's public rhetoric was designed to project.

Early in the summer of 628, the Tang court received a call for military support from the *Tölis Khagan 突利可汗 (d. 631), a subordinate of the 'Il Khagan who had fallen out with him after being punished for failing to defeat the Tegreg divisions. The 'Il Khagan, who now saw the Tölis Khagan as no less a traitor than the Tegreg, had begun waging open war on him.²⁸ Taizong had sworn an oath of brotherhood with the Tölis Khagan in 624²⁹, and he sought his ministers' advice on whether to honor this oath or to instead honor the peace covenant with the 'Il Khagan. Du Ruhui 杜如晦 (585–630), returning to the theme of barbarian perfidy, argued that oaths and covenants were simply irrelevant compared to the just cause of vanquishing the Türks:

The barbarians are faithless and have long been so. Though our empire may keep faith with them, they are sure to betray it. It would be better to use their state of disorder as an opportunity to conquer them; this is what [the Classics] call the way of “conquering [enemy states when they are] in disorder and invading [them when they are close to] destruction.”

夷狄無信，其來自久。國家雖爲守信，彼必背之。不若因其亂而取之，所謂取亂侮亡之道也。³⁰

Du Ruhui was quoting the same line from the *Zuozhuan* and the *Shangshu* that Taizong and Xiao Yu had used in 627. Although the stereotype of “Confucian” pacifism remains prevalent in modern scholarship, we see from examples like this that the Classics could also provide

²⁸ The Tölis Khagan was a nephew of the 'Il Khagan and the only other Eastern Türk leader at the time to hold a khaganal title. His base of operations was the easternmost part of the Eastern Türk khaganate, overseeing subject peoples like the Kitans and the Kai/Qay 奚. TD 197.5411; CFYG 991.11475; JTS 194.5158, 5160–5161; XTS 215.6034, 6038; ZZTJ 192.6049.

²⁹ Chen Yinke argued that the oath-swearing took place in 617, around the time that Gaozu seized control of Chang'an. Chu Chen-hung argues that it took place in 620–624, most probably mid-623. But I see no reason to reject the original account found in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu*, and *Zizhi tongjian*, which states that the oath was sworn in the autumn of 624, when Taizong (then still the Prince of Qin 秦王) conducted peace negotiations with a large Eastern Türk raiding expedition led by both the 'Il Khagan and the Tölis Khagan. According to this account, Taizong falsely claimed during the negotiations to have previously sworn an oath of brotherhood with the Tölis Khagan, in order to sow distrust between him and the 'Il Khagan. But after the negotiations ended, the Tölis Khagan chose to swear a real oath with Taizong. See JTS 194.5156, 5160; XTS 215.6031; ZZTJ 191.5991–5993 (cf. TD 197.5409, 5412); Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 129 n. 116.

³⁰ JTS 194.5158, 5160–5161; CFYG 991.11475 (cf. XTS 215.6034; ZZTJ 192.6049–6050).

ideological justification for opportunistic military aggression. The sources state that this time, Taizong was persuaded that the time was ripe to move against the Eastern Türks. We are not told the reasons for this, but it probably had little to do with the authority of the Classics and the trope of barbarian perfidy (both of which had already been used the year before), and much to do with the increased vulnerability of the Türks.

On the military front, Taizong almost immediately launched an attack on the ‘Il Khagan’s last remaining Chinese warlord vassal, Liang Shidu 梁師都, perceiving that the Tegreg revolt had severely reduced the Eastern Türks’ ability and willingness to protect him. A Tang army defeated Liang and a contingent of Eastern Türk reinforcements in the field, laid siege to his stronghold of Shuofang 朔方 (modern Jingbian county 靖邊縣) at the southern end of the Ordos plateau, and soon induced such despair within its walls that Liang’s own cousin murdered him and surrendered the city. On the diplomatic front, Taizong ordered Tang forces to facilitate the Tölis Khagan’s defection, and also dispatched an emissary to the steppe to make contact with the Syr-Yanda and offer their leader, *Īnanch 夷男 (d. 645), the imperial court’s official recognition as khagan of the Tegreg divisions.³¹ By the autumn of 629, the Eastern Türks had lost control of the steppe to the Tegreg and retreated to the southern edge of the Gobi Desert. The ‘Il Khagan was in desperate enough straits to offer to submit to Tang suzerainty in exchange for aid against his enemies. Taizong, who had hitherto avoided a direct clash with the Eastern Türks, recognized this as a sign that the khaganate was on its last legs and came up with a convenient but disingenuous reason to deliver the *coup de grâce*: by sending troops to aid Liang Shidu more than a year before, the ‘Il Khagan had breached the covenant of 626 and thus rendered it void—never mind that it was almost certainly the Tang that had first broken the covenant by attacking another Eastern Türk vassal.³²

That winter, Tang armies began a general offensive on Eastern Türk positions south of the Gobi. The Türks on the Ordos plateau—about 10,000 families who had been there since the end of the Sui—were the first to surrender, soon after suffering a major defeat by Tang troops.³³ In the early spring, armies commanded by Li Jing 李靖 (571–649) and Li Shiji drove the ‘Il Khagan and the remaining Eastern Türks into the Yin Mountains 陰山. The ‘Il Khagan then began negotiating terms of surrender with a team of Tang envoys that Taizong had sent to his

³¹ For details and dates of Liang Shidu’s downfall, see JTS 2.34, 56.2281; XTS 2.29, 87.3731; ZZTJ 192.6050. On developments at Taiyuan and the Tölis Khagan’s eventual defection to the Tang in the winter of 629–630, see TD 197.5411–5412; THY 94.1689; CFYG 991.11475; JTS 194.5158–5159, 5161; XTS 215.6034; ZZTJ 193.6067. On Tang recognition of Īnanch, see THY 96.1726; CFYG 964.11167; JTS 199.5344; XTS 217.6134–6135; ZZTJ 193.6061–6062. Given the theme of this chapter, it is somewhat ironic that Īnanch, the Turkic name that best corresponds to the Chinese transliteration 夷男, means “trust, confidence, belief.”

³² TD 197.5411; JTS 62.2380, 194.5159; XTS 100.3938; ZZTJ 193.6065; see also David Graff’s assessment of Taizong’s *casus belli* at “Strategy and Contingency in the Tang Defeat of the Eastern Turks, 629–630,” in Nicola Di Cosmo ed., *Warfare in Inner Asian History, 500–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 48–49.

³³ XTS 215.6035; ZZTJ 193.6066–6067. On Eastern Türk occupation of the Ordos plateau from 618 to 630, see Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 102–105, 149, 154–156.

camp. Meanwhile, the two Tang generals and their troops—driven by a desire for glory and quite likely riches as well—made plans for an unauthorized surprise attack on the Eastern Türk camp. They justified their perfidy by claiming that the khagan’s surrender was merely a ruse to buy time for an escape into the steppe, and reasoned that the envoys were expendable for the sake of ensuring the Eastern Türks’ total defeat. At dawn, under cover of fog, 10,000 Tang cavalrymen charged the camp without warning, slaughtering an equivalent number of Türks and capturing around 100,000 more. The prisoners and their livestock were then taken south to the Ordos plateau, where Tang troops could guard them more closely. It soon emerged, through an investigation by the Director of the Censorate 御史大夫, that Li Jing had given his soldiers full liberty to pillage the Türks’ treasures, none of which could be traced after the attack.³⁴

The Eastern Türk resettlement debate

The sudden capture of 100,000 Eastern Türks set the stage for a famous debate at the Tang court on the question of how—and indeed, whether—they were to be integrated into the empire.³⁵ A few recent studies have analyzed the positions taken in this unusually well-documented debate, but surprisingly, none has noted the oddly dissimulating quality of the rhetoric with which it was conducted. The participating ministers took care to maintain the official fiction that the Eastern Türks were refugees whom the Tang had magnanimously received with open arms, rather than prisoners of war who had lost their freedom and possessions as the result of an opportunistic Tang assault. Thus, instead of acknowledging that the Türks had legitimate grounds for grievance against the Tang, the debate tended to revolve around the red herring of whether they were capable of repaying Taizong’s kindness with sincere gratitude and loyalty.

³⁴ The ‘Il Khagan himself escaped from the attack, but was eventually betrayed and captured by the Tang. The Tang envoys were able to escape harm as well. Taizong was initially incensed at Li Jing’s connivance in the looting of the Türks (his attitude toward the preceding surprise attack is not recorded), but soon dropped the matter for fear that he would be seen as punishing a successful general. Taizong then publicly dismissed the censorial charges as slander driven by jealousy, and saw to it that Li Jing received ample reward for his victory over the Eastern Türks. The *Da Tang xinyu* and the *Jiu Tangshu* identify the minister who headed the censorial investigation against Li Jing as Wen Yanbo, but the *Xin Tangshu* and *Zizhi tongjian* (supposedly following the *Taizong shilu*) identify him as Xiao Yu, who replaced Wen as the Director of the Censorate when Wen was appointed Director of the Secretariat 中書令 (equivalent to the rank of chief minister) shortly after the Yin Mountains attack. DTXY 7.106; TD 197.5411–5412, 5414; JTS 3.39, 67.2479–2480, 2485–2486, 83.2777, 194.5159; XTS 2.31, 93.3814, 3818, 111.4137, 215.6034–6035; ZZTJ 193.6070–6073, 6078.

³⁵ It should be noted that although every argument made in the debate refers to all 100,000 prisoners as Türks, we know from other sources that they also included a large number of Sogdian immigrants who had played important roles in the Eastern Türk khaganate. Also captured, but presumably excluded from the prisoner count, were as many as 80,000 Chinese refugees and slaves, whom the Tang court later “redeemed” 贖 from the Türks with a payment of gold and silk. Skaff points out that it is impossible to know how many of these had joined the Türks willingly. XTS 215.6036; ZZTJ 193.6087; Pulleyblank, “A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia”; Chen Haitao 陳海濤 and Liu Huiqin 劉惠琴, *Laizi wenming shizi lukou de minzu—Tangdai ruhua Suteran yanjiu* 來自文明十字路口的民族—唐代入華粟特人研究 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2006), 154–157; Jonathan Karam Skaff, “Survival in the Frontier Zone: Comparative Perspectives on Identity and Political Allegiance in China’s Inner Asian Borderlands during the Sui-Tang Dynastic Transition (617–630),” *Journal of World History* 15.2 (2004), 123 n.8.

As a result, historical analyses of the debate that take its rhetoric at face value tend to interpret it as a clash between exclusionist, multiculturalist, and assimilationist ideologies, anachronistically projecting modern debates over immigration and national identity onto the early Tang context. At least one recent Chinese interpretation also reads the debate as a contest between ethnic chauvinism and a more “enlightened” and “tolerant” vision of ethnic harmony.³⁶ I would argue that the Eastern Türks’ status as a resentful, newly subjugated people, and not an immigrant or refugee community or a “national minority,” meant that there were ultimately strategic rather than ideological issues at stake in the question of how they should be treated and how much they could be trusted. It is not impossible that ethnic prejudices influenced the positions taken in the resettlement debate, but I will attempt to show that differing strategic assessments and understandings of history lay at the root of the disagreement, while barbarophilic and barbarophobic rhetoric served mainly to add force to the arguments.

One early proposal—the originator of which has gone unrecorded—called for the Türk divisions to be broken up and their members distributed to prefectures across the southern end of the North China Plain, where they would be added to the tax registers and made to take up farming. This idea was initially popular at court, but suffered defeat at the hands of the new chief minister Wen Yanbo. Wen argued that moving the Türks so far south and forcing them to give up their “native customs” 土俗 would be violating “the innate nature of things” 物性 and the “way of accommodating and nurturing” 含育之道; breaking up their divisions would also demonstrate that the court had a “distrustful heart” 猜心. It would be much better to let them continue their pastoral way of life on the Ordos plateau, as Guangwudi had done with the Southern Xiongnu after their submission to the Eastern Han in AD 48. Wen Yanbo’s argument in turn met with opposition from Wei Zheng, who reminded Taizong that the Eastern Türks were the Tang empire’s most dangerous enemy and suggested that the best way to deal with them was utter extermination. But since it would be immoral to massacre a people who had already surrendered, the next best option, according to Wei, was to send them back to the edge of the Gobi Desert. By no means should they be left on the Ordos plateau, where their large numbers and proximity to Chang’an were sure to make them “a disease of the heart and stomach” 心腹之疾, a direct threat to the empire’s political center.³⁷

Wei Zheng attempted to reinforce his argument with language about the inherent faithlessness of barbarians:

³⁶ Pan, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, 183–187 and “Integration of the Northern Ethnic Frontiers in Tang China,” *The Chinese Historical Review* 19.1 (2012), 10–15; Cui and Ma, *Sui-Tang minzu guanxi sixiangshi*, 109–128; Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 55–57; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 146–147; Fan Wenli 樊文禮, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu—xianqin zhi Sui-Tang* 儒家民族思想研究—先秦至隋唐 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2011), 205–206.

³⁷ WZG 2.16; ZGZY 9.499; THY 73.1312–1313; JTS 61.2361, 194.5162; CFYG 991.11475–11476 (cf. TD 197.5414; XTS 215.6037; ZZTJ 193.6075–6076).

The Xiongnu have the faces of men and the hearts of beasts; they are not of our kind. When strong, they are sure to raid and pillage us, and only when weakened do they abase themselves and submit. They have no regard for gratitude—that is their inborn nature.

匈奴人面獸心，非我族類。強必寇盜，弱則卑服。不顧恩義，其天性也。³⁸

The archaizing reference to the Eastern Türks as Xiongnu makes Wei Zheng's allusion to the *Hanshu* Xiongnu Appraisal particularly obvious. Ironically, Wei would later echo Ban Gu's praise for the Koreans' excellent inborn nature, showing that his use of barbarophobic rhetoric was as selective as Ban's. Wei's worries about the Türks were not unfounded, although their expression in dehumanizing rhetoric may cause the modern reader to underestimate their practical basis. Both the Han and Sui empires had witnessed the ability of steppe peoples like the Xiongnu and the Türks to free themselves from Chinese domination after periods of weakness and subjection. This mainly reflects the considerable logistical, military, and administrative challenges that Chinese empires faced in maintaining firm control over such mobile frontier communities, but during the Han period, some hawkish members of the military attributed the strong Xiongnu desire for independence to some moral defect that made them inherently rebellious and ungrateful. By Wei Zheng's time this idea had become an integral aspect of the trope of barbarian perfidy, as seen also from Cen Wenben's slightly later denigration of all barbarians as "defiant when strong and submissive when weak" in the *Zhoushu*.³⁹ Ethnographic descriptions of the Türks in both the *Zhoushu* and the *Suishu* also highlight their cultural similarity to the Xiongnu, suggesting that early Tang ministers saw the two peoples as essentially alike.⁴⁰ This accounts in part for the tendency on both sides of the resettlement debate to use the history of the Xiongnu to make predictions about what the Türks would do.

³⁸ Ibid. For the phrase "they are not of our kind (*zulei* 族類)," see *Zuozhuan*, Lord Cheng Year 4 成公四年 (587 BC). Lydia Liu and Yuri Pines have recently rejected an ethnic or racist interpretation of the *Zuozhuan* quotation, pointing out that in its original context *zulei* referred to clan lineage, not ethnic or racial group. While this is a valid criticism, it is nonetheless important to recognize that the practice of misinterpreting or reinterpreting the *Zuozhuan* quotation has a long history. In the *Jinshu* 晉書 (compiled in 646–648), such an interpretation is attributed to late third-century Western Jin officials warning the emperor about the risk of rebellion by Xiongnu and Qiang divisions who had been resettled within the empire. Even if the language of the Jin officials' arguments was a product of rewriting by the early Tang editors of the *Jinshu*, this together with Wei Zheng's argument still demonstrate that an ethnic interpretation of the *Zuozhuan* quotation existed by the early seventh century. It should also be noted, however, that the phrase "their hearts are sure to be different" is much more ambiguous than the "faces of men and hearts of beasts" stereotype, since the difference could lie in the object of one's loyalty (e.g., one's own kinship group or ethnic group) rather than one's capacity to remain loyal to anyone. See ZZZY 26.717; JS 56.1531–1532, 101.2646; Liu, *The Clash of Empires*, 72–73; Pines, "Beasts or Humans," 88–89 n. 94; also Tamara T. Chin, "Antiquarian as Ethnographer: Han Ethnicity in Early China Studies," in Thomas S. Mullaney, James Leibold, Stéphane Gros, and Eric Vanden Bussche eds., *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 130–135.

³⁹ For Han precedents, see HS 94.3803–3804; HHS 18.695–696.

⁴⁰ ZS 50.909; Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 84.1864.

Despite Wei Zheng's harsh rhetoric about the Eastern Türks, his proposal of returning them to the edge of the Gobi seems on the surface to be more charitable to them than Wen Yanbo's, since it would effectively have restored the *status quo ante bellum* and allowed the Türks to live relatively free of Tang control and interference. If Wen Yanbo's priority really was to let the Türks keep their original way of life, the debate would have ended at this point. In reality, however, Wen is likely to have been aware that the Türks, given their severely weakened and impoverished state, would ultimately be forced to join the Syr-Yanda khaganate if left to fend for themselves at the edge of the Gobi. Wen's recent experience of being held by the Türks as a prisoner of war in "the bitterly cold parts of the Yin Mountains" 陰山苦寒之地 in 625–626 made him intimately familiar with that area's inhospitable aspects.⁴¹ It was also known to the Tang court that a number of Türks who escaped the Yin Mountains attack had returned to the steppe and submitted to the Syr-Yanda—perhaps a more palatable option to them than becoming prisoners of the Chinese.⁴² I would thus suggest that there was an unspoken dilemma at the center of the resettlement debate: while settlement on the Ordos plateau would place the Türks within striking range of Chang'an, it would also keep them beyond the reach of the Syr-Yanda khaganate, thus ensuring that they did not end up becoming a part of it.

As for the question of which was a worse possible outcome for the Tang—the Eastern Türks becoming an internal threat, or their merging with the Syr-Yanda to pose an external threat—we may infer that Wei Zheng focused on the former, Wen Yanbo on the latter. Wen's citing of historical precedent also hinted that if the Eastern Türks were allowed to recover their strength on the Ordos plateau, they could eventually be used against the Syr-Yanda, just as the Eastern Han had used the Southern Xiongnu to attack the Northern Xiongnu. Since the Syr-Yanda were still officially Tang allies, no one at court could acknowledge such cynical considerations openly. But without understanding this subtext, it is very difficult to discern any rationality in Wen Yanbo's subsequent insistence that the Ordos, and not the edge of the Gobi, was the right place for the Türks. Indeed, we can get some sense of Wen's underlying concerns from a remark he reportedly made toward the end of the resettlement debate: "Since we have taken [the Türks] in, it would be a great pity to send them away for no good reason!" 既已納之，無故遣去，深為可惜!⁴³ Clearly the Türks themselves would not have seen it that way.

⁴¹ JTS 61.2361; XTS 91.3782. Skaff, Fan Wenli, and Pan Yihong argue that this experience gave Wen "an optimistic attitude toward the Türks" and an ability to see them as human beings capable of adopting Chinese ways. However, this counter-intuitive argument rests on the flawed assumption that most other Tang officials could not recognize the humanity of the Türks. In that case, the initial popularity of the equally "optimistic" proposal to convert the Türks into tax-paying farmers is difficult to understand. See Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 57; Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang*, 206–207; Pan, "Integration of the Northern Ethnic Frontiers in Tang China," 12.

⁴² WZG 2.15; JTS 194.5162; CFYG 991.11475; XTS 215.6037; ZZTJ 193.6075.

⁴³ JTS 61.2361.

Wen Yanbo sought to rebut Wei Zheng's arguments by representing his own proposal as being both in the best interest of the Eastern Türks and based on the highest classical ideals. He claimed that Taizong, as the Son of Heaven, had a moral responsibility to succor and protect the helpless Türks, rather than abandon them to their fate—a fate on which he conspicuously chose not to elaborate. The Türks, moved to gratitude by such beneficence, would surely not repay it with rebellion. Wei Zheng responded by pointing to the Xiongnu rebels who had toppled the Western Jin three centuries earlier, in spite of Guangwudi's kindness to their ancestors; the lessons of history had proven that to let the Eastern Türks stay on the Ordos plateau was tantamount to “rearing a tiger to create future danger for oneself” 養虎自遺患.⁴⁴ Wen Yanbo then countered with an assertion that Taizong, being a worthy successor to the sage-kings, possessed sufficient awe-inspiring military strength and moral power to produce lasting loyalty in even barbarians like the Türks. Contradicting his own earlier argument about preserving “native customs,” Wen predicted that if the Türks were taught Chinese “rites and laws” 禮法, they would turn to agriculture on the Ordos within a matter of years. He supported these claims with a quotation from Confucius in the *Analects*, “Where there is [good] teaching, [people] will no longer be divided into categories [of superior and inferior]” 有教無類.⁴⁵ Moreover, the memory of Guangwudi's generosity had kept the Southern Xiongnu loyal to the Eastern Han throughout its history; surely, Wen Yanbo seems to be implying, Taizong was at least Guangwudi's equal in the art of rulership.⁴⁶

Wen Yanbo's strategy of flattering his primary audience was quite brilliant, since further disputation would have forced Wei Zheng to question Taizong's own claims to sageliness. But Wen went even further and turned Wei's arguments against him, asserting that it was much safer to keep the Türks divided between several chieftains on the Ordos than to let them regain independence under a single leader further north. Wen reminded Taizong that Sui Wendi 隋文帝 (r. 581–604) had protected a previous khagan from his enemies and helped him to gain control of the steppe in 599–603, but that khagan's successor eventually turned against the Sui and

⁴⁴ All sources except the *Wei Zhenggong jianlu* have 獸 (“wild beast”) in place of 虎 (“tiger”). This is in compliance with the Tang dynasty's taboo on the name of Taizong's great-grandfather Li Hu 李虎 (d. 551). One might surmise that the *Wei Zhenggong jianlu* does not follow the taboo because it was written during the fifteen-year Zhou 周 interregnum of the female emperor Wu Zhao 武曌 (r. 690–705). On the Western Jin events that Wei Zheng alluded to, see JS 56.1529–1534, 97.2549, 101.2643–2652, 102.2658–2659; Graff, *Medieval Chinese Warfare*, 48–50. The Discourse at JS 103.2702–2703, which comments on the causes and consequences of the Xiongnu revolt, begins with the line, “The barbarians (Rong-Di) have the faces of men and the hearts of beasts; they desert their rulers and kinsmen upon seeing [an opportunity for] profit, and forget humaneness and moral duty upon coming across [an opportunity for] riches” 彼戎狄者，人面獸心，見利則棄君親，臨財則忘仁義者也。The Discourse then remarks on the perils of allowing barbarians to settle within reach of the imperial capital. The similarity between these arguments and Wei Zheng's rhetoric in 630 suggests that his interpretation of the fall of Western Jin exercised some influence on the editors of the *Jinshu* more than fifteen years later. The *Jinshu*'s primary editor, Fang Xuanling, is not on record as having expressed such sentiments during the resettlement debate of 630, even though he was then a chief minister and would have had the opportunity to do so if thus inclined.

⁴⁵ *Analects* 15:39 (see n. 8 above).

⁴⁶ WZG 2.16; TD 197.5415; THY 73.1313–1314; JTS 194.5162–5163; CFYG 991.11476; XTS 215.6037; ZZTJ 193.6076–6077.

besieged Sui Yangdi on the frontier for more than a month in 615.⁴⁷ This argument from precedent indicates that Wen Yanbo actually had no strong belief in Taizong's greater ability to induce gratitude and loyalty in the Türks. Du Chuke 杜楚客 (n.d.), a supporter of Wei Zheng's arguments, pounced on the inconsistency and argued that although the Türks had betrayed Sui Yangdi, Yangdi had brought it upon himself by misruling his empire. How could one conclude from this that the same would happen to Taizong if he restored independence to the Türks? Yet Du Chuke's memorial also employed demonizing and dehumanizing tropes similar to those seen in Wei Zheng's argument: "The northern barbarians (Di) are vicious and violent, with the faces of men and the hearts of beasts" 北狄狼戾，人面獸心。⁴⁸ By this point in the debate, then, both sides were agreed that the Türks could not be trusted to serve the Tang loyally; the disagreement was over where they would do less damage. To the credit of the debate's participants, genocide was never seriously considered as an option—Wei Zheng raised it only to dismiss it as morally unacceptable.

The ministers Li Baiyao 李百藥 (564–647) and Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581–645) and the senior Tang area commander on the Ordos plateau, Dou Jing 竇靜 (d. 635), also submitted memorials in support of Wei Zheng. Yan Shigu seems to have sought to exploit the contradictions in Wen Yanbo's rhetoric, arguing that any attempt to alter the Türks "innate natures" 常性 and make them conform to Chinese ways was sure to fail.⁴⁹ Dou Jing criticized the Ordos resettlement by echoing Wei Zheng's warning about the security risk it would entail, as well as Wei's dehumanizing rhetoric: "Your subject has heard that barbarians (Yi-Di) are similar to birds and beasts; when desperate, they fight and devour one another, and when they congregate, fathers and sons share the same mate" 臣聞夷狄者，同夫禽獸，窮則搏噬，羣則聚麀. Dou claimed that moral teaching and even laws could have no remedial effect on such brutes, contrary to Wen Yanbo's confident claims. It was not that Taizong's moral power was inadequate; rather, barbarians were simply incorrigibly unreliable. Li Daliang, then at Yiwu, also joined in this late phase of the debate. Although Li's memorial was mainly concerned with dissuading Taizong from annexing Yiwu and expanding into the Dzungarian Basin, it ended by arguing that Taizong's generosity to the Eastern Türks was a waste of Chinese tax revenue on "vicious caitiffs with a long history of evildoing" 積惡之兇虜, and that the Türks' resettlement too near to the capital would be deleterious to the empire's internal security in the long run.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ ZGZY 9.503. On the 615 incident, see Chu Chen-hung 朱振宏, "Daye shiyinian (615) 'Yanmen shibian' tanwei" 大業十一年 (615) "雁門事變" 探微, *Dongwu lishi xuebao* 東吳歷史學報 24 (2010), 51–107, which highlights the Sui court's culpability for the breakdown in relations.

⁴⁸ ZGZY 9.503; THY 73.1312–1313.

⁴⁹ Li Baiyao did not explicitly state which proposal he favored, but his strong advocacy for the Eastern Türks to be supervised by a Protector-General based in Dingxiang shows that he supported their settlement on the southern edge of the Gobi, and the *Xin Tangshu* lists him among that proposal's supporters.

⁵⁰ TD 197.5414; ZGZY 9.503–504; THY 73.1311–1313; JTS 61.2369–2370, 62.2389; CFYG 407.4619–4620; XTS 95.3848–3849, 99.3912, 215.6037–6038; ZZTJ 193.6075–6076.

Despite Wen Yanbo's self-contradictory arguments and the vehement criticism directed at his proposal, his renowned eloquence enabled him to win over Taizong and the majority of the court's ministers.⁵¹ Taizong decided to establish three autonomous (that is, "bridled") prefectures for the 'Il Khagan's followers on the southern side of the Ordos plateau, as well as a prefecture for the Tölis Khagan's followers in the northeastern corner of the empire. The Tölis Khagan and three other chieftains were appointed as area commanders over the new prefectures.⁵² Following another of Wen Yanbo's recommendations, Taizong appointed more than a hundred Eastern Türk chieftains to positions as imperial guards officers and allowed their relatives and retainers to reside in Chang'an. Close to 10,000 Türk families are said to have moved to the Tang capital for this reason. These appointments were ostensibly a measure aimed at conciliating and integrating the Türks, but they were probably also aimed at weakening the cohesion of the divisions and lessening the risk of revolt by separating them from their elite.⁵³ An interesting story from the *Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要 tells of one of these Türks:

During the Zhenguan era (627–649), there was a Türk named Shi (i.e., Ashina) Xingchang on guard duty at the Xuanwu Gate. When he ate his meals, he would leave the meat aside. Someone asked him the reason, and he said, "I will offer it up to my mother when I get home." Taizong heard of this and gasped [in admiration], saying, "How can there be a division between Chinese and barbarians (Yi) when it comes to a humane and filial nature?" He bestowed a horse from the imperial stables [on Xingchang] and issued an edict ordering a ration of meat to be provided to his mother.

貞觀中，有突厥史行昌，直玄武門，食而捨肉。人問其故，曰：「歸以奉母。」太宗聞而嘆曰：「仁孝之性，豈隔華夷？」賜尚乘馬一匹，詔令給其母肉料。⁵⁴

As Marc Abramson has observed, Taizong's words (if he did indeed utter them) can be read in different ways. Taken at face value, they might imply that Taizong wanted to show his ministers that there was no moral difference between the innate natures of Chinese and Türks, that the two peoples had equal potential to be moral, and that humaneness and filiality were universally esteemed values. In other words, Taizong's exclamation would simply be another reflection of a barbarophilic and universalistic mentality. But a more skeptical reading would interpret Taizong's expression of surprise upon hearing of Xingchang's deed, as well as his choice to highlight Xingchang's foreignness, as indications that he was manipulating—and thus implicitly

⁵¹ JTS 61.2361, 194.5163; CFYG 991.11476; THY 73.1314.

⁵² JTS 194.5160–5161; XTS 215.6038–6039; ZZTJ 193.6077.

⁵³ The former 'Il Khagan, too, was given a sinecure and lived for a few miserable years in the gilded cage of Chang'an before dying in 634, not long after being subjected to the humiliation of dancing for Gaozu's entertainment. ZGZY 9.503; TD 197.5413; THY 73.1311; JTS 1:18, 61.2361, 194.5159–5160, 5164; XTS 215.6036, 6038; ZZTJ 193.6078, 194.6103–6105; Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 156–159; Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 58.

⁵⁴ ZGZY 5.277–278 (cf. XTS 215a.6036, which identifies the Türk as the 'Il Khagan's son and gives a slightly different context for his filial act).

acknowledging rather than challenging—the standard Chinese stereotype of steppe nomads as cruel and self-seeking. According to this reading, Taizong was using Shi Xingchang as the ‘rule-proving exception’ of a rare Chinese-like barbarian in order to shame his Chinese subjects into being filial, for fear of behaving worse than a Türk.⁵⁵ In either case, Taizong appears to have missed the irony of the fact that Xingchang was guarding the Xuanwu Gate, where in 626 Taizong had murdered two of his brothers prior to forcing Gaozu to abdicate the throne to him.⁵⁶ Clearly Shi Xingchang’s humaneness and filiality ought to have put him to shame as well.

The trope of barbarian perfidy in Tang relations with the Syr-Yanda

Wei Zheng and other critics of the Ordos resettlement are said to have kept up their debate with Wen Yanbo for several years after 630, but to no avail.⁵⁷ As mentioned earlier, it was not until 639 that Taizong ordered the Eastern Türks to move back to the southern edge of the Gobi, reportedly because the assassination incident had temporarily diminished his trust in them. The Türks were reluctant to comply with the order due to fear of a Syr-Yanda attack, and Taizong had to reassure them by issuing a letter to the khagan İnanç with a thinly-veiled threat that his armies would punish any aggression by the Syr-Yanda. Anxious to cover up the embarrassing reason for his change of heart, Taizong also claimed in the letter that he was simply demonstrating his regard for trustworthiness by keeping an old promise to restore the Eastern Türk khaganate.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the decade-old strategic alliance between the Tang

⁵⁵ Abramson argues that the latter reading “may have found favor with more conservative Confucian scholars [but] is less reflective of the general thrust of Taizong’s imperial discourse on ethnic difference.” However, I am not so sure that we can clearly discern the “general thrust” of Taizong’s rhetoric on barbarians, as will be evident from further analysis below. It is also interesting to consider why Wu Jing 吳兢 (699/700–749), the author of the *Zhenguan zhengyao*, would choose to include Shi Xingchang in a section with four other filial exemplars from Taizong’s court, two of whom were Chinese ministers and two of whom were younger brothers of Taizong. Wu’s anti-expansionist sympathies are obvious from the prominent place given to anti-expansionist rhetoric in his sections on the imperial frontier; his account of the resettlement debate also shows that he believed the assassination attempt on Taizong in 639 had proven Wei Zheng, Du Chuke, and Li Daliang right with regard to the unreliability of the Türks. Abramson would thus classify him as one of the “conservative Confucian scholars,” although I have already argued that such a category is highly problematic. Since Wu Jing only included anecdotes that he considered morally edifying into the *Zhenguan zhengyao*, this would imply that he did not see the Türks’ disloyalty to Taizong as precluding a Türk’s capacity to be filial to his mother. Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 147–148; ZGZY 9.473–482, 485–488, 492–510.

⁵⁶ I remain unconvinced by Andrew Eisenberg’s theory (first proposed in 1994) that Gaozu deliberately encouraged the deadly rivalry among his sons that led to the Xuanwu Gate Incident of 626, with the intent of retiring and handing the throne to whichever son emerged victorious from that rivalry. See Andrew Eisenberg, *Kingship in Early Medieval China* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 167–194.

⁵⁷ JTS 61.2361.

⁵⁸ In contrast to the detailed documentation for the debate of 630, sources are extremely vague regarding the discussions that led Taizong to move the Eastern Türks back to the southern edge of the Gobi. The *Zhenguan zhengyao*, *Tang huiyao*, and *Zizhi tongjian* claim that Taizong expressed regret for not having heeded Wei Zheng’s warnings in 630, thus incurring needless expenses and nearly forsaking “the way of lasting stability” 久安之道. But Wei Zheng’s influence on Taizong’s decision is otherwise unknown. Cui Mingde and Ma Xiaoli claim that there was another court debate involving Wen Yanbo and Wei Zheng, among other ministers; but there is no evidence for this, and Wen had already died in 637! As Chu Chen-hung points out, Taizong continued to employ some Eastern Türk chieftains (notably Ashina Zhanir) as generals and imperial guard commanders after 639. Chu infers from this

empire and the Syr-Yanda khaganate was soon under serious strain, as the Syr-Yanda saw the Eastern Türks' imminent return to the vicinity of the steppe as a direct challenge to their supremacy over the Tegreg divisions.⁵⁹ İnanç expressed his displeasure with Taizong's decision by withdrawing a prior offer to contribute a large contingent of Tegreg warriors to the imminent Tang expedition against Gaochang.⁶⁰

When Taizong issued a second warning for İnanç to leave the Türks alone or face military action, the Syr-Yanda khagan—who was clearly well-informed about the recent attempt on Taizong's life—replied that the Türks did not deserve such protection from the Tang, as they had betrayed the emperor's generosity and shown they were a faithless people “with the hearts of beasts” 獸心. He then offered to demonstrate his own loyalty and gratitude to the Tang by attacking them on Taizong's behalf.⁶¹ Unfortunately for the Syr-Yanda, Taizong had already staked his pride on the idea of returning the Eastern Türks to the southern edge of the Gobi, and remained unmoved by İnanç's creative effort at using the Chinese stereotype of barbarian perfidy to turn him against them. In the spring of 641, the Eastern Türks finally left the Ordos and reestablished themselves at Dingxiang 定襄 (modern Horinger county 和林格爾縣). That winter, a massive army of Syr-Yanda warriors crossed the Gobi and drove the Türks southwards, only to be roundly defeated by an intervening Tang army and then nearly wiped out as they attempted to retreat through a snowstorm.⁶²

that the assassination incident did not cause him to develop a distrust of all Türks. ZGZY 9.499–500; TD 197.5415–5416; THY 73.1314, 94.1690; CFYG 964.11168–11169; JTS 194.5163–5164; XTS 215.6039–6040; ZZTJ 195.6147–6149; Cui and Ma, *Sui-Tang minzu guanxi sixiangshi*, 111–112; Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 174–175.

⁵⁹ Chu Chen-hung argues (citing a 1968 study by Arafune Yoshiko 荒船淑子) that Taizong actually hoped the restoration of the Eastern Türk khaganate would weaken the Syr-Yanda. There is no direct evidence for this, however, and it probably overestimates the rationality of Taizong's response to the assassination incident. Chu, *Sui Tang zhengzhi*, 177.

⁶⁰ According to the *Zizhi tongjian*, İnanç's offer was made in the month before the assassination attempt on Taizong. All sources agree that Taizong's response to the offer was highly favorable. These sources give no explanation for why the actual Gaochang expedition of 640 included *Kibir 契苾 and Eastern Türk contingents, but none from the Syr-Yanda khaganate; the most plausible reason has to be that the Syr-Yanda had withdrawn from the expedition in protest against Taizong's restoration of the Eastern Türk khaganate. CFYG 973.11264; JTS 198.5295; XTS 221.6221; ZZTJ 195.6146–6147.

⁶¹ It is unclear whether İnanç delivered this reply orally to the Tang envoy, or in written form. Either way, he would have had to rely on the services of a translator, who was presumably familiar with the conventions of Tang court rhetoric. JTS 194.5164; XTS 215.6040; ZZTJ 197.6215.

⁶² CFYG 982.11403–11404; JTS 194.5164, 199.5345; XTS 215.6039–6040, 217.6135–6136; ZZTJ 195.6148–6149, 196.6165, 6170–6172. This was the battle that Li Shiji later claimed could have led to the utter destruction of the Syr-Yanda khaganate, if not for Wei Zheng's excessively cautious advice to Taizong.

In 642 the Tegreg *Kibir 契苾 division, which had submitted to the Tang and resettled in Liangzhou a decade earlier, decided to transfer its allegiance to the Syr-Yanda khaganate.⁶³ The Kibir reached this decision without the knowledge of their chieftain *Garek 何力 (d. 677), who was serving as an imperial guard general at the Tang court. But shortly afterward, Garek made a visit to Liangzhou to inspect the condition of his people and quickly discovered what had happened.⁶⁴ According to the account in Garek's official biography—which, presumably being based on his own testimony, has to be read with some skepticism⁶⁵—he berated the elders of his people for their disloyalty and ingratitude to the emperor, and declared that he would never betray the Tang. The elders then had him forcibly taken across the Gobi and presented to Īnanch, probably hoping that this would induce him to relent. Instead, Garek first insulted the Syr-Yanda khagan by sitting on the ground with his legs splayed out, then drew his sword, turned to face east, and loudly called on Heaven, Earth, the sun, and the moon to bear witness to his unwavering loyalty to the Great Tang. He concluded this defiant display by slicing off a piece of his left ear to make it clear that he was not indulging in mere bravado. Īnanch was infuriated by Garek's disrespect and nearly had him put to death, but was persuaded to reduce the penalty to imprisonment, perhaps because killing one of Taizong's generals would immediately have handed the Tang a pretext for war.⁶⁶

This incident came at a very inconvenient time for Īnanch. Following the disastrous losses suffered by his army the previous winter, he had decided to mend fences with the Tang, and perhaps also restore his battered prestige, by requesting the hand of an imperial princess in marriage. In the late autumn a Syr-Yanda embassy arrived at the Tang court to present Īnanch's

⁶³ Before 632 the Kibir lived along the southern edge of the Tianshan 天山 range, under the suzerainty of the Western Türks. Their submission to the Tang involved a voluntary migration to the Gansu Corridor and was probably prompted by the Western Türk khaganate's fragmentation after 628. The Syr-Yanda themselves were originally western Tegreg under Western Türk suzerainty and only migrated eastward to submit to the Eastern Türks in 628. The Kibir and Syr-Yanda also had a history of particularly close association, having jointly led a brief revolt against the Western Türks in 605–612. Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 84.1879–1880; JTS 109. 3291, 199.5343–5344.

⁶⁴ Skaff states that Garek was sent back to Liangzhou for the purpose of convincing his division to stay loyal to the Tang. But this is not supported by Garek's biographies, which state that he was making a routine visit and was greatly surprised to learn of his division's defection. Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 100.

⁶⁵ Skaff notes the possibility that the story was embellished by later emperors, court historians, and descendants of Garek. But he overlooks the likelihood that Garek himself later presented a self-promoting account of the encounter to the Tang court. That said, Skaff's interpretation of Garek's loyalty to Taizong in terms of patron-client ties is much preferable to Ma Chi's, which assumes that Garek had been acculturated to "Confucian" values and developed a Chinese cultural identity. In fact, the notion that loyalty to one's ruler is a uniquely "Confucian" ideal is an ethnocentric myth that reflects the lingering influence of the stereotype of barbarian perfidy in modern Chinese historiography. *Ibid.*, 345 n. 12; Ma Chi 馬馳, *Tangdai fanjiang* 唐代蕃將 (Xi'an: Sanqin chubanshe, 1990), 231–232. For an example of the equal importance of loyalty in steppe nomad societies, see Sechin Jagchid, "Traditional Mongolian Attitudes and Values as Seen in the *Secret History of the Mongols* and the *Altan Tobči*," in Clark and Draghi eds., *Aspects of Altaic Civilization II*, 89–114.

⁶⁶ JTS 109.3292; XTS 110.4118; ZZTJ 196.6180. One wonders why no one had seen to it that Garek was disarmed before the audience with Īnanch. The significance of turning eastward is not explained; was this done to face the sun?

marriage proposal, along with a large gift of horses and sable pelts as a sign of his sincerity.⁶⁷ At some point, the chief ambassador also explained the background to Garek's detention by the Syr-Yanda. Taizong's ministers had earlier assumed that Garek must have been behind the Kibir division's defection, reasoning that the Tegreg chieftain was like a fish out of water at the Tang court and would naturally long to return to the company of his own kind. Taizong, however, had refused to believe Garek was to blame and insisted, "This man has a heart [as immovable] as iron and stone; he would never betray me!" 此人心如鐵石，必不背我! Now, reportedly moved to tears upon finding that his trust in the Kibir chieftain had been vindicated, Taizong turned to his ministers and embarrassed them with a pointed rhetorical question: "So, what did Kibir Garek do in the end?" 契苾何力竟如何? Taizong thereupon agreed to betroth one of his daughters to Īnanch on the condition that Garek be released. This was an exceptional honor for the Syr-Yanda khagante, since Taizong had only given daughters of other imperial clansmen to the rulers of the Tuygun and Tibetans in 639–640.⁶⁸

Taizong's concern for Garek's safety was probably not the decisive factor in his agreement to the proposed marriage alliance, however. Unbeknownst to the Syr-Yanda embassy, Taizong's first response to its arrival in Chang'an had been to consult his ministers about the possibility of invading the steppe and conquering the Syr-Yanda with 100,000 Tang troops. Taizong seems to have felt that this was preferable to a marriage alliance, as he believed such an alliance would only ensure about thirty years (that is, a generation) of peace on the northern frontier. But Fang Xuanling persuaded him to accept Īnanch's marriage proposal on the grounds that a full-scale war with the Syr-Yanda would be too costly and risky for the Tang. Taizong thus based his response to the proposal on pragmatic, not sentimental, considerations; it seems reasonable to infer that he would have proceeded with the war option if he had greater confidence of its producing a swift victory.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ CFYG 978.11325; JTS 199.5345; ZZTJ 196.6177.

⁶⁸ XTS 217.6136–6137 claims that Taizong brusquely rejected this embassy's request for a marriage alliance and only consulted his ministers after the arrival of a second embassy in 643. But this is contradicted by numerous other sources including ZGZY 9.478–479; CFYG 109.1191–1192, 978.11325; THY 94.1696, 96.1727; JTS 109.3292, 199.5345–5346; XTS 110.4118; and ZZTJ 196.6180.

⁶⁹ During Taizong's deliberations with his ministers, he did not mention his belief that the Syr-Yanda were holding Garek against his will, even though this implied that a Tang expedition against the Syr-Yanda would turn Garek into a hostage and endanger his life. This omission suggests that eliminating the Syr-Yanda as a potential threat was more important to Taizong than rescuing Garek. The *Zhenguan zhengyao* version of Taizong's consultation with his ministers also shows him reasoning that, given the tendency among steppe nomads for men to defer to their wives, the Princess of Xinxing would be able to restrain Īnanch from threatening the Tang. Furthermore, if the princess bore Īnanch a son, the next khagan would be Taizong's grandson and would surely be friendly to the Tang. The latter argument rested on the flawed assumption, however, that Īnanch would choose the princess's child as his successor instead of the adult sons whom he already had by his principal wife and at least one other consort. ZGZY 9.478–479; THY 94.1696; JTS 199.5345–5346; XTS 217.6138; ZZTJ 196.6179–6180, 198.6228.

In the summer of 643, another Syr-Yanda embassy presented Taizong with an impressive bride price of 50,000 horses, 10,000 cattle and camels, and 100,000 sheep.⁷⁰ But Garek, who had by then returned to the imperial court, urged Taizong not to go ahead with the marriage alliance. The sources do not explain Garek's motivations, but we may surmise that they included bitterness over losing his people to the Syr-Yanda. Taizong, despite having just treated the Syr-Yanda ambassador to a lavish banquet, was apparently inclined to agree with Garek—an indication that his attitude toward the Syr-Yanda khaganate had continued to harden—but expressed concern about the unseemliness of a Son of Heaven being seen to go back on his word. Garek proposed a cunning solution to this problem: if the Syr-Yanda khagan was asked to come in person to Lingzhou 靈州 (modern Lingxia 靈夏) on the Ordos plateau to receive his bride from Taizong, he would surely not show up for fear of a trap. The Tang would then have a legitimate excuse to cancel the princess' engagement to him.⁷¹

Taizong adopted Garek's proposal, but the accompanying prediction turned out to be wrong. According to the most reliable sources, Īnanch was so delighted by the honor of being bestowed a daughter of the Tang emperor, and also so eager for a chance to see the celebrated Taizong face to face, that he resolved to go to Lingzhou in spite of his advisers' objections that doing so would be both demeaning and dangerous for him.⁷² Unfortunately for Īnanch, the process of gathering large numbers of horses and sheep from his subject divisions to constitute a new bride price took much longer than expected. Taizong used the resulting delay as a convenient pretext to cancel his trip to Lingzhou. Moreover, about half of the livestock eventually died of hunger or thirst while being driven across the Gobi Desert to the Tang frontier. Certain members of Taizong's court, not named in the sources, then called for the wedding to be postponed indefinitely until Īnanch could produce the full bride price, arguing that “the barbarians (Yi-Di/Rong-Di) cannot be reared using ritual and moral duty” 夷狄/戎狄不可以禮義畜 and might therefore “become contemptuous of the Central Lands” 輕中國 if the Tang showed itself willing to compromise on matters of protocol. Given that the Syr-Yanda had already offered up a large bride price in the summer, this reasoning seems unreasonable. There is a strong likelihood that these ministers represented a segment of the court that opposed peace with the Syr-Yanda; they may even have been acting on instructions from Taizong himself. In any case, Taizong readily accepted their argument and sent the latest Syr-Yanda embassy home without the promised princess.⁷³

⁷⁰ THY 94.1696; ZZTJ 197.6199 (cf. XTS 217.6136–6137).

⁷¹ THY 94.1696; JTS 109.3292; XTS 110.4118; ZZTJ 197.6199–6200.

⁷² Garek's official biographies in the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* claim that Īnanch was indeed prevented by fear from going to Lingzhou, but this is contradicted by all the extant sources on Tang relations with the Syr-Yanda. The biographies' reliability is highly suspect, since they also credit Garek with the uncanny ability to predict Īnanch's death from illness within two years. Of course, the other sources also contain a conversation between Īnanch and his advisers that must have been invented by the court historians. But that conversation's depiction of Īnanch as a sincere and grateful, if somewhat naïve, admirer of Taizong is unusually sympathetic and at odds with Taizong's own representation of the Syr-Yanda as faithless opportunists. THY 94.1696; CFYG 978.11326, 991.11478; JTS 109.3292, 199.5346; XTS 110.4119, 217.6137; ZZTJ 197.6200.

⁷³ THY 94.1696 (cf. 96.1727); CFYG 978.11326, 991.11478; JTS 199.5346; XTS 217.6137; ZZTJ 197.6200.

Some other ministers, however, argued that Taizong's reputation among foreign peoples would suffer more if he broke faith (literally, "lost his trustworthiness" 失信) with the Syr-Yanda than if he accepted an incomplete bride price. They also urged him to seal the marriage alliance promptly for the sake of maintaining peace on the northern frontier. These ministers seem to have surmised that Taizong remained interested in the idea of conquering the Syr-Yanda, and this must have added to their concern over his growing proclivity for initiating wars of conquest. Chu Suiliang submitted a memorial that began by expounding on the importance of good faith in statecraft and diplomacy via classical examples: Confucius taught that he would sooner a state lack food than it lack trustworthiness; Lord Wen of Jin 晉文公 (r. 636–628 BC), when advised to break a promise to his army for the sake of capturing a city, had refused to do so on the grounds that trustworthiness was his state's greatest treasure. Significantly, these examples related to good faith between a Chinese ruler and his subjects, but Chu evidently felt they were equally applicable to foreign relations. In fact Chu, employing his characteristically ironic style of indirect remonstrance, next 'reminded' Taizong that throughout his reign, he had "used humaneness and kindness to build relations with alien peoples and used trustworthiness and integrity to care for barbarians (Rong-Yi)" 以仁恩而結庶類，以信義而撫戎夷. The Syr-Yanda were already eternally indebted to Taizong and his descendants for his generosity, but if he honored the marriage agreement, this would prove that he was no less than a sage. On a more pragmatic note, Chu Suiliang noted that the nomadic divisions of the steppe were too numerous to exterminate; the destruction of one khaganate would only lead to its replacement by another. The ancients therefore sought instead to gain their goodwill through moral power, taking care to ensure that any wrongdoing or breach of faith was the fault of the barbarians (Yi 夷) and not of the Chinese. Since Taizong's achievements far surpassed those of the ancients, he should now give the empire rest from war and restrain himself from "being frequently angered by [the disobedience of] remote lands" 常嗔絕域.⁷⁴

Taizong responded to Chu Suiliang and the other pro-peace ministers by belittling their understanding of current strategic realities: "You gentlemen understand the past but not the present!" 君等知古而不知今! Boasting that the Tang was far stronger militarily than the steppe nomads and had no need to appease them with marriage alliances, Taizong argued that the Syr-Yanda were only using the prestige gained from Tang patronage to keep the other Tegreg divisions under control. Marriage to a daughter of the emperor would only strengthen İnanç's authority over the divisions, but it would not guarantee peace between the Tang and the Syr-Yanda. Indeed, Taizong asserted that lasting peace with the Syr-Yanda was a futile hope, using rhetoric strikingly similar to the recently deceased Wei Zheng's arguments from the Eastern Türk resettlement debate of 630:

⁷⁴ The most complete surviving text of Chu Suiliang's memorial is found in the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Cefu yuangui*; the *Tang huiyao*, *Xin Tangshu*, and *Zizhi tongjian* contain condensed versions. See JTS 80.2731–2733; CFYG 543.6207–6208; THY 94.1696; XTS 105.4027; ZZTJ 197.6200–6201. For the classical allusions see *Analects* 12:7, where 信 refers to the people's trust in their ruler; ZZZY 16.429; *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, Book 19, Chapter 6 ("Weiyu" 爲欲). Ironically, the *Zhenguan zhengyao* records that in this year, Taizong lectured his ministers on the importance of trustworthiness using the same *Analects* passage—see ZGZY 5.314.

What do barbarians (Yi-Di) know of gratitude? If they are dissatisfied over even a trifle, they will lead their armies south [to attack us]. To do as you gentlemen propose can well be called rearing a tiger only to be devoured by it.

夷狄之人豈知恩義？微不得意，勒兵南下。如君所言，可謂養獸[虎]自噬也。⁷⁵

Taizong concluded his response by unveiling a new strategy for dealing with the Syr-Yanda: neither peace nor open war, but rather subversion by means of flagrant diplomatic snubs. By denying their request for a marriage alliance and downgrading the ritual protocol observed by Tang envoys in Īnanch's presence, the Tang empire would send a message to the other Tegreg divisions that the Syr-Yanda no longer had its support. Indeed, Taizong predicted that these divisions would turn against the Syr-Yanda in no time, and confidently ordered his ministers to have this prediction noted in the court records. Subsequent events proved Taizong's powers of prescience to be no stronger than Garek's. Despite Īnanch's failure to secure the marriage alliance he had sought, he retained the support of the Tegreg divisions for the remaining two years of his life.⁷⁶ It was instead the restored Eastern Türk khaganate that soon began to collapse, leading to a situation in which Taizong had to affirm the humanity and trustworthiness of barbarians in order to avoid having to call off his expedition against Goguryeo.

Rethinking the stereotype of barbarian perfidy

For reasons dictated by current state ideology, historians in China routinely praise Tang Taizong as an early champion of a model of Chinese nationhood that transcended ethnic prejudice and chauvinism, citing his barbarophilic statements in 645 and 647. Yet there is a glaring incongruence between the Taizong who trusted in the Eastern Türks' gratitude and claimed not to believe in barbarian inferiority, and the Taizong who in 643 declared that the Syr-Yanda, being barbarians, could know nothing of gratitude and were bound to repay kindness with treachery. Only a handful of historians have been conscientious enough to point this out. Li Dalong admits "it is hard to imagine that [these statements] came from the mouth of the same person, Tang Taizong." Cui Mingde and Ma Xiaoli attribute these "contradictions in Tang Taizong's thought on ethnic relations" to the "historical limitations" and "pluralistic nature" of

⁷⁵ The *Tongdian* and *Cefu yuangui*, which are the more reliable sources for this passage, render the proverb "rearing a tiger only to be devoured by it" 養虎自噬 as "rearing a wild beast only to be devoured by it" 養獸自噬, because of the Tang taboo on the word 虎 (see n. 43 above). The *Zizhi tongjian* paraphrase changes the first line to "the barbarians (Rong-Di) have the faces of men and the hearts of beasts" 戎狄人面獸心, while the *Xin Tangshu* paraphrase changes it to "the barbarians (Rong-Di) have the hearts of wild [beasts]" 戎狄野心. TD 199.5466; CFYG 978.11326, 991.11478 (cf. ZJTJ 197.6201; XTS 217.6137).

⁷⁶ THY 94.1696 claims that Īnanch lost the loyalty of the other Tegreg divisions by levying so much livestock from them for the second bride price. But all other sources state that it was Īnanch's successor *Bashak 拔灼 (d. 646) whose paranoia, poor leadership skills, and unsuccessful raids on the Tang frontier caused the other divisions to revolt against the Syr-Yanda khaganate. Ibid., see also the analysis in Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 219–221.

his ideas, which seems to be a way of acknowledging that they make no sense. These historians have all attempted to rationalize Taizong's inconsistency by arguing that his attitude toward foreign peoples depended entirely on whether they were submissive or defiant toward the Tang.⁷⁷ But such an interpretation misses the whole point of Taizong's claim, which is that the barbarians have submitted to him *because* he loves them. Somewhat similarly, Zhou Weizhou assumes Taizong's barbarophobic rhetoric about the Syr-Yanda to be an expression of his fear of their khaganate's growing power.⁷⁸ But an interpretation based on fear alone begs the question as to why Taizong remained unaffected by his ministers' attempts at appealing to his fear of Eastern Türk treachery in 645, given his memory of the 639 assassination incident. Moreover, the idea that Taizong feared the Syr-Yanda is belied by accounts that in 644, he issued a pugnacious challenge inviting Īnanch to raid the Tang empire's northern frontier while he was campaigning against Goguryeo.⁷⁹

The historians cited above are analytically hamstrung by a compulsion to interpret Taizong's statements as evidence of his "thought" (*sixiang* 思想) or "viewpoint" (*guan* 觀) on relations with foreign peoples. It seems more likely to me that Taizong himself felt no need to ground his rhetoric in consistent philosophical principles. Instead, he could alternate freely between barbarophilic and barbarophobic arguments depending on the pragmatic needs of the moment—needs that usually revolved around his expansionist ambitions. Jonathan Karam Skaff recently made a perceptive point about Taizong's claim to love Chinese and barbarians equally: "It is difficult to determine whether this rhetoric actually represented Taizong's personal views, because his statements about nomads often varied depending on the audience." I would argue that they also varied depending on the arguments he was responding to. When his advisers insisted on the need to keep faith with the Syr-Yanda because they opposed his intention to conquer them, he had no compunction about trotting out the image of barbarian perfidy in order to dismiss such arguments as naïve. But when the same advisers tried to exploit the trope of Eastern Türk perfidy in an effort at averting the invasion of Goguryeo, he could make them look small-minded and paranoid by declaring that barbarians were human too. Finally, when he needed more rhetorical firepower to pre-empt the anticipated arguments against his planned second invasion of Goguryeo, he declared that the idea of barbarian inferiority was only for

⁷⁷ Li argues that "Tang Taizong's liberal, progressive view of relations between barbarians and Chinese had a baseline," namely, that Taizong would only "love equally" those foreign peoples who submitted to his rule. Any peoples who defied him would still be regarded as inferior barbarians and subjugated by military force. Similarly, Cui and Ma argue that "the precondition for [Taizong] 'loving [the barbarians] equally' was the submission of states ruled by minority (i.e., foreign) peoples." Li, *Han Tang fanshu tizhi yanjiu*, 306–307; Cui and Ma, *Sui Tang minzu guanxi sixiangshi*, 106–108.

⁷⁸ Zhou Weizhou 周偉洲, *Bianjiang minzu lishi yu wenwu kaolun* 邊疆民族歷史與文物考論 (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000), 228–239, esp. 236.

⁷⁹ Īnanch responded to Taizong's taunt by offering to contribute Tegreg troops to the Goguryeo expedition, but Taizong declined the offer. After the expedition began, Yeon Gaesomun attempted to persuade Īnanch to join forces with Goguryeo against the Tang. Īnanch refused to do so; Chinese sources claim that he was deterred by fear of Taizong's military prowess. Taking the bias of these sources into account, it is more likely that his refusal was motivated by his consistent preference for peace with the Tang. THY 96.1727; JTS 199.5346; XTS 217.6137–6138; ZZTJ 198.6227.

small-minded rulers; he, on the other hand, loved Chinese and barbarian alike and was therefore fit to rule them all. By considering these cases together, we may come to see Taizong not as an exceptionally broad-minded individual, but as a master in the art of rhetorical self-promotion and self-justification—or, as Skaff puts it, “a cunning strategist who hid his true feelings and manipulated his image in order to maximize political gain.”⁸⁰

Although Skaff acknowledges that “it probably is not possible to know Taizong’s personal attitudes toward [steppe peoples],” Taizong’s confidence in his personal knowledge of Garek’s character may well reflect the relatively limited weight given to ethnic difference in his usual attitude to foreign individuals. Indeed, Skaff’s own reinterpretation of Taizong’s relationship with Garek in terms of patron-client ties is quite persuasive in this regard.⁸¹ But it is also noteworthy that the ministers who believed Garek had defected did not try to account for this in terms of the stereotype of barbarian perfidy; rather, they expressed an assumption that he would naturally prefer to be with his fellow Tegreg on the steppe. It appears, therefore, that historians attempting to reconstruct early Tang attitudes towards foreigners may have overestimated the relevance of both barbarophilic and barbarophobic rhetoric not just to Taizong, but also to the everyday functioning of a large, multi-ethnic empire. In spite of the impression created by such rhetoric, the considerations that really mattered to the Tang elite were assessments of individual loyalty and notions of ethnocultural affinity, not sweeping notions of a moral dichotomy between Chinese and barbarians.

As with anti-expansionist uses of barbarian inferiority and otherness, past scholarship has tended to interpret the Tang trope of barbarian perfidy as a product of ethnic prejudice, racist xenophobia, and an idealized, overinflated self-image.⁸² The mainstream opinion, especially in Chinese-language historiography, has been that such sentiments ran counter to the supposed “cosmopolitanism” of the Tang elite and were only held by a conservative minority. Marc Abramson’s *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* takes the opposite stand, asserting that a “fundamental belief in non-Han treachery” was “the default stereotype in discourse on ethnic

⁸⁰ Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 58.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 58, 100–102.

⁸² A notable exception is Michael R. Drompp, who has pointed out that the Tang court frequently also used dehumanizing rhetoric to accuse internal enemies of the throne of treacherous ingratitude, particularly by labeling them as “*xiao* and *jing*” 梟獍—these being (respectively) owl-like and leopard-like animals believed to kill and eat their own mothers. Drompp argues: “[This phrase’s] widespread use in the language of public edicts reveals that in the Tang mind, a bestial, immoral nature was not the domain of foreigners alone. Indeed, the symbol was far too rich to be used on foreigners alone. It is important to note this, particularly since so much has been written regarding the ‘bestialization’ of foreigners by Chinese writers.” Drompp’s point is important in correcting assumptions that equate all dehumanizing rhetoric produced by the Tang court with racist or ethnocentric thinking, but he perhaps goes to the opposite extreme in seeing all such rhetoric as identical or universal irrespective of its target. The “faces of men and hearts of beasts” trope seems to have appeared mostly in rhetoric directed at foreign peoples, and I would argue that the association of barbarians with perfidy appears often enough in Tang rhetoric to be interpreted as a distinct stereotype. Michael R. Drompp, *Tang China and the Collapse of the Uighur Empire: A Documentary History* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 174.

difference,” that “[m]istrust of the outsider.... was deeply ingrained into Han [Chinese] society,” and that foreigners were perceived as “irredeemably Other, and thus ultimately incomprehensible.”⁸³ In my view, both of these positions are too extreme. Ethnic prejudice and ethnocentric attitudes clearly did exist in the Tang and were more common than is often acknowledged; at the same time, we should not overestimate their pervasiveness and the extent of their influence on imperial policy. Abramson’s interpretation raises the question of how the Tang empire was—as is well known—consistently able to employ foreigners like Kibir Garek and Ashina Zhanir as commanders and auxiliary troops in its expeditionary and frontier armies without worrying about their reliability.⁸⁴ In fact, early Tang expeditions against the Tuygun, Gaochang, Kucha, and the Western Türks all relied heavily on the skill and mobility of Eastern Türk and Tegreg (particularly Kibir and Uyghur) cavalry, and the multi-ethnic composition of the Tang military is one of the features regularly cited in depictions of the Tang as an open-minded, “cosmopolitan” empire. There is thus a clear disconnect between the frequently used rhetoric of barbarian perfidy and the reality that the Tang was increasingly dependent on the services of generals and soldiers who were of identifiably foreign origin or ancestry, even after the infamous rebellion of the Sogdian general An Lushan 安祿山 (or Rokhshan, d. 757). While the Tang court did become less trusting toward its senior military commanders in the period immediately after the rebellion, there is no indication at all that this distrust was specifically directed at generals with foreign ancestry.⁸⁵

In a recent study, Bi Bo has established that Sogdians served in the imperial guards in large numbers throughout the Tang and even had an increased presence in the guards after the An Lushan rebellion, showing that the Tang court saw no difficulty in entrusting the security of the emperor to men from the same ethnic group as An Lushan.⁸⁶ In fact, an anecdote about a

⁸³ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 24–36, 51 (quotations from 25).

⁸⁴ Passages in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu*, and *Zizhi tongjian* claim that during the reign of Taizong, even foreign generals as talented and loyal as Ashina Zhanir and Kibir Garek were never appointed to the highest command positions because of concerns that they might use their troops to rebel. In the field, they were also overseen by high-ranking officials appointed as commissioners 使 to ensure their loyalty. But there is no other evidence for the existence of such commissioners in the early Tang, and the argument about command positions overlooks the appointment of Zhanir as an expeditionary army commander 行軍大總管 (with Garek as his second-in-command) in the Kucha expedition of 648, as well as the appointment of Garek as one of two equally-ranked expeditionary army commanders in a 651 expedition against the Western Türks. Command of an expeditionary army was the most senior position in the early Tang military system before the post of Military Commissioner 節度使 was created in the early eighth century. JTS 3.60, 4.69, 106.3239–3240, 109.3289, 3293; XTS 2.46–47, 3.53, 110.4115, 4119, 223.6348; ZZTJ 198.6250–6251, 199.6274, 216.6888–6889; see also the analysis at Ma, *Tangdai fanjiang*, 46–47. The most balanced treatment of the Tang empire’s use of foreign generals and troops remains Zhang Qun 章群, *Tangdai fanjiang yanjiu* 唐代蕃將研究 (Taipei: Lianjing chubanshe, 1986). Ma Chi’s study is slightly more comprehensive, but overly influenced by official ideology.

⁸⁵ *Contra* Fu, “Tangdai yixiaguan zhi yanbian,” 214–218 and Ge Chengyong 葛承雍, *Tangyun Huyin yu walai wenming* 唐韻胡音與外來文明 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), 68–69, which are based on a highly selective and simplistic reading of evidence. See also Zhang, *Tangdai fanjiang yanjiu*, 247–306.

⁸⁶ Bi Bo’s findings contradict her teacher Rong Xinjiang’s influential theory that the An Lushan rebellion created a wave of anti-Sogdian sentiment, forcing Sogdian communities in the empire to migrate to the (supposedly) more foreigner-friendly autonomous military provinces in Hebei. But Bi continues to accept Rong’s theory and tries to

Sogdian officer named Shi Yanfen 石演芬 (d. 784), who reported his general's treasonous intentions to the emperor at the cost of his own life, suggests that An Lushan's actions did not discredit a popular stereotype of Sogdian soldiers as single-mindedly loyal to the Son of Heaven—a stereotype that An himself seems to have exploited to gain Xuanzong's favor.⁸⁷ Bi Bo does point to two officials at Gaozong's court who warned of potential security risks arising from the imperial family's habit of letting Türks serve as guards and attendants in their palace entourages. But the fact that such warnings were never raised with regard to Sogdian guards suggests that these officials were responding to specific ethnic tensions in the 660s and 670s—namely, the growing desire for an independent khaganate that would culminate in the Eastern Türk revolts of 679–682—rather than expressing a distrust of all foreigners.⁸⁸

Abramson's humorous comment that “Tang elites at best believed that they could not trust some ethnic Others (particularly those beyond Tang control) all of the time and certainly could not trust all of them all of the time, but they could trust some of them some of the time” does not seem to bring greater clarity to the problem—surely the Tang court could not have been satisfied with trusting many of its generals and imperial guardsmen only some of the time. Much more useful is Abramson's characterization of the “stereotype of the untrustworthy other” as one of “Tang ethnic discourse's wealth of ideologies in reserve, the repertoire of culturally accepted arguments, often mutually exclusive, that could be drawn upon to explain specific situations and

resolve the contradiction by crediting the increase in the number of Sogdian imperial guards to the Tang court's magnanimity, broad-mindedness, and “cosmopolitanism.” I would suggest that the contradiction is better viewed as a good indication that Rong's theory (which was partly inspired by Fu Lecheng) is incorrect. Neither Rong nor Bi has found strong evidence of an anti-Sogdian reaction in the decades after the An Lushan rebellion. Nonetheless, in a study published around the same time as Rong's, Étienne de la Vaissière also asserted that an anti-Sogdian reaction occurred. De la Vaissière similarly supplied no direct evidence, apart from citing a massacre of Sogdians by “imperial troops” in 761. In fact, the massacre occurred during a clash between rival factions of rebel commanders and is thus irrelevant to the argument. Charles Holcombe has made the first step toward correcting the prevalent but mistaken notion that there was a marked and lasting turn toward xenophobia after the An Lushan rebellion, not least by clarifying the nature of the 761 massacre. Unfortunately, Lee Chamney's recent interpretation of the same incident is marred by serious errors of fact and contextualization. Bi Bo 畢波, *Zhongguo Zhongguo de Sute Huren—yi Chang'an wei zhongxin* 中古中國的粟特胡人—以長安為中心 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2011), 148–161, 166–167; Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, “An-Shi zhi luan hou Sute Huren de dongxiang” 安史之亂後粟特胡人的動向, *Jinan shixue* 暨南史學 2 (2003), 102–123; Étienne de la Vaissière (trans. James Ward), *Sogdian Traders: A History* (Leiden: Brill, 2005 [originally published in French in 2002]), 220; Charles Holcombe, “Immigrants and Strangers: From Cosmopolitanism to Confucian Universalism in Tang China,” *T'ang Studies* 20–21 (2002–03), 71–112; Lee Chamney, “The An Shi Rebellion and Rejection of the Other in Tang China, 618–763” (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 2012), 93–94.

⁸⁷ Shi Yanfen's surname indicates his origin from Chach (Tashkent). We have no way of knowing whether he actually uttered the last words attributed to him: “I, Yanfen, am a Westerner (*Huren*) and cannot understand disloyalty; I wish to serve one master only and to have the good fortune not to be called a rebel” 演芬胡人，不解異心，欲守事一人，幸免呼為賊。These words may well have been fabricated for the edification of other Sogdians in the Tang army. JTS 187.4907 (cf. XTS 193.5555; ZZTJ 230.7407); Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 38–40.

⁸⁸ Bi Bo claims that distrust of the Türks at the early Tang court was a reaction to their “persistently disloyal and inconstant behavior” 一貫的背附無常, but this would seem to be based on an insufficiently critical reading of Tang court propaganda. Bi, *Zhongguo Zhongguo de Sute Huren*, 166–167.

justify particular policies”—although calling the stereotype an ideology probably still overstates its power to shape perceptions and beliefs, rather than merely justify actions.⁸⁹

In light of the preceding analysis of Tang relations with the Eastern Türks and Syr-Yanda, I would argue that the stereotype of a moral dichotomy between barbarian perfidy and Chinese trustworthiness was much less an expression of ethnic prejudice, distrust, or self-definition than a tool for rhetorical posturing. It was deployed most commonly by Chinese interlocutors seeking to justify making war on foreign peoples by representing the Chinese as innocent victims of their treachery, when in reality, Chinese acts of bad faith were usually at least partly responsible for the conflict. In essence, good faith was wasted on the faithless, so the tactic of declaring foreign peoples to be perfidious barbarians automatically freed the Chinese from any obligation to honor prior peace agreements with them, as well as any sense of guilt from having broken such agreements. Thus, far from feeling a “conviction that they were the exemplars of trustworthiness, even when they hypocritically ordered the breaking of treaties and similar actions,” the men who sought to shape or influence Tang foreign policy were fully aware that their rhetoric of moral superiority was not an accurate reflection of reality, and therefore made all the more effort to elide or excuse this inconsistency by playing up the stereotype of barbarian treachery.⁹⁰ In other words, invoking the myth of barbarian perfidy and ingratitude was a self-justifying strategy for retaining the moral high ground despite having done little or nothing to deserve it.⁹¹ Even anti-expansionists like Wei Zheng and Li Daliang were wont to adopt this trope when urging greater caution in handling the Eastern Türks, despite their awareness that the Tang had done nothing to earn the Türks’ gratitude and loyalty and much to provoke their enmity.

⁸⁹ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 26, 38 (cf. other references to “ideologies in reserve” at xiii, xv, 27, 104).

⁹⁰ Quotation from Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 25. Wang Zhenping’s most recent work has sought to absolve the Tang court of hypocrisy by arguing that the terms *de* 德 (moral power, which Wang translates as “virtue”) and *yi* 義 (moral duty/integrity, which Wang translates as “righteousness”) did not have strong moral connotations when used in Tang foreign policy rhetoric; instead, he claims, they carried the pragmatic, utilitarian meanings of “efficacy” and “appropriateness (to the situation)” respectively. However, Wang cites very little evidence for this argument, and his interpretation of that evidence tends toward undercontextualization. Nor does he take into account the rhetoric of “trustworthiness and integrity.” Unlike Wang, I do not think there can be any serious doubt that the Tang court’s rhetoric with regard to foreign relations was highly moral in emphasis. See Wang, “Ideas concerning Diplomacy and Foreign Policy,” 268–278; a Chinese version of this argument has been published as Wang Zhenping 王真平, “Tang Gaozu, Tang Taizong liangchao wajiao sixiang chutan – Yi ‘de’ yu ‘yi’ wei zhongxin” 唐高祖、太宗兩朝外交思想初探 – 以“德”與“義”為中心, *Tangshi luncong* 唐史論從 13 (2011), 54–60. A further iteration of Wang’s theory on *de* and *yi* can be found in Chapter 6 of his new book, *Tang China in Multi-polar Asia: A History of Diplomacy and War* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013).

⁹¹ For similar arguments relating to ancient Roman uses of the ideal of *fides* in foreign relations, see Sara Perley, “Fides Romana: Aspects of Fides in Roman Diplomatic Relations During the Conquest of Iberia” (M.A. thesis, University of Otago, 2012). Perley (p. 131) does point out, though, that at least one Roman historian believed that to avenge treachery with treachery was to imitate the barbarians and thus to behave in a manner unworthy of a Roman—see Appian, *Roman History*, Book 6, Section 60.

When writing *The Prince*, a brutally honest manual for survival and success as a ruler in the political world of Renaissance Italy, the Florentine diplomat and political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) devoted the eighteenth of its twenty-six chapters to the problem of whether rulers should keep faith in their political and diplomatic dealings. Machiavelli's personal experience of the turbulent times in which he lived led him to deliver cynically amoral advice like the following:

Therefore a prudent lord cannot, nor should he, observe faith when such observance turns against himself, and when the reasons that made him promise it are eliminated. And if men were all good, this precept would not be good, but because they are wicked, and they would not observe faith for you, you too do not have to observe it for them. Nor does a prince ever lack legitimate reasons for painting over his inobservance. Of this one could give infinite modern examples, and show how many peaces, how many promises have been made void and vain by the faithlessness of princes.⁹²

I would argue that similar reasoning, only with “men” replaced by “barbarians” and “prince(s)” replaced by “emperor(s),” was central to the conduct of Tang foreign policy. The only significant difference is that imperial Chinese political philosophy never produced a Machiavelli willing to expose the hollowness of its moral idealism and describe the reality of political practice—a reality in which cynical understandings of statecraft and the manipulation of political rhetoric were far more pervasive than anyone cared to admit openly.⁹³

⁹² Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. William J. Connell (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005), 94. This is the most notorious chapter in all Machiavelli's writings, but a recent biography of Machiavelli argues perceptively that he himself “was the least Machiavellian of men”: “What has tarnished his reputation is not any dishonesty on his part but excessive candor. Everyone knows that politicians employ deception, that in fact they could hardly function without resorting from time to time to prevarications, half-truths, and outright lies. Few, however, are so open about this peculiar tool of statecraft as [Machiavelli], whose reputation as an evil man is due in large part to admitting what everyone knows to be true.” See Miles J. Unger, *Machiavelli: A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 132.

⁹³ The closest Chinese analog after the pre-imperial “Legalist” philosophers might be the kind of situational ethics found in Zhao Rui's 趙蕤 (fl. 716) *Changduan jing* 長短經, on which see Anthony DeBlasi, “Contemplating Rulership: The *Changduan jing* and Tang Political Thought,” *T'ang Studies* 25 (2007), 203–232. But the political philosophy of the *Changduan jing* is pragmatically moral rather than amoral.

Conclusion to Part 1:

Rethinking early Tang “cosmopolitanism” from a rhetorical perspective

The interpretation of barbarophobic and barbarophilic rhetoric presented in the preceding chapters poses some larger problems for the now-ubiquitous image of the early Tang empire as imbued with a spirit of “cosmopolitanism”—a nebulous but currently fashionable term variously translated in recent Chinese scholarship as *shijie zhuyi* 世界主義, *shijiexing* 世界性, or *guojixing* 國際性. I should first explain that “cosmopolitanism,” when applied to the Tang, seems to refer to at least five different sociocultural phenomena at once¹:

1. The early Tang political elite had a well-known taste for exotic *Hu* 胡 (‘Western,’ i.e., Central Asian and especially Sogdian and Kuchean) fashions, music, and dances, especially during Xuanzong’s reign. Chinese scholarship generally refers to this phenomenon as *Huhua* 胡化 (‘*Hu*-acculturation’), although we shall see in Part 2 of this dissertation that *Huhua* is an ambiguous neologism that has also been used to describe acculturation to a steppe nomadic way of life.
2. Chang’an and other major cities had significant numbers of foreigners (particularly merchants, but also envoys, monks, and entertainers) who enjoyed a kind of extraterritoriality in disputes that only involved foreigners of the same ethnic group. The early Tang court also permitted the establishment of Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Muslim, and Nestorian Christian places of worship for foreigners in Chang’an.
3. Foreigners could be recruited into the Tang court or local administration, although the use of the civil service examinations to do so is actually a late Tang development (as we shall see in Chapter 4). It should be noted, however, that Chinese historians often conflate people with a distant foreign ancestry (e.g., Xianbi 鮮卑 ancestors who came from the steppe two or more centuries before) and people of foreign birth or parentage, thus greatly overstating the number of “foreign” ministers at court.
4. The Tang military was multi-ethnic even among the highest ranks, as noted earlier.
5. The early Tang elite purportedly did not display the kind of repulsion and disdain toward foreigners and foreign cultures that is commonly associated (fairly or not) with imperial

¹ For representative recent treatments of this subject, see Ge, *Tangyun Huiyin yu walai wenming*, 12–25; Li Songtao 李松濤, *Tangdai qianqi zhengzhi wenhua yanjiu* 唐代前期政治文化研究 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng chubanshe, 2009), 55–105; Holcombe, “Immigrants and Strangers.” For a short but trenchant critique of the indiscriminate use of “cosmopolitan” in the context of Tang history, see Carla Nappi, “Recycling History,” *Tang Studies* 31 (2013), 83–84. See also Johan Elverskog, “China and the New Cosmopolitanism,” *Sino-Platonic Papers* 233 (2013), a fascinating but often frustrating attempt at justifying the use of the concept of cosmopolitanism to interpret the Qing empire. At one point in the article, Elverskog defines cosmopolitanism as “a serious ethical, intellectual and moral commitment to the other” and “the ability to think and act beyond the local,” and Qing cosmopolitanism in particular as “a distinctive Qing culture that cut across many modern ethno-national boundaries” (p. 10). The first two definitions would seem to correspond to the fifth item on my list, while the third definition may correspond to the first item.

China. Modern Chinese historiography usually characterizes the early Tang attitude as *kaifang* 開放 (open), *kaiming* 開明 (enlightened), *baorong* 包容 (tolerant), and *jinbu* 進步 (progressive).

The last phenomenon on this list has never been systematically demonstrated, but historians tend to see it as the intellectual or ideological foundation for the other four and simultaneously assume it to be proven by their existence. At best, Taizong's barbarophilic rhetoric in 645 and 647 is used as evidence that the early Tang court had a strong notion of the equality and humanity of foreigners. As we have seen, this is far too simplistic a way of understanding both Taizong and the early Tang. The various examples of barbarophobic rhetoric produced by Taizong's court demonstrate the untenability of identifying a general or mainstream attitude toward foreigners on the basis of a couple of his rhetorical statements, especially when his own rhetoric does not reflect a consistent position on the nature of barbarians. Even Abramson's characterization of Taizong's barbarophilic statements as an "imperial sanctioned discourse" seems to overstate the coherence and ideological weight of his rhetoric.²

Many historians also assume that Taizong's supposed barbarophilia had its roots in either his mixed Xianbi-Chinese "blood" (ancestry) or his ancestors' extensive exposure to the steppe-derived culture of the Xianbi during the period of the Northern Dynasties.³ Gaozu's mother (née Dugu 獨孤) was either Xianbi or Xiongnu, while Taizong's mother (née Dou 竇, originally *Gur-deleng 紇豆陵) was identifiably Xianbi.⁴ The Tang imperial family's own claim of descent from the prestigious Li clan of Longxi 隴西 was the subject of some disputation among Chinese historians in the 1930s, which ended with Chen Yinke arguing that the Tang emperors were actually descended from another, even more prestigious, Chinese Li clan. Chen Sanping recently reopened the issue by arguing that the early Tang emperors had both Xianbi paternal ancestry and a Xianbi ethnic identity.⁵ Chen's theory is partly based on misinterpreted evidence, but does find some philological support in a fascinating recent article by Toh Hoong Teik.⁶

² Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 148.

³ E.g., Fu, "Tangdai yixiaguan zhi yanbian," 210; Li, *Tangdai qianqi zhengzhi wenhua yanjiu*, 57–61; Ge, *Tangyun Huyin yu wailai wenming*, 67; Luo Zhitian 羅志田, "Yi Xia zhi bian yu dao zhi zhifen" 夷夏之辨與道治之分, *Xueren* 學人 11 (1997), 79–80; Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 139–142.

⁴ Some Chinese historians identify all bearers of the Dugu family name as Xiongnu, but this identification is primarily based on the genealogy of a different Dugu family. It is unclear whether these two Dugu lineages shared a common ancestry. See XTS 75.3437 (cf. WS 23.605–606; BS 20.731–734, 53.1929; XTS 71.2273); Yao Weiyuan 姚薇元, *Beichao huxing kao* 北朝胡姓考 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1958), 38–52, 175–180.

⁵ Sanping Chen, *Multicultural China in the Early Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 4–38.

⁶ A crucial element of Chen's theory is the assumption that Gaozu's disparaging reference to Classicist scholars as *dushu han* 讀書漢 ("bookworms") and Taizong's equally disparaging reference to Wei Zheng as a *tianshe han* 田舍漢 ("yokel") can be interpreted as signs that the early Tang emperors did not identify themselves with the Han ethnic group. However, this assumption overlooks the fact that *han* was often used in Tang times as a non-ethnic

In any case, foreign ancestry alone does not determine one's attitude toward foreigners, nor can we assume that affinity to the Xianbi would translate into affinity to all "barbarian" peoples. We have seen that Dou Jing, one of Taizong's maternal kin, was neither favorably disposed toward the Eastern Türks nor averse to employing standard Chinese tropes of barbarophobic rhetoric against them. In fact, by the time the *Zhoushu* was written, the Dou had begun claiming descent from an Eastern Han consort clan of the same name, probably as a way to increase their social prestige vis-à-vis the great clans of the Tang elite.⁷ Gaozu's maternal kin, the Dugu, were claiming descent from the Western Han imperial clan by 578, when Gaozu was only twelve.⁸ Any Xianbi-Türk cultural connection is thus unlikely to have exerted significant influence on early Tang politics and ideology if the imperial clan and its Xianbi relations themselves tried to accentuate their Chinese origins (fictive or not) for the sake of prestige and political legitimacy. Indeed, early Tang historians consciously elided the similar steppe backgrounds of the Xianbi and Türks by representing the Türks as a new version of the Xiongnu, thus glossing over several centuries of Xianbi dominance on the steppe after the Xiongnu empire's collapse. The underlying subtext was an attempt to deny that the Xianbi and the Türks had anything to do with each other, while asserting a sense of equivalence between the Han and Tang empires.

In my view, a deeper understanding of Chinese uses of barbarian otherness as a rhetorical device would complicate but also ultimately refine the "cosmopolitan" image of early Tang history, not only for Taizong's reign but also for the reputed high point of Tang "cosmopolitanism," the reign of Xuanzong. Let us take for example an edict from Xuanzong to

colloquial term for adult men. It is curious that while Chen's other chapters make heavy use of philology, he employs no philological evidence to support his theory of the Tang emperors' Xianbi ancestry. Chen does not cite Toh, who did employ philological methods to argue that Gaozu's grandfather Li Hu originally used a Xianbi version of his name, and that Gaozu's claim of descent from Laozi was related to Xianbi shamanic beliefs. Nonetheless, Toh wisely refrained from asserting that Li Hu and his ancestors were Xianbi, since language and cultural practice are not conclusive markers of ethnic identity. See Chen, *Multicultural China*, 13–14; Toh Hoong Teik (Zhuo Hongze) 卓鴻澤, "Saizhong yuanliu ji Li-Tang shizu wenti yu Laozi zhi guage—Hanwen fojiao wenxian suojian zhong, beiya Huzu zuxing yi'an" 塞種源流及李唐氏族問題與老子之瓜葛—漢文佛教文獻所見中、北亞胡族族姓疑案, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 78.1 (2007), 183–224, esp. 203–214.

⁷This claim involved inventing a family history that began with a member of the Dou consort clan seeking asylum with the Xiongnu when his clan fell victim to a political purge. ZS 30.517; cf. Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 39.1150 and a later elaboration of the invented genealogy in XTS 71.2288–2289.

⁸This claim is found in the epitaph of Gaozu's maternal uncle Dugu Zang 獨孤藏 (544–578). The epitaph and *Zhoushu* biography of Dugu Zang's father Dugu Xin 獨孤信 (504–557) do not contain any claim of Chinese ancestry. Curiously, neither does the epitaph of Zang's elder brother Dugu Luo 獨孤羅 (534–599), who outlived Zang by twenty-one years. See Luo Xin 羅新 and Ye Wei 葉煒, *Xinchu Wei Jin Nanbeichao muzhi shuzheng* 新出魏晉南北朝墓誌疏證 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 295–296, 474–475; Zhao Chao 趙超, *Han Wei Nanbeichao muzhi huibian* 漢魏南北朝墓誌彙編 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1992), 480; ZS 16.263.

Niu Xianke 牛仙客 (675–742), the Tang military commissioner for the Gansu Corridor, dated to the autumn of 734⁹:

The barbarians (Rong-Di) have no integrity and are worse than birds and beasts. It is only right for us to conquer them with military force; how can we treat them like human beings? The Türgesh recently sent ambassadors [to us], and We always cared for them as if they were [Our] sons. Their envoys traveled to [Chang'an] and back, regardless of the season, and we gave generous treatment to them all—not just to their ruler. Yet they spied out the vulnerabilities of our frontier [defenses] and schemed to capture Tingzhou; that is why the Kül Irkin was executed, and who in all under heaven can say this was unjust? They have not reflected on their misdeeds, and have dared to make us their enemy, leading their dogs and sheep¹⁰ to invade our towns and forts. This is the day when they court their own deaths; now is the time when Heaven will destroy them!

戎狄無義，禽獸不若，但當以兵威取此，豈可人道論之？突騎施頃者通和，朕每撫之如子。行李往來，不隔歲時，賜與優饒，非直君長。而窺我邊隙，圖陷庭州，闕俟斤所以見誅，天下孰云不當？不思己過，仍敢我讎，率其犬羊，犯我城堡。是其送死之日，可謂天亡之時！¹¹

A rather superficial reading of such rhetoric would infer that either Xuanzong or his chief minister Zhang Jiuling 張九齡 (673–740), who composed the edict, had a strong belief in the moral inferiority and otherness of barbarians. Such a reading can indeed be found in an article by Pan Yihong, which claims:

Among the Chinese, there prevailed an idea that Confucian norms could be applied only to the insiders, the inner group, that is, to the Chinese, but not to the outsiders, the non-Chinese, particularly the nomads. In Gaozong's time Liu Yizhi held that the Tibetans were like “birds and beasts,” that their land was useless to Tang and their insults were not

⁹ I have followed the dating proposed by Chang Jih-ming and Guo Pingliang, which appears most plausible. Xiong Fei, who edited the most recent collection of Zhang Jiuling's works, dates the edict to the autumn of 735 (following He Ge'en), while Beckwith seems to date it to “the early winter of 735–736.” ZJL 8.538–539 n. 1; Chang Jih-ming 張日銘, *Tangdai Zhongguo yu Dashi Musilin* 唐代中國與大食穆斯林, trans. Yao Jide 姚繼德 and Sha Dezhen 沙德珍 (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2002), 35; Guo Pingliang 郭平梁, “Tujishi Sulu zhuan buque” 突騎施蘇祿傳補闕, *Xinjiang shehui kexue* 新疆社會科學 1998(4), 49; Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 112–113.

¹⁰ Beckwith writes, “It is not clear whether [Xuanzong] meant ‘dogs and sheep’ literally, figuratively, or both.” I would argue that in this and several other edicts from the same period, “dogs and sheep” is used as a derogatory, dehumanizing reference to the nomadic Türgesh. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 113 n. 27; ZJL 8.542, 10.599, 621, 14.747.

¹¹ ZJL 8.537.

worth being ashamed of. Liu Kuang in Xuanzong's time said that courtesy and deference were used only in communications between gentlemen and should not be used when dealing with "barbarians." Zhang Jiuling held that the "barbarians" did not have righteousness and were not even equal to birds and beasts, and that they could only be overawed with military strength.¹²

Pan's use of these three examples as evidence of a single prevalent "idea" ignores the rhetorical context specific to each. Let us briefly consider the first two examples before addressing the Zhang Jiuling/Xuanzong example (which is contextually more complex) in some detail.

In 678, Liu Yizhi 劉禕之 (631–687) was participating in a court discussion convened by Gaozong to decide on a response to the destruction of a Tang expeditionary army by Tibetan forces in Kokonor (Qinghai)—the second such defeat in eight years. The Tibetans had conquered the Tuyun and driven Tang forces out of the Tarim Basin in 663–670, pushing Tang military dominance back east to the Gansu Corridor, Gaochang, and Yiwu. Liu believed the Tang could not afford the costs of continuing the war with the Tibetans, and thus sought to use dehumanizing and denigrating rhetoric to persuade Gaozong that they were not worth a military response. He also argued that even the sage-kings of antiquity were unable to stop barbarians from raiding the frontier, so Gaozong had nothing to be ashamed of.¹³ The "Confucian norm" to which Liu Yizhi was declaring the Tibetans exempt was simply the liability of facing punitive action for defying the Son of Heaven's authority. This was evidently a variant of the anti-expansionist rhetorical strategies seen during Taizong's reign.

The context and date of Liu Kuang's 劉凱 (n.d.) essay, titled "Wuzhi" 武指 (Points on Military Matters), are not recorded, but it was most likely written during the early decades of Xuanzong's reign. It is rambling and verbose, but unlikely to be a random anti-foreign rant, contrary to Lien-Sheng Yang's suggestion that its "unreasonably isolationist" rhetoric was "a reaction to an overdose of cosmopolitanism under the T'ang."¹⁴ The "Wuzhi" is ostensibly a critique of Ban Gu's Appraisal on the Xiongnu and another famous Han-period foreign policy

¹² Pan Yihong, "The Sino-Tibetan Treaties in the T'ang Dynasty," *T'oung Pao* 78 (1992), 151.

¹³ THY 97.1731–1732; JTS 87.2847–2848; CFYG 991.11479–11480.

¹⁴ Liu's essay is preserved in TD 200.5498–5502 and XTS 215.6023–6025. He was the eldest son of the historical commentator Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661–721), rose to the rank of court diarist 起居郎, and had a wide range of interests. His biographies are in JTS 102.3174 and XTS 132.4522–4523. This essay has not received adequate attention from intellectual historians. David Curtis Wright's more recent analysis fails to identify Liu Kuang as a Tang-period author; apparently unaware of the essay's *Tongdian* version, Wright misattributes the views expressed in the *Xin Tangshu* version to Ouyang Xiu or another similarly "xenophobic" Northern Song author. See Lien-Sheng Yang, "Historical Notes on the Chinese World Order," in John King Fairbank ed., *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 30; David Curtis Wright, "The Screech of a Humbled Empire: The *Xin Tangshu's* Prolegomena on the Türks," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 55.4 (2002), 379–389.

analysis by the general Zhuang You 莊尤 (n.d.), also relating to relations with the Xiongnu.¹⁵ The essay's core argument is an unusually harsh criticism of Western Han marriage diplomacy with the Xiongnu, the intent of which was almost certainly to argue against a marriage alliance between the Tang and the second Eastern Türk khaganate. Liu Kuang may well have written the essay to provide ideological justification for Xuanzong's refusal to grant the Eastern Türk khagan's repeated requests for a Tang princess in marriage. In fact, Xuanzong pursued a policy of granting "princesses" (in reality, only daughters of imperial princesses) to pro-Tang leaders of the Kitans and Kai/Qay 奚, while finding excuses not to accord the same privilege to the Türks during a twenty-year period from 713 to 734. This suggests that he was following a strategy similar to Taizong's treatment of the Syr-Yanda after 643: undermining the prestige of a steppe power with diplomatic snubs. In this case, the insult was all the greater because the Eastern Türks saw the Kitans and Kai as their former vassals.¹⁶ Given this context, Liu Kuang's essay appears to be an attempt at pandering to Xuanzong; its strong barbarophobic rhetoric would then be designed to appeal to Xuanzong's hostility toward the Eastern Türks.

Let us now turn to the edict of 734. A better-contextualized reading would look into Xuanzong's reasons for invoking the tropes of barbarian perfidy and bestiality when addressing Niu Xianke.¹⁷ Why were the Türgesh (a nomadic confederation that had replaced the Western Türks around 700) attacking the Tang frontier? Who was the Kül Irkin? The background to the Tang-Türgesh conflict that began in 734 is not well documented in historical records, but Zhang Jiuling's collected works contain numerous edicts and state letters (written on Xuanzong's behalf) that enable us to reconstruct it to some extent.¹⁸ It appears that the Türgesh began attacking Tang garrisons in the Western Regions in retaliation for the summary execution of their ambassador to the Tang, who held the title of Kül Irkin. The Kül Irkin had been passing through Tingzhou (modern Jimsar 吉木薩爾) en route to the Tang court when the military commissioner Liu Huan

¹⁵ See HS 94.3824, 3834. Zhuang You's analysis was submitted as a memorial to Wang Mang. He is called Yan You 嚴尤 in most sources because of an Eastern Han taboo, Zhuang 莊 being the given name of the emperor Mingdi 明帝 (r. 58–75)—see HHS 1.4.

¹⁶ JTS 194.5172, 5175–5177; XTS 215.6047–6048, 6053–6054; CFYG 979.11331–11335.

¹⁷ The fact that Zhang Jiuling wrote this and numerous other edicts in Xuanzong's name may raise a question of interpretation: what degree of confidence can we have that its language represents evidence of Xuanzong's own ideas? We have seen that Pan Yihong attributes the ideas to Zhang Jiuling alone. I would argue, however, that as Director of the Secretariat in 734–736, Zhang Jiuling's role was primarily to transform Xuanzong's oral statements into the literary prose of edicts and state letters. Thus while much of the language in these texts was certainly Zhang's own, I believe it is reasonable to infer that the tenor and intent of their rhetoric originated with Xuanzong, especially since he would have read Zhang's drafts and ordered any necessary revisions before they were promulgated. In this period of Xuanzong's reign, at least, he was too active and assertive a ruler to give the Secretariat a free hand with the content of his communications with frontier commanders and foreign rulers.

¹⁸ For reconstructions on the basis of the edicts and letters, see Chang, *Tangdai Zhongguo yu Dashi Musilin*, trans. Yao Jide and Sha Dezhen (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2002), 34–37; Guo, "Tujishi Sulu zhuan buque," 47–60; Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 112–113; Wang Xiaofu 王小甫, *Tang Tufan Dashi zhengzhi guanxi shi* 唐吐蕃大食政治關係史 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1992), 171.

劉渙 (d. 734) put him to death.¹⁹ Liu Huan then claimed to the imperial court that a Sogdian from the Kül Irkin's embassy had revealed to him that the embassy was plotting to seize control of Tingzhou by force.²⁰ In the early summer of 734, Xuanzong ordered Liu Huan's subordinates to arrest and execute him on a charge of treason, and then had his head sent to the Türgesh khagan *Suluk 蘇祿 (d. 738) as reparation for the Kül Irkin's death. Suluk, perhaps suspecting that Liu had been made a scapegoat for some treachery ordered by Xuanzong himself, refused to be placated and went to war with the Tang.

Immediately after Liu Huan's execution under such irregular circumstances, Xuanzong issued edicts to Tang forces in Tingzhou and throughout the Western Regions to assure them that Liu was not a scapegoat and had indeed been guilty of the “mad stupidity” 狂愚 of a “nefarious plot” 奸謀 against the empire.²¹ Once the Türgesh attacks began, however, Xuanzong's rhetorical focus shifted to justifying the execution of the Kül Irkin and accusing the Türgesh

¹⁹ Skaff interprets the Tingzhou incident as an armed clash arising from a trade dispute, based on a letter from Xuanzong to the Türgesh khagan *Suluk 蘇祿 (d. 738) that was composed in the autumn of 735. Skaff reads the letter as stating that the Kül Irkin attacked Tingzhou and was killed by Tang troops after Liu Huan refused to buy livestock from him for a price equivalent to the tax proceeds from an entire Tang prefecture. My own reading of this letter is quite different: Xuanzong acknowledges that the khagan is entitled to compensation for the large number of livestock and horses that Liu Huan confiscated from the Kül Irkin's entourage after executing him, and comments that one prefecture's tax payments for that year would easily cover much of the cost. Xuanzong then berates the khagan (not the Kül Irkin) for attacking Tang frontier garrisons instead of making a proper request for compensation. I translate the text as follows: “If you, the Khagan, had observed ritual propriety and memorialized your complaint reasonably, even though the number of cattle, sheep, and horses under the Kül Irkin was a little large, how could we have had any difficulty in making compensation for them? It would take only the tax revenue from one prefecture to pay back most of it. But you made yourself our enemy without any sense of integrity, inflicting violence on our frontier garrisons. 可汗向若有禮，以理論奏，闕俟斤下牛羊馬數雖稍多，欲為補答，亦何足難？惟費一州庸調，酬還則已大多。而乃無義為讎，暴我邊鎮。” ZJL 11.636, 639 n. 1; Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 279.

²⁰ Xuanzong's 735 letter to the khagan Suluk claims that a member of the Kül Irkin's embassy had revealed his plot to Liu Huan, thus proving that his execution was “not a complete mistake” 未是全失. The name of this envoy-turned-informer, He Jieda 何羯達 (羯達 may transliterate the Sogdian name Kartīr), suggests an origin from the Sogdian city-state of Kushaniya (known to the Tang as He 何). He Jieda apparently sought asylum at the Tang court two months after Liu Huan's own execution and was given a position in the imperial guards. Most Chinese historians assume that He only confirmed the existence of a plot after arriving at the Tang court. But a line in Xuanzong's letter to the khagan reads, “What He Jieda said constituted his (i.e., the Kül Irkin's) own man informing on him, and he was only executed when the traces [of his plotting] were already exposed” 何羯達所言，即是彼人自告，蹤跡已露，然始行誅. This strongly suggests that the tip-off came before the execution of the Kül Irkin. Among Chinese historians, only Xue Zongzheng has read the line with the latter meaning, but his argument that He Jieda was an Arab agent working to sabotage Tang-Türgesh relations is entirely speculative. Given the limited sources available, the question of whether the Kül Irkin was indeed guilty of a plot remains unanswerable. Note that Xuanzong did not directly accuse Suluk of being behind the alleged plot, although his letter did offer this rather insinuating explanation for the Kül Irkin's plotting: “The ways of the barbarians (Rong) lack integrity; when they see [an opportunity for] gain, [disloyal] thoughts [immediately] arise” 戎俗少義，見利生心. ZJL 11.636; Chang, *Tangdai Zhongguo yu Dashi Musilin*, 34; Guo, “Tujishi Sulu zhuan buque,” 47–48; Xue Zongzheng 薛宗正, “Dalusi zhi zhan lishi shuoyuan – Tang yu Dashi bainian zhengzhi guanxi shulue (651–751)” 怛邏斯之戰歷史淵源 – 唐與大食百年政治關係述略, *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu* 中國邊疆史地研究 10.4 (2000), 97.

²¹ ZJL 8.523, 525, 533.

collectively of treachery and ingratitude, as seen from the edict to Niu Xianke. But the edict also contains deployment orders to Niu that show Xuanzong hoping to eliminate the Türgesh problem once and for all by secretly coordinating a surprise attack on their home base at Suyab 碎葉 (modern Tokmok) by “10,000 foreign and Han (i.e., Tang) troops” 蕃漢兵一萬人 from the Tarim Basin, in concert with a simultaneous attack by Arab troops from Khurasan. Meanwhile, Niu Xianke was to use 20,000 of his foreign and Tang troops as a diversionary counterattack on the Türgesh armies in the Western Regions.²² The Arabs had fought the Türgesh over control of Sogdiana and Fergana for more than a decade, and Xuanzong was confident that self-interest and hatred of a common enemy would lead them to agree to such a military alliance.²³ In the summer of 735 Wang Husi 王斛斯 (n.d.), the Tang military commissioner for the Tarim Basin, finally forwarded to Xuanzong a letter from the Arab Amir (governor) of Khurasan communicating agreement to participate in the joint attack on Suyab. Xuanzong commented in reply, “They (i.e., the Arabs) may be a distant foreign people, but they are a powerful country as well, and judging from the meaning of their words, they seem to possess trustworthiness and integrity” 此雖遠蕃，亦是強國，觀其意理，似存信義。²⁴ Xuanzong then suddenly canceled peace negotiations with the Türgesh and recalled an ambassador who was already en route to Suluk’s camp. In a letter sent to Suluk that autumn, Xuanzong explained that he did so because he had found out that the Türgesh had no sincere desire for peace and were only using the negotiations as a ruse.²⁵ But the timing of this decision makes it likely that the negotiations were merely Xuanzong’s way of buying time while awaiting the Arabs’ response.

A comparison of Xuanzong’s plans with the barbarophobic rhetoric in his edict’s opening lines reveals that he had no qualms about using foreign auxiliaries and allies against the Türgesh, in spite of his claims about the faithlessness of barbarians. Xuanzong did order steps to be taken to ascertain the veracity of the Arabs’ commitment to the planned attack, but this was not because he distrusted them. Rather, he suspected that the Tang envoy who composed the letter

²² ZJL 8.537.

²³ On the often bitter warfare between the Arabs and Türgesh in 720–731, see H.A.R. Gibb, *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia* (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1923), 60–76; Khalid Yahya Blankinship, *The End of the Jihad State: The Reign of Hishām Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 125–128, 155–161.

²⁴ The Tang envoy Zhang Shuyao 張舒耀 (n.d.), whom Wang Husi had sent to Khurasan, presumably composed the letter in Chinese based on the Amir’s oral statements. He was either conversant in Arabic or, more likely, had the services of a translator. I have followed Chang Jih-ming and Wang Xiaofu in dating Xuanzong’s reply, instead of Beckwith’s date (“Shortly before 735”) or Xiong Fei’s (the summer of 736). Wang Xiaofu also argues quite persuasively that the apparent delay in the completion of Zhang Shuyao’s mission was due to the unrest in Khurasan caused by the revolt of al-Ḥārith b. Surayj (d. 746), which began in 734. The Amir defeated al-Ḥārith and drove him to Tokharistan in 735; al-Ḥārith then aligned himself with the Türgesh. ZJL 10.604–605; Guo, “Tujishi Sulu zhuan buque,” 60; Chang, *Tangdai Zhongguo yu Dashi Musilin*, 37; Wang, *Tang Tufan Dashi*, 171; Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 112. On al-Ḥārith’s revolt see Gibb, *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia*, 76–78; Blankinship, *The End of the Jihad State*, 176–180.

²⁵ ZJL 11.636–637.

for the Amir had exaggerated or misunderstood the latter's words.²⁶ One might surmise that Xuanzong was unusually prejudiced toward the Türgesh and, despite expressing this prejudice in the generic language of barbarian inferiority, did not hold similarly negative perceptions of Tarim Basin peoples or Arabs. But it would still be difficult to understand how he later came to place a large amount of military power in the hands of the half-Türgesh general *Kasho Han 哥舒翰 (d. 757), even entrusting Kasho with the defense of the strategically vital Tong Pass 潼關 during An Lushan's rebel army's attack on Chang'an. Rather, it seems clear to me that the stereotype of barbarian perfidy exercised no significant influence on Xuanzong's attitude toward all foreign peoples, and came into play only when he needed a self-justifying explanation for a breakdown in relations that turned one of these peoples against the Tang. In the case of the edict to Niu Xianke, barbarophobic rhetoric about the Türgesh was also aimed at maintaining the morale of Niu and his troops by convincing them that the enemy did not have justice on their side and deserved to be punished with complete destruction.²⁷

Let me now take a step back and sum up what I believe to be Part 1's implications for our understanding of the early Tang as "cosmopolitan." I propose that closer attention to the context and motives for early Tang political rhetoric shows that both barbarophilic and barbarophobic statements reflect ways of *talking* about foreigners, rather than ways of *thinking* about them. This distinction necessitates some awareness that rhetoric and thought are interrelated but not identical, and also that the former is routinely passed off as the latter in political discourse. This awareness is much better developed in Western societies, where rhetoric and philosophy have been separate and equally important fields since Classical Greece, than in China, where the separate study of rhetoric remains underdeveloped because of the pervasive belief (originating with Song *Daoxue* thinkers) that good rhetoric must be rooted in ideologically 'correct' philosophy. In recent years, Chinese historians have sought to use the political rhetoric of Tang emperors and ministers to identify their "views on [relations between] Chinese and barbarians" 夷夏觀/華夷觀, as part of a growing interest (fueled by political concerns) in rediscovering the ideological foundations for harmonious ethnic relations in imperial China. But these efforts are fundamentally misguided, because the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy was a rhetorical device in Tang court discourse, a tool for expressing views, ideas, or ideologies with greater persuasive

²⁶ Xuanzong seems to have suspected the letter's reliability because it stated that the Arabs would launch their attack in the fourth lunar month, but it was already mid-summer and there was no news of such an attack. Xuanzong commented that if Zhang Shuyao were later found to have misrepresented or misinterpreted the Amir's words, he should be punished. ZJL 10.604–605.

²⁷ For further analysis of Xuanzong's use of rhetoric during the conflict with the Türgesh, see Shao-yun Yang, "What Do Barbarians Know of Gratitude?—The Stereotype of Barbarian Perfidy and its Uses in Tang Foreign Policy Rhetoric," *Tang Studies* 31 (2013), 28–74. In the article, I argue that Xuanzong did not use the stereotype of barbarian perfidy only as a tool for self-justification and morale-boosting, nor did he limit its audience to Tang officials at court or on the frontier. Two of Xuanzong's state letters to the Tibetan Bstan-po 贊普 (king or emperor) in 736 show the stereotype being used as a diplomatic weapon to foment distrust between the Tibetan empire and the Türgesh khaganate, who had established a marriage alliance in late 734. Xuanzong tried to undermine the Tibetan-Türgesh alliance by claiming that the Türgesh were sure to turn against the Tibetans eventually, just as they had turned against the Tang. The language of this warning was clearly derived from the trope of barbarian perfidy, but its referents were specified as the Türgesh rather than the generic "barbarians," so as not to give offence to the Tibetans. See ZJL 12.664–665, 668.

force. The decision to deploy this tool should not be mistaken for the rhetorician's motivation for making his argument, even when he claims it to be so. The full content and context of an argument will usually render such claims suspect if we approach it carefully, without preconceived assumptions.

I would argue that in Tang society, the most common modes of *thinking* about foreigners were not dichotomous but ethnic or ethnographic: one did not think in terms of a Chinese-barbarian dichotomy but instead distinguished between many foreign ethnic groups or countries and assigned to each a set of stereotyped or essentialized ethnocultural associations. The ethnographic chapters in the *Zhoushu* and *Suishu* and the Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang's 玄奘 (602–664) famous first-hand description of Central Asia and India are among the most systematic examples of the ethnographic approach, attributing distinct moral predispositions to peoples and states under the rubric of “social customs” (*su* 俗 or *fengsu* 風俗) and “nature” (*xing* 性). Xuanzang's description of the world-continent Jambudvīpa as divided into four realms, corresponding to India in the south, Central Asia and Persia in the west, the steppe to the north, and China in the east, contains another notable form of ethnic stereotyping. Scholars have noted that the fourfold geographical model appears to be Indian and Buddhist in inspiration and was known to Chinese Buddhists from a sutra translated in the late fourth century. But the content of Xuanzang's descriptions also seems to reflect contemporary stereotypes about Sogdians and Türks that were applied more broadly to ‘Westerners’ and steppe nomads: the former are perceived as wealth-obsessed merchants, the latter as violent, ruthless warriors.²⁸

A similar tendency toward ethnic stereotypes can be seen from numerous non-political writings by the Tang elite, such as poetry, anecdote collections (*biji* 筆記) and *chuanqi* 傳奇 tales, which almost never speak in terms of the generic “barbarian.”²⁹ One pervasive stereotype that has been noted from the *chuanqi* is that of Western (*Hu*) men as avid seekers and sellers of priceless pearls and gems, reflected also in Xuanzang's labeling of the ‘West’ as the realm of the Lord of Treasures 寶主 and in a myth (mentioned by Taizong) that Westerners (*Xihu* 西胡) would slit openings in their bodies in which to hide precious pearls.³⁰ Another stereotype found

²⁸ Xuanzang clearly held the Indians and Chinese in the highest esteem: India was superior to all other realms in spiritual enlightenment, while China was superior in political ethics and culture. His opinion of Central Asians, especially those who were not Buddhists, was generally low. See DTXYJ 1.42–45 and cf. ZS 50.909; Wei *et al.*, *Suishu* 83.1849; TD 193.5256. The *Tongdian* is quoting the lost *Xifan ji* 西蕃記 by the Sui ambassador Wei Jie 韋節 (n.d.), who traveled through Central Asia early in Yangdi's reign.

²⁹ The most recent examination of Tang ethnic stereotypes is Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, Chapter 2 and 164–167. However, I have reservations about many of Abramson's arguments, finding them to be overgeneralized and inadequately substantiated.

³⁰ See DTXYJ 1.43; WZG 3.27; ZGZY 1.44; Edward H. Schafer, “Iranian Merchants in T'ang Dynasty Tales,” in Walter J. Fischel ed., *Semitic and Oriental Studies: A Volume Presented to William Popper, Professor of Semitic Languages, Emeritus, on the Occasion of His Seventy-fifth Birthday, October 29, 1949* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1951), 403–422; Seo Tatsuhiko 妹尾達彦, “Huren yu Hanren—‘Yiren mai baotan’ yu Hanren

in poetry from the eighth century and later is the “Western wench” (*Huji* 胡姬), an alluring Sogdian bargirl in the taverns of Chang’an who had southern counterparts in the “Wu wench” (*Wuji* 吳姬) and “Yue beauty” (*Yueyan* 越艷) of the Jiangnan region.³¹ Although both of these stereotypes probably originate in literati fantasies about financial windfalls and romantic encounters, it is significant that they reflect an inclination to associate these fantasies with exotic individuals from the ‘West.’³²

In the genre of political rhetoric, however, popular tastes for the exotic held little or no sway. Instead, the strong association of the generic classical category “barbarian” with moral otherness and inferiority made the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy a convenient rhetorical device for advancing a range of foreign policy agendas. In other words, foreigners (*Fanren* 蕃) were labeled as barbarians (*Yi-Di*, *Rong-Di*, and the like) only when there was a rhetorical need to assert an incontestable claim of Chinese moral superiority in the context of foreign relations. In the Roman empire, similar use was made of the Roman-barbarian dichotomy in the rhetoric of foreign relations, even as a wealth of specific ethnic stereotypes was available for use in other contexts.³³ But in the Chinese case, the language of barbarian moral inferiority could serve an even wider range of purposes that included legitimating war against foreigners, denying their value as objects of conquest, and representing Tang suzerainty over foreign countries as proof of the emperor’s moral power. There were certainly other ways of framing such arguments, including strategic assessments and cost-benefit analysis, but these tended to be seen as ideologically inadequate because of the strong Classicist preference for justifying policy decisions in terms of moral and classical principles. There was thus a strong incentive to reinforce an argument about foreign policy through reference to the moral difference between Chinese and barbarians. Because of these rhetorical conventions, one cannot expect to see a “cosmopolitan” worldview strongly reflected in early Tang foreign policy discourses that refer to a foreign people as barbarians. But the very fact that language about barbarian inferiority and otherness is largely absent from non-political writing indirectly implies that it had little relevance to ordinary interactions with foreigners. Li Dalong’s belief that the Tang court’s attitude toward

renshi zhi bianqian” 胡人與漢人一異人買寶譚與漢人認識之變遷, in Huang ed., *Kongjian yu wenhua changyu*, 107–133; Ge, *Tangyun Huyin yu wailai wenming*, 70.

³¹ Xiang, *Tangdai Chang’an yu xiyu wenming*, 40–42; Ge, *Tangyun Huyin yu wailai wenming*, 78–91; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 20–21. Moriyasu Takao has recently argued that the “Western wench” was typically a Sogdian: see Moriyasu Takao 森安孝夫, “Tōdai ni okeru Ko to Bukkyōteki sekai chiri” 唐代における胡と仏教の世界地理, *The Tōyōshi-kenkyū* 東洋史研究 66.3 (2007), 506–538. On the “Yue beauty” see also Edward Schafer, *The Vermillion Bird: T’ang Images of the South* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 82–86, which identifies this trope with the “southern Yue” of Guangzhou and north Vietnam rather than Jiangnan.

³² Schafer’s contention that the ninth-century heyday of “tales about benevolent millionaires from the Far West” was also, paradoxically, “an age of suspicion and persecution of foreigners” reflects a broader misconception about late Tang society that will be addressed in Chapter 3. Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T’ang Exotics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1963), 23.

³³ On Roman ethnic stereotypes see Brent D. Shaw, “Rebels and Outsiders,” in Alan K. Bowman, Peter Garnsey, and Dominic Rathbone eds., *The Cambridge Ancient History, Second Edition, Vol. XI: The High Empire, A.D. 70–192* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 381–382; Gillett, “The Mirror of Jordanes,” 393–394.

foreign peoples must have had “a dark side” of ethnic prejudice, due to the presence of many officials with a “traditional view of [relations between] Chinese and barbarians,” thus seems much too pessimistic.³⁴

Skaff notes that the difference between “personal” literary sources and “public” texts like edicts, memorials, and historical records has resulted in “a schizophrenic image of Sui-Tang elites who checked their exotic tastes at the doors of their homes and turned into orthodox Confucians upon arrival at government offices.” He blames the discrepancy on a small but powerful minority of ethnocentric “literati Confucians” who dominated the bureaucracy and filtered out all traces of “cosmopolitanism” from the documents it produced.³⁵ Leaving aside the problem of how one would define and identify “orthodox Confucians” or “literati Confucians” in the early Tang context, which allowed for and indeed encouraged considerable intellectual pluralism even in men like Wei Zheng, it seems implausible to me that such a group would continuously dominate the government if it were culturally and intellectually marginal to a “cosmopolitan” elite society.³⁶ A more likely explanation is that when Tang ministers arrived at their offices and prepared to address the emperor or draft edicts on his behalf, they were expected to speak and write in a different language than that of everyday life—namely, the language of court rhetoric. An official who wrote about beast-like barbarians in a memorial in the morning might enjoy some “Western” music or a poem about a “Western wench” in the evening without feeling any sense of paradox, because these activities belonged to different discursive worlds. This was not schizophrenia, nor was it even mental compartmentalization—it was simply a relatively unreflective adherence to convention or tradition.

In my view, the most balanced position is that the early Tang elite, in spite of its rhetoric, was neither significantly more nor significantly less ethnocentric than the elites of other large, multi-ethnic, pre-modern empires. I would thus agree with Skaff that the exceptional nature of early Tang “cosmopolitanism” has been overstated, in part because historians have taken an uncritical attitude toward Taizong’s rhetorical efforts at making himself look exceptional.³⁷ This notion of early Tang exceptionalism has in turn contributed to the widely-held idea that the Chinese became steadily more ethnocentric and anti-foreign as a result of the transition to a

³⁴ Li identifies Li Daliang, Wei Zheng, Dou Jing, Wen Yanbo, and Pei Ju as examples of such officials, ignoring the clear differences on foreign policy between some of these men. Li, *Han Tang fanshu tizhi yanjiu*, 307–308.

³⁵ Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 9–10.

³⁶ Jan De Meyer has pointed out that Wei Zheng’s intellectual eclecticism can be seen from his *Qunshu zhiyao* 群書治要, which draws examples of political wisdom from a wide range of intellectual traditions; also that there is a *Laozi* commentary attributed to Wei. De Meyer cites Wechsler’s study of Wei Zheng, but his own insights show that Wechsler’s portrait of Wei as a man who “lived and breathed Confucianism” is in need of revision. De Meyer, *Wu Yun’s Way*, 186.

³⁷ Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, 10, 57.

“lesser empire” in the late Tang and Song periods.³⁸ In the chapters that follow, I will attempt to show why this idea greatly misrepresents the intellectual history of the late Tang and Song.

³⁸ The oft-quoted phrase “lesser empire” originates from the title of Wang, “The Rhetoric of a Lesser Empire.”

Part 2

“Before we all become barbarians”:

Han Yu’s Ancient Style rhetoric and the accidental invention of “culturalism”

Preamble

Sixty years ago, Chen Yinke wrote an essay that sought to explicate Han Yu’s importance to Tang cultural history in terms of six aspects. Of these, two aspects related to the reasons for Han Yu’s well-known opposition to Buddhism. In Chen’s view, one reason had to do with the social and economic costs that Buddhist monasteries and Daoist temples purportedly imposed on the state. The other had to do with the idea that Buddhism was a religion of foreign and thus “barbarian” origin. It is the latter reason that will concern us here. Chen Yinke saw it as the key to understanding not only Han Yu’s thinking but also the origins of the so-called Ancient Style (*Guwen* 古文) literary movement to which he was believed to belong. Referring to Han Yu by his well-known style name Tuizhi, Chen wrote:

What I would now like to argue is that the Tang Ancient Style movement was, in fact, triggered by the rebellion of An Lushan and Shi Siming and the situation of autonomous military provinces. An Lushan and Shi Siming were Western *Hu* (胡, i.e., Sogdians) of mixed parentage, and moreover the [soldiers in the] military provinces were *Hu* (i.e., northern nomads or Sogdians) or *Hu*-acculturated (*Huhua* 胡化) Han people..., so all the most outstanding literati of the time consciously or unconsciously had in their minds the image of the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters invading the Zhou in distant antiquity and the five kinds of *Hu* bringing disorder to the Chinese in more recent history. That is why “respecting the king and repelling the barbarians” (*zunwang rangyi* 尊王攘夷) was the central idea of the Ancient Style movement. Although the Ancient Style writers slightly before Tuizhi—such as Xiao Yingshi, Li Hua, Dugu Ji, and Liang Su—as well as other Ancient Style writers from Tuizhi’s generation—such as Liu Zongyuan, Liu Yuxi, Yuan Zhen, and Bai Juyi—shared this subconscious thinking, they all suffered from an insufficiently clear understanding and an insufficiently thorough position. Thus they dared not and could not say or do what Tuizhi did in digging up Buddhism’s roots and fervently and vehemently rejecting it because the Buddha was a barbarian (Yi-Di) and Buddhism a barbarian teaching. This is precisely the reason why Tuizhi became the leader of the Ancient Style movement.¹

¹ Chen Yinke 陳寅恪, *Jinmingguan conggao chubian* 金明館叢稿初編 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001), 329. This essay, titled “Lun Han Yu” 論韓愈 (On Han Yu), was originally published in *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 1954(2). A similar argument can be found in Chen’s *Yuan Bai shi jianzheng gao* 元白詩箋證稿 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001 [1955]), 150.

Chen Yinke's interpretation of Han Yu's motivations came to be widely accepted and quoted by historians of the Tang, some of whom (most notably Fu Lecheng²) went further and interpreted the early ninth century as a time of increasing xenophobia among the entire Tang elite, not just "the most outstanding literati of the time." This interpretation remains the mainstream in Chinese-language historiography today³, and was also dominant in Western-language scholarship until relatively recently. In its simplest form, it takes the An Lushan rebellion of 755–763 as a turning point that destroyed the "cosmopolitan" character of the early Tang and replaced it with a sense of ethnocentric intolerance that extended to "foreign" religions like Buddhism. Five years after Chen's essay, for example, Arthur Wright made the following claims in his classic account of the history of Chinese Buddhism:

The [An Lushan] rebellion and its aftermath weakened T'ang self-confidence, and the cosmopolitanism of the early days of the dynasty gave way to a cultural defensiveness that occasionally turned into xenophobia.... The old and oft-repeated attacks on Buddhism now had a more receptive hearing than heretofore.... The upshot was the great suppression of Buddhism between 842 and 845....

As for Han Yu in particular, Wright argued:

In the years of the An Lu-shan catastrophe and its aftermath, men of learning and conscience turned with a new seriousness to the Confucian canon.... These men, whose gropings anticipate the full-scale Confucian revival, were generally not opposed to Buddhism.... It was Han Yü—a brilliant polemicist and an ardent xenophobe—who pulled together the criticisms made by his older contemporaries and laid down the formula for cultural renaissance: Purge Chinese tradition of all the noxious accretions of

² See Fu, *Han Tang shi lunji*, 214–226, 361–367.

³ For recent examples, see Li Hongbin 李鴻賓, *Tangchao zhongyang jiquan yu minxu guanxi—yi beifang qiyu wei xiansuo* 唐朝中央集權與民族關係—以北方區域為綫索 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2003), 192–200 and *Sui Tang Wudai zhu wenti yanjiu* 隋唐五代諸問題研究 (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2006), 155–157. Ge Zhaoguang points out that for ideological and political reasons, Chen Yinke's interpretation of Han Yu came under attack within China during the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1960s, even Zhang Shizhao—who was in many respects a traditionalist like Chen Yinke—also issued a biting critique of Chen's interpretation in his monumental *Liuwen zhiyao* 柳文指要, accusing Chen of endorsing an irrationally xenophobic attitude toward Buddhism by attributing such an attitude to Han Yu. Since Chen's posthumous rehabilitation in the 1980s, however, the authority of his theories has become nearly unshakeable in Chinese academia. In Taiwan and Hong Kong, Chen Yinke's influence has consistently remained strong: the Taiwanese scholar Lo Lien-t'ien's tactfully expressed disagreement with Chen's interpretation of the "Ancient Style movement" appears to be a notable exception. See Ge Zhaoguang 葛兆光, *Zhongguo sixiangshi* 中國思想史, vol. 2: *Qi zhi shijiu shiji Zhongguo de zhishi, sixiang yu xinyang* 七至十九世紀中國的知識、思想與信仰 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2000), 223; Zhang Shizhao 章士釗, *Liuwen zhiyao* 柳文指要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1971), 758–761; Lo Lien-t'ien 羅聯添, *Han Yu yanjiu* 韓愈研究 (Tianjin: Tianjin jiaoyu chubanshe, 2012 [1981]), 202–203. Note that Lo's study was first published in Taiwan in 1977 and revised in 1981.

the years of Buddhist dominance; return directly to the immortal truths laid down by the Chinese sages; rally all men of goodwill and build a new order on these truths.⁴

Similarly, Jacques Gernet's influential *Le Monde Chinois* (1972) asserted the following:

A big change in direction in the intellectual life of China began around 800. In essentials this change consisted of a deep desire on the part of some people to go back to the ancient sources of the Chinese tradition combined with an attitude of hostility to the foreign influences which had permeated China so widely since the end of the Han period. This reaction, which followed a period when the court and the upper classes had been particularly friendly to foreigners and to exotic fashions and products, seems to be largely explained by the aspect of a national defeat assumed by the rebellion of An Lu-shan and by the change of atmosphere which followed those tragic events.

The two examples that Gernet supplies as evidence for this anti-foreign reaction are, likewise, the “‘ancient style’ movement” (particularly Han Yu, “a notorious anti-Buddhist”) and the persecution of Buddhism and other foreign religions under Wuzong 武宗 (r. 840–846).⁵

For decades now, the xenophobic or ethnocentric turn that Chen, Wright, and Gernet claimed to see in Han Yu and his contemporaries has figured in narratives of Tang history and also influenced the study of late Tang literary culture.⁶ Nonetheless, it is no more than a chimera, a mythical by-product of another figment of the modern historical imagination: namely, the idealized and romanticized image of an exceptional golden age of “cosmopolitanism” under the early Tang.⁷ Of the relatively small number of literary texts and incidents that have been used as

⁴ Arthur F. Wright, *Buddhism in Chinese History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), 83, 87–88.

⁵ I have followed the 1982 English translation of Gernet's work by J.R. Foster and Charles Hartman: Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 291–292.

⁶ Stephen Owen's groundbreaking study of the poetry of Han Yu and Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751–814) even began by tracing the origins of the anti-foreign turn further back to the first half of the eighth century, a period usually seen as the heyday of Tang “cosmopolitanism”: “In reaction against the cosmopolitan aspects of T'ang civilization, there was a growing commitment on the part of many intellectuals of the period to the ‘pure’ Chinese tradition. Although their writings show pride in T'ang military power and international success, the intellectuals were just as often disturbed by the incursion of foreign elements into popular culture, elements which they felt presented a threat to the purity and continuity of their own tradition. This ambivalent feeling often emerged as an aggressive cultural confidence expressed in the perennial theme of the golden age of antiquity, an ideal of humane civilization set in the remote past.” See Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of Meng Chiao and Han Yü* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 1. A more recent version of this argument, tracing the anti-foreign turn to a “patriarchal” backlash against Wu Zhao's reign, can be found in Rothschild, *Wu Zhao*, 207.

⁷ Charles Holcombe's article “Immigrants and Strangers,” the only sustained critique of the late Tang xenophobia theory to date, still accepts the image of early Tang cosmopolitanism relatively uncritically.

evidence that the Tang empire stopped welcoming foreigners and their cultures after 755, nearly all should be reinterpreted as indications of the exact opposite. There were thousands of foreign (mostly Arab and Persian) merchants for rapacious imperial troops or rebels to rob and kill in Yangzhou 揚州 (in 760) and Guangzhou 廣州 (in 879) only because both the imperial court and the local populace not only tolerated their presence but even welcomed and encouraged it. It was the merchants' great wealth, not their foreign origin, that made them particularly vulnerable to violence when these cities were sacked.⁸ In 809–811, Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779–831), Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846), and Chen Hong 陳鴻 (fl. 805–829) used works of poetry or fiction to satirize the Chang'an elite's love for “Western” (*Hu* 胡) music and fashions, but only because that proclivity for exoticism was still prevalent in the capital in spite of the fact that the Tibetans had all but severed Chang'an's connections with Central Asia.⁹ In fact, our sources suggest that the number of “Westerners” living in Chang'an increased after the An Lushan Rebellion precisely because the Tibetan conquest of the Gansu Corridor left diplomatic embassies from the Western Regions stranded in the Tang capital. These Western envoys established thriving émigré communities subsidized by the Tang court; they were also joined by enterprising Sogdian traders who passed themselves off as Uyghurs in order to gain commercial advantage from the new Tang alliance with the Uyghur khaganate.¹⁰ In 831 and 836, the court had to issue edicts restricting private commercial transactions and social interactions between Chinese and foreigners—but only because so many Chinese in Chang'an were taking loans from these foreign merchants and defaulting on the debt.¹¹ Nor is there strong evidence to support Chen Yinke's influential theory

⁸The Yangzhou massacre was perpetrated by imperial troops under Tian Shengong 田神功 (d. 773), who were campaigning against a rebel governor but seized an opportunity to plunder the region's wealthiest commercial city. Schafer incorrectly described them as “the hordes of the rebel T'ien Shen-kung,” and Gernet repeated this error by calling them “insurgent bands.” Lee Chamney's interpretation of this massacre as “a symbolic massacre of the Other” via “the selective extermination of foreign merchants” rests on the flawed assumption that since the relevant records mention only the killing of foreign merchants, this constitutes evidence that no Chinese civilians were killed in the looting. Instead, the court historians' emphasis on foreign victims in Yangzhou probably reflects the fact that the wanton slaughter of civilians was too commonplace during the An Lushan Rebellion to be worth mentioning. The Guangzhou massacre occurred after Huang Chao's 黃巢 (835–884) rebel army captured the city and is known only from Arabic sources; the reason for the Arab authors emphasizing foreign victims is even more obvious without the need to ascribe xenophobic motivations to Huang Chao and his followers. JTS 110.3313, 124.3533; XTS 141.4655, 144.4702; Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 18; Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, 292; Chamney, “The An Shi Rebellion,” 91–93; Hyunhee Park, *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds: Cross-Cultural Exchange in Pre-modern Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 69–70.

⁹Yuan Zhen and Chen Hong also allude disapprovingly to marriages between Chinese women and foreign men in Chang'an, but the way in which they do so actually demonstrates that such marriages were common and widely accepted *after* the An Lushan rebellion. For past interpretations of Yuan Zhen, Bai Juyi, and Chen Hong as reflecting a general turn toward xenophobia, see Chen, *Yuan Bai shi jianzheng gao*, 148–150; Florence Hu-Sterk, “Entre fascination et repulsion: Regards des poètes des Tang sur les ‘barbares,’” *Monumenta Serica* 48 (2000), 26–27, 35–38; Robert Joe Cutter, “History and ‘The Old Man of the Eastern Wall,’” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106.3 (1986), 520 n. 125. Schafer's characterization of Yuan Zhen as “exotically anti-exotic” deserves more consideration: see Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 28, 33.

¹⁰See Xiang, *Tangdai Chang'an yu xiyu wenming*, 8–9, 36–37.

¹¹The term *zhuse ren* 諸色人, which occurs in the 831 edict, has been a source of some confusion in Western scholarship. It literally means “people of various colors,” but “various colors” was a standard expression meaning “various types.” In the edict, the term refers to the various categories of Tang subjects—literati, eunuchs, merchants, clergy, commoners, and so on—to whom the new restriction applied. Schafer rendered the *zhuse ren* as “various

that the Hebei military provinces' defiance of imperial authority was rooted in an ethnocultural divide that led the Tang literati to regard the people of Hebei as barbarians.¹²

The chapters in Part 2 of this dissertation aim to build on a different reading of Han Yu and his milieu that has emerged in recent Western-language scholarship. Such scholarship does not assume anti-foreign angst and ethnocentrism to be the defining features of late Tang intellectual history: instead, Peter Bol and Anthony DeBlasi argue that the An Lushan rebellion produced a “crisis of faith in the ability of culture to influence human behavior,” or a “loss of certainty that the cultural tradition—the chain of texts that stretched back through history to antiquity—could act as a reliable guide for men in the present.” According to Bol and DeBlasi, responses to this crisis primarily comprised efforts to revive a kind of literary culture believed to possess the morally and sociopolitically transformative power needed for the restoration of good governance.¹³ In other words, the antiquity to which the late Tang literati called for a return was not defined by an absence of foreign influences, but rather by literary forms that were fully grounded in moral virtue and thus capable of instilling that virtue in others.¹⁴ DeBlasi argues that most late Tang literati understood good writing to be based on broad, balanced learning and the ability to imitate a wide range of literary models, and thus characterized by a high level of adaptability. They “co-opted” the rhetoric of the “return to antiquity” (*fugu* 復古), which “had a long history that predated the Tang,” but only as “a rhetorical means for signaling one’s moral seriousness.” Han Yu and his followers, on the other hand, took the ideal of antiquity seriously by identifying it with a narrowly defined set of moral values called the “Way of the Sages” (*shengren zhidao* 聖人之道). To them, learning to write like the ancients was a means of

colored peoples” and mistakenly conflated it with the “foreigners” (*waihua ren* 外化人) referenced in the 836 edict; Gernet elaborated on Schafer’s misreading by claiming that the 836 edict referred to “‘people of color’, a term that denoted foreigners from the regions beyond the Pamirs or from South-East Asia”; recently Lewis, paraphrasing Schafer’s interpretation, changed “various colored peoples” to the more politically correct “various dark peoples.” Also, Schafer claimed that the edicts of 831 and 836 reflected growing popular resentment toward the “arrogance” and “insufferable haughtiness” of “Uighur usurers” in Chang’an, and that this resentment was a major cause of Wuzong’s anti-Buddhist persecution, which he calls an “outburst of xenophobia.” Neither assertion is supported by the available evidence. Schafer’s notion that there were Uyghur usurers in Chang’an is based solely on a superficial reading of Xiang Da: Xiang (following Kuwabara Jitsuzō 桑原隲藏) actually argued that most of the ‘Uyghurs’ were Sogdians and other ‘Westerners.’ Moreover, the 831 edict clearly holds the Chinese debtors responsible for not paying their debts and thus depriving foreign merchants of the capital that they needed for trade; it does not fault the merchants for engaging in usury. Nonetheless, an interpretation of the 831 and 836 edicts as xenophobic seems to have become entrenched—even Holcombe, who is generally skeptical toward the theory of late Tang xenophobia, reads them as examples of “hints of greater wariness, distaste, and suspicion” toward foreigners. Ibid.; CFYG 999.11562–11563; Ge, *Tangyun Huyin yu walai wenming*, 69–70; Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 20; Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, 294; Mark Edward Lewis, *China’s Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 170; Holcombe, “Immigrants and Strangers,” 109.

¹² For a detailed refutation of this theory, see Appendix 1.

¹³ Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 109; DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 117–118.

¹⁴ Although neither Bol nor DeBlasi engaged in cross-cultural comparison, their understanding of late Tang ideals about literary culture reminds one of how Petrarch, a lover of “antiquity” in a different time and culture, idealized Cicero as representing the perfect union of eloquence and moral wisdom. See Charles G. Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 23.

“literary self-cultivation” that enabled a literatus to rediscover the Way of the Sages and thereby become moral.¹⁵

The newer scholarship also recognizes Han Yu as anything but typical of the late Tang elite. Han Yu’s skill as a prose stylist did gain him admirers throughout the ninth century: according to one of these admirers, a man named Zhao Lin 趙麟 (fl. 834–862), younger literati began imitating his prose during the Yuanhe 元和 era (806–820) and “prose styles changed greatly” 文體大變 as a result.¹⁶ However, very few of these literary imitators appear to have espoused Han’s argument that Buddhism was antithetical to the Way of the Sages and partly responsible for its decline, and none are known to have followed him in arguing that the same was true of Daoism.¹⁷ Nor did Han’s ideology have any direct influence on Wuzong’s religious persecution, which was purely Daoist in inspiration—a point that Kenneth Ch’en was already noting in a history of Chinese Buddhism published just five years after Wright’s.¹⁸ Indeed, Wuzong had thousands of Buddhist monasteries to close down and hundreds of thousands of monks and nuns to laicize in the 840s precisely because Han Yu’s polemics had not diminished Buddhism’s appeal to the Chinese in any way. Moreover, Wuzong’s death was quickly followed by a return to what Mark Halperin calls “the generally benign and salubrious climate enjoyed by the [Buddhist] church in the late T’ang and Five Dynasties.”¹⁹ Interpretations that identify both Han Yu’s exclusivism and Wuzong’s persecution as manifestations of a society-wide response to the An Lushan rebellion thus underestimate their radicalism and overestimate their popularity. As DeBlasi, Edwin Pulleyblank, and Jan De Meyer have argued, Han Yu’s insistence on ideological exclusivity and purity was actually highly atypical and marginal in a pluralist, eclectic elite culture that generally favored complementarity, balance, accommodation, and

¹⁵ DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 5, 115–145.

¹⁶ YHL 3.82. For a recent analysis of Zhao Lin’s *Yinhua lu* 因話錄 as a source on Han Yu’s influence, see Anna M. Shields, “Gossip, Anecdote, and Literary History: Representations of the Yuanhe Era in Tang Anecdote Collections,” in Jack W. Chen and David Schaberg eds., *Idle Talk: Gossip and Anecdote in Traditional China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 117–119.

¹⁷ David McMullen notes: “Only a small number of Han Yu’s followers, themselves obscurely placed enough for their attitudes to be of little political consequence, remained actively anti-Buddhist.” We shall see that even his anti-Buddhist followers did not criticize Daoism. Ge Zhaoguang, too, recognizes that Han Yu’s anti-Buddhist sentiment was not widely accepted during his time. David McMullen, *State and Scholars in T’ang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 111; Ge, *Zhongguo sixiang shi*, vol. 2, 212.

¹⁸ Kenneth Ch’en, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 226. See also the detailed analyses of Wuzong’s persecution in Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T’ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 115–136; Ge, *Zhongguo sixiang shi*, vol. 2, 230–256. Some residual influence from Chen Yinke can still be seen in Ge Zhaoguang’s analysis (pp. 242–243) of Wuzong’s chief minister Li Deyu 李德裕 (787–850), however.

¹⁹ Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960–1279* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 31.

interconnectedness between the so-called “three teachings” (*sanjiao* 三教) of Classicism, Buddhism, and Daoism.²⁰

Building on work by Bol, DeBlasi has also shown that nearly all of the other literati whom Chen Yinke identified as members of the “Ancient Style movement” actually belonged to the eclectic intellectual “mainstream.” Yuan Zhen and Bai Juyi were interested (at least for a time) in reviving a purportedly ancient function of poetry as a vehicle for social criticism and reform; Han Yu did not share this view of poetry, however, and Chen Yinke’s choice to include them in the category of “Ancient Style writers” is therefore questionable. Xiao Yingshi 蕭穎士 (d. 759/760), Li Hua 李華 (715–766), Dugu Ji 獨孤及 (725/726–777), Liang Su 梁肅 (753–793), and Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772–842) did share Han Yu’s interest in reviving a prose style associated with classical antiquity, believing it to be much superior to the contemporary parallel prose style as a medium for realizing the widely espoused ideal of uniting literary culture (*wen* 文) with a correct understanding of the Way (*Dao* 道). But most of these men combined their literary pursuits with an embrace of the Buddhist faith, as did Yuan Zhen and Bai Juyi, and saw no incongruity in doing so—a mentality characteristic of the pluralist mainstream but unacceptable to Han Yu.²¹

Even Chen Yinke acknowledged the difference between these other literati and Han Yu when he criticized the former for “insufficiently clear understanding,” but his criticism reflects an ideological bias anachronistically rooted in the Ming-Qing literati’s greater concern with Classicist orthodoxy, as does Arthur Wright’s suggestion that these men, being “generally not

²⁰ De Meyer characterizes Tang “intellectual eclecticism” as “an amazing variety of attempts to shape answers to the great questions of the times by making use of elements derived from Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism.” He points out that this was not unique to the Tang and was rather the “continuation of a process which found its earliest expression during the final centuries of the pre-imperial era, and which even the final triumph of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy never entirely managed to stifle.” In a study of Korea from the tenth century to the twelfth, Remco Breuker defines the pluralism of the Goryeo elite as “an ideology that allows the existence of contradictions and inconsistencies between its constituent parts... accepts the alternative or simultaneous presence or use of contradictory and incommensurable approaches... [and] maintains an aggregative instead of synthesized worldview, offering an outlook that exists [sic] of simultaneously present, though not necessarily simultaneously used, partial worldviews.” I would argue that the eclecticism or pluralism that De Meyer and Breuker describe was the norm in Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese elite culture until the ascendancy of *Daoxue* (i.e., De Meyer’s “Neo-Confucian orthodoxy”) in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries made ideological correctness a requirement for membership in the literati. Breuker’s theory is that Goryeo’s incorporation into the Yuan empire caused a “radical shift away from a pluralist Weltanschauung,” but it is much more likely that the Joseon court’s embrace of *Daoxue* ideology was responsible for this shift. E. G. Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in T’ang Intellectual Life, 755–805,” in A.F. Wright ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 78, 95; DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 2–3, 102–113; De Meyer, *Wu Yun’s Way*, 104–105; Remco E. Breuker, *Establishing a Pluralist Society in Medieval Korea, 918–1170: History, Ideology and Identity in the Koryŏ Dynasty* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 259, 309–310.

²¹ DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 23, 25–29, 41–42, 102–103. On Buddhism’s influence on Li Hua, Liang Su, and Dugu Ji, see also David W. Tien, “Discursive Resources and Collapsing Polarities: The Religious Thought of Tang Dynasty Scholar-Officials” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2009).

opposed to Buddhism,” could manage little more than “gropings” in the direction of a “Confucian revival.” I therefore agree with Bol and DeBlasi that we should differentiate the widely-shared literary ideal of “returning to antiquity” (*fugu*) from Han Yu’s Ancient Style ideal, the latter being an extreme agenda of ideological purity that also included a literary component of learning to write like the ancients in order to acquire their moral values. Since this agenda was limited to Han Yu and a handful of his students and associates, it is probably an overstatement to speak of him as joining and then leading a distinct Ancient Style “movement” in the late Tang.²²

DeBlasi still identifies the other great prose stylist of Han Yu’s day, Liu Zongyuan, as another leading Ancient Style thinker due to similarities between his and Han’s views on literature. I would argue, however, that when it came to ideological preferences, Liu disagreed quite openly with Han’s attitude toward Daoism and Buddhism and was thus much closer to the pluralism of the mainstream literary reformers. Nor did Liu share two other key aspects of Han Yu’s ideology: the idolization of Mencius and the belief that the Way of the Sages was lost after Mencius’s death.²³ There is thus some validity to Pulleyblank’s argument that Liu and Han belonged to two different groups: one group that was ideologically eclectic and politically reformist, and another that was focused on promoting “Confucian orthodoxy.”²⁴ The widespread notion that Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan were at the forefront of a “Confucian revival” (*Ruxue fixing* 儒學復興 in Chinese) overlooks the fact that these two men had fundamental differences over what a good “Confucian” or Classicist would look like.²⁵ The “Confucian revival” paradigm

²² Lo Lien-t’ien has pointed out that the term “Ancient Style movement” (*Guwen yundong* 古文運動) originated with Hu Shih 胡适 in 1928, when China was replete with political, cultural, literary, and social movements of every kind. Hu Shih himself was a leading figure in the May Fourth and New Culture movements. Lo therefore warns that using the modern neologism “movement” to describe a late Tang development produces a misleading impression of highly coordinated action by an organized group. Zhang Shizhao’s *Liuwen zhiyao* also criticized Chen Yinke’s use of the term “Ancient Style movement” as anachronistic. Unfortunately, mainland Chinese scholarship has largely ignored these arguments, although Lo’s argument has gained the support of the Japanese scholar Higashi Hidetoshi. See Lo Lien-t’ien 羅聯添, *Tangdai wenxue lunji* 唐代文學論集 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1989), 16; Zhang, *Liuwen zhiyao*, 760; Higashi Hidetoshi 東英壽 (trans. Wang Zhenyu 王振宇 and Li Li 李莉, *et al.*), *Fugu yu chuanguxin — Ouyang Xiu sanwen yu guwen fixing* 復古與創新—歐陽修散文與古文復興 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005), 107–111.

²³ On Liu Zongyuan’s critical attitude toward Mencius, see Zhang Yong 張勇, *Liu Zongyuan Ru Fo Dao sanjiao guan yanjiu* 柳宗元儒佛道三教觀研究 (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 2009), 53–56. Zhang’s study is also highly informative with regard to Liu’s views on Buddhism and Daoism.

²⁴ Pulleyblank’s use of the terms “conservative” and “nationalistic” to characterize Han Yu’s ideology fundamentally misreads its nature, however. Pulleyblank calls Liu Zongyuan’s group “radical” on account of its political reformism, but Han’s ideology was certainly “radical” in its own way and had nothing to do with the idea of a Chinese “nation.” I find DeBlasi’s characterization of the eclectic mainstream as “conservative” and Han Yu as “radical” to be much more persuasive, even though my interpretation of Liu Zongyuan differs from his. Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism,” 96–97, 112; DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 148–149.

²⁵ The term *Ruxue fixing* is standard in Chinese-language accounts of late Tang and Northern Song intellectual history. We have seen that Arthur Wright credited Han Yu with initiating a “full-scale Confucian revival.” Chen Jishi’s study of Liu Zongyuan also adopts the paradigm of the “Confucian revival,” but Bol and DeBlasi rightly question the usefulness of the term. Bol argues that “Confucianism” was not a fixed entity with unchanging boundaries, and that the rhetoric of revival masked efforts at ideological redefinition: “We need to see through the

also assumes that late Tang literati shared a common notion of Classicist or “Confucian” orthodoxy defined by the complete rejection of Buddhism and Daoism. In reality, Han Yu had practically invented that notion, and what he represented as a struggle to defend, revive, or preserve orthodoxy actually consisted of efforts to convince other people (including Liu Zongyuan) that a Classicist orthodoxy existed at all, in part by redefining the concepts of *Ru* and the Way of the Sages.²⁶ The paradigm of a “Confucian revival” is thus too rooted in Han Yu’s partisan perspective to be useful as an objective historical explanation.

Taking these reinterpretations of the late Tang intellectual context as a starting point, Chapter 3 reassesses the significance of two related ideas that originated from Han Yu’s most influential essay, the “Yuandao” 原道 (“Finding the Source of the Way”): first, an idea that the most essential difference between Chinese and barbarians was not geopolitical or ethnic, but “ritual” (*li* 禮); second, an idea that this meant Chinese people who practiced a “barbarian (Yi-Di) religion” 夷狄之法 like Buddhism would thereby become barbarians.²⁷ Modern Chinese scholars tend to credit Han Yu with distilling the essence of a fluid Chinese-barbarian dichotomy that was always defined along cultural (or ritual, or moral) rather than racial (or ethnic) boundaries. However, there was actually no recorded precedent for applying such a definition of the dichotomy to contemporary (as opposed to historical) reality. In other words, Han Yu is the first Chinese person known to have suggested that the Chinese of his own day could turn into barbarians by continuously practicing a religion or ritual that was only meant for barbarians. This assertion effectively made Han Yu’s concept of orthodoxy (or orthopraxy, in the case of ritual) a precondition for Chinese identity, in an ingenious rhetorical strategy for delegitimizing Buddhism’s preceding four to five centuries of remarkable success in gaining Chinese adherents.

Among Western scholars, Charles Hartman and Marc Abramson have emphasized the originality of Han Yu’s attempt at associating the practice of Buddhism with barbarization. Hartman argues that Han Yu’s intention was “to demarcate the cultural boundaries between Hua and Hu,” to “form a clearer definition of what it meant to be Hua,” and to provide a “basic

claim of revival to the activity of definition and we need to see what the revival is being defined against.” DeBlasi argues that a category as vague as “Confucianism” would tend to paper over the use of the Classics to support a variety of ideological agendas, whether exclusivist or eclectic. That said, DeBlasi himself tends to focus on the commonalities between Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan at the expense of ignoring the key differences in their understanding of Classicism. Peter K. Bol, “Review: Jo-shui Chen, *Liu Tsung-yüan and Intellectual Change in T’ang China, 773–819*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56.1 (1996), 167–168; DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 13–16.

²⁶ Holcombe has claimed that “Tang China was notable not only for its cosmopolitanism but also for its predilection for orthodoxy,” when in fact the opposite would seem to be the case: there is no evidence that ideological orthodoxy was a concern for the majority of Tang literati. Holcombe cites the development of a concept of orthodoxy in Chan Buddhism, but that is really not relevant to the question of literati culture at all. Holcombe, “Immigrants and Strangers,” 105.

²⁷ On the validity of translating *fa* 法 as “religion” in this context, see Robert Ford Campany, “On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China),” *History of Religions* 42.4 (2003), 305–306.

solution to the T'ang dichotomy between Hua and Hu.”²⁸ Likewise, Abramson argues that “the heart of [Han Yu’s] discourse” was a notion that “the distinction between Self and Other is not a question of ethnicity or origins per se but rather is dependent on abstract cultural values based on timeless norms,” and that Han “was ahead of his time in his strident attempts to define boundaries between Han and non-Han, Chinese and non-Chinese.”²⁹ Unlike Hartman and Abramson, I will argue that a comprehensive analysis of Han’s polemical writings, including the “Yuandao,” shows that his ultimate concern was not one of defining Chineseness as a cultural identity. Neither the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy nor the rejection of foreign religions was truly central to his ideology.

Han Yu’s aim was to redefine the Classicist identity in a way that made ideological eclecticism unacceptable: the Way of the Sages was founded on Classicist principles alone and thus could only be fatally compromised by accepting any other teaching, be it foreign or Chinese. His occasional decisions to equate Classicist identity with Chineseness and to equate heterodoxy with barbarism were only a rhetorical means to that end. Therefore, besides distinguishing between the broadly shared *fugu* agenda and Han Yu’s more radical Ancient Style ideology, we should also draw a distinction between Han’s ideological agenda and the rhetorical devices that he utilized for advancing it. The novel idea of a highly permeable Chinese-barbarian boundary belongs to the latter category. That said, this idea proved so useful as a rhetorical device that admirers of Han Yu’s prose began to incorporate it into their own writing, applying it to topics beyond the sphere of anti-Buddhist polemic. In Chapter 4, I will analyze some ninth-century examples of such writings. I argue that whereas Han Yu did not propose to redefine the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy as a supra-ethnic distinction between any human being who abided by Classicist standards of morality and any human being who did not, some of his admirers came very close to doing so. Although their experimentation, like Han Yu’s, remained at the level of literary or rhetorical devices, its inadvertent result was the appearance of a new discourse on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy that began acquiring philosophical foundations two centuries later.

²⁸ Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 129, 146, 158. It should be noted that Hartman’s use of a “Hua-Hu” dichotomy is ahistorical and partly influenced by Chen Yinke’s emphasis on the problem of “Hu-acculturation.” Han Yu’s “Yuandao” uses a dichotomy between the Central Lands and the *Yi-Di* or *Yi*; the label *Hu* is absent from his polemical writings, and no extant Tang text speaks of Hua and Hu as opposite categories.

²⁹ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 67, 183.

Chapter 3

Barbarians and barbarization in Han Yu's anti-Buddhist rhetoric

The preface for Wenchang

One morning in the spring of 803, the Buddhist monk Wenchang 文暢 (n.d.) visited Han Yu at the College of the Four Gates 四門學, where Han held the position of Academician 博士. Wenchang was an avid traveler who made considerable efforts at soliciting valedictory poems and prefaces from the Chang'an elite whenever he was about to depart on a trip—perhaps as a way of both widening his social network and increasing his prestige within the Buddhist community. This time, he was preparing to leave for his home region in the southeast and had come to request a poem or preface from Han Yu. He had come armed with an introductory letter from Liu Zongyuan, as well as his entire collection of more than a hundred poems and prefaces. Han Yu browsed through the collection and found it devoid of ideas from Classicism (what Han preferred to call the “Way of the Sages”); the authors had chosen to praise and exhort Wenchang in purely Buddhist terms. Han was probably loath to appear to be endorsing the Buddhist content of the collection by contributing even a properly Classicist piece to it, but he was also reluctant to offend Liu Zongyuan by snubbing Wenchang. He thus wrote a preface for Wenchang that simultaneously complimented the monk, clarified that such compliments did not compromise his belief in Classicism's superiority to Buddhism, reasserted that belief, and issued an indirect rebuke to Liu Zongyuan and other “mainstream” literati who were friendly toward Buddhism.¹

The preface begins by implicitly equating Buddhism with Mohism and thus alluding to Mencius's polemics against the Mohists:

Some men are Classicist in name but Mohist in deed. When you ask them for their name, it sounds correct, but when you look at their deeds, they are wrong. Can one associate with such men? If a man is Mohist in name but Classicist in deed, when you ask him for his name, it sounds wrong, but when you look at his deeds, they are correct. Can one associate with such a man, then?

人固有儒名而墨行者，問其名則是，校其行則非，可以與之遊乎？如有墨名而儒行者，問其名則非，校其行而是，可以與之遊乎？²

¹ Han Yu's preface states the context for Wenchang's request, but additional details about the circumstances of their meeting and Wenchang's place of origin can be found in a valedictory poem that Han later wrote for Wenchang in 806. Ma Qichang 馬其昶 ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu* 韓昌黎文集校註 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986), 252; Qu Shouyuan 屈守元 and Chang Sichun 常思春 eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu* 韓愈全集校註 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1996), 395.

² Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 251–252.

Clearly, Han Yu's answer to the first rhetorical question is "no," and his answer to the second is "yes." He wants to argue that Wenchang falls under the second category; as for the first category, one can surmise that he is referring obliquely to any literatus who is "Classicist in name but Buddhist in deed." This name-deed dichotomy would seem to be inspired by Confucius's claim in the *Analects* that "rectifying names" (*zhengming* 正名)—that is, making them match reality—should take precedence over all other kinds of reform.³ Han Yu then makes a similar point in terms of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy:

Yang Ziyun said, "If he were at our doors and walls, I would drive him away, but if he dwelt among the barbarians (Yi-Di), then I would let him in." I take this as my model.

揚子雲稱：「在門牆則揮之，在夷狄則進之。」吾取以為法焉。⁴

The original passage in Yang Xiong's *Fayan* reads as follows:

Someone asked me, "Suppose there was a person who leaned on Confucius's wall while strumming the music of Zheng and Wei or reciting the writings of Han Fei and Zhuangzi. Would you bring such a man into the house through the main door?" [I replied,] "If he dwelt among the barbarians (Yi-Mo), then I would welcome him in, but I would drive him away if he were leaning on [Confucius's] doors and walls. A pity that before he finishes weaving an upper garment, he has turned his attention to weaving a lower garment."

或問：「人有倚孔子之牆，弦鄭、衛之聲，誦韓、莊之書，則引諸門乎？」曰：「在夷貊則引之，倚門牆則麾之。惜乎衣未成而轉為裳也。」⁵

Yang Xiong's point is not that converting barbarians to Classicism should be a priority.⁶ Rather, it is that barbarians, being a great distance from the Central Lands, can be expected to get their culture and morality wrong, but Chinese people with full access to Classicist teachings (the "upper garment") have no excuse to turn away and follow after inferior traditions (the "lower

³ *Analects* 13:3.

⁴ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 252.

⁵ FYYS 5.102–103.

⁶ *Contra* Guo Junming and Fan Wenli, whose presentist concerns lead them to see Yang Xiong as advocating a Classicist civilizing mission on the frontier. Guo Junming 郭君銘, "Lun Yang Xiong 'Zai Yi-Mo ze yinshi' de minzu sixiang" 論揚雄 "在夷貊則引之" 的民族思想, *Zhongyang minzu daxue xuebao* 中央民族大學學報 2005(5), 60–64; Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 72–73.

garment”). In other words, there is more hope for a heathen than for a heretic. I would also argue that it was not Han Yu’s intention to label Wenchang and other Chinese Buddhist monks as barbarians; as we shall see, he goes on to point out that both he and Wenchang have the good fortune to not be living like “birds and beasts or barbarians,” although only Classicists know the reason for this.⁷ Instead, Han Yu’s paraphrase of Yang Xiong’s argument is meant to imply that Liu Zongyuan and the other authors of the Buddhist-sounding poems and prefaces in Wenchang’s collection are guilty of leaning on Confucius’s wall and “reciting” heterodox teachings.

Han Yu next explains the background to Wenchang’s request and laments the heavily Buddhist content of his collection. He argues that Wenchang’s real motivation for building a collection of prefaces and poetry is a desire to learn the Way of the Sages:

Wenchang is a Buddhist. If he wanted to hear Buddhist teachings, he would go to his own teacher and ask about them. Why would he visit people of our persuasion to request [poems and prefaces]? Because he has seen the goodness of our relations between ruler and minister, father and son, and the greatness of our ritual institutions and arts. His heart longs after them, but he is constrained by his religion and cannot enter into them. Therefore he takes pleasure in hearing of these teachings and requests them from us.... We ought not to still be speaking pointlessly of Buddhist teachings to him.

夫文暢，浮屠也。如欲聞浮屠之說，當自就其師而問之，何故謁吾徒而來請也？彼見吾君臣父子之懿，文物事爲之盛，其心有慕焉，拘其法而未能入，故樂聞其說而請之。… 不當又爲浮屠之說而瀆告之也。

It is hard to tell how sincere Han Yu is being here. One suspects he is aware that Wenchang has little interest in Classicism, but is taking the opportunity to poke fun at his literary pretensions. In any case, Han Yu proceeds to act on his own advice by presenting Wenchang with a potted history of Chinese civilization:

When the [Chinese] people first appeared, they were like birds and beasts or barbarians (Yi-Di). The sages arose, and only then did the people know how to live in houses and eat grains, to love their kin and respect their superiors, to nurture the living and bury the dead. That is why there is no greater Way than humaneness and moral duty, and no teaching more correct than that of rites and music, laws and government. Extend these to all under heaven, and the myriad things will be in their proper place; apply them to the self, and the body and its *qi* will be at peace. Yao passed [this teaching] on to Shun, Shun to Yu, Yu to King Tang, King Tang to Kings Wen and Wu, and Kings Wen and Wu to the Duke of Zhou and Confucius, [who] wrote it down in books. The people of the Central Lands have followed it generation after generation.

民之初生，固若夷狄禽獸然。聖人者立，然後知宮居而粒食，親親而尊尊，生者養而死者藏。是故道莫大乎仁義，教莫正乎禮樂刑政。施之於天下，萬物得其宜；措

⁷Fan Wenli’s suggestion that Han Yu saw Wenchang and other Chinese Buddhists as “new barbarians (Yi-Di)” 新夷狄—a term found in the Gongyang commentary to the *Chunqiu* but completely absent from Han Yu’s writing—is thus unconvincing. Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 228–231.

之於其躬，體安而氣平。堯以是傳之舜，舜以是傳之禹，禹以是傳之湯，湯以是傳之文武，文武以是傳之周公、孔子，書之於冊，中國之人世守之。⁸

This mythology of sagely culture heroes was not unique to the Classicists—it is found in the *Mozi*, the *Zhuangzi*, and the *Han Feizi* as well.⁹ But the mention of barbarians suggests that Han Yu was also inspired by a preface in Du You’s 杜佑 (735–812) massive encyclopedia of institutional history, the *Tongdian* 通典, which was presented to the throne in 801. Du You’s preface to the section on foreign countries and foreign relations (somewhat misleadingly titled “Frontier Defense,” *bianfang* 邊防) contains a passage that uses an innovative anthropological approach to refute the primitivist philosophy of the *Laozi daodejing* 老子道德經. By demonstrating that various “inferior and uncouth customs” 鄙風弊俗 found among peoples of the northeastern and southern frontiers—including corpse exposure, living in trees and caves, and eating with one’s hands—were identical to now-defunct Chinese practices mentioned in the Classics, Du You argued that the Chinese would still be living just like barbarians if not for the sage-kings who had replaced these practices with more civilized ways. A primeval ‘state of nature’ was therefore no different from barbarism and could not be superior to life in a society governed by the sages’ “laws and teachings” (*fajiao* 法教). Expanding on the *Bohu tongyi* explanation for barbarian inferiority, Du You also argued that the barbarians had remained locked in a primitive state because the *qi* in “peripheral” (*pian* 偏) lands was too “blocked up” (*geng* 梗) to produce sages; in contrast, the people of the Central Lands, having “received the correct [balance of] *qi*” 受氣正, were “harmonious by nature and intelligent in their mental faculties” 性和而才惠 and therefore capable of achieving sagehood.¹⁰

Earlier in the preface, Du You had asserted that the Chinese lands lay at the center of the world and implicitly rejected Buddhist notions of geography that located the center in India. Had he been more concerned with promoting an anti-Buddhist agenda, he could have developed the theory of central and peripheral *qi* further and explicitly denied the Buddha’s sagehood. Instead, he moved on to the preface’s proper subject of foreign relations and constructed a familiar anti-expansionist argument based on historical examples and rhetoric borrowed from the *Hanshu Xiongnu Appraisal*.¹¹ One suspects that the argument against Daoist primitivism was itself only an excuse for Du You to present an interesting anthropological theory that he had arrived at from studying ethnographic writings alongside classical texts. Han Yu, on the other hand, uses his narrative of civilization’s origins to berate the Buddhists for ignoring their debt to the sages, without whom they would still be living like animals:

As for the Buddhists today, who among them practices and passes on this [teaching]? Whenever a bird lowers its head to peck at its food, it has to then look up and scan all

⁸ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 252–253.

⁹ See the “Ci guo” 辭過 chapter of the *Mozi*, the “Dao Zhi” 盜跖 chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, and the “Wu du” 五蠹 chapter of the *Han Feizi* (HFZ 19.1085).

¹⁰ TD 185.4978–4980.

¹¹ TD 185.4979–4981.

four directions; wild beasts live deep in their lairs and only come out occasionally; [these creatures] live in fear of predators and even then cannot always escape harm. The flesh of the weak becomes food for the strong. Now I and Wenchang live in peaceful surroundings and eat at leisure, carefree from birth to death, unlike the birds and beasts. How can we not know how this came to be?

今浮屠者，孰爲而孰傳之耶？夫鳥俛而啄，仰而四顧；夫獸深居而簡出：懼物之爲己害也，猶且不脫焉。弱之肉，強之食，今我與文暢安居而暇食，優遊以生死，與禽獸異者，寧可不知其所自耶？¹²

Han Yu thus acknowledges that the Chinese, Classicists and Buddhists alike, are spared the solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short lives (to borrow a well-known phrase from Thomas Hobbes) of animals and barbarians. It is just that the Buddhists are ignorant of the reasons for this good fortune. Absent from this discussion, however, is any serious engagement with the basic Buddhist teaching that in spite of the comforts of civilized existence, life is defined by suffering in the form of emotional pain, sickness, old age, and death.

Han Yu then argues that since Wenchang can now no longer plead ignorance, he has a moral responsibility to turn to the Classicist way; Han also insinuates that Liu Zongyuan and the other literati have been ignoring their own moral responsibilities by politely pandering to Wenchang's Buddhist beliefs rather than asserting the superiority of Classicism:

The ignorant cannot be blamed for not knowing. But to know something and not act on it is to be deluded; to love one's old ways and thus be unable to move on to the new is to be weak; to know something and not tell others is to be inhumane; to tell others something other than the truth is to be untrustworthy.

夫不知者，非其人之罪也；知而不爲者，惑也；悅乎故，不能即乎新者，弱也；知而不以告人者，不仁也；告而不以實者，不信也。

In the very next line, however, Han covers his tracks with a polite gesture to Liu Zongyuan:

I give weight to Liu [Zongyuan's] request [on Wenchang's behalf], and also commend any Buddhist who has the ability to enjoy elegant writing. Hence I have written this.
余既重柳請，又嘉浮屠能喜文辭，於是乎言。¹³

Rather than advocating hostility and persecution toward the Buddhist monastic community, Han Yu seems to believe that if the literati would only take their ideological commitment to the Way of the sage-kings seriously, cultured monks like Wenchang would soon be flocking to Classicism's doors. Likewise, while this preface's citing of Yang Xiong might be taken to imply that Han Yu associated Buddhists with barbarians, the attitude professed is one of proselytism rather than exclusion: "If he dwelt among the barbarians, then I would welcome him in."

¹² Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 253.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 253.

Chen Yinke has cited a *jueju* 絕句 (quatrain) poem attributed to Han Yu in the *Quan Tangshi* 全唐詩, titled “To a Sutra-translating Monk” 贈譯經僧, as evidence that his anti-Buddhist stance was based on anti-foreign sentiments¹⁴:

萬里休言道路賒，Don't talk about the ten-thousand-*li* road you've traveled—
 有誰教汝度流沙？Who asked you to cross the shifting sands?
 隻今中國方多事，The Central Lands are now troubled enough;
 不用無端更亂華！No need or reason for you to bring more disorder to the Chinese!

The references to the Central Lands and to the Chinese imply that this poem was addressed to either a specific foreign monk or a generic foreign monk representing those who had introduced Buddhism to the Chinese centuries before. The *Quan Tangshi* traces the poem to a twelfth-century anthology of Tang *jueju*, but it is absent from the various Song-period editions of Han Yu's collected works. Moreover, its plain, direct, and colloquial language does not resemble his poetic style. Two modern editions of Han Yu's poetry have therefore expressed doubt as to its authenticity.¹⁵ The poem may have been composed in the Song period and falsely ascribed to Han, the most famous anti-Buddhist literatus of the Tang period, in order to raise its prestige.

In fact, there is no evidence that Han Yu ever interacted with foreign monks. He did associate quite freely with Chinese Buddhist monks, however, and many of the valedictory pieces that he wrote for them are characterized by an ambivalence that suggests that their cultural refinement and character ultimately mattered more to him than their ideological affiliation. In valedictory poems for the highly literate monks Chengguan 澄觀 (737–838) and the Reverend Ling 靈師 (n.d.), Han Yu expresses a desire to “gather in” (*lian* 斂) the addressee and have him don the cap of a literatus. At the same time, he emphasizes Buddhism's foreign origins and criticizes the monastic community for extravagant building projects and for being a magnet to tax-evading peasants.¹⁶ In an undated valedictory preface addressed to Lingzong 令縱 (n.d.)—a monk who, like Wenchang, loved travelling and cultivating ties with the literati—Han Yu praises his literary talent and claims that he behaves so much like a literatus that “I forget that Lingzong is a son of the Buddha” 吾忘令縱之為釋氏之子也. Echoing the opening lines of the preface for Wenchang, Han begins his preface for Lingzong by asserting, “If a man's profession is different [from ours] but his sentiments are similar, then a superior man may welcome him in” 其行異，其情同，君子與其進可也.¹⁷ Yet another traveling monk, the Reverend Hui 惠師 (n.d.), gained Han Yu's admiration in 804 simply by showing utter disinterest in fraternizing with the

¹⁴ Chen, *Jinmingguan congkao chubian*, 329.

¹⁵ Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 3029; Qian Zhonglian 錢仲聯, *Han Changli shi xinian jishi* 韓昌黎詩繫年集釋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), 15.

¹⁶ Han Yu composed the poem for Chengguan in 800 and the poem for the Reverend Ling in 804. Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 92, 149–150.

¹⁷ The phrase 與其進 also echoes *Analects* 7:29. Ibid., 2768; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 675.

rich and powerful, to the extent that Han attempted without success to dissuade him from leaving on another journey. As Han's valedictory poem to him explains:

吾非西方教， I think the Western Teaching (i.e., Buddhism) is wrong,
 憐子狂且醇。 But love your passion and purity.
 吾嫉惰遊者， I loathe lazy wanderers,
 憐子愈且諄。 But love your simplicity and resolution.¹⁸

These lines illustrate Han Yu's lifelong difficulty in reconciling his perception of Buddhism as an ideological enemy with his appreciation of certain Buddhist monks as interesting human beings. The most famous examples of the latter are the monks Wuben 無本 (779–843) of Fanyang 范陽 (modern Beijing) and Dadian 大顛 (732–824) of Chaozhou 潮州, who present an interesting contrast. The poetry-loving Wuben, better known by his secular name Jia Dao 賈島, befriended Han Yu in 801. In 811/812, he returned to lay life in order to sit for the *jinshi* examinations. Wuben's decision was motivated by admiration for Han Yu's literary accomplishments, an apparent fulfillment of Han's dream of turning monks into literati. But there is no indication that Wuben also renounced his Buddhist beliefs as a result of Han's influence; he is certainly not known to have engaged in attacks on Buddhism, as some of Han's students did. He later became an accomplished poet himself but apparently was perennially unsuccessful as an examination candidate.¹⁹ As for Dadian, Han Yu met him in Chaozhou in 819 and came to respect the aged monk in spite of their philosophical differences. As a result, he later had to fend off embarrassing rumors that he had converted to Buddhism despite having written the infamous anti-Buddhist memorial that caused his exile to Chaozhou in the first place.²⁰

Han Yu's anti-Buddhist letter to Liu Zongyuan, and Liu's response

Whereas the preface for Wenchang indirectly criticizes Liu Zongyuan as "Classicist in name but Mohist in deed," one of Liu Zongyuan's prefaces provides evidence that Han Yu also made direct attacks on Liu's positive attitude toward Buddhism. Relations between the two literary lions were apparently tense and highly competitive, despite their mutual efforts at maintaining a semblance of amity or cordiality.²¹ Han Yu seems to have eventually discarded

¹⁸ I have followed Stephen Owen's translation and analysis of the poem, which capture the ambivalence and nuance lacking in Marc Abramson's translation of this excerpt's first two lines. Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 140; Owen, *The Poetry of Meng Chiao and Han Yü*, 90–95; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 68.

¹⁹ Bai Aiping argues quite convincingly that Han Yu and Wuben first met at Luoyang in 801, although the two men did not meet again until 811. See Bai Aiping 白愛平, "Jia Dao wei seng ji huansu shijian didian kao" 賈島為僧及還俗時間地點考, *Tangdu xuekan* 唐都學刊 2006(5), 11–13.

²⁰ On Dadian's background and the longstanding controversy over the authenticity of three letters from Han Yu to him, see Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 97–98. Han Yu's attempt at refuting the rumors of his conversion will be analyzed later in this chapter.

²¹ Recent studies of the Han-Liu relationship have emphasized their displays of mutual admiration and respect, while ignoring the less obvious signs of tension and rivalry. See for example Ruan Zhong 阮忠, "Han Yu de 'Liu zan' yu Liu Zongyuan de 'Han bian' shuo" 韓愈的“柳讚”與柳宗元的“韓辯”說, *Zhejiang shifan daxue xuebao* 浙江

those of his works that directly reflect his literary and intellectual rivalry with Liu Zongyuan, but that rivalry can still be discerned from Liu's collected works (compiled posthumously by Liu Yuxi), which contain letters and essays criticizing Han's positions on various subjects. These positions included a bizarre theory—probably made in jest—that Heaven detests human beings for doing violence to the natural landscape and actively seeks their extinction; a willingness to assume the role of a teacher of literary style, which Liu Zongyuan regarded as presumptuous; and a reluctance to complete the assignment of compiling the Veritable Records (*shilu* 實錄) for Shunzong's 順宗 (r. 805) politically controversial reign—Liu saw this as a gutless abdication of responsibility that hardly befitted Han's self-righteous stance on other issues.²²

Liu Zongyuan's valedictory preface for the Buddhist monk Haochu 浩初 (n.d.) mentions, quotes, and rebuts a rather unpleasant anti-Buddhist letter that Han Yu sent to Liu via a mutual acquaintance, Li Chu 李礎 (n.d.). The letter is no longer extant but can be dated to 810 or 811 based on a valedictory preface that Han Yu wrote for Li Chu in the autumn of 810, on the occasion of Li's departure from Luoyang.²³ Han Yu had been posted to Luoyang since 807 and would be appointed magistrate of the city in the winter of 810–811. Li Chu was on the staff of the governor of Hunan 湖南 circuit at Changsha 長沙, and had traveled to Luoyang to visit his father. While there, he caught up with Han Yu, whom he had not seen in thirteen years, and was asked to convey a letter to Liu Zongyuan. Because Liu had been exiled to the Hunan prefecture of Yongzhou 永州 as punishment for his membership in the Wang Shuwen 王叔文 (d. 806) faction during Shunzong's reign, communications between him and Han Yu were infrequent and conducted through traveling intermediaries like Li Chu.²⁴

Han Yu's letter was a response to an earlier valedictory preface that Liu Zongyuan had written for a Daoist traveler known by the nickname Yuan the Eighteenth 元十八.²⁵ Liu begins that preface by claiming that the philosophy of Laozi is merely “a distributary of [the teaching of] Confucius” 孔氏之異流 and implicitly attributing the rivalry between Classicist and Daoists to narrowmindedness. He goes on to assert that even the other competing traditions of classical

師範大學學報 2011(1), 43–49; Jiang Dongyu 姜冬宇, “Cong ‘he’er butong’ zhong kan Han Liu jiaoyi” 從 “和而不同” 中看韓柳交誼, *Beifang wenzue* 北方文學 2011(8), 192–193.

²² LZY 16.441–450, 31.807–809, 34.871–874. For two interpretations of Han Yu's theory on Heaven, see James R. Hightower, “Han Yü as Humorist,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44.1 (1984), 22–24; Owen, *The End of the Chinese ‘Middle Ages,’* 61–70.

²³ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 277–278; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 508; Zhang Qinghua 張清華, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng* 韓愈年譜匯證 (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998), 261–262, 265.

²⁴ For example, Liu received a copy of Han Yu's comic allegory, “The Biography of Mao Ying (Fur Point)” 毛穎傳, from a relative who visited him in Yongzhou in 809. LZY 21.569.

²⁵ Ironically, Han Yu later traveled with Yuan the Eighteenth in 819, while en route to exile at Chaozhou 潮州. The two men had not previously met. Han Yu became good friends with Yuan the Eighteenth and wrote a few poems for him; in one of these, Han speaks of having read Liu Zongyuan's preface for Yuan long before meeting him. Scholars have long identified Yuan the Eighteenth as the Yuan Jixu 元集虛 mentioned in two pieces that Bai Juyi wrote in 817. Qian, *Han Changli shi xinian jishi*, 1123–1136; QTW 675.6895, 676.6900–6901.

philosophy, including those of Yang Zhu 楊朱, Mozi, and the Legalists, all contain ideas that could “assist in [governing] the age” 佐世. Buddhism is the latest addition to the mix, “and so it has faced the most shock, fear, and misguided resistance from men of learning” 固學者之所怪駭舛逆其尤者. Liu draws an explicit contrast between such partisan tendencies and Yuan the Eighteenth’s eclectic approach to learning:

His learning is expansive and integrative, and [other people’s] reproach does not hinder his Way. He adopts all things that have hitherto been different and joins them together, making them the same. He collects, selects, and blends them, achieving a great mediation with the Way, fully employing all their advantages while rejecting their strange and deviant elements. He invites them to be in the same Way as Confucius, where each finds something suited to its purpose, and where each has the capacity to hold on to [that purpose] and the strength to carry it out. He does not seek to make the age conform to his Way and often aspires to emulate those in antiquity who “maintained their *yin*.”

其為學恢博而貫統，數無以躡其道。悉取向之所以異者，通而同之，搜擇融液，與道大適，咸伸其所長，而黜其奇衰，要之與孔子同道，皆有以會其趣，而其器足以守之，其氣足以行之。不以其道求合於世，常有意乎古之「守雌」者。²⁶

The phrase “maintained their *yin*” alludes to the *Laozi daodejing*, which says that “those who know their *yang* while maintaining their *yin* become the stream into which all under heaven flows” 知其雄，守其雌，為天下谿。²⁷ Liu Zongyuan understands it to mean a gentle, tolerant spirit that (unlike that of someone like Han Yu) does not attempt to impose its opinions on others.

Han Yu seems to have read a copy of the preface for Yuan the Eighteenth at some point, and to have interpreted (probably correctly) the comment on Buddhism as a sardonic swipe at himself. In fact, Liu Zongyuan’s description of Yuan’s integrative vision of the Way was also an implicit repudiation of Han Yu’s intolerant, exclusive brand of Classicism.²⁸ Hence the letter that Han had Li Chu bring to Liu Zongyuan was ostensibly a personal rebuke to Liu but effectively a defense of Han’s reasons for opposing Buddhism. Liu Zongyuan in turn decided to use his preface for Haochu as a platform for defending both himself and the Buddhist faith from Han Yu’s criticism. As the preface’s conclusion reveals, Haochu was based in Changsha and knew Li Chu; the monk could thus serve as Liu’s intermediary with Li Chu, who would in turn convey Liu’s message to Han Yu. The preface begins:

²⁶ LZY 25.662–663.

²⁷ *Laozi daodejing*, section 28.

²⁸ See also a preface that Liu Zongyuan wrote for another freespirted Daoist, Jia Jingbo 賈景伯 (or Jia Xuanbo 賈宣伯, n.d.), in 815. It praises Jia’s eclecticism in very similar terms: “I spoke with him and found him to be versed in the Classics, and to have borrowed expansively from the various histories, the philosophical masters, and the great writers of the past, integrating them all” 與之言邃於經書，博取諸史、羣子、昔之為文章者，畢貫統。” LZY 25.664–665.

The Classicist Han Tuizhi is on good terms with me and has previously worried about my fondness for the words of the Buddha, berating me for associating with Buddhist monks. Recently, Mister Li Chu of Longxi came from the eastern capital, and Tuizhi again entrusted him with a letter blaming me. He says, “I have seen the Valedictory Preface for Mister Yuan, and it does not reject Buddhism.” The truth is that there are things in Buddhism that cannot be attacked because they are often in accord with the *Yijing* and the *Analects*. I find pleasure in them, that is true, because they calm my temper and do not belong to a different Way from that of Confucius. Tuizhi’s love of Classicism cannot be greater than that of Yang Xiong, yet Yang Xiong’s book (i.e., the *Fayan*) adopts ideas from Zhuangzi, Mozi, Shen Buhai, and Han Fei. Can Buddhism be more outlandish than Zhuangzi and Mozi and more treacherous than Shen Buhai and Han Fei?

儒者韓退之與余善，嘗病余嗜浮屠言，訾余與浮屠遊。近隴西李生礎自東都來，退之又寓書罪余，且曰：「見《送元生序》，不斥浮屠。」浮屠誠有不可斥者，往往與《易》、《論語》合，誠樂之，其於性情爽然，不與孔子異道。退之好儒，未能過楊子，楊子之書，於莊、墨、申、韓皆有取焉。浮屠者，反不及莊、墨、申、韓之怪僻險賊耶？²⁹

Liu Zongyuan’s appeal to Yang Xiong’s *Fayan* as a benchmark of Classicist fervor is ironic, given that Han Yu’s preface for Wenchang quoted the *Fayan* to insinuate that Liu was disloyal to the Classicist cause. Liu may, in fact, be making a belated attempt to pay Han Yu back in his own coin. Note also a likely case of strategic misquotation: in reality, Yang Xiong only acknowledged that there were ideas worth adopting from Laozi, Zhuangzi, and Zou Yan; he found nothing of merit in Mozi and the “Legalist” ideas of Shen Buhai and Han Fei.³⁰

The middle section of the preface presents Liu Zongyuan’s response to two anti-Buddhist arguments that Han Yu apparently used in the letter: namely, that Buddhism is un-Chinese and that it is anti-social. We will encounter both arguments again in Han’s other anti-Buddhist works. Liu Zongyuan retorts:

He says, “Because it is [from] the barbarians (Yi).” If he really doesn’t believe in the [Buddhist] Way and rejects it because it is from the barbarians, then is he going to be friends with Elai and Bandit Zhi, and despise Ji Zha and Youyu? This is not what they call going beyond names to focus on substance. What I adopt [from Buddhism] is in accord with the *Yijing* and the *Analects*, and even if the sages were reborn [in this age], they would find nothing in it to reject. What Tuizhi blames [Buddhism] for are only its traces. He says, “They shave their heads and wear black robes, ignoring the bonds between husband and wife, father and son. They do not farm or cultivate silkworms in order to sustain the people’s lives.” As for this, even I take no pleasure in it. But Tuizhi, being angered by the exterior, misses the core; this is to know a rock but not know the jade that lies within it. That [i.e., the jade at the core] is the reason why I am fond of the Buddha’s words.

²⁹ LZY 25.673.

³⁰ FYYS 6.114, 130, 134–135.

曰：「以其夷也。」果不信道而斥焉以夷，則將友惡來、盜跖，而賤季札、由余乎？非所謂去名求實者矣。吾之所取者與《易》、《論語》合，雖聖人復生，不可得而斥也。退之所罪者其跡也，曰：「髡而緇，無夫婦父子，不為耕農蠶桑而活乎人。」若是，雖吾亦不樂也。退之忿其外而遺其中，是知石而不知韞玉也。吾之所以嗜浮屠之言以此。³¹

In other words, Han Yu's rejection of Buddhism is based on superficial impressions, whereas a sage would judge it by the substance of its teachings.

For the purposes of this chapter, the most interesting aspect of Liu Zongyuan's response is obviously his juxtaposition of the evil Shang minister Elai³² and Bandit Zhi with the "worthy barbarians" Ji Zha and Youyu, as a way of rendering the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy irrelevant to the question of Buddhism's moral worth. Ji Zha was best known for his familiarity with the ritual culture of the Central Lands, while Youyu was best known for making a primitivist 'noble savage' argument that blamed ritual culture for the moral and political decline of the Chinese states. Despite this fundamental difference, both men acquired a reputation as perspicacious ministers in later lore.³³ The "worthy barbarian" or "sagely barbarian" trope was a popular and time-tested strategy in Buddhist apologetics precisely because, as Charles Holcombe points out, "expressions of disdain for Buddhism on the grounds that it was foreign were as old as Chinese Buddhism itself."³⁴ In the "Mouzi lihuo lun" 牟子理惑論 (Master Mou's Discourse for Removing Doubts), possibly the earliest extant example of the apologetic genre, an imaginary challenger quotes the *Analects* and the *Mencius* as evidence that barbarians are inferior to the Chinese, and then takes Mouzi to task for abandoning "the Way of Yao, Shun, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius" 堯、舜、周、孔之道 to learn "a barbarian (Yi-Di) technique" 夷狄之術. Mouzi counters him by citing counterexamples to show that the Chinese do not have a monopoly on sageliness. For example, Confucius was prepared to live among the nine kinds of Yi barbarian, arguing that they would cease to be crude with a morally superior man living among them, and both he and Mencius were rejected by Chinese, not barbarian, rulers.³⁵ Mouzi also uses the sage-king Yu and Youyu as examples of worthy barbarians to show that Buddhism's foreign origins did not make it inferior to Chinese teachings.³⁶ Similar arguments recur in a number of later apologetical writings, usually responding to Daoist attacks. They effectively assert that since barbarians can become cultured and can even become sages, there is no reason to reject a

³¹ LZY 25.673–674.

³² According to the *Shiji*, Elai had great physical strength and served the evil last king of the Shang dynasty. He was killed when the King Wu of the Zhou overthrew the Shang. SJ 5.174.

³³ SJ 5.192–193, 31.1452–1459; HFZ 3.221–222; ZZZY 39.1095–1109; LJZY 10.312–313.

³⁴ Holcombe, "Immigrants and Strangers," 103–104.

³⁵ Sengyou 僧祐 ed., *Hongming ji* 弘明集 (T52:2102, CBETA edition), 5.

³⁶ The claim that Yu originated from the western Qiang people first appears in the *Shiji*: see SJ 15.686.

teaching just because it is not Chinese in origin.³⁷ Interestingly, while Ji Zha and Youyu could be used as examples of barbarians who became wise and worthy men, both were also believed to be descendants of Chinese who had settled among the barbarians and adopted their ways. We shall see that the idea of Chinese becoming barbarians plays a key role in the anti-Buddhist polemic of Han Yu's most famous essay, the "Yuandao." But the fact that Liu Zongyuan's preface for Haochu does not respond to that idea suggests that it did not appear in Han Yu's letter to Liu.

Liu Zongyuan next defends his fraternization with Buddhist monks and uses Haochu as an example of the kind of monk with whom he is happy to associate. Indeed, Liu's description of Haochu is strongly reminiscent of Han Yu's positive descriptions of Wenchang, Lingzong, and Reverend Hui. But Liu also insinuates that Han has failed to develop a deeper understanding of Buddhism despite his acquaintance with these monks, and implicitly accuses him of being a vulgar careerist:

One who associates with them (i.e., the Buddhist monks) may not necessarily be able to comprehend their words. Furthermore, whoever practices their Way does not covet official rank or compete over ability; most of them find pleasure in the mountains and rivers and are fond of leisure and tranquility. I worry about [the people of] this age rushing after nothing but official seals and jostling against each other; if I want no part of that, then who else [but the Buddhist monks] should I follow? That is the reason why I like to associate with Buddhist monks. Now Haochu's very nature is leisure and his very temperament is tranquility. He reads his books and is familiar with the *Yijing* and the *Analecets*. He finds pleasure in the mountains and rivers and when he writes, he writes about them. Moreover, both father and son practice this Way, and [the son] cares for [his father] and lives with him. They are content and seek nothing [from others]. In that case, they are worthier than those who follow the words of Zhuangzi, Mozi, Shen Buhai, and Han Feizi, and as for rushing after nothing but official seals and jostling against each other, they are far from that indeed.

與其人遊者，未必能通其言也。且凡爲其道者，不愛官，不爭能，樂山水而嗜閒安者爲多。吾病世之逐逐者唯印組爲務以相軋也，則舍是其焉從？吾之好與浮屠遊以此。今浩初問其性，安其情，讀其書，通《易》、《論語》，唯山水之樂，有文而文之。又父子咸爲其道，以養而居，泊焉而無求，則其賢於爲莊、墨、申、韓之言，而逐逐然唯印組爲務以相軋者，其亦遠矣。

The preface ends by issuing a defiant challenge to Han Yu:

³⁷ Examples include Sengyou's 僧祐 (445–518) postface to the *Hongming ji*, Li Shizheng's 李師政 (fl. 620–639) "Neide lun" 內德論 (Discourse on Inner Moral Power), and Falin's 法琳 (572–640) "Poxie lun" 破邪論 (Discourse for Destroying Heterodoxy). Sengyou ed., *Hongming ji* (T52:2102, CBETA edition), 145; Daoxuan 道宣 ed., *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (T52:2103, CBETA edition), 150; Falin, "Poxie lun" (T52:2109, CBETA edition), 11–12.

Mister Li Chu is also on good terms with Haochu. Now [Haochu] is going [to Changsha] and can show my words to him (i.e., Li Chu). I will send [this preface] to Tuizhi through this person [Li Chu] and see what he thinks of it.

李生礎與浩初又善。今之往也，以吾言示之。因此人寓退之，視何如也。³⁸

For reasons that are unknown to us, Han Yu chose not to take up Liu Zongyuan's challenge. No reply to the preface for Haochu is found in Han's collected works or mentioned in Liu's. More than two centuries later Ouyang Xiu, a prominent Han Yu admirer, argued that Han Yu only "said nothing" 不言/無言 about Liu Zongyuan's belief in Buddhism so as to avoid the charge of competing with him for literary fame. In other words, Han did not want to appear to be criticizing Liu out of small-minded jealousy.³⁹ Ouyang Xiu seems to have been unaware that Han Yu did attack Liu Zongyuan's Buddhism on more than one occasion, as revealed in Liu's preface for Haochu. However, Ouyang's theory about Han Yu's restraint may well explain why Han tried to suppress the evidence of these attacks after Liu's death, especially since he was given the honor of composing Liu's epitaph. Han Yu would have made himself vulnerable to accusations of hypocrisy if his collected works included harsh criticisms of Liu Zongyuan alongside a glowing posthumous tribute to him.

The poet Wang Ling 王令 (1032–1059), a younger contemporary of Ouyang Xiu, did know of the preface for Haochu and took it upon himself to write a reply on Han Yu's behalf. Wang Ling's reply berated Liu Zongyuan for "sinking unrepentantly into barbarism (Yi-Di)" 陷夷狄而不悔 by supporting Buddhism, and tried to rebut Liu's "worthy barbarians" argument using a trope from Han Yu's celebrated "Yuandao":

Alas, Zihou (Liu Zongyuan's style name), again you are not thinking straight! When Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu*, if any of the feudal lords used barbarian (Yi) ritual, then [Confucius] regarded him as a barbarian—for example, he called the Marquis of Qi a viscount. If I, Han Yu, should not reject Buddhism as something barbaric, then Confucius, too, should not have rejected the Viscount of Qi because of his traces (i.e., ritual acts) without thinking about his substance. Can even one as sagely as Confucius not escape Zihou's criticism of his judgment?

嗚呼子厚，又不思矣哉！昔者孔子作《春秋》，諸侯用夷禮則夷之，若杞侯稱子是也。若愈不得斥浮圖以夷，則孔子亦不得斥杞子以跡而不思其中也。聖如孔子者，其取捨猶不免子厚之過耶？⁴⁰

³⁸ LZY 25.674.

³⁹ This passage is dated 1064. In it, Ouyang Xiu also decries the eleventh-century literati's habit of referring to these two masters of Ancient Style prose in the same breath (i.e., as "Han and Liu"), and declares, "the Ways that they followed were as different as barbarians (Yi) and Chinese" 其為道不同猶夷夏也. JGL 8.190 (see also the undated entry at 8.191, where Ouyang calls Liu Zongyuan "a sinner against Han Yu's school" 韓門之罪人 and again criticizes the practice of pairing his name with Han's).

⁴⁰ Nearly all of Wang Ling's works must have been written in the decade before his death at the young age of twenty-seven in 1059. Note that in a valedictory poem addressed to a Daoist priest and an essay on the *Mozi*, Wang referred to the Buddha and Laozi as "the two barbarians (Yi)" 二夷. This practice of attributing barbarian origins to Daoism was probably borrowed from Shi Jie (on whom see Chapter 5), with whose works Wang was evidently

Let us now analyze the background and logic of this trope by turning to the “Yuandao” itself.

The “Yuandao”

Han Yu designed the “Yuandao” as an explication of his reasons for believing that both Daoism and Buddhism were philosophically and ethically inferior to and incompatible with Classicism. Han claimed in the preface for *Wenchang* that the Chinese had been following the Way of the Sages “generation after generation,” but in the “Yuandao,” he revealed that he actually believed this Way to have been gradually lost since the death of Mencius. In his view, Xunzi and Yang Xiong only taught an imperfect understanding of the Way, and even that was finally lost due to the pernicious influence of Daoist and Buddhist teachings. The only way for the literati to recover the Way of the Sages was by rejecting these teachings unreservedly and devoting themselves to the study of the Classics and the *Mencius*.⁴¹

An exchange of letters between Han Yu and his protégé Zhang Ji 張籍 (ca. 767–ca. 830) in 798 shows that Han was already promoting this ideological agenda orally at that time, and indeed had been doing so for some years.⁴² Much to Zhang Ji’s consternation, however, he avoided philosophically serious writing and instead indulged a fondness for frivolity and rhetorical sophistry—Zhang complains, “you tend to favor random and baseless theories” 多尚駁雜無實之說—that seems to have always existed in tension with his ideological ambitions.⁴³ In response to Zhang Ji’s assertion that he should be writing a philosophical manifesto instead of engaging in mere frivolity, Han Yu initially maintained that oral teaching was not superior to the written word, and that he would only feel ready to write down his ideas when he was fifty or sixty years old (he was then thirty-one).⁴⁴ But he subsequently admitted to being deterred by fear of offending pro-Daoist and pro-Buddhist persons at court, including the emperor himself. In 798 Han Yu had only recently gained a low-ranking post at Bianzhou 汴州 (Kaifeng) after years of frustrated attempts at entering government service through the examinations.⁴⁵ He was probably loath to jeopardize his already slim chances of an appointment at court by producing written

familiar. We shall see below that the practice did not originate with Han Yu, although Han laid the rhetorical foundations for it. WLJ 2.29, 13.247, 14.254, 16.283–284.

⁴¹ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 14, 18–19.

⁴² However, Han Yu’s second letter to Zhang Ji suggests that he originally believed the Way of the Sages was lost only after Yang Xiong’s death. QTW 684.7007–7009; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 131–136; Lo, *Tangdai wenxue lunji*, 24–25. For the dating of these letters see Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 106–107.

⁴³ For various interpretations of this tendency in Han Yu, see Hightower, “Han Yü as Humorist,” 5–27; David McMullen, “Han Yu: An Alternative Picture,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 49.2 (1989), 652–657; Stephen Owen, *The End of the Chinese ‘Middle Ages’: Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 57–70; Ichikawa Kan 市川勘, *Han Yu yanjiu xinlun—sixiang yu wenzhang chuanguo* 韓愈研究新論—思想與文章創作 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 2004), 155–184.

⁴⁴ Hartman argues that Han Yu’s explanation reflects a “preference for the spoken over the written word as a vehicle for instruction.” I am inclined to be more skeptical. Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 161.

⁴⁵ For a useful summary of this period in Han Yu’s life see Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 36–44.

evidence of his radical views. It is unclear why he changed his mind perhaps six years later and wrote the “Yuandao,” which ends with a notoriously militant call to laicize the Daoist and Buddhist clergy, burn their scriptures, and convert their temples into homes.⁴⁶

The influence and praise that the “Yuandao” enjoyed in later times surely has something to do with the eloquence and forcefulness of its prose, but more important than that is the fact that its new interpretation of the history of the Way eventually became central to the *Daoxue* form of Classicism. Indeed, the appropriation of Han Yu’s ideas by *Daoxue* philosophers tends to lead scholars to overestimate the “Yuandao” as a piece of philosophy. It was clearly effective as a piece of polemic, but there is little philosophical logic or structure to its content. Its opening and middle sections are a string of alternating but largely unrelated anti-Daoist and anti-Buddhist arguments, rather than a systematic exposition of a central thesis. Yet it is the only sustained argumentative piece by Han Yu that targets both Daoism and Buddhism. It is therefore important to review the anti-Daoist arguments alongside the anti-Buddhist arguments, in order to keep in mind that Han Yu’s agenda was not limited to attacking Buddhism. To facilitate analysis, I will analyze the specifically anti-Daoist arguments before doing the same with the anti-Buddhist arguments. It should be noted that the essay also contains two arguments directed against both Daoism and Buddhism: it accuses the Daoists and Buddhists of fabricating “absurd” 誕 and “strange” 怪 stories that Confucius was a disciple of Laozi or the Buddha, and it accuses the Daoist and Buddhist clergy of reducing people to poverty and banditry by being unproductive consumers and an economic burden on society.⁴⁷ Neither accusation is developed in any depth.

The Daoist clergy of the Tang period were most closely identified with a belief in immortals and the pursuit of immortality through various techniques, including the ingestion of elixirs and the avoidance of certain foods and clothing materials. Han Yu’s disapproval of Daoist immortality-seeking is evident in some of his other works, in which he dismisses the idea of immortals as a falsehood and condemns it for causing men and women to leave their families for the sake of pursuing immortality in a state of reclusion.⁴⁸ However, Han conspicuously and rather inexplicably chooses not to criticize this aspect of Daoism in the “Yuandao.” Instead, the three anti-Daoist arguments used in the “Yuandao” are all directed at the primitivist philosophy of the *Laozi daodejing* and *Zhuangzi*. The first of these is that Laozi did not understand the value of morality and thus saw the Way and morality as antithetical concepts:

⁴⁶ The “Yuandao” has not been securely dated. Various scholars have proposed early 804, late 804 and late 805 as possible dates for a poem in which Han Yu stated that he was “writing a book” 著書, inferring that this book consisted of the “Yuandao” and its four companion essays (whose titles all begin with *yuán* 原). All three dates correspond to the period of Han’s demotion to the magistracy of Yangshan 陽山 county in the far south. Of the three dates, the most likely is late 804, but the inference that the book Han Yu was then writing contained the “Yuandao” remains unproven. We cannot discount the possibility that the “Yuandao” was written later than 805, perhaps even in the 810s. Lo, *Tangdai wenxue lunji*, 443–449; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 19; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 182–183, 185–186; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2665–2667; Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 61.

⁴⁷ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 14–15.

⁴⁸ See Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 108; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 19–20, 546–547. It should be noted, however, that Han Yu did not strongly criticize elixir ingestion until 823: possible reasons for this are discussed in Appendix 2.

Laozi belittled humaneness and moral duty, but he did not thereby diminish their value, because it was his perspective that was small. One who sits in a well and looks up at the sky may say the sky is small, but it is not really the sky that is small. [Laozi] saw humaneness as mere niceness and moral duty as mere fastidiousness, so it is only to be expected that he would belittle them.... Whenever I speak of the Way and inner power (*de* 德), I mean that they are united with humaneness and moral duty, and this is what they mean to all under heaven. Whenever Laozi speaks of the Way and inner power, he means that they are separate from humaneness and moral duty, but this is only what they mean to one man.

老子之小仁義，非毀之也，其見者小也。坐井而觀天，曰「天小」者，非天小也。彼以煦煦爲仁，孑孑爲義，其小之也則宜。其所謂道，道其所道，非吾所謂道也；其所謂德，德其所德，非吾所謂德也。凡吾所謂道德云者，合仁與義言之也，天下之公言也；老子之所謂道德云者，去仁與義言之也，一人之私言也。⁴⁹

This is evidently a response to the *Daodejing*'s claim (also quoted in the *Zhuangzi*) that “inner power appeared only after the Way was lost; humaneness appeared only after inner power was lost; moral duty appeared only after humaneness was lost; and ritual appeared only after moral duty was lost” 失道而後德，失德而後仁，失仁而後義，失義而後禮.⁵⁰ But Han Yu's contention that this teaching interprets “humaneness as mere niceness and moral duty as mere fastidiousness” seems not to take into account various Daoist efforts at harmonizing the *Daodejing* passage with Classicist ideology. For example, Wu Yun 吳筠 (d. 778), the most influential Daoist writer of the eighth century, argued that Daoists do value humaneness and moral duty but give priority to the Way and inner power because these are the roots (*ben* 本) of morality and ritual.⁵¹

The second anti-Daoist argument in the “Yuandao” is that Lao-Zhuang primitivism misreads the history of human civilization—here, Han Yu follows Du You more closely by using a narrative of civilization's origins to refute the primitivist idealization of remote antiquity.

In antiquity, human beings faced many threats. Then the sages arose and taught them the way to nurture one another. As rulers and teachers, they drove out the insects, snakes, birds, and beasts and settled the people in the Central Lands. The people were cold and the sages clothed them; the people were hungry and the sages fed them. [Han Yu next runs through the sages' invention of houses, artisanry, commerce, medicine, tombs, rites, music, government, laws, tallies and seals, measuring vessels and balancing scales, walled cities, armor and weapons—arguing in each case that these inventions were sorely needed.] Whenever a threat or danger appeared, the sages protected the people from it. Yet now [the Daoists] say, “Until the sages are dead, the robbers will not stop; smash the measuring vessels and break the balance scales, and people will fight no more.”⁵² Alas! It

⁴⁹ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 13–14.

⁵⁰ *Laozi daodejing*, section 38; *Zhuangzi*, “Zhi beiyou” 知北遊 chapter.

⁵¹ De Meyer, *Wu Yun's Way*, 114–117.

⁵² This quotation combines two lines from the *Zhuangzi* chapter “Quqie” 胠篋.

is just that they haven't really thought things through. If there were no sages in antiquity, humanity would have died out long ago. Why? Because human beings have no feathers, fur, scales, or shells to protect them from cold and heat, nor do they have claws and fangs with which to fight [with animals] for food.

古之時，人之害多矣。有聖人者立，然後教之以相生養之道。爲之君，爲之師，驅其蟲蛇禽獸，而處之中土。寒，然後爲之衣，饑，然後爲之食。木處而顛，土處而病也，然後爲之宮室。爲之工以贍其器用，爲之賈以通其有無，爲之醫藥以濟其夭死，爲之葬埋祭祀以長其恩愛，爲之禮以次其先後，爲之樂以宣其湮鬱，爲之政以率其怠倦，爲之刑以鋤其強梗。相欺也，爲之符璽鬥斛、權衡以信之；相奪也，爲之城郭、甲兵以守之。害至而爲之備，患生而爲之防。今其言曰：「聖人不死，大盜不止；剖斗折衡，而民不爭。」嗚呼！其亦不思而已矣！如古之無聖人，人之類滅久矣。何也？無羽毛鱗介以居寒熱也，無爪牙以爭食也。⁵³

The last line in this passage is paraphrased from the opening of the *Hanshu* Treatise on Laws, which Du You also quoted in his preface to the *Tongdian* section on Laws; it is possible that Han Yu came across it when reading the *Tongdian*.⁵⁴ The *Hanshu* Treatise uses human beings' physical disadvantages vis-à-vis animals to explain the emergence of communities and states, and the *Tongdian* preface on Frontier Defense argues that the consequence of not having sages is perpetual barbarism. But Han Yu goes further and claims that the consequence of a sageless antiquity would have been humanity's extinction. Obviously, this claim ignores the fact that the "barbarian" peoples, despite not having fur and fangs, have survived without any rulers and teachers whom Han Yu would recognize as sages. In fact, even Han Yu's attack on primitivism in the preface for Wenchang focused on the human-animal dichotomy and only mentioned barbarians in passing. In the "Yuandao," he makes no attempt at all to link primitivism with barbarism. Thus, Pulleyblank's suggestion that the "Yuandao" owes something to the *Tongdian* account of civilization's origins is actually more applicable to the preface for Wenchang.⁵⁵

The third anti-Daoist argument is that primitivism, even if applicable to remote antiquity, is unsuitable for humanity's present needs. It is only rational, Han Yu argues, for people to wear linen in summer and fur in winter, or to drink when thirsty and eat when hungry. When the Daoists criticize the present age for not practicing the ideal of "non-striving" (*wuwei* 無爲 or *wushi* 無事), this is like criticizing people for not wearing linen in winter or drinking water when hungry, simply because linen is lighter than fur and drinking is faster than eating.⁵⁶ These analogies are striking but poorly conceived, since Han Yu is comparing a linear narrative of sociocultural evolution to cyclical patterns of seasonal change, or to the difference between two physiological needs (hunger and thirst).

⁵³ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 15–16.

⁵⁴ HS 23.1079; TD 163.4189.

⁵⁵ Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism," 102, 110.

⁵⁶ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 17.

There are two anti-Buddhist arguments in the “Yuandao,” corresponding quite closely to the arguments made in Han Yu’s letter to Liu Zongyuan.⁵⁷ The first anti-Buddhist argument, which is rather bizarrely split into two by the third anti-Daoist argument, claims that Buddhist monks undermine the foundations of state and society by rejecting their roles as sons and imperial subjects. Han Yu argues that Classicist ethics are socially responsible and oriented toward the family and the state, while Buddhist spiritual practice is anti-social and self-centered.⁵⁸ This argument draws on a longstanding anti-Buddhist accusation—repeatedly rebutted by apologists for the religion—that Buddhist monks, in leaving their families, observing celibacy, and refusing to bow down to the ruler, are thereby rejecting the basic human values of filiality and loyalty. But Han Yu also takes aim at the monks’ ultimate goal of spiritual liberation by representing it as a violation of the principles outlined in the “Daxue” 大學 (Great Learning) chapter of the *Liji*, according to which “rectification of the mind” (*zhengxin* 正心) was not an end in itself but only a first step toward building a well-ordered society. Hartman may well be correct that Han Yu’s “brilliance” led him to attempt to discredit Buddhist values by quoting the hitherto obscure “Daxue.” Han’s point in doing so, however, was not to say that self-cultivation is essential to social order, but rather to say that it is only useful if undertaken for the sake of benefiting society. The *Daoxue* philosophers later placed the “Daxue” at the center of their emphasis on self-cultivation and the rectification of the mind, and may have drawn inspiration from Han Yu when doing so. Nonetheless, I believe it would be anachronistic to read the “Yuandao” as a text strongly concerned with linking self-cultivation to Classicism. Han Yu’s intention was to deny that the pursuit of *nirvana* had any moral value, not to propose his own theory of Classicist self-cultivation as an alternative.⁵⁹

The “Yuandao” portrays the Classicist pursuit of social order and the Buddhist pursuit of enlightenment as antithetical, with no possibility of a middle ground. This willfully ignores the existence of lay Buddhists who remain involved in secular society, the extensive uses of Buddhism in Tang political ideology, and the fact that the Buddhists had their own Bodhisattva ideal of seeking the benefit of all sentient beings (albeit with an understanding of benefit that differed considerably from Classicism). The majority of Han Yu’s literati peers would have disagreed with his simplistic representation of Buddhist doctrine, even if some of them occasionally composed their own anti-Buddhist arguments in order to pay lip service to what

⁵⁷ These parts of the essay have tended to attract the most attention, due to Han Yu’s reputation for anti-Buddhist polemics. Hartman has called them “the central message of the treatise” and “the crux of the text”; Chen Zhi’e similarly calls them “the center of the entire text.” But these assessments probably reflect the later reception of the “Yuandao” rather than Han Yu’s intentions. Hartman himself notes at one point that in the “Yuandao,” “Lao-tzu and his followers come under more sustained attack from Han Yü than do the Buddhists.” It seems to me that Han Yu intended the essay’s central message to be its final section, where he lays out his definition of the Way of the Sages and asserts the argument that it has been lost since Mencius’ death. Hartman, *Han Yü and the Tang Search for Unity*, 151, 158; Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. 1: *From Earliest Times to 1600*, Second Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 569; Chen Zhi’e 陳植鏗, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun* 北宋文化史述論 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1992), 331.

⁵⁸ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 16–17.

⁵⁹ On this point, I find the interpretations of Bol and McMullen more persuasive than those of Hartman and DeBlasi. Hartman, *Han Yü and the Tang Search for Unity*, 150–151, 178; Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 131; McMullen, “Han Yu: An Alternative Picture,” 638–639; DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 137–138.

McMullen calls “a publicly rehearsed position among officials and prospective officials, even those who were privately Buddhist.” In an interesting example cited by McMullen, one of Bai Juyi’s *Celin* 策林 essays—written as preparatory exercises for the decree examination of 806—argues that Buddhist moral teachings have the *same* sociopolitical benefits as the teachings of the sage-kings and are therefore superfluous to the Chinese. Bai argues that the court should proscribe or restrict the practice of Buddhism in order to prevent a multiplicity of ideologies from dividing people’s loyalties and destabilizing the state. It is bad enough, Bai argues, that there are now two kinds of Chinese teaching (i.e., Classicism and Daoism) when one would suffice; no need to make things worse by adding “a paltry teaching from the west” 區區西方之教 to the mix.⁶⁰

Like Han Yu, Bai Juyi’s *Celin* essay holds that antiquity was a perfectly moral age with a single universal teaching, which Bai calls the “great Way” 大道; the present ideological heterogeneity is a result of its decline. Unlike Han, Bai’s essay does not identify the Way exclusively with Classicism or represent Buddhism and Daoism as incompatible with its values. The problem with having three teachings is one of duplication and redundancy, not incompatibility. It is difficult to know how sincerely Bai made his arguments, given the strong pro-Buddhist sympathies that he displayed later in life.⁶¹ Ironically, the parts of his essay that were least charitable to Buddhism were later copied wholesale into a memorial of 845, in which Wuzong explained his reasons for seeking Buddhism’s eradication from Chinese soil. Bai Juyi (who died a year later) was by then a longtime devotee of Chan Buddhism and must have rued his decision to make the *Celin* essays widely available to the public.⁶²

We come to the second and much better known anti-Buddhist argument in the “Yuandao,” which Wang Ling imitated in his imagined reply to Liu Zongyuan. Han Yu argues:

When Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu*, if [any of] the feudal lords used barbarian (Yi) ritual, then [Confucius] regarded him as a barbarian, and if barbarians were promoted to the level of the Central Lands, then he regarded them as [part of the] Central Lands. The Classic [of the *Analects*] says, “The barbarians (Yi-Di) have rulers but are still not equal to Chinese states that do not.”⁶³ The ode says, “He smote the Rong barbarians and Di

⁶⁰ However, Bai Juyi does seem to contradict himself and agree with Han Yu in the last part of the essay, when he accuses the Buddhist monastic community of being an unproductive consumer of society’s resources and forsaking the proper affections between ruler and subject, husband and wife. He thus implicitly introduces a paradox: Buddhism can make people better subjects of the state, but only if they do not practice the religion seriously enough to choose the monastic life. McMullen, “Han Yü: An Alternative Picture,” 613; BJJ 65.3545–3546. For other analyses of this essay see DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 80–81; De Meyer, *Wu Yun’s Way*, 126–127.

⁶¹ In a recent article, Jiao Youjie argues that the essay represents an early, fervently “Confucian” Bai Juyi. I do not think such confidence is warranted, given the generic nature of the *Celin* essays. Jiao Youjie 焦尤傑, “Bai Juyi ‘Celin • Yi Shijiao’ lunxi” 白居易《策林 • 議釋教》論析, *Jiaozuo shifan gaodeng zhuanke xuexiao xuebao* 焦作師範高等專科學校學報 2013(2), 24–27.

⁶² The 845 memorial’s copying of Bai Juyi’s *Celin* essay has generally gone unnoticed. See THY 47.840; TDZLJ 113.591; JTS 18.605–606.

⁶³ *Analects* 3:5.

barbarians; he punished [the southern barbarian states of] Jing (i.e., Chu 楚) and Shu.” But now we are elevating a barbarian (Yi-Di) religion above the teachings of the sage-kings. How much longer [can this go on] before we all become barbarians (Yi)?

孔子之作《春秋》也，諸侯用夷禮則夷之，夷而進於中國則中國之。經曰：夷狄之有君，不如諸夏之亡。」《詩》曰：「戎狄是膺，荊舒是懲。」今也，舉夷狄之法，而加之先王之教之上，幾何其不胥而為夷也？⁶⁴

The second quotation in this passage is from the ode “Bigong” 閟宮. It is clear from this ode’s context that its subject is the reigning Lord of Lu 魯, “descendant of the Duke of Zhou and son of Lord Zhuang” 周公之孫、莊公之子, which would make him either Lord Min 閔公 (r. 661–660 BC) or Lord Xi 僖公 (r. 659–627 BC). However, Mencius supposedly interpreted the “Bigong” as an ode about the Duke of Zhou himself.⁶⁵ A well-known chapter of the *Mencius* portrays its protagonist denigrating Xu Xing 許行 (n.d.), an ‘agrarianist’ philosopher who had come to the Central Lands (i.e., the north Chinese states) from the southern state of Chu, as a “shrike-tongued southern Man barbarian whose way is not that of the sage-kings” 南蠻馱舌之人，非先王之道. Mencius then quotes these lines from the “Bigong” to argue that Xu Xing’s Chinese followers were becoming disciples of the very same barbarians whom the Duke of Zhou had fought as enemies. Later in the same chapter, Mencius uses the same lines to respond to criticisms for being “fond of disputation” 好辯—that is, fond of engaging in aggressive polemics against rival schools of thought. Mencius argues that since the followers of Yang Zhu and Mozi are similar to the barbarians in “denying their fathers and rulers” 無父無君, he is simply carrying on the Duke of Zhou’s mission by opposing them.⁶⁶

Han Yu’s love of reading the *Mencius* as a young man had a formative influence on his understanding of Classicist identity, and quite likely on his literary and rhetorical preferences as

⁶⁴ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 17. Some Song-period and most modern editions of Han Yu’s works do not have the characters 夷而在 the first line. Fan Wenli has demonstrated that these characters do appear in many Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing texts that anthologize or quote the “Yuandao,” and makes a strong case that they were in the original text. Fan is mistaken, however, in claiming that while the Song-period Ge 閣, Hang 杭, and Shu 蜀 editions and Fang Songqing’s 方崧卿 (1135–1194) *Hanji juzheng* 韓集舉正 all included these characters, Zhu Xi’s *Changli xiansheng ji kaoyi* 昌黎先生集考異 followed another unspecified edition in omitting them from the main text and indicated in a note that some editions included them. Liu Zhenlun’s study of the only extant Southern Song print edition of the *Hanji juzheng* (now in Japan), which Fan did not consult, shows that almost the exact opposite is true: Fang Songqing followed the Ge and Hang editions in omitting these two characters, while noting that the Shu edition included them; Zhu Xi then followed Fang Songqing’s lead. Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 218–222; Liu Zhenlun 劉真倫 ed., *Hanji juzheng huijiao* 韓集舉正彙校 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2007), 195; Zhu Jieren 朱傑人, Yan Zuozhi 嚴佐之, and Liu Yongxiang 劉永翔 eds., *Zhuzi quanshu* 朱子全書 (Shanghai and Hefei: Shanghai guji chubanshe/Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002), vol. 19, 450. See also the list of other Song-period editions that contain the characters 夷而在 Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2682.

⁶⁵ When one of Zhu Xi’s students asked him about this, Zhu commented, “Mencius was just imprecise when he quoted the Classics” 孟子引經自是不子細: ZZYL 81.2140.

⁶⁶ *Mencius* 3A:4, 3B:14.

well.⁶⁷ When these passages from the *Mencius* are read alongside the “Yuandao,” it becomes evident that the polemical sections of the *Mencius* served as a model for the use of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in the “Yuandao.” Han Yu opposed Buddhism not because it was not Chinese, but simply because it was not Classicism; his agenda was about refuting heterodoxy, not repelling barbarians. Nonetheless, his anti-Buddhist polemics emphasized the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy because he imagined himself an intellectual successor to Mencius. In the *Mencius*, labelling a rival philosophy as barbaric is an easy way to make it look morally inferior and strange without having to explain where that inferiority or strangeness actually lies. Similarly, denigrating Buddhism as a barbarian religion was much easier than refuting it on a philosophical level. As I noted earlier, this strategy was not even new to anti-Buddhist polemics. In the “Mouzi lihuo lun,” Mouzi’s challenger quotes *Analects* 3:5 (“the barbarians have rulers but are still not equal to Chinese states that do not”) as one of his arguments against the idea of Chinese people following a foreign creed.⁶⁸

We also know from numerous other extant works of Buddhist apologetics that the Daoists had been playing the ‘barbarism card’ against their Buddhist rivals for as many as five centuries by Han Yu’s time, beginning with the *Laozi huahu jing*. As I noted in the Introduction, Daoist polemicists tended to assert the moral inferiority of ‘Westerners’ (*Hu*), leading Sui and early Tang Buddhist apologists to seek to remove the Indians from that category altogether. But I think we should be careful not to assume from such arguments that Daoists were particularly ethnocentric or xenophobic.⁶⁹ Rather, the Daoist religion was never Buddhism’s equal in philosophical sophistication, and Daoist polemicists recognized their creed’s indigenous origins to be its only clear advantage over Buddhism. They were therefore determined to maximize that advantage by claiming that a teaching from and for the barbarians had to be inferior to Daoism and unsuited to the Chinese.⁷⁰ Similarly, Han Yu had a limited understanding of Buddhist philosophy compared to many of his literati peers, and he apparently never made an effort to address that weakness.⁷¹ He therefore borrowed the Daoists’ strategic use of ethnocentrism and merged it with the Mencian polemical model to advance a new ideology of Classicist exclusivism that treated both Buddhism and Daoism as the enemy.

⁶⁷ Han Yu reveals in his writings that the *Mencius* was already his favorite classical text as a youth, and that he read it long before reading the *Xunzi* or Yang Xiong’s *Fayan*. As a result, he developed a belief that Mencius was the only true inheritor of Confucius’s Way. Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 36–37, 261.

⁶⁸ *Hongming ji* (T52:2102, CBETA edition), 5.

⁶⁹ In my opinion, both Li Xiaorong and Jan De Meyer are overly confident in interpreting the use of ethnocentric tropes in Daoist anti-Buddhist polemic as a sign of xenophobia and ethnic conflict. See Li, ‘*Hongming ji*’ ‘*Guang Hongming ji*’ *shulun gao*, 256–260, 264–265, 336; De Meyer, *Wu Yun’s Way*, 138, 145.

⁷⁰ For fifth-century examples of Buddhist efforts to refute this claim by denying that other peoples were inferior to the Chinese and arguing that India, not China, lay at the center of the world, see Hsiao, *Zhongguo zhengshi sixiang shi*, vol. 2, 98–100; Li, ‘*Hongming ji*’ ‘*Guang Hongming ji*’ *shulun gao*, 294–299, 301–303.

⁷¹ We have seen that Liu Zongyuan remarked on Han Yu’s superficial understanding of Buddhism. Many later commentators on Han Yu’s anti-Buddhist polemics have pointed out the same deficiency, one of the earliest being Mao Kun 茅坤 (1512–1601). Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 299.

Besides Classicist exclusivism, the other truly original aspect of Han Yu's use of the barbarism card against Buddhism was the argument that the Chinese would become barbarians as a result of following a "barbarian religion," because it implied that the basis of Chineseness was adherence to a Chinese ethical code, "the teaching of the sage-kings." This argument's cleverness lay in the likelihood that the literati were more prepared psychologically to respect a "barbarian" teaching than to be labeled as barbarians because of it. Taken to its logical conclusion, Han Yu's formula meant that a Chinese who practiced Buddhism or any other barbarian religion would literally become a barbarian. As Hartman phrases it, "to behave like a Hua [Chinese] is to be a Hua, to behave like a barbarian is to be a barbarian."⁷² This formula equated ideological convictions and ethical norms with Chinese identity in an unprecedentedly absolute manner—or, to put it differently, it made Chinese identity unprecedentedly relative and conditional on ideological and ethical purity. Mencius had accused one of Xu Xing's Chinese followers of being "changed by a barbarian (Yi)" 變於夷, but not of having *changed into* a barbarian.⁷³ Even the Daoists, who criticized their Chinese Buddhist rivals for serving a barbarian god and adopting barbarian habits like sitting cross-legged, did not claim that the Buddhists had thereby become barbarians.

The idea of literal "barbarization" thus appears to have been Han Yu's invention. The *communis opinio* since Han times, and possibly much earlier, had been that barbarians were born, not made. In *Analects* 14:17, Confucius famously credited the statesmanship of the Qi chancellor Guan Zhong 管仲 (ca. 720–645 BC) with saving the Central Lands from falling to the Di barbarians or to Chu: "If not for Guan Zhong, we would now be wearing our hair untied and fastening our robes on the left side" 微管仲，吾其被髮左衽矣。 But this remark is ambiguous: one cannot assume that for Confucius, dressing like a barbarian was equivalent to becoming a barbarian, especially if such dress had been forcibly imposed by barbarian conquerors. Likewise, acculturation to "barbarian (Yi) customs" 夷俗 among Chinese communities on the frontier was far from unheard of (consider Tang Taizong's edict to the Gaochang elite, for example), but was never described in terms of becoming barbarians. The closest precedent that I have found is Fu Xuan's 傅玄 (217–278) argument that if the Central Lands should lose the "teachings of ritual and moral duty" 禮義之教 by which it has been able to keep the barbarians at bay, "then [the Chinese] would be like the barbarians (Yi-Di)" 則同乎夷狄.⁷⁴ But even this is a warning about *becoming as bad as* barbarians, not about becoming barbarians. The distinction between the two is subtle but important, since the latter makes a claim about the contingent nature of Chinese identity that the former does not.

⁷² Hartman also interprets the "inescapable" logic of Han Yu's argument as being that "those who 'today elevate barbarian practices' *are essentially* barbarians" (italics original to the text). Hartman's use of the word "essentially" should not be read as diluting Han Yu's idea of literal barbarization by Buddhism; it does not mean "figuratively" or "almost." Rather, it implies that in this formula, the essence of barbarism is ritual and ethics, not ethnicity or place of origin. Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 157–158.

⁷³ Mencius 3A:4.

⁷⁴ Fu Xuan 傅玄, *Fuzi pingzhu* 傅子評註 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2010), 56.

Han Yu's choice to cite the *Chunqiu* as a basis for the idea of "barbarization" was equally unprecedented. Much has been written about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy as found in the *Chunqiu*, but most of it anachronistically projects the influence of Han Yu's formula onto earlier periods, as though he merely devised the most succinct way to express a time-honored tenet of Chinese identity. The next section of this chapter will therefore present a more accurate picture of the field of *Chunqiu* exegesis during Han Yu's time and assess the extent of its influence on the "Yuandao."

Chunqiu exegesis and the idea of barbarization

By the Han period, Classicists generally believed that the terse language of the *Chunqiu* followed certain semantic rules, and that inconsistencies in the observance of these rules were actually Confucius's coded messages of moral judgment ("praise and blame" 褒貶) on specific rulers, ministers, and states.⁷⁵ The *Chunqiu* was therefore much more than a historical record; it communicated a sage's interpretation of history and politics along moral lines. Contrary to Hartman's assertion that the so-called "*Chunqiu* method" 《春秋》筆法 of historical writing was based on the *Analects* concept of "rectifying names," classical exegetes never linked the two.⁷⁶ "Rectifying names" was concerned with correcting mismatches between name and reality; the "*Chunqiu* method" was much more subtle in using blatant mismatches to alert the reader that something was amiss in the historical narrative—or so the *Chunqiu* commentators believed.

The Gongyang and Guliang commentaries to the *Chunqiu* were primarily concerned with identifying semantic inconsistencies and using them to decipher Confucius's moral judgments. Both commentaries were compiled in the early Han period, purportedly from older oral traditions; in later centuries, both acquired additional layers of subcommentary. Both commentaries held that several of the coded messages in the *Chunqiu* involved rulers of Chinese states being semantically demoted to the level of inferior barbarians—literally "regarded as barbarians (Yi-Di)" 夷狄之/狄之, an unusual phrase that used the noun "barbarian" (Yi-Di) as a verb. The reasons for such demotions usually involved rulers aligning themselves with a barbarian state (usually Chu) against other Chinese states or engaging in other forms of immoral or unprincipled behavior in the sphere of foreign relations. For example, the Gongyang and Guliang agreed that the ruler of Qin 秦 was semantically demoted to the level of a barbarian in 627 BC for launching an ill-conceived military expedition against the state of Zheng 鄭 against the advice of his wisest ministers; this expedition ended in an ambush and major defeat by the state of Jin 晉 and its Rong barbarian allies at Xiao 穀. The Guliang went further than the Gongyang in claiming:

⁷⁵ Liang Cai has recently shown that the attribution of the *Chunqiu* as Confucius's work was not widely accepted until Han times. Cai also proposes a "bold speculation" that Han Classicists invented this attribution and interpolated it into the text of the *Mencius*, where it ostensibly makes its first appearance. Liang Cai, "Who Said, 'Confucius Composed the *Chunqiu*?'—The Genealogy of the 'Chunqiu' Canon in the Pre-Han and Han Periods," *Frontiers of History in China* 5.3 (2010), 365–374.

⁷⁶ As we have seen, the idea of "rectifying names" is much more applicable to the name-deed dichotomy used in the preface for Wenchang. Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 157.

Qin crossed over a thousand *li* of treacherous terrain to attack an undefended state, but when it advanced, it could not defend its gains, and when it withdrew, its army suffered defeat. For no good reason, they brought disorder to people's education of their sons and daughters and disregarded the distinction between male and female. [The rulers of] Qin were barbarians (Di) beginning from the Battle of Xiao.

秦越千里之險入虛國，進不能守，退敗其師。徒亂人子女之教，無男女之別。秦之爲狄，自之戰始也。⁷⁷

In most cases, however, the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries identified completely different passages of the *Chunqiu* as instances of 'barbarizing' demotion. In an extreme example of disagreement, the Gongyang adopted a face-value interpretation of a statement that the Rong barbarians attacked and seized an envoy from the Zhou king in 716 BC, whereas the Guliang claimed that the attacker was actually the Chinese state of Wei 衛, which was being "demoted and regarded as Rong barbarians" 貶而戎之 as a form of moral condemnation. The subcommentary to the Guliang by Fan Ning 范寧 (339–401) argues that this demotion was particularly severe—most semantic demotions being much more subtle than referring to the offenders as barbarians—because taking a royal envoy prisoner was a particularly heinous offence.⁷⁸ In another extreme instance, the Gongyang interpreted the *Chunqiu* record of the Battle of Jifu 雞父/雞甫 in 519 BC, in which the barbarian state of Wu defeated Chu and its Chinese vassal states, as conveying the message that Chu's vassal states were "new barbarians (Yi-Di)" 新夷狄. This interpretation seems to have been occasioned by language that seemed to demote the Chu vassals to the same level as Wu. He Xiu's 何休 (129–182) subcommentary to the Gongyang offers the following explanation:

The Central Lands are different from the barbarians (Yi-Di) by virtue of their ability to respect those deserving of respect. The royal dynasty was in disorder, yet none [of the feudal lords] was willing to save it; relations between rulers above and ministers below were in a state of ruin. Thus they, too, had newly begun behaving like barbarians. That is why [Confucius] did not allow [Chu's Chinese vassals] to have superiority over [Wu].

中國之所以異乎夷狄也，以其能尊尊也。王室亂，莫肯救，君臣上下壞敗，亦新有夷狄之行，故不使主之。

In contrast, the Guliang commentary assumed that on this occasion, Chu's Chinese vassal states still represented the Central Lands as opposed to Wu; their semantic demotion was merely an unintended consequence of the need to record that two of the vassal rulers were killed in the battle. Fan Ning's Guliang subcommentary even argues that Confucius's intent in noting these rulers' deaths was to commend their sacrifice in defense of their states!⁷⁹

⁷⁷ GYZS 12.270–271; GLZS 9.179.

⁷⁸ The slightly more detailed *Zuozhuan* narrative of this incident supports the literal Gongyang interpretation by showing that the attackers were Rong barbarians who bore a grudge against this envoy. GYZS 3.56–57; GLZS 2.28–29; ZZZY 4.106–107.

⁷⁹ The two commentaries also have different ways of writing the name of the battle's location. GYZS 24.517–518; GLZS 18.345.

The *Zuozhuan* (by then regarded as a third *Chunqiu* commentary) engaged in a similar exegetical practice in only one instance, where the semantic demotion given to Lord Huan of Qǐ 杞桓公 (r. 637–567 BC) in 633 BC was attributed to his use of “barbarian (Yi) ritual” 夷禮 when visiting the court of Lu. The Yi “barbarians” in this case were presumably the indigenous peoples of the Shandong peninsula, most of whom had been subjugated or reduced to vassalage by the Western Zhou. A slightly earlier passage had explained the posthumous demotion of Lord Huan’s predecessor, Lord Cheng 成公 (r. 654–637 BC), in 637 BC by simply saying, “Qǐ was of the barbarians (Yi)” 杞，夷也， even though the Qǐ ruling house was believed to be descended from the kings of the Xia dynasty. Du Yu’s 杜預 (222–285) commentary to the *Zuozhuan* interpreted this line to mean that Confucius demoted Lord Cheng upon his death because he had begun using barbarian ritual and had continued doing so until he died.⁸⁰

The demotions of Lord Cheng and Lord Huan involved their feudal title being stated as “viscount” (*zi* 子) instead of the higher-ranking “marquis” (*hou* 侯) or “earl” (*bo* 伯). This was precisely what Wang Ling meant when he wrote that Confucius “called the Marquis of Qǐ a viscount.” When a later Qǐ ruler, Lord Wen 文公 (r. 550–536 BC), received an identical demotion in 544 BC, the *Zuozhuan* explained it as a gesture “to show his inferiority” 賤之 without making any reference to barbarians or barbarian ritual. Du Yu’s commentary attempted to harmonize the discrepancy by stating that Lord Wen’s inferiority was due to his reversion to barbarian ritual. According to Du Yu, Lord Huan had “given up using barbarian ritual” 捨夷禮 by 615 BC, as seen from his reversion to the title “Earl of Qǐ” 杞伯 in the *Chunqiu* record. One century after Du Yu, however, Fan Ning’s Guliang subcommentary implicitly rejected the *Zuozhuan* interpretation of the Qǐ rulers’ demotions by arguing that these were not semantic demotions imposed retroactively by Confucius at all. Instead, they were actual (but unexplained) demotions received from the reigning Zhou king, as was a demotion to viscount that the Marquis of Teng 滕侯 apparently received in 710 BC. According to Fan Ning, Lord Huan’s reversion to his original title in 615 BC was likewise an actual promotion by the king.⁸¹

The *Zuozhuan* contains no instances of barbarian rulers being semantically “promoted” (*jin* 進) to the level of the Central Lands in the manner claimed by Han Yu, but the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries do contain several such instances. It should be noted, however, that the phrases “promoted to the level of the Central Lands” 進於中國 and “regarded as [part of] the Central Lands” 中國之 are original to Han Yu’s “Yuandao” and do not occur in any of the

⁸⁰ ZZZY 15.408, 16.435. On the purported Xia ancestry of the Qǐ rulers, see SJ 36.1583. Li Wai-ye has recently made a persuasive argument that geopolitical conflict between Lu and Qǐ, not ethnocultural differences, best explains why the *Zuozhuan* (which reflects a Lu perspective) sometimes represents Qǐ as barbaric or inferior. In other words, the language of the *Zuozhuan* sometimes reflects Lu propaganda meant to assert superiority over Qǐ. Indeed, in 633 BC Lu used the Qǐ ruler’s “disrespectful” 不共 (恭) and “indecorous” 無禮 performance of diplomatic ritual as a pretext to invade Qǐ. Li Wai-ye 李惠儀, “Hua-Yi zhi bian yu yizu tonghun” 華夷之辨與異族通婚, in Chiao Chien 喬健, Chiu Tien-chu 邱天助, and Luo Hsiao-nan 羅曉南 eds., *Tanqing shuoyi: Qing, hunyin ji yi wenhua de kuajie lunshu* 談情說異：情、婚姻暨異文化的跨界論述 (Taipei: Center for the Study of Foreign Cultures, Shih Hsin University, 2012), 45–63.

⁸¹ ZZZY 19b.537, 39.1095; GLZS 3.41, 9.166, 11.202, 16.311.

Chunqiu commentaries. It should also be noted that these *Chunqiu* commentaries' (and also Han Yu's) use of the word 進 bore no relation to physical immigration into the Central Lands, even though that word commonly meant "to enter" in other contexts.⁸²

The Gongyang and Guliang commentaries had differences of interpretation when it came to cases of promotion, but these differences were less serious than those over demotion. Later subcommentators could even attempt to reconcile such conflicting interpretations. For example, the Guliang argues that Confucius promoted a Chu ruler slightly from being called "Jing" 荊 (the name of the classical province that corresponded to the Chu heartland) to "a man of Jing" 荊人 in 671 BC on account of "accumulated good deeds" 善累. The Gongyang, however, interprets this promotion as a specific response to the Chu ruler's learning how to send a proper embassy to a Chinese state. Fan Ning's Guliang subcommentary attempts to harmonize the two interpretations by saying that the Chu ruler's good deeds consisted of "understanding the ritual for diplomatic visits and the way of paying homage at the royal [Zhou] court" 明聘問之禮, 朝宗之道, which was something "beyond the ability of [mere] barbarians (Yi-Di)" 非夷狄之所能.⁸³ Similarly, the Guliang commentary claims that the *Chunqiu* promoted the ruler of the Di barbarians from "the Di" 狄 to "a man of the Di" 狄人 in 642 BC for his "accumulated good deeds," including aiding the Chinese state of Qi 齊 against an attack by another Chinese state, Song 宋. The Gongyang commentary makes no interpretation of this case, but He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary concurs with the Guliang commentary that the Di ruler was promoted for having "concern for the Central Lands in his heart" 憂中國之心.⁸⁴

It is worth noting that the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries assumed that such promotions could be very short-lived and were not necessarily based on permanent changes in a barbarian ruler's behavior. Both commentaries agreed that in the *Chunqiu* record of the decisive Wu victory over Chu in the Battle of Boju 柏莒/伯舉 (506 BC), Confucius promoted the barbarian ruler of Wu by referring to him by his feudal title of viscount, rather than as "Wu." This was because the Wu ruler had saved his Chinese ally, the state of Cai 蔡, from an attack by Chu, thus demonstrating that he "felt concerned for the Central Lands" 憂中國 despite being a barbarian himself.⁸⁵ Yet in the very next line of the *Chunqiu*, which records the Wu army's capture of the Chu capital, the Wu ruler reverts to being just "Wu." The Gongyang and Guliang commentaries rationalized this inconsistency by concluding that Confucius was revoking the Wu ruler's promotion because he had "returned to barbarism (Yi-Di)" 反夷狄 or "returned to the

⁸² Luo Zhitian mistakenly links the phrase 進於中國 to Han and Tang policies of resettling foreign communities within the empire: Luo Zhitian 羅志田, "Yi Xia zhi bian de kaifang yu fengbi" 夷夏之辨的開放與封閉, *Zhongguo wenhua* 中國文化 14 (1996), 223 and "Yi Xia zhi bian yu dao zhi zhifen," 79–80.

⁸³ GLZS 6.102; GYZS 8.165.

⁸⁴ GLZS 8.159; GYZS 11.238.

⁸⁵ The two commentaries transcribe *Boju* differently. GYZS 25.560; GLZS 19.364–366.

way of the barbarians (Di)” 反狄道 by taking the Chu king’s queen or mother as a concubine after capturing the Chu capital.⁸⁶

We do not find any reference to the *Chunqiu* commentaries’ language of barbarization and promotion in Chinese political or philosophical discourse prior to the ninth century. This strongly suggests that such language was generally regarded as an idiosyncrasy unique to the *Chunqiu*, rather than a principle that should apply to the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in general.⁸⁷ The clearest expression of this purely exegetical perception is in the *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露, a product of the Gongyang commentarial school that is traditionally (but problematically) attributed to Dong Zhongshu. The author of the *Chunqiu fanlu* notes: “The normal language of the *Chunqiu* credits the Central Lands, not the barbarians (Yi-Di), with behaving in accordance with ritual” 《春秋》之常辭也，不予夷狄而予中國爲禮。 But, the author goes on, there are significant exceptions in which the principle of demotions and promotions takes precedence: “The *Chunqiu* does not have a uniform language throughout; it shifts according to changes [in the circumstances]” 《春秋》無通辭，從變而移。⁸⁸ The *Chunqiu* commentaries and subcommentaries and texts like the *Chunqiu fanlu* thus provided some good material for a philosophical reinterpretation of the meanings of Chineseness and barbarism, but that material’s potential had remained unexplored before Han Yu wrote the “Yuandao.” Han Yu’s innovation lay in transforming the *Chunqiu* commentaries’ idea of ‘barbarizing’ demotion into a rhetorical strategy in the entirely separate genre of anti-Buddhist polemics, and in claiming that “barbarization” was a real-world consequence (i.e., becoming a barbarian) rather than just a figure of speech (i.e., being called a barbarian for behaving like a barbarian). In other words, Han Yu’s rhetoric gave the idea of barbarization new implications for the identity of those being “regarded as barbarians.”

On the surface, the only basis for Han Yu’s emphasis on “barbarian ritual” as a barbarizing factor would seem to be the *Zuozhuan* interpretation of the Qǐ rulers’ demotions, especially as elaborated by Du Yu. But quite possibly, Han was also alluding to a new trend in *Chunqiu* exegesis that had originated with Dan Zhu 啖助 (724–770) and Zhao Kuang 趙匡 (fl. 770–775) and gained popularity through the influence of Lu Chun 陸淳 (d. 805). Dan Zhu and Zhao Kuang still assumed the existence of coded messages in the *Chunqiu*, but unlike nearly all earlier exegetes, who began by accepting every interpretation in one of the three received commentaries as correct, they found many interpretations in all three commentaries to be implausible. They therefore denied that any of these commentaries was authoritative and wrote

⁸⁶ GYZS 25.563–564; GLZS 19.367.

⁸⁷ While it is true that many pre-Tang texts have been lost, I believe it is significant that even surviving quotations or fragments from lost pre-Tang texts do not include the use of the *Chunqiu* to make arguments about Chinese turning into barbarians or barbarians turning into Chinese.

⁸⁸ Strangely, the two examples of “barbarizing” demotion cited in the *Chunqiu fanlu*—namely, the semantic demotions of Jin at the Battle of Bi 邲 (597 BC) and of Zheng during its attack on Xǔ 許 (588 BC)—are actually not interpreted as such in the Gongyang commentary. See CQFL 2.46, 2.63.

new commentaries to present their own interpretations, explaining in each case why earlier interpretations could not be true to Confucius's intended message.⁸⁹

In an example directly relevant to the “Yuandao,” Zhao Kuang rejected as incongruous the *Zuozhuan* author's “barbarian ritual” explanation for the Qǐ ruler's demotion. In Zhao's opinion, it was one thing for Confucius to express disapproval of a lord's actions by not stating his title, but it would have been presumptuous to change a lord's title in the *Chunqiu* record, since only kings had the authority to demote lords:

The traditional interpretations all held that the ritual used in announcing [the Qǐ ruler's] death [to Lu] was the same as that of the barbarians (Yi-Di), so he was demoted [posthumously]. Now, promotions and demotions in feudal title are the prerogative of the king. If the annalist of Lu could demote feudal lords on his own initiative, this would be tantamount to the *Chunqiu* itself creating political disorder.

舊說皆云赴告之禮同夷狄，故貶之。且升降名位當由王者，若魯史專自貶降爵位，乃《春秋》自爲亂也。

Zhao noted other problems of logic with the *Zuozhuan* interpretations of the Qǐ rulers' demotions and with Du Yu's efforts at systematizing them around the issue of barbarian ritual:

If the messages of the *Chunqiu* were really conveyed through demotions in title, then the immoral deeds of the [other] feudal lords were many—why did [the *Chunqiu*] not demote their titles? Moreover, [the rulers of] Qǐ were later referred to as earls, upon which [Du Yu] claims that they had given up using barbarian ritual; and then again referred to as viscounts, upon which [Du Yu] claims that they were using barbarian ritual again. They were descendants of the Xia kings and frequently made covenants with major states; how is it possible that they were behaving like children, constantly switching between giving up and using [barbarian ritual]?

且《春秋》若實專以削黜爲義，則諸侯惡事非一，何不黜其名位哉？又已後，杞或稱伯，即云捨夷禮，或稱子，即云復用夷禮。彼二王之後，常與大國盟，豈是兒童，屢捨屢用哉？

Zhao Kuang therefore preferred Fan Ning's interpretation of the Qǐ demotions, but modified it by attributing the demotions not to the Zhou kings but to the hegemon (*ba* 霸)—powerful feudal lords who acted in the king's stead, regulating interstate relations and leading multi-state military alliances against foreign enemies or wayward lords.⁹⁰ However, Zhao did not completely reject the idea that the use of “barbarian ritual” could be grounds for a ‘barbarizing’ demotion. Instead, he transferred this explanation to the demotion of the rulers of Zhu 邾, Mou 牟, and Ge 葛 to

⁸⁹ There is now quite an extensive body of literature on this new exegetical school. Particularly useful is Ge Huanli 葛煥禮, *Zunjing zhongyi: Tangdai zhongye zhi Beisong monian de xin “Chunqiu” xue* 尊經重義：唐代中葉至北宋末年的新《春秋》學 (Jinan: Shandong daxue chubanshe, 2011), 87–121.

⁹⁰ Zhong Qianjun 鍾謙鈞 ed., *Gu jingjie huihan* 古經解彙函, vol. 2 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2012), 1232–1233. See also 1206, which traces the first demotion of a Qǐ ruler to Lord Huan of Qi's 齊桓公 tenure as hegemon of the Chinese states.

“men” in 697 BC, when they came to the court of Lord Huan of Lu 魯桓公 (r. 711–694 BC), since this demotion did not involve a change in title but rather an omission of these rulers’ titles from the record. The Gongyang commentary had identified it as a ‘barbarizing’ demotion but left its context unexplained, while He Xiu’s subcommentary argued that the three rulers were demoted to the status of barbarians for demonstrating submission to Lord Huan despite his having seized power by assassinating his elder brother Lord Yin 隱公 (r. 722–712 BC).⁹¹

The dissatisfaction that Dan Zhu and Zhao Kuang felt toward the traditional commentaries led them to pursue a more logical and methodical approach to extrapolating the principles governing Confucius’s use of language. The two men worked separately and only met once in 770, upon which they discovered that their approaches had much in common. Dan died shortly afterwards; Dan’s disciple Lu Chun then collaborated with Zhao in editing his exegetical writings, adding Zhao’s own interpretations in the process, and completed this work in 775.⁹² Both Zhao Kuang and Lu Chun eventually produced their own works of exegesis. Lu Chun held a series of posts in Chang’an during the 780s and 790s, during which time his exegetical works circulated among the literati of the capital. He later served as a prefect in the southeast (his home region), but was recalled to Chang’an in early 805 and became involved with the Wang Shuwen faction that held power during the brief reign of Shunzong. The extent to which Lu Chun’s ideas influenced the reforms attempted by the Wang Shuwen faction remains disputed, but one of Liu Zongyuan’s letters shows that he and several other members of the faction enthusiastically embraced and promoted Lu’s works of *Chunqiu* scholarship before 805. The letter also indicates that Liu formally became Lu’s disciple when the latter returned to Chang’an and became involved with Wang Shuwen faction in 805.⁹³ Lu died from an illness very shortly after

⁹¹ Ibid., 1235; GYZS 5.106.

⁹² The *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* biographies of Lu Chun claim that Zhao Kuang was Dan Zhu’s disciple and Lu Chun’s teacher, but this is contradicted by Lu Chun’s own account of the editing of Dan Zhu’s works. The statement in Dan Zhu’s *Xin Tangshu* biography that Zhao Kuang and Lu Chun were both disciples of Dan Zhu is similarly inaccurate. The most reliable accounts in English of the relationship between the three men are by Pulleyblank and Chen Jo-shui. The most reliable recent analysis in Chinese is by Ge Huanli. Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1023; JTS 189.4977; XTS 168.5127, 200.5706; Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism,” 88; Jo-shui Chen, *Liu Tsung-yüan and Intellectual Change in T’ang China, 773–819* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 28; Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 90–92.

⁹³ McMullen points out that “there is little indication, in the records for 805, that [the new Chunqiu scholarship’s] tenets were prominent in the programme that the reformers implemented.” Pulleyblank suggests that Du You’s ideas (which he describes as “rationalistic” and “Legalist”) had at least as much influence on the reformers as Lu Chun’s. On the other hand, Chen Jo-shui describes Lu as the Wang Shuwen faction’s “intellectual guru,” and Kou Yanghou argues (citing Zhang Shizhao) that Lu was both a “core member” of the faction and the source of its activist ideology. Saiki Tetsuro argues that Lu Chun’s *Chunqiu* scholarship was the main source for the ideal of Centrality (*zhong* 中) that appears frequently in Liu Zongyuan’s writings, and also a few times in the writings of Liu Yuxi. Saiki further claims that Centrality constituted the ideological foundation of the 805 reforms. However, the evidence that Saiki cites for both arguments is extremely circumstantial. LZY 31.818–819; McMullen, *State and Scholars*, 103; Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism,” 99–106, 109–110, 114; Chen, *Liu Tsung-yüan*, 59–60, 66–77, 88; Kou Yanghou 寇養厚, “Zhong Tang xin ‘Chunqiu’ xue dui Liu Zongyuan yu Yongzhen gexin jituan de yingxiang” 中唐新《春秋》學對柳宗元與永貞革新集團的影響, *Dongyue Luncong* 東岳論叢 21.1 (2000), 117; Saiki Tetsuro 齊木哲郎, “Eitei kakushin to shunjūgaku: Tōdai shin shunjūgaku no seijiteki tenkai,” 永貞革新と春秋学: 唐代新春学の政治的展開, *Naruto kyōiku daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 鳴門教育大学研究紀要 22 (2007), 261–

Shunzong's abdication to the Heir Apparent Li Chun 李純 (Xianzong 憲宗, r. 805–820), which corresponded with the Wang Shuwen faction's downfall.⁹⁴

The works of Dan Zhu and Zhao Kuang have been lost, but many quotations from them are preserved in Lu Chun's extant works, which essentially collate, synthesize, and systematize interpretations made by Dan and Zhao.⁹⁵ Of particular interest to us is a passage in Lu's *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli* 春秋集傳纂例 that outlines the principles for 'barbarizing' demotion in the *Chunqiu*:

When feudal lords behave like barbarians (Yi-Di), then they are written of as barbarians (Di) [*The same language is used for rulers and their ministers; they are referred to only by the name (of their state)*]. Examples of this include the "man of Jin" defeating the Qin army at Xiao [*The Zuozhuan says that the men of Qin wished to station troops in Zheng in order to plan a surprise attack on Jin, but the people of Jin defeated them at Xiao*],⁹⁶ Zheng attacking Xǔ,⁹⁷ and Jin attacking the Xianyu [*The Zuozhuan says that the Jin [minister] Xun Wu claimed falsely to be heading for a meeting with the Qi army and obtained permission from the Xianyu to pass through their territory. He then conquered the state of Fei. That winter, Jin attacked the Xianyu from Fei*].⁹⁸ The same applies to the

273. For other interpretations of the Centrality theme in Liu Zongyuan's works, see Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 140–144; DeBlasi, *Reform in the Balance*, 120; Chen, *Liu Tsung-yüan*, 92–94; Zhang, *Liu Zongyuan ru fo dao sanjiao guan yanjiu*, 32–49; for Centrality in Liu Yuxi's works, see Chen Yunfeng 陳允鋒, "Lun Liu Yuxi de zhongdao guan jiqi dui wenyi sixiang de yingxiang" 論劉禹錫的中道觀及其對文藝思想的影響, *Ningxia shehui kexue* 寧夏社會科學 2005(2), 137–140.

⁹⁴ In 804 or 805 Wei Zhiyi 韋執誼 (d. ca. 806–807), a leading member of the Wang Shuwen faction, recalled Lu Chun to Chang'an to serve as tutor to Li Chun, upon which Lu changed his given name to Zhi 質 in order to avoid the taboo on Li Chun's given name. Wei Zhiyi was a friend of Lu Chun and reportedly tried, unsuccessfully, to use him to improve Li Chun's opinion of the Wang Shuwen faction. See JTS 189.4977–4978; XTS 168.5128; LZY 9.209–210.

⁹⁵ Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 92–94.

⁹⁶ The *Zuozhuan* account of the events leading to the Battle of Xiao actually does not support this interpretation. Note that Lu Chun follows Dan Zhu in reading the reference to Qin as "the Qin army" as a demotion of the Qin ruler. Dan Zhu did not accept the Gongyang and Guliang interpretation that the *Chunqiu* record of the Battle of Xiao also calls the Jin ruler the "man of Jin" in order to convey moral disapproval of his decision to lead his army into battle instead of seeing to the burial of his newly deceased predecessor. In his view, the *Chunqiu* was actually covering up and thus excusing the Jin ruler's violation of ritual norms for the sake of defending his state. Lu Chun evidently adopts this position as well, as his annotation places no blame on the Jin ruler. ZZZY 17.470–471, 473–475; Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1075, 1171, 1236.

⁹⁷ This took place in 588 BC. Neither the Gongyang commentary nor the Guliang has any comment on this event, but the *Chunqiu fanlu* (which belongs to the Gongyang tradition) argues that Confucius regarded the Zheng ruler as a barbarian because he broke a newly-made covenant by attacking Xǔ. He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary has a different interpretation: that Confucius regarded the Zheng ruler as a barbarian because he had aligned himself with Chu in attacking other Chinese states. Lu Chun does not indicate which interpretation he accepts. CQFL 2.63; GYZS 17.379.

⁹⁸ The Guliang commentary's interpretation of the Jin case was that the Jin ruler was regarded as a barbarian (Di 狄) for "attacking the Central Lands in concert with barbarians (Yi-Di)" 與夷狄交伐中國, these barbarians being the state of Chu (which was then attacking the state of Xú 徐). This seems to overlook the fact that the Xianyu were

“man of Jing (i.e., Chu)” coming to the court [of Lu],⁹⁹ the “man of Chu” besieging [the capital city of the state of] Song [*At that time, Lord Wen of Jin had just become the hegemon, but these feudal lords followed the Viscount of Chu in besieging Song. That is why the Gongyang commentary says, “The Viscount of Chu is called a ‘man’ in order to call these feudal lords ‘men’”*],¹⁰⁰ and the “man of Chu” sending Yishen to present war booty [to Lu].¹⁰¹

諸侯有夷狄之行者，則以狄書之[君臣同辭，但舉名而已]。晉人敗秦師于殽[左氏云秦人因戍鄭而謀襲晉，晉人敗之于殽...]、鄭伐許、晉伐鮮虞[... 左氏云晉荀吳僞會齊師，假道於鮮虞，遂滅肥。冬，晉伐鮮虞，因肥也]之類是也。荆人來聘、楚人圍宋[... 時晉文新霸，諸侯從楚子圍宋，故公羊曰：「人楚子，所以人諸侯也」]、楚人使宜申來獻捷亦同。¹⁰²

“Behave like barbarians” is an ambiguous phrase that we have already encountered in He Xiu’s interpretation of the “new barbarians” at the Battle of Jifu. Lu Chun’s examples of feudal lords behaving like barbarians indicate that to him, barbaric behavior by a Chinese lord could include acting perfidiously or opportunistically against other states, as well as allying with a barbarian state against a Chinese state. This reflects the approach of the Gongyang and Guliang commentarial traditions, albeit with a stronger emphasis on perfidy than before.

However, Lu Chun also incorporates the *Zuozhuan* interpretation of ‘barbarizing’ demotion by placing as much emphasis on differences in ritual as on moral standards and geopolitical allegiances:

themselves Di barbarians who had established a state known as Zhongshan 中山. Fan Ning’s Guliang subcommentary tries to resolve this problem by claiming that since Zhongshan was on the North China Plain, it counted as part of the Central Lands; note also that unlike Lu Chun, Fan Ning did not consider Xú, the target of the Chu attack, to be a barbarian or barbarized state. Dan Zhu proposed an alternative interpretation—which Lu Chun accepted—in which the Jin ruler’s offense lay in lying to the Xianyu and then launching a surprise attack on them (a detail reported by the *Zuozhuan*). In Dan’s opinion, this was “something that [only] barbarians (Yi-Di) do” 夷狄之所爲也; if “a lord and hegemon of the Central Lands practiced deceit on barbarians (Yi-Di)” 中國之侯伯反行詐於夷狄 and not vice versa, then he deserved to be spoken of as a barbarian. Note the interesting contrast with early Tang rhetoric about barbarian perfidy in foreign policy contexts. Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1187; GLZS 17.332.

⁹⁹ As mentioned above, the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries interpreted this as a slight promotion of the Chu ruler. However, Lu Chun (following Dan Zhu) did not agree, for reasons that will be explained in a later footnote.

¹⁰⁰ This is actually the Guliang commentary’s interpretation; the Gongyang interpretation is that only the Chu ruler was demoted, to condemn him for taking the Song ruler captive at a multi-state conference in 639 BC. In another work, the *Chunqiu weizhi* 春秋微旨, Lu Chun attributed the Guliang interpretation correctly and stated that Dan Zhu agreed with it. The siege of Song took place in 633 BC. GLZS 9.170; GYZS 12.255; Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1113, 1169.

¹⁰¹ This took place in 639 BC, shortly after the Chu ruler committed the devious act of taking the Song ruler captive at a conference. The war booty consisted of the Song ruler’s possessions. Lu Chun follows the Gongyang interpretation, which is that the Chu ruler is semantically demoted from viscount to “man” in order to criticize him for taking the Song ruler captive. GYZS 11.243.

¹⁰² I have quoted and translated (in square brackets) only the most relevant annotations by Lu Chun. These are differentiated from main text by the use of italics in the English translation and smaller font in the original Chinese. Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1108.

When feudal lords use purely barbarian ritual, they are referred to only by the name of their state. Examples of this include Jing (i.e., Chu), Wu, Xú¹⁰³, and Yue.... Those [vassals of Lu] who mix barbarian (Yi) ritual [with Chinese ritual] are referred to as “a man,” for example, “a man of Zhu, a man of Mou, and a man of Ge came to court.”

諸侯純用夷禮者，以國稱之，荊、吳、徐、越之類是也。... 雜用夷禮者，以人稱之，「邾人、牟人、葛人來朝」是也。¹⁰⁴

It should be noted that while Lu Chun accepted Zhao Kuang’s interpretation of the Zhu, Mou, and Ge case as a demotion for using barbarian ritual, his interpretation of the Qǐ rulers’ demotions is highly ambiguous, perhaps reflecting a reluctance to choose between the *Zuozhuan* interpretation and that of Zhao Kuang.¹⁰⁵ Unlike Zhao, who confidently asserted that the Qǐ demotions originated from the hegemon and had nothing to do with barbarian ritual or with Confucius, Lu stated that “subtle messages” 微旨 from Confucius were to be found in such changes in title:

[The rulers of] Teng, Xue, and Qǐ were initially all referred to as marquises. After Lord Zhuang [of Lu] (r. 693–662 BC), [the ruler of] Teng is referred to as a viscount [*In Lord Huan Year 2 (710 BC), he is called a viscount, but that is because he was in mourning at the time; that was not his actual title*].¹⁰⁶ As for [the rulers of] Xue and Qǐ, after Lord Zhuang they are sometimes referred to as marquises, sometimes as earls, and sometimes as viscounts. The meanings of these [changes] contain subtle messages. They were originally not barbarians (Yi-Di), nor were they vassals [of Lu], so they are not referred to as “a man” [*This means that they were originally feudal lords of the Central Lands, not barbarians; hence [Confucius] passed judgment on them*].

滕、薛、杞初皆書侯，莊公之後，滕則稱子[桓公二年稱子，時為在喪，非正名也]，薛、杞則自莊公之後或稱侯，或稱伯，或稱子者，義具微旨。本非夷狄，又非附庸，故不書人也[言本中國諸侯，非夷狄，所以議之也]。¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Little is known about this state, which was conquered by Wu in 512 BC and should not be confused with the similar-sounding Xǔ. On the chronologically confused body of lore surrounding the most famous Xú ruler, the humane but excessively pacifistic King Yan 偃王, see Robin McNeal, “Returning to the Canon: A Review of Michael Nylan’s *The Five ‘Confucian’ Classics*,” *Early China* 29 (2004), 278–294; Xu Yulong 徐玉龍, “Shichuan yu minjian gushi zhong de Xu Yanwang gushi yanjiu” 史傳與民間故事中的徐偃王故事研究, *Donghua Zhongguo wenzue yanjiu* 東華中國文學研究 7 (2009), 49–64.

¹⁰⁴ Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1108.

¹⁰⁵ Lu Chun also reiterates Zhao Kuang’s interpretation of the Zhu, Mou, and Ge case at Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1113.

¹⁰⁶ Here, Lu Chun agrees with an interpretation by Zhao Kuang. Whereas Fan Ning interpreted the Teng demotion of 710 BC as an act by the reigning king, Zhao Kuang attributed such demotions to hegemon. Since there was no hegemon yet in 710 BC, Zhao inferred that the Teng ruler’s “demotion” for that year was part of the mourning ritual for his predecessor. The *Zuozhuan* mentions (in another context) that feudal lords referred to themselves as *zi* 子 (meaning “viscount” but also “son”) when in mourning for their fathers. Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1206; ZZZY 13.356.

¹⁰⁷ Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1108.

It is unclear whether this was Lu Chun's own interpretation or one that came from Dan Zhu: Dan's works have been lost, and Lu does not quote his interpretations of the Teng, Xue, and Qǐ cases. In any case, there is a great deal of ambiguity in Lu's use of the word "originally" (*ben* 本) and the phrase "passed judgment on them" (*yizhi* 議之), not to mention the cryptic reference to "subtle messages." Does the phrase "originally not barbarians" mean that the Teng, Xue, and Qǐ rulers had become barbarians at some point? Was Lu Chun suggesting that they belonged to a special category of Chinese feudal lords who used a mix of barbarian and Chinese ritual but were not vassals of Lu, unlike the rulers of Zhu, Mou, and Ge? If so, did Lu believe that the changing titles of the Teng, Xue, and Qǐ rulers corresponded to changes in their use of ritual, as Du Yu had surmised in the case of Qǐ?

Lu Chun's interpretation of the principles behind the semantic *promotion* of barbarian rulers would seem to be highly relevant to these questions. The section on "barbarians" (Yi-Di) in the *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli* outlines these principles as follows:

Barbarian (Yi-Di) rulers and ministers are referred to only by the name of their state, examples being the Di barbarians, Jing (i.e., Chu), Wu, Xú, and Yue. When they visit the court [of Lu] or attend a conference [of the states], the word *ren* ("a man of") is typically added [to the name of the state]. This is because one cannot say [for grammatical reasons], "Jing came to court"¹⁰⁸ or "Wu and a man of Zeng."¹⁰⁹ The same language is used for rulers and their ministers, unlike the Central Lands.... Jing, Wu, and Yue all adopted barbarian (Yi) customs, so they are referred to according to the conventions for barbarians (Yi-Di). The labels "Rong" and "Di" are not added [to the names of these states] in order to clarify that they were originally not barbarians. The Chu people were initially following barbarian (Yi) customs, so they were referred to as "Jing" to label them with the name of a province, as if saying that they were the barbarians of Jingzhou [province]. Later, they could communicate [better with the Central Lands] and were no longer like the barbarians, so they were [labeled] using the same conventions as the Central Lands (i.e., as "Chu"). [The ruler of] Wu disputed [with Jin] over seniority at the Huangchi conference and accepted a lower title as a result, so he is referred to by the feudal title [of viscount] there [*Previously, he had mostly used the title of king*];¹¹⁰ at the

¹⁰⁸ In the *Chunqiu jizhuan bianyi* 春秋集傳辯疑, Lu Chun quotes Dan Zhu's explanation for this: "If we say, 'Jing came to court,' then it would sound like the whole province came. So the word *ren* ('a man of') is added to complete the meaning of the text, that is all. There is no other meaning to it" 若言「荆來聘」, 則似舉州皆來, 故加「人」字以成文義爾, 無他義. Dan was thus rejecting the Guliang and Gongyang interpretation that the Chu ruler was promoted slightly in 671 BC. Lu Chun makes a similar argument with regard to the supposed promotion of the Di ruler in 642 BC. Note, however, that in the *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli*, Dan Zhu is quoted as using the 671 BC example to argue, "Whenever a barbarian (Yi-Di) visits the court [of Lu], he should be called 'a man,' and the same language should be used for rulers and ministers" 凡夷狄朝聘當稱人, 君臣同辭. Ibid., 1053, 1220, 1230.

¹⁰⁹ This example comes from the Gongyang commentary for Lord Xiang Year 5 襄公五年 (568 BC): GYZS 19.421.

¹¹⁰ The royal titles used by the Wu and Chu rulers were considered a usurpation of the Zhou king's authority; the *Chunqiu* thus refers to them only by the feudal title of viscount when it even states their titles at all. There are various accounts of what happened at the Huangchi conference of 482 BC. According to the "Wuyu" 吳語 chapter of the *Guoyu* 國語, the Jin ruler conceded seniority and precedence to the Wu ruler on condition that the Wu ruler

Battle of Boju, the people of Cai employed him [as an ally against Chu], thus increasing the esteem he was accorded, so his feudal title is written there; his ambassador [Ji] Zha visited [Lu] and conformed to ritual, so he is referred to by his feudal title there [*To commend his ability to send an embassy to the Central States*].¹¹¹ In all other cases, he is referred to according to the conventions for barbarians (Yi-Di).

夷狄之君臣皆書其國而已，若狄、荊、吳、徐、越之類是也。朝聘列會，例加入字，不可言「荊來聘」，不可連言「吳、鄆人」故也。但君臣同辭，異於中國耳。... 荊、吳、越之輩全同夷俗，故依夷狄書之。不標「戎」、「狄」之字，明其本非夷狄也。楚人初同夷俗，則書曰「荊」，以州言之，如曰「荊州之夷」。其後自通，又不同夷，則遂同中國之例。吳唯黃池之盟以爭長降號[已前多稱王]，故稱爵；柏舉之戰，以蔡人之舉重也，故書爵；使札來聘，以合禮故稱爵[善其能聘中國也]。餘則皆依夷狄例。¹¹²

This passage shows that Lu Chun differed from the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries by not taking the barbarian status of Wu and Chu as given. Instead, he identified Wu, Chu, and Yue as states whose originally Chinese rulers had become barbarians over time by adopting barbarian customs and ritual. During Confucius's time, the rulers of Wu were already claiming kinship with the Zhou royal house through the legend of Taibo 太伯, a senior uncle of King Wen who had gone south and founded the state of Wu in order to let the Zhou kingship pass to King Wen's line.¹¹³ Sima Qian's *Shiji* gave the Taibo legend its final form and also ascribed sage-king ancestors to the Chu and Yue rulers.¹¹⁴ These myths of Chinese ancestry had already entered the

give up his royal title and refer to himself as the Duke of Wu 吳公. According to the Guliang commentary, the Wu ruler gave up his royal title and used the title of viscount in order to show respect and submission to the Zhou king; Confucius therefore promoted him semantically by referring to him as a viscount in the corresponding *Chunqiu* record. The Gongyang commentary claims that while Confucius promoted the Wu ruler in order to acknowledge that he “presided over” (*zhu* 主) the Huangchi conference, he still mentioned the Jin ruler before the Wu ruler (thus giving the Jin ruler precedence semantically) in order to show that he disapproved of “barbarians (Yi-Di) presiding over the Central Lands” 夷狄之主中國. The *Zuozhuan* claims that the Wu ruler finally conceded precedence to Jin at Huangchi and therefore did not preside over the conference at all. The *Shiji* contains two contradictory accounts, one following the *Zuozhuan* and another following the *Guoyu*. Lu Chun evidently accepts a combination of the *Guoyu* and Guliang versions, whereas quotations from Zhao Kuang in the *Chunqiu jizhuan bianyi* shows that Zhao rejected all existing versions of the story. Zhao argued instead that the Jin and Wu rulers presided jointly over the Huangchi conference using the “ritual protocol of equality” 敵禮. GLZS 20.396–397; GYZS 28.614–616; ZZZY 59.1670–1671; SJ 31.1473–1474, 39.1685; Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1264–1265

¹¹¹ The Guliang commentary interprets this case of semantic promotion as the *Chunqiu* commending the Wu ruler for employing the morally worthy Ji Zha as an ambassador to Lu in 544 BC, while the Gongyang claims that the one being commended in this case was Ji Zha. Lu Chun presents his own interpretation, which resembles the Gongyang interpretation of the Chu ruler's slight promotion to “a man of Jing” in 671 BC. GLZS 16.311; GYZS 21.464–466.

¹¹² I have quoted and translated (in square brackets) only the most relevant annotations by Lu Chun. These are differentiated from main text by the use of italics in the English translation and smaller font in the original Chinese. Zhong ed., *Gu jingjie huihan*, vol. 2, 1109.

¹¹³ In fact, the Taibo legend was the basis of the Wu ruler's attempt to claim seniority over the Jin ruler at the Huangchi conference.

¹¹⁴ See SJ 31.1445, 40.1689, 41.1739.

sphere of *Chunqiu* exegesis through Fan Ning's Guliang subcommentary, which followed the *Shiji* in claiming that the first Chu rulers were descended from Zhurong 祝融, a minister under the sage-king Ku 瞽. According to Fan Ning, because "their state was close to the southern Man barbarians and gradually adopted their customs" 國近南蠻, 遂漸其俗, the people of Chu were "rejected and regarded as barbarians (Yi)" 棄而夷之. But Confucius eventually "promoted" 進 them back to the level of the Chinese once they "knew how to submit to the Central Lands and also became great and powerful" 知內附中國, 亦轉強大. As I mentioned earlier, Fan Ning also claims elsewhere that the promotion of Chu had to do with its reversion to the use of Chinese diplomatic ritual.¹¹⁵

Like Fan Ning, Lu Chun inferred from the example of Chu that the process of barbarization was reversible through increased contact with Chinese states.¹¹⁶ Fan Ning's interpretation of Chu came close to treating barbarization in the *Chunqiu* as something that actually happened to Chinese people who adopted barbarian modes of behavior, rather than just a metaphor by which Confucius condemned certain acts as morally unacceptable (hence "barbaric"). But his use of the phrase "rejected and regarded as barbarians" remains ambiguous: had the Chu people literally *become* barbarians, or had they only become similar enough to barbarians to be taken for barbarians themselves? Lu Chun appears to remove this ambiguity by stating that Chu, Wu, and Yue "were originally not barbarians," thus implying that they did later become barbarians as a result of adopting barbarian customs. One can infer that Lu interpreted Confucius's apparent decision not to demote the Teng, Xue, and Qǐ rulers to the level of "man" as a sign that these rulers were not as far along the process of barbarization.

As we have seen, Han Yu's "Yuandao" applied a similarly literal and ritual-oriented interpretation of barbarization in the *Chunqiu* to the contemporary context of Buddhism's influence on the Chinese. Does this indicate that Lu Chun's *Chunqiu* exegesis had a strong influence on Han Yu's ideas, as some historians have claimed?¹¹⁷ It seems clear from Han Yu's writings that he was, at best, uninterested in Lu Chun's scholarship, probably because he saw it as tainted by association with the disgraced Wang Shuwen faction.¹¹⁸ Han Yu's animosity

¹¹⁵ GLZS 6.102, 11.200.

¹¹⁶ This idea of barbarized Chinese states that could return to being Chinese suggests that Fan Wenli is wrong to argue that the meaning of Han Yu's phrase, "if barbarians (Yi) were promoted to the level of the Central Lands, then he regarded them as [part of the] Central Lands" 夷而進於中國則中國之, changes significantly when the first two characters 夷而 are omitted. After all, this omission merely implies that the subjects of promotion are the same "feudal lords [who] used barbarian ritual" referenced in the preceding phrase. Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang*, 222–223.

¹¹⁷ Hartman disagrees with Pulleyblank's "more conventional" statement that Han Yu "seems to have concerned himself very little with [the new *Chunqiu* scholarship]," claiming instead that Han "had strong sympathies and sometimes direct contact" with the new school. But he cites no evidence for this reinterpretation. Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 174, 336 n. 5; Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism," 112. See also the discussion of Saiki Tetsuro's theories below.

¹¹⁸ In 811 Han Yu wrote a poem of apology to the reclusive Luoyang poet and scholar Lu Tong 盧仝 (d. 835), after Lu protested that Han (who was then magistrate of Luoyang) was being too harsh in applying the death penalty to a group of voyeuristic ruffians against whom Lu had lodged a complaint. Two lines of the poem suggest that Lu Tong's style of *Chunqiu* exegesis was very similar to Lu Chun's:

toward the Wang Shuwen faction predated its political downfall and was not dictated by mere political expediency. Indeed, he suspected that the faction's leaders had played at least an indirect role in his demotion to the magistracy of Yangshan 陽山 county in early 804, possibly because they had learned of his hostile attitude toward them from Liu Zongyuan and Liu Yuxi.¹¹⁹ It is worth noting that in the Veritable Records for Shunzong's reign, which Han Yu compiled for the imperial court in 813–815, Lu Chun's name appears at the head of the list of “famous men of the time who opportunistically sought rapid advancement” 當時名欲僥幸而速進者 by aligning themselves with Wang Shuwen.¹²⁰

Han Yu's studied indifference toward Lu Chun's scholarship is particularly evident when compared to his warm praise in 818 for Yin You's 殷侗 (767–838) new *Chunqiu* subcommentary, which was limited to expounding on the Gongyang commentary and therefore

The [scrolls for the] three commentaries to the *Chunqiu* are left tied up on the shelf,

While you cradle the ancient Classic alone, investigating it from beginning to end.

《春秋》三傳束高閣，

獨抱遺經究終始。

However, Han Yu describes Lu Tong's exegetical style not in order to endorse it, but rather as part of a flattering depiction of Lu as a high-minded eccentric who rejects all societal norms. Pulleyblank is therefore correct to argue that Han Yu “is mainly interested in [Lu Tong] as a recluse and a poet, and his comments on his scholarship, although appreciative, are made from the outside and show nothing of Liu Tsung-yüan's fervor [for Lu Chun's scholarship].” That said, there is no evidence whatsoever for Pulleyblank's description of Lu Tong as “a follower of the Tan Chu school of criticism of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.” While Lu Tong's poems have survived, his works of *Chunqiu* exegesis have not, and nothing is known of their connections (if any) with those of Dan Zhu, Zhao Kuang, or Lu Chun. Pulleyblank, “Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism,” 112; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 540–541; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 272–273. On Lu Tong's *Chunqiu* scholarship see Zhao Boxiong 趙伯雄, *Chunqiu xue shi* 春秋學史 (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2004), 414.

¹¹⁹ For various interpretations as to whether Han Yu's suspicion was correct, see Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 170–173; Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 53–60; Wu Zaiqing 吳在慶, *Tingtao zhai zhonggu wenshi lungao* 聽濤齋中國文史論稿 (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 2011), 158–169; Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 51–57.

¹²⁰ In the Veritable Records, Lu Chun's name is given as Lu Zhi 陸質, the new name that he adopted in 804/805. It is interesting that Liu Yuxi and Liu Zongyuan are named at the very end of this list, perhaps showing that Han Yu held them in higher regard and therefore downplayed their involvement in the faction. Saiki Tetsuro's claim that Han Yu held Lu Chun in high regard is based solely on misreading one of Shunzong's edicts (quoted in the Veritable Records) as reflecting Han's own assessment of Lu. Saiki's argument that the language of the Veritable Records reflects Lu Chun's influence on Han Yu is equally flawed, since its only evidence is the fact that both the Veritable Records and Lu Chun's exegetical writings use the phrase *renqing* 人情, which Saiki identifies as a “key concept” in Lu Chun's exegesis. It seems obvious from the examples Saiki cites that Han Yu does not even use the phrase in the same way as Lu Chun: *renqing* means “public opinion” in the Veritable Records, while in Lu Chun's writings it means “common sense” or “ritual etiquette.” Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2876–2877, 2980; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 721; Saiki Tetsuro 齊木哲郎, “Kan Yu to ‘Shunjū’— Eitei kakushin wo megutte” 韓愈と「春秋」—永貞革新をめぐる, *Chūgoku tetsugaku* 中国哲学 35 (2007), 149–151. On the question of whether the extant version of the Veritable Records for Shunzong's reign is Han Yu's work, see Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the T'ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 145–151, which essentially answers in the affirmative.

subscribed to the traditional mode of *Chunqiu* exegesis.¹²¹ Yin You's commitment to the traditional mode of exegesis was such that he memorialized the throne in 822 to request that a new examination on the three traditional *Chunqiu* commentaries be instituted in order to reverse a decline in the study of these commentaries.¹²² We should not, however, read Han Yu's letter as evidence that he, too, had a strong preference for the traditional commentaries. Rather, Han admits to Yin You that he has neglected the study of the Classics since passing the civil service examinations, and laments that official duties and sheer laziness have kept him from making an effort to learn more about *Chunqiu* exegesis from Yin You. He is ashamed to compare himself to "men of learning and true Classicists" 學士真儒; only the fact that his "prose is close to that of antiquity" 辭章近古 has led Yin You to ask him to write a preface to the new subcommentary despite his ignorance about its contents.¹²³

Some of the language in this letter may be polite self-deprecation, but given the frank and self-assured tone with which Han Yu speaks of his accomplishments as a prose writer in other letters, the sense of embarrassment about his lack of familiarity with *Chunqiu* exegesis seems quite genuine. The *Chunqiu* was clearly not Han Yu's favorite classical text, perhaps because its laconic prose was unattractive to him. I would therefore hypothesize that if he did derive the concept of ritual barbarization from Lu Chun's *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli*, his interest in that text was limited to searching for interpretations that he might use to turn Lu's admirers against Buddhism. Moreover, since Liu Zongyuan is the only contemporary of Han Yu known to have been equally interested in Lu Chun's exegesis and the practice of Buddhism, it is plausible that this section of the "Yuandao," at least, was written with Liu Zongyuan in mind.¹²⁴

Han Yu's memorial on the Buddha relic and letter to Meng Jian

In early 819 the Famen Monastery 法門寺 at Fengxiang 鳳翔 (modern Baoji 寶鷄) had its famous relic, believed to be one of the Buddha's finger bones, taken out from a crypt beneath its pagoda and displayed for the first time in thirty years. This rare event was widely believed to

¹²¹ The letter from Han Yu to Yin You, dated 818, shows that Yin had shown Han the subcommentary and explained its general arguments to him some time before. Since another preface by Han Yu shows that Yin You was on a diplomatic mission to the Uyghurs for much of 817, the subcommentary was probably complete by the winter of 816, when Han successfully recommended Yin for an appointment to the Censorate and the Department of Rites. Han's recommendation letter states that Yin "is familiar with all three [*Chunqiu*] commentaries and also versed in the other Classics, and has gained his own insights beyond the commentaries and subcommentaries" 兼通三傳，傍習諸經，註疏之外，自有所得。Unfortunately, Yin You's subcommentary has not survived. Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 208–209, 272–273, 603; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 340–341, 349–350, 359; Zhao, *Chunqiu xue shi*, 412–413.

¹²² THY 76.1398.

¹²³ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 209.

¹²⁴ Among the other members of the Wang Shuwen faction, Liu Yuxi was also interested in Buddhism but does not seem to have been interested in *Chunqiu* exegesis, while Lü Wen 呂溫 (772–811) was a student of Lu Chun but showed much less interest in Buddhism than Liu Yuxi and Liu Zongyuan did. On Lü Wen and Buddhism, see Chen Jinping 陳津萍, "Lü Wen shengping jiqi zuopin yanjiu" 呂溫生平及其作品研究 (MA thesis, National Chung Cheng University, 2002), 90–96.

ensure a year of peace and good harvests. Xianzong decided to have the relic brought to Chang'an to be displayed and venerated in the palace and the capital's various temples.¹²⁵ Upon the relic's arrival in Chang'an, the adoration that it received from the city's entire population, elite and commoner alike, apparently so annoyed Han Yu—who was then an official in the Ministry of Laws 刑部—that he submitted a memorial of remonstrance. In this memorial, he urged Xianzong not to demean himself by paying reverence to the “inauspicious and filthy remains” 凶穢之餘 of a long-dead man who, while he lived, was “a barbarian (Yi-Di) who did not understand the language of the Central Lands and wore clothing in a different style; whose mouth did not speak the sage-kings' exemplary sayings and whose body was not dressed in the kind of clothing they prescribed; who did not know of the bonds of moral duty between ruler and minister and the bonds of affection between father and son” 夷狄之人，與中國言語不通，衣服殊製，口不言先王之法言，身不服先王之法服，不知君臣之義，父子之情. Instead, Han recommended, the finger bone should be handed over to the relevant officials to be cast into water or fire, so that it would thereupon cease to be an object of misguided devotion.¹²⁶

Han Yu's memorial famously resulted in his year-long exile to Chaozhou 潮州. But it was neither his ethnocentric rhetoric nor even his blasphemous advice to destroy a sacred relic that nearly caused an irate Xianzong to have him put to death before being persuaded to exile him instead. Rather, Xianzong later explained on at least two occasions that Han Yu's principal offense lay in the irreverent tone of the memorial's opening argument: namely, that the ancient kings had all enjoyed exceptionally long lives without any help from Buddhism, whereas the emperors and dynasties since Buddhism's introduction had all been short-lived—with the exception of the devoutly Buddhist Liang Wudi 梁武帝 (r. 502—549), who was besieged by the rebelling general Hou Jing 侯景 (d. 552) and starved to death after a reign of forty-eight years.¹²⁷ As many historians have pointed out, the argument that Buddhism would bring the downfall of any dynasty that favored it was an old one, already used in the 620s by the Daoist court astrologer and fervent anti-Buddhist polemicist Fu Yi 傅奕 (555–639).¹²⁸ Indeed, Han Yu alludes to Fu Yi when he writes, “When Gaozu received the throne abdicated by the Sui, there was a discussion about doing away with [Buddhism]” 高祖始受隋禪，則議除之. The person responsible for initiating that discussion was none other than Fu Yi.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ ZZTJ 240.7756, 7758; JTS 160.4198; XTS 176.1345; Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 102–103. Andrew Eisenberg has recently discussed the political ramifications of the first such relic tour, which took place under Gaozong in 660: see “Emperor Gaozong, the Rise of Wu Zetian, and Factional Politics in the Early Tang,” *Tang Studies* 30 (2012), 66–67. On the relic itself, see Robert H. Sharf, “The Buddha's Finger Bones at Famenxi and the Art of Chinese Esoteric Buddhism,” *The Art Bulletin* 93.1 (2011), 38–59; on the circumstances of its excavation from the Famen Monastery's crypt in 1987, see Han Jinke 韓金科, *Famenxi ta digong* 法門寺塔地宮 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2012).

¹²⁶ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 614–616 (cf. JTS 160.4200; XTS 176.5260).

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 613–614; JTS 160.4200, 4202; XTS 176.5261–5262.

¹²⁸ The earliest person known to have pointed out the similarity between Han Yu's memorial and Fu Yi's arguments is Shao Bo 邵博 (d. 1158), in his *Shaoshi wenjian houlu* 邵氏聞見後錄 of 1157: see SSHL 8.64.

¹²⁹ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 614. For Fu Yi's memorials see QTW 133.1345–1347; for their effect on Gaozu and the Buddhist clergy's response see Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, 215–216; Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 7–11; Li, ‘Hongming ji’ ‘Guang Hongming ji’ shulun gao, 358–372. For a recent analysis of Fu Yi's

Shen Wenfan and Zhang Deheng have recently argued quite convincingly that the trouble that Han Yu's memorial landed him in can be blamed on his ill-judged reliance on Fu Yi's memorial as a model.¹³⁰ As Fu Yi's Buddhist opponents were all too happy to point out, Fu's attempt at branding Buddhism as a source of political chaos was logically flawed in itself. For example, it ignored the fact that the long period between the Western Zhou and the arrival of Buddhism under Han Mingdi 漢明帝 (r. 58–75) had its fair share of short-lived rulers and political disorder.¹³¹ But such claims were still not totally devoid of persuasive power in the early seventh century, given the existence of many ephemeral and intensely pro-Buddhist dynasties during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. By Han Yu's day, however, this was clearly no longer the case, since the Tang dynasty had patronized Buddhism for two hundred years and nonetheless remained in place. Moreover, Fu Yi only claimed that Chinese dynasties lasted much longer before Buddhism's arrival and made no comment on the longevity of individual rulers. When Han Yu borrowed this argument from Fu Yi, however, his memorial provided a detailed list of ancient kings' reign lengths and lifespans and also conflated short reigns with short-lived dynasties. This gave Xianzong the impression that he was arguing that all rulers who revered Buddhism would have short lives and thus implicitly cursing Xianzong with an untimely death. Even Han Yu's fawning praise of Xianzong as the sageliest ruler and greatest conqueror in "several thousands and hundreds of years" 數千百年 could not make up for that miscalculation.¹³² Han Yu's own account of the misunderstanding, written in late 823, tries to cover up the offending aspect of his memorial by mentioning everything but the issue of short-lived rulers, thus rendering Xianzong's reaction almost inexplicable:

When I, Han Yu, was a junior official in the Department of Laws, I said that the Buddha was a barbarian (Yi) ghost, that his religion would bring disorder to the government, that Liang Wudi venerated him and so was defeated by Hou Jing, and that we could root it out with one sweeping move and should not let it continue to spread. The Son of Heaven said my words were inauspicious and demoted me to Chaozhou....

愈之爲少秋官，言佛夷鬼，其法亂治，梁武事之，卒有侯景之敗，可一掃刮絕去，不宜使爛漫。天子謂其言不祥，斥之潮州...¹³³

polemical use of ethnocentric language see Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 58–65. Arthur Wright's more dated analysis of Fu Yi overstates his "xenophobia" and subscribes to a flawed dichotomy between "philosophic Taoism" and "religious Taoism," denying the latter any influence on Fu's position: Arthur F. Wright, "Fu I and the Rejection of Buddhism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12.1 (1951), 33–47, esp. 42–45.

¹³⁰ Shen Wenfan 沈文凡 and Zhang Deheng 張德恆, "Han Yu bian Chao xinji kaolun—cong bijiao Changli 'Lun fogu biao' yu Fu Yi 'Qing chu shijiao shu' zhankai" 韓愈貶潮心跡考論—從比較昌黎《論佛骨表》與傅奕《請除釋教書》展開, *Lanzhou daxue xuebao* 蘭州大學學報 39.1 (2011), 1–8.

¹³¹ Similarly, Augustine's *The City of God* rebutted claims that Christian monotheism had rendered Rome vulnerable to barbarian invasion by pointing out that the Romans had also suffered numerous disasters before Christianity became the religion of the empire.

¹³² Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 614. Ichikawa Kan has argued that Han Yu's decision to dwell at length on the lifespans of ancient rulers stemmed from an interest in mythology: see Ichikawa, *Han Yu yanjiu xinlun*, 159–162.

¹³³ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 561. This account is in Han Yu's epitaph for his fourth daughter Han Na 韓掣 (808–819), who died from an illness when the family was passing through Shangzhou 商州 (modern Shangluo

I would thus argue that despite the famous rhetorical flair of Han Yu's Buddha relic memorial, the memorial's aims were very limited and its arguments uncharacteristically derivative.¹³⁴ Indeed, those arguments are only superficially similar to those found in the "Yuandao." The memorial begins with a line that has been widely quoted as evidence of Han's purported xenophobia: "Your subject humbly submits that Buddhism is just one of the religions of the barbarians (Yi-Di); it spread into the Central Lands during the Later Han, but we never had it here in high antiquity" 伏以佛者夷狄之一法耳，自後漢時流入中國，上古未嘗有也。 However, Han only used this as the first step in a build-up to making a claim borrowed entirely from Fu Yi, namely that because Buddhism arrived under the Eastern Han, it could be blamed for the political disorder of the centuries between Han and Tang. The two most original arguments found in the "Yuandao"—that the Way of the Sages was lost after Mencius, and that Buddhism was both a barbarian religion and a barbarizing religion—make no appearance in the memorial of 819. Indeed, Han Yu's narrative of the Way of the Sages is clearly incompatible with the memorial's claim—taken from Fu Yi, of course—that all was well with the Chinese world before Buddhism arrived under the Han dynasty. Nor does the memorial claim that the Chinese are now being barbarized by Buddhism, only that the people of Chang'an have been "damaging our [good] customs" 傷風敗俗 by burning and mutilating their bodies to demonstrate their devotion to the relic.¹³⁵

There is another problematic but commonly neglected aspect of the memorial on the Buddha relic: namely, that it focused exclusively on criticizing Buddhism and did not also criticize Daoist immortality-seeking techniques even though Xianzong had, at the time, recently begun ingesting mercury-laden immortality elixirs supplied by the Daoist alchemist Liu Bi 柳泌 (d. 820). Instead, the Buddha relic memorial's emphasis on the longevity (or otherwise) of rulers was probably calculated to appeal to Xianzong's newfound interest in immortality, only to backfire by violating the taboo against discussing his mortality. In late 819, another official named Pei Lin 裴潏 (d. 838) did write a memorial to remonstrate against Xianzong's elixir-taking. Pei expressed skepticism about the existence of immortals and pointed out the health risks of regularly consuming metallic substances. He, like Han Yu, angered Xianzong with his remonstrance and was punished with exile.¹³⁶ Unlike Han Yu's 819 memorial, Pei Lin's relative

商洛) on the way to Chaozhou. Han Yu wrote the epitaph when she was reburied in the Han clan cemetery in the winter of 823.

¹³⁴ I essentially agree with Weinstein, who argues that the memorial "added little of substance that could not already be found in the stock anti-Buddhist tirades of preceding generations of Confucian-oriented polemicists." However, Weinstein also contends that the only thing new about the memorial was "the intemperate language employed toward the emperor"; this overlooks the unprecedentedly taboo character of Han Yu's argument about short-lived emperors and its crucial significance for the reaction that the memorial provoked in Xianzong. Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 104–105.

¹³⁵ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 613, 615.

¹³⁶ JTS 15.471, 171.4446–4448; XTS 118.4287–4288; ZZTJ 240.7754–7755, 241.7775.

lack of literary talent has doomed his memorial to obscurity even though it was Liu Bi's elixirs, and not the Buddha relic, that were blamed for Xianzong's sudden death in early 820.¹³⁷

Epitaphs that Han Yu wrote for his friend Li Xuzhong 李虛中 (762–813) and his kinsman Li Gan 李干 (766–823) strongly indicate that by early 819, he already knew elixir poisoning to be responsible for the painful deaths of Li Xuzhong and another prominent minister, Lu Tan 盧坦 (748–817), and also for the excruciating ailments that had afflicted Gui Deng 歸登 (754–820) for over ten years. Indeed, Han Yu knew that Li Gan had begun suffering from hematuria after following alchemical recipes that he had learned from Liu Bi.¹³⁸ If Han Yu was sincerely worried in 819 that Xianzong's patronage of Buddhism would lead to an early death, was he not equally worried that Liu Bi's elixirs would have the same effect? The standard interpretation of Han Yu's Buddha relic memorial as a reflection of his moral courage and Classicist fervor neglects to address this vexing question, which is further complicated by evidence that Han himself consumed elixirs after 819 and finally died from elixir poisoning.¹³⁹

In late 819, the Tang court reduced the severity of Han Yu's punishment by reassigning him from Chaozhou to the slightly more northerly prefecture of Yuanzhou 袁州 (modern Yichun 宜春). He arrived in Yuanzhou to take up the post of prefect in early 820. In the autumn of 820, one of Han Yu's subordinates was passing through Jizhou 吉州 (modern Ji'an 吉安) while returning to Yuanzhou from an errand when the local deputy prefect 司馬, Meng Jian 孟簡 (d. 823), handed this official a letter addressed to Han.¹⁴⁰ Meng had recently been demoted to Jizhou after being found guilty of making large bribes to a powerful eunuch during Xianzong's reign.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ There were also widespread rumors that Xianzong was murdered by the eunuch Chen Hongzhi 陳弘志 (d. 835), but the official explanation for his death at the time was that he had died from elixir poisoning. Xianzong's heir, who succeeded him as Muzong 穆宗 (r. 820–824), held Liu Bi and another alchemist, the Buddhist monk Datong 大通 (d. 820), responsible for Xianzong's death and had them executed. JTS 15.472, 135.3742–3743, 184.4769; XTS 208.5882–5883; ZZTJ 241.7777–7778.

¹³⁸ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 439–441, 553–554; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2571–2572. For the date of Lu Tan's death see JTS 153.4092; XTS 159.4960. On Gui Deng's elixir poisoning and date of death see JTS 149.4020; XTS 164.5039.

¹³⁹ On the issue of Han Yu's position on elixirs, see Appendix 2.

¹⁴⁰ Lo Lien-t'ien and Zhang Qinghua misread Han Yu's reply letter as indicating that Han himself passed through Jizhou and received the letter from Meng Jian. They also infer that this took place when Han traveled from Chaozhou to take up his new post at Yuanzhou. This interpretation overlooks five points: first, Meng would not have needed to write to Han if he could meet Han in person in Jizhou; second, Meng was only exiled to Jizhou two or three months after Han's arrival in Yuanzhou; third, Han clearly wrote his reply letter in autumn, and there is little reason for him to have waited so long if he received Meng's letter in spring; fourth, Hu Sanxing's *Zizhi tongjian* commentary states that the term *xingguan* 行官 refers to a category of local official whose job was to run long-distance errands for governors and prefects; fifth, the phrase "returned from the south" 自南迴 shows that whoever received the letter was returning to Yuanzhou, not traveling there for the first time. Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 211–212; ZZTJ 223.7162–7163; Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 99; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 386–387.

¹⁴¹ Meng Jian's bribery of the eunuch Tutu Chengcui 吐突承璀 (d. 820) occurred in 818–819 and turned out to be badly timed: Tutu was executed upon Muzong's accession because he had favored another of Xianzong's sons to succeed him. But the case against Meng only arose because he arranged the murder of a trusted subordinate who tried using the evidence of bribery to blackmail him. The murdered man's family sought redress from the imperial

He was an exceptionally devout Buddhist and, having heard rumors that the monk Dadian had converted Han Yu to Buddhism in Chaozhou, was writing to Han to ask if they were true.¹⁴² Upon reading Meng Jian's letter, Han Yu promptly wrote a reply to deny the rumors. He admitted to having been friends with Dadian but maintained that he had no reason to "leave the Way of the Sages, abandon the doctrines of the sage-kings, and follow a barbarian (Yi-Di) teaching in pursuit of blessings and gain" 去聖人之道，捨先王之法，而從夷狄之教以求福利。¹⁴³

The second part of Han Yu's letter to Meng Jian explained his reasons for opposing Buddhism, presumably because Meng's letter had represented his past anti-Buddhist polemics as a mistake. Rather than pointing out Buddhism's faults as he had in the past, Han Yu now argued that he was simply trying to follow in Mencius's footsteps by opposing Buddhism and Daoism. Han Yu may have decided to focus on Mencius because Meng Jian was considered a descendant of that philosopher. Han's letter gives us further evidence that the Mencian model was another important source for his rhetoric of barbarization. Han Yu writes:

Moreover, there is also a good reason why I, Han Yu, do not support Buddhism and instead attack it. Mencius said, "Now in all under heaven, those who do not go to Yang Zhu's [teachings] will go to Mozi's. The teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi together create chaos, and the Way of the sages and worthies is no longer clearly understood. Thus the three bonds [of ruler-subject, father-son, and husband-wife] have declined and the nine methods of governance are in ruin; the rites and ritual music have collapsed and the barbarians (Yi-Di) wreak violence unrestrained. How much longer can this go on before we become birds and beasts?" That is why he said, "Whoever can use his words to resist the teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi is a disciple of the sages."

且愈不助釋氏而排之者，其亦有說。孟子云：「今天下不之楊則之墨，楊墨交亂，而聖賢之道不明。則三綱淪而九法斲，禮樂崩而夷狄橫，幾何其不為禽獸也？」故曰：「能言拒楊墨者，皆聖人之徒也。」¹⁴⁴

The second quotation in this passage does appear in the *Mencius*, but the first is only a very loose paraphrase. The original text reads:

The words of Yang Zhu and Mo Di fill all under heaven; of the words spoken in all under heaven, those that do not come from Yang will come from Mo. Yang's teaching is based on self-interest, which denies [one's duty to] one's ruler. Mo's teaching is based on

court, and Meng Jian's bribes were discovered as a result. Ironically, Meng Jian was previously exiled in 811 for criticizing Tutu Chengcui; the bribes were probably aimed at mending fences with Tutu. JTS 16.477, 163.4258; XTS 160.4968.

¹⁴² Meng knew Sanskrit and participated in a court-sponsored sutra translation project in 811. His *Jiu Tangshu* biography states that his Buddhist fervor was a target of criticism from Classicists, possibly a reference to Han Yu. Meng's *Xin Tangshu* biography implies that the criticism occurred in his last years. JTS 163.4257–4258; XTS 160.4969.

¹⁴³ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 212.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 214.

universal love, which denies [one's special affection to] one's father. To deny one's father and ruler is to be a bird or a beast.

楊朱、墨翟之言盈天下。天下之言，不歸楊，則歸墨。楊氏爲我，是無君也；墨氏兼愛，是無父也。無父無君，是禽獸也。¹⁴⁵

In this dialogue, Mencius apparently does not intend the “bird or beast” analogy to be taken literally. He goes on to warn that if the teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi continue unchecked, wild animals and even starving human beings will eventually be eating the corpses of people who have died of hunger. He does not suggest, however, that the human beings themselves will have become wild animals by denying their fathers and rulers.¹⁴⁶ Han Yu, on the other hand, amplifies Mencius's rhetoric of bestialization into an echo of the barbarization rhetoric from the “Yuandao”: the phrasing of the question attributed to Mencius, “How much longer can this go on before we become birds and beasts” 幾何其不爲禽獸也, is nearly identical to that of “How much longer can this go on before we all become barbarians” 幾何其不胥而爲夷也.

The human-animal distinction and the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy are thus interchangeable in Han Yu's rhetoric. The *Mencius*, too, implicitly conflates barbarism and animality by having Mencius claim that just as the Duke of Zhou waged war on barbarians who “denied their fathers and rulers,” he, Mencius, had no choice but to criticize any teaching that would lead people to do the same.¹⁴⁷ In other words, birds, beasts, barbarians, and the followers of Yang Zhu and Mozi are alike in lacking filiality and loyalty. Moreover, the Duke of Zhou analogy also involves another conflation of military action against foreign enemies with ideological warfare against heterodoxies. Han Yu's letter further reinforces both conflations by arguing that “we would all be fastening our robes on the left side and babbling in a foreign tongue if there had been no Mencius” 向無孟氏，則皆服左衽而言侏離矣, since it was thanks to Mencius's teaching that the Chinese of Tang times—despite having lost the Way of the Sages—still knew how to revere Confucius, to esteem humaneness and moral duty, and to respect legitimate rulers rather than hegemons.¹⁴⁸ With the allusion to the fastening of robes, Han Yu is comparing Mencius to Guan Zhong, whose political acumen Confucius credited with saving the Chinese from a fate of “wearing our hair untied and fastening our robes on the left side” 被髮左衽.¹⁴⁹ Whereas Confucius claimed that Guan Zhong had protected the Chinese states from literal barbarians by military means, Han Yu claims that Mencius protected the Chinese from moral barbarism by defending the Way of the Sages with his polemics against Yang Zhu and Mozi.

¹⁴⁵ *Mencius* 3B:14.

¹⁴⁶ But see *Mencius* 4B:47, where Mencius claims that all human beings except for “superior men” (*junzi* 君子) have lost that which made them morally different from birds and beasts.

¹⁴⁷ *Mencius* 3B:14.

¹⁴⁸ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 214.

¹⁴⁹ *Analects* 14:17.

Yet the letter to Meng Jian does not make this analogy of barbarism and heterodoxy explicit. Instead, the very next sentence of the letter claims that Mencius's achievement was as great as that of the sage-king Yu, who saved the Chinese world from a great flood.¹⁵⁰ Nor does Han Yu attempt to make the Guan Zhong analogy more coherent by mentioning the Chu 'agrarianist' philosopher Xu Xing, whom Mencius did label as a barbarian, in addition to Yang Zhu and Mozi. These inconsistent, muddled, or incomplete analogies reflect a general pattern in Han Yu's writing: rhetorical effect takes precedence over intellectual coherence. To his mind, animality and barbarism are both just metaphors for expressing an image of moral decline due to ideological error. The real issue at stake for him is not the preservation or definition of Chinese ethnocultural identity, even though his denigration of Buddhism as a barbarian teaching may give us that impression. Rather, the issue is the urgent need for a renewed commitment to Classicist values for the sake of rescuing the Way of the Sages from final oblivion. In the letter to Meng Jian, this urgency finds expression in Han Yu's stirring (if somewhat histrionic) summation of his ideological agenda:

Since the Han dynasty, the many Classicists have merely been able to patch up [the Way's] hundreds of holes and thousands of wounds. Meanwhile, it has continued to suffer distortion and loss. Its peril is like that of a single hair holding up a thousand *jun* [i.e., eighteen metric tons], stretching long and unbroken but dwindling almost to extinction. At such a time, to sing the praises of Buddhism and Daoism and encourage everyone under heaven to follow them would, alas, be the height of inhumanity! The harmful effects of Buddhism and Daoism are greater than those of the teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi, yet I, Han Yu, am not as worthy as Mencius. Mencius could not save [the Way] when it was not yet lost, yet I, Han Yu, wish to preserve it when it has already been corrupted. Alas, I am overreaching myself and blind to my own danger, and cannot save myself from certain death! Even so, if this Way can be passed on in some imperfect form because of me, I will have absolutely no regrets though I suffer destruction and death!

漢氏已來，羣儒區區修補，百孔千瘡，隨亂隨失，其危如一髮引千鈞，縣縣延延，寢以微滅。於是時也，而唱釋老於其間，鼓天下之眾而從之，嗚呼，其亦不仁甚矣！釋老之害過於楊墨，韓愈之賢不及孟子，孟子不能救之於未亡之前，而韓愈乃欲全之於已壞之後。嗚呼！其亦不量其力且見其身之危，莫之救以死也！雖然，使其道由愈而粗傳，雖滅死萬萬無恨！¹⁵¹

Here, Han Yu is doing nothing less than presenting himself as Classicism's long-awaited savior—the very role that Zhang Ji had urged upon him more than twenty years before.

For Han Yu, as for Mencius, it was rhetorically expedient to accentuate Classicism's importance to his audience by presenting either animality or moral barbarism as its only alternatives. In other words, Han represents being human, being Chinese, and being an orthodox Classicist as one and the same thing, probably not because he really believes the three categories to be equivalent, but because that is the best way to emphasize how essential orthodoxy is. Admittedly, Han does suggest in one of his shorter essays, the "Yuanren" 原人 (Finding the

¹⁵⁰ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 214.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 215.

Source of Humanity), that living beings are divided into three categories: human beings, barbarians (Yi-Di), and animals. The three can collectively be called “humanity” (*ren* 人), Han argues, because humans are meant to be masters over barbarians and animals.¹⁵² This system of categorization effectively equates full humanity with Chineseness, although Han Yu does not bother to explain why barbarians are less than human. The implications of the equation are not explored in any of Han Yu’s extant writings, but we shall see in Part 4 of this dissertation that the *Daoxue* philosophers would take up these implications and attempt to inject some coherence into them some centuries later.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 25–26.

Chapter 4 Barbarians and barbarization in the rhetoric of Han Yu's ninth-century imitators

Polemical writings by Li Ao and Huangfu Shi

In this chapter, I shall turn to consider how Han Yu's rhetoric of barbarization inspired other creative literary reinterpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy during the ninth century. It is no surprise that the earliest examples of these are by two of Han Yu's firmest literary and ideological supporters: his student Li Ao 李翱 (774–836) and his friend Huangfu Shi 皇甫湜 (ca. 777–ca. 835).¹ Among the pieces by these two men that imitated the rhetorical tropes used in Han Yu's anti-Buddhist polemics, the most obvious examples are Li Ao's "Qu fozhai lun" 去佛齋論 (Discourse on Deleting the Buddhist Maigre Feast) and Huangfu Shi's valedictory preface for the Reverend Jian 簡師 (n.d.), but by far the most interesting is Huangfu's "Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun" 東晉元魏帝正閏論 (Discourse on the Legitimacy of the Eastern Jin Emperors and the Illegitimacy of the Northern Wei Emperors), which takes the barbarization trope out of its original context in anti-Buddhist polemics and applies it to the political theory of legitimate dynastic succession (*zhengtong* 正統).

The undated "Qu fozhai lun" is the only extant piece of writing by Li Ao that is strongly anti-Buddhist.² In it, he uses the inclusion of a Buddhist rite (the "seven sevens" or forty-ninth day maigre feast) in a new handbook of funeral rituals as an opening to deliver a diatribe against Buddhism's influence on Chinese society and a call for the government to take measures to eradicate that influence.³ The essay includes two passages that are strongly reminiscent of the rhetoric of barbarization in the "Yuandao":

¹ Huangfu Shi has traditionally been identified as a student of Han Yu, but Li Zuixin has recently argued persuasively that this is incorrect because Huangfu never spoke of Han as his teacher. Li Zuixin 李最欣, "Han Yu yu Huangfu Shi guanxi bianzheng" 韓愈與皇甫湜關係辨正, *Zhongzhou xuekan* 中州學刊 2009(1), 205–208.

² In 799, Chengguan asked Li Ao to compose an inscription for a new monastery bell. In a letter to Chengguan, Li Ao tried to decline the request by saying that if he used the inscription to expound on the Way of the Sages, this would be "of no benefit to the Buddhists" 於釋氏無益, whereas if he wrote an inscription that accorded with Buddhist doctrine, he would be "greatly deluding all under heaven" 惑乎天下甚 and would become an object of reproach for future sages. Nonetheless, Li Ao seems to have relented in the end and composed an inscription that avoided any mention of Buddhist beliefs; both the letter and the inscription are found in his collected works. Given the mild tone of the letter to Chengguan, I do not think it qualifies as an anti-Buddhist polemic. QTW 636.6422–6423, 637.6427.

³ Li Ao's concern with purifying funeral rites of non-Classicist influences seems to be mirrored in Huangfu Shi's spirit road stele epitaph for Han Yu, which claims that his deathbed instructions were as follows: "All aspects of my funeral and burial should accord with the [classical] rites. It is customary to practice barbarian (Yi-Di) [rites] like [sponsoring] the painting of Buddhist images and the copying of Buddhist [sutras] and counting [the days of the funeral] in multiples of seven, and to be bound by the *yin* and *yang* experts' concepts of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness. Do not defile me with any of these" 喪葬無不如禮, 俗習夷狄畫浮圖、寫浮圖、以七數之, 拘陰陽所謂吉凶, 一無汙我. Note that these instructions do not reject "barbarian" Buddhist customs alone; they also exclude longstanding but purportedly unclassical Chinese customs involving the selection of auspicious dates and tomb sites. I have followed the Song-period edition of the spirit road stele epitaph and amended 畫浮圖 to 畫浮圖, although 書浮圖 is also possible. The *Quan Tangwen* version has a missing 浮圖 between 畫 and 寫. Huangfu Shi 皇甫湜, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji* 皇甫持正文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1994), 97; QTW 687.7039.

There must have been no one in the Later Han who could discern [Buddhism's harmfulness] and attack it; as a result, a barbarian (Yi-Di) religion has spread throughout the Central Lands of the Chinese. Because of this, our wedding and funeral rites are erroneous and confused; only a few of them have not completely turned into barbarian (Rong) rites....

蓋後漢氏無辨而排之者，遂使夷狄之術行於中華，故吉凶之禮謬亂，其不盡為戎禮也無幾矣。...

As for those who are immersed in the [Buddhist] teaching and use the customs of barbarians (Yi-Di) to change those of the Chinese states, this is a great calamity indeed. They would be fortunate not to turn into barbarians (Rong)!

而溺於其教者，以夷狄之風而變乎諸夏，禍之大者也。其不為戎乎幸矣！

Li Ao does present one argument that Han Yu did not, which is that the better teachings in Buddhism can already be found in the Daoist philosophical texts:

The Buddhist religion teaches about matters on which Lie Yukou and Zhuang Zhou have already spoken in detail; the rest [that is not found in these Daoist texts] is all a Way of the barbarians (Rong-Di).

佛法之所言者，列禦寇、莊周所言詳矣，其餘則皆戎狄之道也。⁴

This ethnocentric argument may have its roots in the pro-Daoist Fu Yi's claim, made to Tang Taizong at a court audience, that the Buddhists have "imitated the mysterious teachings of Zhuangzi and Laozi, using fine writing to disguise a demonic and delusive teaching" 模寫莊、老玄言，文飾妖幻之教。⁵

It is noteworthy that Han Yu, unlike Fu Yi and Li Ao, did not hold that Daoism was superior to Buddhism by virtue of being Chinese, although he also did not claim that Daoism was a "religion of the barbarians." Ironically, a letter written by Li Ao himself did come rather close to claiming that all non-Classicist ideologies were barbaric. The purpose of this letter, which Li Ao wrote in 797 or 798, was to recommend Zhang Ji, Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751–814), and Li Jingjian 李景儉 (fl. 799–805) to Zhang Jianfeng 張建封 (735–800), the Governor of Xuzhou 徐州. Toward the end of the letter, Li Ao makes the following assertion in order to emphasize Confucius's exalted status, but only as a rhetorical strategy to admonish Zhang Jianfeng for neglecting to give employment to the men whom Li was recommending:

Confucius explicated the *Changes*, fixed the *Rites* and *Music*, edited the *Odes*, wrote the preface for the *Documents*, and wrote the *Chunqiu*. He was a sage who exerted himself to the utmost a hundred generations ago. Wherever his transforming influence spread, whoever did not follow his Way was [no better than] a man of the barbarians (Yi-Di). Yet

⁴ QTW 636.6424–6425.

⁵ THY 47.836; JTS 70.2717.

although there are still temples to Confucius, even worthy men are unable to go to them daily and worship him, because [such worship] brings little benefit to people. Hence, something that brings no benefit to people will not receive attention day and night, even if it is Confucius's temple. How much more so for ordinary people of the world (literally "all under heaven") [like yourself]? If you are hoping [to recruit good] men [to your staff] but cannot treat good, talented men with respect, then it is better not to hope at all.

孔子述《易》、定《禮》《樂》、刪《詩》、序《書》、作《春秋》，聖人也，奮乎百世之上，其所化之者，非其道，則夷狄之人也。而孔子之廟存焉，雖賢者亦不能日往拜之，以其益於人者寡矣。故無益於人，雖孔子之廟，尚不能朝夕而事焉，況天下之人乎？有待於人，而不能禮善人良士，則不如無待也。⁶

Li Ao is effectively saying, "Who do you, Zhang Jianfeng, think you are? Even a great sage like Confucius can be ignored because people do not think they will get anything out of worshipping him. If you make no effort to recruit talented men, you should not expect them to come to you in search of employment." The letter is thus decidedly not a statement of Han Yu's concept of ideological orthodoxy, but it perhaps bears the influence of Han's proclivity for using barbarism as a rhetorical trope, since Li Ao had recently begun emulating Han's style of prose at that time.

Huangfu Shi's preface for the Reverend Jian praises a Buddhist monk who decided to visit Han Yu during his exile to Chaozhou. In Huangfu's depiction, Reverend Jian is willing to brave the snake-infested mountains and crocodile-filled rivers of the south in order to learn the Way of the Sages from Han Yu—"if at dawn he has the chance to pay his respects [to Han Yu], he will be able to die at sunset [without regrets]" 若將朝得進拜而夕死可者. This adaptation of Confucius's declaration (in *Analects* 4:8) that one can hear of the Way at dawn and die content at sunset seems to elevate Han Yu into a personification of the Way itself, and is probably the only original rhetorical move in the preface. Most of the preface is essentially a variation on the opening passage of Han Yu's preface for Wenchang. It expands on that preface's use of the name-deed dichotomy by introducing images of animality and barbarism and then inverting them to argue that those who look human and Chinese may be less worthy than those who do not:

The phoenix has feathers and the *qilin* has fur; they are birds and beasts. The Classics and commentaries use them as an analogy to sages; is this not because it judges them by their hearts and not by their physical forms? Although the Reverend is a Buddhist in name, he is a Classicist in deed; although he has a barbarian's (Yi-Di) clothes, he has the wisdom of a human being.⁷ Though he is not one of the literati, he is similar to a *qilin* or a

⁶ At the time of this letter's writing, Li Ao was in Bianzhou learning the art of prose writing from Han Yu; he had also recently befriended Zhang Ji and Meng Jiao through their acquaintance with Han Yu. Han Yu himself became a member of Zhang Jianfeng's staff in 799. In the letter, Li Ao mentions hearing that Zhang had missed an earlier opportunity to recruit Han before Han accepted an appointment from the Governor of Bianzhou. QTW 635.6417–6418; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 89–92, 96, 115.

⁷ Following the version found in the only extant Song-period edition of Huangfu Shi's collected works, also quoted in Hong Mai's 洪邁 (1123–1202) *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆. The *Tang wencui* and *Quan Tangwen* versions read "he has a heart of humaneness and moral duty" 仁義其心 instead of "he has the wisdom of a human being." Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 37; Hong Mai 洪邁, *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 115; TWC 98.997; QTW 686.7025.

phoenix.⁸ Is he not better than those who don the caps of Classicists and wear the robes of court officials but are deluded and immersed in a heterodox and strange teaching, thus ruining our moral standards? Alas! I consider the Reverend alone to be a worthy man.

鳳羽而麟毛，鳥與獸也，經傳以比聖人，豈非以其心，不以其形者耶？師雖佛名，而儒其行，雖夷狄其衣服，而人其知，雖未齒於士，與鳳麟類矣，不猶愈於冠朝冠、服朝服，惑溺於淫怪之說，以黷彝倫者耶？嗚呼！師吾獨賢也。⁹

Huangfu Shi thus implies that any literatus who is Classicist in name but Buddhist in deed effectively has only a barbarian's level of wisdom. He amplifies the force of that rhetorical assertion by using humanity, not Chineseness, as the opposite of barbarism, but the idea that literati adherents to a "heterodox and strange teaching" have lost both their Chineseness and their humanity is left implicit rather than stated outright.

Huangfu Shi's use of the form-body dichotomy may also be modeled on an undated essay by Han Yu, usually referred to as *Miscellaneous Discourse #3* 雜說三, which uses myths that the ancient sages had animal-like physical features to argue that it was better to look like an animal than to behave like one:

A sage of the past had a head like that of a bull, another had a body like that of a snake, another had a beak like a bird's, and another had a face as ugly as an exorcist's mask.¹⁰ They resembled [these things] in outward appearance but not in their hearts. Can one say that they were not human? Some people have excellent physiques and complexions, with faces as ruddy as cinnabar; they are handsome but vicious. Such people have the appearance of human beings but the hearts of birds and beasts; how can they be called human? In that case, judging people by the rightness or wrongness of their appearance is not as reliable as judging them by their hearts and deeds.

昔之聖者，其首有若牛者，其形有若蛇者，其喙有若鳥者，其貌有若蒙俱者：彼皆貌似而心不同焉，可謂之非人耶？即有平脅曼膚，顏如渥丹，美而很者，貌則人，其心則禽獸，又惡可謂之人耶？然則觀貌之是非，不若論其心與其行事之可否爲何不失也。¹¹

One is reminded of the "faces of men and hearts of beasts" trope commonly used against foreign peoples, but the essay's intent is to criticize *Chinese* people whose behavior is less than human. Three other points are worth noting: the first is that as early as the twelfth century, Fang Songqing 方崧卿 (1135–1194) noted that this argument is very similar to one found in the *Liezi*

⁸ Following the *Tang wencui* and *Quan Tangwen* versions, which have two characters (士與) missing from the Song-period edition.

⁹ Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 37–38.

¹⁰ According to various early sources, Shennong 神農 had a bull's head, Fuxi 伏羲 and Nuwa 女媧 had snake-like bodies, Yu and Gaoyao 皋陶 had beaks, and Confucius had a face like an exorcist's mask. Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2713.

¹¹ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 34–35; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2709.

列子, suggesting that Han Yu was not above borrowing ideas from a Daoist philosophical text.¹² The second is that the early Tang Buddhist apologist Falin 法琳 (572–640) used the animal-like features of ancient Chinese sages to rebut attempts by Fu Yi and another Daoist polemicist to denigrate Buddhism’s foreign origins. Falin argued that just as one could not judge the sages by their appearance, one should not judge the Buddha by his place of birth.¹³ The third point is that unlike Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan refused to believe that the ancient sages looked any different from ordinary human beings. In an undated essay, Liu dismisses the myths of bull-headed, snake-bodied, and mask-faced sages as absurd and criticizes them for leading people to think that sagehood is a matter of unusual physical appearance rather than one of moral superiority.¹⁴

Huangfu Shi’s “Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun” deals with a question that was the subject of some vacillation and controversy before the An Lushan rebellion: namely, which earlier dynasties the Tang dynasty should identify as politically legitimate. Although the early Tang emperors traced their legitimacy from the Northern Zhou 北周 (557–581) and Sui dynasties, they avoided accusations of a “northwestern” bias by sponsoring the compilation of official dynastic histories for the Northern Qi, Liang 梁 (502–557), and Chen 陳 (557–589). The Tang court also initially took a neutral position on the Northern Wei’s 北魏 (399–534) claim to have inherited the Mandate of Heaven from the Western Jin, since this claim explicitly rejected the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties as illegitimate. But in the 670s, Wang Bo 王勃 (650–676) opted to render the north-south issue redundant by taking the radical position of dismissing as illegitimate all of the short-lived dynasties that had existed during the four centuries between the end of the Han and the founding of the Tang. Wang Bo’s theory enjoyed no influence during his short life, but Li Sizhen 李嗣真 (d. 696) persuaded Empress Wu to adopt Wang’s theory in 689, shortly before she established the Zhou regime in place of the Tang. Upon the Tang dynasty’s restoration to power in 705, it returned to recognizing the legitimacy of the Northern Zhou and Sui; moreover, in 749 Xuanzong’s court officially recognized the Northern Wei’s legitimacy by awarding a title to a descendant of Xiaowendi 孝文帝 (r. 471–499). In 750, Cui Chang 崔昌 (n.d.), Wei Bao 衛包 (n.d.), and Li Linfu 李林甫 (d. 753) convinced Xuanzong to again follow Wang Bo and trace the Tang dynasty’s legitimacy directly to the Han. Three years later, Yang Guozhong 楊國忠 (d. 756) persuaded Xuanzong to revert to the 749 arrangement and exile Cui Chang and Wei Bao as part of the court’s wholesale repudiation of the recently deceased Li Linfu’s political legacy.¹⁵

¹² Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2714; Liu, *Hanji juzheng huijiao*, 206. For another example of Han Yu’s use of the *Liezi* as a source, see Ichikawa, *Han Yu yanjiu xinlun*, 177–180.

¹³ Falin made this argument in two apologetical essays, the “Bianzheng lun” 辯正論 (Discourse for Clarifying the Orthodox) and the “Poxie lun” 破邪論 (Discourse for Defeating the Heterodox). Both are preserved in the Buddhist canon: see T52:2103:128a and T52:2109:11c (CBETA edition).

¹⁴ LZY 16.468–469.

¹⁵ According to the *Xin Tangshu*, Yang Guozhong was also motivated by a claim to be descended from the Sui imperial clan. TD 74.2028–2029; JTS 190.5006; CFYG 4.44; XTS 201.5740; ZJTJ 216.6899–6890, 6918. See also the discussion in Liu Pujiang 劉浦江, “Nanbeichao de lishi yichan yu Sui Tang shidai de zhengtong lun” 南北朝的歷史遺產與隋唐時代的正統論, *Wenshi* 文史 2013(2), 143–144.

Around this time, Xiao Yingshi, who was a descendant of the Liang imperial clan, was using various historical writings and essays to propagate the argument that both the Chen and the Sui were illegitimate. Xiao maintained that the Tang had inherited the Mandate of Heaven directly from the Liang dynasty even though the Liang was generally believed to have ended when Chen Wudi 陳武帝 (r. 557–559) usurped the Liang throne in 557, sixty-one years before the founding of the Tang. Xiao Yingshi reduced this gap by thirty years by according legitimacy to the Liang rump state in Jiangling 江陵 (modern Jingzhou 荊州), which was established as a dependency of the Western Wei 西魏 (534–557) in 555 and was annexed by the Sui in 587. Nonetheless, a significant gap remained between 587 and the Tang founding in 618, and Xiao Yingshi's theory of dynastic succession was also too obviously motivated by family interests to be taken seriously by his peers.¹⁶ Recognition of the Northern Wei, the Northern Zhou, and the Sui as the three legitimate dynasties preceding the Tang appears to have remained the Tang court's official position through the late eighth and ninth centuries. The ostensible purpose of Huangfu Shi's essay was to refute this position by showing that the Northern Wei was illegitimate and that the Northern Zhou (and thus the Sui and Tang as well) derived its legitimacy from the Liang, but in the analysis that follows, I shall argue that a hidden personal and political agenda lay behind this argument.

After an opening section outlining the principles of political legitimacy and tracing the line of legitimate dynasties down to the Western Jin, Huangfu Shi argued that the transition from Western Jin to Eastern Jin was little more than a change of the Jin dynasty's capital. Because the Eastern Jin was already long established in south China by the time the Northern Wei conquered north China, the Tuoba Xianbi rulers of the Northern Wei were no more than foreign intruders:

Huidi [of the Western Jin] did not rule in accordance with the Way, and the nomadic peoples then threw the Chinese [lands] into disorder. When the Jin dynasty retreated to the south, the truth is that Yuandi [of the Eastern Jin] was doing the same thing, for the same reasons, as King Pan'geng [of the Shang] moving the capital to Bo after [flooding] destroyed King Zuyi's [capital] at Geng¹⁷, and King Ping [of the Eastern Zhou] evading the Rong barbarians [by moving the Zhou capital to Luoyang] after King You [of the Western Zhou] was killed [by the Rong barbarians] at Xi. As for the Tuoba, they were actually of the Xiongnu race and came from [the northern regions of] Youzhou and Dai. They took over the homeland of the sage-kings and assumed the titles held by the rulers of the Central Lands. Can one say that they conquered [the previous dynasty], when the Jin dynasty had not in fact ended? Can one say that [they received legitimacy] through abdication, when there was already no [legitimacy in the north] to be passed on? Yet past

¹⁶ XTS 202.5768.

¹⁷ The Song-period and *Quan Tangwen* editions of the “Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun” have *Zuyi zhi yi Geng* 祖乙之圮耿 (“Zuyi [building a] bridge at Geng”). *Yi* 圮 is almost certainly a misreading of *pi* 圮, as the *Shuijing zhu* 水經注 and *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義 both have *Zuyi pi yu Geng* 祖乙圮於耿 and interpret *pi* 圮 as meaning Geng's destruction by a flood. The phrase *Zuyi pi yu Geng* 祖乙圮於耿 originates from the preface to the lost *Shangshu* chapter “Zuyi” 祖乙. *Shangshu* commentators from the Eastern Han to the Tang generally believed that Zuyi moved the Shang capital from Xiang 相 to Geng, that Pan'geng later moved the capital from Geng to Bo 亳, and that Bo was also known as Yin 殷. Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 33; QTW 686.7031; SJZ 6.164; SSZY 8.221–222, 9.223–224.

writers of books referred to the Yuan (i.e., Tuoba) as emperors, and all who keep records today regard the [Eastern] Jin as illegitimate.¹⁸ This can be said to be wide of the mark!

惠帝無道，群胡亂華，晉之南遷，實曰元帝，與夫祖乙之圯耿，盤庚之徙亳，幽王之居歲，平王之避戎，其事同，其義一矣。而拓跋氏種實匈奴，來自幽代，襲有先王之桑梓，自爲中國之位號。謂之滅耶，晉實未改；謂之禪耶，已無所傳。而往之著書者有帝元，今之爲錄者皆閔晉，可謂失之遠矣。

Against the conventional assumption that the Central Lands were equivalent to north China and that whichever dynasty held all of north China was *ipso facto* legitimate, Huangfu Shi asserted that north China ceased to be the Central Lands whenever it was ruled by barbarians:

Someone might argue, “The [territory] that the Yuan occupied corresponds to the Central Lands.” I would reply, “The Central Lands are what they are because of ritual and moral duty; the barbarians (Yi-Di) are what they are because they do not have ritual and moral duty. How could [this distinction] be tied to the land?

或曰：「元之所據，中國也。」對曰：「所以爲中國者，以禮義也；所謂夷狄者，無禮義也。豈繫於地哉？」

In other words, Chineseness was not dependent on geographical location. Rather, it was contingent on the observance of certain ritual and moral standards. The Eastern Jin’s observance of these standards meant that the Central Lands had shifted to the south.

To support the claim that north China’s status as the Central Lands was contingent on its being under Chinese rule, Huangfu Shi cited four classical examples, all but one of which was related to the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy:

When [the ruler of] Qǐ used barbarian (Yi) ritual, he became a barbarian. If Confucius went to live among the nine kinds of Yi barbarians, they would no longer be crude. Immersed in the [corrupting] influence of King Zhou, the people of the Shang became rebellious subjects. Because of the immigration of Rong barbarians, the Yi River [near the Eastern Zhou capital] [became the county of] Luhun. [The Chinese-barbarian dichotomy] is not tied to the land. When the Jin retreated to the south, all men of talent went to it, and all their rites and ritual music remained intact. The historical record of its refined customs and good governance is still extant today.

杞用夷禮，杞即夷矣；子居九夷，夷不陋矣；沐紂之化，商士爲頑人矣；因戎之遷，伊川爲陸渾矣。非繫於地也。晉之南渡，人物攸歸，禮樂咸在，流風善政，史實存焉。¹⁹

¹⁸ Xiaowendi changed the Northern Wei imperial clan’s surname from Tuoba to Yuan in 496. Yuan was not an existing Chinese surname at the time, as is commonly assumed; it merely resembled a Chinese surname much more closely than the conspicuously foreign “Tuoba.”

¹⁹ Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 33; QTW 686.7031.

The example of Qǐ will be familiar to us by now; we have also encountered the example of Confucius and the Yi barbarians in the contexts of anti-expansionist rhetoric and Buddhist apologetics. The Luhun example alludes to a passage in the *Zuozhuan* (already mentioned in the Introduction) that revolves around a correlation between the barbarization of ritual and the arrival of actual barbarians:

Initially, when King Ping moved the capital east [to Luoyang in 770 BC], Xin You went to the Yi River and saw someone making sacrifices in the fields with his hair untied [in the manner of the barbarians]. He said, “Will this not be [a land of] the Rong barbarians in less than a hundred years? Our rites have already been lost.” In the autumn [of 638 BC], Qin and Jin resettled the Rong barbarians of Luhun along the Yi River.

初，平王之東遷也，辛有適伊川，見被髮而祭於野者，曰：「不及百年，此其戎乎？其禮先亡矣。」秋，秦、晉遷陸渾之戎于伊川。²⁰

There was indeed a Luhun county near Luoyang that was named after the “barbarian” immigrants from Luhun. Huangfu Shi’s first official post had been the magistracy of that county in 808–810, and this may have deepened his impression of the Xin You anecdote.²¹ Note that in 809, one of Bai Juyi’s New *Yuefu* poems alluded to the same *Zuozhuan* passage to warn that the Tang elite’s taste for imitating Tibetan hairstyles and cosmetics could be a harbinger of invasion by the Tang empire’s western nemesis:

昔聞被發伊川中，I once heard that when someone left his hair untied by the Yi River,
辛有見之知有戎。Xin You saw it and knew the Rong barbarians would [eventually] be there.
元和妝梳君記取，Remember this about the cosmetics and hairstyles of today²².
髻堆面赭非華風！Hammer-shaped chignons and ochered faces are not Chinese!²³

Huangfu Shi thus argues that ritual and morality take precedence over geography, but this argument clearly cuts both ways: if the Chinese can be barbarized by adopting barbarian ritual (and Huangfu does not even allege that the Northern Wei’s Chinese subjects did so), barbarians too can theoretically cease to be barbaric (or “crude”) if they embrace Chinese norms of ritual and moral duty. Could it not then be claimed that the Northern Wei became legitimate once its

²⁰ ZZZY 15.401.

²¹ Li Qian argues that the reference to Luhun suggests Huangfu Shi wrote the essay while serving as magistrate of Luhun, but I do not think we can be reasonably certain of such a direct link. Du Yu’s *Zuozhuan* commentary states that the original location of Luhun was to the northwest of Qin and Jin, and that Luhun county was named after the barbarians from Luhun. The early Tang *Zuozhuan zhengyi* subcommentary links this passage to another in the *Zuozhuan* and concludes that Luhun was in Dunhuang. Li Qian 李芊, “Huangfu Shi nianpu jianbian” 皇甫湜年譜簡編 (M.A. thesis, Xiamen University, 2008), 19; ZZZY 15.401–402.

²² Literally, of Xianzong’s Yuanhe 元和 reign era (806–820).

²³ BJJ 4.235. Xiang Da and Chen Yinke identified the “ochred face” makeup mentioned in this poem as a characteristic Tibetan custom: see Xiang, *Tangdai Chang’an yu xiyu wenming*, 49; Chen, *Yuan Bai shi jianzheng gao*, 197, 267–270.

rulers ceased to behave like barbarians? In fact Wang Bo's grandfather, the Classicist philosopher Wang Tong 王通 (ca. 580–ca. 618), held that the Northern Wei became fully legitimate in 479 when the Southern Qi replaced the Liu-Song in the south. This was because the Central Lands (i.e., north China) now had in Xiaowendi a ruler worthy of the Mandate of Heaven. Wang Tong saw Xiaowendi's Taihe 太和 era (477–499) reforms, which included moving the capital to Luoyang and ordering the Xianbi elite to use Chinese or Chinese-sounding surnames, wear Chinese-style clothing, and speak Chinese, as the turning point that enabled political legitimacy to return to the north. As Wang explained in his *Zhongshuo* 中說, “I reject the [Southern Qi], Liang, and Chen as if they were the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters, in order to make it clear that the Central Lands had a [legitimate] dynasty [again] due to the merits of the Taihe era” 齊、梁、陳之德，斥之於四夷，以明中國之有代，太和之力也。²⁴

Huangfu Shi gives no indication that he is aware of Wang Tong's position²⁵, but he clearly anticipates this counterargument and responds that Xiaowendi's reforms came too late to win the hearts of the brutalized (but presumably not barbarized) Chinese:

The [Northern] Wei dynasty indulged in violence and behaved cruelly toward these Central Lands of the Chinese. Wherever [its armies] campaigned, not even chickens and dogs were left alive. They drove men and women before them as human shields to be killed; they called the gowned and capped [literati] straw dogs and slaughtered them as if cutting grass. Their clans and divisions proliferated and grew numerous over the years. If they could be recognized as [legitimate] emperors despite such behavior, then all the men under heaven would jump into the sea to drown themselves or climb to mountain tops to starve. How could they bear to eat the grain [of the Northern Wei] and stand in its court?²⁶ By the time Xiaowendi began to use Chinese [ways] to change the barbarians (Yi) by changing surnames and reforming laws, it was too late. Moreover, there was no place for a transfer [of the Mandate of Heaven from the south to the north] to take place. What more can one say?

魏氏恣其暴強，虐此中夏，斬伐之地，雞犬無餘，驅士女為肉籩，委之戕殺，指衣冠為芻狗，逞其屠刈，種落繁熾，曆年滋多。此而帝之，則天下之士，有蹈海而

²⁴ Wang Tong's family history seems to have determined his choice of 479 as the date for the Mandate's transfer to the north: his ancestor Wang Qiu 王虬 (420–500) defected from the Liu-Song to the Northern Wei shortly before the founding of the Southern Qi, and regarded the first Southern Qi emperor as an illegitimate usurper. See Li Xiaocheng 李小成, *Wenzhongzi kaolun* 文中子考論 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), 26–28; Liu, “Nanbeichao de lishi yichan yu Sui Tang shidai de zhengtong lun,” 136–137.

²⁵ Huangfu Shi does not mention Wang Tong in any of his extant writings; neither does Han Yu. Li Ao mentions “Mister Wang's *Zhongshuo*” 王氏《中說》 in passing as an example of stylistically inferior but philosophically sound writing. However, Wang Tong's writings (especially the *Zhongshuo*) seem to have gained wider recognition and higher esteem beginning around the middle of the ninth century, as reflected in pieces by Pi Rixiu 皮日休 (d. ca. 883) and Lu Guimeng 陸龜蒙 (d. 881). QTW 635.6412, 800.8406; PZWS 4.35–36, 9.88; Li, *Wenzhongzi kaolun*, 108–110.

²⁶ An allusion to Boyi 伯夷 and Shuqi 叔齊, Shang loyalists who refused to “eat the grain of the Zhou” 食周粟 and therefore starved to death after the fall of the Shang. See SJ 61.2123.

死，天下之人，有登山而餓，忍食其粟而立其朝哉？至於孝文，始用夏變夷，而易姓更法，將無及矣。且授受無所，謂之何哉？²⁷

The phrase “no place for a transfer to take place” is ambiguous; it probably means that a transfer of legitimacy would be valid only if the ruler of the legitimate dynasty formally surrendered or abdicated his throne to another regime.

Huangfu Shi appears to have copied the line about human shields and straw dogs from an essay by Fu Yi, only a fragment of which has been preserved in the *Tongdian*. The relevant line of the fragment reads as follows:

Whenever the [Northern] Zhou and [Northern] Qi used cavalry in battle, they drove Chinese people before them as human shields, bragging, “We should cut the Han dogs into pieces to feed our horses; knives should be used to cut off the heads of Han dogs, not to cut grass.”

周、齊每以騎戰，驅夏人爲肉籬，詫曰「當剉漢狗飼馬，刀刈漢狗頭，不可刈草也。」²⁸

The Fu Yi fragment is essentially a brief and highly subjective summary of north China’s history between the fall of the Western Jin and the end of the Northern Zhou. Its argument is that the various northern states during this period were all ruled by foreign invaders who, being “from the northern barbarian (Di) races” 北狄種類, had a much closer affinity to steppe nomads like the Rouran and the Türks than to the Chinese. As a result, the Türks were able to extort wealth from the Northern Qi and Northern Zhou and to treat both dynasties like their vassals. Given what we know of Fu Yi’s preoccupations, the essay from which the fragment was taken was probably a piece of anti-Buddhist polemic written in the 620s or 630s. If so, Fu was using the theme of foreign rule to explain why Buddhism, a foreign religion, was able to flourish in north China during these centuries. His depiction of the Northern Dynasties as oppressors of the Chinese and grovelers to the Türks was meant to cast their patronage of Buddhism in the worst possible light. The sources on Fu Yi’s early career under the Northern Zhou give us no reason to assume the opposite—that is, that his hostility toward the foreign religion of Buddhism sprang from a rejection of foreign rule.

Fu Yi’s picture of Northern Zhou and Northern Qi brutality toward the Chinese has only a minimal basis in historical evidence. The human shield motif may be based on an incident from 450 in which a Liu-Song army invaded western Henan and captured over two thousand Northern Wei foot soldiers, most of whom were local Chinese. When the Liu-Song general berated them for serving a foreign foe, they reportedly responded by claiming that the Northern Wei army forced them into battle by exterminating the families of those who tarried, and that the cavalry was used to drive the infantry forward so that the latter “died even before entering battle” 未戰先

²⁷ Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 33–34; QTW 686.7031.

²⁸ TD 200.5495.

死—implying that they were used as human shields to protect the cavalry from Liu-Song arrows and crossbow bolts.²⁹ The “dogs and grass” motif originates from rhetoric attributed to Han Feng 韓鳳 (or Han Changlun 韓長鸞, n.d.), a Xianbi military official at the Northern Qi court who paradoxically combined a fictitious claim of descent from a literati lineage with a violent hatred of the “Han” 漢 literati. According to Han Feng’s *Beishi* biography, he often made two declarations: “I wish I could cut those Han dogs into pieces to feed my horses” 恨不得剉漢狗飼馬, and “Knives should only be used to cut off the heads of Han traitors, not to cut grass” 刀止可刈賊漢頭, 不可刈草.³⁰ Since the *Beishi* was not published until 659, twenty years after Fu Yi’s death, Fu probably read earlier versions of Han Feng’s biography in the *Beiqi shu* (completed in 636) or the *Qizhi* 齊志 (completed under the Sui). This cannot be confirmed, since the relevant chapter of the *Beiqi shu* and the entire text of the *Qizhi* have been lost. It is also unclear whether Huangfu Shi had read Fu Yi’s essay or only encountered it through the *Tongdian* quotation. The vividness of the human shield and straw dog motif seems to have appealed to Huangfu Shi in spite of its historical inaccuracy. His intent was to exaggerate the Northern Wei’s atrocities to the point of discrediting it completely.

Ironically, whereas Fu Yi tarred the Northern Zhou with the same brush as all other “northern barbarian” regimes, Huangfu Shi’s essay goes on to argue that the Northern Zhou received dynastic legitimacy from the Liang when its armies overran Jiangling in 554, capturing the Liang emperor Yuandi 元帝 (r. 552–554) and replacing him with his rival Xiao Cha 蕭譽 (Xuandi 宣帝, r. 555–562). Unlike Xiao Yingshi, Huangfu adopts the conventional view that the Liang rump state that Xiao Cha and his descendants maintained in Jiangling was illegitimate because of its status of subservience and vassalage to (successively) the Western Wei, Northern Zhou, and Sui. Although the Chen dynasty ruled most of south China from 557 to 589, Huangfu Shi cursorily dismisses the Liang emperor Jingdi’s 敬帝 (r. 555–557) abdication to Chen Wudi at Jiankang 建康 (modern Nanjing): “The Chen dynasty set itself up through an illegitimate seizure of power; there is no room for dispute [regarding this]” 陳氏自樹而奪, 無容於言. After observing that the Mandate of Heaven passed from the Northern Zhou to the Sui (in 581) and then from the Sui to the Tang (in 618), Huangfu Shi concludes:

In that case, the Chen were traitors in the south and the Yuan (i.e., Northern Wei) were illegitimate in the north. Is it not as clear as day? Is it not as clear as day?
則陳姦於南, 元閔於北, 其不昭昭乎? 其不昭昭乎?³¹

Yet Huangfu Shi’s interpretation does not stand up to scrutiny, given his earlier emphasis that the Northern Wei dynasty’s foreignness disqualified it from legitimacy. After all, the Northern Zhou

²⁹ Shen Yue 沈約, *Songshu* 宋書 (Zhonghua shuju edition) 77.1985.

³⁰ On Han Feng’s fictitious claim to membership in the Han clan of Changli 昌黎, see Luo Xin 羅新, “Beiqi Han Changlun zhi jiashi” 北齊韓長鸞之家世, *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大學學報 43.1 (2006), 149–153. For his anti-“Han” rhetoric, see BS 92.3053 (cf. BQS 50.693). Incidentally, Han Yu’s family also claimed descent from the Han clan of Changli, and this claim has long been recognized as spurious: see Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 1–4.

³¹ Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 34; QTW 686.7031.

emperors were no less foreign than the Tuoba. Moreover, identifying the capture of Liang Yuandi and his capital as the source of the Northern Zhou's legitimacy would imply that military conquest, not "ritual and moral duty," decides who holds the Mandate. In that case, would the Northern Wei not have become legitimate if it had succeeded in conquering one of the Southern Dynasties, regardless of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy? In fact, since the army that captured Jiangling in 554 was that of the Western Wei (535–556) and not the Northern Zhou, Huangfu seems to have been either very careless with chronology, or intentionally disingenuous for the sake of denying that any emperor from the Tuoba/Yuan clan ever held legitimacy.³²

These blatant errors and inconsistencies in the argumentation of the "Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun" lead me to suspect that the essay is not a serious discussion of dynastic legitimacy or even an expression of anti-foreign prejudice.³³ My hypothesis is that its overt anti-Tuoba/Yuan bias was actually meant as an indirect personal attack on Yuan Zhen, who was descended from the Northern Wei ruling house. This is admittedly impossible to prove, since the limited surviving evidence for Huangfu Shi's official career and social interactions does not include anything reflecting the nature of his relations with Yuan Zhen. Nonetheless, I believe it is quite plausible that Huangfu Shi wrote the "Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun" in response to the bitter political rivalry between Yuan Zhen and Pei Du 裴度 (765–839) that arose in 821–822, after Pei accused Yuan of colluding with a eunuch to undermine his campaign against the mutinous Chengde army out of jealousy and political ambition.³⁴ Huangfu Shi served on Pei Du's staff in 834, three years after Yuan Zhen's death, but there is no direct evidence to indicate whether Huangfu supported Pei Du at the time of the Yuan-Pei feud.³⁵ However, Huangfu would have had good political and personal reasons to take Pei Du's side in the dispute. Accounts of the Yuan-Pei feud indicate that many officials at the Tang court supported Pei Du and held Yuan Zhen in contempt, even though Yuan enjoyed Muzong's 穆宗 (r. 820–824) favor. Huangfu Shi was connected to Pei Du through friendship with Han Yu: Han regarded Pei as a patron after serving on his staff during the Huaixi 淮西 campaign of 815–817, and Pei was one of two high-ranking ministers who had entreated with Xianzong for Han Yu's life to be spared during the

³² The Western Wei was one of the Northern Wei's two successor states and was nominally ruled by a line of the Northern Wei imperial clan, although actual power was held by the Yuwen 宇文 family. The Yuwen eventually seized the throne via abdication and founded the Northern Zhou. Hong Mai's *Rongzhai suibi* notes Huangfu Shi's error in crediting the fall of Jiangling to the Northern Zhou, although Hong claims that the essay's overall logic is sound. See Hong, *Rongzhai suibi*, 115.

³³ Liu Pujiang recently argued that it was both and suggested that it was another reflection of late Tang xenophobia. Liu Xinzheng, citing Chen Yinke's theory of Hebei barbarization, argues that the essay is aimed at the "barbarized" military provinces. Somewhat similarly, Chang Chishen suggests that Huangfu Shi was indirectly condemning the rebellion of An Lushan. Liu, "Nanbeichao de lishi yichan yu Sui Tang shidai de zhengtong lun," 140–141; Liu Xinzheng 劉新征, "Huangfu Shi yanjiu" 皇甫湜研究 (Ph.D. dissertation, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, 2012), 52; Chang, "'Zhongguo' gainian yu 'Hua Yi' zhi bian de lishi tantao," 232–233 n. 426.

³⁴ JTS 166.4333–4334, 170.4421–4424; XTS 173.5213–5214, 174.5228–5229; ZZTJ 242.7801–7802, 7810. Wu Weibin has tried to prove Yuan Zhen's innocence of these charges and show that his accuser, Pei Du, had cynical and self-interested motives. See Wu Weibin 吳偉斌, "Pei Du de tanhe yu Yuan Zhen de bianzhi—sanlun 'Yuan Zhen yu huanguan'" 裴度的彈劾與元稹的貶職—三論 "元稹與宦官", *Ningxia shehui kexue* 寧夏社會科學 2007(3), 137–142.

³⁵ Li, "Huangfu Shi nianpu jianbian," 38–39.

matter of the Buddha relic memorial.³⁶ Moreover, since it was the failure of Pei Du's Chengde campaign that led to Han Yu's perilous mission as a negotiator with the mutineers in 822, it is likely that Huangfu Shi held Yuan Zhen's machinations responsible for putting his friend in danger.³⁷

I would therefore suggest that Huangfu Shi composed the “Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun” as a satirical piece to vent his ire at Yuan Zhen by insulting his ancestors. If so, there would seem to be a sardonic edge to Huangfu's later decision to include an interesting detail in his epitaph for Han Yu: namely, that Yuan Zhen attempted at the last minute to dissuade Muzong from sending Han to Chengde by saying, “It would be a pity to lose Han Yu!” 韓愈可惜!³⁸ This is usually read as a reflection of Yuan Zhen's (and by extension Muzong's and the entire court's) well-founded fear that Han Yu would not survive his mission, and thus as proof of Han Yu's courage in accepting the assignment. But the surrounding circumstances make it likely that Huangfu Shi also intended to insinuate that Yuan was being hypocritical. The fact that the eunuch with whom Yuan Zhen allegedly conspired was named Wei Hongjian 魏弘簡 (n.d.) would also have made it possible for Huangfu Shi to attack both of them by denigrating the “Yuan-Wei.”

Polemical essays by Du Mu, Chen An, and Cheng Yan

About ten years after Han Yu's death, Du Mu 杜牧 (803–852)—who was one of his younger admirers—composed a text to be inscribed on the reverse side of a stele at the Confucius temple in Chuzhou 處州 (modern Lishui 麗水). The stele already bore an inscription that Han Yu composed in 820 to commemorate and commend the temple's renovation and revival as a site for Classicist education.³⁹ Whereas Han Yu's stele inscription was relatively free of ideological or polemical content, Du Mu's supplementary inscription was an overtly polemical denunciation of Legalism, Daoism, and Buddhism in the style of the “Yuandao.” Du's inscription begins with a provocative question and answer:

If Heaven did not cause Confucius to be born in the Central Lands, what would the Central Lands be like? I say, “It would not even be equal to the barbarians (Yi-Di).”
天不生夫子於中國，中國當何如？曰不夷狄如也。⁴⁰

³⁶ Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 81–89. Note, however, that Pei Du also had serious reservations about Han Yu's literary eccentricity, as seen from a letter that he wrote to Li Ao. Lo Lien-t'ien dates the letter to 802; Ichikawa Kan argues for its importance (together with the exchange of letters between Zhang Ji and Han Yu) to understanding Han Yu as a writer. Ichikawa, *Han Yu yanjiu xinlun*, 142–150; Lo, *Tangdai wenxue lunji*, 467.

³⁷ For Han Yu's mission see QTW 639.6461; JTS 160.4203; XTS 176.5264; ZZTJ 242.7808, 7812–7813.

³⁸ Huangfu Shi wrote two epitaphs for Han Yu: one for the tomb and one for the spirit road stele. Only the former mentions Yuan Zhen. Li Ao repeats this detail in his obituary or posthumous biography (*xingzhuang* 行狀) for Han Yu, which was probably written later than the epitaph and thus influenced by it. Huangfu, *Huangfu Chizheng wenji*, 100; QTW 639.6461, 687.7040 (cf. XTS 176.5264).

³⁹ For Han Yu's inscription see Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 490–492. For a tentative dating of Du Mu's inscription, see FCWJ 6.684.

⁴⁰ FCWJ 6.681; QTW 754.7820.

This seems to a twist on three tropes at once: the barbarization trope from the “Yuandao,” the “if there had been no Mencius” line in Han Yu’s letter to Meng Jian, and *Analects* 3:5, in which Confucius asserts that even barbarians with rulers “are not equal to” 不如 Chinese states without rulers. Du Mu then walks the reader through an account of the Qin empire’s Legalist ideology, the immortality-seeking of the First Qin Emperor and Han Wudi, and Liang Wudi’s Buddhist piety. He emphasizes the evil consequences that befall rulers who turn away from Classicist teachings, before arguing that things would have been worse if there had been no Confucius to establish an orthodox understanding of what Classicism was:

If Confucius was never born, there would have been nothing but controversy and ignorance. A hundred schools of thought would have battled one another, each with its own interpretation of right and wrong. All under heaven would have followed [whichever philosophy was popular] in that season, and who would have dared to criticize it? Even if someone did criticize, on what basis would he have made his arguments? In that case, from Yang Zhu, Mozi, Tian Pian, and Shen Dao on down, the disciples of the hundred schools of thought would all now have their portraits displayed in temples to receive blood sacrifices. Every ten years there would be a reform of the laws, and every hundred years there would be a change of teaching. Constantly shifting from horizontal to vertical, from high to low, no one would know where to stop. As for the barbarians (Yi-Di), they practice their barbarian customs consistently without changing; that is why I know that if Confucius were never born, we would not even be equal to the barbarians.

儻不生夫子，紛紜冥昧，百家鬥起，是已所是，非已所非，天下隨其時而宗之，誰敢非之？縱有非之者，欲何所依據而爲其辭？是楊、墨、駢、慎已降，百家之徒，廟貌而血食，十年一變法，百年一改教，橫斜高下，不知止泊。彼夷狄者，爲夷狄之俗，一定而不易，若不生夫子，是知其必不夷狄如也。⁴¹

Like the “Yuandao” and its derivative, the “Qu fozhai lun,” Du Mu’s piece is a good example of rhetorical sophistry that uses the idea of barbarian inferiority to make the absence of an ideological orthodoxy appear incompatible with and even threatening to Chinese identity. Whereas Han Yu and Li Ao claim that one cannot become a Buddhist without ultimately becoming a barbarian, Du Mu makes intellectual diversity look *even worse* than barbarism by focusing solely on the notion that barbarians do not change their customs. In arguing that barbarians, at least, are consistent in their barbarism, Du Mu ignores the other aspects of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy that usually received more attention—humaneness and moral duty (or the lack thereof), or differing customs and rituals—for the sake of surpassing Han Yu’s barbarization trope in creativity and rhetorical force. But what would being inferior to barbarians actually mean for the Chinese? Does it signify a descent into animality? Du Mu does not go that far, because his argument’s already-tenuous logic would have broken down: birds and beasts do not have schools of thought, after all. Again, we see that barbarism or barbarization was only one of various tropes that Ancient Style ideologues could utilize for polemical purposes, and that they were more interested in demonstrating their creativity with this trope than in developing it into a philosophically coherent theory.

⁴¹ FCWJ 6.682; QTW 754.7820.

I will now illustrate this point further with two later ninth-century essays: Chen An's 陳黯 (ca. 805–871) “Huaxin” 華心 (The Chinese Heart) and Cheng Yan's 程晏 (n.d.) “Neiyi xi” 內夷檄 (A Call to Arms against the Inner Barbarian). Both essays were virtually forgotten until the twentieth century, but since their ‘rediscovery’ by modern Chinese historians, numerous studies have used them as evidence that an inclusive, ‘culturalist’ interpretation of Chineseness was the norm during the Tang period.⁴² Zhang Weiran describes these essays as “excellent explications of Tang-period people’s views on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy,” and even suggests that they reflect recognition of the barbarians’ political equality with and political independence from the Chinese. Fan Wenli has used both essays to argue that Fu Lecheng’s theory of late Tang ethnocentrism and xenophobia is only valid for the highest stratum of the Tang elite, including emperors; in contrast, “ordinary people, including Classicist literati,” were becoming even less concerned with the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. Marc Abramson, on the other hand, has argued that these two essays reflect a new understanding of Chineseness as a status independent of ethnic identity: “By arguing for a non-ethnic definition of Self and Other but using the vehicle of ethnicized discourse to do so, the two works establish a new benchmark for conceptualizing the notion of China itself.... The belief that non-Han, acknowledged as the ethnic Other even while living in China, could possess a Chinese ethos superior to some or even many Han was a new development in the late Tang.”⁴³

No existing analysis of either essay has made sufficient effort at assessing the context of its composition; historians have generally assumed them to be transparent statements of their authors’ views on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy and, by extension, to be reflections of a widely-shared understanding of Chineseness and barbarism. This assumption ignores the highly rhetorical and polemical nature of both essays and neglects to address the question of what the authors’ motivation and audience would have been. Only Abramson has taken the important steps of identifying Han Yu’s influence on both essays’ style and content and proposing a likely political context for the “Neiyi xi.” However, I believe that he still underestimates these essays’ functions as displays of rhetorical skill and overstates their authors’ intellectual ambition when he argues that they wished to “solidify a Chinese self-identity that went beyond ethnic boundaries to embody ‘universal’ values.”⁴⁴ As I will argue below, it is more likely that both

⁴² While Yuri Pines has claimed that in imperial China, “[s]upporters of the culturalist paradigm would eagerly quote Chen An (ninth century),” I have not encountered a single text written before the twentieth century that quotes either the “Huaxin” or the “Neiyi xi.” The first Chinese historian to cite the “Huaxin” seems to have been Chen Yuan in 1923, although he used it as evidence for the “sinicization” of foreigners rather than an example of Chinese “culturalism.” John Fincher was the first scholar to note the “unusual clarity” of the “culturalist” position in the “Huaxin,” although he mis-dated the text to the early Song. Xie Haiping appears to have been the first historian to notice the “Neiyi xi”; in 1978, he cited it and the “Huaxin” as examples of Tang “culturalism.” Pines, “Beasts or Humans,” 60; Chen Yuan 陳垣, *Yuan xiyu ren huahua kao* 元西域人華化考 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000 [1923]), 4–5; Fincher, “China as a Race, Culture, and Nation,” 63–64; Xie Haiping 謝海平, *Tangdai liuhua waiguoren shenghuo kaoshu* 唐代留華外國人生活考述 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1978), 8–9.

⁴³ Zhang Weiran 張偉然, “Tangren xinmuzhong de wenhua quyu ji dili yixiang” 唐人心目中的文化區域及地理意象, in Li Xiacong 李孝聰 ed., *Tangdai diyu jiegou yu yunzuo kongjian* 唐代地域結構與運作空間 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2003), 311; Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 231–232; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 182, 187.

⁴⁴ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 184.

Chen An and Cheng Yan simply used the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy as a vehicle to direct flattery or criticism at a powerful Chinese individual.

Since neither Chen An nor Cheng Yan is as well known as even Li Ao or Huangfu Shi, not to mention Han Yu and Du Mu, it would be useful to begin by reviewing what little information we have about their background. Our main source for information on Chen An's life is the preface to his collected works written by his nephew Huang Tao 黃滔 (840–911); this is supplemented by short biographical notes in the *Xin Tangshu* “Treatise on Literature” 藝文志 and the *Quan Tangwen*. Chen An was born and raised in Quanzhou 泉州, although his family claimed descent from the prestigious Chen clan of Yingchuan 潁川. Although he demonstrated talent as a poet from a young age, the responsibility of caring for his widowed mother delayed him from sitting for the *jinshi* examinations until he was in his early forties. After failing the examinations about eighteen times between 845 and 864, he gave up and spent his last years as a recluse. Many of his prose writings were later lost or scattered in the “flames of war” 兵火, probably during the Huang Chao rebellion. Huang Tao began compiling Chen An's surviving works in 895 and finally published a collection of thirty-one prose pieces and an unspecified number of *shi* and *fu* poems in late 902.⁴⁵ Huang published the collection in five *juan*, but it had been reduced to three *juan* by the eleventh century. The three-*juan* edition was still extant in the twelfth century, when Chao Gongwu 晁公武 (ca. 1105–ca. 1185) included it in the catalog for his private collection, but only nine of Chen An's essays and one of his valedictory prefaces have survived to the present by virtue of inclusion in Song-period anthologies.⁴⁶

As for Cheng Yan, he and Huang Tao both passed the *jinshi* examination in 895; this was Huang's twelfth attempt since 872, and probably not Cheng's first. Wang Dingbao's 王定保 (870–940) *Tang zhiyan* 唐摭言, a collection of anecdotes about the civil service examinations, states that both Cheng and Huang were of humble birth and that they were the only truly outstanding *jinshi* graduates in their cohort.⁴⁷ Many of the other graduates were of unusually poor quality, causing a scandal that led the emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 (r. 888–904) to order a retest for the entire cohort of twenty-five graduates. Ten graduates, including the first-placed scholar (*zhuangyuan* 狀元), failed the retest; Zhaozong thereupon sent the original examiner into exile. Cheng Yan placed second in the retest, but nothing is known about his subsequent career.⁴⁸ The *Xin Tangshu* Treatise on Literature lists seven *juan* of his collected works, while Chao Gongwu's catalog lists six *juan* and describes them as “all miscellaneous essays” 皆雜文.⁴⁹ Only seven of Cheng's essays have survived to the present day, again due to their inclusion in Song anthologies.

⁴⁵ XTS 60.1609; QTW 767.7983; Huang Tao 黃滔, *Puyang Huang Yushi ji* 莆陽黃御史集 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936), 178–182. The version of Huang Tao's preface at QTW 824.8684–8685 contains a few errors.

⁴⁶ XTS 60.1609; JZDSZ 18.913.

⁴⁷ Peng Wanlong 彭萬隆, *Tang Wudai shi kaolun* 唐五代詩考論 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2006), 365–75; TZY 7.74.

⁴⁸ Xu Song 徐松 and Meng Erdong 孟二冬, *Dengke jikao buzheng* 登科記考補正 (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan chubanshe, 2003), 1020–1026.

⁴⁹ XTS 60.1609; JZDSZ 18.933.

My analyses of Chen An's "Huaxin" and Cheng Yan's "Neiyi xi" will consist of a translation of each essay, followed by a careful contextualization of its argument. There are already two full translations of the "Huaxin" into English, by Hartman and Abramson; Abramson has also made a full translation of the "Neiyi xi."⁵⁰ Unfortunately, all three translations contain significant errors that affect the interpretation of the text, and Abramson's translation of the "Huaxin" shifts erratically between "Chinese" and "Han" as translations for *Hua* 華—a practice that often imposes an ethnic dimension artificially onto that essay's reinterpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. I translate the "Huaxin" as follows:

In the first year of the Dazhong era (847) the Duke of Fanyang, who was the Governor of Daliang, came to know the Arab Li Yansheng and recommended him to the throne. The Son of Heaven issued an edict ordering the Department of Rites to examine his abilities. In the second year (848), he made his name by passing the *jinshi* examination. Among the ordinary recommended guest (i.e., foreign) candidates, none was his equal. Someone might argue, "Daliang is a large city, and the governor is a very worthy man. He was appointed by a Chinese ruler, and his salary comes from taxes paid by Chinese people. Yet when he recommends men, he seeks them from the barbarians (Yi). Can it be that there was no worthy candidate among the Chinese? Are barbarians (Yiren) the only ones suitable for employment? I remain perplexed by the Governor even now."

大中初年，大梁連帥范陽公得大食國人李彥昇，薦於闕下。天子詔春司考其才。二年以進士第，名顯然，常所賓貢者不得擬。⁵¹ 或曰：「梁大都也，帥碩賢也。受命於華君，仰祿於華民。其薦人也，則求於夷。豈華不足稱也耶？夷人獨可用也耶？吾終有感於帥也。」

I would reply, "The Governor truly recommends men based on their talent, without any undue partiality. If we speak in terms of geography, then there is a distinction between the Chinese and the barbarians (Yi). But if we speak in terms of teaching, is there also a distinction between Chinese and barbarians? Now, the distinction between Chinese and barbarians lies in their hearts, and to distinguish a [Chinese heart from a barbarian] heart, one must examine [the heart's] inclinations. One who is born in the Central Lands, but whose actions go against ritual and moral duty, is Chinese in physical form but a barbarian at heart. One who is born in the lands of the barbarians, but whose actions accord with ritual and moral duty, is a barbarian in physical form but a Chinese at heart. Take the cases of Lu Wan and Li Ling, who rebelled and defected [to the Xiongnu]—were they barbarians? Consider the steadfast loyalty of [the Xiongnu] Jin Midi [to Han Wudi]—was he Chinese?⁵² From this we can see that it all depends on a person's inclinations.

⁵⁰ Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 158–159; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 180–181.

⁵¹ I have followed the punctuation used in the *Quan Tangwen*. Most modern studies that quote the "Huaxin" punctuate this sentence as 二年以進士第名顯，然常所賓貢者不得擬。However, in that case the construction 顯名 would be more grammatically correct, and the 然 would serve no useful purpose as a conjunction.

⁵² For Lu Wan, Li Ling, and Jin Midi, see SJ 93.2637–2639, 109.2877–2878; HS 34.1890–1893, 54.2450–2455, 68.2959–2962.

曰：「帥真薦才而不私其人也。苟以地言之，則有華夷也。以教言，亦有華夷乎？夫華夷者，辨在乎心，辨心在察其趣向。有生於中州而行戾乎禮義，是形華而心夷也；生於夷域而行合乎禮義，是形夷而心華也。若盧綰、少卿之叛亡，其夷人乎？金日磾之忠赤，其華人乎？繇是觀之，皆任其趣向。」

Now Li Yansheng came from across the sea, and he came to the attention of the Governor because of his understanding of the Way. The Governor therefore recognized him as an exceptional talent and recommended him in order to encourage the barbarians (Rong-Di), so that all peoples under the light of the sun and moon will turn to the [more radiant] light of culture and be transformed. He perceived Li Yansheng to be Chinese at heart, and therefore did not consider him a barbarian (Yi) based on his land of origin.” Hence I wrote [this essay,] “The Chinese Heart.”

今彥昇也，來從海外，能以道析知於帥。帥故異而薦之，以激夫戎狄，俾日月所燭，皆歸於文明之化。蓋華其心，而不以其地也而又夷焉。」作《華心》。⁵³

We know nothing about Li Yansheng apart from what little is said of him in the “Huaxin.” He was probably conferred the Tang imperial surname of Li as a special honor after receiving his *jinshi* decree. He may have received the Chinese name “Yansheng” as an imperial conferral as well, although it is also possible that he was already using it with a different Chinese surname prior to the examinations. The *jinshi* examiner in 848, Feng Ao 封敖 (n.d.), had a preference for “literary men” 文士 or “men who could write *fu*” 能賦人, which indicates that he did not pass candidates who performed well only in the classics and policy sections of the examination.⁵⁴ We may infer from this that Li Yansheng’s proficiency in composing Chinese poetry was exceptional for a man who learned Chinese as a second language. That said, most past analyses of the “Huaxin” have overestimated the degree to which Li Yansheng’s *jinshi* candidacy itself was unusual or unprecedented. This is mainly a result of misunderstanding or ignoring the phrase *chang suo bin’gong zhe* 常所賓貢者, which I translate as “ordinary recommended guest candidates.”⁵⁵ Beginning with Yan Gengwang in the 1950s, studies by various scholars have established that from around 821, the *jinshi* examinations included a special category for foreign candidates, known as *bin’gong* (“recommended guests”). Whereas the earliest studies assumed that *bin’gong* candidates sat for a separate test that was easier than the regular *jinshi* examination, more recent studies suggest that they were examined at the same time as Chinese candidates and had to answer the same questions and write poetry on the same

⁵³ QTW 767.7986; Li Fang 李昉 *et al* ed., *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 364.8a–8b (*Siku quanshu* edition).

⁵⁴ Xu and Meng, *Dengke jikao buzheng*, 905.

⁵⁵ Hartman translates the phrase as “those who had sponsored other candidates,” while Abramson translates it as “candidates recommended in the normal fashion.” Likewise, Hartman misinterprets the phrase *bude ni* 不得擬 (“none was his equal”) as “were not content with the results,” Abramson as “none... received an appointment.” Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 158; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 180.

set topics. But they may have benefited from a quota for foreign *jinshi* graduates that effectively increased their chances of passing, given their much smaller numbers.⁵⁶

Fifty-eight *bin'gong* candidates had earned the *jinshi* degree by the time the Tang dynasty ended. Most of these were scholars from Silla, the main source of foreign students in the Tang capital, but a chief minister of the Manchurian Bohai (Balhae) 渤海 kingdom and his son also passed as *bin'gong* candidates. So did Li Xun 李珣 (ca. 855–ca. 930), a descendant of Persian immigrants (a “local-born Persian” 土生波斯, according to one tenth-century source) who spent most of his life in Sichuan and became a noted lyricist.⁵⁷ Li Yansheng is the only Arab known to have passed the *jinshi* examinations under the Tang; we do not know whether he was an immigrant or only descended from immigrants.⁵⁸ The fact that Chen An compares him favorably to “ordinary” (*chang* 常) *bin'gong* candidates implies that Li Yansheng was a *bin'gong* candidate himself, albeit an extraordinarily talented one.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Yan Gengwang 嚴耕望, *Tangshi yanjiu luncong* 唐史研究論叢 (Hong Kong: Xinya yanjiusuo, 1968), 432–441. Yan wrote the relevant essay in 1959 and revised it in 1968. For some important later studies that built on or revised Yan’s findings, see Xie, *Tangdai liuhua waiguoren shenghuo kaoshu*, 124–130; Kao Ming-shih 高明士, “Sui Tang gongju zhidu dui Riben, Xinluo de yingxiang—jianlun Sui Tang bin'gong ke de chengli” 隋唐貢舉制度對日本、新羅的影響—兼論隋唐賓貢科的成立, in Lin Tien-wai 林天蔚 and Joseph Wong 黃約瑟 eds., *Gudai Zhong Han Ri guanxi yanjiu* 古代中韓日關係研究 (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1987), 77–81; Dang Yinping 黨銀平, “Tangdai youwu ‘bin'gong ke’ xinlun” 唐代有無“賓貢科”新論, *Shehui kexue zhanxian* 社會科學戰綫 2002(1), 152–157; Fan Wenli 樊文禮, “Songdai Gaoli bin'gong jinshi kao” 宋代高麗賓貢進士考, *Shilin* 史林 2002(2), 42–45; Shi Xiulian 史秀蓮, “Tangdai de ‘bin'gong ke’ yu bin'gong zhi zhi” 唐代的“賓貢科”與賓貢之制, *Yantai daxue xuebao* 煙臺大學學報 17.3 (2004), 338–341.

⁵⁷ On Li Xun see Xie, *Tangdai liuhua waiguoren shenghuo kaoshu*, 125–126; Cheng Yuzhui 程鬱綴, “Wudai ciren Li Xun shengping jiqi ci chutan” 五代詞人李珣生平及其詞初探, *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大學學報 1992(5), 7–14.

⁵⁸ Abramson argues “it is likely that he was born and raised in China and possible that his family had lived there for generations.” Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*,

⁵⁹ In Fan Wenli’s latest work, he incorrectly assumes that there were separate examinations for *bin'gong* candidates and Chinese candidates, and implies that Li Yansheng sat for the Chinese candidates’ examination. Strangely, this contradicts one of Fan’s earlier articles, in which he argues that separate examinations for *bin'gong* and Chinese candidates would not have made sense in the Tang context and only began under the Song. Dang Yinping has also argued that there was no separate examination for *bin'gong* candidates under the Tang; nonetheless, he infers from the lines “the Son of Heaven issued an edict ordering the Department of Rites to examine his abilities” and “among the ordinary *bin'gong* candidates, none was his equal” that Li Yansheng differed from all other *bin'gong* candidates in being granted a special examination by imperial decree. I would argue that since Li Yansheng was recommended in 847 but not examined until 848, it is more likely that he sat for the regular *jinshi* examination in 848. The emperor’s edict merely added him to the roster of regular candidates, and he differed from ordinary *bin'gong* candidates in how well he performed, not how he was examined. Shi Xiulian has noted the possibility of this interpretation, albeit without ruling out Dang Yinping’s interpretation. Note also that Fan Wenli’s statement that the top graduate in Li Yansheng’s cohort was Lu Shen 盧深 (d. 870) may be inaccurate: Meng Erdong’s revision of the *Dengke jikao* points out that Lu Shen was probably the top graduate in 847. The identity of the top graduate in 848 is unknown. Xie, *Tangdai liuhua waiguoren shenghuo kaoshu*, 125; Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 235 and “Songdai Gaoli bin'gong jinshi kao,” 42–43; Dang, “Tangdai youwu ‘bin'gong ke’ xinlun,” 157; Shi, “Tangdai de ‘bin'gong ke’ yu bin'gong zhi zhi,” 340 n. 2; Xu and Meng, *Dengke jikao buzheng*, 900–901.

The Duke of Fanyang referenced in the “Huaxin” is Lu Jun 盧鈞 (776–862), who was appointed Governor of the Xuanwu Army 宣武軍節度使 and Prefect of Bianzhou 汴州刺史 (i.e., Daliang, modern Kaifeng) in 847.⁶⁰ Lu Jun had previously served as Governor of Lingnan 嶺南節度使 in 836–839, and some historians have proposed that he became acquainted with Li Yansheng in Guangzhou, which had a large Arab merchant community.⁶¹ However, there is no direct evidence for this theory, and the fact that Lu recommended Li Yansheng to the court nearly ten years after leaving Guangzhou would seem to count against it. It is quite possible that by the ninth century, there was an otherwise unattested Arab community in Bianzhou, given the growing commercial importance of its position along the Grand Canal; after all, the earlier existence of such a community in the Canal’s southern terminus, Yangzhou, is known only from records of its being massacred in 760.

We know that Chen An wrote the “Huaxin” at least two years after Li Yansheng passed the *jinshi* examinations, since Lu Jun only received the title Duke of Fanyang in 850, when he returned to Chang’an from Bianzhou to take up the post of Junior Tutor to the Heir Apparent 太子少師.⁶² This temporal gap makes it highly unlikely that Chen An was responding to a real controversy surrounding Lu Jun’s decision to recommend a “barbarian” for the *jinshi* examinations.⁶³ For such a controversy to rage for two years or more, there would have had to be something truly unprecedented about opening up the examinations to foreign candidates. The

⁶⁰ JTS 177.4592; XTS 182.5368.

⁶¹ Chen, *Yuan xiyu ren huahua kao*, 5; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 221 n. 4. Given the barbarophilic reputation that Lu Jun has now acquired due to the “Huaxin,” it is somewhat ironic that he attempted as Governor of Lingnan to prevent the local Chinese population (“local people,” *turen* 土人) and the indigenous “barbarian” peoples known as Man 蠻 or Lao 獠 from living in the same communities and intermarrying. Lu also forbade the Man to buy farmland and houses. Schafer has argued that such measures “had no other basis than the zeal of a pious magistrate to protect the purity of Chinese custom” and labeled Lu Jun “a kind of ethnic puritan.” Holcombe reinforces this picture with the statement that “around 837, miscegenation was banned by local order in extreme southeast [*sic*] China.” In fact, Lu Jun’s biographies make it clear that purity had nothing to do with his actions. He was responding to the tendency of the Lingnan Chinese and the Man to join forces in armed rebellion when the local authorities “disturbed” 撓 them, probably with demands for taxes. The practical motivation for imposing ethnic segregation was to eliminate the threat of such multi-ethnic alliances. It is even more ironic that on the very next page, Schafer uses “the example of an Arab who gained distinction with the degree of ‘Advanced Gentleman’ (*chin shih*) in the middle of the ninth century” to illustrate his contention that in that century, “it was possible for foreigners to rise to high position in the government, especially if they allied themselves with the new gentry, which had been created by the examination system, against the hereditary aristocrats.” The confusion only increases in Schafer’s next book, which claims that in Lingnan Lu Jun “refused to enforce laws against the intermarriage of Hua and Lao.” Note that Lu Jun was a member of the highly “aristocratic” Lu clan of Fanyang, not the “new gentry”; also that Li Yansheng is not known to have gained a high post after gaining the *jinshi* degree. JTS 177.4592; XTS 182.5367; Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 22–23 and *The Vermillion Bird*, 36; Holcombe, “Immigrants and Strangers,” 109.

⁶² JTS 177.4592. Abramson suggests that Chen wrote the “Huaxin” in the 850s or 860s: see Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 179.

⁶³ *Contra* Benite, who claims that Li Yansheng’s participation in the examinations “sparked a debate among several Chinese men of letters,” and Fan Wenli, who believes that Chen An was quoting and rebutting actual criticisms directed at Lu Jun: see Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 1; Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 235–236.

existence of the *bin'gong* category demonstrates, on the contrary, that foreign *jinshi* candidacies had been sanctioned for nearly thirty years by the time Li Yansheng gained his *jinshi* degree. Moreover, it is difficult to believe that Chen An, a serially unsuccessful *jinshi* candidate with no official post, was in any position to defend a high-ranking statesman like Lu Jun from his critics. The debate presented in the “Huaxin” is thus almost certainly hypothetical, and Lu Jun’s imaginary critic may even be subtly expressing Chen An’s own private chagrin at having been outshone by a foreigner in the examinations of 848.

Considering Chen An’s situation at the time of the essay’s writing, the “Huaxin” may well have originated as part of his *xingjuan* 行卷, a literary portfolio presented to influential officials and literati in Chang’an in the hope that they would endorse his candidacy to the *jinshi* examiner and thus greatly improve his chances of passing. If so, the essay’s intended audience was none other than Lu Jun. Lu’s recommendation had been crucial in Li Yansheng’s success at the examinations; Chen An was probably trying to secure a similar advantage for himself. The “confident and constructive tone” noted by Hartman was carefully designed to achieve two effects at once: flattering Lu Jun with praise for his perspicacity and impartiality, while impressing him with a creative reinterpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy.⁶⁴ Chen An may also have hoped that Lu Jun’s patronage would translate into an opportunity for employment after passing the examinations: we know that Lu appointed Li Zhang 李璋 (fl. 847–874), another graduate from the *jinshi* cohort of 848, to his staff when he served as Governor of Hedong 河東節度使 and Prefect of Taiyuan 太原尹 in 852–855.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, the “Huaxin” did not open any doors for Chen An, whose dreams of an official career remained unfulfilled.

Let us turn to the “Neiyi xi.” The first issue to be resolved is how to interpret and translate this essay’s title. Abramson argues that the title is “open to at least two readings”: one in which *nei* 內 is a verb meaning “to draw in,” and one in which it is an adjective meaning “inside” or “inner.” Abramson prefers the first reading and translates the essay’s title as “Announcement on drawing the barbarians inward,” presumably because the essay contains the phrase, “Those among the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters who turn inward” 四夷內向.⁶⁶ However, *nei* actually has three possible meanings as a verb in Classical Chinese: “to enter,” “to take in,” or “to regard as inner.” The last of these is found in the well-known line in the Gongyang commentary, “[Confucius] regarded the Chinese states as inner and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer” 內諸夏而外夷狄, and would thus seem more germane to an essay about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. In that case, *neiyi* would mean “to regard the barbarians as inner.” But the meaning of the word *xi* 檄, which has hitherto received insufficient attention in analyses of the “Neiyi xi,” makes it even more likely that *nei* should be read as an adjective. The *xi* was a prose genre most often used to issue formal declarations of war or calls to arms against an enemy; as such, the contents of a *xi* usually asserted the justice of the author’s cause by describing and denouncing the enemy’s crimes. Since the most important element in the title of a *xi* was the enemy’s identity, it stands to reason that the title “Neiyi xi” indicates a declaration of war or a

⁶⁴ Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 159.

⁶⁵ Xu and Meng, *Dengke jikao buzheng*, 904–905; JTS 114.4292, 177.4592; XTS 152.4844, 182.5368.

⁶⁶ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 180–181.

call to arms against “inner barbarians.” I have therefore translated this title as “A Call to Arms against the Inner Barbarian.” I translate the essay itself as follows:

There have long been people from the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters who came here, their speech passing through several translations before it could be understood, out of admiration for the humaneness, moral duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness of the Central Lands of the Chinese. Although their bodies originate from foreign lands, their hearts are drawn to the Chinese as swiftly as a galloping horse. Therefore, I do not call them barbarians. There have long been people in the Central Lands who stubbornly resist the emperor’s transforming influence, forgetting and abandoning the virtues of humaneness, moral duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness. Although their bodies have a Chinese origin, they have instead banished their hearts into exile among the barbarians. Therefore, I do not call them Chinese. When I say that they have banished their hearts into exile among the barbarians, it is not that the empire banished them. Rather, they have banished their own hearts into iniquity. How could it be just a matter of calling people Chinese because they have the name “Chinese,” or calling people barbarians because they have the name “barbarians?”

四夷之民長有重譯而至，慕中華之仁義忠信。雖身出異域，能馳心於華，吾不謂之夷矣。中國之民長有倔強王化，忘棄仁義忠信，雖身出於華，反竄心於夷，吾不謂之華矣。竄心於夷，非國家之竄爾也，自竄心於惡也。豈止華其名謂之華，夷其名謂之夷邪？

Some people who are Chinese in name are barbarians at heart. Some people who are barbarians by name are Chinese at heart. From this we know that people who live in the Central Lands but abandon humaneness, moral duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness are barbarians of the Central Lands, and there is no need for the barbarians of the four quarters to invade us [from outside]. Since they rebel against the Central Lands, arrogantly usurp and reject the emperor’s authority, and abandon humaneness, moral duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness, they cannot even be counted as human beings. Are they not then barbarians of the Central Lands? People from the barbarians of the four quarters who turn inward [to the Central Lands] and delight in our humaneness, moral duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness, desiring to be counted as human beings—are they not Chinese from the barbarians of the four quarters? Remember these words of mine! Those who are barbarians by name are, nonetheless, not barbarians, and those who are Chinese by name are instead not equal to those who are barbarians by name.

華其名有夷其心者，夷其名有華其心者。是知棄仁義忠信於中國者，即為中國之夷矣，不待四夷之侵我也。有悖命中國，專倨不王，棄彼仁義忠信，則不可與人倫齒，豈不為中國之夷乎？四夷內向，樂我仁義忠信，願為人倫齒者，豈不為四夷之華乎？記吾言者，夷其名尚不為夷矣，華其名反不如夷其名者也。⁶⁷

⁶⁷ QTW 821.8650; TWC 49.545.

Two aspects of this text are particularly striking to me. The first is the similarity of its rhetorical strategy to that of the “Huaxin.” Both essays assert that because the quality of one’s heart is more important than the land of one’s birth, the term “Chinese” simply describes any person who honors the Classicist ideals of ritual, moral duty, humaneness, loyalty, and trustworthiness, while the term “barbarian” describes any person who does not. The “Neiyi xi” goes a little further than the “Huaxin” in equating ‘moral Chineseness’ with being human, and in implying that geography is not entirely irrelevant to the picture: any ‘morally Chinese’ foreigner who admires the Classicist ideals would still be inspired to “turn inward” and come to the Central Lands. Nonetheless, the rhetorical commonalities between the “Huaxin” and the “Neiyi xi” are too close to be coincidental. It is likely that Cheng Yan was directly inspired by reading Chen An’s essay; if so, it is quite possible that he read it only after Huang Tao published Chen’s collected works in late 902, given Chen’s prior obscurity.

The second striking aspect is the high level of generalization found in the “Neiyi xi”: unlike the “Huaxin,” which uses the case of Li Yansheng as a frame and also supplies Han-era examples of disloyal Chinese and loyal barbarians, the “Neiyi xi” conspicuously refuses to deal in specifics. It subverts the conventional stereotypes of Chinese trustworthiness and barbarian perfidy, but makes no attempt to substantiate that subversion by revealing the identities of its objects of condemnation and praise, the “barbarians of the Central Lands” and the “Chinese from the barbarians of the four quarters.” This suggests that the “Neiyi xi” was written as a satirical essay and not as a genuine call to arms, and that its reader was expected to recognize the target of its political satire based on the political events of the time. If the essay was written after late 902, as I have suggested, that target was almost certainly the warlord Zhu Wen 朱溫 (or Zhu Quanzhong 朱全忠, 852–912).

Abramson, too, has argued, “It was probably Zhu whom Cheng Yan had in mind as the archetypal ‘barbarian of the Central Kingdom.’” However, his inference that the essay “probably dates to the late 890s” overlooks the fact that Zhu Wen’s expanding sphere of influence on the North China Plain was not perceived as a significant threat to the imperial court at that time.⁶⁸ Instead, in 895–901 Han Jian 韓建 (855–912) of Huazhou 華州 (modern Hua 華 county) and Li Maozhen 李茂貞 (856–924) of Fengxiang were the warlords who posed the greatest threat to the court, due to their geographical proximity to the capital. This only changed in 901–903, when Zhu Wen played a crucial role in the success of a bid by Zhaozong and the chief minister Cui Yin 崔胤 (854–904) to end the eunuchs’ well-entrenched power over the imperial court. In response to a summons from Cui Yin, Zhu marched west from his home base at Daliang, secured Han Jian’s surrender, and gained effective military control over Chang’an. He then besieged Fengxiang, where the leading eunuchs had taken refuge with Li Maozhen as their protector and Zhaozong as their hostage. In early 903, a desperate Li Maozhen chose to kill his eunuch allies and make peace with Zhu Wen. Zhu escorted Zhaozong back to Chang’an and massacred the remaining eunuchs before returning to Daliang.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 180, 189.

⁶⁹ ZZTJ 262.8546–8547, 8555–8566, 263.8570, 8573–8576, 8580–8595, 264.8602–8605.

The alliance between Cui Yin and Zhu Wen broke down in early 904 when Cui realized that Zhu had designs on the throne. Cui and his closest supporters plotted to raise an army to resist the would-be usurper, only to be killed by troops whom Zhu had stationed in Chang'an. Zhu then moved Zhaozong and the imperial court east to Luoyang on the pretext of pre-empting an attack by Li Maozhen. Zhaozong, aware that Zhu Wen was about to assume full control over his movements and edicts, secretly sent out desperate pleas for help to Zhu Wen's rival warlords. These warlords began issuing calls to arms (that is, *xi*) to one another, hoping to form an alliance to defeat Zhu Wen and, at least ostensibly, restore power to the emperor, but their conflicting interests and common fear of Zhu's military strength meant that no alliance materialized. Zhu was soon able to have Zhaozong assassinated and replaced with a young imperial prince; in early 905, he arranged the murder of Zhaozong's older sons. Finally, in 907, he forced his puppet to abdicate the throne to him and founded a new dynasty, the Later Liang 後梁 (907–923).⁷⁰

The lack of biographical information on Cheng Yan makes it impossible to establish the context of the "Neiyi xi," but its use of the *xi* genre suggests that it was written as a response to the political situation in 904. Abramson has argued that Cheng Yan's primary intention was not to criticize Zhu Wen but rather to defend the Shatuo Turk Li Keyong 李克用 (856–908), one of Zhu's major warlord rivals, from suspicions of disloyalty that reflected ethnocentric prejudice:

The immediate context of the essay was almost certainly the Tang court's controversial use of Li Keyong as its principal military support.... [Li's] autonomy, combined with his often-boorish behavior and unconcealed disdain for the educated Chinese civilian elite, as well [as] his non-Han ethnicity, made him the object of suspicion and occasional attacks by court officials. In one memorial, Li complained to the throne of poor treatment, particularly the constant labeling of him and his family as "barbarians." ... [The "Neiyi xi"] thus was not only a general statement on the nature of Chineseness, ... but also specifically served as a defense of Li and a criticism of the knee-jerk cultural chauvinism still practiced by some, if not many, literati.

Although this interpretation is plausible, it suffers from weaknesses of chronology and contextualization, particularly if we also take into account Abramson's suggestion that Cheng Yan was setting up a contrast between the loyal Li Keyong and the "rebellious Han general" Zhu Wen.⁷¹ Even if such a contrast was intended, Abramson's belief that the emphasis of the contrast was on defending Li Keyong does not cohere with the rhetorical function of a *xi*, which is offensive and not defensive. A more critical problem with the 'pro-Li' interpretation is that there was never a moment when Li Keyong was simultaneously the Tang court's "principal military support," a target of suspicion and denigration at court, *and* noticeably more loyal to the court than Zhu Wen.

Both Li Keyong and Zhu Wen were instrumental in defeating the Huang Chao rebellion in 883–884, and although a feud subsequently arose between the two men, neither of them made

⁷⁰ ZZTJ 264.8623–8630, 265.8634–8636, 8640, 266.8669–8670, 8674.

⁷¹ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 189.

a direct challenge to the imperial court's authority in the 880s.⁷² The court therefore did not take sides in the dispute until 890, when Zhu Wen and two other warlords persuaded Zhaozong's chief minister Zhang Jun 張濬 (d. 904) to lead a military expedition against Li Keyong. Zhang Jun was motivated by a personal grudge against Li Keyong and an ambition to gain political advantage over the eunuch Yang Fugong 楊復恭 (d. 894) by achieving a prestigious victory over one of the warlords. Li Keyong's foreign origins thus played no part in his becoming the target of Zhang Jun's expedition, but he did submit a memorial complaining of the court's hypocrisy in now disparaging him as a "Rong and Jie barbarian" (Rong-Jie 戎羯) or "foreign barbarian" (Fan-Yi 蕃夷) when it had previously praised his martial prowess in glowing terms when it needed his aid against Huang Chao. Apparently, then, the Tang court was making rhetorical use of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy to justify its sudden and unprovoked hostility toward Li Keyong. But since this rhetoric arose from the unique circumstance of Zhang Jun's expedition, there is no basis to Abramson's claim that it reflects a "constant labeling" by the court. In any case, the expedition's defeat quickly led Zhaozong to mend fences with Li Keyong and send Zhang Jun into exile.⁷³

In 895, Li Keyong came to Zhaozong's rescue when Li Maozhen, Han Jian, and their ally Wang Xingyu 王行瑜 (d. 895) seized control of Chang'an and attempted to depose him. Li Keyong's intervention resulted in Wang Xingyu's defeat and death, but Zhaozong's advisers persuaded him to restrain Keyong from attacking Fengxiang, on the grounds that a balance of power between Li Maozhen and Li Keyong was preferable to a situation in which the Shatuo Türks enjoyed absolute military superiority.⁷⁴ This was clearly a strategic calculation based on pragmatism rather than "knee-jerk cultural chauvinism." There is no indication that Zhaozong's advisers cited the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy as a reason to be wary of Li Keyong—Li's status as a powerful autonomous warlord was reason enough. Moreover, Li Keyong never acted as the court's defender against a seizure of power by Zhu Wen—his conflict with Zhu was purely personal in nature. By the time Zhu was able to pose a threat to the Tang dynasty itself, Li had lost his stomach for warfare with Zhu after narrowly surviving two assaults on his home base at Jinyang 晉陽 (modern Taiyuan).⁷⁵ In my assessment, therefore, Cheng Yan probably wrote the "Neiyi xi" to condemn Zhu Wen's usurpation of imperial power, and not to defend Li Keyong from ethnocentric accusers who probably never existed. In other words, the essay is an attack on a 'barbarous' Chinese, not a defense of a Chinese-like 'barbarian.' It is a polemic against moral barbarization, not a celebration of moral sinicization.

The "Huaxin" and "Neiyi xi" have been compared to the "Yuandao" because of their emphasis on a fluid interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. Hartman argues that the

⁷² For the origins of the feud, see ZZTJ 255.8304–8306, 256.8312–8313; JWDS 1.5, 25.338–339; XWDS 1.5, 4.34.

⁷³ ZZTJ 258.8395–8400, 8406–8409, 8411–8412; JTS 179.4657–4661; XTS 185.5412–5413; XWDS 1.5, 4.35. The *Jiu Tangshu* version of Li Keyong's memorial has Fan-Yi; the *Zizhi tongjian* version has Hu-Yi 胡夷 ("Western barbarian"). On the late Tang use of *Jie* 羯 (an extinct ethnonym of the third and fourth centuries) as a derogatory epithet for foreigners of 'western' origin, see Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 3–4.

⁷⁴ ZZTJ 260.8469–8481; JWDS 26.350–353.

⁷⁵ ZZTJ 262.8551–8553, 8569–8570, 263.8599–8600.

“Yuandao” and “Huaxin” express the “exact same sentiment” on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, except that it is “illustrated and elaborated” in the latter piece. Abramson describes Chen An and Cheng Yan as “likely intellectual inheritors of Han Yu” because of their use of Ancient Style prose, and suggests that both the “Huaxin” and “Neiyi xi” are modeled on the “Yuandao.”⁷⁶ These comparisons overlook the fact that their imitation of Han Yu is limited to literary style and rhetorical strategy, not substance. Neither essay argues that a Chinese Buddhist is “Chinese in physical form/name but a barbarian at heart” or a “barbarian of the Central Lands.” Typically Classicist values of humaneness, moral duty, and ritual are identified as the essence of Chineseness, but without any assertion of their incompatibility with Buddhism or Daoism. In this regard, the “Huaxin” and “Neiyi xi” are a little closer to Huangfu Shi’s “Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun,” which borrows the barbarization trope from the “Yuandao” and applies it to a subject unrelated to Han’s ideological agenda: namely, the legitimacy of a ‘barbarian’ dynasty. That said, their differences from the “Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun” are significant as well: whereas Huangfu Shi uses the Northern Wei’s ethnic origin as the reason for its alleged illegitimacy and brutality, Chen An and Cheng Yan argue that moral character, not ethnic origin, determines an individual’s worth. As I have suggested above, this difference is primarily one of rhetorical intent rather than one of philosophy or opinion.

Despite their superficial similarity to the “Yuandao,” the most important models for the “Huaxin” and “Neiyi xi” are probably Han Yu’s preface for Wenchang and Miscellaneous Discourse #3, as well as Huangfu Shi’s preface for Reverend Jian. Apart from Huangfu Shi’s reference to the Reverend Jian’s Buddhist robes as “a barbarian’s clothes,” these models do not use the tropes of barbarism and barbarization. In the prefaces for Wenchang and the Reverend Jian, the Other is Classicist in name and Buddhist (or its analogue, Mohist) in deed; in the Miscellaneous Discourse, he is an animal-hearted human being. Yet the form-heart dichotomy in the “Huaxin” and the name-heart dichotomy in the “Neiyi xi” are clearly inspired by the name-deed, form-heart, and appearance-heart dichotomies in these pieces.⁷⁷ Just as the Wenchang and Reverend Jian prefaces claim that a Buddhist monk who admires Classicism is more truly Classicist than a literatus who embraces Buddhism, and the Miscellaneous Discourse claims that a sage with an animal’s head or body is more human than a human being with an animal’s heart, the “Huaxin” and “Neiyi xi” assert that a barbarian who honors Chinese moral values has more Chineseness in his heart than a Chinese person who dishonors them. Clearly, playing with discrepancies between appearances (or names) and realities was one of the favorite polemical strategies used by Han Yu and his imitators, and the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy was only one of several that were seen as open to such play.⁷⁸ But there is no indication that these rhetorical performances sprang from a true rethinking of the boundary between Chineseness and barbarism

⁷⁶ Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 158; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 183, 186. For a Chinese-language example see Eqiong Zhuoma 俄瓊卓瑪, “Tangai minzuguan zhi ‘Huaxin’ shuo” 唐代民族觀之“華心”說, *Qinghai shehui kexue* 青海社會科學 2010(11), 189–191, which identifies the “Huaxin,” the “Neiyi xi,” the “Yuandao,” and Tang Taizong’s barbarophilic rhetoric as reflections of the same inclusive mentality.

⁷⁷ Fan Wenli notes the similarity between the form-heart dichotomy in the “Huaxin” and the name-deed dichotomy in the preface for Wenchang, but does not suggest literary imitation as the reason for it. Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 236.

⁷⁸ Hartman notes that Han Yu “often uses ‘rectification of names’ as a dialectical and rhetorical technique.” Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 329 n. 70.

or the nature of Chinese identity. The “Huaxin” and “Neiyi xi” are thus better seen as interesting literary experiments in the inversion or subversion of conventional wisdom, rather than as evidence of a broader change in understandings of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy during the ninth century.

Conclusion to Part 2: Rethinking Han Yu and the rhetoric of barbarization

As I noted in the preamble to Part 2, the idea of a turn toward exclusivity and ethnocentrism remains the most influential interpretation of the ninth century in Chinese historical scholarship. Although some Western intellectual historians (notably Bol and DeBlasi) have turned away from this paradigm without challenging it overtly, its lingering influence can still be detected in some of the most important recent studies of Tang intellectual history. For example, Abramson asserts toward the end of his *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*:

We ought now to add to the significance of the [Tang] period the key shift in the nature of China and Chineseness, a shift from a model of ethnic pluralism and cultural imperialism that characterized many premodern empires (e.g., Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman) to a model of ethnic and cultural exclusivity that was the hallmark of the protonationalist sentiment that infused the literati of the Song dynasty and laid the groundwork for the emergence of the modern Chinese nation. This shift was far from absolute in the Tang, but if we weigh the two trends, particularly as expressed in the discourse and social actions of elites and the state, the balance seems to have irrevocably tipped from one to the other during the course of the dynasty.¹

This interpretation seems odd, considering that Abramson has just taken the reader through an analysis of the “Huaxin” and “Neiyi xi,” both of which could not be further from “a model of ethnic and cultural exclusivity” or “protonationalist sentiment.”

Charles Holcombe has gone further than any other historian in challenging the notion of late Tang xenophobia (albeit in highly tentative terms) and cautioning against the assumption that Han Yu’s anti-Buddhist polemic “marks the beginning of some general anti-foreign shift in Chinese attitudes.” Nonetheless, even Holcombe suggests that Han Yu’s insistence on orthodoxy was indicative of a growing general intolerance of cultural diversity:

[There was] a subtle yet significant shift from the cosmopolitan openness of the early Tang dynasty towards a less tolerant late-imperial Confucian universalism. The pluralistic world of early Tang China, where invidious distinctions were (allegedly) simply not made between Chinese (civilization) and foreign (barbarism), gave way in mid- and late Tang to a more narrowly judgmental definition of civilized behavior—one that was still supposedly ‘universal,’ in the sense of being theoretically open to anyone of sufficiently elegant achievement, but which was now an orthodoxy whose Tao did indeed have constant forms and names.... Cultural expectations throughout the Tang may have gradually tended to become somewhat more uniform, with a corresponding loss of tolerance for diversity.²

¹ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 190–191.

² Elsewhere, Holcombe concedes that Wuzong’s proscription of foreign religions “may be a representative episode of post-An Lushan xenophobia” (albeit a “notable belated and fleeting spasm”); follows Robert Joe Cutter in reading Chen Hong’s “Dongcheng laofu zhuan” 東城老父傳 as evidence of “a certain amount of corroboration of ‘nascent sinocentric xenophobia’”; and interprets certain prohibitions as “hints of greater wariness, distaste and suspicion”

Holcombe's addition of the word "allegedly" does suggest some skepticism about the widespread notion that the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy did not matter in the early Tang. Such skepticism is well-founded. As I showed in Chapters 1 and 2, "invidious distinctions" did play an important role in some rhetorical contexts during the early Tang, including both anti-expansionist and pro-war rhetoric. These contexts all rested on an assumption that the boundary between Chineseness and barbarism was both immutable and coterminous with the empire's present frontiers. Han Yu's innovation lay in subverting that assumption and using the *Chunqiu* to argue that the Chinese were susceptible to ritual, moral, and ideological barbarization when they forsook the Way of the Sages. The reasons for this move were literary and rhetorical rather than political or philosophical: Han Yu's emulation of Mencius's polemics, his attempt to exploit new trends in *Chunqiu* exegesis against the Buddhists, and his predilection for playing with dichotomies. If, as Holcombe argues, the upshot of Han Yu's concept of Classicist orthodoxy was a narrowing of the definition of civilization, the side-effect was a broadening of the rhetorical uses to which notions of barbarism could be put. Han Yu's rhetoric thus made the concept of barbarization available to Chinese polemicists for use as a metaphor for ideological heterodoxy or moral bankruptcy.

Bol, De Meyer, Holcombe, and Abramson have all argued that Han Yu's formula took him as far as claiming that Daoism, being unclassical, was as barbaric as Buddhism.³ While such a claim would indeed be the formula's logical conclusion, there is actually no indication of it in the "Yuandao" or any of Han's other writings. While Han Yu frequently paired Buddhism and Daoism together as the major heterodoxies of his day, he never suggested that both teachings were not Chinese. This suggests that Han was not interested in thinking through his formula's theoretical implications and was content to use it for anti-Buddhist polemic alone. Had Han Yu desired to explore or elucidate the philosophical ramifications of his ideology-centered redefinition of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, he could quite conceivably have arrived at the argument that Daoism was as barbaric as Buddhism. But there is no indication that he ever did so. It is thus likely that his redefinition was a rhetorical means to an end, not an end in itself. Han Yu's lack of interest in arriving at a reading of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy that had true philosophical coherence and depth is very much in keeping with the "alternative picture" that David McMullen has drawn of a man who never developed a "consistent and systematic philosophy" and was indeed "temperamentally unsympathetic" to such a goal.⁴ He was at heart a rhetorician and a polemicist, not a philosopher. Han's ideas of a lost orthodoxy and barbarization appear in only two of his writings, namely the "Yuandao" and the letter to Meng Jian. A comprehensive view of the full corpus of his work, therefore, shows that whereas his literary creativity was almost limitless, his attempts at developing a concept of orthodoxy were sporadic and never advanced beyond the radical but simple idea that the Way of the Sages had to be saved from Buddhism and Daoism. To borrow an analogy that Isaiah Berlin first applied to Tolstoy,

toward foreigners. These concessions signal a reluctance to break completely from the old model of a xenophobic turn. Holcombe, "Immigrants and Strangers," 96, 101, 109, 173.

³ Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 130; De Meyer, *Wu Yun's Way*, 104; Holcombe, "Immigrants and Strangers," 104; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 67.

⁴ McMullen, "Han Yu: An Alternative Picture," 606, 657.

Han Yu was a literary fox (who knows many things) trying—rather halfheartedly, one might add—to be a philosophical hedgehog (who knows one big thing).⁵

Unlike many previous studies, I have argued that neither Han Yu’s idea of orthodoxy nor his notion of barbarization achieved much influence in the ninth century. Apart from Li Ao, Huangfu Shi, and Du Mu, few notable literati seem to have espoused Han’s argument for ideological orthodoxy or imitated his rhetoric of barbarization. Various modern historians who have identified Chen An and Cheng Yan as embodiments of the Tang zeitgeist or weltanschauung have greatly overestimated the amount of attention their works received during their lifetime and, indeed, for more than a thousand years afterward. If the “Huaxin” and the “Neiyi xi” “probably represented the views of growing numbers of literate elites in the late Tang,” as Abramson argues, it is strange that we see no other examples of such arguments before the eleventh century.⁶ The enduring influence that the idea of barbarization had on later discourses about Chineseness owes much to the fact that the “Yuandao”—not the “Huaxin” or the “Neiyi xi”—became exceptionally influential among the Song literati during the eleventh century. By the same token, the “subtle yet significant shift” from ideological pluralism toward a concern for orthodoxy that Holcombe traces to the ninth century actually did not begin until the eleventh.

It is also important to recognize that the target of Han Yu’s attacks was mainstream Tang literati culture’s ideological pluralism and eclecticism, not the Tang empire’s ethnic or cultural pluralism. The idea of ethnic exclusivism was irrelevant to Han Yu’s ideology: he neither advocated nor opposed it. Holcombe has argued that because the “Yuandao” does not speak of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy “in the familiar modern terms of ethnicity, race, or nationality,” Han Yu saw the Way of the Sages as a universal civilization, “theoretically open to anyone.” That may be so, but there is no evidence that Han was interested in exploring this theoretical implication.⁷ Han Yu was really only interested in the part of his “Yuandao” formula that warned of barbarization and never gave any serious thought to the idea of barbarians becoming like the Chinese. The objects of his ideological proselytizing remained always the Chinese literati or literatus-like Chinese monks like Wenchang.⁸ Although non-Chinese individuals—whether foreign Buddhist monks or foreign *jinshi* candidates like Li Yansheng—are conspicuously absent from the literary output produced by Han Yu’s social interactions,⁹ this

⁵ Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy’s View of History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013 [1953]), 1–5.

⁶ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 184.

⁷ Holcombe’s citing of the “Huaxin” in support of this assertion is misleading, since Han Yu never wrote anything remotely similar to that essay: “Immigrants and Strangers,” 104–105.

⁸ I have seen no evidence to support Fan Wenli’s claim that Han Yu used the Mencian phrase “using Chinese [ways] to change barbarians (Yi)” 用夏變夷 (*Mencius* 3A:4) as an ideological basis for attempts at converting Chinese Buddhist monks to Classicism. As I argued in Chapter 3, Han Yu never labeled Chinese Buddhists (even monks) as barbarians even though he often emphasized their religion’s barbarian origin. I have likewise seen no evidence from Han and Tang imperial discourse to back up Fan’s claims that the Tang empire had a distinct policy or ideology of “using Chinese [ways] to change barbarians” and that Han Yu’s “Yuandao” reflects this. Fan, *Rujia minzu sixiang yanjiu*, 233–234.

⁹ I have noted earlier that the poem addressed to a foreign monk that has been attributed to Han Yu is most likely not his work.

was hardly exceptional for a late Tang literatus and should not be read as evidence that he avoided contact with foreigners. Chen Sanping, who has recently attempted to show that Bai Juyi had a strong affinity to Central Asia, argues that Han Yu's "strong sinocentric stance" as a "fierce defender of Chinese tradition against all foreign intrusions" was the reason for the "striking lack of close relation and interaction" between him and Bai.¹⁰ Leaving aside the problem of whether Chen's interpretations of Bai and Han are correct, it should be noted that whereas Bai and Han did exchange a few poems in 821–822¹¹, not one of Bai's many extant poems is addressed to a foreign individual or even mentions interacting with a foreigner.

As for whether Han Yu was culturally exclusive, that would depend entirely on how one chooses to define the nebulous concept of culture. It is clear that Han Yu did not understand Classicism or the Way of the Sages in the way that we would understand "Chinese culture" today, as the sum of all cultural forms produced by the Chinese throughout history. To him only certain Chinese cultural forms—those that were created by the sages—were worthy of preservation; all other forms had to be rejected as threats to the purity of the culture inherited from antiquity. The boundaries of his normative "culture" were thus not ethnic but ideological; his cultural exclusivity was predicated on a sense of Classicist ideological exclusivity that regarded foreign creeds and Chinese heterodoxies as equally unacceptable. Buddhism's popularity with the Chinese was, to him, only the latest symptom of a deeper cultural or ethical malaise that began long before that religion's introduction to the Central Lands.

An attitude of caution with the use of the word "culture" is especially germane because the "late-imperial Confucian universalism" to which Holcombe refers is essentially the same mode of identity that Joseph Levenson and many later scholars of Chinese nationalism have labeled as "culturalism." As will be clear from my arguments in Chapters 3 and 4, I do not accept the conventional assumption that a "culturalist" interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy originated with Confucius and has existed throughout imperial Chinese history. Although the *Chunqiu* exegetical traditions' notions of demotion and promotion contained the potential for such an interpretation, it was Han Yu and his imitators who inadvertently laid the true intellectual foundations for "culturalism" when they began using the ideas of moral barbarism and barbarization as polemical tropes. At the time, they had no idea that they were creating a fundamental reinterpretation of what it meant to be Chinese or to be barbaric; their concern was only with immediate rhetorical agendas—agendas that were at first anti-Buddhist, then much more varied. But the effect of such rhetorical innovation and imitation was to create a new way of *talking* about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, which in turn eventually enabled a new way of *thinking* about it. In other words, "culturalism" as rhetoric preceded "culturalism" as philosophy or ideology.

Ironically, whereas Levenson posited "culturalism" and modern Chinese nationalism as distinct opposites in terms of the object of one's loyalty, Gernet seems to have seen "culturalism" as a form of Chinese protonationalism that first appeared in the late Tang:

¹⁰ Chen, *Multicultural China*, 181.

¹¹ Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 181–182.

The term “nationalism” would be an anachronism, yet it was certainly reactions analogous to nationalism that took vague shape after An Lushan’s rebellion and that were to become evident again on other occasions in China’s history. This attachment to an authentic tradition supposed to have been corrupted by foreign elements, this desire to return to the pure—and imaginary—sources of orthodox thought and morality are difficult to sum up, since they do not relate to the quite recent idea of a nation, but to the idea of culture. If we wanted one word for them, we should have to invent the barbarous term “culturalism.”¹²

Similarly, Stephen Owen has spoken of Han Yu as representing a “‘cultural nationalism,’ if we may call it that,” in which “some Mid-Tang intellectuals... gave their allegiance more exclusively to traditionally Chinese social and moral values,” while James Townsend would probably identify Han’s anti-Buddhist polemics as a perfect example of “‘culturalism as movement’, in which conscious argument and action become necessary to defend a culture under threat.”¹³ I hope to have proven by now, however, that this emphasis on a distinction between foreign and Chinese cultures is deeply misleading: the intellectual origins of “culturalism” had nothing to do with xenophobia. I would also suggest that the closest analogues to Han Yu’s ideology are not modern nationalist movements but instead Renaissance humanism and the Protestant Reformation, both of which were founded on a new historical consciousness that saw most of Western Christendom’s prior history as a long age of degeneration. In this I build on Stephen Owen’s brief but insightful observation, in a later work on the literary culture of Han Yu’s day, that the Reformation is the most obvious European analogy to the “remarkable abrogation of continuous history [by which] Han Yu declared himself and his moment a turning point in Chinese culture, a leap across more than a millennium to resume the Confucian tradition that had fallen into error and corruption after Mencius.”¹⁴

Charles Nauert, building on an influential article by Theodore Mommsen and modifying Jakob Burckhardt’s seminal *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, observes that Petrarch was the first European to develop a conception of history as divided into three periods:

[Petrarch] was in effect declaring something like this: “In addition to the ancient age of light, of high civilization, and the modern [we would say medieval]¹⁵ age of darkness and barbarism, there is a third age, a new age of light, and it begins with me!” This sense of standing at a turning-point in human history, and of reviving lost civilization, explains what often seems an exaggerated sense of self-importance, an outlook that Jakob

¹² Gernet seems strangely unaware of Levenson’s prior invention of the term “culturalism,” as well as the irony in his use of the word “barbarous.” Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, 293.

¹³ More recently, Ge Zhaoguang has also characterized Han Yu’s ideology as one of “cultural nationalism” (*wenhua minzu zhuyi* 文化民族主義). See Ge, *Zhongguo sixiangshi*, vol. 2, 211–212; Owen, *The Poetry of Meng Chiao and Han Yu*, 3; Townsend, “Chinese Nationalism,” 105–106.

¹⁴ Shortly afterwards, however, Owen reverts to the traditional image of late Tang xenophobia, writing of “a China that is, for the first time, conceived in times of excluding the foreign, as is proposed in Han Yu’s famous ‘Memorial on the Buddha Bone.’” Owen, *The End of the Chinese ‘Middle Ages,’* 9, 16.

¹⁵ Note original to the text.

Burkhardt labelled ‘individualism’ and demonstrated largely with reference to the humanists’ thirst for fame.... Burkhardt made the mistake of putting a secondary characteristic, a heightened sense of individualism, in place of the truly primary characteristic, the new historical consciousness that emerged in the thought of Petrarch. This sense of being engaged in the restoration of true civilization after many centuries of barbarian darkness finds its first clear statement in the works of Petrarch, and some such claim is common to virtually all of those writers (Salutati, Valla, Ficino, Erasmus) whom historians identify as the crucial figures in the history of humanism.¹⁶

Clearly, these observations are highly applicable also to Han Yu’s reinterpretation of the history of Chinese civilization and his sense of his place in that history.¹⁷

It may be particularly interesting to think of Han Yu in comparison not only to Petrarch but also to Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther. In a manner somewhat similar to Han Yu’s fulmination against Buddhism, Erasmus condemned scholastic theology and Medieval Latin as the intellectual and literary sides of “barbarism”—products of a cultural decline from classical (that is, Roman) standards of learning and eloquence that in turn had brought about the Christian world’s moral degeneration under the weight of ignorance, corruption, and superstition. Indeed, Erasmus’s most concerted attempt at a narrative of this decline bears the title *Antibarbari*, “Against the Barbarians.”¹⁸ At the same time, Han Yu’s claim to be engaged in reviving a long-lost Classicist Way bears some resemblance—as Owen noted—to Luther’s equally radical claim (which Erasmus rejected as sheer arrogance¹⁹) to have discovered the truth of the Christian gospel, obscured by thirteen centuries of erroneous church tradition and teaching. Han Yu’s Buddha relic memorial, which rejects the then-widespread belief in the spiritual potency of relics, can perhaps also be compared to Luther’s attack on the sale of indulgences in the Ninety-five Theses. Moreover, Han Yu’s reinterpretation of Classicist identity as an exclusive ideological commitment was as fundamental as Luther’s reinterpretation of Christian soteriology and arguably more influential in the long run, since it came to be accepted by all who identified themselves as Classicists.

These striking similarities are accompanied by key differences, of course. Unlike Petrarch, Erasmus, and other Renaissance humanists, who dreamt of reviving the classical civilization of ancient Rome but did not think one had to reject Christianity in order to do so, Han Yu argued that the Way of the Sages could not be restored as long as Daoism and Buddhism

¹⁶ Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of the Renaissance in Europe*, 20–21. For Mommsen’s argument see Theodore E. Mommsen, “Petrarch’s Conception of the ‘Dark Ages,’” *Speculum* 17.2 (1942), 226–242.

¹⁷ Interestingly, Owen argues that the unprecedentedly individualistic use of writing and claims to interpretive authority by Han Yu and some of his peers heralded the “end of the Chinese ‘Middle Ages’” (hence the title of his book), but does not credit Han Yu with inventing the concept of a “Middle Age” in Chinese history. Note also that Owen (unlike Burkhardt) argues that the challenges to received textual authority seen in the Renaissance and Reformation were not ultimately driven by individualism. Owen, *The End of the Chinese ‘Middle Ages’*, 55–57.

¹⁸ On Erasmus, I have benefited greatly from István Bejczy’s *Erasmus and the Middle Ages: The Historical Consciousness of a Christian Humanist* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 170–182.

continued to confuse and mislead the Chinese. Whereas Luther's excommunication and condemnation as a heretic lasted to the end of his life and beyond, Han Yu's denigration of the Buddha was soon forgiven and his exile was relatively brief. Erasmus's notion of barbarism was focused on literary style and theological method rather than heterodoxy, whereas Han Yu never associated parallel style prose with barbarism. The impact of the Ciceronian works rediscovered by Petrarch, and of Erasmus's new edition of the New Testament, stands in stark contrast to Han Yu's lack of influence on classical scholarship, although one may speculate whether things might have been different had Han completed his commentary to the *Analects*.²⁰ Most importantly, Petrarch, Erasmus, and Luther all started important intellectual or religious movements within their lifetimes, whereas Han Yu's intellectual influence in the ninth century was negligible compared to his literary reputation.²¹ Nonetheless, Han Yu's arguments about the lost Way of the Sages eventually served as an inspiration to several successive generations of Song literati. As is well known, some of these literati used the idea of the Way of the Sages as an ideological foundation for building the philosophical system eventually known as *Daoxue* or *Lixue*, which has had a profound influence on the study and interpretation of the Classics since Song times. In the next two chapters, I will explore various interpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in the Northern Song intellectual context from which *Daoxue* emerged. In the process of that exploration, we will frequently notice the unmistakable influence of Han Yu's rhetoric.

²⁰ A poem by Zhang Ji, describing the scene at Han Yu's deathbed, mentions an unfinished *Analects* commentary; other sources speak of a ten-juan *Analects* commentary by Han that was circulated among his students, and Han himself says in an undated letter that he had once worked on such a commentary. It is thus likely that the ten-juan work, which was lost after the Northern Song, was only an incomplete draft. Hartman has attempted to identify it with the two-juan *Lunyu bijie* 論語筆解 (Jotted Notes on the *Analects*) attributed to Han Yu and Li Ao since the Song period. However, I believe that McMullen and Chen Jo-shui are correct to conclude that there is insufficient evidence for the authenticity of the *Lunyu bijie*. Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 115; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 3, 728; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2760; Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 339–341; McMullen, "Han Yü: An Alternative Picture," 640–642; Chen, *Liu Tsung-yüan*, 124 n. 92.

²¹ Erasmus and the other Renaissance humanists have been described as unsystematic thinkers who preferred rhetoric to philosophical system-building; if this characterization holds true for them, it surely applies even more to Han Yu. Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of the Renaissance in Europe*, 204–205.

Part 3

Uses and interpretations of barbarism in the Ancient Style revival,

ca. 970–ca. 1070

Preamble

The eleventh century was a pivotal period in Chinese literary and intellectual history, during which the literary and ideological agendas associated with Han Yu came to occupy the mainstream of literati culture. Throughout the tenth century and the first three decades of the eleventh century, parallel prose remained the standard style of literati writing. From 1009 to the 1030s, the most fashionable form of parallel prose was in a dense, allusive style that Yang Yi 楊億 (974–1020) and two other members of the *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 editorial team had originally developed for use in poetry, with Li Shangyin's 李商隱 (ca. 813–ca. 858) poems as a model.¹ Nonetheless, a small but vocal minority of contrarians favored the Ancient Style—these included Liu Kai 柳開 (947–1000), Wang Yucheng 王禹稱 (954–1001), Sun He 孫何 (961–1004), Yao Xuan 姚鉉 (967–1020), and Mu Xiu 穆修 (979–1032). Han Yu's works therefore continued to circulate among the literati and began to gain a strong following in the early 1030s, among the generation of literati born between 990 and 1010. As a result, Ancient Style prose surpassed parallel prose in prestige by the middle of the 1040s. Around 1061, the eminent Ancient Style writer Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) boasted that whereas no one spoke of Han Yu's writings when he was a *jinshi* candidate in 1030, now “men learning [how to write] refuse to learn from anyone but Han Yu” 學者非韓不學也.² Of course, not everyone who sought to write like Han Yu was anywhere near as creative a writer as Ouyang Xiu. As early as 1047 another Ancient Style writer, Li Gou 李覲 (1009–1059), was already complaining about the tendency for lesser writers to ride the Ancient Style wave by “imitating Mencius and plundering [phrases] from Changli (i.e., Han Yu)” 摹勒孟子，劫掠昌黎.³

Modern historians usually call this literary shift the second Ancient Style movement, with the assumption that the first movement took place during the ninth century. We have seen, however, that Han Yu's ninth-century influence was too limited to be considered a true literary movement. Moreover, Higashi Hidetoshi (building on an argument by Lo Lien-t'ien) has cautioned that the modern concept of movements, which can be applied to a wide range of political, social, cultural, literary, artistic, and philosophical causes or trends, may convey the misleading impression that the Ancient Style writers were a cohesive, organized group united by a single cause. In Chapters 5 and 6, I will follow Higashi in referring to the eleventh-century

¹ On this see most recently Jin Qian, “Formation of the Xikun Style Poetry” (M.A. thesis, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 2009).

² JSWJ 23.1927.

³ LGJ 28.324.

‘rediscovery’ of Han Yu as the Ancient Style revival (*Guwen fuxing* 古文復興).⁴ It should be noted, however, that the Northern Song Ancient Style writers themselves usually referred to it as a revival of “this literary culture” (*siwen* 斯文). In the *Analects*, Confucius used *siwen* to refer to the ritual culture of the Zhou dynasty, but in Song Ancient Style rhetoric, this phrase is reinterpreted to mean writing that combines a classical prose style with Han Yu’s notion of an ideological orthodoxy, thus emulating both the language of the classics and the values of the sages who wrote them.⁵ By the early 1030s, for example, Shi Jie 石介 (1005–1045) was already writing about “this literary culture,” “the Way” (*dao* 道), “this Way” (*sidao* 斯道), and “the Way of the Sages” (*shengren zhi dao* 聖人之道) as identical or interchangeable concepts.⁶

The Ancient Style revival was far from monolithic: modern historians who assume that its major figures were driven by the same ideological concerns make the same mistake as those who overlook the fundamental intellectual differences between Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan. Shi Jie and Ouyang Xiu both belonged to the *jinshi* examination cohort of 1030 and became the most influential Ancient Style writers of their generation, but they had markedly different temperaments and literary tastes. Shi Jie followed Liu Kai in taking Han Yu’s tendencies toward ideological invective, self-promotion, and literary eccentricity to a flamboyant extreme. The more moderate Ouyang Xiu preferred to focus on literary aesthetics and favored a restrained, dignified prose style that he had learned from Mu Xiu’s student Yin Shu 尹洙 (1001–1047).⁷ Shi Jie’s influence initially dominated the Ancient Style revival and gave rise to the ostentatiously eccentric and polemical “Imperial University style” (*taixue ti* 太學體) in the mid-1040s. But in the famous *jinshi* examinations of 1057, Ouyang Xiu used his authority as chief examiner to reject all candidates who wrote in that style.⁸ Thereafter, it was Ouyang’s tastes that defined the

⁴ Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 107–111.

⁵ Peter Bol translates *siwen* as “this culture of ours,” but adding the adjective “literary” helps me avoid giving the impression that an oppositional dichotomy of “Chinese culture” and “foreign culture” is being invoked. More recently, Anna Shields has translated *siwen* as “the greater culture,” but this may be problematic as there does not appear to be a corresponding concept of a “lesser culture.” See *Analects* 9:5; Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 1–3; Shields, “Gossip, Anecdote, and Literary History,” 110.

⁶ CLWJ 12.139, 15.180–182, 16.192.

⁷ On Mu Xiu’s style and its influence on Yin Shu and Ouyang Xiu, see Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, “Lun Mu Xiu dui Beisong guwen yundong de gongxian” 論穆修對北宋古文運動的貢獻, *Songdai wenhua yanjiu* 宋代文化研究 2 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1992), 92–106; JSWJ 23.1927.

⁸ Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 125–141. The current mainstream opinion among scholars is that the “new Imperial University style” that Zhang Fangping 張方平 (1007–1091) associated with Shi Jie in 1046 was the same “Imperial University Style” that Ouyang Xiu rejected in 1057. However, Zhu Gang argues that the “Imperial University style” of 1057 was a newer development that had no relation to Shi Jie’s earlier “Imperial University style.” Zhu theorizes that the new “Imperial University Style” was instead characterized by the philosophical interest in questions of “[human] nature and [individual] allotment” (*xingming* 性命) that we see in Cheng Yi, but this theory rests on a conjecture that Cheng Yi was one of the candidates who failed the *jinshi* examinations in 1057. We know that Cheng Hao passed in 1057, and that Cheng Yi failed the examinations in 1059. But there is no direct evidence that Cheng Yi was a candidate in 1057. Ultimately, I find Zhu’s argument less convincing than the mainstream interpretation of the history of the “Imperial University style.” Zhu Gang 朱剛, “‘Taixue ti’ ji qi zhoubian zhu

Ancient Style—in part through the influence of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039–1112), and Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019–1083), the most outstanding prose writers in the *jinshi* cohort of 1057.

It is also important to note that the Ancient Style revival's impact went beyond literary culture. Besides emulating Han Yu's literary style, some of the most influential Ancient Style writers of the 1030s and 1040s also embraced his exclusivist redefinition of Classicist identity and blamed intellectual and religious eclecticism for the decline of the Way of the Sages. The Ancient Style revival thus had a strong anti-Buddhist ideological element that occasionally expanded to include anti-Daoist sentiment.⁹ Although Buddhism's general appeal to the Song literati remained strong in the long run, Han Yu's enhanced stature did put a high premium on rhetoric that imitated his renowned animus toward Buddhism.¹⁰ As we shall see in Chapter 5, even Ouyang Xiu, who identified ideological eclecticism as the consequence, not the cause, of classical Chinese civilization's decline, nonetheless felt compelled to represent Buddhism as an invasive competitor with Classicist orthodoxy. Interestingly, Li Gou's above-quoted complaint about the blatant imitation of Han Yu appears in a letter in which he defended himself from a cousin's criticism that he was soft on Buddhism. Li's cousin, Huang Hanjie 黃漢傑 (n.d.), was annoyed that he had written commemorative inscriptions for several Buddhist monasteries, one of which asserted that the Classicists' own failure to educate the people in classical ritual was to blame for Buddhism's appeal. In response, Li Gou insisted that he had already established his

wenti" '太學體' 及其周邊諸問題, *Wenxue yichan* 文學遺產 2007(5), 44–55; also his "Beisong 'xianguai' wenfeng: Guwen yundong de lingyi yi" 北宋 '險怪' 文風: 古文運動的另一翼, *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 中國社會科學 2010(1), 173–185.

⁹ It should be noted that Ancient Style writers prior to the 1030s were not uniformly or unambiguously anti-Buddhist. Liu Kai seems to have been firmly opposed to Buddhism, as we shall see in Chapter 5, but Mu Xiu's two extant commemorative inscriptions for Buddhist monasteries reflect a remarkably even-handed and tolerant attitude toward Buddhism's popularity. Wang Yucheng is well-known to have submitted an anti-Buddhist memorial that was partly modeled on Han Yu's polemics, and Shi Jie later cited both him and Han Yu as prominent critics of Buddhism. But Albert Welter and Mark Halperin have highlighted his more positive interactions with the Buddhist community, including his friendship with the monk-scholar Zanning and his authorship of several commemorative inscriptions. For Mu Xiu's inscriptions see QSW 323.36–38, 40–41. For Wang Yucheng, see CLWJ 13.154; Albert Welter, "A Buddhist Response to the Confucian Revival: Tsan-ning and the Debate over *Wen* in the Early Sung," in Peter N. Gregory and Daniel A. Gezt eds., *Buddhism in the Sung* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 25–28; Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*, 117–118; Chang Ching-chuan 張清泉, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang* 北宋契嵩的儒釋融會思想 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1998), 80–81.

¹⁰ Much recent scholarship has disproved the myth that Chinese Buddhism underwent a permanent decline during the Song period as the result of a "Confucian revival." As Morten Schlütter argues, "writings criticizing Buddhism had simply become part of the literary repertoire that a member of the educated elite was expected to be adept in—perhaps due to the influence of the vigorous anti-Buddhist writings of the famous early Confucian classicist Han Yu (768–824). That many literati showed a great interest in Buddhism, and especially Chan Buddhism, is apparent in writings from throughout the Song." See Peter N. Gregory, "The Vitality of Buddhism in the Sung," in Gregory and Gezt eds., *Buddhism in the Sung*, 1–4; Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-Dynasty China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 27–28; also Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*, esp. 7–12 and Chapters 2 and 4.

anti-Buddhist credentials in the 1030s by writing essays critical of Buddhism, and had no need to prove them further.¹¹

The impact of the Ancient Style revival was felt in politics as well. Most of the Ancient Style writers from the early eleventh century, including Shi Jie, Ouyang Xiu, Yin Shu, and Su Shunqin 蘇舜欽 (1008–1048), were strong political supporters of the reformist Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052). The institutional reforms that Fan introduced in 1043–1045 included changing the *jinsi* examinations to emphasize policy essays over poetry—a change advantageous to candidates skilled in Ancient Style prose. Fan Zhongyan’s reforms, although short-lived, inspired Wang Anshi’s 王安石 (1021–1086) more ambitious and controversial New Policies of 1069–1073. Wang, an accomplished classical scholar and Ancient Style writer, represented his reforms as comprehensively applying the Ancient Style ideal of “returning to the Three Dynasties (i.e., Xia, Shang, and Zhou)” to the sphere of political institutions.¹² Whether Wang Anshi truly believed he was reviving institutions from classical antiquity remains a matter of debate, as do the merits and demerits of his reform program, which drew a large number of detractors—including, ironically, Ouyang Xiu and two other leaders of the 1043–1045 reform program, Fu Bi 富弼 (1004–1083) and Han Qi 韓琦 (1008–1075).

In the long run, the biggest beneficiaries of the Ancient Style revival were also the least likely: namely, the brothers Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, who founded the *Daoxue* (“Neo-Confucian”) tradition of cosmological and moral philosophy in the 1070s and also became severe critics of Wang Anshi’s ideas. Unlike Han Yu and the Ancient Style writers, the Cheng brothers were indifferent to questions of literary style; Cheng Yi even argued that being concerned with writing well was a distraction from learning the Way.¹³ Nonetheless, Cheng Yi’s

¹¹ Huang Hanjie compared Li Gou unfavorably to Li Ao, not knowing that Li Ao did compose an inscription for Chengguan in the end. Chang Ching-chuan argues that the only explanation for the contradiction between Li Gou’s anti-Buddhist writings and his willingness to compose inscriptions for Buddhist monasteries is to interpret the inscriptions as “all a form of social courtesy in which he had no choice but to praise [the inscriptions’ subjects]” 皆為應酬，不得已而美言之。Li Chenggui attempts to explain the contradiction by arguing that Li Gou objected to Buddhism’s economic and social effects but was open-minded enough to recognize its benefits as a means of moral self-cultivation. However, I find it just as likely that Li Gou became dependent on composing inscriptions and epitaphs as a source of income after failing to pass the examinations for the second time in 1042. Buddhist monasteries were one of the largest markets for commemorative inscriptions written by prominent literati, and Li, in his impoverished state, could not afford to refuse their requests. LGJ 28.321–324; Chang, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang*, 92–96; Li Chenggui 李承貴, “Shilun Li Gou fojiaoguan de shuangchongxing” 試論李觀佛教觀的雙重性, *Jiangxi shifan daxue xuebao* 江西師範大學學報 38.1 (2005), 31–36.

¹² On the influence of the Three Dynasties ideal on Northern Song political discourse, see Yu Ying-shih 余英時, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie: Songdai shidafu zhengzhi wenhua de yanjiu* 朱熹的歷史世界：宋代士大夫政治文化的研究 (Beijing: Sanlian chubanshe, 2004 [2003]), 189–198; Fang Cheng-Hua 方震華, “Tang-Song zhengzhi lunshu zhong de Zhenguan zhi zheng — zhiguo dianfan de lunbian” 唐宋政治論述中的貞觀之政 — 治國典範的論辯, *Taida lishi xuebao* 臺大歷史學報 40 (2007), 34–43.

¹³ CSYS 18.239.

philosophy was also heavily influenced by Han Yu's ideological writings, particularly the "Yuandao." After Cheng Hao's death, Cheng Yi imitated Han Yu and asserted that his brother had been the first Classicist since Mencius to understand the Way of the Sages.¹⁴ Cheng Yi's decision to magnify Cheng Hao's achievement by cutting Han Yu out of the narrative of the Way's rediscovery was, ironically, quite true to Han's spirit of grandiose self-promotion, which had already proven irresistible to men like Liu Kai and Shi Jie. But it was also the culmination of a trend that had begun in the 1060s, when the Song literati began to adopt a more critical or dismissive attitude toward Han Yu's philosophical limitations even as they perpetuated his literary legacy. In another irony, the Ancient Style revival began with the enthusiastic rediscovery of Han Yu in the 1030s but also produced a sense of disenchantment with him some thirty years later, when Ancient Style writers began to see through the eloquence of his prose and perceive the weaknesses of his philosophical and ideological arguments.¹⁵

Part 4 of this dissertation will analyze the use of ideas about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in *Daoxue* philosophy. Part 3 seeks to lay the groundwork for that discussion by presenting an analysis of arguments relating to notions of barbarism and barbarization in Northern Song texts written between 970 and 1070. I have organized the analysis around two genres of writing—namely, Ancient Style polemic about orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and new interpretations of the *Chunqiu*—that became highly popular in the eleventh century, in part as a revival and intensification of trends that first appeared in the late Tang. In Chapter 5, I show that the Ancient Style writers Liu Kai, Shi Jie, and Sun Fu 孫復 (992–1057) built on Han Yu's rhetoric of barbarization by labeling all non-Classicist ideologies as barbaric. This rhetorical strategy had no greater consistency or logic than Han Yu's rhetoric and seems to have disappeared after the 1050s. While it existed, however, it exerted a crucial, albeit inadvertent, influence on Classicist thought by inspiring an argument that Chinese superiority to barbarians, and Chineseness itself, were contingent on the observance of certain essential moral norms.

As I shall show in Chapter 6, the Ancient Style rhetoric of barbarization was complemented by a growing trend among *Chunqiu* interpreters (of whom Sun Fu was one) to interpret that classical text's use of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in ways that emphasized the idea of moral barbarization: that is, the idea that Confucius believed Chinese people could effectively turn into barbarians when they behaved immorally. This understanding of barbarization was heavily influenced by the famous summation that Han Yu presented in the "Yuandao": "When Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu*, if [any of] the feudal lords used barbarian (Yi) ritual, then [Confucius] regarded him as a barbarian, and if barbarians were promoted to the level of the Central Lands, then he regarded them as [part of the] Central Lands." However, the eleventh-century *Chunqiu* interpreters' emphasis shifted from "ritual" as a cultural or religious practice, as found in the distinction between Buddhist ritual and Classicist ritual, to "ritual" as an

¹⁴ CSWJ 11.640.

¹⁵ Yang Guo'an 楊國安, "Shilun Beisong ruxue de yanjin yu Han Yu diwei de bianhua" 試論北宋儒學的演進與韓愈地位的變化, *Zhongzhou xuekan* 中州學刊 2002(5), 142–147.

ethical concept or value, as found in the phrase “ritual and moral duty.” We have already seen this moral or ethical interpretation of barbarization presented in the “Huaxin” and the “Neiyi xi,” but I have found no evidence that these essays exerted a particularly significant influence on eleventh-century *Chunqiu* commentators. Instead, we shall see that these commentators differed from Chen An and Cheng Yan in denying that barbarians could become morally “Chinese”—with the exception of barbarians who were descended from barbarized Chinese and thus not “real barbarians” in the first place. I find it more likely, therefore, that the eleventh-century commentators derived the idea of moral barbarization from the genre of Ancient Style polemic in general, and simply found it perfectly suited to explicating the concept of ‘barbarizing’ demotions in the *Chunqiu*.

Together, the Ancient Style ideologues and *Chunqiu* commentators of the eleventh century extended the concept of barbarism beyond its original key characteristic of geographical and ethnic foreignness, turning it into a moral category for all beliefs or behavior that ran counter to Classicist values. By doing so, they effectively produced a new, higher standard for Chinese identity that emphasized adherence to Classicist ideology or ethics, rather than ethnicity and geopolitics. The idea that ethnicity and geopolitics became less important to Chinese identity over the course of the Northern Song is highly counter-intuitive, however, given the common image of the Song as a period of growing ethnocentrism and xenophobia in reaction to threatening foreign enemies: namely, the Liao (Kitan) and Xia states, followed by the Jurchen Jin and finally the Mongols. A brief overview of Northern Song approaches to foreign relations may help to bring greater clarity to that picture.

The evidence for Northern Song literati arguments about foreign policy—including memorials, examination essays, and court debates—is extremely plentiful, indicating a very widespread and active interest in foreign relations. Contrary to the passive, pacifistic, and defensive-minded mentality that is often associated with Song foreign policy, however, the underlying motivation for these arguments was often a desire to restore Chinese suzerainty over neighboring states and reconquer lost territory perceived to be “former lands of the Han and Tang” 漢唐舊土. Many literati found it galling that under the terms of the Song-Kitan peace treaty concluded in 1005, the Son of Heaven had to acknowledge the Kitan ruler as his equal and also make large annual gifts to the Kitans, further strengthening them with Chinese wealth. The outcome of the Song-Xia war of 1040–1042 only added to the literati’s discomfiture: the Song, having repeatedly suffered defeat on the battlefield, was essentially forced to buy nominal suzerainty over the Xia with annual gifts. To add insult to injury, the Kitans exploited this situation to secure an increase in the value of their annual gifts and claim credit for brokering the Song-Xia peace agreement. From 1043 to the 1060s, the Song court repeatedly sought political and military strategies by which to subdue the Xia and put the Kitans in their proper place, despite the fact that peace with both states was the norm throughout this period. The reforms initiated by Fan Zhongyan and Wang Anshi were, to a large extent, products of this longing for a Chinese-dominated world order in which Song supremacy would stand unchallenged.

Modern historians have tended to point to a preference for diplomacy over war in Song strategic thinking and explain it as the product of a greater emphasis on “Confucian” and “civil” (*wen* 文) values among the Song political elite—an attitude usually called “exalting (or giving weight to) the civil at the expense of the military” 崇（重）文抑武 and explained as an overreaction to the problem of military revolts in the late Tang and the militarization of politics under the Five Dynasties.¹⁶ As Fang Cheng-hua has recently shown in an insightful article, however, this interpretation ignores strong evidence for a broad and growing irredentist consensus among the literati from the 1040s onwards.¹⁷ The consensus was that the Song should aim—at least in the long term—to reclaim certain frontier regions that had been part of the Tang empire but had fallen under the control of foreign peoples during the late Tang period or the Five Dynasties. These regions included the Kitan-ruled Sixteen Prefectures 十六州 (northern Hebei and northern Shanxi); the Ordos region and the Gansu Corridor, which now comprised the Xia state; the He-Huang 河湟 (eastern Qinghai and southwestern Gansu) region, which was divided between various Tibetan groups; and north Vietnam, which had become independent in 938 and fought off a Song invasion in 981. The Song state’s right to these territories was never open to serious question among its ruling elite, even though the Song-Kitan treaty of 1005 had formally recognized Kitan ownership over the Sixteen Prefectures in exchange for the Kitans renouncing their claim to the adjoining Guannan 關南 region. In 1067–1075 even Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) and Han Qi, who believed that the Song was not fiscally and militarily ready for another war with the Xia, occasionally had to pay lip service to irredentist ideals when attempting to restrain Song Shenzong’s 宋神宗 (r. 1067–1085) expansionist ambitions.¹⁸ Not surprisingly, their attempts were totally unsuccessful.

The Northern Song state’s limited success in expansion, compared to the early Tang, was not the result of an inherently pacifist or anti-military mentality. Inadequate logistics, strategic blunders, and the tactical superiority of Liao and Xia armies had a lot more to do with it. For more than fifty years from 1071 to 1122, the Northern Song was more often actively expansionist than not. Under Shenzong, the Song court annexed much of He-Huang in an attempt at outflanking the Xia and then launched a direct but unsuccessful invasion of Xia territory in 1081–1082. Upon Shenzong’s death, conservative ministers like Sima Guang abandoned the policies of expansion in He-Huang and aggression against the Xia in the process of repudiating Wang Anshi’s reforms, but these policies—as well as the reforms with which they were associated—were eventually revived in 1094 by Zhezong 哲宗 (r. 1085–1100) and continued under Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1100–1126). In 1122, as is well known, the Song sought to regain the Sixteen Prefectures by joining the Jurchen Jin in an opportunistic attack on the Liao.

¹⁶ The most recent example is Chen Feng 陳峰, “Songdai zhuliu yishi zhipei xia de zhanzheng guan” 宋代主流意識支配下的戰爭觀, *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 2009(2), 38–50. Chen argues that from the 990s to the very end of the Song dynasty in the 1270s, the Song state consistently showed little interest in border defense and territorial expansion. Chen essentially builds this argument by downplaying the significance of all evidence to the contrary.

¹⁷ Fang Cheng-hua 方震華, “Cong herong dao tuobian – Beisong zhongqi duiwai zhengce de zhuanzhe” 從和戎到拓邊—北宋中期對外政策的轉折, *Xin shixue* 新史學 24.2 (2013), 35–69.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 60–62.

The fact that a Jurchen invasion then overran much of north China and nearly put an end to the Song dynasty in 1125–1127 is an ironic twist to the tale, not an inevitable consequence of Song military weakness or passivity. The image of a Northern Song state living in chronic, helpless fear of Liao and Xia military incursions is thus a historical myth arising from our knowledge that both the Northern Song and Southern Song finally fell to foreign invasions.

Northern Song policymakers were certainly never so politically naïve as to assume that appeasement was sufficient to guarantee peace with foreign enemies; nor were they so idealistic as to believe that they could overcome these enemies through moral power and civilizing influence alone, even when they employed such rhetoric at court.¹⁹ Proof of this can be found in the fact that while Northern Song military expenditures were infamously high because of the need to maintain a large professional army—itsself a major reason for the fiscal crises that reformers sought to resolve—the economizing solution that the reformers attempted was to replace local garrisons with a militia system, not to reduce the size of military forces on the Song state’s various borders. Nonetheless, eleventh-century writings on foreign policy do suggest that many Song literati came to link their government’s inability to subdue neighboring states to a lack of moral superiority that had undermined the country’s military strength and political institutions. In other words, they saw greater moral power as a necessary condition for the Song state’s political and military resurgence, albeit not a sufficient condition. This led them to think more deeply than their Tang predecessors did about bringing government policy, including foreign policy, into line with Classicist principles. Moreover, the most important lessons that they had drawn from the Tang dynasty’s decline and fall were that large, militarily powerful empires would not last if they were built on poor foundations, and that it was a fatal mistake to delegate ever-greater power to military commanders on the frontier. They therefore felt uneasy about relying on military solutions and sought to subordinate them to agendas of moral, ideological, and institutional reform wherever possible, even when they disagreed intensely over which reforms were needed.²⁰

This approach is well illustrated by the “Dihuan” 敵患 (The Enemy Threat), a short essay that Li Gou wrote in 1043, shortly after the end of the first Song-Xia war. Having failed to pass a decree examination in 1042, Li submitted this essay, along with numerous others, to Fan

¹⁹ *Contra* Tao Jing-shen 陶晉生, *Song-Liao guanxishi yanjiu* 宋遼關係史研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008 [1995]), 92–95 and Alan T. Wood, *Limits to Autocracy: From Sung Neo-Confucianism to a Doctrine of Political Rights* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 84.

²⁰ Alan Wood is thus partly correct in arguing that the Northern Song literati’s “preoccupation with moral issues,” specifically “the goal of a moral and centralized government,” led to a “policy of assigning a lower priority to strictly military solutions to barbarian problems.” He also notes that “the [Northern Song] scholar-officials [were concerned] with preventing a recurrence of the anarchy that had prevailed in the late Tang and the Five Dynasties period”; they therefore had “solid grounds for their fear of decentralizing power.” Unfortunately, Wood does not explore the link between the fear of anarchy and the emphasis on moral and political reform over military adventurism. Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 84.

Zhongyan and Fu Bi in the hope of earning a recommendation to government office.²¹ Not surprisingly, Li's argument is a subtle endorsement of the reforms that Fan and Fu were then implementing. Throughout the essay, Li Gou plays on the ironic fact that the name of the Xia state can also mean "Chinese." Here is a full translation of the "Dihuan":

Who are the barbarians (Yi), and who are the Xia [Chinese]? I say: When we speak of barbarians, how could we be speaking only of leaving hair untied and wearing animal skins? When we speak of the Xia [Chinese], how could we be speaking only of the wearing of robes, caps, skirts, and shoes? The true difference lies simply in moral power, laws, policies, and governance. If one practices moral power diligently, enforces the laws justly, and has good policies and effective governance, then one may be a barbarian but could just as well be called Xia [Chinese]. If the opposite is true, then can one still be called Xia [Chinese]?

夷夏奚若？曰：所謂夷者，豈被髮衣皮之謂哉？所謂夏者，豈衣冠裳履之謂哉？以德刑政事為差耳。德勉刑中，政脩事舉，雖夷曰夏可也。反是，則謂之夏可乎？

Some foolish Classicists boastfully claim, "*They* are barbarians and *we* are Xia [Chinese]," but they do not say, "We must reform ourselves." When we have reformed ourselves to the point of possessing superior moral power, laws, policies, and governance, then we will be justified in saying, "The Xia [Chinese] are superior to the barbarians." This is what is meant by "know your enemy and know yourself, and in a hundred battles you will not be in peril."²² They (i.e., the Xia state) want to drain our country of its wealth and reduce our people to penury [by provoking us into war], but if we respond with a frugal use of resources, then our country can instead be enriched and our people given lives of ease. If we still cannot do this, then we will have fallen for their tricks.

愚儒之咤則曰「彼夷我夏」，而不曰「內自脩」。內自脩則德、刑、政、事四者備當，而後曰「夏勝夷」可矣，是謂「知彼知己，百戰不殆」。彼欲虛吾國、困吾民，應之以儉，則國可富、民可逸。然猶不能，是墮其術內也。

Alas! [Today's] barbarians and Xia [Chinese] are not the barbarians and Xia [Chinese] of antiquity. It would be best if we "first make ourselves unbeatable, and then wait until they are beatable."²³ Otherwise, disasters will occur daily, and would we not then become a laughing stock to Youyu?

²¹ LGJ 27.299–301, 28.305.

²² Quoting a famous line from the "Mougong" 謀攻 chapter of the *Sunzi bingfa* 孫子兵法.

²³ Another quotation from the *Sunzi bingfa*, this time from the "Junxing" 軍形 chapter.

嗚呼！夷夏非古之夷夏，先爲不可勝，以待彼可勝，善矣。不然，禍且日至，豈徒由余所笑！²⁴

Although Li Gou's argument is partly based on wordplay, its central claim is that moral superiority and good governance, not superficial outward manifestations of culture, define what is Chinese. This claim self-consciously rejected a long-dominant tradition of associating barbarians primarily with geopolitical and ethnocultural otherness, but Li Gou was not alone in doing so. During the eleventh century, an increasing number of Chinese literati came to speak of barbarians in a manner that did not take Chinese superiority for granted. This was not only because the Song state's foreign rivals had adopted Chinese political institutions and material culture more effectively (albeit still in a selective and strategic manner) than any of the enemies whom the Han and Tang empires had faced, although this did arouse some degree of anxiety in men like Han Qi and Fu Bi.²⁵ Just as importantly, understandings of barbarism were changing under the influence of Ancient Style ideology, which popularized the rhetoric of barbarization and made it relevant to a wider range of Classicist discourses. I shall now explain how this happened, beginning with the first Ancient Style writer of the Song period.

²⁴ LGJ 22.242–243. Youyu (already mentioned in Chapter 3) was a Chinese-born emissary from the Rong barbarians to the Qin ruler's court. According to the *Shiji*, he claimed that the Rong were superior to the Chinese because their primitive simplicity had insulated them from the corrupting influence of civilization—the earliest known instance of a “noble savage” argument in Chinese writing.

²⁵ As seen from comments in memorials on foreign policy and frontier defense that Han and Fu submitted in 1043–1044: ZCZY 134.1493–1494, 135.1502.

Chapter 5

The revived Ancient Style rhetoric of ideological barbarism

Liu Kai on barbarians and heterodoxy

Liu Kai was a paradoxical and transitional figure. In a recent study, Chen Feng describes his impetuous and unruly personality and violent, militaristic streak as a vestige of the war-torn world of the Five Dynasties.¹ Lurid tales of his cannibalistic fetish for extracting and eating the livers of convicts and prisoners of war were still being told a century after his death. By then, these stories had overshadowed the literary and intellectual influence that he sought to build during his lifetime, largely through acts of brazen self-promotion.² Nonetheless, Liu Kai was ahead of his time in embracing both Han Yu's prose style and his ideological persona as a fearless champion for the revival and defense of a long-eclipsed Way of the Sages. He effectively invented the rhetorical strategy of labeling all heterodoxies as barbaric; he also espoused the irredentist cause with an unusual degree of zeal. Did his views on foreign policy influence his choice to label all non-Classicist ideologies as intrusions from beyond the Central Lands?

Let us begin our analysis of Liu Kai's ideas with an overview of his intellectual development. Liu was born in Daming 大名 (modern Daming county) in early 947, at a time when the Liao army had briefly occupied the North China Plain after invading and conquering the Later Jin. The circumstances of his birth may have had some influence on his later zeal for warfare against the Kitans, although he never mentions the Liao invasion in his works. Liu's idolization of Han Yu began around the age of sixteen, when he was shown a collection of Han's prose works by an "old Classicist" 老儒 who complained about their being difficult to understand despite the plainness of their language. In a kind of epiphanic moment that Shi Jie later also experienced when first encountering Han Yu's works, Liu was astonished that the Tang had produced a prose writer of this quality. He decided to take Han Yu as the only model for his own writing and change his name to Jianyu 肩愈 ("standing shoulder-to-shoulder with [Han] Yu"); so thorough was his effort at erasing his earlier identity that his original name has been lost to history.³ In 969, he made the following claim in the postface to an edition of Han Yu's works, "I have read Master [Han's] prose from the age of seventeen *sui* (i.e., sixteen years) to this day, about seven years in all; it does not leave my hands by day or night, and I have acquired but one

¹ Chen Feng 陳峰, "Liu Kai shiji yu Songchu shilin de haoheng zhi qi" 柳開事迹與宋初士林的豪橫之氣, *Renwen zazhi* 人文雜誌 2012(4), 123–130.

² E.g., TWSCT, 3.46; see also Lei Chia-sheng 雷家聖, "Beisong qianqi, zhongqi ruxue de duoyuan fazhan — yi Liu Kai daotong shuo yu Sun Fu zunwang lun weili" 北宋前期, 中期儒學的多元發展 — 以柳開道統說與孫復尊王論為例, *Jungguksa yeongu* 中國史研究/中國史研究 76 (2012), 39–42.

³ Zhu Shangshu 祝尚書, "Liu Kai nianpu" 柳開年譜, *Songdai wenhua yanjiu* 宋代文化研究 3 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1993), 116–118; QSW 120.289.

or two tenths of his skill” 余讀先生之文，自年十七至于今，凡七年，日夜不離于手，始得其十之一二者哉。⁴

Around 970, however, Liu Jianyu changed his name to Kai to reflect a new self-appointed mission: “to open up (*kai*) the Way of the ancient sages and worthies in this age, and to open up (*kai*) the ears and eyes of today’s people, so that their ears may hear clearly and their eyes may see clearly” 將開古聖賢之道于時也，將開今人之耳目使聰明也。⁵ As he explained to his patron Liang Zhouhan 梁周翰 (929–1009) two years later, he had undergone a progression from mere literary imitation of Han Yu to aspiring to practice the Way of Confucius. He had previously been engaged in writing an unofficial history of the new Song dynasty, but now took up the study of the Classics. Before long, he began a new project of replacing the lost chapters of the *Odes* and the *Shangshu* with his own compositions, apparently inspired by Wang Tong’s writing of sequels or continuations to the Classics. By this time, Liu Kai believed himself to have unique insight into the minds of the sages. He soon came to believe also that he had possessed this insight from birth, unlike ordinary men who had to learn the Way of the Sages by studying the Classics, and was therefore no less than a sage himself.⁶

After changing his name, Liu Kai clearly still admired Han Yu greatly; indeed, the letter to Liang Zhouhan shows that he regarded Han as a sage or worthy and took great exception to certain unflattering stories about Han’s character that Liang believed to be true. His views on the history of the Way of the Sages were inspired by Han Yu’s “Yuandao” and letter to Meng Jian, but also differed slightly from Han’s. Han Yu saw himself as a direct successor of Mencius, regarded the ideas of Xunzi and Yang Xiong as adulterated forms of the Way, and ignored Wang Tong. Liu Kai, however, believed that Heaven had intended to use Yang Xiong and Wang Tong to revive the Way of the Sages. In a letter to Zang Bing 臧丙 (940–992), probably written during the early 970s, Liu Kai explained that Yang Xiong’s success in combating the “Huang-Lao” 黃老 ideology (which Liu probably equated with Daoism) during Han times was undone by Buddhism during the Wei-Jin period. As a result, “the people were like barbarians (Yi-Di) and the Way of the Sages collapsed as if it had died, with none able to hold on to it” 民若夷狄，聖人之道隕然若逝，無能持之者. Heaven was angered by this collapse and sent Wang Tong to re-illuminate the Way of the Sages; unfortunately, his sageliness never gained the recognition it deserved and therefore failed to reverse the Way’s decline. Heaven next sent Han Yu into the world, and “the Way of the Sages was restored to greatness under the Tang” 聖人之道復大于唐焉. Liu Kai then claimed to Zang Bing that Heaven had now created him to carry on Han Yu’s work: “The Way of the Sages undoubtedly does reside in me!” 聖人之道果在于我矣！ Zang

⁴ QSW 125.355.

⁵ QSW 127.393; Zhu, “Liu Kai nianpu,” 121.

⁶ QSW 120.289–291, 127.393–396; Zhu, “Liu Kai nianpu,” 121.

Bing was apparently fully convinced by Liu Kai's arrogant claim to sageliness and hailed him as "the Song Confucius" 宋之夫子, but few, if any, of Liu's other colleagues were won over.⁷

In this letter to Zang Bing, we can see Liu Kai imitating Han Yu's "Yuandao" by imputing a barbarizing effect to Buddhism. In fact, he went further than Han Yu in representing the barbarization of the Chinese as an event that had already transpired centuries before Han's time, rather than a possible consequence if the Chinese continued to practice Buddhism. In an undated letter addressed to Chen Zhaohua 陳昭華 (n.d.), Liu Kai also went further than Han Yu by claiming that both Buddhism and Daoism were barbarian teachings:

The followers of Laozi and the Buddha arose from among the barbarians (Yi), and the barbarians say that theirs are the highest of teachings. But when they come to the Central Lands, they cannot equal the Way of father-son and ruler-subject relations. The barbarians do not know the Classics; if they knew the Classics, then how could the teachings of Laozi and the Buddha have come into being among them?

老、佛之徒起于夷，夷謂極于教也。至于中國，則莫及其父子君臣之道焉。夷不知其經也，知其經，則老、佛之教何有于夷哉？

Curiously, the idea of barbarian teachings seems to contradict a claim made earlier in the same letter, namely, that barbarians were incapable of learning and thus not truly human:

One might ask, "What is a human being?" I would say, "To learn is to be human. One who does not learn may have the appearance, the robe, and the cap of a human being, but he cannot be called human. The barbarians (Yi-Di Man-Mo) live beyond the four quarters of the world, and their heaven and earth, their sun and moon, their stars, their mountains and rivers, their vegetation, and their climate are no different from ours. But they do not know how to learn, and that is what makes them barbarians."

或問：「如何人？」曰：「學，爲人也。不學，雖形貌、衣冠如人也，不曰人也。夷狄蠻貊居于四方之外，天地、日月、星辰、山川、草木、風氣無殊焉，不知學，所以夷狄蠻貊也。」⁸

⁷ QSW 121.294–301; Zhu, "Liu Kai nianpu," 123–124.

⁸ QSW 121.292–294.

This argument seems to be imitating the rhetoric of Han Yu's "Miscellaneous Discourse #3," except that it identifies learning, rather than moral character, as the criterion for humanity.

Liu Kai also likened the influence of all heterodox ideologies to barbarian invasions in a valedictory preface written for the same man, Chen Zhaohua:

When a true king does not appear [in the world], the laws and government go into decline; the barbarians (Rong-Di Man-Yi) then grow powerful and invade the Central Lands from every side. When a sage passes away, the rites and ritual music decline; the teachings of Yang Zhu, Mozi, Laozi, and the Buddha then grow powerful and bring confusion to the Great Way from every side. Have you seen a well-governed state before? [A state is well-governed] when a true king is on the throne; how would the barbarians be able to invade it? Alas! Can it be that the Great Way will never be illuminated [again]? It is a long time since the sages passed away, and a long time since the rites and ritual music declined. All human beings now follow the teachings of Yang Zhu or Mozi or Laozi or the Buddha, their tangled confusion filling all under heaven. The Great Way is like the Central States, and the teachings of Yang Zhu, Mozi, Laozi, and the Buddha are like the barbarians. Our state is well-governed, but the Great Way has still not been illuminated, and the teachings of Yang Zhu, Mozi, Laozi, and the Buddha continue to invade and confuse it. Who can say that we lack the means [to change this]? ... You say that I have revived the Way of the Sages, but the damaging influence of Yang Zhu, Mozi, Laozi, and the Buddha has not yet been removed, so have I truly succeeded in reviving the Way? ... Have you heard of how armies fight? If one has courage and the support of a multitude, then he will be victorious in battle. I am like one engaged in battle, I have the [needed] courage, and I am going to first muster all my strength and strike Yang Zhu, Mozi, Laozi, and the Buddha dead. If you and the others remember your kind words to me and support me, then the Way of the Sages will surely be revived.

王者不出，行政弛焉，則戎狄蠻夷盛，而交侵于中國矣。聖人既沒，禮樂弊焉，則楊、墨、老、佛盛，而交亂于大道焉。子見治于國乎？由王者在其上也，戎狄蠻夷是能侵之乎？烏乎！大道獨不明乎？聖人沒也久矣，禮樂弊也亦久矣，爲人者或楊、墨，或老，或佛，交亂而滿天下。大道猶中國也，楊、墨、老、佛猶戎狄蠻夷也。國治而道不明，楊、墨、老、佛固侵亂也，孰謂吾無能哉？... 謂吾復于聖人之道，則楊、墨、老、佛之害未去矣，是能果復其道哉！... 然子聞兵陣乎？能有勇，眾輔之，則勝于戰矣。吾猶戰也，斯有勇焉，先將舉其力而斃其楊、墨、老、佛。子與諸君苟念其惠我之言而輔于吾，復于聖人之道也，而後必矣。⁹

⁹ QSW 124.343.

The most important model for this analogy of invasion and warfare is Mencius's attempt at likening his philosophical polemics to the Duke of Zhou's military campaigns against barbarians. But it is noteworthy that whereas Mencius displayed an attitude of indifference, even aversion, toward actual warfare, Liu Kai eventually put his literary and philosophical pursuits aside and pursued a second career in the military.¹⁰ Liu narrowly passed the *jinshi* examinations in 973, at the age of twenty-seven, and served in a variety of official posts, mostly in local government.¹¹ But in the 980s, the new irredentist cause of reclaiming the Sixteen Prefectures from the Kitan empire seems to have awoken in him an ambition for military glory. He memorialized Song Taizong 宋太宗 (r. 976–997) to request command of several thousand troops on the northern frontier in the winter of 986–987, shortly after the second Song attempt at capturing the Sixteen Prefectures failed as disastrously as the first. Liu's request was denied, probably because he lacked military experience. But in the summer of 987 Liu Kai, then forty years old, was one of five court officials who responded to an edict calling for civil officials with knowledge of military affairs to volunteer for positions in the army. The court assigned him to command a newly established military prefecture at Boye county 博野縣, a strategic location on the northern frontier. Liu Kai soon initiated a plan to seize Youzhou from the Kitans with the aid of a defecting general named Bai Wande 白萬德 (n.d.), but this plan was aborted upon Liu's reassignment to Quanzhou 全州 (modern Quanzhou county), a frontier prefecture in the far south, in 988.¹²

In an epitaph that Liu Kai composed for one of his cousins in 996, he claimed that his abrupt reassignment in 988 was a result of calumnious accusations made by political enemies of the high-ranking minister Zhao Changyan 趙昌言 (944–1009), with whom Liu was apparently close. Indeed, Liu's reassignment to Quanzhou coincided with a political scandal in which Zhao and a political ally, Hu Dan 胡旦 (955?–1034?), were charged with cronyism and demoted to the provinces. One of Hu Dan's friends, an ambitious copyist named Zhai Ying 翟穎 (n.d.), had

¹⁰ Peter Bol's analysis of Liu Kai, hitherto the most detailed treatment in English, focuses on his claims to be Han Yu's successor and a sage but does not consider the significance of his career change. Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 162–165.

¹¹ One of Liu Kai's letters mentions that he initially failed the examinations in 973, but passed a retest that Song Taizong called after one of the other unsuccessful candidates appealed to the throne and accused the chief examiner of partiality. Higashi Hidetoshi accepts as factual an anecdote from Ye Mengde's 葉夢得 (1077–1148) *Shilin yanyu* 石林燕語, which claims that Liu Kai had failed the *jinshi* examinations repeatedly because of his inability to compose poetry and write in the parallel prose style. According to Ye, could not even pass the retest in 973, but Song Taizong then granted him a special interview on the recommendation of Lu Duoxun 盧多遜 (934–985) and was sufficiently impressed to order that he be given the *jinshi* degree. Zhu Shangshu has pointed out, however, that Liu Kai's posthumous biography (*xingzhuang* 行狀) states he passed the examinations on the first try, and that Wang Yinchen's 汪應辰 (1118–1176) commentary to the *Shilin yanyu* notes other inaccuracies in this anecdote's account of the retest. In that case, one cannot assume the factuality of the *Shilin yanyu* anecdote. Nonetheless, we can be certain that Liu Kai had to undergo a retest in 973. QSW 123.329; Ye Mengde 葉夢得, *Shilin yanyu* 石林燕語 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 113, 215; Higashi, *Fugu yu chuanguxin*, 37–41, 47; Zhu, "Liu Kai nianpu," 126–127.

¹² Zhu, "Liu Kai nianpu," 131–135; Chen, "Liu Kai shiji," 125–126.

submitted an audacious memorial to criticize current court policy while recommending himself and at least ten other men for high posts. Hu Dan was suspected of being the real author of the memorial and of trying to use his ties with Zhao Changyan to build a faction at court.¹³ Song Taizong may have lost confidence in Liu Kai as a result of his connections with Zhao Changyan, particularly if Liu was one of the men recommended in Zhai Ying's memorial. In any case, the war-weary Taizong chose to redirect his attention from irredentism to internal governance after 990, partly on the urging of ministers who feared that further conflict with the Kitans would be fatally destabilizing to the new Song state.¹⁴ Liu Kai served in a series of prefectural posts around the empire during the ten years after his transfer to Quanzhou, but none of these was on the Song-Kitan frontier. It is interesting that the tales of him eating human livers are specific to his prefectural posts in 988–994. Possibly, given his history of self-promoting behavior, he adopted the liver-eating practice precisely for the purpose of salvaging his military career by gaining a fearsome reputation.¹⁵

In 998, the newly enthroned Song Zhenzong 宋真宗 (r. 997–1022) finally assigned Liu Kai to the northern frontier at Daizhou 代州 (modern Dai county 代縣). He almost immediately clashed with the local garrison over his plans to refortify the prefectural capital despite there being no sign of an enemy attack. He thereupon requested a transfer and was posted to Xinzhou 忻州, the prefecture immediately south of Daizhou. Soon after arriving in Xinzhou in the summer of 999, he heard rumors of large Kitan troop movements along the frontier, and memorialized the throne predicting that the Kitans would invade in winter. He urged Zhenzong to seize the strategic initiative by personally leading an expedition to the frontier and striking fear into Kitan hearts; he also volunteered to command three to five thousand elite cavalry as the expedition's vanguard. Liu Kai's warning came true even earlier than he had expected. A large Kitan army invaded the North China Plain that autumn and raided as far as the Shandong peninsula in the spring of 1000, withdrawing only after Zhenzong led a Song army to Daming. One month later, the Song court transferred Liu Kai to Cangzhou 滄州 (modern Cang county 滄縣), where he would be in a position to intercept future Kitan raids from Youzhou. While en

¹³ There is an amusing anecdote about Hu Dan and Liu Kai in the *Yuhu qinghua* 玉壺清話, written by the monk Wenying 文瑩 (n.d.) in 1078: sometime in 980–984, Hu wrote an annalistic account of Han history entitled the *Han Chunqiu* 漢春秋, which was clearly modeled on the *Chunqiu*. He proudly showed it to Liu Kai, but Liu angrily berated him for presuming to be a sage like Confucius. Liu then attempted to slash Hu Dan with a sword, and Hu narrowly escaped by fleeing onto a ship. Chen Zhi'e has argued that this story is implausible because Liu Kai himself had pretensions to sagehood; I would argue that the story was created precisely to poke fun at the fact that both Hu and Liu were ardent self-promoters who (in Wenying's words) "loved to use their fame to shock the [people of] their time" 喜以名驚于時. It is worth noting that in 985, Hu Dan submitted a memorial that urged Song Taizong to launch an expedition to capture Youzhou. He and Liu Kai thus also shared an enthusiastic attitude toward the irredentist cause. QSW 129.413; SS 267.9195, 432.12828–12830; Zhu, "Liu Kai nianpu," 129, 135; Chen, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun*, 185–186. On Zhao Changyan and Hu Dan see also Chen, "Liu Kai shiji," 129.

¹⁴ See Li Huarui, *Song-Xia guanxishi*, 26–29; Chen, "Songdai zhuliu yishi," 40–41.

¹⁵ Zhu, "Liu Kai nianpu," 136–142; Chen, "Liu Kai shiji," 127.

route to take up this post, he suddenly developed an ulcer on his head and died at Bingzhou (Taiyuan), at the age of fifty-three.¹⁶

The Song-Kitan conflict continued to escalate after Liu Kai's untimely death and ended at the beginning of 1005, after the Song army fought a massive Kitan invasion force to a stalemate just seventy-four miles northwest of the Song capital Kaifeng. Had Liu Kai lived longer, he would almost certainly have had the opportunity to participate in these campaigns and demonstrate whatever military talent he had. There is thus good reason to doubt Chen Feng's claim that Liu's choice of a military career doomed him to obscurity and disappointment because of the Song state's growing aversion to warfare.¹⁷ His military career would indeed have stagnated after 1005, when the Song-Kitan conflict came to an end. But he would then probably have returned to his earlier ambitions as a self-appointed sage, which had been interrupted by his career as a local official and aspiring general. The real problem was that his claims to sagehood never gained credibility with most of his peers, in part because of the many stories about his impulsive and violent behavior. Even his literary abilities were apparently not equal to his ambitions to be the next Han Yu: his prose tends toward vagueness and syntactical awkwardness, despite his own assertion that Ancient Style writing is not meant to be obscure and unreadable.¹⁸ Three decades later, however, Liu Kai's militant attitude toward both Classicist ideology and foreign relations became a source of inspiration for Shi Jie, who was at least his equal in overweening self-importance and eccentricity and probably surpassed him in ideological zeal.

Shi Jie and Sun Fu on barbarians and heterodoxy

Around 1032, Shi Jie made it his mission to find the next Han Yu and become his disciple. Two years before, Shi had passed the *jinshi* examinations at the age of twenty-six and received appointment to an official post in Yunzhou 鄆州 (modern Dongping 東平 county). At Yunzhou, he acquired copies of Han Yu's collected works and Yao Xuan's anthology of Tang poetry and prose, the *Tang wencui* 唐文萃 (completed in 1010), and read them for the first time. Yao Xuan's preference for Ancient Style prose over parallel prose was evident in his selection of

¹⁶ Zhu, "Liu Kai nianpu," 144–146.

¹⁷ Chen, "Liu Kai shiji," 127–128. Chen overlooks the fact that Liu Kai's career as a military commander on the northern frontier was reviving by the time of his death.

¹⁸ QSW 126.367. Modern Chinese literary historians have tended to argue that Liu Kai's focus on the ideology of the Way (*dao* 道) caused him to pay insufficient attention to literary skill (*wen* 文) or to assume wrongly that any ideologically correct writing was good writing. This argument, which became common in the 1990s and was also applied to Shi Jie, seems in part to be a reaction to the extreme politicization of literature during the Cultural Revolution. Soejima Ichiro has proposed a different and quite promising theory that the marginal position in elite society that Liu Kai and some of his closest friends (including Liang Zhouhan) occupied drove them to challenge the status quo by espousing a radical approach to literary style and engaging in eccentric behavior. See Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 142–143; Zhu, "Lun Mu Xiu dui Beisong guwen yundong de gongxian," 290–294; Soejima Ichiro 副島一郎 (trans. Wang Yiyuan 王宜瑗), *Qi yu shifeng—Tang-Song guwen de jincheng yu beijing* 氣與士風 — 唐宋古文的進程與背景 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005), 149–158.

works for inclusion in the *Tang wencui*, and Shi Jie was quickly struck by the contrast between the rich didactic content of late Tang Ancient Style writing and the primarily aesthetic preoccupations of parallel prose writing.¹⁹ He began to interpret Song literary culture's preference for parallel prose, especially the style invented by Yang Yi, as a deplorable state of decline. Han Yu, together with his allies or imitators—among whom Shi Jie counted Liu Zongyuan, Huangfu Shi, Li Ao, Meng Jiao, Zhang Ji, Yuan Zhen, and Bai Juyi—had reversed a similar decline in the late Tang; only another man of Han Yu's talent and courage could do the same for the Song.²⁰ As with the case of Liu Kai, more than literary culture was at stake: Shi Jie, having embraced Han Yu's agenda *in toto*, also believed it was time for someone to take up Han's mantle on the ideological front and revive the Way of the Sages by rooting out the influence of Buddhism and Daoism. By 1034, he had accepted Liu Kai's expanded list of legitimate followers of the Way of the Sages (i.e., Mencius, Yang Xiong, Wang Tong, and Han Yu) but also added two men—namely, Xunzi and Liu Kai himself—to that list.²¹

Shi Jie initially attempted to convince a Mister Zhao 趙先生 to become the new hero of the Ancient Style cause, arguing that Zhao's failure to secure an official career in spite of his literary talent must mean he was destined for greater things.²² Nothing seems to have come of this effort, however. Shi Jie then turned to seeking out a Classicist who could revive the Way of the Sages by leading the fight against Buddhism and Daoism. In 1033, the renowned classical scholar Sun Shi 孫奭 (962–1033) retired from office at the imperial court and took residence in Yunzhou. Shi Jie quickly came to the conclusion that Sun Shi was the man who would become Han Yu's ideological successor, perhaps because Sun had written a commentary on the *Mencius* and was known to have criticized Song Zhenzong's patronage of Daoism on a few occasions. Shi wrote a letter to Sun, explaining the latter's historic mission and begging to be accepted as his disciple. To Shi Jie's disappointment, Sun Shi fell ill and died two months later.²³

Shi Jie next set his sights on Shi Jianzhong 士建中 (b. 998), an impoverished Yunzhou man who was a gifted writer of Ancient Style prose.²⁴ Shi Jianzhong was then preparing to take the *jinshi* examinations for the first time, and Shi Jie worried that his insistence on writing in an unfashionable prose style would put him at a disadvantage as an anonymous candidate. Shi Jie and a like-minded Yunzhou official therefore attempted to persuade the imperial court to hold a

¹⁹ On the literary biases and popularity of the *Tang wencui*, see Soejima, *Qi yu shifeng*, 162–164.

²⁰ CLWJ 12.135–139; Chen Zhi'e 陳植鏐, *Shi Jie shiji zhuzuo biannian* 石介事迹著作編年 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), 22, 26–27.

²¹ CLWJ 15.180–181 (cf. 7.79). Lei Chia-sheng's recent analysis of Liu Kai's influence on Shi Jie overlooks Shi's eventual acceptance of Xunzi and Liu Kai as true followers of the Way of the Sages—see Lei, “Beisong qianqi, zhongqi ruxue de duoyuan fazhan,” 42–43.

²² CLWJ 12.135–139.

²³ Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 28–29, 31–33; CLWJ 9.99–102, 15.172–173.

²⁴ Ge Huanli 葛煥禮 has written an article-length study of Shi Jianzhong's life and ideas: “Shi Jianzhong shengping ji sixiang kaoshu” 士建中生平及思想考述, *Kongzi yanjiu* 孔子研究 2003(2), 100–106. Shi Jie's first extant letter to Shi Jianzhong, inviting him to assume leadership of the Ancient Style cause, is found at CLWJ 14.162–164. Chen Zhi'e dates the letter to 1031, but a date of 1032 or 1033 is also plausible—see Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 25.

special examination for Shi Jianzhong. After this request was turned down, Shi Jie forwarded a portfolio of Jianzhong's works to two court ministers in the hope of securing special treatment for him.²⁵ In the end, Shi Jie's worries for Shi Jianzhong's future proved unnecessary. Late in the spring of 1034, Jianzhong passed the *jinshi* examinations in Kaifeng and was appointed magistrate of Wei county 魏縣, near Daming.²⁶

Shi Jianzhong's trip to Kaifeng also included a serendipitous discovery: during the examinations, he befriended a fellow candidate named Sun Fu who claimed to have recovered the original message of the Classics. Unlike Shi Jianzhong, Sun failed to pass the examinations (it was his fourth try), but Jianzhong decided to introduce him to Shi Jie.²⁷ Sun Fu soon visited Shi Jie at the Southern Capital 南京 (Yingtian prefecture 應天府, modern Shangqiu 商丘), to which the latter had just been reassigned as the principal of the prefectural school. Shi Jie was then attempting to persuade Wang Gongchen 王拱辰 (1012–1085), the top candidate in the 1030 *jinshi* cohort, to “lead this literary culture” 主盟斯文 against the influence of parallel prose.²⁸ Upon meeting Sun Fu, however, he was immediately won over by Sun's devotion to classical scholarship and hailed Sun and Shi Jianzhong as the new Han Yu and Mencius.²⁹ Shi Jie invited Sun to become a private teacher of *Chunqiu* exegesis on Mount Tai, which was in Shi's hometown of Fengfu county 奉符縣 (modern Tai'an 泰安). Sun Fu, who had tired of pursuing success in the examinations, eventually accepted the invitation. He stayed with Shi Jianzhong in Daming until the winter of 1035, when he moved into a house on Mount Tai that had been built on Shi Jie's expense. Shi Jie and two of his friends, Zhang Dong 張洞 (n.d.) and Li Wen 李縉 (n.d.), then formally entered into discipleship under Sun Fu.³⁰

During the period 1033–1035, Shi Jie seems to have taken a special interest in imitating Han Yu's rhetorical uses of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. We see the first indications of this in his 1033 letter to Sun Shi, which begins by praising Sun as an equal of Confucius and Mencius. Shi Jie claims that those Chinese people who had the misfortune of living after Confucius but before Mencius all ended up following Yang Zhu or Mozi; as for people who

²⁵ One of these ministers took exception to Shi Jianzhong's belief in the theory of direct interaction between Heaven and humankind, and therefore refused to support him. We know nothing about the other minister's response to Shi Jianzhong's portfolio. CLWJ 13.142–146, 150–153, 15.183–185, 16.192–193, 20.241–242; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 34–36, 39–42.

²⁶ Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 41; Ge, “Shi Jianzhong shengping ji sixiang kaoshu,” 101–102.

²⁷ On Sun Fu's four failed attempts at passing the examinations, see CLWJ 9.95, 14.158.

²⁸ Shi Jie had been impressed by a preface that Wang Gongchen composed, declaring it equal to the work of Liu Zongyuan, Liu Yuxi, Han Yu, and Liu Kai. There is no evidence, however, that Wang was partial to the Ancient Style. Wang Gongchen later turned against Fan Zhongyan's reform party (which Shi Jie supported) in 1044 and played a key role in its downfall. CLWJ 15.180–181; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 42–43, 48; SS 318.10359–10360.

²⁹ Chen Zhi'e interprets Shi Jie's use of the phrase “Han and Meng” 韓孟 as meaning Han Yu and Meng Jiao, but since Shi is not known to have been an admirer of Meng Jiao's poetry, it is more likely that he was referring to Mencius. CLWJ 3.27, 16.191–192; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 43–44.

³⁰ CLWJ 2.18–20, 3.28–29, 14.158, 15.183.

lived at the time of Confucius or Mencius but lived far away among the barbarians (Rong-Di 戎狄/Yi-Man 夷蠻), they had no chance to learn from these sages and therefore “continued fastening their robes on the left side and babbling in a foreign tongue” 服終左衽，而言終侏離矣。Shi Jie then declares that he, by contrast, has the good fortune of living in the same age and in the very same place as a new Confucius or Mencius.³¹ The motif of robes and babbling is obviously borrowed from Han Yu’s letter to Meng Jian, but Shi Jie has switched it from a statement about the barbarizing effect of heterodoxy to a statement about the potential for sagely teachings to de-barbarize the barbarians, if not for the distance separating them from the Central Lands. He then goes on to employ the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in a new and rather bizarre metaphor that likens the decline of the Way of the Sages to a burglary:

Alas! Confucius died, and his seventy-two disciples later died too. The Way of the Sages had no bolts or locks to protect it, so at midnight someone tore down the walls and removed the doors, taking them with him when he left. Then anyone could come and go through the entrances. Unfortunately, there next came a burglar who stole it and went out of the Central Lands, leaving it among the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters beyond. Thus were the teachings of Yang Zhu, Mozi, the Buddha, and Laozi invented. After the teachings of Yang Zhu, Mozi, the Buddha, and Laozi, there were several hundreds of philosophers who distorted and departed from [the Way] and combined all kinds of weird, false, strange, and absurd [ideas]. These were the geopolitical strategists, the syncretists, the name-disputers, the tale-collectors, men like [Zhang] Yi, [Su] Qin, Shang Yang, Han Fei, and Zhuang Zhou, who rose up like a swarm of bees and could not be stopped.

噫！孔子沒，七十二之徒隨喪。聖人之道無關鍵扃鐃以固，夜半有人壞墉撤扉，挈之而去，則人各由其門戶自出處焉。不幸又有穿窬之盜，盜之而出於中國之內，放諸四夷之外。故有楊、墨、佛、老氏之教作焉。楊、墨、佛、老之下，諸子且數百，又乖而離之，合諸妖妄怪誕，復有縱橫家者、雜家者、刑名家者、小說家者，儀、秦、商鞅、韓非、莊周之徒，蠱起而莫之禦也。³²

Shi Jie seems to want to represent all heterodox teachings as illegitimate and inferior distortions of the Way of the Sages by comparing their emergence to a theft of the Way and their founders to barbarians. One is reminded of the Daoist strategy of representing Buddhism as an inferior version of the Way that Laozi (in the guise of the Buddha) created for barbarians. Shi Jie next elaborates on his point using two other metaphors to describe the rise of heterodox teachings:

They were like streams that flowed out of a river that overflowed its dykes, spreading all over the land, some flowing into the Tuo [River] and some into the Han [River], making it impossible to gather them back in the same place. They were like roads that turned away from the Chinese states and took different routes, splitting and branching out, some going to the Yi and some going to the Mo, making it impossible to reconnect them.

³¹ CLWJ 15.172.

³² Ibid.

譬諸水，出諸瀆，溢於防，浩然汗漫，或入於沱，或淪於漢，無所屬焉。譬諸塗，背諸夏，由諸徑，分然支離或之於夷，或之於貊，無所會焉。³³

Here, the mention of the Yi and Mo barbarians seems to serve little purpose other than to emphasize the extent of the heterodoxies' deviation from and inferiority to the Way of the Sages, in the same way as the burglary metaphor had the burglar taking the Way out of the Central Lands and into the lands of the barbarians.

Shi Jie soon went beyond such metaphorical uses of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy and adopted Liu Kai's strategy of claiming that both Buddhism and Daoism literally "arose from among the barbarians." An incident that occurred in 1034 may have provided the impetus for this move. The new prefect of the Southern Capital, Liu Sui 劉隨 (971–1035), was inspecting the prefectural school with Shi Jie and gave instructions that all books that were not "the books of the sages" 聖人之書 should be removed from the school library lest they mislead students. To Shi Jie's consternation, however, when Liu Sui came across the library's set of portraits of the Buddha, Laozi, and Confucius, titled *Standard Portraits of the Three Teachings* 三教畫本, he remarked that the Three Teachings—Buddhism, Daoism, and the teachings of Confucius—were all worthy of respect. The next day, Shi Jie was again with Liu Sui in the prefect's office when the two men happened to look at portraits of Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Yao, and Shun. Liu Sui praised the sage-kings and claimed that they and the Buddha were all sages.³⁴ Shi Jie, having embraced Han Yu's ideology, found this eclectic disregard for orthodoxy intolerable. Nonetheless, he refrained from disagreeing with Liu Sui in public and instead wrote Liu a letter soon afterwards. In this letter, Shi claimed to be baffled by Liu Sui's willingness to accord the Buddha a level of honor that only the greatest Chinese sage-kings deserved:

Even Yu, King Tang, King Wen, King Wu, and the Duke of Zhou did not reach [the level of sageliness attained by Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Yao, and Shun] despite being kings. In later ages, wasn't our teacher [Confucius] the only man who could equal the greatness of the two sagely lords [Yao and Shun] and the three august lords [Fuxi, Shennong, and Huangdi]? Even Yu, King Tang, King Wen, King Wu, and the Duke of Zhou did not reach that level, yet [you claim that] the Buddha, a man of the barbarians (Yi-Di), surpasses Yu, King Tang, King Wen, King Wu, and the Duke of Zhou and is equal to Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Yao, and Shun. In that case, you wish to bring in a man of the barbarians and elevate him to the level of the sage-kings; you wish to bring in a way of the barbarians and cause it to be practiced within the Central Lands.

禹、湯、文、武、周公，猶不及其號而為王，後世能躋二帝三皇之懿者，其吾師乎？夫禹、湯、文、武、周公，猶不能及，而佛夷狄之人，乃過禹、湯、文、武、周公，與伏羲、神農、黃帝、堯、舜等，則是公欲引夷狄之人，加於二帝三皇之上也，欲引夷狄之道，行於中國之內也。

³³ CLWJ 15.172–173.

³⁴ CLWJ 13.153, 19.228.

Shi Jie also practically accused Liu Sui of inventing the idea of the Three Teachings, as if Han Yu's exclusivist understanding of the Way had been the norm up to that point:

From the time of Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Yao, Shun, Yu, King Tang, King Wen, King Wu, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius to this day, there has been only one ruler of all under heaven, and there has been only one teaching in the Central Lands. There has been no other Way. Now you say that our sages and the Buddha [and Laozi] are the Three Teachings, and that the Buddha, Laozi, and Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Yao, and Shun are all sages. Is that not shocking? I, Shi Jie, do not understand your intent in saying what you said.

夫自伏羲、神農、黃帝、堯、舜、禹、湯、文、武、周公、孔子至於今，天下一君也，中國一教也，無他道也。今謂吾聖人與佛爲三教，謂佛、老與伏羲、神農、黃帝、堯、舜俱爲聖人，斯不亦駭矣！介不曉公之旨，何爲而爲是言也。³⁵

In fact, Liu Sui's acceptance of the Three Teachings concept and eclectic definition of sagehood still represented the mainstream opinion at the time and could hardly have come as a surprise to Shi Jie. The truly shocking thing was the thirty-year-old Shi's decision to challenge and embarrass his direct superior, a sexagenarian and a highly respected official, over the seemingly inconsequential issue of two portraits in a library.

In the last part of the letter to Liu Sui, Shi Jie argued that Liu's instructions to remove all unsagely books from the library collection were even more applicable to unsagely images, even though Liu had clearly indicated the opposite. Indeed, Shi Jie next acted without Liu's authorization and ordered the school library staff to destroy the portraits of the Buddha and Laozi. Claiming that he had to leave a written record of this order so as not to be accused of losing the portraits through negligence, he wrote an explanation of his actions in a deliberately idiosyncratic calligraphic style that he had invented. He then had the text inscribed in stone and sent a rubbing of the inscription to Wang Gongchen; other literati in Kaifeng probably received rubbings as well. The inscription repeated Shi Jie's argument about unsagely images and also claimed that Liu Sui's definition of unsagely books could not refer to anything but Buddhist and Daoist texts, since "Laozi and the Buddha are enemies of the Way of the Sages and opposed to the good governance of the Central Lands" 老與佛，賊聖人之道者也，悖中國之治者也. If students should not be allowed to read books containing the teachings of Laozi and the Buddha, how much more so should they not be allowed to see images of Laozi and the Buddha? Moreover, grouping these two together with Confucius in the *Standard Portraits of the Three Teachings* amounted to considering them as equals to the sages. How could this not mislead the Chinese into "changing our robes and caps, abandoning our Master [Confucius], discarding our honored parents, ceasing our sacrificial rites, and all going together to follow barbarians (Yi)" 易吾衣冠，棄吾夫子，捨吾尊親，廢吾祭祀，相與同歸于夷也?³⁶

³⁵ CLWJ 13.153–154.

³⁶ CLWJ 13.154, 19.228–229; on the inscription's calligraphy and the rubbing sent to Wang Gongchen, see JSWJ 16.1764.

By this point, Shi Jie was extremely close to asserting that Laozi's teachings were as foreign to the Central Lands as those of the Buddha. That very assertion lies at the center of Shi Jie's most famous essay, the "Zhongguo lun" 中國論 (Discourse on the Central Lands). Chen Zhi'e believed that Shi Jie wrote the "Zhongguo lun" in 1034, but cited no direct evidence for this.³⁷ I suspect that Chen's dating of the essay is based on a gut feeling as to the direction in which Shi Jie's disagreement with Liu Sui was taking him: namely, a rhetorical effort at linking both Buddhism and Daoism with barbarians in the clearest and most literal way possible. In the "Zhongguo lun," Shi Jie attempts to raise the rhetorical strategy of equating all heterodoxy with barbarism to the level of a comprehensive theory, but he can only do so by committing some glaring errors of fact and logic. The first part of the essay speaks of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in terms of geography and customs, borrowing heavily from the long-obsolete ethnographic descriptions of barbarian peoples in the "Wangzhi":

Heaven lies above and earth lies below, and that which lies in the center of heaven and earth is called the Central Lands, while those who dwell on the fringes of heaven and earth are called the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters. The barbarians of the four quarters are outer, and the Central Lands are inner. Heaven and earth made them inner and outer in order to keep them separate. The Central Lands are where it is natural for the bonds of ruler and subject to be established; for the rites and ritual music to be performed; for [men in] robes and caps to appear; for the rituals of capping, marriage, and sacrifice to be used; for mourners to dress in hemp sackcloth; for fruits and vegetables to grow; and for rice, hemp, and millet to exist. The peoples to the east are called Yi. They leave their hair untied and tattoo their bodies. Some of them eat their food uncooked. Those to the south are called Man. They tattoo their foreheads and have their toes crossed. Some of them also eat their food uncooked. Those to the west are called Rong. They leave their hair untied and wear animal skins. Some of them do not eat grains. Those to the north are called Di. They wear skins and dwell in caves. Some of them also do not eat grains. Each people is comfortable with its own customs, and if they are changed, then disorder will ensue.

夫天處乎上，地處乎下，居天地之中者曰中國，居天地之偏者曰四夷。四夷，外也，中國，內也。天地爲之乎內外，所以限也。夫中國者，君臣所自立也，禮樂所自作也，衣冠所自出也，冠婚祭祀所自用也，纓麻喪泣所自制也，果蓏菜茹所自殖也，稻麻黍稷所自有也。東方曰夷，被髮文身，有不火食者矣。南方曰蠻，雕題交趾，有不火食者矣。西方曰戎，被髮衣皮，有不粒食者矣。北方曰狄，衣毛穴居，有不粒食者矣。其俗皆自安也，相易則亂。³⁸

We have seen that in the "Dihuan" of 1043, Li Gou dismissed the idea that such outward cultural forms as "leaving hair untied and wearing animal skins" could define the difference between barbarians and Chinese. In contrast, Shi Jie highlights these external differences because the

³⁷ Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 45.

³⁸ CLWJ 10.116.

primary rhetorical strategy of the “Zhongguo lun” will be to claim that Buddhism and Daoism are culturally alien to the Chinese, and not just philosophically incompatible with Classicism.

Shi Jie turns to astrology and ethics, claiming that these all correspond to the geographic distinction between inner and outer. Cosmic order requires that barbarians stay out of the Central Lands, and that the Chinese differ from barbarians in valuing social relationships. Any violation of either principle places the identity of the Central Lands in dire jeopardy:

If we gaze up at heaven, there are the twenty-eight lunar mansions (i.e., constellations); if we look down at the earth, there are the field allocations for the Nine Provinces; if we look at the human beings between [heaven and earth], there are bonds between rulers and subjects, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, elder brothers and younger brothers, [hosts and] guests, and friends. Those who do not fall within the twenty-eight lunar mansions and the field allocations for the Nine Provinces, and who do not honor the bonds between rulers and subjects, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, elder brothers and younger brothers, [hosts and] guests, or friends—those are all barbarians (Yi-Di). If those outside the twenty-eight lunar mansions should interfere with those within them, that would bring disorder to the order of the heavens; if those outside the field allocations for the Nine Provinces should enter into them, that would alter the principles of the earth; when they do not honor the bonds between rulers and subjects, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, elder brothers and younger brothers, [hosts and] guests, and friends, they are violating the way of humanity. If the order of the heavens is in disorder above, the principles of the earth are altered below, and the way of humanity is being violated in between, then our country will no longer be the Central Lands.

仰觀於天，則二十八舍在焉；俯察於地，則九州分野在焉；中觀於人，則君臣、父子、夫婦、兄弟、賓客、朋友之位，皆夷狄也。非二十八舍、九州分野之內，非君臣、父子、夫婦、兄弟、賓客、朋友之位，皆夷狄也。二十八舍之外干乎二十八舍之內，是亂天常也；九州分野之外入乎九州分野之內，是易地理也；非君臣、父子、夫婦、兄弟、賓客、朋友之位，是悖人道也。苟天常亂於上，地理易於下，人道悖於中，國不為中國矣。³⁹

As we saw in Chapter 2, the notion that barbarians are prone to betraying their rulers and kin was commonplace long before this time. Here, Shi Jie is trying to conflate it with an argument seen in the “Yuandao” and numerous earlier pieces of anti-Buddhist polemic: namely, that Buddhism and Daoism cause people to abandon their duties to their families and rulers by becoming monks, nuns, or immortality-seeking recluses.

³⁹ Ibid.

In the next part of the essay, Shi Jie identifies the barbarians who have interfered or entered into the Central Lands as the Buddha and Laozi, not—as one might expect—the Kitans or any other foreign power:

I have heard that there was a giant called the Buddha who came from the west and entered our Central Lands, and an old man named [Lao] Dan (i.e., Laozi) who came from among the Westerners (Hu) and entered our Central Lands. Each [sought to] change the people of the Central Lands with his people, the Way of the Central Lands with his way, the customs of the Central Lands with his customs, the books of the Central Lands with his books, the teachings of the Central Lands with his teachings, the houses of the Central Lands with his houses, the rites and ritual music of the Central Lands with his rites and ritual music, the literary arts of the Central Lands with his literary arts, the clothing of the Central Lands with his clothing, the diet of the Central Lands with his diet, and the sacrificial rites of the Central Lands with his sacrificial rites.

聞乃有巨人名曰佛，自西來入我中國；有龐眉名曰聃，自胡來入我中國。各以其人易中國之人，以其道易中國之道，以其俗易中國之俗，以其書易中國之書，以其教易中國之教，以其居廬易中國之居廬，以其禮樂易中國之禮樂，以其文章易中國之文章，以其衣服易中國之衣服，以其飲食易中國之飲食，以其祭祀易中國之祭祀。

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Shi Jie's claim that the Buddha himself came to the Central Lands can be read as hyperbole.⁴¹ His claim that the Laozi was a barbarian like the Buddha, however, is obviously not just exaggerated but false. Shi may have been attempting to reverse the Daoist myth that Laozi became the Buddha after going west⁴², or he may have been imitating Liu Kai's letter to Chen Zhaohua. In any case, the argument that Daoism was alien to the identity of the Central Lands was simply untenable: Daoist rites, ritual music, temple architecture, ritual clothing, and dietary practices all had essentially Chinese origins, even if they did not conform to Classicist norms.⁴³ As mentioned in Chapter 3, anti-Buddhist polemic produced by Daoists even highlighted Buddhism's foreignness in order to represent Daoism as the true Chinese religion. Shi Jie seems

⁴⁰ CLWJ 10.116–117.

⁴¹ The literal-minded Southern Song philosopher Huang Zhen 黃震 (1213–1281) found it ludicrous, pointing out that it was the Buddha's disciples who came from the west and also faulting Shi Jie for believing the Buddhists' claims about the Buddha's exceptional height (which, according to one text, was seven cubits rather than the normal four). See Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 45.

⁴² Huang Zhen noted this reversal and commented skeptically, "I do not know what basis there is for it" 未知何据也—see *ibid.*

⁴³ Chen Zhi'e ignores this problem when he explains Shi Jie's claim about Laozi as a case of Han Yu's *Chunqiu* formula: "when one uses barbarian (Yi-Di) rites, then one is regarded as a barbarian" 用夷禮則夷狄之. Chen, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun*, 31.

to recognize this incongruity and quickly turns to attributing the popularity of Buddhism and Daoism to their beliefs in heaven, hell, and immortality. In the process, he takes the hoary myth that Buddhism is a selfish and anti-social religion and turns it against the Daoists:

Even so, the people of the Central Lands were still unwilling to take delight in following them. The Buddha then said, “There are heavenly courts and hells beneath the earth; those who follow after me will ascend to the heavenly courts, those who do not will be sent to hell.” Laozi also said, “Mine is the Way of longevity and mine are the elixirs of immortality; those who follow me will have long lives, those who do not will die young. Besides, [the sage-kings] invented hoeing implements so that people would be peasants, the *Odes* and *Documents* so that people would be scholars, tools so that people would be artisans, and money so that people would be merchants. Subjects have to bow down to their rulers, sons have to serve their fathers, younger brothers have to serve their elder brothers, and the young have to obey their seniors. People have to wear caps to gather up their hair, sashes to tighten their robes at the waist, and shoes to contain their feet. There are wives and children waiting to be fed, and guests and teachers who have to be attended to. There are mourning rites and mourning garments of hemp sackcloth to make people grieve [for their deceased kin], and ancestral rites to make people filial. Such are the burdens placed upon you, while I have none of these hardships.”

雖然，中國人猶未肯樂焉而從之也。其佛者乃說曰：「天有堂，地有獄，從我游則升天堂矣，否則擠地獄。」其老者亦說曰：「我長生之道，不死之藥，從我游則長生矣，否則夭死。且又有為耒耜以使人農也，為《詩》、《書》以使人士也，為器材以使人工也，為貨幣以使人商也，臣拜乎君，弟事乎兄，幼順乎長，冠以束乎髮，帶以繩乎腰，履以羈乎足，妻子以待養，賓師以須乎奉，縗麻喪泣之制使人為哀，禋祀祭享之位使人為孝。爾之勞也如是，我皆無是之苦。」

Thus people began to follow them, some out of fear and some out of delight. Having followed them, these people then said, “We don’t show respect to our rulers and fathers and instead treat them as our equals. We don’t have elder brothers to serve, seniors to obey, wives and children to feed, and guests and teachers to attend to. We don’t have hair to gather up, sashes to tighten our robes at the waist, mourning rites and mourning garments of hemp sackcloth to make us grieve, and ancestral rites to make us filial. We simply sit and take our clothing and food from the scholars, peasants, artisans, and merchants. That makes us superior to them all.” For this reason, the people rejoiced as they left and ran after [the Buddha and Laozi], like grass being blown by the wind. Alas! How many are now left who have not departed and turned away from [the ways of] the Central Lands to run after the Buddha and Laozi?

於是人或懼之，或悅之，始有從之者。既從之也，人則曰：「莫尊乎君，與之抗禮，無兄以事也，無長以從也，無妻子以養也，無賓師以奉也，無髮以束也，無帶以繩也，無縗麻喪泣以為哀也，無禋祀祭享以為孝也，中國所為士與農、工與商

者，我皆坐而衣食之，我貴也如此。」故其人歡然而去之也，靡然而趨之也。噫！今不離此而去彼，背中國而趨佛、老者幾人？⁴⁴

The essay ends with a prescription that alludes to the infamously radical ending of Han Yu's "Yuandao," in which Han calls for government action to "turn these people [i.e., the Buddhist and Daoist clergy] into subjects [of the state], burn their books, and turn their dwellings [i.e., monasteries] into houses" 人[民]其人，火其書，廬其居. Whereas Han Yu meant 民其人 ("turn these people into subjects") but had to write 人其人 (literally "turn these people into human beings") because of the Tang taboo on the character *min* 民⁴⁵, Shi Jie adapts the phrase 人其人 into 各人其人 ("let each people be its own people") and thereby constructs an argument for strict ethnic and cultural segregation:

One may ask, "What then can be done about it?" I would answer, "Let each people be its own people and have its own customs, its own teachings, its own clothing, and its own architecture. Let the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters live in their own lands, and the Chinese live in the Central Lands. That is all there is to it. Then the Central Lands would [truly] be the Central Lands, and the barbarians of the four quarters would [truly] be the barbarians of the four quarters."

或曰：「如此將為之奈何？」曰：「各人其人，各俗其俗，各教其教，各禮其禮，各衣服其衣服，各居廬其居廬。四夷處四夷，中國處中國，各不相亂，如斯而已矣。則中國，中國也；四夷，四夷也。」⁴⁶

Shi Jie's recommendation is that the Chinese should stop practicing Buddhism and Daoism so that they can be truly Chinese again, although he does not present any practical solutions for achieving this outcome. In the essay "Ming jin" 明禁 (Clarifying the Prohibitions), however, he includes "heterodox doctrines bringing disorder to our customs" 左法亂俗 in a long list of social ills that he wants the state to prohibit, arguing that "when heterodox doctrines bring disorder to our customs, then the Chinese of the Central Lands will become barbarians (Yi)" 左法亂俗則中華夷也. Another essay, the "Ming sizhu" 明四誅 (Clarifying the Four Capital Offences), goes even further and argues that the government should put the Buddhist and Daoist clergy to death along with proponents of other heterodox philosophies and writers of florid, frivolous prose:

⁴⁴ CLWJ 10.117.

⁴⁵ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 19. Charles Hartman's translation of the "Yuandao" misses this point: De Bary and Bloom eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1, 573.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

The Buddha and Laozi were men of the barbarians (Yi-Di), yet the Buddhists and Daoists bring disorder to the teachings and doctrines of the Central Lands with the teachings and doctrines of the barbarians; bring disorder to the clothing of the Central Lands with the clothing of the barbarians; and bring disorder to the language of the Central Lands with the language of the barbarians. There is no crime greater than that, yet they are not put to death for it.

夫佛、老者，夷狄之人也，而佛、老以夷狄之教法亂中國之教法，以夷狄之衣服亂中國之衣服，以夷狄之言語亂中國之言語，罪莫大焉，而不誅。⁴⁷

By now, one will have noticed that Shi Jie had a characteristic polemical style: plain, repetitive, angry, and strident. Unlike Han Yu, who clearly cared about writing creatively even when he was being polemical, Shi Jie used Ancient Style prose like the literary equivalent of a bludgeon. His writings tend to be as weak in originality and inspiration as they are in logic.

Interestingly, letters that Shi Jie wrote in reply to Shi Jianzhong and Sun Fu at this time show that they had chided him for being overly argumentative and urged him to adopt a spirit of “moderation” (*zhong* 中) and “concord” (*he* 合) in his relations with Liu Sui.⁴⁸ Shi Jie apparently felt wounded and betrayed by the lack of support from his mentors. In a defiantly self-righteous tone, Shi Jie claimed to Shi Jianzhong that his extreme, disputatious behavior was due to the “principled and forthright” 剛正直烈 personality that Heaven had given him. He was now closer to being a complete human being, he claimed with considerable sarcasm, thanks to the philosophy of moderation that Jianzhong had imparted to him. Having received the bitter but necessary medicine of advice from Sun Fu and Shi Jianzhong, “I am now not just slightly awakened but have fully understood that what I did earlier was wrong; I have already scraped it away so that not a thread or a hair is left” 吾今非特少寤也，盡知前日所爲之非，已刮去無纖髮存者也。⁴⁹ Shi Jie went on to complain that his low-ranking official position gave him no opportunity to propagate the Way of the Sages, while expressing a fear that achieving much higher rank would be impossible because of his “short and ugly” 短陋 frame. With a mixture of self-pity, anger, and sarcasm, he declared that he had a good mind to give up trying to revive the Way and retire to Mount Tai with Sun Fu.⁵⁰ In a similar vein, he claimed to Sun Fu that his railing against heterodoxy was like cries of pain from a man sitting on hot coals, and lamented that even Sun did not understand the intensity of his ideological zeal:

When I see that the worthy do not gain advancement, the people do not enjoy peace, and the Way is not being practiced, I am like one sitting on hot coals and cannot be at peace for a moment. The fire is about to burn my skin, and without thinking, I cry and scream

⁴⁷ CLWJ 6.71.

⁴⁸ CLWJ 15.182, 16.189–190.

⁴⁹ Chen Zhi'e, missing the biting tone of Shi Jie's letter to Shi Jianzhong, assumes that Shi Jie was referring to literal medicine that Jianzhong had sent him as a remedy for an ailment caused by his fiery temper. CLWJ 16.189–190; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 51.

⁵⁰ Again, Chen Zhi'e misses the sarcasm and infers that Shi Jie was sincerely considering reclusion because of the lack of advancement in his career—see *ibid.*

out loud. My cries and screams are for no other purpose than saving the skins of all under heaven [from the fire]. There are some who are so inhumane that they not only cannot save [all under heaven] but will also become angry at my cries and screams. But what about you, Master? I, Shi Jie, will know in future that my cries and screams are useless and will just keep quiet.

顧賢人未得進，生民未得泰，道未得行，如坐塗炭之上，不得須臾安。火將及皮膚，不覺時疾叫大號。叫與號無他，將以救天下之皮膚也。彼不仁者甚，既不能救之，復怒其叫且號，先生如何？介後始知其叫且號之無益也，默焉而已。⁵¹

Earlier in the same letter to Sun Fu, however, Shi Jie used another metaphor that is even more revealing of his personality and motivations. In response to a poem by Sun that likened Shi Jie and Shi Jianzhong to soldiers “attacking frivolity and falsehood” 攻浮偽 (possibly with an intended pun on *futu* 浮圖, a common name for the Buddha and Buddhism), Shi Jie eagerly embraced the military metaphor. He analogized Sun Fu and Shi Jianzhong to commanding generals, he and his friends Jiang Qian 姜潛 (n.d.) and Zhang Dong to soldiers in battle against a strong enemy army, and two of Sun Fu’s other disciples to strategists:

I, Shi Jie, know that we will surely be victorious. Then we will cut off the heads of those whippersnappers and place them under our banners. We will make this literary culture truly resemble that of the Three Dynasties [of Xia, Shang, and Zhou] and the two Han dynasties and surpass that of the Tang by a hundred million times. We will magnify [the influence of] this Way and cause it to return directly to Yao, Shun, King Tang, King Wen, King Wu, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius. I, Shi Jie, look at myself and see a body not even three *chi* in height. When I meet someone, I can hardly get more than a few words out of my mouth. I wear the robes and cap of a Classicist, and I move and walk and run like a scholar. But when it comes to [defending] this Way, I feel like I have a body eight or nine *chi* tall, with glaring eyes and a broad forehead, dressed in rhinoceros-hide armor, a steel helmet on my head, riding in an army of a hundred thousand cavalry. I have the valor of a great hero and fear nothing at all. That is why I say of myself that I am only thirty years old but my heart is already immovable. Who was it that claimed that I, Shi Jie, am more unyielding [on matters of principle] than Mencius? When it comes to courage, at least, I am indeed not afraid to praise myself.

介知必克捷也，然後梟豎子輩首，致於麾下。使斯文也，真如三代、兩漢，跨踰李唐萬萬。使斯道也，廓然直趨於堯、舜、禹、湯、文、武、周公、孔子。介嘗自視身不滿三尺，見人語訥訥不出諸口，被服儒衣冠，舉步趨蹌為書生。於斯道也，身自視若八九尺長，方目廣額，體被犀甲，頭戴鐵盔，前後馳十萬騎，膽氣雄烈，無所畏恐。故嘗自道吾年纔三十，吾心已不動。誰謂石介剛過孟軻，勇則誠敢自許也。⁵²

⁵¹ CLWJ 15.183.

⁵² CLWJ 15.182.

Shi Jie's evident pride in being said to have surpassed even Mencius in ideological obduracy suggests that he, like Han Yu, drew inspiration from Mencius's reputation for being relentlessly polemical toward Classicism's philosophical rivals.

Some of Shi Jie's poetry suggests that his self-image as a fearless soldier on an ideological battlefield was also rooted in fantasies of literal military glory—an ambition that was unattainable because of his physical limitations. Such ambitions may have much to do with Shi Jie's admiration for Liu Kai, whom he saw as the only man since Han Yu who had truly mastered the Ancient Style. As we have seen, Liu Kai once likened himself to a soldier engaged in a battle to “strike Yang Zhu, Mozi, Laozi, and the Buddha dead” and then revive the Way of the Sages. The fact that Liu Kai was both an Ancient Style writer and a war hawk seems to have increased his appeal to Shi Jie. A poem that he wrote after a visit to Liu Kai's grave at Daming eulogizes Liu's combination of literary and martial talents and emphasizes his physical courage, even to the point of glamorizing his cannibalism. It also praises his militant stance toward the Kitans and his plan for the reconquest of Youzhou. Shi Jie implies that thirty years after Liu's death, the Song state's inability to humble the Kitans is as distressing as the damage done to the Way of the Sages by the “whippersnappers” of heterodoxy and parallel prose:

四海無英雄， The world is without heroes,
 斯文失宗主。 And this literary culture has lost its leading light.
 豎子敢顛狂， The whippersnappers dare to cavort wildly,
 黠戎敢慢侮。 And the crafty barbarians (Rong) dare to be arrogant and insulting.
 我思柳先生， I think of Mister Liu [i.e., Liu Kai],
 涕淚落如雨。 And tears stream down my face like rain.⁵³

Another poem, which is not dated, builds on the irredentist theme by emphasizing Youzhou's strategic importance and lamenting two lost opportunities to regain it from the Kitans: the Later Zhou 後周 (r. 951–960) emperor Shizong's 世宗 (r. 954–959) untimely death, which came on the eve of his planned military expedition to Youzhou, and Liu Kai's transfer away from the northern frontier, which derailed his conspiracy with the defector Bai Wandu. Shi Jie claims to be moved to tears by these unfortunate twists of fate:

我覽此二事， When I read about these two incidents,
 天意終難測。 I realize that Heaven's will is unfathomable.
 撫卷一感傷， I place my hand on the scroll and grieve,
 兩眼淚潛滴。 Tears dripping, barely visible, from my eyes.⁵⁴

⁵³ Chen Zhi'e dates this poem to 1029 on the grounds that it says Liu Kai has been dead for thirty years. However, another poem that can be dated to 1040 also states the time elapsed since Liu Kai's death as thirty years. It is thus likely that in both poems, “thirty years” is only serving as a rough estimate. There is no evidence that Shi Jie was an admirer of Liu Kai before passing the *jinshi* examinations and reading the *Tang wencui*; moreover, there is a higher likelihood that he visited Daming after Shi Jianzhong was posted there as a magistrate. See CLWJ 2.17, 20–21; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 19–20, 96.

⁵⁴ CLWJ 3.24–25.

One of Shi Jie's poems from 1035, entitled "The West and the North" 西北, expresses concern that the Kitans and the Ordos Tangut (who would later found the Xia state) will eventually pose an insurmountable threat to the Song if their power continues to grow unchecked. The poem accuses the political and military leaders of the day of complacency and ends with Shi Jie close to tears again:

吾恐患已深, I fear that the danger is already great,
 爲之居靡寧。 And for this reason cannot live in peace.
 堂上守章句, [Ministers] at court are mired in chapter-and-verse scholarship,
 將軍弄娉婷。 While generals play with pretty girls.
 不知思此否? Who knows if they ever think about this [problem]?
 使人堪涕零。 It is enough to make one weep.⁵⁵

Rhetoric of this sort can easily produce the impression that Shi Jie's choice to ascribe a foreign origin to both Buddhism and Daoism arose from a mental habit of conflating the defense of Classicist orthodoxy with the defense of the Song state. Chen Zhi'e has argued, for example, that "Shi Jie's rejection of Buddhism and Daoism was closely linked to his political philosophy of 'respecting the king and repelling the barbarians (*zunwang rangyi* 尊王攘夷).'"⁵⁶ Elsewhere, Chen expands this argument into a general theory that ideological warfare against Buddhism and Daoism was merely a way for Shi Jie and other Northern Song literati to vent their anxiety about foreign threats to their country:

In the real world, the deepening national crisis awakened the intellectuals' strong identification with the mainstream Classicist culture, in which it was their duty to respect the king and repel the barbarians, as well as their sense of crisis. Defeats on the battlefield further forced them to vent the accumulated national sentiment in their hearts in an intense manner, by making great efforts to revive traditional Classicist learning and reject Buddhism and Daoism, so as to conquer and destroy 'barbarians' in the cultural sphere.⁵⁷

This interpretation is quite typical of Chinese scholarship on Song attitudes toward the "barbarians." Indeed, Ge Zhaoguang has claimed that a kind of Chinese ethnic proto-nationalism emerged under the Northern Song in response to the rise of militarily powerful non-Chinese

⁵⁵ CLWJ 2.17–18.

⁵⁶ Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 45.

⁵⁷ 現實中越來越深刻的民族危機喚醒了知識分子對以尊王攘夷爲己任的儒家主體文化的強烈認同和憂患意識, 戰場上的失利又逼使他們通過大力復興傳統儒學而排斥佛、老異端的激烈方式排泄鬱積在胸中的民族感情, 以求在文化上征服並消滅“夷狄”。Chen, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun*, 32 (see also the discussion in 26–29). Xiong Mingqin 熊鳴琴 recently borrowed this interpretation in her essay, "Chaoyue 'Yi Xia': Beisong 'Zhongguo' guan chutan" 超越“夷夏”: 北宋“中国”观初探, *Zhongzhou xuekan* 中州學刊 2013(4), 126.

states. Ge cites the “Zhongguo lun” as his first piece of evidence for this claim, explaining that “this essay’s national sentiment is unusually intense; one could even call it unusually extreme, revealing an anxiety about ‘the Central Lands’ that is unprecedented in intellectual history.”⁵⁸

Such a reading of the “Zhongguo lun” and of Shi Jie’s polemics in general suffers from at least two weaknesses relating to chronology. The first is that Shi Jie was already using the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy against both Buddhism and Daoism in his letter to Sun Shi, which was written two years before “The West and the North” and nearly ten years before the Song army’s defeat in the first Song-Xia war. Shi’s decision to equate heterodoxy with barbarism thus seems to have preceded any sense of “deepening national crisis” produced by military setbacks. The second weakness is that contrary to popular belief, a political philosophy that emphasized both “respecting the king” (*zunwang* 尊王) and “repelling the barbarians” (*rangyi* 攘夷) did not yet exist during Shi Jie’s lifetime. Modern Chinese historians and history textbooks routinely claim that Lord Huan of Qi and Guan Zhong used *zunwang rangyi* as a slogan to rally other states into a military alliance against Chu, thus establishing Qi hegemony over the Central Lands. There is no textual evidence for such a claim; indeed, the phrase *zunwang rangyi* is not found in any Chinese text earlier than the twentieth century.

As we shall see in Chapter 6, the phrase *zunwang* does appear in the title of a *Chunqiu* commentary written by Sun Fu, the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* 春秋尊王發微 (Uncovering the Subtleties of Respecting the King in the *Chunqiu*), but Sun did not pair it with *rangyi*.⁵⁹ Instead, he followed the Gongyang commentary in crediting Lord Huan with “saving the Central Lands” (*jiu Zhongguo* 救中國) and “repelling the barbarians” (*rang Yi-Di* 攘夷狄).⁶⁰ Moreover, we shall see that Sun’s praise of Lord Huan’s barbarian-repelling achievements was accompanied by strong censure for Lord Huan’s perceived failure to respect the authority of the Zhou king—in other words, a failure to practice the *zunwang* ideal.

The seeds of the phrase *zunwang rangyi* may lie not in Sun Fu’s commentary but in a slightly later *Chunqiu* commentaries by Sun Jue 孫覺 (1028–1090) and Hu Anguo 胡安國 (1074–1138). While Sun Jue does not use the exact phrase, he does argue at one point that a hegemon like Lord Huan of Qi had the responsibility to “lead the feudal lords to show respect to the royal dynasty and repel the barbarians (Yi-Di) in order to strengthen the Central Lands” 帥諸侯，尊王室，攘夷狄，以彊中國。⁶¹ Hu Anguo’s commentary, which was much more influential in later periods than those authored by Sun Fu and Sun Jue, seems to borrow Sun

⁵⁸ 這篇論文中民族情緒非常激烈，甚至可以說非常極端，顯示了思想史上前所未有的關於“中國”的焦慮。In a footnote, Ge points out that the “most pressing” barbarian threat identified in the “Zhongguo lun” is Buddhism, but avoids mentioning that the other threat is Daoism. Presumably, he finds the illogicality in Shi Jie’s ascription of foreign origins to Daoism to be detrimental to his theory. Ge, “Songdai ‘Zhongguo’ yishi de tuxian,” 135; Xiong Mingqin echoes this interpretation but also acknowledges Shi Jie’s use of anti-barbarian rhetoric against Daoism in “Chaoyue ‘Yi Xia,’” 126.

⁵⁹ *Contra* Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 21, 160.

⁶⁰ For the Gongyang precedent, see GYZS 10.213.

⁶¹ Sun Jue 孫覺, *Chunqiu jingjie* 春秋經解 (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 3.

Jue's language when it describes a hegemon's role as "uniting all the feudal lords under heaven to repel the barbarians (Rong-Di) and respect the royal dynasty" 合天下之諸侯，攘戎狄，尊王室。⁶² Five centuries later, the Ming loyalist and *Chunqiu* exegete Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–1692) wrote an essay on Southern Song history that described Hu Anguo's commentary as "emphasizing the great message of repelling the barbarians (Yi) and respecting the Zhou [dynasty]" 著攘夷尊周之大義; he also argued that "if the barbarians (Yi) are not repelled, then the king will have no opportunity to be respected" 夷不攘，則王不可得而尊. Wang's fellow Ming loyalist Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682) also wrote the following in his most famous work, the *Rizhi lu* 日知錄: "The message of the *Chunqiu* is one of respecting the Heavenly King, repelling the barbarians (Yi-Di), and punishing usurpers and rebels" 《春秋》之義，尊天王，攘夷狄，誅亂臣賊子。⁶³

Although men like Wang Fuzhi and Gu Yanwu laid the foundations for a perception of "respecting the king and repelling the barbarians" as the core message of the *Chunqiu*, the actual phrase *zunwang rangyi* probably originated with Japanese samurai in the 1850s and 1860s who used the slogan *sonnō jōi* 尊王（皇）攘夷, "revere the king/emperor and repel the barbarians," to call for the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate, the restoration of political power to the imperial court, and a program of military modernization to counter European and American naval power.⁶⁴ Toward the end of the Qing dynasty, Pi Xirui 皮希瑞 (1850–1908), perhaps influenced by the Japanese precedent, described *zunwang rangyi* as "the great message of the *Chunqiu*" 《春秋》大義 when paraphrasing Wang Fuzhi in his highly influential history of classical scholarship, *Jingxue lishi* 經學歷史 (1907).⁶⁵ Since then, the phrase *zunwang rangyi* has become so pervasive in Chinese interpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy and the

⁶² CQHSZ 12.179; cf. 8.108, which describes Lord Huan as "uniting the feudal lords, bringing peace to the Central Lands, repelling the barbarians [Yi-Di], and respecting the Heavenly King (i.e., the Zhou king)" 合諸侯，安中國，攘夷狄，尊天王. Note that the *Siku quanshu* edition of Hu's commentary censors these passages by changing the phrases 攘戎狄 and 攘夷狄 to 扶大義 ("uphold one's highest moral duty") and 正僭竊 ("rectifying usurpations").

⁶³ SL, 10.184; RZL, 7.382 (cf. 7.396, which repeats Zhu Xi's phrase "respecting the Zhou dynasty and repelling the barbarians" with regard to Guan Zhong). For another late Ming example of a *Chunqiu* scholar borrowing the phrase "respecting the Zhou dynasty and repelling the barbarians" from Zhu Xi, see Zhuo Erkang's 卓爾康 (1570–1644) *Chunqiu bianyi* 春秋辯義, the original uncensored text of which is quoted at Wu Zhefu 吳哲夫 ed., *Siku quanshu buzheng: jingbu* 四庫全書補正: 經部 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1995), 464–465.

⁶⁴ On the complex evolution of this Japanese discourse see Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan: The New Theses of 1825* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986), 4, 9, 20–21, 27–28, 54–55, 135–137; Wm. Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur E. Tiedemann eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, Volume 2, abridged, Part 1: 1600 to 1868 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 518–519, 529–530. Wakabayashi traces the *jōi* component to Zhu Xi and states that it was "alien to early Tokugawa Japan," but does not attempt to trace the *sonnō* component. Alan Wood insists that the entire phrase *sonnō jōi* was taken from Song *Chunqiu* commentaries, particularly Sun Fu's *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, but supplies no direct quotations to prove this. He professes great surprise that no modern work on Japanese history has acknowledged the supposed Song provenance of *sonnō jōi*, and that the *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* "has even claimed" that the Chinese never used the expression *zunwang rangyi* before modern times. In fact, the *Kodansha Encyclopedia* is technically correct. See Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, xi, 21, 159–160.

⁶⁵ Pi Xirui 皮希瑞, *Jingxue lishi* 經學歷史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959 [1907]), 250.

Chunqiu that even outstanding historians like Chen Yinke and Chen Zhi'e assumed that a distinct political ideology based on that phrase already existed in Tang and Northern Song times.⁶⁶ Innumerable works of modern scholarship have claimed *zunwang rangyi* to be the central theme both of the *Chunqiu* itself and of all Song-period commentaries on that text.⁶⁷

As the editor of a modern edition of Shi Jie's collected works, Chen Zhi'e's familiarity with Shi's ideas was second to none.⁶⁸ Yet his anachronistic emphasis on the phrase *zunwang rangyi* caused him to overlook the fact that Shi Jie's preferred foreign policy was not to strengthen frontier defenses in order to repel invading barbarians, but rather to reassert Song supremacy by aggressively invading neighboring states. We see this preference in a poem from the late 1030s or early 1040s, in which a game of chess leads Shi to fantasize about playing general and embarking on an expansionist spree that includes even the Korean peninsula, which had not seen Chinese rule since the late seventh century:

嗟哉一枰上， Alas! How could pieces on a chessboard
 奚足勞經營？ Be worth this much strategizing?
 安得百萬騎， Where can I get a million cavalrymen
 鐵甲相磨鳴？ With their steel armor plates all rattling?
 西取元昊頭， To the west, we'd take [the Tangut ruler] Yuanhao's head
 獻之天子庭。 And present it to the Son of Heaven in his palace.
 北入匈奴域， To the north, we'd enter the lands of the Xiongnu (i.e., the Kitans)
 縛戎王南行。 And return south with the barbarian (Rong) king a bound captive.
 東逾滄海東， To the east, we'd cross to the other side of the cerulean sea
 射破高麗城。 And shoot Gaoli's (Goryeo's) cities to pieces.
 南趨交趾國， To the south, we'd charge into the kingdom of Jiaozhi (i.e., north Vietnam)

⁶⁶ Recall the Chen Yinke quotation in the preamble to Part 2, which claimed that *zunwang rangyi* was “the central idea of the Ancient Style movement” in the late Tang, even though the phrase does not occur in any late Tang writings. Similarly, Chen Zhi'e identifies *zunwang rangyi* as “the core of the Song Classicists' social and political thought.” A highly influential 1952 article on Song-period *Chunqiu* exegesis by Mou Jun-sun also asserts, without any attempt at substantiation, that “*zunwang rangyi* is the key message of the *Chunqiu*,” and that the primary concern of Song-period *Chunqiu* exegesis was to explicate this message, “all other matters being just its branches.” Alan Wood, who was heavily influenced by Pi Xirui and Mou Jun-sun, bases his study of Song *Chunqiu* exegesis on the misconception that Song political thinkers promoted a policy of *zunwang rangyi*, argued that it was the “principal meaning” of the *Chunqiu*, and wrote *Chunqiu* commentaries to expound on it. Chen, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun*, 26; Mou Jun-sun 牟潤孫, “Liang Song Chunqiu xue zhi zhuliu” 兩宋春秋學之主流, *Songshi yanjiuji* 宋史研究集 3 (1966), 104; Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, ix, 72–73.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Sung Ting-tsung 宋鼎宗, *Chunqiu Songxue fawei* 春秋宋學發微 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1986), 127, 237–240; Yang Xiangkui 楊向奎, “Songdai lixuejia de ‘Chunqiu’ xue” 宋代理學家的《春秋》學, *Shixueshi yanjiu* 史學史研究 1989(1), 23–25. For an example in English, see Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 47.

⁶⁸ Chen also completed a draft for a biographical timeline of Shi Jie's life shortly before his untimely death in 1994. His widow revised the draft and succeeded in getting it published in 2003—see Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 1–2, 135–136.

蠻子與觀迎。 And the Man barbarian ruler would come to surrender with an empty coffin.⁶⁹
 盡使四夷臣， We'd turn the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters into the emperor's subjects
 歸來告太平！ And return to proclaim that an age of great peace has begun!⁷⁰

In light of this martial fantasy, we should probably read Shi Jie's poetic weeping as tears of frustrated irredentist ambition, not tears of patriotic anxiety in the face of danger to the country. If the argument of the "Zhongguo lun" is ostensibly about keeping foreign religions, values, and customs out of the Central Lands, Shi Jie's poems on foreign affairs are about the need for offensive warfare to recapture lost territory and bring foreign peoples to submission. The former speaks in the language of cultural exclusivism, while the latter uses the language of irredentism and imperialism. Both types of argument speak of barbarians, but that is as far as the similarity goes. Moreover, whereas Liu Kai likened heterodox assaults on orthodoxy to barbarian invasions, Shi Jie never made such a link. We should also note that even Liu Kai made this link only once while simultaneously claiming (prematurely, it turns out) that the Song was well-governed and therefore not in danger of invasion. In sum, the idea that Shi Jie's anti-Buddhist and anti-Daoist sentiment was a reaction to foreign threats is not supported by a careful reading of his works. If anything, his allusion to the notion of moral and ideological barbarization undermines any assumption that a vigorous military defense against external threats will suffice to preserve the identity and integrity of the Central Lands.

The portrait incident appears to have made Shi Jie's name as an Ancient Style ideologue without damaging his career significantly. Liu Sui had himself acquired a reputation for bluntness as a remonstrating official at the imperial court and perhaps, therefore, appreciated Shi Jie's audacious attempt at correcting him.⁷¹ Liu responded to Shi Jie's arguments and actions with a spirit of forbearance, leading Shi to comment to Sun Fu that "[Mister Liu's] Way and heart are like Xidao's (i.e., Shi Jianzhong's), and he often counsels me with them" 公之道、公之心如熙道，公亦常以此相教。⁷² Liu Sui transferred Shi to an administrative post in the prefectural government before returning to the imperial court to take up a new post in the autumn of 1035 (he died soon afterwards). Before long, however, Shi Jie managed to offend the emperor himself. In January 1036, Shi memorialized Song Renzong 宋仁宗 (r. 1022–1063) to remonstrate against his decision to pardon descendants of the ruling houses of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms and allow them to enter the civil service. Renzong was so annoyed with Shi Jie's attempt at interfering with an imperial prerogative that he rescinded Shi's impending appointment to a junior post in the Censorate. Shi remained on the staff of the new prefect of the

⁶⁹ It was customary in war for rulers surrendering their states in person to bring an empty coffin as a symbol that they were prepared to be put to death by their conquerors but were pleading for mercy. For the *locus classicus* see ZZZY 13.348.

⁷⁰ Chen Zhi'e dates this poem to 1039, on the eve of the first Song-Xia war, but it is also possible that Shi wrote it after the war began. CLWJ 2.22–23; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 87.

⁷¹ On Liu Sui's earlier career as a remonstrating official, see SS 297.9888–9889.

⁷² CLWJ 15.182.

Southern Capital, Xia Song 夏竦 (985–1051), until early 1038, when he volunteered to take a posting to Jiazhou 嘉州 (modern Leshan 樂山) in his seventy-year-old father's place.⁷³

One month after Shi Jie's arrival at Jiazhou, his mother died and he returned home to Fengfu county to observe the three-year mourning period. He spent the next three to four years teaching *Chunqiu* and *Yijing* exegesis at Sun Fu's Mount Tai Academy 泰山書院.⁷⁴ At Mount Tai, Shi Jie converted two Daoist priests to Classicism and proudly accepted them as his students, while giving them new, Classicist-themed names. In a letter explaining his decision to rename one of the former Daoists as Guilu 歸魯 (“returning to Lu”), he analogized the pursuit of the Way of the Sages to a physical journey that had as its destination the region of Lu (that is, the region around Mount Tai), since it was the Duke of Zhou's fief and Confucius's birthplace.⁷⁵ Like some of Shi's other writings, the letter to Zhang Guilu reflects a sense of local pride at being a native of the Lu region, as well as a belief that the revival of the Way of the Sages will surely begin in Lu.⁷⁶ Indeed, Shi Jie equates the Way itself with Lu and analogizes heterodox ideologies to other parts of the world:

The Way of the Sages is all in Lu. One can only get to see the Way of the Sages after arriving at Lu. But now people do not go to Lu and instead go to Qin, to Chu, to Wu, or to Yue. Is that not going further from the Way of the Sages? Alas! There is worse, for there are also some who go to the barbarians (Yi-Di), and that is even further from Lu. If one wants to return to Lu from Qin, Chu, Wu, and Yue, it is no more than a month's travel. That is how easy it is, but I have not seen any who have been able to do it. If one wants to return to Lu from the barbarians, he may travel for a season or even an entire year and still not arrive there. That is how hard it is, yet I have now seen one who could do it. The meaning of the *Chunqiu* is that when the barbarians are barbarians, one regards them as barbarians, but when they advance to the level of the Central Lands, one regards them as [part of] the Central Lands. How much more so for [a barbarian] who can get to Lu by his own strength? I would like to give you, Mister Zhang, the name Guilu. Returning to Lu is how one honors the Way of the Sages. May you take encouragement from this [name]!

⁷³ Relations between Shi Jie and Xia Song appear to have been good during this time, but Shi later incurred Xia's enmity in 1043 by denigrating him in a poem celebrating Fan Zhongyan's reform program. After Shi Jie's death, Xia Song accused him of faking his death and conspiring with Fu Bi and the Kitan to launch a rebellion against the Song state. Shi and Fu were finally cleared of these charges after various officials confirmed that Shi was truly dead. Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 52–54, 61–63, 75–77, 114–116, 124, 126, 128–131.

⁷⁴ Sun Fu regarded the *Chunqiu* and *Yijing* as the most important of the Classics, and had completed major commentaries on both texts by late 1040. Shi Jie himself wrote two shorter works on the *Yijing*, possibly by compiling notes used in his lectures; both are no longer extant. *Ibid.*, 82, 85, 91–92, 100; CLWJ 19.222–224.

⁷⁵ Chen Zhi'e assumes that the two priests became Shi Jie's students during his stint as an instructor at the Imperial University in 1042–1044. However, the use of “returning to Lu” as an analogy in the letter to Zhang Guilu strongly suggests that this letter, at least, dates from Shi Jie's time at Mount Tai in 1038–1042. Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 111; CLWJ 7.82.

⁷⁶ CLWJ 14.163–164, 170–171.

聖人之道盡在魯矣。之於魯，然後聖人之道可得而見也。今夫人不之於魯，而之於秦，之於楚，之於吳，之於越，去聖人之道不亦遠乎！嗚呼，甚矣，亦有之於夷狄者，去魯益為遠矣。秦、楚、吳、越將復於魯，不逾月遂可至焉爾。如此其易也，吾未見其能復者焉。夷與狄將復於魯，窮時卒歲不能至焉爾。如此其難也，吾今見其能復者焉。《春秋》之義，夷狄則夷狄之，進於中國則中國之。況能自之於魯者乎！吾請以「歸魯」名張生。歸魯所以宗聖人之道也，生其勉之！⁷⁷

In this passage, Shi Jie very self-consciously quotes (or rather, misquotes) Han Yu's *Chunqiu* formula from the "Yuandao," but shifts its emphasis from warning about the danger of barbarization to asserting the possibility of barbarians becoming followers of the Way of the Sages. That assertion has nothing to do with literal barbarians, however: Zhang Guilu, the former Daoist, was obviously not a foreigner and had almost certainly never traveled to foreign lands. The point of Shi Jie's travel metaphor is to emphasize how rare and difficult it is for a Daoist priest to turn to Classicism, since Daoism is as far from orthodoxy as the lands of the barbarians are from Lu.⁷⁸ There is a universalist implication in this message—just as Chinese people can lose their way and wind up among the barbarians, barbarians can also come to the Central Lands and become like the Chinese—but Shi Jie uses it for a very 'safe' rhetorical purpose. Indeed, as with the case of the earlier letter to Sun Shi, Shi Jie simultaneously raises the *possibility* of barbarians becoming civilized and represents geographical distance as a nearly insurmountable barrier to such an occurrence. Nonetheless, these letters do give us cause to doubt the extent of Shi Jie's commitment to the central rhetorical assertion of the "Zhongguo lun"—namely, that the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy has to be founded on immutable differences and physical separation, failing which the universe would descend into chaos and the Chinese would cease to be Chinese.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Shi Jie's letter to the former Daoist Zhang Guilu is not that Shi associated Daoism with barbarism for rhetorical purposes—we have already seen him doing so in the "Zhongguo lun"—but rather that he seems to have been unwilling to stick to a single way of equating heterodoxy with barbarization. His letter to Sun Shi analogized the rise of the various heterodoxies to a burglar stealing the Way of the Sages and leaving it in the lands of the barbarians, but also likened it to diverging streams and roads, with the streams flowing into different rivers and the roads heading out into different barbarian lands. The letter to Zhang Guilu uses an elaboration of the road metaphor: people trying to get to Lu who travel a long way in the wrong direction and end up among the barbarians, who symbolize heterodoxy. These metaphors are all clearly inconsistent with the "Zhongguo lun," which claims that two barbarians, the Buddha and Laozi, literally brought their teachings *into* the Central Lands. In the case of all three metaphors, however, the rhetorical objective was to represent Classicism as the only legitimate ideology by making it synonymous with Chinese identity and equating all other

⁷⁷ CLWJ 7.82.

⁷⁸ But see also CLWJ 6.73–74, an essay that Shi Jie wrote in 1032 to praise a Chinese man who had crossed the Song-Kitan border in order to return his family and his father's remains to their original home in Yunzhou (this family had been taken captive by a Kitan raid in 999/1000). Shi Jie represents this border-crossing as a return from the barbaric life of a steppe nomad, "far from the ritual and moral duty of the Central Lands" 遠中國禮義, to the comforts of Chinese civilization.

ideologies (whether foreign or not) with barbarism. My sense of these inconsistencies is that Shi Jie's interest in emulating Han Yu's literary creativity made him averse to using a metaphor more than once, even if this weakened the coherence of his ideological message.

In spite of Sun Fu's attempts at urging Shi Jie in the direction of moderation, both Shi's radical ideological exclusivism and his tendency to speak of heterodoxy in the rhetoric of barbarism seem to have rubbed off on his mentor eventually. In 1038, Sun Fu wrote an inscription for a temple to Mencius that Kong Daofu 孔道輔 (ca. 985–ca. 1039), the prefect of Yanzhou 兗州, had built in Zou county 鄒縣 (Mencius's birthplace). The inscription began by praising Mencius's polemics against the followers of Yang Zhu and Mozi and alluding to his famous claim that these philosophers denied the special significance of ruler-subject and father-son relationships. Whereas Mencius accused Yang Zhu and Mozi and their followers of descending to the level of animals by denying their rulers and fathers, however, Sun Fu employs yet another barbarization metaphor to represent their pernicious influence: namely, a mass migration of Chinese to the lands of the barbarians.

Alas! That rulers should behave like rulers, subjects behave like subjects, fathers behave like fathers, and sons behave like sons—this is the greatest principle of statecraft and the greatest root of human relationships. It cannot be dispensed with for even a moment, yet [the teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi] were all devoid of it. This was driving all people under heaven to abandon the Central Lands and go to the barbarians (Yi-Di); there could be no calamity greater than this, and Mencius was the only one who could save them from it. Thus Mencius rose up in a passionate rage and loudly explained the doctrines of Yao, Shun, Yu, King Tang, King Wen, King Wu, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius. He drove out and exterminated [the philosophies of Yang Zhu and Mozi] and left them with no descendants. He picked up all people under heaven from among the barbarians and put them back in the Central Lands, so that our Way of the Sages would shine brightly and not fall into ruin.

嗟乎！君君、臣臣、父父、子子，邦國之大經也，人倫之大本也，不可斯須去矣，而彼皆無之。是驅天下之民舍中國之夷狄也，禍孰甚焉，非孟子莫能救之。故孟子慨然奮起，大陳堯、舜、禹、湯、文、武、周公、孔子之法，驅除之以絕其後，拔天下之民於夷狄之中，而復置之中國，俾我聖人之道炳焉不墜。⁷⁹

A few lines down, however, Sun Fu switches to a metaphor of bestialization, claiming: “If [the teachings of] Yang Zhu and Mozi had continued running rampant and Mencius had not arisen, then all people under heaven would have become bird and beasts” 楊、墨暴行，孟子不作，則天下之民禽獸矣。 We saw in Chapter 3 that Han Yu's letter to Meng Jian conflated barbarization with bestialization in a similar manner, at least in part out of a desire to imitate Mencius's own rhetoric. Indeed, Sun Fu switches to the rhetoric of bestialization immediately

⁷⁹ QSW 401.314.

after quoting Han Yu's argument, found in the letter to Meng Jian, that Mencius's achievement was as great as that of the flood-taming sage Yu.⁸⁰

On another occasion, Shi Jie wrote to Sun Fu informing him that Kong Daofu—who was a descendant of Confucius—had recently added portraits of Mencius, Xunzi, Yang Xiong, Wang Tong, and Han Yu to the Confucius temple in Qufu. Since Sun had come to accept Shi Jie's argument that all five of the men thus honored were true followers of the Way of Confucius, he was elated and wrote a letter to commend Kong Daofu.⁸¹ Sun Fu explained in his letter that these five worthies were born in different times because Heaven knew that there would be heterodox teachings in every age:

After a worthy died, a new worthy would emerge and shield [the Way of Confucius] with his wings. It was clearly Heaven's will that this should continue without end. If not for that, from the Warring States to the Tang dynasty there would have been many empty, absurd, weird, seductive, and strange teachings bringing disorder to the Way of our Confucius. If a new worthy did not arise as soon as the previous worthy died, and shield [the Way of Confucius] with his wings, [the Way] would have been obscured and fallen into ruin. Once it was obscured and fell into ruin, then all [people] under heaven would have become barbarians (Yi-Di) and the people would have become birds and beasts. That being the case, the contributions of these five worthies were great indeed!

一賢歿，一賢出，羽之翼之，垂諸無窮，此天之意也，亦甚明也。不然，則戰國迨於李唐，空闊誕謾、奇嶮淫麗譎怪之說亂我夫子之道者數矣。非一賢歿，一賢出，羽之翼之，則晦且墜矣。既晦且墜，則天下夷狄矣，斯民鳥獸矣。由是言之，則五賢之烈大矣！⁸²

Note how Sun Fu again conflates barbarization and bestialization, this time within the very same sentence. In cases like this, it is quite apparent that writers of the Ancient Style revival followed Han Yu in using the rhetoric of barbarization as one of two standard metaphors for connoting extreme moral decline, rather than using it as an expression of anti-foreign sentiment.

Further evidence that the ultimate source of this rhetorical strategy was Han Yu's prose can be found in Sun Fu's most famous polemical essay, the undated "Ru ru" 儒辱 (The Humiliation of the Classicists). In this essay, Sun claims that Classicism has suffered a long history of humiliation beginning with Yang Zhu and Mozi, followed by the Legalists, and culminating in the Daoists and Buddhists "rampaging through the Central Lands" 橫乎中國. Sun calls it "strange" 怪 that Daoism and Buddhism are allowed to "ride in tandem with Classicism" 與儒齊驅並駕 under the concept of the Three Teachings. He argues that it is an unparalleled

⁸⁰ Sun Fu also amplifies the bestialization metaphor by pairing the line about birds and beasts with a paraphrase of a comment attributed to Lord Ding of Liu 劉定公 (fl. 559–541 BCE) in the *Zuozhuan*: "If not for Yu, we would all be fish!" 微禹，吾其魚乎！ QSW 401.314–315; ZZZY 41.1150.

⁸¹ In one of Sun Fu's essays, he argued that Dong Zhongshu merited inclusion in the list as well. See QSW 401.302–304 (cf. 401.294).

⁸² QSW 401.292–293.

humiliation for Classicists that they have allowed Daoism and Buddhism to “bring disorder to the teachings of our sages with the doctrines of the barbarians (Yi-Di) and the philosophers (*zhuzi*)” 以夷狄諸子之法亂吾聖人之教. Unlike Chen Zhi’e, I do not think we can assume that Sun Fu intends the pairing of *Yi-Di* and *zhuzi* to mean “barbarian philosophers.” But Sun does go on to claim, in language clearly taken from the “Yuandao,” that if not for Mencius’s attacks on Yang Zhu and Mozi, Yang Xiong’s resistance to the Legalists, and Han Yu’s rejection of Buddhism and Daoism, “then all people under heaven would have become barbarians (Yi-Di)” 則天下之人，胥而為夷狄矣。⁸³

Like Liu Kai and Shi Jie, Sun Fu was clearly not content to play the barbarism card against Buddhism alone. Instead, he claimed that all heterodoxies were equally barbaric and equally barbarizing. Whereas the varied metaphors of barbarization that Liu Kai and Shi Jie employed still shared the common denominator of ascribing foreign origins to heterodox ideologies, however, Sun Fu’s equation of heterodoxy with barbarism was even less consistent, shifting between a metaphor of expatriation (“going to the barbarians”) and a metaphor of moral transformation *in situ* (“becoming barbarians”). I believe Liu Kai, Shi Jie, and Sun Fu all desired to maximize the rhetorical power of Han Yu’s most original argument against Buddhism by universalizing its scope, but without an attendant interest in formulating a systematic philosophical interpretation of what actually defined barbarism and Chineseness.

It is important to note that not everyone involved in the Ancient Style revival shared an interest in equating the concept of barbarism with that of heterodoxy, even in this relatively unreflective manner. For example, Li Gou preferred to stick to a more conventional ethnocultural interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in his anti-Buddhist polemics, despite having turned Chineseness and barbarism into philosophical abstractions in his “Dihuan.” In a commemorative inscription for a local school, Li argued that the good moral teachings in Buddhism could already be found in a few lines of the *Liji* and the Ten Wings of the *Yijing*; if one had to look further, one could turn to Laozi or Zhuangzi. What need was there, Li Gou asked rhetorically, to “hastily put on a ritual cap and grovel before a man of the barbarians (Rong)” 遽冕弁匍匐於戎人前? This argument implied that although Daoism (represented by Lao-Zhuang philosophy) was inferior to Classicism, it was at least not barbaric.⁸⁴ But an even more interesting example of this tendency can be found in Ouyang Xiu. Not only did Ouyang resist the new trend of associating Daoism with barbarians, he also implicitly rejected Han Yu’s claim that Chinese Buddhists were becoming barbarians by practising a foreign religion. Let us now turn to exploring Ouyang Xiu’s views on Buddhism and his uses of the barbarization trope.

Ouyang Xiu on Buddhism, barbarism, and barbarian rule

In an essay written around 1061, Ouyang Xiu recounted his early development as an Ancient Style writer. As a child in the 1010s, he had acquired a lacunose and misarranged copy of Han Yu’s collected works and had been struck by the power of Han’s prose, although he was

⁸³ QSW 401.309–310; Chen, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun*, 31–32.

⁸⁴ Ironically, this was one of the inscriptions for which Huang Hanjie criticized Li Gou in 1047, on the grounds that it implied Buddhism was even comparable to the teachings of the sages. LGJ 23.252, 28.321–323.

then unable to understand its arguments fully. He soon turned his attention to learning to compose poetry and parallel prose in order to pass the civil service examinations, but failed the prefectural-level examinations in 1023 because of a technical fault in his *fu* 賦 poem's rhymes. Ouyang claims that he then re-read his copy of Han Yu's works, recognized them as the height of literary perfection, and resolved to write only in that style as soon as he succeeded in the examinations. Upon attaining the *jinshi* degree in 1030 and gaining appointment to a post in Luoyang, he befriended Yin Shu and began learning to write in the Ancient Style.⁸⁵ According to this account, Ouyang Xiu's embrace of the Ancient Style preceded Shi Jie's but was also more gradual and less absolute than Shi's sudden conversion in 1032. I would argue that a similar distinction applies to their ideas and personalities: whereas Shi Jie was an ideological extremist prone to denouncing the cultural mainstream in hyperbolically militant language, Ouyang Xiu preferred a rational, reflective, and gradualist approach to the Ancient Style revival.

The first meaningful conversation between Ouyang Xiu and Shi Jie, which took place in 1035, was an intense epistolary debate over Shi's eccentricities and self-righteousness, including his arrogant claim to be the only man of his time who was willing to resist the influence of Buddhism, Daoism, and parallel prose. In spite of this unpromising start, the two men gradually developed a relationship of mutual respect and even admiration over the next decade.⁸⁶ Nonetheless, they continued to take markedly different approaches to the literary, ideological, and rhetorical aspects of the Ancient Style revival. In the preamble to Part 3, I mentioned Ouyang's dislike of the gratuitously eccentric and inelegant form of Ancient Style writing that Shi Jie popularized when teaching at the Imperial University in 1042–1044. This trend toward literary “strangeness” persisted for more than ten years after Shi's death in 1045, until Ouyang Xiu finally reversed it in 1057. Apart from the issue of literary stylistics, Ouyang's 1042 essay “Ben lun” 本論 (Discourse on Fundamentals) shows that he also disagreed with Shi Jie's demand for state action to prohibit and suppress Buddhism and Daoism—a demand directly inspired by the conclusion of Han Yu's “Yuandao.”⁸⁷

In the “Ben lun,” Ouyang Xiu acknowledged that “the Buddha was a barbarian (Yi-Di)” 佛為夷狄 and that Buddhism had “plagued the Central Lands for more than a thousand years”

⁸⁵ This is the same essay quoted in the preamble to Part 3, in which Ouyang Xiu remarks that Han Yu's prose has since become the literary gold standard for all literati. JSWJ 23.1927.

⁸⁶ The 1035 debate and subsequent relations between Ouyang Xiu and Shi Jie are discussed in detail in Appendix 3.

⁸⁷ Ye Mengde's *Bishu luhua* 避暑錄話 claims that Ouyang Xiu was not originally anti-Buddhist but eventually adopted that position under Shi Jie's influence; also that both Ouyang and Shi were “probably both inspired by Han Tuizhi” 蓋同出韓退之. This overlooks the fact that Ouyang's arguments about how to deal with Buddhism were quite different from those of Han Yu and Shi Jie. See Chen, *Beisong wenhuashi shulun*, 334. For two good analyses of Ouyang Xiu's views on Buddhism, including the story that he began reading the Avatamsaka (Huayan 華嚴) Sutra shortly before his death, see Chang, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang*, 97–106; Zhang Peifeng 張培鋒, *Songdai shidafu foxue yu wenxue* 宋代士大夫佛學與文學 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2007), 145–153.

為中國患千餘歲。⁸⁸ But he chose not to make Buddhism's foreign origin the crux of his argument, nor did he accept Han Yu's argument (which had also become Shi Jie's) that Buddhism had to be prohibited and eradicated by force before the Way of the Sages could be revived. Instead, he argued that Buddhism had only gained a foothold in the Central Lands because of the moral and social breakdown resulting from the abandonment of classical rites and administrative institutions after the Zhou.⁸⁹ In other words, whereas Shi Jie's anti-Buddhist and anti-Daoist arguments were framed rather clumsily in a language of extreme xenophobia that was modeled on Han Yu's, Ouyang Xiu traced Chinese civilization's supposed decline to internal causes and saw no point in blaming foreigners for it.⁹⁰ One is reminded of Ouyang's first letter to Shi Jie in 1035, which faulted his essays for making arguments that "seem not to look into the sources of things deeply enough" 若未深究其源。⁹¹

Since the internal decline of Chinese civilization was the fundamental cause of Buddhism's appeal to the Chinese people, rather than vice versa (as Shi Jie would have it), it followed that the only way for Classicists to achieve victory over Buddhism was to "restore the fundamentals" 修其本 by reviving the classical rites and institutions and teaching people about the benefits of ritual and moral duty. Ouyang Xiu believed that only a gradual and gentle approach of moral guidance by the state had any chance of success in combating the influence of Buddhism. In passages that read like implicit jibes at Shi Jie's ranting, he pointed out that no angry individual spouting anti-Buddhist polemics or indulging in military metaphors stood any real chance of driving out a long-entrenched religion; moreover, if the government attempted to prohibit Buddhism and impose ritual and moral duty without educating the people, this would merely frighten them away.⁹² In what may well be the essay's boldest move, Ouyang took direct aim at Han Yu's calls (in the "Yuandao") for the state to burn Buddhist sutras and turn monasteries into private dwellings, arguing that such extreme measures were hardly necessary if the state gradually guided the people toward taking delight in the ways of classical antiquity.⁹³

⁸⁸ JSJ 17.511.

⁸⁹ JSJ 17.511–513.

⁹⁰ David Curtis Wright is thus wide of the mark when he reads the "Ben lun" as evidence that Ouyang Xiu was "a xenophobe of the first magnitude." Dougals Skonicki's insightful study of the Buddhist monk-apologist Qisong's 契嵩 (1007–1072) interactions with Ancient Style writers also misses this crucial distinction when it identifies Sun Fu's "Ru ru" and Mencius temple inscription, Ouyang Xiu's "Ben lun," and Shi Jie's "Zhongguo lun" as examples of how "[m]any Ancient-style Learning followers in the Song also posited a connection between Chinese civilization and the *dao* of the ancient sages, identifying heterodox theories as leading to its decline." See Curtis Wright, "The Screed of a Humbled Empire," 384–385; Douglas Skonicki, "A Buddhist Reponse to Ancient-style Learning: Qisong's Conception of Political Order," *T'oung Pao* 97 (2011), 8 n. 15.

⁹¹ It is possible that Ouyang was also referring to Shi's claim that Daoism came from the barbarians. JSWJ 16.1764.

⁹² JSJ 17.513, 516–517.

⁹³ Li Gou made a similar argument in one of thirty essays written as a literary portfolio for the decree examination of 1042: he criticized Han Yu's recommendation as "too violent in its language and not gradual [enough] in its [approach to] driving out [Buddhism and Daoism]" 言之太暴，毆之亡漸。JSJ 17.517; LGJ 16.140.

The way to do this was for local officials to reform the ritual culture of village communities to accord with classical models, and to do this patiently and consistently:

As for [reviving] the [classical] rites pertaining to spring and autumn hunts, weddings, funerals, ancestral sacrifices, and archery contests, these are a matter for the prefectural and county officials. They need only explicate and promulgate [these rites to the people]. But if this is not done diligently and through gradual influence, it cannot enter into people's [minds] and achieve their transformation. Since antiquity, the governance of a true king has always taken a generation to produce humaneness.

至于所謂搜狩、婚姻、喪祭、鄉射之禮，此郡縣有司之事也，在乎講明而頒布之爾。然非行之以勤，浸之以漸，則不能入于人而成化。自古王者之政，必世而後仁。⁹⁴

The “Ben lun” contains two other conspicuous subversions of the kind of anti-Buddhist polemic favored by Han Yu, Shi Jie, and Sun Fu. The first of these is an argument that so many people follow Buddhism, in spite of its unnatural denial of family bonds, because its emphasis on good works appeals to the innate goodness of human nature. By the same token, Classicism can compete with Buddhism by showing people how to do good works through the practice of ritual and moral duty.⁹⁵ This flatly contradicts Han Yu's claim that the Buddhist pursuit of nirvana is inherently selfish and immoral, as well as Shi Jie's claim that people follow Buddhism only out of a desire for heaven and a fear of hell. Thus, while Han and Shi assume that people's motivation for practicing Buddhism is fundamentally different from their own motivation for following the Way of the Sages, Ouyang acknowledges that Buddhists and Classicists have similar motivations. As a result, he also avoids a self-righteous view of Buddhists as morally other from and inferior to himself. The same optimistic attitude toward the Buddhists enables Ouyang Xiu to make the second subversion: namely, rejecting the alarmist rhetorical trope of a contemporary Chinese world being barbarized by Buddhism. He notes that the Chinese people of his day do not have to deal with real barbarian invaders, unlike the people of Confucius's time, and thus implies that reversing Buddhism's influence is not as difficult as those anti-Buddhist polemicists who employ the barbarization trope often make it seem to be:

In the distant past, the barbarians (Rong-Di Man-Yi) lived all mixed up throughout the Nine Provinces—there were the so-called Rong barbarians of Xú, the White Di barbarians, the Man barbarians of Jingzhou (i.e., Chu), and the Yi barbarians of the Huai River, for example. After the Three Dynasties [of Xia, Shang, and Zhou] declined, [barbarians] like these all invaded the Central Lands. Thus the Qin used the Rong

⁹⁴ JSJ 17.517.

⁹⁵ JSJ 17.516.

barbarians [whom it had conquered] to seize and occupy the Eastern Zhou capital,⁹⁶ and the rulers of the Wu and Chu states all assumed the title of king illegitimately. The *Chunqiu* speaks of [the men of Zhu] using the Viscount of Zeng [as a sacrifice],⁹⁷ the *Zuozhuan* records the incident of a man with his hair untied at the Yi River,⁹⁸ and Confucius, too, thought himself fortunate to not be fastening his robe on the left side.⁹⁹ At that time, even though Buddhism had not arrived yet, how much longer could this have gone on before the [people of the] Central Lands became barbarians (Yi-Di)?

昔者戎狄蠻夷雜居九州之間，所謂徐戎、白狄、荆蠻、淮夷之類是也。三代既衰，若此之類并侵于中國，故秦以西戎據宗周，吳、楚之國皆僭稱王。《春秋》書用鄩子，《傳》記被發于伊川，而仲尼亦以不左衽為幸。當是之時，佛雖不來，中國幾何其不夷狄也？

We can know from this that when the Way of the True King was obscured and humaneness and moral duty were abandoned, then the barbarians became a threat. When Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu*, he used it to assert the superiority of the Central Lands and the inferiority of the barbarians, and the Way of the True King became clear again. Today, the people of the Nine Provinces all fasten their robes on the right side and wear caps and sashes. The plague that we face is nothing more than Buddhism. The way to victory over it not some lofty or impracticable theory; the only problem is that we neglect to use it.

以是而言，王道不明而仁義廢，則夷狄之患至矣。及孔子作《春秋》，尊中國而賤夷狄，然後王道複明。方今九州之民，莫不右衽而冠帶，其為患者，特佛爾。其所以勝之之道，非有甚高難行之說也，患乎忽而不為爾。¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ The Qin state's early expansion involved conquering surrounding Rong groups, who were presumably incorporated into its army. In 256 BC, Qin annexed the Eastern Zhou capital and put an end to the Zhou dynasty, as a prelude to unifying the Warring States world.

⁹⁷ This incident occurred in 641 BC, after the state of Zhu 邾 (also known as Zhulou 邾婁 or Zou 鄒) took the Zeng ruler captive at a treaty conference. The Gongyang and Guliang commentaries claim that the sacrifice consisted of striking the Zeng ruler's nose to draw blood and dripping that blood on the altar to the god of the soil, implying that the Zeng ruler was not killed. The *Zuozhuan*, however, claims that the men of Zhu killed the Zeng ruler and sacrificed him on the altar to a local god, and that the Song ruler, who had suzerainty over Zhu, connived in this act so as to gain the loyalty of the "eastern Yi barbarians" 東夷. Note that whereas the *Zuozhuan* refers to the people of Zhu as "barbarians" (Yi or Man-Yi 蠻夷) on more than one occasion, the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries do not do so at all. Du Yu's *Zuozhuan* commentary argues that Zhu, originally a Chinese state, was identified with the eastern Yi barbarians because it lay adjacent to them and had adopted some of their rites and customs. Li Wai-ye suggests that the real reason has to do with geopolitical enmity between Lu and Zhu, since the *Zuozhuan* is based on Lu historical records. However, an earlier article by Robert Eno that traces Confucius's family background to the "Yi" state of Zhu assumes that the *Zuozhuan* is an objective source on that state's ethnic identity. ZZZY 14.393, 399–400, 50.1431; GYZS 11.240; GLZS 9.160; Li, "Hua-Yi zhi bian yu yizu tonghun"; Robert Eno, "The Background of the Kong Family of Lu and the Origins of Ruism," *Early China* 28 (2003), 1–41.

⁹⁸ That is, the Xin You anecdote already mentioned in Chapter 4, in which this scene is interpreted as a portent of barbarian migration to the Luoyang area.

⁹⁹ An allusion to *Analects* 14:17.

¹⁰⁰ JSJ 17.517.

Ouyang Xiu ingeniously alludes to Han Yu's famous rhetorical question about barbarization and even cites the *Chunqiu*, but does so to make a point completely contrary to Han's attempt at representing Buddhism as a barbarizing religion. Evidently, Ouyang had the ability to imitate Han Yu's Ancient Style prose without subscribing to Han's ideological positions uncritically, whereas Shi Jie and Sun Fu either lacked that ability or were disinclined to use it. Indeed, Ouyang's observation that the Chinese of his day "all fasten their robes on the right side and wear caps and sashes" also implicitly negates Shi Jie's far-fetched claim that the Chinese were all dressing in barbarian clothing because of Buddhism and Daoism. Whereas Shi's rhetorical strategy was to represent the purported barbarizing effect of Buddhism as a tangible reality by applying it to such mundane aspects as food, clothing, and architecture, Ouyang recognized this as a blatant misrepresentation of reality and preferred to relate the idea of barbarization to actual invasion and conquest by barbarians.

On the only other occasion when Ouyang Xiu used the trope of barbarization from the "Yuandao," he did so with reference to a much more recent period of history—namely, the Five Dynasties. This occurs in a Discourse at the end of the "Basic Annals of Zhou Shizong" in the *Xin Wudaishi* 新五代史, which Ouyang composed as a private project over a long period of time between 1036 and 1066. Here, Ouyang lists four aspects of moral and cultural decline under the preceding four dynasties—Later Liang, Later Tang 後唐 (923–936), Later Jin 後晉 (936–947), and Later Han 後漢 (947–951)—that he believes Zhou Shizong was able to reverse during his short reign. Of these, one aspect is likened to moral bestialization, while another is characterized as barbarization:

Alas! The Basic Annals for the Five Dynasties are replete [with signs of decline and disorder]; [the immoral deeds that were done] between rulers and ministers are too many to speak of! Yougui of the [Later] Liang rebelled [and killed his father, the emperor¹⁰¹], and in the [Later] Tang, there was the murder of Kening and the execution of Cunyi and Congcan.¹⁰² In that case, how much longer could this have gone on before the ties of affection between fathers and sons and kinsmen were [completely] cut? [One emperor]

¹⁰¹ In 912, Zhu Yougui 朱友珪 (888–913) assassinated his father Zhu Wen (Liang Taizu 梁太祖) and seized the Later Liang throne because he believed Zhu Wen was about to execute him. XWDS 13.137.

¹⁰² In 908 the Shatuo Türk leader Li Keyong's son and successor Li Cunxu 李存勖 (885–926), who later reigned as the Later Tang emperor Zhuangzong 莊宗 (r. 923–926), executed his uncle Li Kening 李克寧, who had been implicated in a conspiracy to overthrow him. In 926, Zhuangzong ordered the execution of his brother Li Cunyi 李存乂 because Cunyi had expressed indignation at the recent unjust execution of his father-in-law, the senior general Guo Chongtao 郭崇韜 (d. 926). In 929, Mingzong 明宗 (r. 926–933) of the Later Tang ordered his nephew Li Congcan 李從璨 to commit suicide after the powerful chief minister An Chonghui 安重誨 (d. 931) accused Congcan of treasonous intent. XWDS 6.60, 14.150–151, 15.168.

merely suspended court audiences when the Consort Dowager died¹⁰³, while Lady Liu and Lady Feng were installed as empresses.¹⁰⁴ In that case, how much longer could this have gone on before the moral duties between husband and wife degenerated to the level of birds and beasts? [One emperor] made sacrifices and burned paper money [for his father] in the wilds during the Cold Food Festival¹⁰⁵, [another] adopted a new reign era and had court music performed during the period of mourning [for his father]¹⁰⁶, and then there were the murders of Ma Yan and Ren Huan.¹⁰⁷ In that case, how much longer could this have gone on before the rites and ritual music, laws and government all collapsed? As for making offerings at Mount Lei¹⁰⁸, sending arrows as tallies¹⁰⁹, and sacrificing horses¹¹⁰, how much longer could this have gone on before [the people of] the Central Lands became barbarians (Yi-Di)? It can truly be called an age of chaos!

嗚呼，五代本紀備矣，君臣之際，可勝道哉！梁之友珪反，唐戕克寧而殺存義、從璨，則父子骨肉之恩，幾何其不絕矣。太妃薨而輟朝，立劉氏、馮氏為皇后，則夫

¹⁰³ The Consort Dowager Liu 劉太妃 was officially Zhuangzong's mother, having been Li Keyong's wife, but Zhuangzong installed his birth mother Lady Cao 曹氏 (Li Keyong's concubine) as Empress Dowager instead. When the Consort Dowager died in 925, Zhuangzong only suspended court audiences for five days instead of observing the full mourning period. XWDS 5.49, 14.142.

¹⁰⁴ In 924 Zhuangzong bypassed his official wife Lady Han 韓夫人 and his first concubine Lady Yi 伊夫人 to install Lady Liu as empress, because Lady Liu had borne him a son and enjoyed his favor. Lady Feng was the widow of Shi Chongyin 石重胤 (d. 936), the younger brother or cousin the Later Jin founder Shi Jingtang 石敬瑭 (Jin Gaozu 晉高祖, r. 936–942). When Shi Jingtang's son Shi Chonggui 石重貴 (Jin Chudi 晉出帝, r. 942–947) succeeded to the throne in 942, he chose Lady Feng as his empress because of her beauty, even though this was technically incest. XWDS 5.47, 9.92, 14.143–144, 17.180–181.

¹⁰⁵ Shi Chonggui performed these rites for Shi Jingtang in 943. Ouyang Xiu comments at XWDS 17.188 that because they were typical of commoners but hardly befitting a Son of Heaven, this incident illustrates the extent to which “the rites and ritual music collapsed” 禮樂崩壞 (cf. the similar commentarial note at XWDS 9.91).

¹⁰⁶ These violations of the mourning rites for a deceased emperor took place in early 934, at the beginning of the brief reign of Mindi 閔帝 (r. 934) of the Later Tang: see XWDS 7.70.

¹⁰⁷ In 926, Tang Mingzong's chief minister An Chonghui slew the imperial attendant Ma Yan at the gates of the Censorate, probably after an argument between the two. In 927, An accused his recently retired political enemy Ren Huan of involvement in a revolt mounted by the general Zhu Shouyin 朱守殷 (d. 927), and used a forged imperial edict to force Ren to commit suicide. XWDS 6.56, 58, 28.306–307.

¹⁰⁸ This refers to a sacrifice to *Tängri*, the Turkic celestial deity, that Tang Zhuangzong performed near Luoyang in 923: see JWDS 32.438; XWDS 5.47.

¹⁰⁹ In 927, the Later Tang governor Huo Yanwei 霍彥威 (d. 928) sent Mingzong a pair of arrows to congratulate him on quelling Zhu Shouyin's revolt. Mingzong sent Huo a pair of arrows in return. The *Jiu Wudaishi* 舊五代史 explains that the “foreigners” 番家 (i.e., the Türks) used arrows as tallies to issue military orders and deploy armies. Huo Yanwei, being Chinese, did not fully understand this custom and committed a *faux pas* by sending arrows to his ruler, but Mingzong clearly did not take it to heart. JWDS 38.529; XWDS 6.58.

¹¹⁰ In 942, just five days after succeeding Jin Gaozu, Jin Chudi sent an imperial guard general to sacrifice two of Gaozu's horses in the mountains west of Xiangzhou 相州 (modern Anyang 安陽). This was apparently a Turkic religious ritual. JWDS 81.1068; XWDS 9.89.

婦之倫幾何其不乖而不至於禽獸矣。寒食野祭而焚紙錢，居喪改元而用樂，殺馬延及任圜，則禮樂刑政幾何其不壞矣。至於賽雷山、傳箭而撲馬，則中國幾何其不夷狄矣。可謂亂世也歟！¹¹¹

Ouyang Xiu thus criticizes the Later Tang and Later Jin dynasties, both of which were ruled by Shatuo Türks, for various immoral and ritually improper acts, and also for corrupting the imperial court's ritual culture with Turkic customs; Xu Wudang's 徐無黨 (d. 1086) commentary to the *Xin Wudaishi*, believed to reflect Ouyang Xiu's own views to a very large extent, consistently describes these as "barbarian (Yi-Di) rites" 夷狄之禮 or "barbarian practices" 夷狄之事.¹¹² As with the "Ben lun," this argument about barbarization via the practice of barbarian ritual uses the rhetoric of "how much longer can this go on before" (*jihe qi bu* 幾何其不) from the "Yuandao," but implicitly rejects its connection to Buddhism; in fact, it bears more resemblance to the Xin You anecdote from the *Zuozhuan*, to which the "Ben lun" also alludes. Ouyang Xiu does go on to praise Zhou Shizong for closing down 3,336 Buddhist monasteries and issuing an order for all bronze Buddhist icons in his realm to be melted down and recast into copper coinage. But Ouyang does not link this anti-Buddhist campaign—which was much smaller in scale than Tang Wuzong's—with Han Yu's call for the forceful extirpation of Buddhism and Daoism. Nor does he pretend that suppressing Buddhism was an adequate solution to the moral collapse and political fragmentation that followed the fall of the Tang.¹¹³ It is interesting to compare this to a 1034 letter from Shi Jie to Kong Daofu, in which Shi uses the Lu region as a touchstone for the state of civilization and exclaims:

Alas! The Duke of Zhou has been dead for several thousand years, and the sagely teacher [Confucius] has also been dead for several thousand years. Passing from the Qin through the Jin, Song, Liang, and Sui, up to the Five Dynasties, how much longer could it have gone on before [the people of] Lu were wearing their hair untied and fastening their robes on the left side?

¹¹¹ XWDS 12.125.

¹¹² XWDS 5.48, 6.58, 9.90. Xu Wudang was a longtime student of Ouyang Xiu, and scholars generally believe that the text of his commentary was dictated orally by Ouyang himself. See Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 162–180.

¹¹³ Ouyang gives as much attention to Shizong's other accomplishments as an emperor, which included reviving classical rites and ritual music at the imperial court, initiating the process of political reunification by capturing the Huainan region from the Southern Tang state, and reconquering the Guannan region (which Ouyang's commentary refers to as "former territory of the Central Lands" 中國故地) from the Kitans. Here and elsewhere in the *Xin Wudaishi*, Ouyang Xiu emphasizes that Shizong seized Guannan without meeting any resistance from the Kitans because the Kitan ruler Yelü Jing 耶律璟 (Liao Muzong 遼穆宗, r. 951–969) had no interest in holding territory that had been taken from the Chinese. Ouyang thus takes issue with other historians who criticized Shizong for reckless adventurism. Like Shi Jie, he argues that if not for Shizong's death, the Song would now have the Sixteen Prefectures (which he calls the Fourteen Prefectures) as well. XWDS 12.125–126, 73.904–905.

嗚呼！周公死數千年矣，聖師沒亦數千年矣。經于秦，歷于晉、宋、梁、隋，至于五代，魯幾何不被髮而左衽也？¹¹⁴

Here, Shi Jie is alluding to *Analects* 14:17 but also deliberately reminding his reader of the “Yuandao” through the use of the “how much longer can this go on before” (*jihe qi bu* 幾何其不) construction. The fact that Shi mentions the Southern Dynasties rather than the Northern Dynasties suggests that his use of the barbarization trope is aimed at Buddhism, not barbarian rulers. This is confirmed in the very next line, in which he blames Laozi, Zhuangzi, Han Feizi, Yang Zhu, Mozi, Buddhism, and the Daoist religion for what he perceives to be the near-collapse of classical civilization.

Ouyang Xiu’s preference for applying the barbarization trope to the effects of barbarian rule over the Central Lands, rather than the impact of Buddhism, might lead one to conclude that he had a strong distaste for the three Shatuo dynasties of the tenth century: Later Tang, Later Jin, and Later Han. Interestingly, however, that was clearly not the case. Ouyang followed his contemporaries in directing the greatest opprobrium at the Later Liang dynasty, whose rulers were unambiguously Chinese. In the *Xin Wudaishi*, he argues that “the [Later] Liang’s immorality was extreme” 梁之惡極矣 and declares Zhu Wen’s incestuous relations with his daughters-in-law, in particular, to be “unspeakable” 不可道.¹¹⁵ Although he explicitly refers to the rulers of the Later Tang and Later Jin as “barbarians” (Yi-Di 夷狄), he never makes this a basis for criticism and, in fact, speaks quite positively of Mingzong 明宗 (r. 926–933) of the Later Tang.¹¹⁶ Mingzong, Ouyang argues, was one of the few effective and praiseworthy emperors of the Five Dynasties, but this was (ironically) in part because he supposedly recognized that he, as a “foreigner” (*Fanren* 蕃人), was unworthy to rule the Chinese and therefore prayed to Heaven for a sage to be born—a prayer that, so the story goes, was rewarded with peace and good harvests and also resulted in Song Taizu’s 宋太祖 (r. 960–976) birth in 927, the second year of Mingzong’s reign. The story of Mingzong’s prayer probably originated with efforts at reinforcing the Song dynasty’s legitimacy by representing its founder as a sage. It first appears in Wang Yucheng’s *Wudaishi quewen* 五代史闕文, which credits Mingzong with an innately “pure, honest, humane, and compassionate” 純厚仁慈 nature. However, Ouyang Xiu also notes that Mingzong, being a barbarian, was “strong-willed by nature” 性果, and that his humaneness was therefore not accompanied by clarity of thought. As a result, he repeatedly executed ministers for offenses they had not actually committed.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ CLWJ 14.170–171; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 46.

¹¹⁵ XWDS 13.127.

¹¹⁶ XWDS 4.39–40, 6.66, 17.181, 188.

¹¹⁷ The story of Mingzong’s prayer seems to have enjoyed considerable appeal during the Song and Yuan periods: versions of it also appear in the thirteenth-century *Qidan guozhi* 契丹國志 and the fourteenth-century *Xuanhe yishi* 宣和遺事. The *Qidan guozhi* also quotes Hu Anguo affirming the sincerity of Mingzong’s prayer. See JWDS

Ouyang Xiu's attitude toward the Five Dynasties was ambivalent and evolving, but his famous essay "Zhengtong lun" 正統論 (Discourse on Legitimate Rule) shows quite clearly that he never saw the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy as an important factor in assessing them.¹¹⁸ In the original 1040 version of the "Zhengtong lun," he rejected the mainstream position that the Later Liang was illegitimate and that the Tang dynasty's legitimacy had passed directly to the Later Tang via Li Keyong. Taking an objective historical view, he pointed out that the Later Tang's claim to be a direct successor to the Tang lacked credibility, not because the Later Tang emperors were Türks but because their claim to kinship with the Tang imperial clan was based on nothing more than a forebear's having been awarded the imperial surname. Ouyang argued that the Later Liang was therefore just as legitimate as the Later Tang, Later Jin, Later Han, and Later Zhou.¹¹⁹

By the time Ouyang Xiu compiled his collected works in 1071–1072, however, he had completely reversed this position and written a new version of the "Zhengtong lun" that regarded all of the Five Dynasties as illegitimate for two reasons: all were founded through usurpation or rebellion, and none had succeeded in reunifying the Chinese world. Ouyang Xiu argued that the second reason was paramount: no regime could claim legitimacy under conditions of political fragmentation in the Chinese world, whereas a regime that achieved reunification would be legitimate even if it had gained power through immoral means—Ouyang identified the Western Jin and Sui dynasties as examples of the latter. This argument necessitated one other reversal: Ouyang switched from endorsing the Cao-Wei 曹魏 dynasty (220–266) as legitimate to denying its legitimacy because of its failure to conquer the state of Wu 吳 (222–280) in the south.¹²⁰

44.610; XWDS 6.66; Ye Longli 葉隆禮, *Qidan guozhi* 契丹國志 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 13–14; Anonymous, *Xuanhe yishi* 宣和遺事 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 7. For a recent analysis of Ouyang Xiu's complex attitude toward Mingzong and the other "barbarian" rulers of the Five Dynasties, as seen in the *Xin Wudaishi*, see Billy K.L. So, "Negotiating Chinese Identity in Five Dynasties Narratives: From the *Old History* to the *New History*," in Billy K.L. So, James Fitzgerald, Huang Jianli, and James K. Chin eds., *Power and Identity in the Chinese World Order: Festschrift in Honour of Professor Wang Gungwu* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 228–232.

¹¹⁸ Ge Zhaoguang's use of the "Zhengtong lun" and the "Zhongguo lun" as prime examples of Northern Song ethnic 'proto-nationalism' is thus wrong on both counts. Liu Pujiang notes the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy's irrelevance to Ouyang Xiu's assessment of the Five Dynasties in the "Zhengtong lun," finding it surprising enough to require explanation. Liu argues that Ouyang Xiu and his contemporaries perceived the Shatuo Türks as Chinese because they had adopted Chinese culture and assumed the role of defending the Central Lands from a new barbarian threat, the Kitans. I find this argument unconvincing, mainly because it ignores Ouyang's explicit criticism of Shatuo Türk customs as a barbarizing influence on the Chinese under Later Tang and Later Jin rule. Ge, "Songdai 'Zhongguo' yishi de tuxian," 135–136; Liu Pujiang 劉浦江, "Zhengtong lun xia de Wudai shiguan" 正統論下的五代史觀, *Tang yanjiu* 唐研究 11 (2005), 90–93.

¹¹⁹ JSWJ 9.1564–1565.

¹²⁰ JSJ 16.497, 500–501, 504–505. Liu Pujiang argues that Ouyang Xiu finally regarded the Five Dynasties as illegitimate because he came to see political ethics as taking priority over all other factors. This argument, which Liu links with the common idea of a "Confucian revival" in the eleventh century, overlooks the primacy of political

Sometime before 1055, a scholar named Zhang Wangzhi 章望之 (n.d.) had already criticized Ouyang's original position on the Cao-Wei and Later Liang on the grounds that since neither regime had achieved a reunification of "all under heaven," Ouyang was effectively saying that the ability to usurp the throne was a sufficient condition for political legitimacy. Although Ouyang Xiu initially wrote an essay, the "Wei Liang jie" 魏梁解 (Elucidations on the Cao-Wei and Later Liang), to rebut Zhang Wangzhi's charge of "encouraging usurpation" 獎篡, his later revision of the "Zhengtong lun" was evidently influenced by Zhang's arguments.¹²¹

The idea that political unification was an essential criterion for legitimacy was thus a late development in Ouyang Xiu's thinking, but we can see that he was already moving in that direction in the 1040 version of the "Zhengtong lun," in which he denied legitimacy to every regime that existed between the fall of the Western Jin and the founding of the Sui. This position remained unchanged in the final version of the essay. It was a radical departure from both earlier and contemporary discourse on the legitimacy of the Northern and Southern Dynasties, which tended to be centered on controversies over whether the north or the south had held the Mandate of Heaven and whether the Mandate had passed from south to north at some point.¹²² It also amounted to rejecting the longstanding assumption that there was always a legitimate regime during times of political division. Unlike Huangfu Shi, Ouyang Xiu did not think the Eastern Jin could base its claim to legitimacy on the example of the Eastern Zhou. This was because Jin Yuandi, while a member of the Jin imperial clan, was not in the line of succession to the Jin throne and was thus not a legitimate heir to the last Western Jin emperor. On the other hand, Ouyang also did not agree with Wang Tong that Xiaowendi's reforms were a sufficient reason to accord legitimacy to the Northern Wei. Whereas Huangfu Shi had argued that the reforms came too late to make up for the Northern Wei's earlier barbarism, however, Ouyang Xiu argued that the reforms—which he acknowledged as a case of "leaving barbarism (Yi) to pursue

reunification in the new version of the "Zhengtong lun." Liu, "Zhengtong lun xia de Wudai shiguan," 82–85. On the textual history of the "Zhengtong lun," see also Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 239–247.

¹²¹ Zhang Wangzhi's essay, "Mingtong" 明統 (Clarifying the Meaning of Legitimate Rule), is no longer extant, but its arguments are known from a 1055 essay that Su Shi wrote in defense of Ouyang Xiu's original "Zhengtong lun," as well as fragments quoted in Lang Ye's 郎晔 (n.d.) Southern Song annotated edition of Su's collected works. Su Shi claimed that Zhang regarded the Five Dynasties as legitimate, but the fragments in the Lang edition contradict this claim and suggest that Zhang placed them in the same category as the Cao-Wei. JSJ 17.525–526; SSQJ 4.404–409; Jao Tsung-I 饒宗頤, *Zhongguo shixue shang zhi zhengtong lun* 中國史學上之正統論 (Shanghai: Shanghai yuandong chubanshe, 1996), 41–42, 106–107.

¹²² A frequently cited Northern Song example of this is Zhang Fangping's essay "Nanbei zhengrun lun" 南北正閏論 (On the Legitimacy of the North and the Illegitimacy of the South), which argues that the Northern Wei, not the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties, was the legitimate successor to the Western Jin. Even after Ouyang Xiu's death, Chen Shidao's 陳師道 (ca. 1053–ca. 1101) "Zhengtong lun" 正統論 followed Wang Tong's argument that the Northern Wei became legitimate upon the end of the Liu-Song in 479. Chen argued that a "superior man" (*junzi* 君子) would "promote" 進 barbarians who had changed to become like the Chinese, even if they "had not yet become purely Chinese" 未純乎夏, and would "reject" 斥 Chinese who had changed to become like barbarians, even if they "had not yet become pure barbarians (Yi)" 未純乎夷. This distinction between pure Chineseness and pure barbarism may reflect influence from an essay by Su Shi that I analyze in Chapter 6. For the text of the essays by Zhang Fangping and Chen Shidao, see Jao, *Zhongguo shixue shang zhi zhengtong lun*, 91–92, 107–109.

Chineseness” 去夷即華—made no difference because they failed to produce the desired outcome of reunification.¹²³

Ouyang Xiu anticipated a counterargument that he was being unfair to the Northern Wei by ignoring its longevity and its achievement in reunifying the north. He therefore explained that anyone who tried “asking the sage [Confucius]” 質諸聖人 by looking into the principles of the *Chunqiu* would come around to his point of view:

Now those who speak in support of the [Northern] Wei are merely talking about its many achievements and its strength as a state. That is something that the sage [Confucius] did not approve of. How do we know this? We know it from the *Chunqiu*. In the time of the *Chunqiu*, Lord Huan of Qi and Lord Wen of Jin can be said to have had great achievements. [The rulers of] Wu and Chu, who illegitimately [used the title of king], took turns to be the strongest among the feudal lords. When the sage [Confucius] wrote about [Lord Huan of] Qi or [Lord Wen of] Jin, he approved of their actions in reality but wrote in the language of disapproval because he believed that while their achievements were commendable, the Way did not permit him to approve of them. As for writing about Chu and Wu, he repeatedly promoted them, but their rulers' rank never went beyond that of viscount. In that case, achievements and strength are not qualities that gain the sage's approval.

今為魏說者，不過曰功多而國強爾。此聖人有所不與也。何以知之？以《春秋》而知也。《春秋》之時，齊桓、晉文可謂有功矣。吳、楚之僭，迭強於諸侯。聖人於書齊、晉，實與而文不與之，以為功雖可褒，而道不可以與也。至書楚與吳，或屢進之，然不得過乎子爵。則功與強，聖人有所不取也。¹²⁴

In this passage, Ouyang Xiu's simultaneous use of the Qi and Jin hegemons and the Wu and Chu kings as examples suggests that his emphasis is on the Zhou king's precedence over the feudal lords, whether Chinese or barbarian, rather than any idea that the barbarian status of the Wu and Chu rulers made their pretensions to kingship inherently illegitimate. Interestingly, Ouyang also attempted at this point to pre-empt criticism for recognizing Qin, a dynasty that “arose from the barbarians (Yi-Di)” 起夷狄, as legitimate simply because it had unified the Chinese world. Earlier, Ouyang had implicitly rejected the idea of Qin as a barbarian state by accepting the *Shiji* description of its rulers as descendants of the sage-king Zhuangxi 顓頊. But he does not address the question of Qin origins here. Rather, he suggests that the Northern Wei should be compared

¹²³ JSJ 16.498, 500–501, 502–503; JSWJ 9.1552–1553, 1556–1557, 1561–1563.

¹²⁴ This is the 1040 version; the 1072 version is slightly condensed but also contains the new line, “When the sage [wrote] the *Chunqiu*, the [sole] object of his respect was the Zhou [dynasty]” 聖人於《春秋》，所尊者周也。JSJ 16.503; JSWJ 9.1563.

not to the Qin empire but to the ethnically *Dī Former Qin* 前秦 state that had reunified north China in 376 and then collapsed in the 380s. Since no one seriously believed that the Former Qin had earned political legitimacy through its achievements, there was no reason to accord legitimacy to the Northern Wei merely because it had lasted longer than the Former Qin.¹²⁵

It should be noted, however, that a commentarial note in the *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 edition of Ouyang Xiu's collected works claims that one edition of the 1040 version of the "Zhengtong lun" contains an additional passage immediately following the one on the *Chunqiu* that was quoted above. That passage expounds on barbarian inferiority and the principle of promotion in the *Chunqiu*:

Of the ten thousand things created by heaven and earth, human beings are superior to all others by virtue of their intelligence. When human beings are divided into the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters, the [people of the] Central Lands are superior to them because they have ritual and moral duty. That is why it accords with [the natural order] when the superior rule over the inferior but goes against [the natural order] when the inferior infringe on the superior. The sage's sincerity in extending his approval to the good was such that when barbarians (Yi-Di) admired the Central Lands, he would promote them. For barbarians to be promoted to the level of the Central Lands is a fortunate thing, but if they then infringe on the legitimate succession of emperors and kings, can that be acceptable?

天地之生萬物也，人以聰明而為貴。人之分四夷也，中國以有禮義而為貴。故以其貴者治賤者為順，以賤者干貴者為逆。聖人之推與善之誠，夷狄而慕中國，則進之。夫進夷狄於中國，幸矣，遂以干帝王之統，其可乎？¹²⁶

Unfortunately, the *Sibu congkan* edition does not elaborate on the provenance of this intriguing variant text, including its earliest known occurrence. If Ouyang Xiu believed so strongly in the illegitimacy of barbarian rule over the Central Lands, it seems incongruous that the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy would influence his attitude toward the Northern Wei but not play any part in his assessment of the Five Dynasties. There is thus a strong possibility that the passage is an interpolation or a commentarial note from the Southern Song or later. That said, it also seems strange that an interpolator or commentator would choose to insert this passage only into the 1040 version of the "Zhengtong lun" and not the better known final version. It is unclear to me whether the only complete Song-period text of Ouyang Xiu's collected works now extant, dated to 1205–1207 and preserved in the library of Tenri University in Japan, contains the variant

¹²⁵ The 1040 version adds: "Even if one feels that the [Northern] Wei lasted for many generations and cannot still be set aside as barbarians (Yi-Di), it was only on an equal footing with the Eastern Jin" 就使魏興世遠，不可猶格之夷狄，則不過為東晉比也。JSJ 16.501, 503–504; JSWJ 9.1558, 1563.

¹²⁶ JSWJ 9.1564.

passage. Hong Benjian's recent annotated edition of Ouyang's works is based on a number of early editions, including the Tenri University edition (made available to him in facsimile), but Hong simply repeats the *Sibu congkan* annotation for the extra passage without indicating if the Tenri edition contains the passage as well.¹²⁷ In any case, even if this passage is authentic and original to the 1040 version of the "Zhengtong lun," its absence from the 1072 version would indicate that the issue of barbarian inferiority eventually became irrelevant to Ouyang Xiu's mature views on the political legitimacy of the Northern Wei.

¹²⁷ No reproduction of the Tenri University edition has been published thus far. Hong Benjian received his facsimile copy of the edition from Higashi Hidetoshi. On the significance and date of the Tenri edition, see Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 181–195.

Chapter 6

Discourses on barbarism in the *Chunqiu* exegesis of Sun Fu, Liu Chang, and Su ShiSun Fu on “repelling barbarians” and barbarization in the *Chunqiu*

Ouyang Xiu’s attempt in the “Zhengtong lun” at backing up his position on the Northern Wei with the authority of the *Chunqiu*, despite the problems of logic in analogizing the Northern and Southern Dynasties to the Eastern Zhou feudal states, reflects his belief that the *Chunqiu* was Confucius’s definitive statement on political ethics.¹ As he explained in the 1040 version of the “Zhengtong lun,” the very idea of political legitimacy originated with the *Chunqiu*:

With whom did the discourse of legitimate rule (*zhengtong*) begin? It began with the writing of the *Chunqiu*. After the Eastern Zhou moved [its capital to Luoyang], the royal dynasty was weak and [the rulers of] Wu and Xú both illegitimately [used the title of king], so that there were three kings under heaven.² The Son of Heaven’s commands had no effect on the feudal lords, and the Odes [of the royal court] degenerated to become the same as those of the feudal states. No one in all under heaven knew which dynasty was legitimate. Confucius believed that although King Ping of the Zhou was the king under whom the decline began, legitimate rule remained with the Zhou. He therefore wrote the *Chunqiu* and, beginning from [the end of] King Ping’s reign, frequently expressed his respect for the Zhou dynasty in order to make it clear where dynastic legitimacy lay. Hence he wrote “the King’s” before “first month” in order to restrain the feudal lords.³ Even though the kings were weak, he would always place them above [the feudal lords]; even when feudal lords were powerful, he never approved of them conferring fiefs without royal sanction. He added the word “Heavenly” to the title “King,” in order to distinguish [the Zhou kings] from [the kings] of Wu and Chu.⁴ In satirizing, praising, and blaming [the feudal lords], he consistently followed the law of the Zhou dynasty. His

¹ The logical flaw in the analogy is that since Ouyang Xiu did not recognize the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties as legitimate either, there was no equivalent to the Eastern Zhou king as a legitimate locus of authority. It should be noted that Ouyang also modeled the *Xin Wudaishi* on the language of the *Chunqiu*, but had his own commentary to the *Xin Wudaishi* written under his student Xu Wudang’s 徐無黨 (d. 1086) name in order to ensure that his readers would not miss or misinterpret his coded messages of moral judgment. See Higashi, *Fugu yu chuangxin*, 162–180.

² Might this be an allusion to the Tangut ruler Yuanhao’s assumption of the imperial title in 1038, which produced a situation where three rulers (those of the Song, the Kitan Liao, and the Tangut Xia) all called themselves emperors? Curiously, here Ouyang Xiu omits the case of Chu, which was much better known than Xú. We have seen in Chapter 3 that Lu Chun classed Xú together with Chu, Wu, and Yue as barbarian states.

³ This refers to the *Chunqiu* practice of referring to the first month of the year as “the King’s first month” 王正月. The phrase “the King’s first month” indicates that the *Chunqiu* is following the Zhou calendar, but it is well-known that the Gongyang commentary also saw it as an expression of Confucius’s preference for “unified rule” 一統. See GYZS 1.7–10.

⁴ This refers to the *Chunqiu* practice of referring to the Zhou king as the Heavenly King 天王.

intention was never anything but to show respect to the Zhou. Yet later scholars did not understand his intent and claimed that he rejected the Zhou and regarded [the rulers of] Lu as kings.

正統之說肇於誰乎？始於《春秋》之作也。當東周之遷，王室微弱，吳、徐並僭，天下三王，而天子號令不能加於諸侯，其《詩》下同於列國，天下之人莫知正統。仲尼以為周平雖始衰之王，而正統在周也。乃作《春秋》，自平王以下，常以推尊周室，明正統之所在。故書「王」以加「正月」而繩諸侯。王人雖微，必加於上，諸侯雖大，不與專封，以「天」加「王」，而別吳、楚。刺譏褒貶，一以周法。凡其用意，無不在於尊周。而後之學者不曉其旨，遂曰黜周而王魯。⁵

The last line in this passage is aimed at He Xiu and other adherents of the Gongyang commentarial school, who had developed a theory that the language of the *Chunqiu* puts the Lu ruler in the position of king.⁶

Ouyang Xiu's reinterpretation of the *Chunqiu* as an assertion of the Zhou kings' legitimacy was probably inspired by Sun Fu's *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* commentary, which is known to have been written before August 1040.⁷ Whereas the popularity of Lu Chun's new-style *Chunqiu* exegesis had faded after the Wang Shuwen faction's fall in the early ninth century, Sun Fu's influence initiated a fashion of writing new *Chunqiu* commentaries that persisted throughout the Song period. This was in large part because Sun had the opportunity to deliver lectures on *Chunqiu* exegesis to thousands of young literati at the Imperial University in 1042–1045 and again in 1054/1055–1057.⁸ Shi Jie, who also lectured at the Imperial University in

⁵ JSWJ 9.1551–1552.

⁶ See Wu Congxiang 吳從祥, "Lun He Xiu Chunqiu wang Lu shuo" 論何休《春秋》王魯說, *Shanxi shida xuebao* 山西師大學報 34.5 (2007), 50–54.

⁷ The *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* (in seventeen *juan*) is mentioned as one of Sun Fu's works in Shi Jie's commemorative inscription for the Taishan Academy, which is dated August 28, 1040. A few scholars have argued that the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* did not circulate beyond the circle of Sun Fu's disciples until shortly before his death. This argument is based on a longstanding assumption that a revised, twelve-*juan* version of the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* comprised the bulk of the fifteen chapters (*pian* 篇) of writing that—according to Ouyang Xiu's 1057 epitaph for Sun Fu—the Song court obtained from Sun during his final illness and added to the imperial library. I find this assumption to be flawed, however, as Ouyang Xiu does not specify the content of the fifteen chapters. Since Ouyang states at the beginning of the epitaph that Sun wrote the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* at Mount Tai in the late 1030s, one would expect him to explain that the fifteen chapters that the Song court acquired in 1057 included a revision of the same work, if this were indeed the case. CLWJ 19.223; JSJ 27.747; Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 126–129, 187–189.

⁸ In mid-1042, the Song court appointed Shi Jie as an Imperial College (*guozi jian* 國子監) instructor in *Yijing* interpretation. Five months later, Fan Zhongyan and Fu Bi secured for Sun Fu an appointment to the Imperial College as an instructor in *Chunqiu* exegesis. In 1044, the Song court established the Imperial University (*taixue* 太學) as part of Fan Zhongyan's reforms. Shi Jie and Sun Fu thereupon became lecturers in the Imperial University, which was attended by thousands of students at a time. Sun Fu was dismissed in 1045 after being implicated in the same accusation of treasonous conspiracy that Xia Song had leveled against Shi Jie after Shi's death. However, he

1042–1044, used his position to popularize his eccentric version of Ancient Style prose (i.e., the “Imperial University Style”). Sun Fu, on the other hand, seems to have used his lectures to propagate radically new interpretations of the Classics, which one disapproving court Academician complained were “different from earlier Classicists in many respects” 多異先儒.⁹

As a *Chunqiu* interpreter, Sun Fu followed Dan Zhu, Zhao Kuang, and Lu Chun in claiming a special insight into the language of the text that allowed—indeed required—him to dispense with the Gongyang, Guliang, and *Zuozhuan* interpretations alike, not to mention the subcommentaries to these texts by He Xiu, Fan Ning, and Du Yu. Sun was not the only one advocating such an iconoclastic approach at the time: it appears to have been shared among the leading members of the Ancient Style revival. In a series of essays written in 1037, Ouyang argued forcefully that there were instances in which all three traditional commentaries contradicted the *Chunqiu* itself; in such cases, one should reject the authority of all three commentaries and defer to the higher authority of the *Chunqiu*.¹⁰ Shi Jie, too, dismissed all existing classical commentaries as worthless: in his 1033 letter to Sun Shi, he argued that their mutual contradictions made scholars in search of the Way as lost and confused as blind men in dark rooms; in another essay, he claimed that the traditional commentaries distorted the Classics like silverfish chewing holes in books.¹¹

Whereas Dan Zhu, Zhao Kuang, and Lu Chun did not see the *Chunqiu* as a text with a central message, Sun Fu’s commentary was aimed at demonstrating that Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu* as a lament over the Zhou kings’ declining authority, which Sun believed was the root of the political anarchy and moral degeneracy that plagued the Eastern Zhou period. A corollary to that theme was the argument that the rise of a sage-king was the only solution to the Zhou decline: powerful lords who acted as hegemonies were only usurping the king’s prerogatives and making matters worse. Sun Fu was probably motivated by the same concerns that drove Ouyang Xiu to write the *Xin Wudaishi*: namely, a fear that the Song literati had not fully learned the lessons of the Five Dynasties period, the political history of which was essentially a long string of rebellions, palace coups, assassinations, and usurpations. Mou Jun-sun and Sung Ting-tsung argue that Sun Fu also traced the political instability of the Five Dynasties to the autonomy of the

was again appointed to the Imperial University in 1054 or 1055 and taught there until his death in 1057. JSJ 27.747; XCB 138.3325 (cf. CLWJ 9.95–96); Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 110–111, 123–124, 128–129; Mou, “Liang Song Chunqixue zhi zhuliu,” 111.

⁹ Ironically, this Academician, Yang Anguo 楊安國 (n.d.), was a student of Shi Jie’s early hero Sun Shi. According to Yang’s *Songshi* biography, his teaching of the Classics adhered closely to the traditional commentaries and never proposed new interpretations. Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 70, 123–124; CLWJ 13.155; XCB 149.3609 (cf. JSJ 27.747); SS 294.9828.

¹⁰ Note also that in the epitaph that Ouyang composed for Sun Fu twenty years later, he praised Sun’s *Chunqiu* scholarship for being “undeluded by the [traditional] commentaries” 不惑傳注. JSJ 18.545–554, 27.747.

¹¹ CLWJ 7.81, 15.173.

late Tang military provinces and therefore used the Eastern Zhou feudal states as an analogy to the late Tang situation.¹²

Due to this negative attitude toward hegemonies, Sun Fu apparently felt compelled to explain both to himself and to his readers why Confucius appears to express approval of hegemonies in two cases when they formed and led military alliances against the rising power of Chu. These two occasions were the Shaoling 召陵 peace covenant of 656 BC, which followed Lord Huan of Qi's eight-state expedition against Chu, and the Battle of Chengpu 城濮 in 632 BC, at which a four-state alliance led by Lord Wen of Jin defeated Chu and its client states. In both cases, the hegemonies are referred to as viscounts, whereas disapproving language would have referred to them as "men" or simply by the names of their states. Sun Fu concluded that on these occasions, the need for "repelling the barbarians and saving the Central Lands" (*rang Yi-Di jiu Zhongguo* 攘夷狄救中國) momentarily outweighed the political illegitimacy of these hegemonies' actions. As I will explain below, Sun did not see "repelling the barbarians and saving the Central Lands" as a priority of equal importance to "respecting the king," although it is often assumed that he did.

The Gongyang commentary—the *locus classicus* of the very phrase "repelling the barbarians"—interprets Confucius's attitude toward the Shaoling covenant as one of unqualified admiration for Lord Huan's success at intimidating Chu into proposing a truce, thus averting the further expansion of Chu influence into the Central Lands:

Chu was the last to submit when there was a true king [on the throne], and the first to rebel when there was none. They were barbarians (Yi-Di) and were often a plague on the Central Lands. The southern barbarians (Yi) and northern barbarians (Di) had joined forces, and the Central Lands hung by a thread. Lord Huan saved the Central Lands and repelled the barbarians (Yi-Di), finally bringing Jing (i.e., Chu) to submission. This was an achievement worthy of a true king. Why does [the *Chunqiu*] say that [the Chu peace envoy] "came?" To show approval of Lord Huan's position as hegemon.

楚有王者則後服，無王者則先叛。夷狄也，而亟病中國。南夷與北狄交，中國不絕若線，桓公救中國而攘夷狄，卒帖荊，以此爲王者之事也。其言「來」何？與桓為主也。¹³

Sun Fu, on the other hand, found it difficult to accept that Confucius would approve of Lord Huan trying to play the role of a "true king." In Sun's opinion, Lord Huan's pursuit of hegemony

¹² Mou, "Liang Song Chunqixue zhi zhuliu," 105, 109; Sung, *Chunqiu Songxue fawei*, 39, 129–131.

¹³ GYZS 10.213–214.

over the other feudal lords “took advantage of an age when the Son of Heaven’s [authority] was in decline” 乘天子衰季; moreover, his authority was built on the threat to use his superior military strength against states that defied him, rather than moral power.¹⁴ Hegemons like him were therefore to be censured, not praised. Yet in the *Chunqiu* record of events leading up to the Shaoling covenant, Sun could find no sign of Lord Huan being even subtly denigrated or demoted. Resorting to special pleading, he concluded that Confucius did approve of Lord Huan’s actions at Shaoling, but only because the danger that Chu posed to the Central Lands was so great:

Chu was the strongest of the barbarians (Yi-Di) and took advantage of the times to usurp the title [of king]. It had conquered several thousand *li* of territory and, relying on its large army, had long been arrogant and rebellious, striking fear in the hearts of the Central Lands. Lord Huan¹⁵ led the feudal lords and within a day, without shedding blood, brought [Chu] to submission. Their armies finally could rest, and the lords enjoyed peace. To the end of Lord Huan’s life, the Central Lands were completely free from the threat of invasion. This accomplishment of repelling the barbarians and saving the Central Lands can truly be called remarkable! That is why Confucius said [in *Analects* 14:17], “Guan Zhong served Lord Huan as chancellor and achieved [Qi] hegemony over the feudal lords, restoring order to all under heaven. To this day, the people are reaping the benefits of his deeds. If not for Guan Zhong, we would now be wearing our hair untied and fastening our robes on the left side.”

楚，夷狄之鉅者也，乘時竊號，斥地數千里，恃甲兵之眾，猖狂不道，創艾中國久矣。桓公帥諸侯，一旦不血刃而服之。師徒不勤，諸侯用寧。訖桓公之世，截然中國無侵突之患。此攘夷狄救中國之功可謂著矣！故孔子曰：「管仲相桓公、霸諸侯，一正天下，民到于今受其賜。微管仲，吾其被髮左衽矣！」

For that reason, in the case of the Shaoling covenant, [Confucius] made a special exception and approved of Lord Huan. Confucius’s [intent in writing the *Chunqiu* was to] explicate the king’s laws, end an age of disorder, and rein in the feudal lords. When in the case of the Shaoling covenant, he made a special exception and approved of Lord Huan, there can be no other reason: Confucius was lamenting over the lack of a sage-king and the cutting off of the Zhou way [of governance].

是故召陵之盟，專與桓也。孔子揭王法、撥亂世以繩諸侯，召陵之盟專與桓者非他，孔子傷聖王不作，周道之絕也。

¹⁴ Sun Fu 孫復, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* 春秋尊王發微 (*Tongzhitang jingjie* 通志堂經解 edition), *juan* 3.

¹⁵ Extant editions of the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* refer to Lord Huan as “Lord Wei” 威公 because Southern Song editors had to observe the taboo on the name of Song Qinzong 宋欽宗 (r. 1126–1127), Zhao Huan 趙桓.

He then explained that Confucius' true intention was to emphasize that it was properly the king's responsibility to do what Lord Huan did at Shaoling:

The odes “Liuyue,” “Caiqi,” “Jianghan,” and “Changwu” all praise King Xuan for reversing the [Western Zhou's] decline by repelling the barbarians (Yi-Di) and saving the Central Lands. If, after the reigns of King Ping and King Hui [of the Eastern Zhou], there was one like King Xuan who could arise through the Way of the True King, then the accomplishment of repelling the barbarians and saving the Central Lands would have belonged to the Son of Heaven and not to Lord Huan and Guan Zhong.¹⁶ That is why Confucius lamented over it.

夫《六月》、《采芑》、《江漢》、《常武》，美宣王中興，攘夷狄救中國之詩也。使乎平、惠以降有能以王道興起如宣王者，則攘夷狄救中國之功在乎天子，不在乎齊桓、管仲矣。此孔子所以傷之也。¹⁷

Sun Fu applied the same argument to Lord Wen's victory over Chu at Chengpu. As with the passage on the Shaoling covenant, Sun first emphasized the magnitude of Lord Wen's achievement by stressing the seriousness of the barbarian threat:

From this time on, the people of Chu stayed away and did not again invade the Central Lands for fifteen years. This accomplishment of repelling the barbarians (Yi-Di) and saving the Central Lands can truly be said to have been established in less time than it takes to turn on one's heels. Alas! After moving the capital to the east, the Zhou dynasty was weak and the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters seized the opportunity to bring disorder to the Central Lands. They seized the territory of the former kings and cut down and killed the people of the former kings, invading and harassing, raiding and destroying. The [entire land within the] four seas was in turmoil; [the civilization of] rites and ritual music and robes and caps was at its nadir. That this came to be was not the fault of the barbarians of the four quarters; it was because the Central Lands had lost the Way.

自是楚人遠屏不犯中國者十五年。此攘夷狄救中國之功可謂不旋踵而建矣。噫！東遷之後，周室既微，四夷乘之以亂中國，盜據先王之土地，戕艾先王之民人，憑陵寇虐，四海汹汹，禮樂衣冠蓋掃地矣。其所由來者，非四夷之罪也，中國失道故也。

For that reason, Wu and Chu responded by taking turns to use the great title [of king] illegitimately and display their barbarian (Man-Yi) hordes. They conquered several thousand *li* of territory and advanced as far as the outskirts of Song, Zheng, Chen, and

¹⁶ King Hui was actually still the reigning king at the time of the Shaoling covenant.

¹⁷ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 5.

Cai. The feudal lords trembled with fear at the sight of them and hurried to flee to temporary safety. If Lord Huan of Qi and Lord Wen of Jin did not arise in succession, making a covenant with [the Chu minister] Qu Wan at Shaoling and defeating [the Chu general] Dechen at Chengpu, pursuing them, driving them out, punishing them, and cutting them down, how much longer could things have gone on before the [people of the] Central Lands all became barbarians (Yi-Di)?

是故吳、楚因之交僭大號，觀其蠻夷之眾，斥地數千里，馳驅宋、鄭、陳、蔡之郊，諸侯望風畏慄，唯其指顧奔走之不暇。鄉非齊桓、晉文繼起，盟屈完于召陵，敗得臣于城濮，驅之、逐之、懲之、艾之，則中國幾何不胥而夷狄矣！¹⁸

We have already seen Sun Fu borrowing the rhetoric of barbarization from the “Yuandao” and expanding its targets to include all non-Classicist ideologies in his letter to Kong Daofu and the essay “Ru ru.” Here, he applies it to a very different context of literal invasion and conquest by barbarians—essentially turning it into a version of the more ambiguous *Analects* 14:17, which only hints at the idea of barbarization through a metaphor of sartorial change. As we have seen, Ouyang Xiu’s slightly later “Ben lun” made a similar move of equating the meaning of *Analects* 14:17 with that of Han Yu’s famous rhetorical question about barbarization. Another interesting similarity to the “Ben lun” can be found in Sun Fu’s assertion that Zhou political decline was to blame for the barbarian invasions, not vice versa: recall Ouyang Xiu’s assertion that “when the Way of the True King was obscured and humaneness and moral duty were abandoned, then the barbarians became a threat.”

However, there is also an interesting, if subtle, discrepancy between Sun Fu and Ouyang Xiu when it comes to interpreting Confucius’s approach to writing about Lord Huan and Lord Wen. Ouyang argues that Confucius “approved of their actions in reality but wrote in the language of disapproval because he believed that while their achievements were commendable, the Way did not permit him to approve of them.” Sun Fu argues the exact opposite: Confucius used the language of approval in relation to Lord Huan’s deeds at Shaoling and Lord Wen’s deeds at Chengpu because they averted the barbarization of the Central Lands, but his approval was mixed with deep disappointment over the fact that these deeds were not performed by kings. Sun first makes this argument in his commentary on the Shaoling covenant, and reiterates it in his commentary on the Battle of Chengpu:

Mencius claimed that Confucius’s disciples do not speak of the deeds of Lord Huan and Lord Wen.¹⁹ When we say that [Confucius] made special exceptions and approved of Lord Huan of Qi and Lord Wen of Jin, the truth is that he lamented over them. Confucius lamented over the cutting off of the Zhou way [of governance], and only approved of

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ See *Mencius* 1A:7. By this, Mencius meant to say that Confucius held the deeds of the hegemons in contempt.

their momentary accomplishments of repelling the barbarians (Yi-Di) and saving the Central Lands. At the Shaoling covenant and the Battle of Chengpu, even though [Lord Huan and Lord Wen] achieved successive victories over the powerful Chu, they were unable to put an end to [Chu's] illegitimate use of the [royal] title in order to make it show respect to the Son of Heaven. If, after the reigns of King Ping and King Hui [of the Eastern Zhou], there was one like King Xuan who could arise through the Way of the True King, then how could Lord Huan of Qi and Lord Wen of Jin even have [needed to do] these things? That is Confucius's deeper message [behind the special exceptions].

孟子稱仲尼之徒無道桓、文之事。此言專與齊桓、晉文者，其實傷之也。孔子傷周道之絕，與其攘夷狄救中國一時之功爾。召陵之盟、城濮之戰，雖然迭勝強楚，不能絕其僭號以尊天子。使平、惠以降有能以王道興起如宣王者，則是時安有齊桓、晉文之事哉！此孔子之深旨也。²⁰

One other interpretive difference between Ouyang Xiu and Sun Fu is worth mentioning in this context. In 1037, Ouyang Xiu wrote an essay advancing the iconoclastic argument that there was no special significance in Confucius's choice to start the *Chunqiu* at the first year of the Lu ruler Lord Yin 隱公 (722 BC) and end it at the capture of a *qilin* in the spring of the fourteenth year of Lord Ai 哀公 (481 BC). Ouyang argued that Confucius, not being a historian by profession, simply based the *Chunqiu* on a Lu official chronicle that happened to begin with Lord Yin and end with the *qilin*. Whereas the Gongyang commentary and later *Chunqiu* exegetes tended to ascribe a symbolic meaning to the text's beginning and end, Ouyang Xiu criticized these theories for "bringing confusion to the *Chunqiu*" 亂《春秋》 and claimed to be sick and tired of them.²¹ In contrast, Sun Fu believed that Confucius did stop writing the *Chunqiu* in 481 BC for a reason: he could not bear to continue recording the political decline and cultural barbarization of the Central Lands.

Confucius was lamenting over the lack of a sage-king and over the [civilization of the] Central Lands being cut off as a result; he was not lamenting over the capture of the *qilin*. In that case, why did he stop writing here? He could still bear to speak of [events] before this, but he could not bear to speak of [events] after this.

孔子傷聖王不作，中國遂絕，非傷麟之見獲也。然則曷為絕筆于此？前此猶可言也，後此不可言也。²²

²⁰ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 5.

²¹ JSJ 18.556.

²² Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 12.

In Sun's view, the last straw for Confucius was the Huangchi conference of 482 BC, at which the ruler of Wu gained hegemony over the Central Lands. Lu Chun had argued that Confucius approved of the Wu ruler's behavior at Huangchi, which involved dropping the use of the royal title in exchange for hegemony. Sun Fu did not agree. In his opinion, the capture of the *qilin* coincided with the point at which the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy ceased to hold any meaning, since the feudal lords had submitted to the leadership of Wu, an inferior barbarian state. At the same time, he emphasized that this came at the end of a long, slippery slope that began with feudal lords ceasing to respect the Zhou king's political authority:

The Son of Heaven's loss of political authority began from the eastward move of the capital [to Luoyang], while the feudal lords' loss of political authority began from the Juliang conference.²³ Therefore, from Lord Yin's reign to the Juliang conference, political authority over all under heaven and responsibility for the affairs of the Central Lands were divided up among the feudal lords; from the Juliang conference to the Shen conference, political authority over all under heaven and responsibility for the affairs of the Central Lands were monopolized and controlled by the [feudal lords'] ministers. From the Shen conference to the capture of the *qilin*, the barbarians (Yi-Di) took turns to hold political authority over all under heaven and responsibility for the affairs of the Central Lands.²⁴ The sage-kings' laws and institutions, [the civilization of] rites and ritual music and robes and caps, and the customs and methods of governance inherited from the past were all at a nadir. Having come to this point, the fall of the Central Lands was complete. [Confucius] could still bear to speak of [events] before this because [the rulers of] Jin and Lu were [at least] present at the Huangchi conference. He could not bear to speak of [events] after this because the feudal lords became passive, the authority to issue

²³ The *Chunqiu* states rather cryptically that at the Juliang 溴梁 conference in 557 BC, eleven feudal lords met but it was their ministers (*dafu* 大夫) who made a covenant. Both the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries interpret this as a message that the lords had by then become mere puppets in their ministers' hands. The *Zuozhuan* states the context for the covenant, however: the Qi ruler had sent his minister Gao Hou 高厚 (d. 554) to the conference as a representative, but Gao came under suspicion of attempting to subvert the Jin ruler's hegemony. The Jin minister Xun Yan 荀偃 (d. 554) then called for Gao Hou to prove his goodwill by making a covenant with the ministers from other states who were present at the conference, since it would be ritually inappropriate for Gao to make a covenant with the assembled feudal lords. Gao Hou thereupon fled from the conference, but the ministers from other states demonstrated their goodwill toward the Jin by making a covenant to join hands in attacking any state that betrayed the Jin-led alliance. See GYZS 20.441–442; GLZS 16.297; ZZZY 33.939–940.

²⁴ In 538 BC, the Chu king sought to reestablish Chu hegemony over the Central Lands by convening a multi-state conference at Shen 申. On the advice of the Jin minister Sima Hou 司馬侯 (n.d.), the Jin ruler chose not to challenge the Chu bid for hegemony and merely found an excuse to not attend the conference. This marked the beginning of the Jin state's decline from being Chu's strongest rival. The Lu and Wey 衛 rulers, who were closely aligned with Jin, also found an excuse not to attend, as did the rulers of Zhu 邾 and Cao 曹 (out of deference to their overlords, Lu and Song 宋 respectively), while the Song ruler only sent his heir apparent as a representative. Nonetheless, leadership of the Shen conference enabled Chu to lead multi-state military expeditions to attack Wu and conquer the statelet of Lai 賴. See ZZZY 42.1190–1194, 1199–1203.

commands lay in the hands of Wu, the Central Lands no longer existed, and all [people] under heaven became barbarians.²⁵

天子失政自東遷始，諸侯失政自會滎梁始。故自隱公之于滎梁之會，天下之政、中國之事皆諸侯分裂之；自滎梁之會至于申之會，天下之政、中國之事皆大夫專執之。自申之會至于獲麟，天下之政、中國之事皆夷狄迭制之。聖王憲度、禮樂衣冠、遺風舊政蓋掃地矣。中國淪胥逮此而盡。前此猶可言者，黃池之會，晉、魯在焉。後此不可言者，諸侯泯泯，制命在吳，無復中國，天下皆夷狄故也。

For that reason, the *Chunqiu* respects the Son of Heaven and regards the Central Lands as superior. It regards the Central Lands as superior and therefore regards the barbarians as inferior; it respects the Son of Heaven and therefore denigrates the feudal lords. It respects the Son of Heaven and denigrates the feudal lords by starting with Lord Yin, and it regards the Central Lands as superior and regards the barbarians as inferior by ending with the capture of the *qilin*. Alas! How subtle its message is! How subtle its message is!

是故《春秋》尊天子、貴中國。貴中國所以賤夷狄也，尊天子所以黜諸侯也。尊天子、黜諸侯，始于隱公是也；貴中國、賤夷狄，終于獲麟是也。嗚呼！其旨微哉！其旨微哉！²⁶

It seems, then, that while Sun Fu believed that Lord Huan and Lord Wen averted the barbarization of the Central Lands by deterring or repelling a Chu invasion, he also believed that the Central Lands were ultimately still barbarized by accepting the Wu ruler's hegemony and thus forsaking the principle of Chinese superiority.²⁷ Ouyang Xiu's view of the matter was significantly more optimistic: recall his claim in the "Ben lun" that Confucius "used [the *Chunqiu*] to assert the superiority of the Central Lands and the inferiority of the barbarians, and the Way of the True King became clear again." We may infer that Ouyang Xiu accepted the basic argument of the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* without being fully persuaded by Sun Fu's rather bleak reading of Confucius's state of mind during the writing of the *Chunqiu*.

²⁵ Alan Wood's translation of the passage mispunctuates this line and thus misses the trope of barbarization. Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 87.

²⁶ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 12.

²⁷ The Wu state's hegemony was actually extremely short-lived and ended with Wu being conquered by its rival Yue in 473 BC, but Sun Fu could argue that Confucius (who died in 479 BC) had not anticipated this. Nonetheless, Sun's interpretation of the capture of the *qilin* seems overly tortured, since one would think that the presence of the Jin and Lu rulers at Huangchi was more, not less, of a humiliation to the Central Lands: after all, they could have boycotted the conference to avoid recognizing the Wu ruler's hegemony. Indeed, the Gongyang commentary implies just that when it argues that Confucius, despite not approving of "barbarians (Yi-Di) leading the Central Lands" 夷狄之主中國, nonetheless honored Wu by naming the Jin and Wu rulers as joint hegemonies at Huangchi because "with [the ruler of] Wu there, not one of the feudal lords under heaven dared to not go [to the conference]" 吳在是，則天下諸侯莫敢不至也. GYZS 28.615–616.

We can sum up Sun Fu's position on Chu and Wu in the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* as follows: while it is a terrible thing for barbarian states to conquer, dominate, and thus barbarize the Central Lands, the bigger and more fundamental problem was that the Zhou kings had lost their political authority and did not have the respect of the feudal lords. This led some lords to turn to Chu for military support or submit to Chu overlordship, and also emboldened the Chu and Wu rulers to arrogate the title of king to themselves. Sun Fu appears to agree with Lu Chun that Chu and Wu were originally Chinese feudal states that effectively became barbarian states at some point. But he differs from Lu Chun in explaining the Chu and Wu rulers' barbarization in terms of their illegitimate use of the royal title, rather than their adoption of barbarian customs:

[The rulers of] Wu and Chu originally had the title of viscount. Upon entering the [time of the] *Chunqiu*, they are initially referred to as “Jing,” as “Chu,” or as “Wu.” At the end [of the *Chunqiu*], they are referred to as “man” or “viscount.” Chu was initially referred to as “Jing” because they illegitimately [usurped the royal title] earlier than Wu. Their offense was greater, and their demotion is thus heavier; [calling them “Jing”] is like calling them “the barbarians of Jingzhou [province].” Next, when they are called “Chu” or “Wu,” the same language is used for rulers and their ministers: they are referred to only by the name of their state [as is the norm for barbarians].

吳、楚本子爵，入《春秋》，始則曰「荊」、曰「楚」、曰「吳」，終則稱「人」、稱「子」。楚始謂之「荊」者，楚先吳僭，罪大貶重，猶曰「荊州之夷」也。既而曰「楚」、曰「吳」者，君臣同辭，以國舉之也。²⁸

Sun Fu does seem to agree with Lu Chun, however, that the Chu and Wu rulers' eventual promotions in the language of the *Chunqiu* reflect their partial reversion to Chinese norms of ritual and diplomacy:

At the end [of the *Chunqiu*], they are referred to as “man” or “viscount” because they gradually became like the Central Lands: they participated in conferences and covenants with the feudal lords, and learned enough ritual to send embassies to the court [of Lu]. Referring to them as “man” promotes them slightly, while referring to them as “viscount” restores their original title.

終則稱「人」、稱「子」者，以其漸同中國，與諸侯會盟，及修禮來聘。稱「人」，少進也；稱「子」，復舊爵也。²⁹

²⁸ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 5.

²⁹ Ibid.

Yet he cannot bring himself to see these promotions as well-deserved, given the severity of the Chu and Wu rulers' earlier disrespect for the Zhou king. This leads him into another interpretation in which Confucius makes an exception for the sake of lamenting the decline of the Central Lands:

The immorality of the Wu and Chu rulers in [usurping the royal title] arrogantly and illegitimately was an unpardonable offense, for which it would have been fitting to be demoted throughout the age of the *Chunqiu*. Confucius did not demote them throughout the age of the *Chunqiu* because he lamented over the lack of a sage-king had not risen and over the extreme degree to which the Central Lands had lost the Way.

吳、楚之君狂僭之惡，罪在不赦，固宜終《春秋》之世貶之。孔子不終《春秋》之世貶之者，傷聖王不作，中國失道之甚也。

Sun's commentary on the Huangchi conference notes that the *Chunqiu* restores the Wu ruler to his original title of viscount at this point, repeats the passage about the "unpardonable offense" of the Wu and Chu rulers, and then adds a vivid image borrowed from the *Analects*:

If a sage-king had risen, the institutions of government had been restored, and all things had been brought to a successful conclusion, then everyone in the Nine Provinces and [beyond] the four seas would have come [to submit], [speaking unfamiliar languages that required] several rounds of translation and with their children strapped to their backs.³⁰ How could there have been this situation of [barbarians] going on the rampage, [usurping the royal title] arrogantly and illegitimately, indulging freely in warfare, and assuming leadership at covenant-making conferences without royal sanction? That is Confucius's deeper message.

鄉使聖王興、百度修、萬物遂，則九州四海皆將重譯負其子而至矣。又安有奔軼狂僭，肆誅伐、專盟會之事哉？此孔子之深旨也。³¹

In sum, Sun Fu seems to be saying that Confucius saw no point in condemning the Wu and Chu rulers for defying the authority of the Zhou dynasty, since the Central Lands states' own tendency to do so was responsible for the political malaise that had emboldened the barbarians to rebel against Zhou suzerainty. In other words, the very need to "repel the barbarians and save the Central Lands" was an unfortunate consequence of failing to "respect the king."³² It is likely that

³⁰ *Analects* 13:4.

³¹ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 12.

³² Mou Jun-sun argued that when Sun Fu wrote about "repelling the barbarians," he "gave priority to respecting the king" and "did not go beyond the boundaries of respecting the king." This is essentially correct but does not adequately explain Sun's understanding of the relationship between the two concepts. Yang Xiangkui has it

this is a veiled allusion to the Five Dynasties, when the Kitans took advantage of the Tang empire's collapse and the ensuing political instability to found their own imperial dynasty. Lei Chia-sheng's argument that Sun Fu's emphasis on "respecting the king" was a response to the geopolitical situation of 'three emperors' (Song, Liao, and Xia) in the late 1030s thus has some validity. However, Lei overlooks the fact that Sun consistently identifies the Chinese lords, and not the Wu and Chu kings, as the ones most to blame for the Zhou kings' diminished authority. Unlike Lei and some other historians, including Benjamin Elman, I do not see any strong indication that defense against the Song state's "barbarian threats" is the primary concern of the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*.³³

We have seen that by 1038, Sun Fu was following Shi Jie's example by equating all ideological heterodoxy to barbarism in polemical writings like the "Ru ru" and the inscription for Kong Daofu's Mencius temple. Yet a view of the *Chunqiu* as supplying evidence for barbarian ritual's barbarizing effects on the Chinese is altogether absent from the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*. As we saw in Chapter 3, this view was most famously expressed by Han Yu but has roots in the *Zuozhuan*, where it is used to explain why the *Chunqiu* seems to demote Qǐ rulers on occasion. Inspired by this explanation, Lu Chun interpreted the frequently changing titles of the Teng, Xue, and Qǐ rulers in the *Chunqiu* record as a "subtle message" that they were Chinese who had become (or were becoming) barbarians. Zhao Kuang, however, believed (at least in the Qǐ case) that the hegemon of the time were actually issuing promotions and demotions to these rulers. Nevertheless, Lu Chun and Zhao Kuang agreed that the barbarizing demotion of the Zhu, Mou, and Ge rulers to "men" in 697 BC was due to their use of barbarian ritual during a visit to the Lu court. Sun Fu proposed another interpretation of the Teng, Xue, and Qǐ cases that was still related to ritual but was grounded in the theme of "respecting the king," rather than that of barbarization:

This is probably because a sage-king had not risen and the feudal lords acted as they saw fit, not observing consistent standards in their diplomatic visits and conferences. These three states were lacking in resources and therefore often unable to perform the full ritual. They sometimes made diplomatic visits using the ritual protocol of a marquis, and at other times attended conferences using the ritual protocol of an earl or a viscount. Therefore Confucius recorded these [inconsistencies] accordingly so as to show their [ritual] disorder.

backwards when he argues that Sun "believed that respecting the king depended on repelling the barbarians." Mou, "Liang Song Chunqiu xue zhi zhuliu," 106–107; Yang, "Songdai lixuejia de 'Chunqiu' xue," 23.

³³ Alan Wood argues, "the problem of the barbarians... never reached the proportions of a fixation until the Southern Song, when something had obviously gone wrong." While there is some truth to this, Wood, too, makes the common mistake of reading Northern Song foreign policy in terms of the "threat of invasion from northern barbarian tribes," rather than the irredentist aim of regaining 'lost' territory. In other words, the "problem of the barbarians" in the Northern Song was a significantly different problem from the one in the Southern Song but is too often conflated with it. Lei, "Beisong qianqi, zhongqi ruxue de duoyuan fazhan," 58; Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations*, 47–48; Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 99.

此蓋聖王不作，諸侯自恣，朝會不常。彼三國者力既不足，禮多不備，或以侯禮而朝，或以伯、子而會，故孔子從而錄之，以見其亂也。³⁴

As for the rulers of Zhu, Mou, and Ge, Sun Fu chose to follow He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary in attributing their demotion to their unprincipled act of condoning Lord Huan's regicidal usurpation of power in Lu.³⁵ Unlike the Gongyang commentary and He Xiu, however, Sun did not use the expression "[Confucius] regarded them as barbarians (Yi-Di)" 夷狄之 to characterize this demotion.

There are six instances in the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* where Sun Fu did use the phrase "[Confucius] regarded them as barbarians (Yi-Di/Di)" 夷狄之/狄之 or "[Confucius] called them barbarians" 夷狄稱之. These fall into three categories³⁶:

1. Three instances have to do with Chinese states that supposedly allied with Chu against other Chinese states: Zheng attacking Xǔ in 588 BC, Jin attacking the Xianyu in 530 BC, and six minor states (Dun 頓, Hu 胡, Shen 沈, Chen, Cai, and Xǔ) that were clients of Chu in 519 BC. In these cases, Sun Fu has borrowed interpretations from He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary, the Guliang commentary, and the Gongyang commentary respectively.³⁷
2. One case, probably derived from He Xiu, involves the Qin ruler being demoted (by being referred to as "Qin") for attacking Jin in 617 BC despite the latter's war-weariness. Sun argues that the Qin ruler's callous aggression and greed for gain followed "the way of the barbarians (Yi-Di)" 夷狄之道—a phrase that also appears in Sun's interpretation of the Jin attack on the Xianyu.³⁸

³⁴ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, *juan 2*.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Lin Yu-ting's study of the *Chunqiu zunwang fawei* (originally written as a M.A. thesis) has compiled these examples and provided full quotations of the Chinese text, but the categories are mine. See Lin Yu-ting 林玉婷, "Sun Fu 'Chunqiu zunwang fawei' yanjiu" 孫復《春秋尊王發微》研究, *Guoli Taiwan shifan daxue guowen yanjiusuo jikan* 國立臺灣師範大學國文研究所集刊 47 (2003), 406–408.

³⁷ Sun Fu follows the Guliang commentary's interpretation of the Jin attack on the Xianyu, rather than Dan Zhu's (which focused on the perfidious nature of the Jin attack). Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, *juan 8* and *10*; GYZS 17.379, 24.517–518; GLZS 17.332.

³⁸ The Gongyang and Guliang commentaries have no comment on this line in the *Chunqiu*, but He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary argues that Confucius regarded the Qin ruler as a barbarian (Yi-Di) because he exceeded reasonable limits in his aggression toward Jin. Interestingly, Sun Fu does not regard the only barbarizing demotion of Qin identified in the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries *per se*—namely, the Battle of Xiao in 627 BC—as a demotion of Qin at all. He holds that the only demotion is that of the Jin ruler, who is being censured for ambushing the Qin army and violating the mourning period for his father. Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, *juan 5* and *6*; GYZS 14.296.

3. Two cases relate to the rulers of Chu and Wu: the Chu case appears to follow Fan Ning's Guliang subcommentary, while the Wu case has no known precedent. Sun argues that in 666 BC the Chu ruler is referred to only by the province name "Jing," stripping him of a prior semantic promotion (in 671 BC) to "a man of Jing," in order to pass judgment on him for attacking a Chinese state (Zheng). Similarly, the first mention of the Wu state in the *Chunqiu* refers to its ruler as "Wu," rather than "the Viscount of Wu," in order to condemn him for adopting the royal title in 584 BC. In both cases, Sun believes Confucius is criticizing the Chu and Wu rulers by speaking of them as barbarians.³⁹

Sun Fu's interpretation of barbarizing demotion in the *Chunqiu* thus adhered quite closely to the Gongyang and Guliang traditions by focusing on geopolitics and warfare and ignoring the issue of ritual. Therein lay a contradiction. When Sun Fu argues that Chu and Wu were morally barbarized by the illegitimate act of usurping the royal title, and that other states were barbarized by allying with Chu or otherwise following "the way of the barbarians," he is essentially saying that Confucius likened their behavior to that of barbarians. In such contexts, barbarization is a figure of speech for expressing moral censure: Chinese states are "behaving like barbarians" in a purely moral sense that has no relation to whether they have adopted barbarian customs and rituals or a barbarian identity. But when Sun Fu argues that Lord Huan and Lord Wen averted the barbarization of the Central Lands by repelling Chu, and that Chu and Wu hegemony over Chinese states eventually spelt the end of Chinese superiority over barbarians, he is speaking of the Chu and Wu people as real, literal barbarians whose ethnocultural otherness existed prior to (and thus independent of) Confucius's writing of the *Chunqiu*. The contradiction is essentially between, on one hand, a traditional exegetical practice of seeing barbarization as a special mode of subtle criticism that Confucius used in his historical writing and, on the other hand, a newer strategy of talking about barbarization as something that could literally happen to the Chinese.⁴⁰ The former practice originated with the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries, while the latter was partly inspired by the *Zuozhuan* and Lu Chun but primarily derived from the rhetoric of Han Yu and Shi Jie.

Sun Fu prided himself on having discarded the traditional commentaries and returned to the original meaning of the *Chunqiu*. In the process of reconstructing that original meaning, however, he introduced into the field of *Chunqiu* exegesis the new rhetoric of barbarization that Han Yu and Shi Jie had deployed in their writings about the Way of the Sages and the problem of heterodoxy. Sun Fu himself evidently found the barbarization trope useful for different

³⁹ Fan Ning argues that Confucius reversed the Chu ruler's promotion because his attack on the Central Lands made him no longer worthy of commendation, but does not use the expression "[Confucius] regarded him as a barbarian." In the Wu case, He Xiu argues that Confucius refers to the Wu ruler as "Wu" in order to make it easier to "promote him gradually" 漸進 later in the *Chunqiu*—a counter-intuitive interpretation similar to his reading of the first mention of the Chu state in the record for 684 BC. Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, *juan* 3 and 8; GLZS 6.112, 13.254; GYZS 7.143–146, 9.179, 17.384.

⁴⁰ Alan Wood's analysis of Sun Fu's commentary misses this distinction when he asserts that Sun's "very definition of a barbarian was based on moral considerations." See Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 100.

rhetorical purposes, including denigrating rival ideologies and framing exegetical arguments, but he made no effort to develop a coherent theory or philosophy that would clarify what the concept of barbarism actually meant to a sage like Confucius. Let us now move on to the other great *Chunqiu* commentator of the eleventh century, Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019–1068), who made the first serious attempt at explaining the difference between literal barbarians and metaphorical barbarization in the *Chunqiu*.

Liu Chang on “real barbarians” and barbarized Chinese in the *Chunqiu*

Liu Chang began learning to write in the Ancient Style in 1033, at the age of fourteen, but his interest in the Ancient Style revival was always ambivalent at best. Unlike Shi Jie, whose introduction to the Ancient Style preceded his by a year, Liu was not a great admirer of Han Yu. Later in life, he was known to argue that Han’s efforts to secure a high post at the imperial court through self-promotion showed that he did not really understand the Way.⁴¹ Indeed, the obituary written for him by his younger brother Liu Bin 劉邠 (1022–1088) reveals that he already saw himself as a direct successor to Mencius by early 1044, when the Song court decreed that prefectural governments could only recommend men who had attended official schools to be candidates for the examination. Liu Chang’s maternal uncle Wang Shu 王洙 (997–1057), who held an academic post at court, wrote a letter inviting him to come to the capital and study at the newly-founded Imperial University under Shi Jie and Sun Fu. He refused, saying, “Why should an equal of Boyi, Mencius, and Duan’gan Mu enter into discipleship under an Academician?” 焉有伯夷、孟軻、段干木之儔而自致博士弟子乎？ Fortunately for Liu, the school policy was soon dropped along with the rest of Fan Zhongyan’s reforms, and he passed the *jinshi* examinations at the top of the 1046 cohort.⁴²

Liu Chang was a genius and polymath in a century known for producing Chinese geniuses and polymaths. His innate curiosity about every branch of learning known to humanity probably made him unreceptive toward the more extreme Ancient Style ideologues’ insistence on ideological exclusivism. According to both the obituary by Liu Bin and an epitaph composed by Ouyang Xiu, Liu Chang was familiar with the Classics, the philosophy of Laozi and Zhuangzi, and the Buddhist sutras, and also dabbled in geography, astronomy, divination, and medicine.⁴³ Ouyang Xiu admired the breadth of his knowledge and regularly consulted him on difficult

⁴¹ Liu Bin 劉邠, *Pengcheng ji* 彭城集 (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 35; Liu Chang 劉敞/Cui Dunli 崔敦禮 (ed. Huang Shuhui 黃暑輝), *Gongshi xiansheng dizi ji/Zouyan* 公是先生弟子記 / 芻言 (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 40–41.

⁴² He was originally in first place, but his maternal cousin Wang Yaochen 王堯臣 (1003–1058), a nephew of Wang Shu, was in charge of tabulating the examination grades and insisted that he be ranked lower so as to avoid accusations of favoritism. The emperor then had Liu Chang moved down to second place. Liu Bin also passed the examinations in the same cohort. Liu, *Pengcheng ji*, *juan* 35; Ye, *Shilin yanyu*, 112.

⁴³ His uncle Wang Shu had an even wider range of interests that included musical theory and philology: see SS 294.9816.

questions. Ouyang was perhaps a little uneasy about Liu's eclectic attitude toward Buddhism and Daoism, however. When writing the epitaph for Liu Chang, Ouyang placed the Six Classics first and the Buddhist and Daoist texts last in the list of genres that Liu took an interest in, whereas Liu Bin's obituary places "the Buddha and Laozi" 佛老 first and justifies this with an argument reminiscent of Liu Zongyuan: "He sought out those ideas whose meanings accorded with the sages, and also did not reject those that the common people held to be good" 求其意義合於聖人者，而世人所謂善者亦不廢也。⁴⁴ It should be noted that Liu's many scholarly pursuits did not keep him from an active and fairly successful career in officialdom. The high point of his career was serving as chief examiner for the civil service examinations in 1059. By then, his extreme self-confidence and tendency to adopt contrarian positions on state policy had made him many enemies at court, but he continued to enjoy the favor of first Song Renzong and then Yingzong 英宗 (r. 1063–1067). In 1064, however, a debilitating health condition ("panicky giddiness" 驚眩, possibly vertigo) forced him into semi-retirement until his death in 1068.⁴⁵

Although Liu Chang was familiar with a wide range of texts, the focus of his scholarship was the Classics, particularly the *Chunqiu*, on which he authored no fewer than five commentaries: the *Chunqiu zhuan* 春秋傳, *Chunqiu quanheng* 春秋權衡, *Chunqiu yilin* 春秋意林, *Chunqiu shuoli* 春秋說例, and *Chunqiu wenquan* 春秋文權.⁴⁶ Liu Chang's interpretations of

⁴⁴ In light of this, it is interesting that in 1059, Liu Chang objected strongly to Renzong's decision to endorse the writings of the eclectic classical scholar Long Changqi 龍昌期 (b. ca. 971) by awarding him an official's robe and gifts of gold and silk. Long, who was by then nearly ninety years old, had been a Buddhist monk before turning to classical studies on the urging of the official Zhu Taifu 朱台符 (965–1006), and had eventually gained a large following in his native Shu 蜀 region. None of his works has survived, but the numerous known titles show that his range of interests was as broad as Liu Chang's: they included commentaries to all of the Classics (including two *Chunqiu* commentaries) and the *Daodejing*, a treatise on the complementarity of the Three Teachings (Classicism, Buddhism, and Daoism), and a hundred-chapter essay criticizing Han Yu (a summary of which is found in the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記). On the surface, therefore, Liu Chang and Long Changqi had much in common despite the nearly fifty-year difference in their ages. Yet Liu Chang mounted a vehement attack on Long, denouncing his interpretations of the Classics as absurd falsehoods and urging Renzong to withdraw the award and have the printing blocks for his works destroyed. Ouyang Xiu supported Liu's anti-Long campaign, which succeeded in changing Renzong's mind. Liu Chang's condemnation of Long Changqi seems to have centered on Long's claim that the Duke of Zhou's behavior in the famous affair of the 'metal-bound coffer' was a hypocritical charade to cover up his ambition of usurping the throne. Liu's obituary also criticizes Long for "mixing Buddhist teachings" 雜用佛說 into his classical exegesis. Most scholars have seen Liu Chang as a conservative Classicist who could not tolerate Long Changqi's eclecticism. But since Liu Chang himself had strong eclectic tendencies and was not known for being a zealous defender of Classicist orthodoxy, one might suspect the real problem was that he saw Long Changqi as an intellectual rival: precisely because they were so alike, Long's reputation weakened his own claim to unconventionality and unique insight. QSW 1280.87–88; JSJ 35.928–929; Liu, *Pengcheng ji*, *juan* 35; Guo Tian 郭焜, "Long Changqi shengping yu xueshu sixiang bukao" 龍昌期生平與學術思想補考, *Xihua daxue xuebao* 西華大學學報 32.3 (2013), 41–45; Huang Chi-chiang 黃啓江, "Zhang Shangying hufa de lishi yiyi" 張商英護法的歷史意義, *Zhonghua foxue xuebao* 中華佛學學報 9 (1996), 139–143.

⁴⁵ For summaries of Liu Chang's career see JSJ 35.927–929; Liu, *Pengcheng ji*, *juan* 35; SS 319.10383–10386.

⁴⁶ All but the *Chunqiu wenquan* are extant. According to Ye Mengde's *Bishu luhua* (see *juan* 1 of the *Siku quanshu* edition), Ouyang Xiu frequently consulted Liu Chang on the language of the *Chunqiu* when writing the *Xin Wudaishi* and co-editing the *Xin Tangshu*. Liu Chang's interpretations of the *Chunqiu* were much more sophisticated

the *Chunqiu* reflect an exegetical approach inspired by Lu Chun's (and thus also Dan Zhu's and Zhao Kuang's) effort at resolving contradictions within and between the traditional commentaries by subjecting these to rigorous logic and systematization, rather than Sun Fu's monothematic approach to understanding the text. Much of Liu's interpretive framework relating to barbarizing demotions is clearly borrowed from earlier commentators in a typically eclectic manner. For example, in the *Chunqiu zhuan* he agrees with Sun Fu that Confucius wrote of the ruler of Qin as a barbarian for violating the "[moral] Way of warfare" 為師之道 and "acting as a barbarian (Yi-Di)" 以夷狄為之 when Qin attacked Jin in 617 BC.⁴⁷ But Liu also applies the very same interpretation to the Zheng ruler's demotion for attacking Xǔ in 588 BC and the Jin ruler's demotion for attacking the Xianyu in 530 BC.⁴⁸ Sun Fu attributed these barbarizing demotions to the Zheng and Jin rulers' collusion with a barbarian state, Chu; in this he was following interpretations by He Xiu and the Guliang commentary respectively. Liu Chang, however, saw Confucius's demotion of the Zheng and Jin rulers as a consequence of their having broken the rules of warfare—an interpretation apparently derived from the *Chunqiu fanlu* in the case of Zheng and from Dan Zhu in the case of Jin.

Liu Chang follows Zhao Kuang in rejecting the *Zuozhuan* interpretation that the Qǐ rulers' demotions in rank were a response to their use of barbarian ritual. Like Sun Fu, however, he also rejects Zhao's argument (which Lu Chun followed) that the Zhu, Mou, and Ge rulers were indeed demoted for using barbarian ritual.⁴⁹ Unlike Sun Fu, Liu Chang did not completely reject the idea that feudal lords could be demoted for using barbarian ritual: instead, he applied it to explaining why the *Chunqiu* very atypically refers to the rulers of Gu 穀, Deng 鄧, and Jie 介 by name rather than by their titles. In so doing, he departed from various explanations provided by the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries and the *Zuozhuan*, which had nothing to do with ritual.⁵⁰ That said, Liu Chang's use of the word "demoted" with reference to these rulers, rather

than Ouyang Xiu's, and when he disagreed with one of Ouyang's readings, he would make a joke about it, much to Ouyang's chagrin.

⁴⁷ Liu Chang, *Chunqiu zhuan* 春秋傳 (Tongzhitang jingjie edition), *juan* 7. Cf. *juan* 6, in which Liu Chang (unlike Sun Fu) agrees with the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries that Confucius saw the Qin ruler as behaving like a barbarian during the events leading up to his army's being ambushed and defeated by Jin at the Battle of Xiaohou.

⁴⁸ Liu, *Chunqiu zhuan*, *juan* 9 and 12.

⁴⁹ Liu Chang's alternative explanation for the Zhu, Mou, and Ge rulers' demotions differs from Sun Fu's: he argues that these rulers violated ritual protocol by visiting the Lu court as a group, a practice reserved for visits to the Zhou royal court. Liu Chang, *Chunqiu quanheng* 春秋權衡 (Tongzhitang jingjie edition), *juan* 4; *Chunqiu zhuan*, *juan* 2.

⁵⁰ The Gongyang and Guliang commentaries interpreted the Gu and Deng case as indicating that these rulers had lost their lands, while the *Zuozhuan* argued that the *Chunqiu* was reflecting the inferiority of their states by calling them by name. Liu Chang found both interpretations to be illogical and therefore devised his own: Confucius "demoted" 貶 the rulers of Gu and Deng for using barbarian ritual during their visit to the Lu court in 705 BC. The Gongyang commentary interpreted the Jie ruler as a barbarian (Yi-Di) ruler who was referred to by name because he had no feudal title when visiting the Lu court in 631 BC, while the Guliang commentary argued that his state was too small for him to merit a title. Liu Chang took exception to the Gongyang interpretation, in particular, pointing out that the White Di ruler was not referred to by name when he visited the Lu court in 555 BC. Liu concluded that Confucius "demoted" 貶 the Jie ruler because he used barbarian ritual during his visit to Lu. In the *Chunqiu yilin*, Liu argues

than the phrase “regarded as a barbarian,” suggests that he did not fully agree with Han Yu’s assertion that Confucius regarded feudal lords who used barbarian ritual as literal barbarians.

One of Liu Chang’s most original interpretations of the *Chunqiu* is that Confucius drew a sharp distinction between two kinds of “barbarians”: on one hand, there were “real barbarians (Yi-Di)” 真夷狄 who had always been, and would always be, morally inferior enemies of the Chinese; on the other hand, there were Chinese states that had become barbarian-like or barbaric in their moral or ritual behavior but were still capable of returning to Chinese ways.⁵¹ It was very possible for Chinese states to be semi-barbarized or “barbarians in name,” but impossible for “real barbarians” to earn promotion to the level of Chinese states. Of Liu’s four extant *Chunqiu* commentaries, only the *Chunqiu yilin* contains sustained arguments relating to this distinction between real and nominal (or metaphorical) barbarians, but these are supplemented by shorter passages in the *Chunqiu zhuan* and *Chunqiu quanheng*. Early in the *Chunqiu yilin* Liu Chang argues that states like Chu and Wu were not truly barbarians but only metaphorically so, since their rulers were (according to Sima Qian) descendants of Chinese sage-kings or worthies. Confucius demoted them to a step above real barbarians as a way to censure them for misusing the royal title, while leaving the door open for them to return to full morality:

People who discuss [the *Chunqiu*] regard Wu, Chu, Xú, and Yue as barbarians (Yi-Di), but this is wrong. Wu, Chu, Xú, and Yue were barbarians (Di) in name, but not barbarians in reality. The sage [Confucius] was careful not to cut people off. [The rulers of] Wu were descended from Taibo, [the rulers of] Chu were descended from Zhurong, [the rulers of] Xú were descendants of Earl Yi, and [the rulers of] Yue were descendants of the Great Yu. Their ancestors all had great moral power and prominent achievements and were in contact with the Zhou dynasty. How were they any different from the capped and robed rulers of the Central Lands? Xú was the first to use the title of king. Chu later also used the title of king, and Wu and Yue followed suit. The title of king should not be used by feudal lords, so [Confucius] regarded them as barbarians (Yi-Di). Nonetheless,

that Jie was a Chinese state that had adopted the ritual and material culture of its “eastern Yi barbarian” 東夷 neighbors. As a result, the Jie ruler’s “rites and customs did not conform to those of the Chinese states, and he had no way to maintain [diplomatic] relations with the Central Lands” 禮俗不合諸夏，無以交中國. GYZS 5.89, 12.263; GLZS 3.52–53, 9.174; ZZZY 7.185; Liu, *Chunqiu quanheng*, *juan* 2, 9, 11, and 14; *Chunqiu zhuan*, *juan* 2 and 6; *Chunqiu yilin* 春秋意林 (Tongzhitang *jingjie* edition), *juan* 1.

⁵¹ In a recent summary of Liu Chang’s views on barbarians in the *Chunqiu*, Liu Tao overlooks this interpretation and thus contradicts herself, first arguing that Liu’s *Chunqiu* exegesis “was not strongly colored by distinctions between barbarians (Yi) and Chinese” 夷夏之別的色彩不濃 and then claiming that he “sometimes displayed a kind of extreme thinking in his attitude toward the barbarians (Yi-Di)” 在對夷狄的態度上有時表現出一種極端的思想. The evidence that Liu Tao cites for such “extreme thinking” comes from Liu Chang’s “Zhirong lun” 治戎論, which I shall analyze in some detail below. Ge Huanli’s analysis of Liu Chang is even less accurate, as it ignores the “Zhirong lun” and relies on the *Siku quanshu* edition of his commentaries, which was heavily censored to remove all derogatory language about barbarians. Liu Tao 劉濤, “Qianxi Beisong chunqiu xue de rangyi guan—yi Sun Fu, Liu Chang zhushu wei zhongxin shiye” 淺析北宋春秋學的攘夷觀—以孫復、劉敞著述為中心視野, *Zaozhuang xueyuan xuebao* 棗莊學院學報 27.1 (2010), 131; Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 176.

he was still unwilling to cut off those of their kind, so he did not place them as high as the Central Lands but also did not place them as low as the barbarians. Thus he could keep them at a distance [when they became aggressive] but also invite them in [when they became submissive]. This is how the sage was careful not to cut people off.

論者以吳、楚、徐、越爲夷狄乎，不然也，吳、楚、徐、越有狄之名，無狄之情。聖人者，慎絕人。吳，太伯之後也。楚，祝融之後也。徐，伯益之後也。越，大禹之後也。其上世皆有元德顯功，通乎周室矣。與中國冠帶之君奚以異？徐始稱王，楚後稱王，吳、越因遂稱王。王，非諸侯所當名也，故夷狄之。雖然，猶不欲絕其類，是以上不使與中國等，下不使與夷狄均。推之可遠，引之可來也。此聖人慎絕人也。⁵²

Later in the text, Liu Chang reiterates and elaborates on this interpretation:

The *Chunqiu* is careful about ruler-subject relations above all else. [The rulers of] Wu, Chu, Xú, and Yue were all descendants of sages or worthies. They were all either paternal uncles or maternal uncles of the Zhou kings. Seeing that the Zhou [kings] were weak and the feudal lords were acting without restraint, and knowing that they were a distance from the Central Lands and beyond the reach of the king's authority, they all usurped the [royal] title illegitimately and became no different from barbarians (Yi-Di). Hence the *Chunqiu* responded by regarding them as barbarians. The sage [Confucius] was careful in employing people and reluctant to cast them off. Although he regarded them as barbarians, he could not bear to lower them to the same level as barbarians and therefore still stooped to making excuses for them. Thus when he spoke of their rulers and of their ministers, he did not distinguish between [rulers and ministers by mentioning] feudal titles and names. In this way he merely demoted them and placed them at a distance so that they would not be equal to the Central Lands. This is what he meant by saying, "The barbarians have rulers but are still not equal to Chinese states that do not." Alas! Can one not be alert to this? They sought glory but instead brought dishonor on themselves; they sought security but instead put themselves in peril. As soon as they thought of doing good and repented of their error, discarding their false titles and following the practice of the Central Lands, then he would permit them to have [legitimate] rulers and ministers.

《春秋》所甚謹者，莫如君臣。吳楚徐越，此皆聖賢之後，非周室之伯父叔父，則伯舅叔舅也。見周之弱而諸侯放恣，自以遠於中國，王靈不及，而皆僭名號，雖夷狄無以異。是以《春秋》亦因而夷狄之。聖人慎用人，重棄人。雖夷狄之，而未忍使其與夷狄等也，尚委曲為之造說。故稱其君國，稱其大夫，無爵命名氏之辨，以貶遠之，不使得齒中國而已。所謂「夷狄之有君，不如諸夏之亡」者也。嗚呼，可

⁵² Liu, *Chunqiu yilin*, juan 1.

不省乎？將以求榮邪，乃反辱焉。將以求安邪，乃反危焉。及其思善悔過，去僞號從中國，然後許之有君有大夫。⁵³

Like Lu Chun and Sun Fu, Liu Chang believed that Confucius promoted the Chu and Wu rulers as soon as they conformed to the diplomatic protocol required of feudal states. This is most evident in his reading of a generally-recognized case of promotion in 618 BC, in which the *Chunqiu* records the name of a Chu ambassador to Lu for the first time. The Gongyang commentary read this as a sign that Chu had just started to appoint ministers at its court, while the Guliang commentary read it as commending Chu for sending an embassy to Confucius's state of Lu. Liu Chang was evidently dissatisfied with both explanations. In the *Chunqiu zhuan*, he argues that the promotion was a sign that “from this point on, [Chu] was in communication with the Central Lands” 自是與中國通也 in a manner conforming to “the rites of the Central Lands” 中國之禮.⁵⁴ In the *Chunqiu yilin*, he goes further and argues that Confucius promoted the Chu ruler in response to his choice to forgo using the royal title in diplomacy with Lu:

The Viscount of Chu's ambassador Jiao came [to Lu] for a diplomatic visit. Before this, Chu did not have diplomatic contact with the Central Lands. When it interacted with the Central Lands, its use of the [royal] title was illegitimate and lawless, so [Confucius] likened it to the barbarians (Yi-Di). It is always only exceptional events that get recorded in the *Chunqiu*. Now when the ambassador Jiao came for a diplomatic visit, his use of titles was appropriate and his use of ritual protocol was correct; only then could [Chu] begin to be placed on an equal footing with the Central Lands. Therefore, the feudal lords were all [held to] the same [standard], but those who could embellish themselves with the rites and ritual music were called the Central Lands, while those who could not embellish themselves with the rites and ritual music, and who behaved insolently toward their superiors and violently toward their inferiors, were called barbarians. [The difference between] the Central Lands and the barbarians is not based on geographical proximity but rather on moral worthiness and unworthiness. If one is morally worthy, though he may reside beyond the Four Seas, it is permissible to call him [a person of] the Central Lands. If one is morally unworthy, though he may dwell along the Yellow and Luo rivers, it is permissible to call him a barbarian.

楚子使椒來聘。前此者，楚不與中國通。其交於中國也，名號僭而無法，故比之夷狄。得見於《春秋》者，皆必有非常之事焉。今使椒來聘，其號辭順，其禮節中，然後始均之中國矣。故諸侯一也，能自藩飾以禮樂者，則謂之中國；不能自藩飾以禮樂，上慢下暴者，則謂之夷狄。中國夷狄不在遠近，而在賢不肖。苟賢矣，雖居四海，謂之中國，可也。苟不肖矣，雖處河洛，謂之夷狄，可也。⁵⁵

⁵³ GYZS 13.294; GLZS 11.199; Liu, *Chunqiu yilin*, *juan 2*.

⁵⁴ Liu, *Chunqiu zhuan*, *juan 7*.

⁵⁵ Liu, *Chunqiu yilin*, *juan 1*.

The moral universalism expressed by this passage, in which geography is completely irrelevant to the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, may lead one to assume that Liu Chang saw all barbarians as capable of becoming morally worthy and practicing the rites, thus earning equality with and membership in the Central Lands. It is evident from other passages in Liu's works, however, that he believed this principle to apply only to feudal lords who had become morally and ritually barbaric, not to "real barbarians" who had no common ancestry with the Chinese.⁵⁶ As he explains in the *Chunqiu quanheng*:

When barbarians (Yi-Di) defeat the Central Lands, [the *Chunqiu*] refers to this as a defeat, and when the Central Lands defeat barbarians, [the *Chunqiu*] also refers to this as a defeat. The only difference is that [the *Chunqiu*] does not speak of real barbarians fighting battles with the Central Lands. As for Wu and Chu, even though they were barbarians in name, they were brothers and colleagues [of the other feudal lords] in reality. Now if we liken the rulers of Wu and Chu to the Red Di, White Di, Mountain Rong, and Rong-Man [barbarians] without exception, would we not be insulting [their ancestors] Taibo and Yuxiong as well?

夷狄敗中國則曰「敗」，中國敗夷狄則曰「敗」。唯真夷狄與中國不言戰，此為異耳。至於吳、楚乎，雖有夷狄之名哉，其實兄弟僚友也。今一概以吳、楚之君，比赤狄、白狄、山戎、戎蠻，不亦羞太伯、鬻熊哉？⁵⁷

Here, Liu Chang is building on a principle found in the Guliang commentary: "[the *Chunqiu*] does not speak of the Central Lands fighting battles with barbarians (Yi-Di); it refers to these as 'defeating [barbarians]'" 中國與夷狄不言戰，皆曰敗之。 According to Fan Ning's subcommentary, this was done in order "to not accord the barbarians a status of equality with the Central Lands" 不使夷狄敵中國.⁵⁸ In the *Chunqiu yilin*, Liu elaborates on this principle in considerably greater detail:

⁵⁶ Xiong Mingqin misses this distinction when citing Liu Chang in Xiong, "Chaoyue 'Yi Xia,'" 127.

⁵⁷ Liu, *Chunqiu quanheng*, *juan* 17. Cf. *juan* 11, where Liu Chang rejects the interpretation (common to Lu Chun and Sun Fu) that Confucius referred to Chu by the province name of "Jing" early in the *Chunqiu* in order to represent the people of Chu as barbarians. Liu argues: "If one says that referring to them as a province is a way to refer to them as barbarians (Di), then why are all barbarians (Yi-Di) not referred to as provinces, not to mention that the Chu [people] were not even real barbarians?" 若曰「州舉之所以為狄之」者，凡在夷狄尚不州舉之，況楚非真夷狄乎？ In *Chunqiu zhuan*, *juan* 3, Liu also argues that "'Jing' was [Chu's] name for itself, while 'Chu' was the Central Lands' name for it" 荆者，其自名者也；楚者，中國名之者也，and that Confucius did not show that he regarded the Chu ruler as a barbarian (Yi-Di) by calling him "Jing," but rather by not referring to his title, "the Viscount of Jing" 荆子.

⁵⁸ GLZS 14.263.

The *Chunqiu* regards barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer and the Central Lands of the Chinese as inner. Those regarded as inner are to be governed with moral power; those regarded as outer are to be governed with [military] strength. When opposing armies meet, there is always a battle. But when it involves the Central Lands [alone], then it is recorded as a battle. Recording it as a battle means that [the parties involved] are governed with moral power. When it involves the barbarians [as well], then it is not recorded as a battle. Not recording it as a battle means that [the barbarians] are governed with [military] strength. The true king is not [intentionally] generous toward the Central Lands and mean toward the barbarians. He has no choice but to be so. The Central Lands can be taught ritual and moral duty; therefore, if [a Chinese state] does not fix a date [for the battle] and engage in pitched battle, then it is to be abhorred even if its cause is just. Barbarians cannot be taught ritual and moral duty; when they come and raid, all that matters is achieving victory over them. Even if [a Chinese state] does not fix a date [for the battle] and engage in pitched battle [with them], it is not to be derided. When the commentary (i.e., the *Zuozhuan*) says, “Moral power is used to rule the Central Lands with gentleness, and punishments are used to rule the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters with awe-inducing military strength,” it is also referring to this [principle].

夷狄者，《春秋》之所外也。中夏者，《春秋》之所內也。所內者，將以德治之。所外者，將以力治之。故抗兵相加，未嘗不戰也。然而在中國，則書戰。書戰者，以德治之之意也。在夷狄，則不書戰。不書戰者，以力治之之意也。王者，非於中國厚，而於夷狄薄也。勢不得不爾也。中國可教以禮義，故不結日，不偏陳，雖有道猶惡之。夷狄不可教以禮義，其之來為寇，能勝之而已矣。雖不結日，不偏陳，無譏焉。傳曰：「德以柔中國，刑以威夷狄」，乃亦此之謂也。⁵⁹

In other words, Liu’s argument is that since the barbarians only understand brute force and are incapable of learning how to fight battles in a civilized, honorable fashion, the Chinese are also not bound by the normal rules of warfare when fighting them.

In an undated three-part essay titled “Zhirong lun” 治戎論 (Discourse on Governing the Barbarians), Liu Chang presents an even more elaborate analysis of the battle-defeat distinction in the *Chunqiu*. In the essay’s second part, Liu Chang explains why the *Chunqiu* mentions barbarian invasions but not barbarian military victories. His argument involves accentuating the moral inferiority of “real barbarians” and the moral superiority of the Central Lands, casting them as such absolutes that any barbarian victory over the Central Lands is too appalling to be acknowledged in writing:

⁵⁹ Liu, *Chunqiu yilin*, *juan 2*.

[The *Chunqiu*] speaks of barbarians (Yi-Di) entering the Central Lands but not of them winning battles. Why? This is to use morality to drive them back... It is not because such things did not occur that [the *Chunqiu*] does not speak of them; rather, they occurred, but [the *Chunqiu*] does not record them. The barbarians are utterly inferior, utterly chaotic, and utterly immoral. The Central Lands are utterly superior, utterly well-governed, and utterly moral. The language of the *Chunqiu* does not permit the inferior to rise above the superior, the chaotic to rise above the well-governed, and the immoral to rise above the moral. ... Therefore, when [the *Chunqiu*] speaks of barbarians (Yi-Di) entering the Central Lands but not of them winning battles, the meaning is like that of saying, "They can enter the Central Lands, but they can never be victorious over the Central Lands." If one avoids even the name of [a barbarian victory], how much more so would one seek to avoid its [occurrence in] reality? If one abhors even speaking of [a barbarian victory], how much more so does one abhor the [barbarian] races? That is the intent of the *Chunqiu*.

夷狄之於中國，言入而不言勝，是何也？凡以義却之也。... 非無其事而不言，蓋有其事而不書焉耳。夫夷狄者，至賤也，至亂也，至不肖也。中國者，至貴也，至治也，至義也。《春秋》之說，不使賤加貴，不使亂加治，不使不肖加有義。... 故言其入而不言勝，其義猶曰：「可以有入中國，不可以有勝中國」云爾。其名猶遠之，況其實乎？其言猶惡之，況其類乎？此《春秋》之指也。⁶⁰

In the third part of the essay, Liu Chang explains why the *Chunqiu* mentions Chinese military victories over barbarians but does not record them as battles. This part of the essay is noteworthy for its dehumanizing rhetoric about barbarians and its insistence that when they invade, they must be defeated by any means necessary, even if these are inhumane or perfidious:

[The *Chunqiu*] speaks of the Central Lands winning battles against the barbarians (Yi-Di) but not of them fighting battles with the barbarians. Why? This is to use awe-inducing military strength to bring them to submission. Between the [states of the] Central Lands, there were indeed battles. The Central Lands were the source of ritual and yielding; they were ruled with humaneness and moral duty and embraced the moral power of the Way. Therefore, although there were conflicts, these merely involved those who observed ritual decorum rebuking those who did not, those who honored their moral duty rebuking those who did not, and those who practiced the Way rebuking those who did not. Their hearts did not covet each other's goods, and they had no intent to harm each other's people. That is why they fixed a date before meeting in battle and got into formation before charging [at each other]. They did not gain victory through deception, pursue glory through opportunistic acts, or establish their reputation through awe-inducing military strength. Such were the armies of the Central Lands; thus did the kings and hegemony rule.

⁶⁰ Anonymous, *Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui* 新刊國朝二百家名賢文粹, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書, vol. 1652 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002), 39.630; QSW 1289.270.

中國之於夷狄，言勝而不言戰，是何也？凡以威服之也。中國之於中國則有戰。中國者，禮讓之所出，仁義之所治，道德之所懷也。是雖有鬪爭，不過以其禮責其無禮，以其義責其無義，以其道責其無道。非有利其貨之心，非有病其民之意。是故結日而後陣，成列而後出，不以詐取勝，不以幸圖功，不以威立名。此中國之師，王霸之治也。

The barbarians were not like that. When they came and raided, they could not be admonished with [the virtues of] ritual and yielding, humaneness and moral duty, and the moral power of the Way. [If one attempted to do so,] they would simply rob the people to vent their violence, break open the storehouses to satiate their greed, cut trees down to indulge their destructiveness, and injure animals to slake their fury. They were like duelling tigers and leopards, serpents devouring [their prey], or swarms of crop-eating caterpillars. Rulers of states prepared for the season of their arrival and worried about the damage they would do. One did not extend trustworthiness to them as long as one could harm them, or extend humaneness to them as long as one could cut them off, saying, “All that matters is eliminating them as a threat and being effective [in warfare against them].” That is why when [the *Chunqiu*] speaks of winning battles but not of fighting battles, the meaning is like that of saying, “The value lies in winning the battle, not in fighting it.”

彼夷狄者不然。其來爲寇，非能以禮讓、仁義、道德相率厲者也。直將剽人民以盈其暴，掙府庫以足其欲，斬樹木以逞其害，殘百物以快其怒而已矣。譬若虎豹之搏、長蛇之噬，螟蟻之集也，有國者時其至而慮其害。苟可以害之，毋待於信；苟可以絕之，毋待於仁，曰：「除害而已矣，效力而已矣。」是故言勝而不言戰者，其義猶曰：「貴於勝，不貴於戰也」云耳。⁶¹

We have seen similar language in Sun Fu’s argument that Confucius reluctantly approved of hegemons when they repelled barbarians who had “seized the territory of the former kings and cut down and killed the people of the former kings, invading and harassing, raiding and destroying.” Whereas Sun Fu’s primary example of such barbarian invaders was Chu, however, Liu Chang’s focus is on “real barbarians,” whom he believes the sages had no qualms about cutting off.

Moreover, while Sun Fu interpreted the entire *Chunqiu* as a lament over the moral decline of the Central Lands, of which the Chu rulers’ defiance toward the Zhou kings was but a symptom, Liu Chang’s emphasis on a fundamental moral divide between the Central Lands and the “real barbarians” in the “Zhirong lun” effectively causes him to deny that such a decline existed at all. Liu idealizes the feudal lords and hegemons of the Eastern Zhou as perfectly moral and honorable men who were never motivated by avarice or malice. One party in every battle between Chinese states was acting justly to rebuke the other party for some moral failing, and

⁶¹ Anonymous, *Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui*, 39.630; QSW 1289.271–272. The *Quan Songwen* version has 扞之 (“fend them off”) instead of 害之 (“harm them”) and 效立 (“achieving results”) instead of 效力 (“being effective”).

every such battle was fought in accordance with the rules of warfare, with neither side resorting to deceptive tactics. This romantic image contradicts nearly every prior assessment of Eastern Zhou history and the *Chunqiu* record—including Liu’s own *Chunqiu zhuan*, which finds that the rulers of Qin, Zheng, and Jin were all demoted at a certain point for “acting as a barbarian (Yi-Di)” 以夷狄爲之 by violating the “[moral] Way of warfare” 爲師之道. As we saw earlier, even the *Chunqiu yilin* acknowledges the possibility of a scenario in which one Chinese state “does not fix a date [for the battle] and engage in pitched battle” with another. Since we have no way of dating Liu Chang’s works relative to each other, however, it is just as possible that the *Chunqiu zhuan* and *Chunqiu yilin* were written later than the “Zhirong lun” and represent a retreat from its rhetorical excesses. Indeed, we shall see in a moment that I do suspect the “Zhirong lun” to be one of Liu Chang’s earliest works.

A few lines down in the “Zhirong lun,” Liu Chang anticipates an imaginary questioner’s objection that a sage-king should be able to do more with the barbarians than simply keep them out of his realm. He responds with standard tropes borrowed from anti-expansionist rhetoric:

A questioner may ask, “A sage’s humaneness is such that there is no one whom he does not love; a sage’s trustworthiness is such that there is no one who cannot trust him; a sage’s ritual propriety is such that there is no one whom he will not teach. But now you are saying that when it comes to barbarians (Yi-Di), [the sage should] keep them out, abhor them, and cut them off. Why?” I would answer, “Without keeping them out, we cannot preserve our humaneness; without abhorring them, we cannot preserve our trustworthiness; without cutting them off, we cannot preserve our ritual propriety. A sage does not covet the reputation of gaining the submission of distant [lands], nor does he worry about the shame of losing distant [lands]. Therefore, he does not grant the standard calendar to [lands] where the grace of his moral power does not extend, and he does not extend the grace of his moral power to [lands] to which he did not grant the standard calendar. He regards them as birds and beasts, and he will not subject human beings to military conscription and corvée labor for the sake of birds and beasts. The *Chunqiu* [i.e., Confucius] was afraid that people would not be able to understand the meaning [of this message], so he further clarified his language and said, “The White Di came.”⁶² “Came” means that they came to pay homage. [The *Chunqiu*] says that they came but does not say that they came to pay homage, in order to say that their coming to pay homage is not significant enough to be regarded as an honor, and that their not coming to pay homage would not be significant enough to be regarded as an insult.⁶³ This is like what [the

⁶² This line is from the *Chunqiu*, Lord Xiang Year 18 襄公十八年 (555 BC).

⁶³ Liu Chang presents a similar interpretation of this line in the *Chunqiu yilin*, where he argues: “Barbarians (Yi-Di) should have nothing to do with the Central Lands” 夫夷狄於中國無事焉. He thus differs from the Gongyang commentary, which interprets the language in this line of the *Chunqiu* as indicating that the White Di were unable to pay homage in the proper way, presumably because of their ignorance of ritual. Liu, *Chunqiu yilin*, *juan 2*; GYZS 20.444.

Chunqiu] means when [it records sightings of] sandspitters, meadow grasshoppers, and mynahs [only because] they very rarely appear.⁶⁴

問者曰：「聖人之仁，無所不愛；聖人之信，無所不孚；聖人之禮，無所不教。今獨謂夷狄則外之，惡之，絕之，何也？」曰：「不外則不能全吾仁；不惡則不能全吾信；不絕則不能全吾禮也。聖人不貪於服遠以為名，不恤於喪遠以為羞。是故德澤不加，則正朔不及；正朔不及則德澤不加也。一之於鳥獸，不以鳥獸役人。《春秋》患人莫能知義，故明其文而申之，曰：「白狄來。」「來」者，來朝也，言其來，不言其朝，以謂其來朝不足以榮，其不朝不足以辱。蜮也，蜚也，鸚鵡也，一有一亡者也，此之謂也。」⁶⁵

Liu Chang is essentially claiming that the sage-king's only duty with regard to barbarians is to ensure that they continue to be cut off from the Chinese for the sake of keeping Chinese civilization intact. Not only are barbarian lands unworthy of the sage-king's civilizing influence, even the arrival of a barbarian embassy at court deserves no more interest or enthusiasm than the occasional sighting of an exotic animal or insect.

The highly barbarophobic tone of the “Zhirong lun,” which is not found in any of Liu Chang's other works, leads me to suggest that he wrote it in 1042–1043, when the Song court was deeply troubled by the possibility of the Xia and the Kitans forming an alliance to attack the Song in the aftermath of the first Song-Xia war.⁶⁶ At this time Liu Chang, who was in his early twenties and was still preparing for the *jinshi* examinations, composed a hawkish policy essay titled “Zongheng lun” 從橫論 (Discourse on Vertical and Horizontal Alliances) that was probably meant for inclusion in his literary portfolio (*xingjuan* 行卷). In it, he used the historical analogy of the competing vertical and horizontal alliance strategies during the Warring States period to argue that the Song state's best strategic option was to thwart any emerging Xia-Kitan alliance by launching a surprise attack on the Kitan empire, in violation of the Song-Kitan peace treaty of 1005. Liu Chang predicted that such an attack would at least succeed in reclaiming Fanyang 范陽 (Youzhou), the most strategically crucial part of the Sixteen Prefectures, and in deterring the Kitans from rendering military aid to the Xia, although he prudently chose not to assess the Song state's chances of victory in a prolonged war with the Kitans.⁶⁷ It is thus quite

⁶⁴ Here, Liu Chang is following the Guliang interpretation of the *Chunqiu* record for Lord Zhuang Year 18 莊公十八年 (676 BC), Lord Zhuang Year 29 莊公二十九年 (665 BC), and Lord Zhao Year 25 昭公二十五年 (517 BC). In ancient Chinese lore, the Yu or Huo 蜮 (here translated as “sandspitter”) is a water creature that lurks at the water's edge and spits sand containing highly poisonous *qi* at unwary passersby. GLZS 5.96, 6.114, 18.347.

⁶⁵ Anonymous, *Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui*, 39.630–631; QSW 1289.272. The *Quan Songwen* version omits the characters 蜮也蜚也鸚鵡也一有一亡.

⁶⁶ Liu Tao has made the more general suggestion that the “Zhirong lun” can be read as Liu Chang's policy recommendations for dealing with the Kitans and the Xia. I do not agree, however, with her conclusion that Liu's recommendations centered on internal reform. Liu, “Qianxi Beisong chunqiu xue de rangyi guan,” 131.

⁶⁷ Anonymous, *Xinkan guochao erbaijia mingxian wencui*, 30.570; QSW 1288.251–252.

plausible that one of Liu's motives for writing the "Zhirong lun" was to provide moral justification for a pre-emptive attack on the Kitan empire by demonstrating that Confucius approved of any means, fair or foul, that was necessary for the defeat of dangerous barbarians. The strategic reasoning behind Liu Chang's proposal became obsolete in the autumn of 1043, however, when the Kitan empire unexpectedly went to war with the Xia.⁶⁸ No Xia-Kitan alliance against the Song ever materialized. Instead, a watchful peace between the Song and Xia was the norm for the next two decades, until the young Xia ruler Li Liangzuo 李諒祚 (1047–1068) began launching raids on Song frontier prefectures over a diplomatic dispute in 1064.⁶⁹ Moreover, Song-Kitan relations were stable and peaceful throughout Liu Chang's official career—a career that even included a stint as ambassador to the Kitan court in 1055.

If Liu Chang wrote any essays on relations with the Kitans or Xia after 1043, these have not survived, but it would be simplistic to assume that his attitude toward foreign peoples was always as hostile as the belligerent rhetoric of the "Zhirong lun" and "Zongheng lun" seems to imply. Nonetheless, it remains clear that when Liu Chang interpreted the language of the *Chunqiu*, he consistently believed that Confucius's attitude toward 'barbarized' Chinese states like Chu and Wu was more favorable than his attitude toward "real barbarians" who had never been Chinese. This stands in clear contrast to Sun Fu, who assumed Chu and Wu to be the greatest barbarian threats to the Central Lands and represented their hegemony as nothing short of a total barbarization of the Chinese. However, Liu Chang and Sun Fu certainly do not exhaust the range of eleventh-century positions taken on the theme of barbarization in the *Chunqiu*. Let us look at one more example of *Chunqiu* exegesis that adopts an interpretation of barbarization that is rather similar to Liu Chang's, yet comes to markedly different conclusions. That example is Su Shi's "Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun" 王者不治夷狄論 (Discourse on 'The True King Does Not Govern the Barbarians'), an essay written for the decree examination of 1061.

Su Shi on "pure" barbarism and barbarization

"The true king does not govern the barbarians" 王者不治夷狄 is an argument from Eastern Han anti-expansionist rhetoric that we have encountered in Chapter 1. But it is also a line in He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary, specifically from a passage on one of the earliest events recorded in the *Chunqiu*: namely, Lord Yin of Lu's conference with a leader or a representative of a group of Rong 戎 barbarians at Qian 潛 in the spring of 721 BC. According to additional information supplied in the *Zuozhuan* narrative, the Qian conference was meant to reaffirm the good relations that had existed between Lu and the Rong under the previous Lu ruler, Lord Hui 惠公 (r. 768–723 BC). At the conference, the Rong requested a formal peace covenant with Lord Yin. He declined this request, but the Rong made a second request that autumn; this time, Lord

⁶⁸ One of Liu Chang's other early essays is a hypothetical draft for a state letter from the Song emperor to the Kitan emperor that very politely expresses a desire to remain neutral in the imminent Kitan-Xia war. QSW 1282.128–129.

⁶⁹ Li Liangzuo became the ruler of Xia at the age of one but was controlled by his maternal kin, the Mozang 沒藏 family, and did not gain true political power until 1061. Liangzuo's stated reason for launching the raids in 1064 was that the Song court had treated a Xia ambassador in an insulting manner. See SS 485.14000–14002.

Yin relented and made a covenant with the Rong at Tang 唐. The Gongyang commentary originally made no interpretation of the Qian conference, while the Guliang commentary merely remarked that it put Lord Yin in a dangerous situation—presumably because the Rong could have taken him captive. He Xiu’s subcommentary, in contrast, argues two things about the conference: first, that Confucius disapproved of conferences because the rulers who attended them were relying on diplomatic alliances to the neglect of domestic governance; second, that although “the true king does not govern the barbarians,” Confucius recorded this conference with the Rong because “when [barbarians] come [to submit], one should not refuse them, and when they leave [in flight], one should not pursue them” 來者勿拒，去者勿追。⁷⁰

No interpretation of the Qian conference by Dan Zhu, Zhao Kuang, or Lu Chun has survived, but we know that both Sun Fu and Liu Chang found the conference significant, for quite different reasons. Sun, highlighting the theme of “respecting the king,” argued that Confucius was condemning Lord Yin because feudal lords were not supposed to have conferences with one another except when the Zhou king ordered them to—let alone have conferences with barbarians. Liu, drawing on the idea of an unbridgeable divide between the Central Lands and the “real barbarians,” argued that Confucius did not acknowledge the presence of a Rong ruler at the conference because “[he] does not approve of diplomatic visits to the court by [peoples] who have not been granted the standard calendar and who lie beyond the reach of the rites and ritual music” 正朔不加，禮樂不及，朝聘不與. Modifying the well-known line from the Gongyang commentary, Liu Chang asserted that “the true king regards the capital as inner and the Chinese states as outer [in terms of relations between the court and the feudal lords], but regards the Chinese states as inner and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer [in terms of relations between the Chinese states and the barbarians]” 王者內京師而外諸夏，內諸夏而外夷狄. Therefore, it was “improper” 非正 for Lord Yin to have a meeting with a barbarian ruler.⁷¹

It thus appears that He Xiu’s interpretation of the Qian conference was essentially ignored, and thus implicitly rejected, by the leading *Chunqiu* commentators of the eleventh century. For the second round of the 1061 decree examination, however, the examiners chose “the true king does not govern the barbarians” as the subject of one of six essays on which the candidates were required to write within one day. The five other essay topics, all chosen by the examiners as well, were similarly obscure quotations or allusions from the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu*, the *Hou Hanshu*, the *Analects*, and the *Odes*. Only three candidates passed this examination, including Su Shi and his brother Su Zhe, both of whom eventually published their examination essays as part of their collected works.⁷² The Su brothers took very different approaches to the

⁷⁰ GYZS 2.29; GLZS 1.9–11; ZZZY 2.67.

⁷¹ Sun, *Chunqiu zunwang fawei*, juan 1; Liu, *Chunqiu zhuan*, juan 1.

⁷² SSQJ 2.184–207; LCYJ 12.1698–1710. The third candidate to pass this decree examination was Wang Jie 王介 (1015–1087), whose works have not survived. Ronald Egan and Peter Bol have analyzed the fifty essays in Su Shi’s pre-prepared examination portfolio (*jinjuan* 進卷), which he submitted for the decree examination’s first round, but not the six essays written in the second round: see Ronald C. Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1994), 5–26; Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 259–269.

subject, “the true king does not govern the barbarians.” Su Zhe had a strong interest in *Chunqiu* exegesis—he later wrote his own commentary to the text—and regarded the historical narratives found in the *Zuozhuan* as more authoritative than the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries. For that reason, his “Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun” focuses on arguing that He Xiu’s interpretation of the conference at Qian makes no sense—firstly, because Confucius recorded that conference without intending to express either praise or deprecation toward the parties involved; secondly, because it is patently untrue that the true king does not govern the barbarians in any way and (as He Xiu claimed) allows them to come and go as they please.⁷³ Su Shi’s “Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun,” on the other hand, takes He Xiu’s claim at face value and develops it into an argument about the very meaning of barbarism in the *Chunqiu*. Whereas Su Zhe’s essay is strong on logic but reads like a mean-spirited harangue against He Xiu’s scholarship, Su Shi’s is an exercise in creative thinking that also reflects a keen awareness of prior discourses on the concept of barbarization.⁷⁴

Su Shi begins his essay with a nod to the timeworn anti-expansionist tropes also seen in Liu Chang’s “Zhirong lun,” but puts a clever spin on the definition of “govern” before demonstrating that he knows exactly which passage the essay topic is quoting from:

Barbarians (Yi-Di) cannot be governed as the Central Lands are governed. They are like birds and beasts: if one seeks to bring great order to them, it will surely lead to great chaos. The sage-kings knew this and therefore governed them through non-governance, for governing them with non-governance is the profoundest way to govern them.⁷⁵ The *Chunqiu* records, “Lord [Yin of Lu] had a conference with the Rong barbarians at Qian,” and He Xiu said, “The true king does not govern the barbarians. This record shows that when the Rong barbarians come [to submit], he does not refuse them, and when they leave [in flight], he does not pursue them.”

夷狄不可以中國之治治也。譬若禽獸然，求其大治，必至於大亂。先王知其然，是故以不治治之。治之以不治者，乃所以深治之也。《春秋》書「公會戎于潛」，何休曰：「王者不治夷狄。錄戎來者不拒，去者不追也。」⁷⁶

⁷³ LCYJ 12.1698–1699. On Su Zhe’s *Chunqiu* exegesis, see Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 265–285.

⁷⁴ We know from one of Su Shi’s early essays that he, too, had a low opinion of He Xiu. But during the decree examination, he was probably perceptive enough to know that the examiners were not looking for a mere polemic against the author of the assigned quotation. SSQJ 3.271–275.

⁷⁵ For some reason, this part of Su Shi’s essay acquired importance in early nineteenth-century British attempts at showing that the Chinese regarded foreigners with contempt: see Liu, *The Clash of Empires*, 43–44.

⁷⁶ SSQJ 2.184.

Su then proceeds to an explication of the demotion of barbarized states in the *Chunqiu*, using Qin and Chu (rather than the more common pairing of Wu and Chu) as the main examples:

There is no [text] under heaven that is more perfectly rigorous and careful in its way of using [language] than the *Chunqiu*. When the *Chunqiu* speaks of dukes, marquises, and viscounts or records names, so that rulers are acknowledged as feudal lords and subjects are acknowledged as ministers, these are always references to Qi or Jin or, if not, to states allied with Qi or Jin. When [the *Chunqiu*] speaks only of provinces, states, clan names, or “men,” so that rulers are not acknowledged as feudal lords and subjects are not acknowledged as ministers, these are always references to Qin or Chu or, if not, to states allied with Qin or Chu. Now, when the rulers of Qi or Jin governed their states, supported and defended the Son of Heaven, and loved and nurtured the people, how can they possibly have conformed fully to ancient mores? They must have employed deception and force mixed with humaneness and moral duty. Thus they were unable to be purely of the Central Lands. Qin and Chu, too, were not merely avaricious and shameless, acting recklessly without regard for [the consequences]. They must also have had rulers who upheld the Way and did their moral duty. Thus Qin and Chu did not go to the extent of being purely barbarians.

夫天下之至嚴，而用法之至詳者，莫過於《春秋》。凡《春秋》之書公、書侯，書字、書名，其君得為諸侯，其臣得為大夫者，舉皆齊、晉也；不然，則齊、晉之與國也。其書州、書國、書氏、書人，其君不得為諸侯，其臣不得為大夫者，舉秦、楚也；不然，則秦、楚之與國也。夫齊、晉之君所以治其國家擁衛天子而愛養百姓者，豈能盡如古法？蓋亦出於詐力，而參之以仁義，是亦未能純為中國也。秦、楚者，亦非獨貪冒無恥肆行而不顧也，蓋亦有秉道行義之君焉。是秦、楚亦未至於純為夷狄也。⁷⁷

On the surface, the idea of “being purely barbarians” is very similar to Liu Chang’s category of “real barbarians.” On closer inspection, however, there is an important difference. Where Liu Chang identified a trichotomy of fully Chinese states, barbarized Chinese states, and “real barbarians,” Su Shi is effectively describing a continuum from pure Chineseness to pure barbarism but assuming that in Confucius’s time, no state remained purely Chinese. Barbarism, in Su Shi’s treatment, is defined by reliance on deception and force, as well as avarice, shamelessness, and recklessness. Any Chinese state that exhibits such behavior, even to a small degree, cannot be regarded as fully Chinese (“purely of the Central Lands”). Conversely, Chineseness is defined by humaneness, moral duty, upholding the Way, and conforming to “ancient mores.” Any barbarized Chinese state whose ruler practices even one of these values, even to a small degree, cannot be regarded as fully barbaric either. Thus, whereas Sun Fu and Liu Chang saw the barbarization of Chu and Wu as a consequence of one gravely immoral act (namely, using the royal title in defiance of the Zhou king’s authority), Su Shi represents any

⁷⁷ SSQJ 2.184–185.

immoral behavior as barbarizing. This also means that unlike Sun Fu, who credited the Qi and Jin hegemony with “repelling the barbarians” of Chu and thereby saving the Central Lands from being barbarized, Su Shi saw the difference between Qi and Jin on one hand and Qin and Chu on the other only in terms of the extent to which they had been barbarized.

Su Shi next develops his concepts of pure Chineseness and pure barbarism into an analysis of “praise and blame” in the language of the *Chunqiu*:

The rulers of Qi and Jin were unable to be purely of the Central Lands, yet the *Chunqiu* frequently directs approval at them. When they do something good, it is anxious to record this, fearing only that it will not be known to later generations; when they do wrong, it finds many ways to make excuses for this, fearing only that they will not become superior men. The ruler of Qin and Chu did not go to the extent of being purely barbarians, yet the *Chunqiu* frequently shows disapproval of them. When they do something good, it promotes them only after [the good deeds] have accumulated; when they do something abhorrent, it omits this and does not record it, regarding it as unworthy of record. In matters of right and wrong, it is biased in favor of Qi and Jin and inclined toward detesting Qin and Chu, in order to show that one should not turn away from the Central Lands and toward the barbarians for even one day. If even those who are not purely [of the Central Lands or of the barbarians] are sufficient for expressing the praise and deprecation [of the *Chunqiu*], then one can know that it is even more so in the case of those who are purely [of the Central Lands or of the barbarians]. That is why I say there is no [text] under heaven that is more perfectly rigorous and careful in its way of using [language] than the *Chunqiu*.

齊、晉之君不能純為中國，而《春秋》之所予者常嚮焉，有善則汲汲而書之，惟恐其不得聞於後世；有過則多方而開赦之，惟恐其不得為君子。秦、楚之君，未至於純為夷狄，而《春秋》之所不予者常在焉，有善則累而後進，有惡則略而不錄，以為不足錄也。是非獨私於齊、晉，而偏疾於秦、楚也，以見中國之不可以一日背，而夷狄之不可以一日嚮也。其不純者，足以寄其褒貶，則其純者可知矣。故曰：天下之至嚴，而用法之至詳者，莫如《春秋》。

As for the Rong barbarians, how could they be only [as bad] as Qin or Chu, who descended into [a state of being] barbarians (Rong-Di)? Yet the *Chunqiu* records it as “Lord [Yin of Lu] had a conference with the Rong barbarians at Qian”; it does not blame Lord [Yin] and implies that the Rong barbarians were capable of attending conferences. Why is this so? It is clear that the Rong barbarians were unable to have a conference with Lord [Yin] using the proper ritual protocol for a conference. Scholars have had serious doubts [about this line] and sought an explanation for it. Hence it was said, “The true king does not govern the barbarians. This record shows that when the Rong barbarians come [to submit], he does not refuse them, and when they leave [in flight], he does not pursue them.” The Rong barbarians could not be drawn into [a ruler’s] embrace and subdued through transformative teaching; it would be fortunate enough if they did not

come ferociously, bearing arms, and engage us [in battle] on the frontier. How much more [fortunate] would it be that they knew that there was such a thing as a conference and wanted to conduct one? Would this intent not be worthy of high praise? Otherwise, if one should rebuke them strongly for [not abiding by the proper] ritual protocol, then they would be embarrassed and fly into a rage, and a great calamity would ensue. Confucius was deeply worried about this and therefore responded to their coming by recording it as “a conference,” as if to say, “That is good enough.” He thus governed them in the profoundest way through non-governance. From this we can see that when the *Chunqiu* detests barbarians (Rong-Di), it does not detest the pure barbarians but rather, detests those from the Central Lands who descend into [a state of being] barbarians.

夫戎者，豈特如秦、楚之流入於戎狄而已哉！然而《春秋》書之曰「公會戎于潛」，公無所貶而戎為可會，是獨何歟？夫戎之不能以會禮會公亦明矣，此學者之所以深疑而求其說也。故曰：「王者不治夷狄，錄戎來者不拒，去者不追也。」夫以戎之不可以化誨懷服也，彼其不悍然執兵，以與我從事於邊鄙，則已幸矣，又況乎知有所謂會者，而欲行之，是豈不足以深嘉其意乎？不然，將深責其禮，彼將有所不堪，而發其憤怒，則其禍大矣。仲尼深憂之，故因其來而書之以「會」，曰，若是足矣。是將以不治深治之也。由是觀之，《春秋》之疾戎狄者，非疾純戎狄者，疾夫以中國而流入於戎狄者也。⁷⁸

This analysis manages to contradict both Sun Fu and Liu Chang at once. Sun saw Confucius's attitude toward Lord Huan of Qi and Lord Wen of Jin to be one of general disapproval, except on rare occasions when they defended the Central Lands from the barbarians of Chu. Liu believed Confucius abhorred “real barbarians” but was anxious to promote the rulers of Chu back to a level of equality with the Central Lands, lest they be permanently cut off from Chineseness. Moreover, both Sun and Liu held that Confucius frowned upon Lord Yin's decision to have a conference with the Rong barbarians at Qian. Su Shi argues, however, that Confucius consistently favored Qi and Jin, detested Chu, and was charitable toward “pure barbarians” because he held them to lower standards than the Chinese. Therefore, Confucius did not object to the Qian conference because the Rong barbarians' willingness to talk rather than fight was commendable enough; one could hardly expect more of them.⁷⁹

The literary portfolio (*jinjuan* 進卷) of fifty essays that Su Shi submitted to the court for the first round of the decree examination shows that this softer interpretation of Chinese-

⁷⁸ SSQJ 2.185–186.

⁷⁹ A late ninth-century essay on *Chunqiu* exegesis by Pi Rixiu goes further in commending the Rong barbarians' intentions and contrasting them to the Wu ruler's bid for hegemony at the Huangchi conference: “Wu was actually Chinese by lineage, but its way was that of the barbarians (Yi). Using their strength to coerce others into a covenant—should we not call that barbaric (Yi)? The Rong were in fact barbarians (Yi) by lineage, but their way was that of the Chinese. Following the way by being fond of making covenants—should we not call that Chinese?” 吳實華族，其道夷也。以強要盟，不曰夷乎？戎實夷族，其道華也。以道好盟，不曰華乎？ There is no indication, however, that Su Shi was aware of this precedent. See PZWS 3.33.

barbarian relations did not arise spontaneously during the writing of the “Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun.” One of the portfolio essays, the “Han Yu lun” 韓愈論 (Discourse on Han Yu), sharply criticizes Han Yu for loving the “name” (*ming* 名) of the Way of the Sages but not its “reality” or “substance” (*shi* 實). We have seen that Liu Chang made a similar argument, but while Liu faulted Han Yu for being driven by political ambition, Su Shi’s criticism focused on Han’s theories about humaneness, human nature, and the emotions. Han Yu had concluded the “Yuanren” 原人, one of his less coherent and therefore more controversial pieces, by claiming that a sage would relate to human beings (that is, Chinese people), barbarians (Yi-Di), and animals alike with an attitude of “seeing them as one and with the same humaneness” 一視而同仁.⁸⁰ Su Shi’s “Han Yu lun” argues that it would hardly do to treat barbarians in the same way as human beings and animals in the same way as barbarians, as a different expression of humaneness is appropriate to each category of being:

To give them skills by teaching them, and to give them understanding by transforming them—that is how to treat human beings humanely. To reciprocate their [good] sentiments without despising the [inadequate] ritual [by which those feelings are expressed], and to commend them when they come [to submit] without rebuking them when they leave [in flight]—that is how to treat barbarians (Yi-Di) humanely. To slaughter them in the right season and use them in moderation—that is the way to treat birds and beasts humanely. That being so, how can we treat them as one?

教之使有能，化之使有知，是待人之仁也。不薄其禮而致其情，不責其去而厚其來，是待夷狄之仁也。殺之以時而用之有節，是待禽獸之仁也。若之何其一之？⁸¹

However, the same portfolio also strongly suggests that Su Shi’s attitude toward the Song state’s current foreign policy of maintaining peace treaties with the Kitans and the Xia was much more negative than the “Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun” would seem to imply. A group of three portfolio essays argues that a future war with the Kitans and Xia is inevitable; the Song should seize the strategic initiative and go on the offensive, before the tax increases necessitated by yearly payments of silk and silver lead to internal revolts and give the enemy an opportunity to strike.⁸² Su Zhe’s literary portfolio includes several essays propounding a similar strategic assessment.⁸³ Indeed, the Su brothers probably acquired this view from their father Su Xun 蘇洵 (1009–1066), as seen from an essay that the elder Su wrote in 1055.⁸⁴ The policy essay that Su

⁸⁰ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 26.

⁸¹ SSQJ 4.385–386.

⁸² SSQJ 9.891–906; cf. 7.765–766, an essay written for the *jinshi* examinations in 1057. For a recent refutation of the idea that annual payments to the Kitans were an unsustainable burden on the Song economy, see F.W. Mote, *Imperial China 900–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 116–118.

⁸³ LCYJ 5.1621–1624, 1692–1697.

⁸⁴ JYJ 1.13–18.

Shi composed for the third and last round of the decree examination includes an even more ambitious strategic recommendation: the Song should aim to conquer the Xia and then reestablish a Chinese military presence in the Western Regions via the Gansu Corridor. Su argued that this was necessary for putting pressure on the Kitan empire's western flank and thus deterring the Kitans from attacking the Song northern frontier; the obvious precedent for such a strategy was the westward expansion of the Han and Tang empires.⁸⁵ It therefore seems clear that Su Shi's position on foreign policy in 1061 tended toward hawkishness and irredentism, not at all unlike Liu Chang's position nearly two decades earlier.⁸⁶ That being so, we should see the "Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun" not as a reflection of Su's foreign policy thinking, but rather as a reflection of his ability to deliver an original and interesting perspective on a problematic reading of the *Chunqiu* without going beyond the boundaries of plausibility and exegetical convention.

⁸⁵ SSQJ 9.916.

⁸⁶ It should be noted that some of the most eloquent anti-war rhetoric from the Song period is found in a memorial that Su Shi composed in 1077 to remonstrate against Song Shenzong's expansionist policies. However, Su actually composed the memorial on behalf of his political patron Zhang Fangping, who had been an advocate of peace with the Xia since as early as 1041 (see XCB 134.3192–3194). Although both Zhang and Su Shi were critics of Wang Anshi's reforms, it is unclear whether Su himself was committed to an anti-expansionist position by this time. Su Shi's later views on foreign policy appear to have been quite pragmatic. He was sharply critical of Shenzong's policy of annexing territory in the He-Huang region, but also criticized Zhezong's court for giving an impression of weakness by being too ready to make peace with the Xia in 1087. SSQJ 37.3660–3665 (written in 1077); XCB 286.7005–7009, 405.9862–9866, 9872–9875.

Conclusion to Part 3:

Qisong's Buddhist response to the Ancient Style rhetoric of barbarization

I began Part 3 by noting that Han Yu, previously a marginal figure, became a literary and ideological hero to a generation of Song literati during the 1030s and 1040s—a development that I have been referring to as the Ancient Style revival. Yet we have just seen that by the 1060s, younger Ancient Style writers like Liu Chang and Su Shi were ready to dismiss Han Yu as a moral and philosophical lightweight who did not really understand the Way of the Sages. Indeed, Yang Guo'an and Guo Tian have recently demonstrated that correcting and transcending Han Yu, rather than just emulating and exalting him, became the new intellectual fashion for literati who came of age during the 1040s and 1050s—men like Liu Chang, Sima Guang, Wang Anshi, Su Shi, and the Cheng brothers.¹ Rather surprisingly, this trend did not lead to attempts at surpassing Han Yu in militant opposition to Buddhism and Daoism. On the contrary, both Su Shi and Wang Anshi were deeply interested in Buddhism, while Sima Guang's attitude toward Buddhism was highly ambivalent.² We have already seen that Liu Chang was familiar with the Buddhist sutras and the classics of Daoist philosophy; Cheng Hao, too, “dabbled in Daoist and Buddhist [philosophy] for a few decades” 出入於老釋者幾十年 before returning to the study of the Classics and developing the philosophy of *Daoxue* with Cheng Yi.³

Cheng Yi was much more critical of Daoist and Buddhist philosophy than most of his contemporaries, but even he dismissed Daoism's influence as marginal and asserted that Wang Anshi's interpretations of the Classics were more dangerous than Buddhism.⁴ In their efforts to revive the Way of the Sages and counteract Wang Anshi's intellectual influence by developing their own cosmological and epistemological interpretations of Classicism, the Cheng brothers actually had more in common with the self-critical, reformist tone of Ouyang Xiu's “Ben lun” and Li Gou's “Dihuan” than with the barbarophobic rhetoric of Shi Jie's “Zhongguo lun.” It is

¹ Yang, “Shilun Beisong ruxue de yanjin yu Han Yu diwei de bianhua”; Guo Tian 郭焜, “Songdai rushi hudong de yige anli—Qisong fei Han yu Han Yu diwei de zhuanzhe” 宋代儒釋互動的一個案例—契嵩非韓與韓愈地位的轉折, *Chuanshan xuekan* 船山學刊 2011(4), 119–121.

² Sima Guang found Han Yu's Buddha relic memorial too extreme and preferred the more reasonable tone of the preface for Wenchang; in 1072, Wang Anshi maintained to Shenzong (who agreed) that the teachings of the Buddhist sutras were compatible with the Classics. Sima Guang and Su Shi had strong disagreements with Wang Anshi on many things, but Buddhism was not one of them. ZZTJ 240.7759; XCB 233.5660; Zhang, *Songdai shidafu foxue yu wenxue*, 153–185. On Su Shi's practice of Buddhism, see also Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi*, Chapter 6; Beata Grant, *Mount Lu Revisited: Buddhism in the Life and Writings of Su Shih* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

³ CSWJ 11.638.

⁴ CSYS 2a.38, 2b.50.

worth noting that Cheng Yi never labeled the Buddha as a barbarian and occasionally even described him as a man of great moral worth, despite disagreeing with his teachings.⁵

Guo Tian credits the “Fei Han” 非韓 (Against Han Yu), a series of essays composed by the prominent Buddhist monk-apologist Qisong 契嵩 (1007–1072) in 1056, with initiating the shift in attitudes toward Han Yu.⁶ While this may be an overstatement, I do find it likely that Qisong—who was highly skilled in using Classicist concepts to rebut Ancient Style anti-Buddhist polemicists—was at least responsible for rendering the rhetorical tropes of barbarism and barbarization less effective, and therefore less popular, as arguments against the practice of Buddhism by Chinese people.⁷ Qisong achieved this quite ingeniously by taking the concept of barbarizing demotion in *Chunqiu* exegesis, which Han Yu had so famously used against Buddhism in the “Yuandao,” and turning it on its head to argue that barbarism and Chineseness were completely relative moral categories. Toward the end of the first “Fei Han” essay, Qisong invokes the concept of Great Centrality (*dazhong* 大中), which commentaries on the *Shangshu* chapter “Hongfan” 洪範 used as a synonym of the more abstruse term *huangji* 皇極. The *Shangshu* commentators interpreted Great Centrality as an ideal governing philosophy that eschews extreme positions and factional divisions.⁸ Qisong relates Great Centrality to the language of the *Chunqiu*, claiming that it embodies a principle of impartiality in which “goodness” (*shan* 善) and “moral duty” (*yi* 義) were Confucius’s only criteria for distinguishing between the Central Lands and the barbarians:

⁵ See CSYS 18.216, 22a.292. In the first passage, Cheng Yi concurs with the argument that all Buddhists are deluded (*huo* 惑) but refuses to argue that the Buddha is undeserving of respect, noting, “The Buddha was also a worthy and wise man of the Westerners (Hu); how can we despise him?” 佛亦是胡人之賢智者，安可慢也？ In the second passage, Cheng Yi professes an agnostic attitude regarding the Buddhist belief in rebirth, and says, “The Buddha was also a worthy man of the West, a recluse of the mountains and forests beyond the secular world” 佛亦是西方賢者，方外山林之士。 But see also CSWS 10.408–409, where Cheng Yi argues that “the Buddha was just a crafty Westerner (Hu)” 釋祖只是一箇黠胡 and that his teachings are based on deceit. Note that even in this case, Cheng calls the Buddha a Westerner rather than a barbarian.

⁶ Guo, “Songdai rushi hudong de yige anli,” 117–121. For the date of the “Fei Han,” see Chang, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang*, 67.

⁷ According to a biography of Qisong by Chen Shunyu 陈舜俞 (1026–1076), his primary opponents from the Ancient Style camp were Zhang Wangzhi, Li Gou, and Huang Xi 黄希 (d. 1057). All three men were influential in the southeastern region (Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Fujian) during the 1050s, when Qisong wrote all of his apologetical works. Qisong himself was based in Hangzhou 杭州 from around 1039 until his death in 1072. Qisong, *Qisong ji* 契嵩集 (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2012), vol. 1, 24; Chang, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang*, 46–47.

⁸ As noted in Chapter 3, Liu Zongyuan and Liu Yuxi also frequently referred to an ideal of Centrality or Great Centrality, but there is disagreement over whether this was inspired by the “Hongfan.” Note that Qisong wrote an essay on the subject of *huangji*, but it does not use the phrase Great Centrality, only the similar phrase “centrality and correctness” (*zhongzheng* 中正). SSZY 12.307–308; Qisong, *Qisong ji*, vol. 1, 149–157; see also Skonicki, “A Buddhist Response to Ancient-style Learning,” 24–26. Skonicki translates *huangji* as “the sovereign standard.”

Confucius used the sages' Way of Great Centrality to determine the correctness of all things under heaven. When he wrote the *Chunqiu* of Lu, he praised the good and abhorred the wicked regardless of whether they were of the Central Lands or of the barbarians (Yi-Di). The *Chunqiu* says, "Xú attacked Ju." Xú was originally of the Central Lands, but when its actions were not good, then [Confucius] regarded it as [a] barbarian [state]. It says, "The people of Qi and the Di people made a covenant at Xing." The Di people were originally a barbarian (Yi-Di) people, but when their actions were good, then [Confucius] regarded them as [part of the] Central Lands.⁹ When the sage [Confucius] esteemed the Central Lands as superior and regarded the barbarians as inferior, it was not based on territorial boundaries or peoples, but on whether they accorded with *li* 理, so to speak. Hence he said, "The superior man does not have fixed opinions for or against anything under heaven, but simply aligns himself with moral duty."¹⁰ As for Buddhism, its goodness in this age can be said to be a pure and great goodness. Judging according to the Way of Centrality, should it be approved of, or should it be rejected? If one does not use the sage's Way of Centrality to evaluate whether it is good or bad and come to a correct opinion on whether it should be accepted or discarded, then one is just a mediocre person acting on one's subjective biases. That is not to be followed as a model and is not even worth talking about!

孔子以列聖大中之道斷天下之正。爲魯《春秋》，其善者善之，惡者惡之，不必乎中國、夷狄也。《春秋》曰：：「徐伐莒。」徐本中國者也，既不善，則夷狄之。曰：「齊人、狄人盟于邢。」狄人本夷狄人也，既善，則中國之。聖人尊中國而卑夷狄者，非在疆土與其人耳，在其所謂適理也。故曰：「君子之於天下也，無適也，無莫也，義之與比。」若佛之法，方之世善，可謂純善、大善也。在乎中道，其可與乎？可拒乎？苟不以聖人中道而裁其善惡、正其取舍者，乃庸人愛惡之私。不法，何足道哉？¹¹

In other words, since goodness is the antithesis of barbarism, Buddhism cannot be called barbaric simply because of its foreign origins. Qisong uses the same argument, with the very same examples, in another essay from 1056, the "Guang yuanjiao" 廣原教 (Expanding Upon 'Finding the Source of the [Buddhist] Teaching'):

⁹These examples are from He Xiu's Gongyang subcommentary: He Xiu believed that referring to the Xú ruler only by the name of his state was a barbarizing demotion for "not knowing how to respect the laws of the former sages" 不知尊先王法度, while referring to the Di as "people" was promoting them for "frequently aligning themselves with the Central States" 能常與中國也. As we have seen, Lu Chun and Liu Chang attributed the barbarization of the Xú rulers to other causes: namely, the use of barbarian ritual (in Lu's case) and the illegitimate use of the royal title (in Liu's case). GYZS 11.242, 13.289.

¹⁰ *Analects* 4:10.

¹¹ Qisong, *Qisong ji*, vol. 2, 222–223.

The *Chunqiu* considered Xú to be immoral for attacking Ju, and therefore regarded it as [a] barbarian (Yi-Di) [state]. It considered the Di people to be moral for making a covenant with Qi at Xing, and regarded them as [part of the] Central Lands. The *Chunqiu* surely contains the doctrines of the Classicists' sages; how then can it be that one has to judge a person by his place of origin? If a person is more than just his race, and the Way is more than just its traces, then is it not mistaken to look for sages based on their race, and is it not absurd to judge the Way of a sage by its traces?

《春秋》以徐伐莒不義，乃夷狄之，以狄人與齊人盟于刑得義，乃中國之。《春秋》固儒者聖人之法也，豈必以所出而議其人乎？然類不足以盡人，迹不足以盡道，以類而求夫聖人，不亦繆乎？以迹而議夫聖人之道，不亦妄乎？¹²

In 1061, Qisong traveled to Kaifeng and presented his writings to Renzong in order to petition for them to be added to the Buddhist canon.¹³ The “ten-thousand-word memorial” that he submitted along with his works contains various refutations of common anti-Buddhist arguments, and attempts to demonstrate that Buddhism is compatible with the Classicist ideal of the Way of the True King (*wangdao* 王道). Qisong argues that the Way of the True King, *huangji*, and the Way of Centrality (*zhongdao* 中道) are one and the same concept, and that it is no coincidence that Buddhism is called the Central Path or the Middle Way (also translated as *zhongdao* 中道).¹⁴ As part of this argument, Qisong restates his interpretation of the *Chunqiu* as an expression of Great Centrality:

The doctrine of the *Chunqiu* is to esteem the Central Lands as superior and regard the barbarians as inferior. At that time, even when a feudal lord was of the Central Lands, if he failed to be moral, [the *Chunqiu*] would also regard him as a barbarian (Yi-Di). Even when [a feudal lord] was of the barbarians, if he acted morally, Confucius would also regard him as [part of the] Central Lands. This, too, was how Confucius used the Way of Great Centrality. Hence it is said, “The superior man does not have fixed opinions for or against anything under heaven, but simply aligns himself with moral duty.” Moral duty means *li* 理. The sage regards whatever accords with *li* as correct. Is that not so?

《春秋》之法，尊中國而卑夷狄。其時諸侯雖中國，或失其義，亦夷狄之。雖夷狄者，苟得其義，亦中國之。是亦孔子用其大中之道也。故傳曰：「君子之於天下

¹² Qisong, *Qisong ji*, vol. 1, 109. The “Guang yuanjiao” was written as a sequel to an essay titled “Yuanjiao” (“Finding the Source of the [Buddhist] Teaching”); the resemblance to the title of Han Yu’s famous “Yuandao” is entirely deliberate. For its date of composition see Chang, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang*, 47, 65.

¹³ The petition was successful. See Chang, *Beisong Qisong de rushi ronghui sixiang*, 50–52.

¹⁴ Qisong, *Qisong ji*, vol. 1, 317; see also Skonicki, “A Buddhist Response to Ancient-style Learning,” 15–16.

也，無適也，無莫也，義之與比。」義者，理也。聖人唯以適理為當，豈不然乎？
15

We may feel like we have seen much of this reasoning before, but Qisong actually does two things here that Sun Fu, Liu Chang, and Su Shi did not. The first is that he acknowledges the possibility of “real barbarians” or “pure barbarians” like the Di becoming good or moral enough to merit promotion to equality with the Central Lands. Sun Fu, Liu Chang, and Su Shi were only prepared to recognize the capacity for barbarized Chinese states to earn such promotions and essentially return to a state of moral Chineseness. Qisong, by contrast, places no arbitrary limits on the universalist implications of Han Yu’s rhetorical use of the *Chunqiu*. If to be Chinese is to be good and moral, then one is only Chinese when one is being good and moral; what is more, one who is not Chinese—and indeed, was never Chinese—can *become Chinese* by becoming good and moral. We have here all the necessary ingredients for the discourse of Chinese identity that modern historians have termed “culturalism” or “Confucian universalism.” Ironically, it was a Buddhist apologist who wrote the ‘recipe’ based on an idea from the very man whose influence had made his apologetical efforts necessary at all.

There is, in fact, an additional irony to savor: the only other writers from the period 970–1070 who even came close to suggesting that “real barbarians” could become like the Chinese were the strongly anti-Buddhist Shi Jie and Li Gou. In his letters to Sun Shi and Zhang Guilu, Shi Jie implied that this was hypothetically possible, but extremely unlikely because of the geographical distance between the barbarians and Confucius’s home region of Lu.¹⁶ In the case of Sun Shi, Shi Jie was emphasizing how fortunate he was to be living in close proximity to a new Confucius, unlike the barbarians of Confucius’s day who went to their graves “fastening their robes on the left side and babbling in a foreign tongue.” In the case of Zhang Guilu, Shi Jie was emphasizing Zhang’s rare merit in converting from the “barbaric” heterodoxy of Daoism to the pursuit of Classicist learning. In the essay “Dihuan,” Li Gou suggested that if barbarians could achieve superiority in moral power, laws, policies, and governance, then they might as well be called Chinese. But he only presented this hypothetical scenario in order to stress the need for the Song state to preserve its superiority over the Xia by pursuing institutional reform. Moreover, Shi Jie and Li Gou clearly felt no compulsion to be consistent in their definitions of Chineseness. Shi’s criteria shifted erratically between material and ritual culture on one hand and ideology on the other; likewise, Li’s “Dihuan” claimed that the real essence of Chineseness was good governance and dismissed the relevance of ethnocultural differences, even as his anti-Buddhist rhetoric continued to assert that Buddhism was inferior to Classicism and even to Daoism simply because it was not Chinese.

¹⁵ Qisong, *Qisong ji*, vol. 1, 320–321.

¹⁶ Note that in the letter to Zhang Guilu, in particular, Shi Jie is clearly drawing a distinction between the barbarians and the “barbarized” states of Qin, Chu, Wu, and Yue.

That brings us to the second new and interesting thing that Qisong does: namely, sneaking the concept of *li* 理 into his interpretation of Chineseness and barbarism. While Qisong identifies goodness and morality as the essence of Chineseness, he denies that Classicism has a monopoly on these values by equating them with an abstract universal moral standard, which he terms *li* 理. Where did the inspiration for this strategy come from, and what exactly did Qisong mean by *li*? Qisong's extant writings do not include any clear definition or exposition of the concept, apart from an essay asserting that the mind (*xin* 心) is synonymous with *li*—an idea that seems to bear the marks of Huayan 華嚴 Buddhist philosophy rather than Qisong's own background in the Chan 禪 tradition.¹⁷ As is well known, *li* (variously translated as “principle,” “coherence,” “pattern,” and most recently “congruity”) was also one of the foundational cosmological concepts in *Daoxue*, which was only just emerging at the time of Qisong's death.¹⁸ As Peter Bol explains, the Cheng brothers and their intellectual inheritors used *li* as both a descriptive and a normative term for talking about how the world works under normal conditions; indeed, they considered it to be a synonym of *dao* 道 (“the Way”) and *xing* 性 (the innate or inherent “nature” of things).¹⁹ Since the question of Buddhist influence on the development of *Daoxue* philosophy has been treated extensively elsewhere, let us proceed to Part 4, which analyzes the influence of *Daoxue* on discourses about Chinese-barbarian dichotomy during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries.

¹⁷ Qisong, *Qisong ji*, vol. 1, 270; Brook Ziporyn, *Beyond Oneness and Difference: Li and Coherence in Chinese Buddhist Thought and Its Antecedents* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013), 261–268.

¹⁸ On these various translations see Willard Peterson, “Another look at *Li*,” *The Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies* 18 (1986), 13–31; Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 77, 91, 304–305 and *Neo-Confucianism in History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), 162–168; Vytis Silius, “Congruity (*li*) as Ethical Notion in Zhu Xi's Theory of *Renxing*,” *Acta Orientalia Vilnensia* 11.2 (2010), 95–97. On the earlier history of *li* as a concept, including its uses in Chinese Buddhist philosophy, see now Brook Ziporyn's *Beyond Oneness and Difference*. Unfortunately, Ziporyn's study does not include a discussion of Qisong.

¹⁹ Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, 163–165.

Part 4

The universalist's dilemma: *Daoxue* philosophy and the problem of Chinese identity, ca. 1072–ca.1223

Preamble

Yet I believe [Xin You] did not go far enough when he said, “Will this not be [a land of] the Rong barbarians in less than a hundred years?” Good and evil are not fixed positions, and “Chinese” and “barbarian” (Yi) are not fixed names. As soon as one abandons ritual and moral duty, one becomes a barbarian (Rong-Di) as quickly as turning on one’s heels. At the moment when [the people of the Yi and Luo rivers] were making sacrifices in the wilderness with their hair untied, they most certainly were already Rong barbarians. What need was there to wait for a hundred years before they could become Rong barbarians? Before the [Rong barbarians of] Luhun were resettled [along the Yi and Luo Rivers], [the people of that area] were barbarians (Rong-Di) in their minds¹; after the [Rong barbarians of] Luhun were resettled, [the people of the Yi and Luo Rivers] also became barbarians in physical form. People wrongly take the resettlement of the [Rong barbarians of] Luhun by [the states of] Qin and Jin to be the beginning of [barbarians] bringing disorder to Chinese lands, not knowing that the [people of the] Yi and Luo rivers had been Rong barbarians for a long time by then—what need was there for them to dress in felt and fur, live in yurts, and babble in a foreign tongue before they could be called Rong barbarians? Nineteen years spent digging up marmots [for food] and herding sheep on the shores of Lake Baikal did not change Su Wu’s Han [identity] in the slightest; Li Chengqian never left the Tang imperial palace, but he was already a pure Türk.² There is nothing under heaven more frightening than the barbarians (Yi-Di) in our minds; barbarians from remote lands only come second to that.

然其言曰「不及百年，此其戎乎」，吾以爲猶未盡也。善惡無定位，華夷無定名，一渝禮義，旋踵戎狄。彼被髮野祭之際，固已爲戎矣，豈待百年而始爲戎乎！陸渾未遷之前，戎狄其心者也；陸渾既遷之後，戎狄其形者也。人徒以秦、晉之遣陸渾爲亂華之始，不知伊、洛之爲戎久矣，豈待氈毳其服，穹廬其居，侏離其語，然後

¹ In Chapters 7 and 8, I will (with occasional exceptions) translate *xin* 心 as “mind” rather than “heart,” in keeping with the conventions of English-language scholarship on *Daoxue* philosophy.

² On Su Wu 蘇武 (140–60 BC), the Western Han envoy to the Xiongnu who was held captive at Lake Baikal, see HS 54.2459–2469. On Li Chengqian 李承乾 (ca. 619–645), Tang Taizong’s first heir apparent who is said to have enthusiastically emulated the Türk way of life, see XTS 80.3564–3565; HZZTJ 196.6189–6190. Several modern historians have interpreted Li Chengqian’s Turkophilia as evidence of the Tang imperial clan’s ethnocultural affinity with the Türks—most recently Chen, *The Poetics of Sovereignty*, pp. 44–45; Chen, *Multicultural China in the Early Middle Ages*, 14–17. I think more circumspection is in order, since Chengqian’s interest in Türk customs could more plausibly be explained in terms of the presence of a large Eastern Türk community in Chang’an in the 630s.

謂之戎哉！十九年掘鼠牧羊於北海之濱，而未嘗少改蘇武之漢也；承乾身未離唐宮，而已純乎突厥矣。天下之可畏者，莫大於吾心之夷狄，而要荒之夷狄次之。³

When Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137–1181) wrote the passage quoted above ca. 1168, he was presenting a new interpretation of the Xin You anecdote in the *Zuozhuan*. But he was also drawing on more than three centuries of Chinese discourse on the idea of barbarization, beginning with Han Yu's "Yuandao," while engaging with nearly a century of *Daoxue* philosophical discourse on the meanings of Chineseness and barbarism—a discourse for which the first *Daoxue* thinkers had coined the name, "the difference between Chinese and barbarians" (*Hua Yi zhi bian* 華夷之辨).

In Part 4 of this dissertation, I will show that the *Daoxue* discourse of "the difference between Chinese and barbarians" built on ideas that had originated with Han Yu and that had acquired wider moral implications through the Ancient Style polemical writings and new *Chunqiu* commentaries of the early Song. Leading *Daoxue* philosophers of the Song period sought to give these ideas greater coherence by clarifying the relationship between barbarization and bestialization, as well as the relationship between barbarization and barbarian invasions. However, these philosophers were either unable or unwilling to resolve a fundamental contradiction in their interpretations of barbarism: they claimed that Chinese people could become barbarians by failing to abide by the norms of ritual and moral duty, but also claimed the moral inferiority of barbarians to be a result of imbalanced *qi*. This conflict between moral universalism and environmental determinism is already evident in the teachings of Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi. To some degree, it reflects a basic contradiction between two different understandings of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. One of these was the *qi*-based interpretation originating from the Han Classicists at the White Tiger Hall conference, and the other was the discourse of moral or ideological barbarization that originated with Han Yu's polemical reading of the *Chunqiu*.

I would suggest, however, that the absence of any effort at resolving this contradiction in *Daoxue* writings also reflects a dilemma arising from the *Daoxue* philosophers' ethnic and political identities. *Daoxue* was centered on a philosophy of human nature in which ethnicity was, on the surface, all but irrelevant: all human beings were innately good and therefore had the potential to become sages if they overcame the limitations of their *qi* through moral self-cultivation. Conversely, any human being could descend to the level of barbarism as soon as he forsook ritual and moral duty. Yet nearly all of the *Daoxue* philosophers recoiled from contemplating the concomitant prospect of barbarians advancing to the level of fully-developed humanity, and even to that of sagehood, through the study of the Classics and the practice of self-cultivation. They could not accept the idea of barbarians becoming equals to the Chinese or even *becoming Chinese*, and therefore sought to preclude it by asserting the inherent

³ ZSBY 12.303–304.

unimproveability of barbarian *qi*. While they were comfortable with downplaying the ethnic dimension in the idea of barbarism, they were not prepared to do the same with the idea of Chineseness.

Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi had extremely high praise for Zhang Zai's 張載 (1020–1077) Western Inscription 西銘, with its famous declaration, “All the people are my brothers and sisters, and all creatures are my friends” 民吾同胞，物吾與也。⁴ Nonetheless, as I shall show in Chapter 7, both of the Cheng brothers also regarded barbarians as less than fully human. Contrary to a recent article by Xiong Mingqin, they and their philosophical successors never embraced moral or cultural universalism to the point of “transcending the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy.”⁵ They would almost certainly have answered “no” to the query, “Can you regard Chinese and barbarians (Yi) with equal affection?” 等親華夷否？, which a Chan Buddhist monastic code of 1103 included among its 120 devotional questions for Chan monks.⁶ Similarly, we see no indication that any *Daoxue* philosopher ever felt much inclined to disagree with Shao Yong's 邵雍 (1011–1077) assumption that “barbarians (Yi-Di) doing what the Central Lands do” 夷狄行中國事 was as much a sign that a “deviant way” 邪道 was prevailing in the world as were “rulers doing what ministers do, ministers doing what rulers do, fathers doing what sons do, sons doing what fathers do, husbands doing what wives do, wives doing what husbands do, superior men doing what inferior men do, inferior men doing what superior men do, [and] the Central Lands doing what barbarians do” 君行臣事，臣行君事，父行子事，子行父事，夫行妻事，妻行夫事，君子行小人事，小人行君子事，中國行夷狄事。⁷ We shall see that one *Daoxue* thinker, Hu Yin 胡寅 (1098–1156), did claim, “If they were barbarians (Yi-Di) but could do as the Central Lands do, then they too would be [people of] the Central Lands” 使夷狄而為中國之事，是亦中國矣。 But he immediately went on to negate this gesture toward moral universalism by asserting that the barbarians' imbalanced *qi* made them incapable of more than sporadic successes at being moral.⁸

⁴ Cheng Hao claimed that the Western Inscription was the best distillation of Classicist morality since Mencius. Cheng Yi, too, rated the Western Inscription as highly as the *Mencius* and more highly than Han Yu's “Yuandao,” disagreeing with his student Yang Shi 楊時 (1053–1135) who found its universalism too similar to Mozi's teaching of impartial love. On another occasion, Cheng Yi criticized other aspects of Zhang Zai's philosophy but affirmed the Western Inscription as a work of incomparable genius, likening Zhang's achievement in composing it to a man who happened to see the Big Dipper by looking at the night sky through a tube. See Zhang Zai 張載, *Zhang Zai ji* 張載集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1978), 62; CSYS 2a.37, 39, 18.196, 23.308; CSWJ 9.609; CSCY 1.1202–1203.

⁵ Xiong, “Chaoyue ‘Yi Xia,’” esp. 128.

⁶ Zongze 宗贖, *Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規 (T63:1245, CBETA edition), 41; a different translation can be found in de Bary and Bloom eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. 1, 525–529.

⁷ Shao Yong 邵雍, *Shao Yong ji* 邵雍集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2010), 34.

⁸ DSGJ 7.245–246.

I believe the main reason for this reluctance to abandon the idea of barbarian inferiority and otherness has to do with the Song state's foreign relations. The *Daoxue* philosophers realized that a view of barbarians as morally reformable would imply that the Song claim to political superiority over neighboring states—which theoretically was rooted in moral superiority—was relative, conditional, and temporary, rather than absolute, non-negotiable, and permanent. This problem already existed in the eleventh century, as Northern Song emperors could not depend on military superiority to assert superiority over the Liao and Xia. But it became particularly acute after the Jurchen conquest of north China, since the Southern Song court chose to accept a position of vassalage to the Jurchens' Jin dynasty in exchange for peace. This compromise drew intense criticism from revanchist Song officials who condemned it as a product of abject cowardice on the Song imperial court's part. The revanchists argued that submitting to Jin suzerainty violated both the principle of Chinese superiority and the Song dynasty's moral obligation to avenge the Jurchens' capture of the emperors Huizong and Qinzong 欽宗 (r. 1126–1127).

Although the leading *Daoxue* philosophers of the Southern Song all identified with the revanchist cause, modern historians have long believed that their emphasis on moral self-cultivation diluted their sense of ethnic identity and weakened their commitment to revanchism.⁹ In the 1970s, some historians also interpreted Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143–1194) and Ye Shi 葉適 (1150–1223), two Southern Song revanchists who were critical of *Daoxue*, as representing a kind of ethnic “proto-nationalism” that developed as a challenge or an alternative to *Daoxue* philosophy's preference for “universalism” or “cosmpolitanism.”¹⁰ Building on Hoyt Tillman's insightful observation that Zhu Xi's “patriotic sentiments had a confining effect on the universality of his values,” making him “markedly reluctant to embrace and make explicit his implicit theoretical universalism,” Chapters 7 and 8 will propose a more complex and more carefully contextualized interpretation of Southern Song revanchist discourse.¹¹ I will show that major *Daoxue* thinkers of the Southern Song did wrestle with the tension between their revanchist sentiments and the universalistic implications of their moral philosophy, often to the point of self-contradiction. To borrow Lü Zuqian's terms from the passage quoted earlier, most of these *Daoxue* thinkers ultimately could not bring themselves to argue that driving “barbarians from remote lands” out of the north China heartland was more important than combating moral barbarism in Chinese hearts and minds. In fact, they argued that the Central Lands were only vulnerable to barbarian invasions when the Chinese were already morally barbarized, like the people of the Yi and Luo Rivers in Xin You's day. At the same time, however, their ethnic

⁹ E.g., Hsiao, *Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiang shi*, vol. 2, 210; Trauzettel, “Sung Patriotism as a First Step toward Chinese Nationalism,” 209–212.

¹⁰ Winston Wan Lo, *The Life and Thought of Yeh Shih* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1974), 140–141; Trauzettel, “Sung Patriotism as a First Step toward Chinese Nationalism,” 211–212; Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 403–428. In Tillman's slightly later *Utilitarian Confucianism: Ch'en Liang's Challenge to Chu Hsi* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1982), he appears to reject (p. 7) the use of “proto-nationalism” or “nationalism” to describe Chen Liang's ideas.

¹¹ Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 425–426 and *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 171.

prejudices made it almost impossible for them to acknowledge that the Jurchens had the potential to advance out of moral barbarism by embracing the Way of the Sages.

I will also show that Chen Liang and Ye Shi were themselves building on the two conflicting aspects of *Daoxue* discourse on barbarism. Chen Liang sought to add urgency to his arguments for revanchist warfare by warning that although the Jurchens were inferior barbarians, they, too, could eventually acquire the “correctly-balanced *qi*” 正氣 of the Central Lands—and with it, political legitimacy—if the Song allowed them to rule north China long enough. Meanwhile, Ye Shi attempted to delegitimize the idea of negotiated peace with the Jurchens by arguing that it was such morally bankrupt practices in foreign relations, rather than ideological heterodoxy, that had already made the Chinese no better than barbarians for more than a thousand years. Both Chen and Ye later retreated from these positions, probably after realizing that they had come dangerously close to making the principle of barbarian inferiority irrelevant. In different ways, then, Chen Liang and Ye Shi were more, not less, universalistic than their *Daoxue* opponents, but were still conflicted about the implications of such universalism for Chinese identity. They could not conceive of a world in which the Chinese were not *meant* to be morally superior to all other peoples, although Ye Shi seems to have eventually resigned himself to the belief that such superiority was a thing of the distant past and was impossible to restore in a world where military power, not moral power, now reigned supreme.

Chapter 7

Early *Daoxue* discourse on barbarians, ca. 1072–ca. 1161

The Cheng brothers on barbarian *qi* and moral barbarization

The *li* of equilibrium (*zhong*) is perfect. Nothing that is purely *yin* can come into existence; nor can anything that is purely *yang* come into existence. When [*yin* and *yang*] are out of balance, then one is [born] an animal or a barbarian (Yi-Di); when they are in equilibrium, then one is [born] a human being. That which is in equilibrium does not go out of balance; that which is constant does not change. However, “equilibrium” (*zhong*) by itself is not adequate for expressing this idea, so it is called “equilibrium and normality” (*zhongyong*).

中之理至矣。獨陰不生，獨陽不生，偏則爲禽獸，爲夷狄，中則爲人。中則不偏，常則不易。惟中不足以盡之，故曰中庸。¹

This is one of the relatively few statements in the *Chengshi yishu* 程氏遺書 (Surviving Writings of the Cheng Brothers) that are specifically attributed to Cheng Hao. In at least one version of the text, one finds a similar statement elsewhere, attributed more generally to the Cheng brothers:

Human beings and animals differ only in the balance of their *qi*. Nothing that is purely *yin* can come into being; nor can anything that is purely *yang* come into existence. Those which receive an imbalance of *yin* and *yang* are birds and beasts, grasses and trees, and barbarians (Yi-Di); those which receive the correct balance of *qi* are human beings.

人與物，但氣有偏正耳。獨陰不成，獨陽不生，得陰陽之偏者爲鳥獸、草木、夷狄，受正氣者人也。²

This *qi*-based theory of a human-barbarian-animal-plant taxonomy both builds on and departs from previous discourses on barbarians. It resembles the *Bohu tongyi* theory of *qi* imbalance as the reason for barbarian inferiority, which we have also seen used seven centuries later in Du You's *Tongdian*. Unlike that theory, however, it takes ethnic identity out of the picture by using the category “human being” in place of the category “Chinese.” This is not an ethnocentric discourse on barbarian inferiority as much as an anthropocentric discourse that includes an ethnocentric redefinition of humanity. The resulting dehumanization of other peoples is so innocent of rhetorical or polemical intent that one suspects Cheng Hao was merely classing

¹ CSYS 11.122.

² CSYS 1.4.

barbarians with animals and plants in order to formulate a new cosmology that would provide theoretical support for a moral vision of all humanity as innately good. As I mentioned at the end of Chapter 3, we can already see the beginnings of this cosmology in Han Yu's "Yuanren," which contained a human-barbarian-animal trichotomy.³

Cheng Hao's claim that "[t]hat which is in equilibrium does not go out of balance; that which is constant does not change" reflects the *Bohu tongyi* notion of a static, immutable *qi*-based difference between Chinese and barbarians. However, Cheng Yi seems to have been inclined toward the newer idea that Chinese people could descend into barbarism by failing to practice ritual and moral duty. Where Han Yu and his Ancient Style imitators had alternated between the rhetoric of barbarization and the rhetoric of bestialization in a random fashion, Cheng Yi held that barbarization comes before bestialization on an increasing scale of moral degeneration.⁴ We see this from a statement attributed to Cheng Yi in the *Chengshi yishu*:

In later generations, the ritual of humanity was completely destroyed. When it was lost to a small degree, then [human beings] entered a state of barbarism (Yi-Di); when it was lost to a great degree, then they entered a state of animality.

後世人禮全廢。小失則入於夷狄，大失則入於禽獸。⁵

Some editions of the text have *li* 理 instead of the homophonous "ritual" (*li* 禮), so that what is destroyed is "the *li* of humanity." Given the importance of the first *li* as a concept in Cheng Yi's philosophy, one might be tempted to accept that reading. Indeed, Cheng Yi was once quoted making the argument that human beings only differed from animals in having "a heavenly *li*" 一箇天理 and being able to preserve it.⁶ However, the "ritual" reading of the above-quoted text is supported by a similar but longer quotation, dated to 1079 and most likely from Cheng Yi⁷:

³ See Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 25–26.

⁴ It is possible that Fu Xuan had already argued in the third century that if the Chinese, after becoming "like the barbarians" 同乎夷狄 by losing ritual and moral duty, went on to lose even the qualities that made barbarians superior to animals, they would then become "like animals" 同乎禽獸. This is Jordan Paper's interpretation of the relevant passage of the *Fuzi* 傅子, but it requires the insertion of a 失 at the beginning of the line 其所以同，則同乎禽獸矣. Without that insertion, the line means, "That which makes them like [the barbarians] then also makes them like animals," implying a conflation of barbarism with animality rather than a progression from the former to the latter. Liu ed., *Fuzi pingzhu*, 56; Jordan D. Paper, *The Fu-tzu: A Post-Han Confucian Text* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 60.

⁵ CSYS 17.177.

⁶ CSYS 18.214–215.

⁷ Lü Zuqian's *Chunqiu jijie* 春秋集解 attributes this quotation to Cheng Yi, as does Hu Anguo's *Chunqiu* commentary (which abridges it). However, Li Mingfu's 李明復 (fl. 1208–1224) *Chunqiu jiyi gangling* 春秋集義綱

If one loses ritual just once, one becomes a barbarian (Yi-Di); if one loses it again, then one becomes an animal. The sage [Confucius] was afraid that human beings would turn into animals, so his method of writing the *Chunqiu* was extremely careful and strict. If the Central Lands used the rituals of the barbarians, then [Confucius] regarded them as barbarians. When Han Yu said that the *Chunqiu* was careful and strict, he deeply understood [Confucius's] intent. One cannot do without knowing of Han Yu's way. His words, "the [language of the] *Changes* is unconventional yet exemplary; that of the *Odes* is correct yet flowery; that of the *Chunqiu* is careful and strict; that of the *Zuozhuan* is given to hyperbole," are both linguistically and philosophically sound.

禮一失則爲夷狄，再失則爲禽獸。聖人初恐人入於禽獸也，故於《春秋》之法極謹嚴。中國而用夷狄禮，則便夷狄之。韓愈言「《春秋》謹嚴」，深得其旨。韓愈道侘不知又不得。其言曰：「《易》奇而法，《詩》正而葩，《春秋》謹嚴，《左氏》浮夸」，其名理皆善。⁸

This is probably the most unreservedly positive comment about Han Yu that one will find in any of the Cheng brothers' recorded statements. Cheng Yi's theory of barbarization is clearly inspired by the "Yuandao," but the quotation from 1079 rather strangely avoids mentioning the "Yuandao" and instead links the theory to another of Han's essays, the "Jinxue jie" 進學解 (Explication of Advancement in Learning).⁹ In reality, Han Yu says nothing about barbarizing demotions in the "Jinxue jie" and merely uses the phrase "careful and strict" to describe the general literary characteristics of *Chunqiu* prose in comparison to the language of other classical texts. Cheng Yi reinterprets the phrase as a statement about barbarization; this somewhat circuitous way of crediting Han Yu may be due to Cheng's ambivalent attitude toward the "Yuandao," which he believed to be marred by "many flaws" 多病 but also capable of the occasional flash of insight, such as the claim that the Way of the Sages was lost after Mencius.¹⁰ Cheng Yi's overall assessment of the "Jinxue jie" may have been higher, hence his preference for citing that essay as evidence of Han Yu's views on barbarizing demotion in the *Chunqiu*.

領 (*Siku quanshu* edition, *juan* 1) attributes it to Cheng Hao and merges it with another passage that can also be found in CSWS 9.401. Since Li Mingfu appears to have a tendency to mis-attribute Cheng Yi's words to Cheng Hao, I believe Lü Zuqian and Hu Anguo to be more reliable. Note that the *Siku quanshu* editors have censored the *Chunqiu jiyi gangling* to remove the quotation's references to barbarians. See CQJJ 16.442; CQHSZ 10; Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 231.

⁸ CSYS 2a.43; cf. the abbreviated version attributed to either Cheng Hao or Cheng Yi in CSCY 1.1201: "The method of the *Chunqiu* is that if the Central Lands used the way of the barbarians, then [Confucius] regarded them as barbarians. When Master Han said that the *Chunqiu* was careful and strict, he deeply understood [Confucius's] intent" 《春秋》之法，中國而用夷道即夷之。韓子謂「《春秋》謹嚴」，深得其旨矣。

⁹ For the relevant passage of this essay see Ma, *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 46.

¹⁰ CSYS 1.5 (attributed to Cheng Hao or Cheng Yi), 2a.37 (Cheng Hao or Cheng Yi), 18.232 (Cheng Yi); CSCY 1.1195, 1201–1202 (Cheng Hao or Cheng Yi).

The Cheng brothers thus removed ethnicity from the discourse of barbarism by classifying barbarians as non-human beings and (in Cheng Yi's case) redefining barbarization as a loss of humanity, not a loss of Chineseness. But Cheng Yi also took an unprecedented step in the opposite direction, incorporating the discourse of barbarization into a historical narrative of the Chinese imperial dynasties. When a disciple asked Cheng Yi to explain Confucius's claim (in *Analecets* 2:23) that one could predict the history of the next hundred generations based on how the Shang dynasty had altered the ritual institutions of the Xia and how the Zhou had altered those of the Shang, Cheng replied with a theory that each imperial dynasty's ethos was simply a reaction to that of its predecessor, making it possible to extrapolate the patterns of history. The Qin was oppressive and suppressed classical scholarship; the Western Han therefore ruled with a light touch and esteemed Classicists. The abundance of Classicists resulted in a large number of Han loyalists during Wang Mang's interregnum; the early Eastern Han naturally commended the moral integrity of these loyalists, resulting in a political culture in which moral integrity was taken to the extreme of pursuing martyrdom. As a reaction to this grim, puritanical culture, the Wei-Jin literati turned toward free-spirited, unrestrained behavior and philosophical escapism, thus losing all regard for "ritual and law" 禮法; having lost "ritual and law," the literati became "no different from barbarians (Yi-Di)" 與夷狄無異, thus bringing on the insurrection and invasion of the "five kinds of *Hu*" 五胡 during the fourth century. "When the disorder caused by barbarians (Yi-Di) has reached its height, there will surely be a hero who emerges to pacify it" 夷狄之亂已甚, 必有英雄出而平之, so Cheng Yi claims. Hence the Sui-Tang reunification of the Chinese world—although the Sui, according to Cheng, was not a true reunification but merely a "clearing away" 驅除 of the barbarism of the Northern Dynasties.¹¹

Cheng Yi went on to claim, however, that even the Tang dynasty at its height under Taizong and Xuanzong "also had barbarian (Yi-Di) ways" 亦有夷狄之風 in its disregard for the ethics of father-son, ruler-subject, and husband-wife relationships, beginning with Taizong's fratricidal, unfilial, and incestuous behavior during and after the Xuanwu Gate coup of 626.¹² As a result, Tang political history was plagued by princes rebelling against their fathers, provinces rebelling against the court, and ministers usurping authority from emperors. This moral decline finally led to the chaos of the Five Dynasties.¹³ Interestingly, Cheng Yi sees in the faults of the Tang not an over-correction to the excesses of the preceding period (as had been the case with the Han and Wei-Jin) but rather the residual effects of the moral barbarization that began with the Wei-Jin literati. He is rather circumspect as to whether the Song has succeeded in

¹¹ CSYS 18.236, cf. another version in CSCY 1.1212. Note that the version in CSYS 18.236 has previously been mis-attributed to Su Shi: see SSWJ 65.7322; Su Pinxiao 粟品孝, "'Lidai shibian' fei Su Shi suozuo kao" 《歷代世變》非蘇軾所作考, *Sichuan daxue xuebao* 四川大學學報 2003(4), 124.

¹² Besides killing two of his brothers and forcing Gaozu to abdicate, Taizong also took the wife of one of the slain brothers as a concubine and had a son by her: XTS 80.3579.

¹³ CSYS 18.236. The version in CSCY 1.1212–1213 omits mention of the Tang dynasty's "barbarian ways" but supplies examples of incestuous behavior by Taizong, Gaozong, and Xuanzong, as well as blaming the dynasty's immorality for the fact that it constantly faced threats from "barbarians" on the frontier.

overcoming these effects and prudently declines to predict what the next dynasty will look like, merely commenting: “Our dynasty’s basic laws are very correct, but its minor laws have not been fully established” 本朝大綱正，然萬目亦未盡舉。¹⁴

Cheng Yi’s interpretation of Tang history reflects a growing tendency for the Northern Song literati to criticize the Tang empire in general, and Tang Taizong in particular, on moral grounds.¹⁵ But he seems to have been the first person to accuse the Tang of barbarism, and his interpretation of the fall of the Western Jin also breaks new ground. Mencius and Liu Kai had likened the fight against ideological heterodoxy to defending the Central Lands from barbarian invaders, while Ouyang Xiu had dismissed the validity of such an analogy. Cheng Yi, however, raised the stakes for the discourse of barbarization by identifying barbarian invasion as a *consequence* of moral barbarization among the Chinese, rather than just an analogy for it.

The interpretation of barbarization as one step removed from bestialization and the interpretation of barbarization as a cause of barbarian invasion are two of Cheng Yi’s three major innovations in the discourse of moral barbarism. The third innovation is this: Cheng Yi reinterpreted *Analects* 3:5 (夷狄之有君，不如諸夏之亡也) to mean that Confucius believed the Chinese of his day had sunk even lower than barbarians in terms of morality. We have seen in Chapter 4 that Du Mu, perhaps playing on the language of *Analects* 3:5, once claimed that the Chinese “would not even be equal to the barbarians” if Confucius had not been born. But Du was talking about a counterfactual scenario in which the “hundred schools” of the Warring States continued to contend for a thousand years, resulting in a permanent state of ideological inconsistency and heterogeneity. In contrast, Cheng Yi’s reinterpretation claims to be Confucius’s assessment of the historical reality of his own times, and it is centered on political ethics rather than the problem of competing philosophical traditions:

[This means that] even the barbarians (Yi-Di) had rulers, unlike the usurpation and disorder in the Chinese states, which no longer observed the proper distinctions between those above and those below.

夷狄且有君，不如諸夏之僭亂，無上下之分也。¹⁶

¹⁴ CSYS 18.236. Cheng Yi had commented before this that the Han dynasty’s basic laws were correct, while the Tang established its minor laws but presumably neglected its basic laws. Here, “minor laws” may be a reference to the influential Tang legal code.

¹⁵ On this shift in attitudes toward the Tang empire and Tang Taizong, see most recently Leung Sze-lok 梁思樂, “Fan Zuyu dui Tang Taizong xingxiang de chongsu” 范祖禹對唐太宗形象的重塑, *Jungguksa yeongu* 中國史研究/中國史研究 70 (2011), 25–45.

¹⁶ CSJS 6.1136; Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 6, 85, vol. 7, 104.

This is Confucius saying that his was a time of great disorder, when insubordination to one's ruler (literally "not having a ruler") was at an extreme. It is like saying, "The barbarians still have rulers, unlike the Chinese states that do not."

此孔子言當世大亂，無君之甚。若曰：「夷狄猶有君，不如諸夏之亡也。」¹⁷

This interpretation requires Cheng Yi to read *buru* 不如, literally "unlike," to mean "not as bad as" rather than "not as good as," and to read the Chinese states' not having rulers in the figurative sense of *behaving* as if they have no rulers. Let me now explain the significance of Cheng's interpretation in the context of the earlier understandings of *Analects* 3:5 that it challenged and eventually replaced.

The Daoxue reinterpretation of *Analects* 3:5

We have already encountered a few rhetorical uses of *Analects* 3:5 in previous chapters: in the "Yuandao," in the "Mouzi lihuo lun," and in Liu Chang's *Chunqiu* exegesis. In each case, the point of the quotation was to assert, on the basis of Confucius's sagely authority, that barbarian inferiority to the Chinese was an incontrovertible and immutable fact. Barbarians were "not equal to" or "not as good as" (*buru* 不如) the Chinese, even when they had rulers and the Chinese did not. The two extant Han-period texts that quote *Analects* 3:5 both interpret it in this manner: Wang Chong 王充 (AD 27–ca. 100) used it to argue that Confucius would have found the nine kinds of Yi barbarians even harder to teach than the Chinese, had he indeed chosen to go and live with them; He Xiu's Gongyang commentary used it to explain why the *Chunqiu* regards Chu as inferior to the Chinese states even when the latter have failed to act with integrity.¹⁸ However, Zheng Xuan's 鄭玄 (127–200) *Analects* commentary, written in 184–200, presents the following interpretation: "Because these were times of decline and disorder, [Confucius said this] in order to rectify people's hearts" 為時衰亂，以矯人心。¹⁹ This is, in essence, the same reading that Cheng Yi made about nine centuries later, but it is unlikely that Cheng ever read Zheng Xuan's commentary, since that text seems to have been lost by the eleventh century.²⁰

¹⁷ Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 104.

¹⁸ Wang, *Lunheng*, *juan* 9, chapter 28 ("Wen Kong" 問孔); GYZS 19.425.

¹⁹ Chen Jinmu 陳金木, *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshi zhu yanjiu—yi kaoju, fuyuan, quanshi wei zhongxin de kaocha* 唐寫本論語鄭氏注研究—以考據、復原、詮釋為中心的考察 (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1996), 356; cf. Wang Su 王素, *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshi zhu jiqi yanjiu* 唐寫本論語鄭氏注及其研究 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1991), 19.

²⁰ Zheng Xuan's commentary fell into relative obscurity after the An Lushan rebellion and ceased to be circulated or preserved after the Five Dynasties period, although Chen Jinmu claims (citing Zheng Jingruo 鄭靜若) that a copy appeared briefly during the reign of Song Taizong and was lost thereafter. Some fragments (none relating to *Analects* 3:5) survived in other texts, and numerous incomplete Tang-period manuscript copies of the commentary were recovered at Dunhuang and Turfan in the twentieth century. Zheng Xuan's commentary to *Analects* 3:5 is known only from a copy excavated from a grave at Astana, near Turfan. That copy reads 仁心 ("humane hearts"),

In the “Mouzi lihuo lun,” Mouzi appears to use Zheng Xuan’s interpretation to rebut his imaginary anti-Buddhist opponent’s citing of *Analects* 3:5, arguing that his opponent has misunderstood Confucius: “What Confucius said was a way to rectify the age” 孔子所言，矯世法矣。²¹ This is the only evidence we have of disputation over the two conflicting interpretations of *Analects* 3:5—one ethnocentric, the other self-critical.²² The ethnocentric reading clearly gained dominance after the Han period, however, as seen from interpretations by Sun Chuo 孫綽 (314–371), Huilin 惠琳 (fl. fifth century), and Huang Kan 皇侃 (488–545). None of these commentators had an anti-Buddhist agenda: in fact, Sun Chuo himself composed an essay of Buddhist apologetics, the “Yudao lun” 喻道論 (Discourse for Explaining the [Buddhist] Way), Huilin was a Buddhist monk, and Huang Kan composed his *Analects* commentary under the strongly pro-Buddhist Liang dynasty.²³ Yet all three of them understood *Analects* 3:5 as a statement that the barbarians would never be as good as the Chinese. For this reason, the Qing-period editors of the *Siku quanshu* edited Huang Kan’s subcommentary by removing the offending quotations from the commentaries by Sun Chuo and Huilin and replacing Huang’s interpretation with one that accorded with Cheng Yi’s.²⁴

which experts generally take to be a transcription error for the homophonous 人心 (“people’s hearts”). Chen, *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshi zhu yanjiu*, 3; Wang, *Tang xieben Lunyu Zhengshi zhu jiqi yanjiu*, 1–2; John Makeham, “The Earliest Extant Commentary on *Lunyu*: *Lunyu Zhengshi zhu*,” *T’oung Pao* 83.4 (1997), 262–267, 273–274.

²¹ Sengyou ed., *Hongming ji* (T52:2102, CBETA edition), 5.

²² Alan Wood overlooks the existence of two conflicting interpretations and attributes the self-critical interpretation to Confucius himself, as evidence that “tolerance [toward barbarians] was not new in the Chinese tradition.” Note that although Wood lists D.C. Lau’s translation of the *Analects* in his bibliography, his reading of *Analects* 3:5 actually follows Arthur Waley’s translation. As Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi has noted, Waley followed the self-critical interpretation while Lau followed the ethnocentric interpretation; neither translator acknowledged the existence of an alternative reading. Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 101, 209 n. 75, 237; Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan*, 286 n. 15.

²³ For the “Yudao lun” see *ibid.*, 23–25. For the possibility of Buddhist influences on Huang Kan see John Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators: Chinese Commentators and Commentaries on the Analects* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 148–156.

²⁴ Huang Kan’s subcommentary fell out of circulation during the Southern Song and was reintroduced to China from Japan in the 1760s. The *Analects* commentaries by Sun Chuo and Huilin were also lost, probably before the Song, and only a small number of fragments remain. Ma Guohan’s 馬國翰 (1794–1857) monumental collection of fragments from lost pre-Song texts, the *Yuhan shanfang ji yishu* 玉函山房輯佚書, includes all extant fragments from the *Analects* commentaries by Sun Chuo and Huilin, except for those on *Analects* 3:5. It is unclear whether Ma was unaware of the existence of the 3:5 fragments, or was aware of them but chose to practice self-censorship. In any case, the modern *Analects* commentator Cheng Shude 程樹德 (1877–1944) encountered the censored Hulin fragment in an earlier commentary by Liang Zhangju 梁章鉅 (1775–1849) but, to his bewilderment, could not locate it in either the received text of the Huang Kan subcommentary or Ma Guohan’s *Yuhan shanfang ji yishu*. Fortunately, recent scholarship has had better access to uncensored copies of Huang Kan’s subcommentary. See Cheng Shude 程樹德, *Lunyu jishi* 論語集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), 148; Li Ling 李零, *Sangjia gou—wo du ‘Lunyu’* 喪家狗—我讀《論語》 (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 2007), 91; Xu Wangjia 徐望駕, “Huang Kan ‘Lunyu jijie yishu’ banben yanjiu shuping” 皇侃《論語集解義疏》版本研究述評, *Guji zhengli yanjiu xuekan* 古籍整理研究學刊 2002(2), 88–89.

Let us compare the interpretations made by Sun Chuo, Huilin, and Huang Kan. According to Sun Chuo, Confucius was saying that barbarians chose their leaders according to a principle of ‘might makes right,’ and that this could never be equal to the Chinese way of governance, which presumably was based on moral values:

The Chinese states at times do not have rulers, but the Way is not completely lost, whereas among barbarians (Yi) the strongest man is king, their principles being the same as those of birds and beasts.

諸夏有時無君，道不都喪，夷者強者爲師，理同禽獸。

In Huilin’s reading, the targets of Confucius’s criticism are Chinese. Unlike Zheng Xuan, however, Huilin thought that Confucius was likening them to barbarians (who have no understanding of ritual even when they have rulers), rather than claiming that they were worse than barbarians. Since *Analects* 3.1, 3:2, and 3:6 all concern Confucius’s moral condemnation of the Ji 季 (Jisun 季孫) ministerial family that dominated politics in the state of Lu and was usurping the ruler’s authority and ritual prerogatives, Huilin interpreted *Analects* 3:5 as a subtle criticism of the Ji family as well:

Having a ruler but not practicing [the correct] ritual is worse than (literally “not as good as”) practicing [the correct] ritual but not having a ruler. [Confucius] was saying that the Ji family had a ruler but did not practice [the correct] ritual.

有君無禮不如有禮無君，言季氏有君無禮。

Huang Kan quoted both interpretations in his subcommentary, declining to choose one over the other, and added the following comment:

This makes it clear that Confucius favored the Central Lands and saw the barbarians (Man-Yi) as inferior. He is saying that barbarians (Yi-Di) have rulers but are still not as good as the Central Lands without a ruler. Hence he says, “they are still not equal to Chinese states that do not.”

此明孔子重中國賤蠻夷，言夷狄之有君，而不如中國之無君，故云不如諸夏之亡。

²⁵

²⁵ In quoting Sun Chuo, Huilin, and Huang Kan, I have followed the earliest extant version of Huang Kan’s subcommentary, an incomplete manuscript from Dunhuang. A 1921 printed edition from Shanghai, based on the

Qian Mu argued that commentators from the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties preferred the ethnocentric reading of *Analects* 3:5 because they felt threatened by the “barbarians” in the north; being ‘rulerless’ was less of a problem to them because they were members of the great clans and accustomed to disregarding the emperor’s authority.²⁶ This argument ignores the fact that the ethnocentric reading was just as popular in the Northern Dynasties. The Northern Wei emperor Xiaowendi used it to denigrate the Qiang ruler of Dangchang 宕昌, who had “behaved in a highly unseemly fashion” 殊無風禮 during a visit to the Wei court.²⁷ Wei Shou 魏收 (ca. 506–572), the author of the *Weishu* 魏書, also used the ethnocentric reading to criticize the tendency for Eastern Jin emperors to be dominated by powerful ministers; according to Wei, the “barbarians” of the south had rulers but were still worse off than Chinese (that is, northern) states that had none.²⁸ The application of this argument to the Eastern Jin may strike the reader as bizarre, since it is that regime’s northern rivals that are usually regarded as “barbarian” states in Chinese historiography. But it is important to note that precisely because the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties regularly used the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy for propaganda purposes, Wei Shou made a point of asserting the Northern Dynasties’ competing claim to political legitimacy by denigrating the southern rulers as “island barbarians” (*daoyi* 島夷) and likening them to the ancient states of Chu, Wu, and Yue.²⁹

Geopolitical conflict or ethnic animosity alone thus cannot account for the ethnocentric interpretation’s ascendancy in classical exegesis. Students of the *Analects* must have found it more persuasive and plausible than Zheng Xuan’s interpretation, quite possibly because the usual meaning of *buru* 不如 was indeed “not as good as” and not “not as bad as.”³⁰ That said,

reintroduced Japanese text, differs slightly from the Dunhuang manuscript. Xu Wangjia assumes that the 1921 edition follows the original text and that the Dunhuang manuscript may have deviated from the original. But the opposite may be true, given the longer history of the 1921 text’s transmission in Japan. Xu, “Huang Kan ‘Lunyu jijie yishu’ banben yanjiu shuping,” 89.

²⁶ Qian Mu 錢穆, *Lunyu xinjie* 論語新解 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1985 [1963]), 52.

²⁷ WS 101.2242; cf. BS 96.3202.

²⁸ WS 96.2110.

²⁹ Li Ling claims that Wei Shou uses *Analects* 3:5 to “criticize the Central Lands for having weak rulers and powerful ministers” 批評中國的君弱臣強, and that this is self-criticism that compares the Chinese states unfavorably with the barbarians, the very opposite of Xiaowendi’s denigration of the Dangchang king. However, Li’s analysis rests on the flawed assumption that Wei Shou identified the Eastern Jin with “the Central Lands.” Wei Shou’s message is actually closer to those of Sun Chuo, Huang Kan, and Xiaowendi than those of Zheng Xuan and Cheng Yi, since it is based on the denigration of a polity that its author does not regard as Chinese. WS 96.2092–2093, 97.2117, 2129, 2153, 98.2161, 2172, 2188; Li, *Sangjia gou*, 90.

³⁰ Yang Liu’an has demonstrated this through comparison with other instances of *buru* 不如 in Classical Chinese texts, including the *Analects* itself. Note that Yang mis-attributes Cheng Yi’s interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 to Cheng Hao. See Yang Liu’an 楊柳岸, “‘Yan Yi-Xia dafang’ yihuo ‘zhong junchen dayi?’—‘Lunyu’ ‘Yi-Di zhi youjun, buru zhuxia zhi wang’ jie” “嚴夷夏大防”抑或“重君臣大義?”—《論語》“夷狄之有君, 不如諸夏之亡”解, *Zhongguo zhexue shi* 中國哲學史 2009(4), 58–63.

geopolitical conflict may well have lain at the heart of some *rhetorical* uses made of the ethnocentric interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 under the Tang and the Five Dynasties. At the beginning of a *Zhoushu* Discourse that would have been written in the early 630s, an editor (probably Cui Wenben) uses *Analects* 3:5 to denounce a marriage alliance between the Northern Zhou and the Türks as a gutless and futile attempt at appeasement.³¹ This rhetoric seems to be aimed at retroactively justifying the Tang court's decision to turn against the Eastern Türks in the 620s. Similarly, the *Jiu Tangshu* Discourse on the Tibetan empire quotes *Analects* 3:5 at the end of a passage condemning the Tibetans for being perfidious breakers of treaties who could never be trusted.³² The *Jiu Tangshu* was compiled in the early 940s, a time of rapidly growing tension and eventually warfare between the Later Jin court and the Kitan empire, caused by Later Jin attempts at breaking loose from Kitan suzerainty. We therefore have reason to infer that the rhetoric of barbarian perfidy in the Discourse was motivated by its author's desire to claim the moral high ground in the Later Jin conflict with the Kitans.

Qian Mu has attempted to contextualize Cheng Yi's reinterpretation of *Analects* 3:5 in terms of the supposed Northern Song obsession with centralizing political power:

The Song dynasty inherited the accumulated weaknesses of provincial autonomy from the late Tang and Five Dynasties; if they did not promote the message of “respecting the king” (*zunwang* 尊王), they would find it difficult to preserve political unity, and barbarian incursions would then become a source of worry. Therefore, most [Song commentators] advocated the first interpretation (i.e., of *buru* 不如 as “not as bad as”).³³

Several other modern commentaries or studies on the *Analects* have cited Qian's theory as an authoritative explanation for the existence of two contrasting interpretations of *Analects* 3:5.³⁴ However, this theory makes two flawed assumptions. First, it assumes that most Northern Song interpretations of *Analects* 3:5 were like Cheng Yi's. Second, it assumes that Northern Song writers would only adopt the ethnocentric interpretation if they were more worried about barbarian invasions than about political disunity. Neither assumption is well-supported by the

³¹ ZS 9.149. The author of this Discourse seems to have found it particularly distasteful that a Northern Zhou emperor received a Türk noblewoman as his empress—a reversal of the conventional pattern of marriage diplomacy with steppe powers, in which Chinese emperors would bestow noblewomen on steppe rulers.

³² JTS 196b.5267.

³³ Qian, *Lunyu xinjie*, 52.

³⁴ E.g., Li, *Sangjia gou*, 89; Yang, “‘Yan Yi-Xia dafang’ yihuo ‘zhong junchen dayi?’”, 59; Li Zehou 李澤厚, *Lunyu jindu* 論語今讀 (Hefei: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 1998), 79–80. Note that Li Ling's paraphrase of Qian's theory mistakenly switches “first interpretation” with “second interpretation,” making it look like Song commentators preferred the ethnocentric interpretation while Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties commentators preferred the self-critical interpretation.

first major *Analects* commentary from the Song period: Xing Bing's 邢昺 (932–1010) *Lunyu zhushu* 論語註疏, which was completed around 999. On *Analects* 3:5, Xing Bing writes:

This passage tells us that the barbarians (Yi-Di) have none of the abundance of ritual and moral duty that we have in the Central Lands. [Confucius] raises the Yi barbarians and Di barbarians as examples, from which we can also infer the same about the Rong barbarians and Man barbarians. ... He says that even though the barbarians have rulers and leaders, they do not have ritual and moral duty; on the other hand, even though the Central Lands occasionally goes without a ruler, such as during the joint regency of the Dukes of Zhou and Shao, ritual and moral duty are not destroyed [as a result].³⁵ That is why [Confucius] said, “The barbarians have rulers but are still not equal to Chinese states that do not.”

此章言中國禮義之盛而夷狄無也。舉夷狄則戎蠻可知。... 言夷狄雖有君長而無禮義，中國雖偶無君，若周、召共和之年，而禮義不廢。故曰：「夷狄之有君，不如諸夏之亡也。」³⁶

Xing Bing thus essentially endorses Sun Chuo's argument that even on the rare occasions when the Chinese are without a ruler, they remain morally superior to the barbarians.

It may surprise us that Xing Bing could express such optimism about the indestructibility of Chinese ritual and morality. After all, he had witnessed the final decades of the Five Dynasties period, which later Song writers like Ouyang Xiu would decry as a nadir of political anarchy and moral depravity. Would Xing not have had good reason to adopt an interpretation in which Confucius was lamenting the political instability of his times? Indeed, John Makeham has suggested that Zheng Xuan's interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 and numerous other *Analects* passages reflect his pessimism about the political situation toward the end of the Eastern Han, when power at court was held by eunuchs, consort clans, and finally warlords.³⁷ One might argue that Xing Bing was more optimistic than Zheng Xuan because he was writing when the Song reunification had already taken place, whereas Zheng wrote when the collapse of the Han was just beginning. But why would Cheng Yi be more worried than Xing Bing about centralizing political power, since the Song state's authority was far better established by the late eleventh

³⁵ Xing Bing's example of a period when the Chinese had no ruler is the so-called Gonghe 共和 regency (841–828 BC), which began after the highly unpopular King Li 厲王 (d. 828 BC) of the Western Zhou was driven into exile by his disgruntled subjects, and ended upon the king's death in exile. Xing follows the *Shiji* interpretation of the Gonghe regency as a joint regency by the Dukes of Zhou and Shao; most historians now accept the alternative *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年 (Bamboo Annals) interpretation of this period as a sole regency by He 和, the Earl of Gong 共伯. See SJ 4.144.

³⁶ LYZS 3.33.

³⁷ Makeham, “The Earliest Extant Commentary on *Lunyu*,” 298.

century? Given that Cheng Yi was a critic of Wang Anshi's reform program, should he not have been more worried about the over-centralization of power in the hands of an oppressive, profit-seeking state?

One possible explanation is that Xing Bing's generation was an exception to Qian Mu's theory because of the ongoing military conflict between the Song and the Kitan empire, which supposedly made barbarian invasions a bigger threat than internal rebellions or civil wars until the Song-Kitan peace treaty was concluded in 1005. Yet, as was the case with the Northern and Southern Dynasties, we have little or no reason to see Xing Bing's adherence to the ethnocentric interpretation as driven by geopolitical or ethnic conflict. Xing's commentary does not contain any other denigration of barbarians; instead, his interpretation of *Analects* 9:13 assumes Confucius was correct in believing that the presence of a morally superior man (*junzi* 君子) among barbarians would “transform” 化 them and “cause them to practice ritual and moral duty” 使有禮義.³⁸ This implies that barbarians are not incapable of learning ritual and moral duty after all; it is just that they need a *junzi*, not just a *jun* 君 (ruler), to teach them.

The more likely explanation for Xing Bing's interpretation is that he was following the conventional reading of *Analects* 3:5 in his day, and that Qian Mu simply overstated the typicality of Cheng Yi's interpretation. The reality is that in the late eleventh century, Cheng's interpretation was still the exception, not the rule. It was not even universally accepted by Cheng Yi's friends and students, and only gained general acceptance within the *Daoxue* community decades after his death.³⁹ Lü Dalin 呂大臨 (ca. 1040–ca.1092), one of Cheng's senior disciples⁴⁰, hewed close to Xing Bing's interpretation in his own *Analects* commentary, writing:

³⁸ LYZS 9.132.

³⁹ Ironically, three twelfth-century anecdotes suggest that the Kitans and Jurchens only knew of the ethnocentric interpretation of *Analects* 3:5, even though they found it highly offensive and would certainly have promoted the self-critical interpretation had they known about it. One of these anecdotes relates to the Liao emperor Daozong 道宗 (r. 1055–1100), a second relates to the Jurchen invasion of north China, and a third relates to the Jin emperor Wanyan Liang 完顏亮 (r. 1150–1161, posthumously demoted to Prince of Hailing 海陵王). Daozong is able to deflect the quotation's ethnocentrism by claiming that the label “barbarian (Yi)” only applies to ancient peoples who did not practice “ritual and law” 禮法, whereas the Kitans are “no different from the Chinese of the Central Lands” 不異中華 in cultural sophistication. The Jurchens, on the other hand, cannot help being outraged by Confucius's supposed claim of absolute Chinese superiority. Note that while Zhuang Chuo's 莊綽 (fl. 1085–1143) anecdote has the Jurchens razing Confucius's former residence to the ground out of anger at his ethnic prejudice, a contemporaneous anecdote in Hong Hao's 洪皓 (1088–1155) *Songmo jiwén* 松漠紀聞 claims that Confucius's former home emerged from the Jurchen invasion nearly unscathed. According to Hong Hao, “Han'er” 漢兒 troops (i.e., former Chinese subjects of the Liao) in the Jin army attempted to loot Confucius's tomb and were put to death by the Jurchen general Nianhan 粘罕 (1080–1136) after he was told that Confucius was a great sage: see Hong, *Songmo jiwén*, 39. These conflicting accounts may reflect competing propaganda produced by the Southern Song court and the Jurchens respectively: Zhuang Chuo gathered his anecdotes while serving as a local official in south China, while Hong Hao's anecdotes are based on personal observation and hearsay gathered during his period of detention by the Jurchens in 1129–1143. See Hong Hao 洪皓, *Songmo jiwén* 松漠紀聞, in Li Shutian 李樹田 ed.,

The superiority of the Chinese states lies in their continuing to have ritual and moral duty. “When they establish an infant as ruler and hold court audiences with only the deceased ruler’s clothes placed on the throne, the empire (literally “all under heaven”) does not fall into disorder”⁴¹; this is because it has ritual and moral duty to sustain it. This is why the barbarians (Yi-Di) cannot [be allowed to] usurp/enter⁴² [the Chinese states].

所貴於諸夏者，禮義存焉耳。「植遺腹，朝委裘，而天下不亂」者，蓋有禮義以維之。此夷狄所以不可僭/入也。⁴³

Similarly, the historian Fan Zuyu 范祖禹 (1041–1098), who was close to the Cheng brothers and adopted many of Cheng Yi’s views on Tang history⁴⁴, proposed a reading that essentially followed Xing Bing’s interpretation but abandoned the longstanding practice of reading *wang* 亡 (literally “to be destroyed”) as a classical variant of *wu* 無 (“to be without”):

Changbai congshu chujī 長白叢書初集 (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 1986), 22; Zhuang Chuo 莊綽, *Jilei bian* 雞肋編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 76; SCBM 242.9b.

⁴⁰ Lü Dalin was originally a disciple of Zhang Zai; he entered into discipleship under the Cheng brothers shortly after Zhang Zai’s death in 1078. Lü’s ideas and place in the history of *Daoxue* philosophy were long neglected but have recently been a subject of study: see Wen Bifang 文碧方, *Guanluo zhijian—yi Lü Dalin sixiang wei zhongxin* 關洛之間—以呂大臨思想為中心 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011); Chen Haihong 陳海紅, *Lü Dalin xueshu sixiang yanjiu—jianlun Zhedong xuepai de xueshu jincheng* 呂大臨學術思想研究—兼論浙東學派的學術進程 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang gongshang daxue chubanshe, 2013); Jeffrey Moser, “The Ethics of Immutable Things: Interpreting Lü Dalin’s *Illustrated Investigations of Antiquity*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 72.2 (2012), 259–293.

⁴¹ This is a quotation from Jia Yi’s 賈誼 (200–168 BC) *Xinshu* 新書: see XS 2.68; cf. HS 48.2138.

⁴² A Ming manuscript edition of Zhu Xi’s *Lunyu jingyi* 論語精義 has 僭, probably a mis-transcription of 僭 (“usurp”). A Japanese printed edition of the same text, dated to 1727, has 入 (“enter”). The *Siku quanshu* edition has 棄 (“abandon”), probably as a result of Qing censorship. Lü Dalin’s commentary is lost but can be partially reconstructed from quotations in the *Lunyu jingyi*. Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 132; Chen Junmin 陳俊民 ed., *Lantian Lüshi yizhu jijiao* 藍田呂氏遺著輯校 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993), 20, 431.

⁴³ Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 105; Chen ed., *Lantian Lüshi yizhu jijiao*, 430–431.

⁴⁴ Fan Zuyu was the assistant editor responsible for the Tang portion of the *Zizhi tongjian*; he later used that portion as the framework for writing an overtly didactic and anti-expansionist work of historical commentary entitled *Tangjian* 唐鑑 (The Mirror of the Tang). For Cheng Yi’s influence on Fan’s interpretations of Tang history, see CSWS 11.416, 439. On the ideological agenda of the *Tangjian* see Chu Chen-hung 朱振宏, “Fan Zuyu ‘Tangjian’ de bianzuan jiqi neirong tedian—Yi ‘Tangjian • Taizong’ wei tantao hexin” 范祖禹《唐鑑》的編纂及其內容特點—以《唐鑑•太宗》為探討核心, *Shixueshi yanjiu* 史學史研究 2008(4), 35–46; Leung, “Fan Zuyu dui Tang Taizong xingxiang de chongsu.”

Heaven and earth have determined people's positions [in society], such that there are rulers and subjects. [A society's] superiority lies in there being a hierarchy of ruler and subject, so that ritual and moral duty can be put into practice. Even though the barbarians (Yi-Di) have rulers, they have neither ritual nor moral duty⁴⁵; therefore, they are not even equal to (*buru*) Chinese states that have been destroyed (*wang* 亡). A state cannot remain a state without ritual, so if there is a state that does not have ritual, it is better for it to be destroyed (*wang* 亡). If the Chinese states do not have ritual, then they are not even equal to (*buru*) barbarians.

天地定位而有君臣，所貴乎，君臣者有上下，而禮義有所措也。夷狄雖有君而無禮無義，故不如諸夏之亡。夫非禮無以爲國，有國而無禮，則亡爲愈。若諸夏而無禮，則又夷狄之不如也。⁴⁶

We see that Fan attempted to accommodate Cheng Yi's interpretation at the end of this passage, but that attempt had the result of weakening his argument's overall coherence, especially since he persisted in reading *buru* as "not as good as." Moreover, Fan's scenario of the Chinese being worse than barbarians is highly consonant with Cheng Yi's argument that the loss of ritual leads to barbarization followed by bestialization, but he merely presented it as a hypothetical scenario, rather than the historical situation that Cheng Yi believed Confucius was commenting on.

In the late twelfth century Zhu Xi, who found the ethnocentric interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 "meaningless" 無意義 and accepted Cheng Yi's interpretation as correct⁴⁷, was asked what he thought of the interpretations by Fan Zuyu and Lü Dalin:

[A student] asked, "Mister Fan and Mister Lü both thought [Confucius meant that] the barbarians (Yi-Di) have rulers but not ritual and moral duty, and are thus not as good as (*buru*) Chinese states that do not have rulers but have ritual and moral duty. I fear this is not correct." [Zhu Xi] replied, "I don't know how they could say that. Even if the sage [Confucius] did say that, how could it have done any good? Wouldn't that mean that it is just as well for the Central Lands to not have a ruler?" [The student] asked, "The word

⁴⁵ At one point in the *Tangjian*, Fan Zuyu makes a similar claim that *Analects* 3:5 is a statement about the barbarians' "not practicing the [correct] ritual of ruler-minister relationships" 無君臣之禮: see Fan Zuyu 范祖禹, *Tangjian* 唐鑑 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), 33.

⁴⁶ Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 104–105.

⁴⁷ ZZYL 25.611. Tillman's analysis of the relation between Cheng Yi's interpretation and Zhu Xi's is quite confused, simultaneously identifying Cheng Yi with the ethnocentric interpretation, identifying Zhu Xi with the self-critical interpretation, and claiming that Zhu used his interpretation to "vent hostility toward the barbarians." Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi's otherwise perceptive analysis of the difference between the two interpretations makes the error of attributing the origin of the self-critical interpretation to Zhu Xi. Tillman, "Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China," 414; Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan*, 22–23.

wang 亡 ('to not have'), doesn't it just mean to have an insubordinate mind (literally 'a mind that does not have a ruler')?" [Zhu Xi] replied, "It does."

問：「范氏、呂氏皆以爲夷狄有君而無禮義，不如諸夏之無君而有禮義。恐未當。」曰：「不知他如何恁地說。且如聖人恁地說時，便有甚好處？不成中國無君恰好？」問：「亡，莫只是有無君之心否？」曰：「然。」⁴⁸

This conversation ignores Fan Zuyu's reinterpretation of the word *wang* and his half-hearted concession to Cheng Yi's interpretation. Nonetheless, it does illuminate a key difference between the ethnocentric and self-critical understandings of *Analects* 3:5. Whereas the ethnocentric reading interprets "not having a ruler" literally and infers it to be a rare and temporary political situation, such as a regency, a self-critical reading like Cheng Yi's interprets "not having a ruler" figuratively as describing a society afflicted with a rebellious state of mind. It is impossible for such a society to still have ritual and moral duty, and therefore impossible for it to be any better than the barbarians. In contrast to the ethnocentric reading's confidence that Chinese civilization's moral superiority would survive the brief lack of a ruler, Cheng Yi's version of the self-critical reading is haunted by the idea of civilizational decline: a belief that it is all too possible for the Chinese to lose ritual and moral duty and become even *worse* than barbarians.

Although Lü Dalin did not share Cheng Yi's reading of *Analects* 3:5, at least three of Cheng's other leading disciples adopted and built on it when writing their own commentaries to the *Analects*. None of these commentaries is extant today, but many quotations from them are preserved in the *Lunyu jingyi* 論語精義 (Essential Meanings of the *Analects*), Zhu Xi's anthology of ten late Northern Song *Analects* commentaries. Xie Liangzuo's 謝良佐 (b. 1050⁴⁹) commentary, written between 1086 and 1093⁵⁰, contains the following interpretation:

How can there be a state without a ruler in this world (literally "all under heaven")? For the barbarians (Yi-Di), it is the same as for the Central Lands. As to the matter of rites, ritual music, and laws "where the five means of government are applied and the seven crops cultivated,"⁵¹ these are only customs [of the Central Lands], nothing more. In the

⁴⁸ ZZYL 25.611–612.

⁴⁹ Two very different dates for Xie Liangzuo's death have been proposed: 1103 and 1120.

⁵⁰ The date of composition for Xie's commentary is indicated in Hu Yin's 胡寅 (1098–1156) postface (dated 1122): see FRJ 19.394. Xie was a student of Cheng Hao until Cheng Hao's death in 1085, after which he began studying under Cheng Yi.

⁵¹ This is a quotation from Yang Xiong's *Fayan*, where Yang defines the Central Lands as "the land located at the center of heaven and earth where the five means of government are applied and the seven crops cultivated" 五政之所加，七賦之所養，中於天地者。The "five means of government" are probably the Five Constants 五常 of humaneness, moral duty, ritual, wisdom, and trustworthiness. The seven crops probably include rice, proso millet, foxtail millet, wheat, soybeans, mulberry, and hemp. The *Siku quanshu* edition of the *Lunyu jingyi* changes three

Central Lands during the time of Lord Ding (r. 509–495 BC) and Lord Ai (494–468 BC) [of Lu], the ministers’ subordinate officers held authority over their states, and government was in the hands of ministers. “Who was in charge”⁵² of the rites, ritual music, and the laws, then? Where then, was the moral duty between rulers and their ministers? Consider the barbarians who have rulers: they obey [their ruler’s] every command and go wherever [their ruler] directs them. Were [the Central Lands] anything like this? By that measure, [the Central Lands] were not equal to the barbarians who have rulers.

天下豈有無君之國哉！夷狄與中國一也。至於論禮樂法度，「五政之所加，七賦之所養」，此特其俗耳。中國定、哀之時，陪臣執國命，政在大夫。禮樂法度，誰其尸之？安在其為君臣之義也？若夷狄之有君，令之必聽，馭之必從，其有如是乎？以是度之，不如夷狄之有君也。⁵³

The most unexpected feature of this passage is its strategy of emphasizing the importance of respect for legitimate political authority by dismissing the rites and ritual music as mere “custom,” making them inadequate bases for Chinese superiority to the barbarians. Also noteworthy is Xie Liangzuo’s attempt at embracing the essence of Cheng Yi’s interpretation while subtly reverting to a more conventional reading of *buru* as “not as good as.” We see the same subtle compromise in Yang Shi’s 楊時 (1053–1135) commentary, which argues:

When a lord’s ministers can use the rites and ritual music of the Son of Heaven, their insubordination to their ruler (literally “not having a ruler”) is at an extreme.⁵⁴ That is why [Confucius] said that [they are] not even equal to (*buru*) the barbarians (Yi-Di). He [said so] as a lament over it.

陪臣用天子禮樂，無君之甚矣。故言夷狄不如，傷之也。⁵⁵

characters in the quotation, altering the meaning to “where penal laws and government decrees are applied and taxes are paid” 刑政之所加，財賦之所出. This is probably intended to censor the assertion that moral values like the Five Constants and an agrarian economy involving the seven crops are the sole preserve of the Chinese. See FYYS 6.119; Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 132.

⁵² The wording of the question “who was in charge” 誰其尸之 is borrowed from the Ode “Caiping” 采萍.

⁵³ Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 105.

⁵⁴ This appears to be alluding to the head of the Ji family, who infringed on the Zhou king’s ritual prerogatives by using eight columns of court dancers and conducting a sacrifice on Mount Tai 泰山: see *Analects* 3:1, 3:6.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Yin Tun's 尹焞 (1071–1142) commentary, on the other hand, follows Cheng Yi's reading of *buru* but seems to redirect Confucius's criticism from the ministers to the ruler:

Confucius lamented over the disorder of his times, saying, “The barbarians still have rulers, unlike (*buru*) the Chinese states that do not.” The word *wang* 亡 does not really mean not having [rulers], but rather having rulers who are unable to live up to the way [of rulership].

孔子傷時之亂，曰：「夷狄猶有君，不如諸夏之亡也。」「亡」非實亡，有而不能盡其道爾。⁵⁶

In the 1190s, when one of Zhu Xi's students asked him why Yin Tun's interpretation has Confucius blaming the rulers for the disorder in the Chinese states whereas Cheng Yi's interpretation has Confucius blaming the ministers, Zhu deftly reconciled the two by arguing that they were two sides of the same coin: “They mean the same thing: they both are saying that there was usurpation and disorder between those above and those below, and that they could not live up to the way of [proper] ruler-minister relationships, as if there was no ruler at all” 只是一意：皆是說上下僭亂，不能盡君臣之道，如無君也。⁵⁷

In 1173, a year after Zhu Xi completed the *Lunyu jingyi*, Zhang Shi 張栻 (1133–1180)—another influential *Daoxue* philosopher from Zhu's generation—expanded on Xie Liangzuo's interpretation while discarding Xie's more conservative use of the phrase *buru*. Zhang's interpretation is probably the clearest, most systematic Song-period explication of the self-critical reading of *Analects* 3:5:

Although the barbarians (Yi-Di) are not granted [the Son of Heaven's] governance and teaching, they, too, always have rulers and leaders to govern them—only then can they establish themselves [as states]. During the age of the *Chunqiu*, [authority over] the rites and ritual music and punitive military expeditions proceeded from the feudal lords. After further [political] decline, they proceeded from the [feudal lords'] ministers; after yet more decline, even the ministers' subordinate officers were able to usurp authority over the state.⁵⁸ For that reason, the sage [Confucius] lamented and sighed, commenting that

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ ZZYL 25.611. Note that the text mis-transcribes “Mister Yin” 尹氏 as “Mister Jun” 君氏. This conversation was recorded by Huang Yigang 黃義剛 (n.d.). The *Zhuzi yulei* dates Huang's records to 1193 or later, but Tanaka Kenji has determined that he studied under Zhu Xi during two separate periods in 1193 and 1197–1199: see Tanaka Kenji 田中謙二, “Shumon deshi shiji nenkō” 朱門弟子師事年攷, *Toho gakuho* 東方學報 44 (1973), 178–181.

⁵⁸ This alludes to *Analects* 16:2, in which Confucius argues that the downward shift of political authority in a polity is a symptom of moral decline and a recipe for recurrent political instability.

even the barbarians still had rulers, unlike (*buru*) the Chinese states that had no [legitimate] rulers. The Chinese states were the place where ritual and moral duty originated. Yet they had now come to such a state—what a tragic transformation that was! This is the reason why the *Chunqiu* was written.

夷狄雖政教所不加，然亦必有君長以統蒞之，然後可立也。《春秋》之世，禮樂征伐自諸侯出，降而自大夫出，又降而陪臣竊國命。是以聖人傷嘆，以為夷狄且有君，不如諸夏之無君也。夫諸夏者，禮義之所出也。今焉若此，其變亦慚矣！此《春秋》之所為作也。⁵⁹

The last line of this passage may surprise readers accustomed to the argument that Southern Song *Daoxue* thinkers, motivated by patriotism and revanchist hostility toward the Jurchens, saw “repelling the barbarians” (*rangyi*), not moral and political decline, as the central theme of the *Chunqiu*.⁶⁰ I shall now propose a reassessment of that argument by comparing Cheng Yi’s *Chunqiu* exegesis with the first and most influential *Chunqiu* commentary produced under the Southern Song: that of Hu Anguo.

Cheng Yi and Hu Anguo on Chinese and barbarians in the *Chunqiu*

Cheng Yi grouped the *Chunqiu* together with the *Analects* and the *Mencius* as the three essential texts for understanding the Way of Confucius. He believed that a student of the Classics should start with the *Analects* and *Mencius* before proceeding to the *Chunqiu*, but also claimed that one could arrive at a complete understanding of the Way by studying the *Chunqiu* alone.⁶¹ Cheng is said to have decided to write a commentary to the *Chunqiu* after being disappointed by a commentary that his disciple Liu Xun 劉絢 (1045–1087) had produced. But he did not begin this project until around 1101, by which time Liu Xun had been dead for fourteen years and Cheng himself was nearly seventy years old.⁶² His preface to the commentary is dated 1103, and he had only finished commenting on the first twenty years of the *Chunqiu* when he died in 1107. The rest of his commentary comprises oral teachings recorded by his students and presumably added to the text after his death.⁶³

⁵⁹ NXLYJ 2.20.

⁶⁰ E.g., Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 412.

⁶¹ Zhao, *Chunqiu xue shi*, 470–472.

⁶² CSWS 12.432–433, 436; Zhao, *Chunqiu xue shi*, 480. On Liu Xun’s commentary see Huang Juehong 黃覺弘, “Liu Xun ‘Chunqiu zhuan’ yiwen kaoshuo” 劉絢《春秋傳》佚文考說, *Nanjing shehui kexue* 南京社會科學 2008(12), 112–120.

⁶³ For the date of Cheng Yi’s preface see CSJS 4.1125. The received text of the commentary states (CSJS 4.1107) that Cheng only got as far as Lord Huan Year 9 (703 BC) and that the commentary’s content after that year consists of appended oral teachings. Ge Huanli has recently argued, on the basis of a quotation attributed to Yin Tun (CSWS 12.432–433), that Cheng Yi’s commentary originally ended with the reign of Lord Min of Lu (i.e., 661–660 BC), and that the part of the commentary covering the years from Lord Huan Year 9 and Lord Min’s reign was lost

Unlike Cheng Yi, Hu Anguo did complete his *Chunqiu* commentary; he presented a revised version of it to the first Southern Song emperor, Gaozong 高宗 (r. 1127–1162), in late 1136 or early 1137. This was almost thirty years after Cheng’s death, and also only about seventeen months before Hu’s own demise.⁶⁴ Hu Anguo had been studying Cheng Yi’s *Chunqiu* commentary since 1116, and was a devoted follower of Cheng’s philosophy by the time he made his final revision of the commentary in 1135–1137. Indeed, Hu collaborated with Yang Shi on a compilation of the Cheng brothers’ recorded sayings in 1132–1135.⁶⁵ Many modern studies of Song *Chunqiu* exegesis represent Hu Anguo as the foremost proponent of a militantly revanchist, obsessively anti-barbarian approach to the *Chunqiu*, in contrast to a Northern Song approach that was supposedly more focused on the idea of “respecting the king” (*zunwang*).⁶⁶ A closer reading of Hu Anguo’s *Chunqiu* commentary reveals, however, that Hu’s views on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy had much more in common with Northern Song *Chunqiu* exegesis than has generally been assumed. In particular, Hu was heavily influenced by Cheng Yi’s interpretations of the *Chunqiu* and of *Analects* 3:5. Indeed, some of the revanchist rhetoric in Hu’s commentary actually had precedents in Cheng Yi’s commentary, suggesting that Hu’s understanding of the *Chunqiu* influenced his position on Song-Jurchen relations rather than vice versa.

The first passage relating to barbarians in Cheng Yi’s commentary is, naturally enough, about the Qian conference of 721 BC. Whereas previous commentators (with the notable

toward the end of the Northern Song. Huang Juehong, on the other hand, dismisses the Yin Tun quotation as unreliable and suggests that it confuses Cheng Yi’s commentary with the first *juan* of another work by Liu Xun, the *Chengshi zashuo* 程氏雜說 (Miscellaneous Sayings of the Cheng Brothers). In fact, both Ge and Huang seem to have misunderstood Yin Tun’s statement: it actually says (incorrectly) that Liu Xun’s commentary—not Cheng Yi’s—ended with Lord Min’s reign (in fact, only Liu’s *Chengshi zashuo* did). Yin does mention Cheng Yi’s failure to complete his commentary in another quotation at CSWS 12.436, and this may have unduly influenced the way in which modern scholars like Ge and Huang understood the quotation at CSWS 12.432–433. Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 226–228; Huang Juehong 黃覺弘, “‘Chengshi zashuo’ yiwèn kaoshuo” 《程氏雜說》佚文考說, *Xinan jiaotong daxue xuebao* 西南交通大學學報 2010(5), 7–13.

⁶⁴ Hu Anguo’s memorial for presenting the commentary to the throne is dated the twelfth month of the sixth year of the Shaoxing 紹興 era, which corresponds to the period from December 25, 1136 to January 22, 1137. The exact day of the month is now missing from the text. The date given for Hu’s death in his obituary (*xingzhuang*) corresponds to May 23, 1138. CQHSZ 8, 529; cf. Zhao, *Chunqiu xue shi*, 500.

⁶⁵ Hu Anguo’s obituary states that he first read Cheng Yi’s commentary in 1116 and that Gaozong issued an edict in 1135 ordering him to revise his commentary and present it to the throne: CQHSZ 512, 528–529. Hans Van Ess has challenged the traditional account of Hu Anguo as a student of Xie Liangzuo and suggested that Hu did not become a committed follower of *Daoxue* until the early 1130s, possibly through the influence of Yang Shi. See Hans Van Ess, “The Compilation of the Works of the Cheng Brothers and Its Significance for the Learning of the Right Way of the Southern Song Period,” *T’oung Pao* 90.4 (2005), 264–277.

⁶⁶ This view originated with Mou Jun-sun’s use of the *zunwang rangyi* formula to compare the *Chunqiu* exegesis of Sun Fu and Hu Anguo: see Mou, “Liang Song Chunqiu xue zhi zhuliu,” 104, 116–119. In a recent dissertation, Kang Kai-Lin claims (citing only two examples) that Hu Anguo’s focus on “repelling the barbarians” exceeded even that of later Southern Song *Chunqiu* commentators: see Kang Kai-Lin 康凱淋, “Hu Anguo ‘Chunqiu zhuan’ yanjiu” 胡安國《春秋傳》研究 (Ph.D. dissertation, National Central University [Taiwan], 2012), 139–140.

exception of Su Shi) had interpreted Confucius's attitude toward the Qian conference as one of disapproval, Cheng Yi seems to have been the first to tie that disapproval to an idea that the conference violated a principle against appeasing barbarian invaders:

The Zhou dynasty was in decline, and barbarians (Man-Yi) were bringing disorder to the Chinese, with groups of them living scattered throughout the Central Lands. If the hegemon and larger states clearly understood their greatest duty and repelled [these barbarians], that would have been morally correct. As for the other states, it would have been acceptable for them to “be prudent in strengthening their defenses.”⁶⁷ But if they made peace with [the barbarians] in order to be spared from invasion and violence, this would not be “smiting the Rong barbarians and Di barbarians”⁶⁸; rather, it would be permitting them to bring disorder to the Chinese. That is why the *Chunqiu* is especially careful with the difference between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*). If [the barbarians] stayed in their own lands and were friendly to the Central Lands, then [Confucius] would have approved of having covenants and conferences with them. Lord [Yin's] act of holding a conference with the Rong barbarians was immoral.

周室既衰，蠻夷猾夏，有散居中國者。方伯大國明大義而攘斥之，義也。其餘列國「慎固封守」可也。若與之和好以免侵暴，非所謂「戎狄是膺」，所以容其亂華也。故《春秋》華夷之辨尤謹。居其地而親中國，與盟會者，則與之。公之會戎非義也。⁶⁹

Cheng reiterates this point much more laconically with regard to the covenant that Lord Yin made with the Rong barbarians at Tang later that year: “The Rong barbarians brought disorder to the Chinese, yet [Lord Yin] made a covenant with them; this was immoral” 戎猾夏而與之盟，非義也。⁷⁰

An abbreviated and slightly rephrased version of Cheng Yi's remarks on the Qian conference is quoted in the *Chengshi cuiyan* 程氏粹言 (Finest Sayings of the Cheng Brothers) compiled by Yang Shi, but framed differently as an answer to the question, “When barbarians (Man-Yi) bring disorder to the Chinese, what is the right way to deal with them?” 蠻夷猾夏，處之若何而後宜？⁷¹ A passage highly similar to the *Chengshi cuiyan* version, minus the question

⁶⁷ This is a phrase from the *Shangshu* chapter “Biming” 畢命, now known to be a fourth-century AD forgery.

⁶⁸ This phrase is from the Ode “Bigong” and was famously re-applied to ideological warfare by Mencius and Han Yu (see Chapter 3).

⁶⁹ CSJS 4.1089.

⁷⁰ CSJS 4.1090.

⁷¹ CSCY 1.1214.

and with some obvious Qing-period censorship by *Siku quanshu* editors, can be found attributed to Cheng Hao in the received text of Li Mingfu's 李明復 (fl. 1208–1224) *Chunqiu jiyi gangling* 春秋集義綱領. But Li also attributes the unabbreviated *Chunqiu* commentary passage to Cheng Yi in his *Chunqiu jiyi* 春秋集義, while crediting Cheng Hao with only a small piece of it: “Making peace with [the barbarians] is the way to bring disorder to the Chinese” 與之和好，亂華之道.⁷² It is possible that Cheng Yi's interpretation of the Qian conference expanded on an earlier reading that Cheng Hao had written down, to the point of borrowing its language. Since we have no other extant evidence of *Chunqiu* exegesis by Cheng Hao, however, it is just as possible that Li Mingfu's attributions to Cheng Hao were based on unreliable sources.⁷³

The most striking aspect of Cheng Yi's interpretation of the Qian conference is his view of the Rong barbarians involved as aggressors and unwelcome intruders in Lu territory—a view contrary to the *Zuozhuan* account, which speaks of a previous history of friendship under earlier Lu rulers.⁷⁴ Less noticeable but just as significant is Cheng Yi's use of the phrase *Hua Yi zhi bian*, “the difference between Chinese and barbarians.” This expression and the similar *Yi Xia zhi bian* 夷夏之辨 (“the difference between barbarians and Chinese”) are now the standard Chinese terms for the concept of a Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, but neither of them appears in any text earlier than Cheng Yi's commentary. There is a strong likelihood that credit for the invention of the term *Hua Yi zhi bian* belongs to none other than Cheng Yi.

Cheng Yi's use of *Hua Yi zhi bian* centers on ethnic conflict and the need to keep barbarians out of Chinese territory, rather than the problem of ritual or moral barbarization that he links with the ‘*Chunqiu* method’ elsewhere. Hu Anguo's commentary on the Tang covenant tries to merge the two subjects while implicitly relating them to the recent history of Song-Jurchen relations:

The “Bishi” [chapter of the *Shangshu*] speaks of the Yi barbarians of the Huai River and the Rong barbarians of Xuzhou. These [Rong barbarians who made the covenant with Lu] were probably Rong barbarians of Xuzhou who had long lived in the Central Lands and were located in the eastern outskirts of Lu. Han Yu said, “The *Chunqiu* is careful and strict,” and a superior man (i.e., Cheng Yi) believed that [Han Yu] deeply understood its intent. What is being “careful and strict” being careful about? It is careful about the

⁷² Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 230; Li Mingfu, *Chunqiu jiyi* (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 2. Strangely, the *Chunqiu jiyi* has not suffered the same Qing censorship as the *Chunqiu jiyi gangling*.

⁷³ This is the cautious position that Ge Huanli adopts after initially accepting Li Mingfu's attributions. Ge, *Zunjing zhongyi*, 230–231.

⁷⁴ Xiong Mingqin, selectively quoting the line on barbarians who “stayed in their own lands and were friendly to the Central Lands,” claims that Cheng Yi did not advocate “repelling the barbarians” (*rangyi*). This is wide of the mark and probably misreads 居其地 as meaning “living in the lands of the Chinese.” Xiong, “Chaoyue ‘Yi-Xia,’” 128.

difference between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*) above all else. When the Central Lands are like the barbarians (Yi-Di), one regards them as barbarians (Di); when the barbarians (Yi-Di) bring disorder to the Chinese, one smites them. That is the intent of the *Chunqiu*. As for swearing a covenant with the Rong by smearing blood on one's mouth, that is immoral.

按《費誓》稱「淮夷」、「徐戎」，此蓋徐州之戎，久居中國，在魯之東郊者也。韓愈氏言「《春秋》謹嚴」，君子以為深得其旨。所謂謹嚴者，何謹乎？莫謹于華夷之辨矣。中國而夷狄則狄之，夷狄猾夏則膺之，此《春秋》之旨也。而與戎歃血以約盟，非義矣。⁷⁵

Despite having claimed on the basis of the “Bishi” that the Rong barbarians had been living on Lu territory since the days of the first Lu ruler, Hu Anguo persists in calling them intruders bringing disorder to the Chinese. Indeed, he goes on to liken Lu relations with the Rong to Western Han *heqin* marriage diplomacy with the Xiongnu, the Tang dynasty's reliance on the Uyghurs as military allies during the An Lushan rebellion, and Tang Dezong's 德宗 (r. 779–805) attempts at reaching a truce with the Tibetans—all cases in which diplomacy was seen to have failed to prevent further humiliation at the hands of barbarians. Of course, it is the unspoken contemporary parallel that is really on Hu Anguo's mind: namely, the ongoing debate at Gaozong's court over whether to negotiate peace with the Jurchens. While it may be easy for us to assume that Hu Anguo was simply using his commentary as a vehicle for hawkish arguments against appeasement, the existence of Cheng Yi's interpretation of the Qian conference and the Tang covenant forces us to consider the possibility that Hu was motivated by a serious interest in applying Cheng's interpretation to the geopolitical situation of his day.

Whereas Hu Anguo's commentary on the Tang covenant blends Cheng Yi's arguments about barbarian invasions and barbarization, Hu's commentary on the Qian conference presents an original attempt at explicating a philosophical basis for Confucius's supposed prejudice against barbarians. Hu begins:

[The *Chunqiu*] refers to barbarians (Rong-Di) only by the names of their states because it regards them as outer. Heaven shelters all things and earth bears all things, and the Son of Heaven is equivalent to heaven and earth. The *Chunqiu* speaks for the Son of Heaven⁷⁶, so why does it regard the barbarians as outer?

⁷⁵ CQHSZ 1.7. It should be noted that “smearing blood on one's mouth” was the conventional method for swearing an oath between states since Zhou-dynasty times and had nothing to do with the covenant's supposed immorality.

⁷⁶ This quotes *Mencius* 3B:14.

戎狄舉號，外之也。天無所不覆，地無所不載。天子，與天地參者也。《春秋》，天子之事，何獨外戎狄乎？⁷⁷

As we saw in Chapter 1, the Gongyang commentator solved the problem of Confucius's ethnocentrism by claiming that his regarding the barbarians as "outer" was only a temporary attitude that was necessary in the initial stages of unifying all under heaven. Hu Anguo was clearly inspired by the Gongyang commentary's way of framing the problem, but he had a different solution that linked the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy to two other binary oppositions: that of superior men (*junzi* 君子) to inferior men (*xiaoren* 小人), and that of the hexagram *tai* 泰 (representing flow and flourishing) to the hexagram *pi* 否 (representing obstruction and decline). In this, Hu followed Cheng Yi's interpretation of the *Yijing*, in which *tai* symbolized the political dominance of superior men and *pi* symbolized the dominance of inferior men.⁷⁸

I reply, "The Central Lands are to the barbarians just as superior men are to inferior men."⁷⁹ When superior men are brought in and inferior men are kept out, that is "flourishing" (*tai*), but when inferior men are brought in and superior men are kept out, that is "decline" (*pi*). The *Chunqiu* is the sage [Confucius's] book for reversing decline (*pi*), so it regards the Central Lands as inner and the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters as outer, causing each to be content with its place.

曰：中國之有戎狄，猶君子之有小人。內君子外小人爲泰，內小人外君子爲否。《春秋》，聖人傾否之書。內中国而外四夷，使之各安其所也。⁸⁰

Hu Anguo then brings in a third binary opposition frequently used in *Daoxue* philosophical argumentation: that between a thing's essence (*ti* 體) and its application (*yong* 用):

To shelter all and bear all is the essence (*ti*) of the true king's moral power, but to regard the Central Lands as inner and the barbarians of the four quarters as outer is the application (*yong*) of the true king's way.

無不覆載者，王德之體；內中国外四夷者，王道之用。⁸¹

⁷⁷ CQHSZ 1.6.

⁷⁸ See Tze-ki Hon, *The Yijing and Chinese Politics: Classical Commentary and Literati Activism in the Northern Song Period, 960–1127* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 124–126.

⁷⁹ For a slightly earlier example of this analogy, see Fan, *Tangjian*, 80.

⁸⁰ CQHSZ 1.6.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

This effort at justifying the limits of Confucius's universalism ultimately evades the question of *why* all barbarians would be as morally inferior as the inferior men of the Central Lands. We shall see later that Hu Anguo's son Hu Yin tackled this very question and tried to answer it using the concept of *qi* endowment. Hu Anguo, on the other hand, shifts from philosophical theorizing to laying out what he sees as the practical policy implications of regarding barbarians as outer: the Chinese should not pay tribute to barbarians, since this contravenes the principle of Chinese superiority⁸²; when barbarians pay homage at the imperial court, they should not be accorded a protocol higher than that of Chinese nobles⁸³; barbarians should not be allowed to migrate into the Chinese lands because of the danger of rebellion: here Hu invokes the much-abused *Zuozhuan* quotation, "They are not of our kind (*zulei* 族類), so their hearts are sure to be different" 非我族類，其心必異。⁸⁴ By the end of a commentarial passage that attempts to reconcile universalism with ethnocentrism, Hu Anguo seems to have abandoned the notion that a Son of Heaven should be above ethnic distinctions.

Thus far, we might appear to have good reason to characterize Cheng Yi and Hu Anguo as barbarophobes whose primary concern was keeping barbarians out of the Central Lands. But that view becomes problematic when we come to their treatment of the next covenant made between the Rong barbarians and Lu, in 710 BC. The oath ceremony was held at Tang as it had been eleven years before, but two things were different: first, the Lu ruler was now Lord Huan, who had seized power by murdering his brother Lord Yin; second, the *Chunqiu* records Lord Huan's return from Tang, whereas it had not done so for Lord Yin. Cheng Yi notes a likely reason for this: the *Chunqiu* records a ruler's return if his travels have extended from one season to the next, which was the case for Lord Huan's trip to Tang but not Lord Yin's. Yet Cheng prefers a different reason: that Confucius wanted to show that Lord Huan had been in danger of not returning from Tang. Rather than attribute the danger to the Rong barbarians' perfidy, however, Cheng suggests that the danger lay in the chance that Rong barbarians would seek to punish Lord Huan for his fratricide, unlike various Chinese rulers who had condoned his crime:

Lord Huan became the ruler through assassination and had previously gone to a conference with the rulers of Zheng, Qi, and Chen, but [these rulers] were all equally immoral. When he traveled afar and made a covenant with the Rong barbarians, [Confucius] knew the danger he had been in and thus recorded, "he returned." If the Rong barbarians were not as evil as the rulers of those three states (Zheng, Qi, and Chen),

⁸² Here, Hu Anguo's use of the metaphor of a person standing upside down alludes to Jia Yi's arguments against the *heqin* agreement with the Xiongnu. See XS, 3.127, 131.

⁸³ Hu alludes here to a Xiongnu ruler's visit to the Western Han court after submitting to Han suzerainty in 51 BC. Such a visit was unprecedented and provoked a debate at court over whether the Xiongnu ruler should be accorded a protocol befitting a head of state or treated like one of the Han aristocracy. The former position eventually won out. See HS 78.3282–3283, 94b.3798.

⁸⁴ CQHSZ 1.6.

then they would attack him.⁸⁵ This is what [Confucius] meant when he said he wanted to live among the Yi barbarians and sail out to sea; since the Central Lands did not understand morality, perhaps the barbarians (Yi-Di) might be able to understand it.

桓公弑立，嘗與鄭、齊、陳會矣，皆同爲不義。及遠與戎盟，故危之而書「至」。戎若不如三國之黨惡，則討之矣，居夷浮海之意也，中國既不知義，夷狄或能知也。⁸⁶

Hu Anguo adopts Cheng Yi's interpretation, paraphrasing it and adding the comment:

Master Cheng was right to say, "This is what [Confucius] meant when he said he wanted to live among the Yi barbarians and sail out to sea." Does the *Analects* not say, "The barbarians still have rulers, unlike the Chinese states that do not"?

程氏所謂「居夷浮海之意」，是矣。《語》不云乎「夷狄之有君，不如諸夏之亡也」？⁸⁷

Hu Anguo's use of Cheng Yi's reading of *Analects* 3:5 is a very good reflection of the uneasy coexistence of ethnocentrism and moral universalism in *Daoxue* philosophy. Cheng Yi and his followers represented barbarians as inherently inferior beings, yet they also claimed that the Chinese could be worse than barbaric. They alternated between dehumanizing barbarians and valorizing them because they wanted to warn their audience about the dangers of appeasement and moral decline at the same time. Political philosophy and moral philosophy pulled *Daoxue* philosophers like Cheng Yi and Hu Anguo in opposite directions rhetorically, even as these philosophers saw the two spheres as ideologically inextricable.

Some statistics may help to put this tension into clearer perspective. Twenty-eight commentarial sections in Hu Anguo's commentary assert the importance of repelling barbarian invasions, the need for keeping barbarians out of the Central Lands, or the moral illegitimacy of covenants or any other form of alliance between Chinese states and barbarians.⁸⁸ Of these, six sections use the phrase *Hua Yi zhi bian* or the similar *bian Hua Yi zhi fen* 辨華夷之分 ("telling

⁸⁵ Incidentally, this is another example of Cheng Yi's unusual habit of reading *buru* as "not as bad as."

⁸⁶ CSJS 4.1102.

⁸⁷ CQHSZ 4.49.

⁸⁸ CQHSZ 1.6, 1.7, 8.108, 9.128, 12.147, 12.177, 12.180, 12.182, 12.183, 13.191, 13.193, 13.199, 13.204, 14.224, 15.234, 16.251, 16.253, 17.266 (2 items), 17.275, 19.299, 19.302, 19.312, 20.321, 21.345–346, 22.361, 25.423, 30.499–500.

the difference between Chinese and barbarians”).⁸⁹ However, Hu seems as concerned about denouncing barbarism among the Chinese states as he was about repelling barbarians: twenty-six other sections in the commentary use the concept of barbarization, sometimes together with the concept of bestialization.⁹⁰ Five of these sections refer to immoral behavior by the term “the way of the barbarians (Di)” 狄道.⁹¹ This seems to be an abbreviation of “the way of the barbarians (Yi-Di)” 夷狄之道, a term first seen in Sun Fu’s commentary that also occurs twice in the oral teachings appended to Cheng Yi’s commentary. It should be noted that Cheng’s appended teachings include five sections on barbarization: three of these correspond closely to longer sections in Hu Anguo’s commentary, and Hu quotes another of them directly in the corresponding section.⁹²

One of Hu Anguo’s twenty-six commentarial sections relating to barbarization links Cheng Yi’s theory of barbarization and bestialization to the concept of *Hua Yi zhi bian*, arguing that ritual and moral duty are the very basis of both Chinese identity and humanity:

The Central Lands are the Central Lands because of ritual and moral duty; lose them once and we become barbarians (Yi-Di), lose them again and we become animals, bringing humankind to extinction!

中國之所以爲中國，以禮義也；一失則爲夷狄，再失則爲禽獸，人類滅矣！⁹³

Two sections use the same theory to argue that losing *trustworthiness* once turns human beings into barbarians and losing it twice turns them into animals.⁹⁴ Two sections use Cheng Yi’s interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 to argue that the Chinese states had become worse than barbarians; another argues that an heir apparent who murders his ruler (thus committing both regicide and patricide) is worse than a barbarian or an animal, because father-son bonds and ruler-subject

⁸⁹ CQHSZ 1.7, 12.183, 14.224, 16.255, 19.299, 20.321.

⁹⁰ CQHSZ 4.46, 4.47, 4.49, 6.76, 9.120, 11.146–147, 12.182, 12.184, 13.205–206, 15.229, 15.230, 16.250, 17.275, 18.293, 19.306, 19.307, 19.310, 19.311, 23.384, 24.397, 24.399–400, 24.408, 25.421, 27.459, 30.495, 30.496–497.

⁹¹ CQHSZ 13.205–206, 24.399–400, 25.421, 27.459, 30.495.

⁹² CSJS 4.1112, 1115, 1117, 1122; cf. CQHSZ 12.182, 15.230 (quotes Cheng Yi’s commentary), 19.306, 24.408. Cheng Yi’s commentary proper also includes a section attributing the Teng ruler’s barbarization to his submission to Chu suzerainty, but Hu Anguo’s corresponding section has a different interpretation that claims the Teng ruler was barbarized by his decision to pay homage to the fratricidal Lord Huan of Lu: see CSJS 4.1101; CQHSZ 4.46.

⁹³ This section concerns the well-known case of the rulers of Qi. CQHSZ 12.182.

⁹⁴ CQHSZ 13.205–206, 24.408.

bonds are the only things that make human beings different from animals and the Chinese superior to barbarians.⁹⁵

Four of the twenty-six sections relating to barbarization follow Sun Fu's interpretation of the supposed barbarism of Chu and Wu: namely, that these were Chinese states that Confucius chose to denigrate as barbarians because of their rulers' 'barbaric' crime of usurping the royal title.⁹⁶ Three other sections follow Liu Chang's theory that Chu and Wu were barbarized Chinese states and that Confucius placed them at an intermediate point between full Chineseness and full barbarism, promoting them back toward Chineseness when they re-learned the practice of Chinese norms.⁹⁷ The Chu ruler's first semantic promotion in the *Chunqiu*, which corresponds to his sending a diplomatic mission to Lu, prompts Hu Anguo to argue that Confucius welcomed any barbarians who were willing and able to behave like the Chinese states:

Diplomatic missions were a practice of the feudal lords in the Central Lands. If even barbarians (Man-Yi) were able to learn the practices of the feudal lords in the Central Lands, then [Confucius] would promote them without any thought of their past acts of bringing disorder to the Chinese and behaving irreverently [toward the Zhou king]. From this one can see how the sage's heart delighted in helping people to do good. If rulers in later ages could model their hearts after the sage's heart, then they would be the equal of heaven and earth. ... The *Chunqiu* is careful about the difference between Chinese and barbarians, but Jing (i.e., Chu), Wu, Xú, and Yue were Chinese states that were changed by the barbarians (Yi), so the method of writing about them is such.

朝聘者，中國諸侯之事。雖蠻夷而能修中國諸侯之事，則不念其猾夏不恭而遂進焉，見聖人之心樂與人爲善矣。後世之君能以聖人之心爲心，則與天地相似。... 《春秋》謹華夷之辨，而荆、吳、徐、越，諸夏之變於夷者，故書法如此。⁹⁸

There was thus a double standard to Hu Anguo's view of Confucius's "heart" toward the barbarians, as there had been with Liu Chang. Barbarized Chinese states like Chu could expect the sage's generosity and leniency because they belonged to a gray area in the "difference between Chinese and barbarians." Other barbarians, on the other hand, deserved only expulsion from the Chinese world because they had never been a legitimate part of it—even those like the Rong barbarians of Xuzhou who had lived in it for a few centuries. We should bear in mind, however, that Hu Anguo's idea of expulsion also meant that Chinese states had no business attacking the barbarians unless they had been attacked first; his message was not one of

⁹⁵ CQHSZ 17.275, 23.384, 30.496–497.

⁹⁶ CQHSZ 11.146–147, 12.184, 19.310, 19.311.

⁹⁷ In one of these cases, Hu Anguo quotes Liu Chang explicitly. CQHSZ 9.120, 15.229, 24.399–400.

⁹⁸ CQHSZ 9.120.

unmitigated anti-barbarian hostility. Hu's commentary reads the *Chunqiu* as condemning the Qi state for invading the Mountain Rong barbarians and the Jin state for conquering the Red Di 赤狄 barbarians.⁹⁹ According to Hu Anguo's reading, Confucius was even unwilling to praise the Jin for conquering the Rong barbarians of Luhun in 525 BC—thus ridding the Eastern Zhou capital region of a purportedly menacing barbarian presence—because he did not want to be seen as encouraging wasteful wars of territorial expansion.¹⁰⁰

In the only substantial English-language discussion of Hu Anguo's *Chunqiu* commentary to date, Alan Wood writes:

Although Hu grew to maturity in the Northern Sung, his interpretation of the *Ch'un-ch'iu* was powerfully affected by the events surrounding the fall of the Northern Sung to the invading forces of the Chin in 1127.... Hu was understandably preoccupied with the threat of the barbarians, and his commentaries on the *Ch'un-ch'iu* reflected this concern.... Yet it would be a mistake to regard Hu's purpose as simply to kick out a specific group of intruders; much more was involved. One might even say that his purpose was not so much to root out the barbarians as it was to root out barbarism, whether practiced by Chinese or by the barbarians. Only by returning to the civilizing principles of classical Confucianism, as outlined by the Northern Sung thinkers, particularly Ch'eng I, did Hu believe that China could hope to withstand the threats posed by the present invaders. He was determined to cure the cause of China's disease, not just treat the symptoms.¹⁰¹

This view of Hu Anguo is not without merit, but I suspect that it draws connections between Hu's ideas that he himself did not see. Hu probably knew of Cheng Yi's argument that the Western Jin elite's moral barbarization had brought on the barbarian revolts that destroyed their empire, but his commentary never argues that avoiding moral barbarism at home was the Chinese states' best defense against barbarian invasions. His twenty-eight commentarial sections relating to the barbarian threat do not overlap with his twenty-six sections relating to barbarization, even when sections of these two types occur in close proximity to each other.¹⁰² One sometimes gets the feeling of reading two commentaries that have been spliced into one.

⁹⁹ CQHSZ 9.131–132, 18.286–287, 18.289.

¹⁰⁰ It should not be forgotten that Jin was one of the two states that were responsible for moving the Rong barbarians of Luhun to the Luoyang area in 638 BC. CQHSZ 25.423.

¹⁰¹ Wood, *Limits to Autocracy*, 121–122.

¹⁰² E.g., 12.181–184, 13.204–206, 16.250–251.

According to Hu Anguo's obituary, written by Hu Yin, his initial impetus for studying the *Chunqiu* was a belief that the perceived marginalization of that text under Wang Anshi and his ideological successors was "bringing disorder to human relations and destroying the *li*, and using barbarian (Yi) ways to change the Chinese" 亂倫滅理，用夷變夏.¹⁰³ However, the preface and memorial that accompanied the commentary when Hu Anguo presented it to Gaozong seem to have opted for the rhetoric of barbarian threat over that of barbarization: it blames Wang Anshi and the other reformists for causing a moral decline that "led barbarians (Yi-Di) to bring disorder to the Chinese" 使/至夷狄亂華, but it does not accuse them of having caused a moral barbarization of the Chinese.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps this simply reflects a new phase of anti-reformist rhetoric that emphasized the reformists' responsibility for the Jurchen invasion, but I would suggest that the haste with which Hu Anguo revised his commentary for Gaozong in 1135–1137 also prevented him from giving serious thought to the question of whether moral barbarization had caused the loss of the north.¹⁰⁵ Ironically, Hu Anguo's youngest son Hu Hong 胡宏 (1105–1161) had already made that very argument in a memorial submitted to Gaozong around early 1135.¹⁰⁶ Let us now turn to look at how the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy is interpreted in Hu Hong's other writings, as well as those of his elder brother Hu Yin.

Barbarians, barbarism, and Buddhism in Hu Hong's *Zhiyan* and Hu Yin's *Chongzheng bian*

In his memorial to Gaozong, Hu Hong argues: "All things under heaven respond to their own kind: those who live in the Central Lands but behave like barbarians (Yi-Di) will surely suffer disaster from the barbarians" 夫天下萬事各以類應，居中國而夷狄行者，必有夷狄之禍.¹⁰⁷ Then, modifying Cheng Yi's narrative of imperial history only slightly, Hu Hong tells Gaozong that the reason why the Western Jin lost north China and the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties failed to reconquer it is that these regimes were all founded through usurpation.

¹⁰³ CQHSZ 528. Recent studies by Zhao Boxiong and Hsia Chang-Pwu have reevaluated the claim made by various early Southern Song literati (including Hu Yin) that Wang Anshi denigrated the *Chunqiu* and sought to suppress its study. Both Zhao and Hsia argue that while stories of Wang Anshi dismissing the *Chunqiu* as a "tattered and rotten court bulletin" 斷爛朝報 may well be false, Wang did make efforts at sidelining the study of the *Chunqiu* because of a preference for other classical texts. See Zhao, *Chunqiu xue shi*, 460–468; Hsia Chang-Pwu 夏長樸, "Cong 'duanlan chaobao' dao bafei shixue—Wang Anshi xin xue dui Songdai xueshu de yige yingxiang" 從「斷爛朝報」到罷廢史學——王安石新學對宋代學術的一個影響, in He Chengzhou 何成洲 ed., *Kuaxueke shiye xia de wenhua shenfen rentong: Piping yu tansuo* 跨學科視野下的文化身份認同：批評與探索 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2011), 322–342.

¹⁰⁴ CQHSZ 2, 7.

¹⁰⁵ According to the obituary by Hu Yin, Hu Anguo exerted so much energy on the revision, often going without food and sleep, that his health rapidly declined and he finally suffered a fatal illness: see CQHSZ 529.

¹⁰⁶ Hu Hong's memorial can be dated from its claim that nine years have elapsed since the capture of Huizong and Qinzong, as well as its mention of an ongoing rebellion led by Yang Yao 楊么 (d. 1135). Southern Song armies defeated Yang Yao's rebellion in mid-1135. Hu Hong 胡宏, *Hu Hong ji* 胡宏集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 84, 101–102.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 87. Note that this line is censored in the *Siku quanshu* edition of Hu Hong's collected works.

Likewise, the An Lushan rebellion and the Tang dynasty's troubles with foreign threats resulted from the unfilial and incestuous behavior of Tang Taizong and his successors, which was "close to barbarism" 近似夷狄. Hu Hong follows by arguing that the Song dynasty's loss of north China was the direct result of a moral decline that Wang Anshi's reforms had inflicted on the Song court.¹⁰⁸ Hu Hong comes close to claiming that the reformists behaved like barbarians—as close as would be possible without committing *lèse-majesté*, since the emperors Shenzong, Zhezong, and Huizong had all supported the reformist party.

Hu Hong's memorial is much more than an anti-reformist diatribe, however. It covers numerous other issues, including the choice between war and peace with the Jurchens that the Southern Song court was trying to make. Hu Hong asserts the futility of peace negotiations with the Jurchens by likening barbarians to wolves and tigers whose "love of killing and fighting" 好殺喜搏之心 knows no limit; he also describes the Jurchen invasion as "a humiliation that will remain indelible for ten thousand generations, and a blood feud that [the dynasty's] ministers cannot but avenge" 萬世不磨之辱，臣子必報之讐.¹⁰⁹ A contemporaneous memorial by Hu Yin urges Gaozong to commit himself fully to avenging the capture of Huizong and Qinzong, rather than allow the Jurchens to use the two captive emperors as hostages to intimidate the Song court into submission.¹¹⁰ Hu Hong and Hu Yin thus shared their father's revanchism, but they did come to differ from him in one significant aspect: namely, their hostile attitude toward Qin Hui 秦檜 (1091–1155).

Hu Anguo was on very good terms with Qin Hui after the latter's purported escape from Jurchen captivity in 1130. Hu regarded Qin as a hero because he had attempted, without success, to prevent the Jurchens from installing Zhang Bangchang 張邦昌 (1081–1127) as a puppet ruler after the fall of Kaifeng. Charles Hartman goes so far as to identify Hu Anguo as the "leader of [Qin Hui's] faction" during Qin's first tenure as chief minister in 1131–1132.¹¹¹ But during Qin Hui's second term as chief minister, which began shortly before Hu Anguo's death in 1138, he emerged as the leading advocate of peace negotiations with the Jurchens, using his political

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 87–88. The line about barbarism is censored in the *Siku quanshu* edition of Hu Hong's collected works.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 85–86. The line about wolves and tigers is censored in the *Siku quanshu* edition of Hu Hong's collected works.

¹¹⁰ Hu Yin points out, with a necessary degree of subtlety, that no one at the Song court knows if Huizong and Qinzong are even still alive. In fact, both were still living at the time, but Huizong died in mid-1135. FRJ 11.228–230 (cf. SS 435.12920–12921).

¹¹¹ ZZYL 131.3153; Charles Hartman, "The Making of a Villain: Ch'in Kuei and Tao-hsueh," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 58.1 (1998), 64–66, 141–142.

influence to purge revanchist officials from the court and eventually arrange the arrest and execution of the outspokenly hawkish general Yue Fei 岳飛 (1103–1142).¹¹²

According to Zhu Xi, Qin Hui once remarked to Hu Anguo's son Hu Ning 胡寧 (n.d.) that Anguo's arguments were "good" 好 but "impracticable" 行不得. When Hu Ning pointedly asked how an argument could be both good and impracticable at the same time, Qin reportedly revealed his cynicism by replying that even the *Analects* and the *Mencius* contained impracticable ideals.¹¹³ Zhu Xi also claims that although Qin Hui made an effort to co-opt Hu Anguo's sons, Hu Hong and Hu Yin refused to align themselves with him politically.¹¹⁴

Hu Hong, the youngest of the Hu brothers, was the most resolute in this regard: he persistently refused to serve in government and maintained a life of reclusion on Mount Heng 衡山 in Hunan. When Hu Ning, who did accept an appointment at court, wrote a letter to Hu Hong that merely contained expressions of brotherly affection, Hu Hong replied with unusually harsh language for the sake of deterring any attempt by Qin Hui to use Ning in recruiting him. Expecting that Qin Hui might also contact him through Hu Yin, Hu Hong avoided all correspondence with his eldest brother until Yin resigned his post as a prefect and joined Hong on Mount Heng in 1142.¹¹⁵ Despite Hu Yin's withdrawal from political life, Qin Hui eventually had him charged with engaging in correspondence with the exiled revanchist minister Li Guang 李光 (1078–1159) and exiled to Xinzhou 新州 (modern Xinxing 新興 county) in 1150.¹¹⁶ Upon Qin Hui's death in 1155, the court released Hu Yin from exile; Yin died at Mount Heng a year later. After 1155, Hu Hong received invitations to serve at court but declined on grounds of illness; his own death at Mount Heng in 1161 marked the end of the generation of *Daoxue* philosophers who had lived through the Jurchen invasion.¹¹⁷

Given Hu Hong's strong identification with the revanchist cause, one may be surprised to find that his only full-length philosophical treatise, the *Zhiyan* 知言 (Understanding of Words),

¹¹² Tao Jing-shen, "The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127–1162)," in Paul Jakov Smith ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 677–689; Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 66–68.

¹¹³ ZZYL 131.3154–3155.

¹¹⁴ ZZYL 131.3153–3154.

¹¹⁵ Some modern accounts claim that Hu Yin resigned in protest over the Song-Jin peace agreement; this is highly plausible but there is no direct evidence for it. SS 435.12925–12926; FRJ 685–687.

¹¹⁶ One of Qin Hui's political allies also accused Hu Yin of not mourning for Hu Anguo's wife (Hu Yin was an adopted son) and of trying to derail the Song-Jin peace agreement. SS 435.12922; FRJ 692–693. On the Li Guang case see Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 99–101.

¹¹⁷ FRJ 696–698; SS 435.12926.

makes no mention of avenging the Jurchen invasion. Hu Hong does, however, consider the causes of such invasions and the means by which they may be prevented or, failing that, how they may be ended. Hans Van Ess argues that the *Zhiyan* “is probably best understood as a manual on the cultivation of the mind as a prerequisite for recovering the heartland of Chinese culture.”¹¹⁸ Van Ess’s argument was probably inspired by the text’s final section, titled “The Central Plains” 中原, which begins with the following statement:

When the Central Plains have lost the way of the Central Plains, only then will the barbarians (Yi-Di) enter the Central Plains. When the Central Plains return to practicing the way of the Central Plains, then the barbarians will return to their own lands.

中原無中原之道，然後夷狄入中原也。中原復行中原之道，則夷狄歸其地矣。¹¹⁹

In the preceding section, “Han Wendi” 漢文, Hu Hong makes a similar argument by way of the dichotomy between the hexagrams *tai* and *pi*: “When the Way of humanity is in ‘decline’ (*pi*), then barbarians (Yi-Di) are strong and animals proliferate, grass and trees spread everywhere and all under heaven becomes a wasteland” 人道否，則夷狄強而禽獸多，草木蕃而天下墟矣。¹²⁰

Although these passages only link barbarian invasions to the idea of moral barbarization implicitly, the *Zhiyan* does contain a few explicit iterations of the barbarization discourse—none of which, however, is related to the issue of barbarian invasions. A passage in the section “Going and Coming” 往來 explains that human beings are more “complete” 全 than all other beings, yet “there are those who are inhumane and thus descend to the nature of barbarians (Yi-Di) and animals” 有不仁而入於夷狄、禽獸者矣. Hu Hong returns to this point slightly later in the section, saying: “When this Way is not clearly understood, then sometimes even capped and sashed rulers of the Central Lands become barbarians (Yi-Di)” 斯道不明，則中國冠帶之君有時而為夷狄。¹²¹ Finally, in the section “The Great Learning” 大學, Hu Hong associates barbarization with Buddhism:

¹¹⁸ See Hans Van Ess, “The Philosophy of Hu Hong,” in John Makeham ed., *Dao Companion to Neo-Confucian Philosophy* (New York: Springer, 2010), 107.

¹¹⁹ Hu, *Hu Hong ji*, 44.

¹²⁰ The “Han Wendi” section also identifies two “best strategies” 上策 by which the sage-kings protected the Central Lands from barbarians: decentralized feudalism, which encouraged the building of fortified cities throughout the realm and thus deterred barbarians from invading; and “avoiding indolence and decadence” 無怠無荒. The second strategy alludes to the forged “Da Yu mo” 大禹謨 chapter of the *Shangshu*, which contains the line, “Be neither indolent nor decadent, and the barbarians (Yi) of the four quarters will then come and acknowledge you as king” 無怠無荒，四夷來王. *Ibid.*, 42–43.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

Only superior men who are astute and honest can know that the Buddhists' falsehoods do great harm to people's minds. If the sage-kings were to arise again, they would surely not abandon the people of the Central Lands of the Chinese and allow them to turn into barbarians (Yi).

惟高明篤實之君子，乃知釋氏之妄大有害於人心。聖王復起，必不棄中華之人，使入於夷類也。¹²²

Cheng Yi and his disciples had criticized Buddhism on the grounds of moral philosophy without resorting to the Ancient Style strategy of denigrating it as a barbarian or barbarizing religion. The kind of anti-Buddhist language used by Hu Hong thus seems out of place in mainstream *Daoxue* discourse and is instead reminiscent of the Ancient Style polemics of Han Yu, Liu Kai, Shi Jie, and Sun Fu. However, Hu Hong was evidently not the only exception to the *Daoxue* norm when it came to such anti-Buddhist argumentation. An even stronger tendency to associate Buddhism with barbarism can be seen in Hu Yin's *Chongzheng bian* 崇正辯 (Arguments for Exalting Orthodoxy), a work of counter-apologetics aimed at refuting a broad selection of Buddhist apologetical arguments from as early as the "Mouzi lihuo lun." Hu wrote this text in 1134, which suggests that he then viewed Classicist orthodoxy's defense from Buddhist ideas to be no less a priority than the Song dynasty's desperate efforts at repelling the Jurchen invasion. The preface to the *Chongzheng bian* argues that Buddhism rejects the "three bonds" 三綱 of affection between ruler and subject, father and son, and husband and wife, as well as Mencius's concept of the "four beginnings" 四端: a capacity for commiseration, a capacity for feeling shame and disgust, a capacity for deferring to others, and a capacity for discerning right from wrong. Drawing on Mencius's rhetorical equation of immorality with barbarism and animality, the preface declares:

The three bonds and four beginnings are that which Heaven has decreed to be naturally so; they are the foundation on which the Way of humanity stands. Only the barbarians (Man-Yi Rong-Di) go against them, while furry, scaly, hooved, and horned creatures all do not have them. If one does not wish to be human, then there is nothing more to be said. But if one does wish to be human, then it has never been acceptable for human beings to lose the three bonds and cut off the four beginnings. The Buddhists sweep these all away and claim that this is the highest Way; how can one not call that heterodoxy?

三綱四端，天命之自然，人道所由立，惟蠻夷戎狄則背違之，而毛鱗角之屬咸無焉。不欲為人者已矣，必欲為人，則未有淪三綱、絕四端而可也。釋氏於此不單除埽，自以為至道，安得不謂之邪歟？¹²³

¹²² Ibid., 34.

¹²³ CZB 1.

This picture of Buddhist values as both barbaric and bestial recurs further down in the preface, when Hu Yin simultaneously appeals to social elitism, ethnic prejudice, and anthropocentrism by accusing pro-Buddhist literati of embracing “the common people’s [ignorant] views” 眾庶見 while wearing the garb of the educated elite, “inviting barbarians (Yi-Mo) into the Central Lands” 引夷貊入中國, and “consorting with birds and beasts” 與禽獸同羣.¹²⁴

When we look beyond the preface, however, we find that the main text of the *Chongzheng bian* shifts rather uneasily between ethnocentric and universalist understandings of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, perhaps reflecting a tension between the Ancient Style tradition of anti-Buddhist polemic (which supplied most of Hu Yin’s rhetorical models) and more universalistic tendencies rooted in Hu Yin’s *Daoxue* background. The first sign of this tension appears when Hu Yin responds to an argument from the early Tang Buddhist apologist Li Shizheng 李師政 (fl. 620–639). Li Shizheng had attempted to refute Fu Yi’s use of ethnocentric rhetoric to denigrate Buddhism by citing Youyu and Jin Midi as examples of worthy barbarians who rendered great service to Chinese rulers.¹²⁵ Surprisingly, Hu Yin not only concedes the basic truth of Li Shizheng’s point but also amplifies it by alluding to Mencius’s claim that the sage-king Shun was “a man of the eastern Yi barbarians” 東夷之人 and King Wen was “a man of the western Yi barbarians” 西夷之人.¹²⁶

Tang and Song commentators on the *Mencius*, including *Daoxue* commentators, generally avoided interpreting this passage literally or even interpreting it at all.¹²⁷ This is probably because of its potential for undermining the idea of barbarian inferiority. In contrast, Hu Yin acknowledges that Shun and King Wen were indeed barbarians who ruled as sages and should not be “regarded as outsiders” 外之 on account of their origins. This willingness to recognize the possibility of barbarians achieving sagehood goes further than almost any other *Daoxue* writing on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. But Hu Yin also argues that Shun and King Wen were sages only because they “ruled human beings with the Way of humanity and kept human beings from becoming barbarians (Yi-Di) and animals” 以人道治人，使人不為夷狄禽獸. Conversely, if they had “propagated deviant and heretical teachings, destroying the moral order and transforming human beings with the way of the spirits, causing human beings to be deluded about the boundaries between life and death and spirits and gods, and bringing disorder

¹²⁴ CZB 3.

¹²⁵ Daoxuan ed., *Guang hongming ji* (T52:2103, CBETA edition), 150.

¹²⁶ *Mencius* 4B:29.

¹²⁷ Zhu Xi’s *Mengzi jingyi* 孟子精義 anthology of late Northern Song *Mencius* commentaries contains only two brief interpretations of this passage (by Yang Shi and Yin Tun), neither of which addresses its description of Shun and King Wen as barbarians. See Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 7, 728; also my comments in Introduction, n. 54.

to the customs of the Central Lands” 邪說異端，絕滅倫類，以鬼道化人，使人惑於生死鬼神之際，亂中國之俗，then it would have been proper to reject them and banish them to distant lands even if they had been born in the Central Lands—“how much more so should this be done with a religion of the barbarians (Yi-Di)?” 又況夷狄之教，宜何如哉？¹²⁸

Hu Yin thus appears to be arguing that although any “religion of the barbarians” is inherently incompatible with both “the customs of the Central Lands” and “the Way of humanity,” it is possible for barbarians to become sages by ruling the Chinese in accordance with Classicist ideals and, ironically, by saving the Chinese from moral barbarization. He also appears to be arguing that any such barbarian sage would be far more acceptable than a Chinese ruler who espoused “deviant and heretical” teachings involving the “way of the spirits.” Theoretically, then, a firmly Classicist sage-ruler with barbarian origins would be preferable to a ruler of Chinese birth who supported a heterodox ideology like Daoism or Buddhism. Hu Yin seems not to have pondered this argument’s political implications, possibly because he found it unlikely that the Jurchen invaders would embrace Classicist values, but we shall see in the next chapter that these implications became unavoidable several decades later when the Jurchens had an emperor whose governance earned him flattering comparisons to the sage-kings Yao and Shun.

The subject of barbarian sages comes up again in Hu Yin’s rebuttal to an assertion made by Wang Tong in the *Wenzhongzi*. Wang Tong acknowledged that the Buddha was “a sage of the west” 西方之聖人 but also held that the Buddha’s teachings became “feeble” 泥 when practised in the Central Lands, due to their unsuitability to the Chinese context. Hu Yin remarks that although Wang Tong “understood the different proclivities of the Central Lands and the barbarians (Yi-Di)” 知中國、夷狄之異宜¹²⁹, his view of the Buddha as a sage shows that his understanding of Buddhism was inadequate. Moreover, Hu Yin argues, Wang Tong also had a flawed understanding of sagehood, since any sagely teaching should be universally applicable:

If [the Buddha’s] way was truly as sagely as that of Yao, Shun, King Wen, and Confucius, then there is no reason for it to be impracticable in the Central Lands. If it is impracticable in the Central Lands, then [the Buddha] was no sage. As for the Way of Yao, Shun, King Wen, and Confucius, there has never been a case of it being impracticable among the barbarians (Yi-Di); ancient texts contain ample record of this.

¹²⁸ CZB 1.15.

¹²⁹ The 1993 Zhonghua shuju edition of the *Chongzheng bian* has 中國知夷狄之異宜. This is incoherent and is almost certainly an error, but it is not clear to me whether the error originated with the editors or with one of their source texts. CZB 3.123.

審其道與堯、舜、文王、孔子同歸於聖，則無不可施於中國之理。不可施於中國，則非聖人也。而堯、舜、文王、孔子之道所以處夷狄者，則無施而不可，方冊所載盡之矣。¹³⁰

In this instance, Hu Yin's universalistic tendencies again appear to impose unanticipated limits on his ethnocentrism. Hu could have denied the Buddha's sagehood without also claiming that barbarians were capable of practicing the Way of the Sages—for example, by arguing that barbarians were too inferior to ever become sages. Yet the logic of his argument about the universal relevance of sagely wisdom made it necessary for him to reject the notion that “the Way of Yao, Shun, King Wen, and Confucius” was meant for the Chinese alone.

Elsewhere in the *Chongzheng bian*, Hu Yin reverts to the more ethnocentric language of his preface and also links his anti-Buddhist sentiment to the new *Daoxue* concept of “the difference between Chinese and barbarians” 華夷之辨 (*Hua Yi zhi bian*). However, he consistently uses a different character for *bian*—辯, meaning “argue” or “debate” rather than “differentiate”—that also occurs in the title of the book itself. We first see this linkage with *Hua Yi zhi bian* when Hu Yin responds to the passage in the “Mouzi lihuo lun” in which Mouzi uses Zheng Xuan's self-critical interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 to rebut his critic's ethnocentric interpretation. Rather than argue that the ethnocentric interpretation is incorrect, which would force him to disagree with Cheng Yi and with his own father, Hu Yin shifts the debate to an argument that accuses Buddhists of hypocrisy for benefiting from the world's but claiming to transcend its rules, as if they were capable of walking on their heads, wearing linen in the winter, drinking through their noses, or driving carriages on water. This argument's language clearly echoes Han Yu's criticism of Daoist primitivism in the “Yuandao,” while its content more closely resembles the preface for Wenchang, in which Han Yu criticizes the Buddhists' supposed ignorance of their debt to the sage-kings. Nonetheless, the end of the passage returns to the rhetorical strategy of equating heterodoxy with barbarization and bestialization:

That is why the sages detested the harm that heresies do to correct teachings, detested the way in which deviant ideas drown out the conscience, and detested false claims that appear to be true. They were careful about the difference (or “the argument”) between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*), so as to uphold the principle of being human and keep [people] from descending into barbarism (Yi-Di) and animality without realizing it.

故聖人惡異端之害正術，惡邪說之溺良心，惡似是而非者。謹華夷之辯，以扶持人理，不使淪胥於夷狄、禽獸而罔覺也。¹³¹

¹³⁰ CZB 3.123–124. About twenty years later, Shao Bo made a similar argument in his *Shaoshi wenjian houlu*, further claiming that if Buddhism was unsuited to the Central Lands then it had to be just as unsuited to the barbarians: see SSSL 4.31–32.

A slightly later passage argues that Chinese people who enter the Buddhist clergy should be required by law to migrate to India so that the government can “be careful about the difference (or “the argument”) between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*)” 謹華夷之辯 and “clarify the *li* of human relationships” 明人倫之理.¹³² After all, “the Central Lands surely cannot abandon father-son and ruler-subject bonds to follow barbarian (Yi) customs, or turn their backs on the ritual and moral duty of the Central Lands to propagate barbarian (Yi) ways” 中國必不能棄父子君臣而從夷俗，必不能背中國禮義而闡夷風.¹³³ It is unclear whether Hu Yin’s “surely cannot” 必不能 is meant to convey inability or merely impermissibility—the fact that he has just recognized the existence of Chinese Buddhist monks would seem to suggest the latter.

It is evident from these passages in the *Chongzheng bian* that Hu Yin could not decide whether the problem with Buddhism had everything or nothing to do with its foreign origins, and whether he was objecting to it on ethnocultural grounds or on moral and philosophical grounds. At moments, he comes close to identifying barbarians as the source of all immorality and heterodoxy, as Shi Jie had been wont to do a century earlier. But Hu Yin’s understanding of barbarization is ultimately more complex and contradictory than Shi Jie’s: whereas Shi Jie represented barbarization as both a loss of Chinese ethnocultural identity and a loss of orthodoxy, Hu Yin is also interested in interpreting it in philosophical terms as a partial loss of humanity. This makes barbarism simultaneously a state of ethnocultural difference, a state of ideological deviance, and a state of moral degeneracy. This threefold definition raised some rather obvious questions: what happens when an ‘ethnocultural barbarian’ learns to practice Classicist orthodoxy and morality, and is such a transformation even possible? For Hu Yin’s attempts at answering these questions, let us turn now to the *Dushi guanjian* 讀史管見 (Limited Perspectives Gained from the Study of History), a work of historical commentary that he wrote some twenty years after the *Chongzheng bian*.

The problem of barbarian inferiority in Hu Yin’s *Dushi guanjian*

Hu Yin composed the *Dushi guanjian* during the period of his exile to Xinzhou (1150–1155). It was ostensibly written as a commentary on the *Zizhi tongjian* but was also effectively a sequel to Hu Anguo’s *Chunqiu* commentary, since the *Zizhi tongjian* narrative begins shortly after the *Chunqiu* ends. The *Dushi guanjian* adopts a strongly didactic approach to historical

¹³¹ CZB 3.122.

¹³² This argument for the forced expatriation of Chinese Buddhists goes back to Fu Yi. In a restatement of the argument toward the end of the passage, Hu Yin modifies “the *li* of human relationships” 人倫之理 to “the *li* of [the difference between] human beings and animals” 人獸之理. CZB 3.127.

¹³³ Ibid. The 1993 Zhonghua shuju edition has 西域必不能背中國禮義而闡夷風 (“the Western Regions surely cannot turn their backs on the ritual and moral duty of the Central Lands to propagate barbarian ways”), but this is incoherent. It is likely that the characters 西域 were mistakenly added to the text at some point.

interpretation throughout and occasionally engages in veiled criticism of the Southern Song court's peace policy, especially via condemnation of the Later Jin founding emperor Shi Jingtang's 石敬瑭 (Jin Gaozu 晉高祖, r. 936–942) submission to Kitan suzerainty in 936—an event that Hu Yin perceived as a direct precedent for the Song-Jin peace agreement of 1142. The sections of the *Duzhi guanjian* pertaining to the rise and fall of the Later Jin contain some of that text's most strident rhetoric about the inferiority, otherness, greed, and perfidy of the barbarians, all aimed at persuading the reader of the Song-Jin peace agreement's moral illegitimacy.¹³⁴ In other sections, however, we find Hu Yin acknowledging individual barbarians' capacity for exemplary moral behavior and, conversely, the possibility that Chinese people could behave barbarically or worse. Throughout the *Dushi guanjian*, we see Hu alternating between ethnic and moral interpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy—between an image of the barbarian as an ethnocultural other and a discourse of barbarism as a universal moral problem.

Chang Chishen was the first scholar to take note of the ambivalence or self-contradiction in Hu Yin's statements about barbarians in the *Dushi guanjian*. He suggests that these “can be seen as traces of a transition or change in thought” and as “the manifestation of new and old ideas coexisting.” Chang believes that Hu Yin's positive assessments of individual barbarians “may have come from traditional views that existed before the Southern Song,” while his ethnocentric statements about barbarians are a response to the Song-Jurchen conflict.¹³⁵ I would argue that the picture is more complex than this supposed dichotomy between “traditional” and new ideas: contrary to Chang's assumption that the idea of the barbarians' capacity for moral improvement was “traditional,” it actually originated from a philosophical discourse of moral self-criticism that was much ‘newer’ than Hu Yin's more ethnocentric or barbarophobic statements. Moreover, Hu's rhetoric of barbarian inferiority and his rhetoric about morally worthy barbarians sometimes drew on the same models, most notably Han Yu and the Cheng brothers. This suggests that Hu Yin was not transitioning from an old to a new way of thinking about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy; rather, he was grappling with contradictions that had developed within a single newer discourse on barbarism over the span of a few centuries. Historians have simply overlooked the newness of this discourse by taking at face value its users' claims to have found it in classical texts like the *Chunqiu* and the *Analects*.

As we have seen, the Cheng brothers developed their theories of *qi* balance and barbarization with the assumption that barbarians belonged to a separate category of beings that were neither human nor animal. On occasion, Hu Yin appears to share that assumption. In *juan*

¹³⁴ Ironically, Hu Yin judged Shi Jingtang's adviser Sang Weihuan 桑維翰 (898–947)—who persuaded Shi to submit to the Kitan—to be a “worthy man” 賢. As Zhou Mi 周密 (1232–1298) noted in his *Qi dongye yu* 齊東野語, this was surprisingly positive evaluation was intended to imply that Qin Hui was worse than Sang because Sang, unlike Qin, was at least motivated by loyalty to his lord and not by self-interest. See DSGJ 29.1046–1050, 1052–1053, 1065, 1068–1070, 1072–1073; QDYY 6.111 (cf. Hartman, “The Making of a Villain,” 102).

¹³⁵ Chang, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao,” 247.

23 of the *Dushi guanjian*, he uses a human-barbarian-animal taxonomy to criticize an idea of pre-emptive self-protection that had been used as a justification for perfidious behavior:

Since Han times, there has been the saying, “I’d rather betray others than let them betray me.”¹³⁶ Every person who was fond of deceitful schemes and the unprincipled pursuit of results has used this saying, and every such person has ended up walking into calamity. Human beings differ from barbarians (Yi-Di) and animals in having a heart of humaneness and moral duty. Animals only know how to drink, eat, and attack and devour one another. Barbarians only value brute force, but they have intelligence and are therefore close to being human. As for human beings, they ought to maintain their hearts of humaneness and act according to moral duty in order to preserve what makes them human. Now to say, “I’d rather betray others than let them betray me,” this is something even barbarians might not do!

自漢初有「寧我負人，無人負我」之說，凡尚詐謀、爭功利者率用之，終亦自蹈其患。人之所以異於夷狄、禽獸者，以有仁義之心也。禽獸者，飲食搏噬而已。夷狄尚力而有知焉，故幾於人。既人矣，則當以仁存心，以義行事，全其所以為人者。今曰「寧我負人，無人負我」，此夷狄猶或不為也！¹³⁷

Elsewhere, Hu Yin chooses to emphasize the idea of barbarians being close to animality, rather than the more generous description of them as “close to being human.” In one section of *juan 7*, Hu condemns the Jie 羯 warlord and future founder of the Later Zhao 後趙 state, Shi Le 石勒 (274–333), for showing ingratitude toward a Western Jin general who had reunited him with his mother. He remarks that although “barbarians (Yi-Di) are neighbors of the animals” 夷狄者，禽獸之與鄰 in moral terms, Shi Le’s deficient love for his mother made him even worse than the animals, who could recognize their mothers but not their fathers. In *juan 16*, Hu Yin condemns the practice of forcing sons to testify against their fathers in criminal investigations by arguing that only barbarians, being “not far removed from animals” 與禽獸不遠, would betray their own fathers. Borrowing the rhetoric of Han Yu’s “Yuandao,” Hu Yin claims that if Chinese governments compel their subjects to report the crimes of their own kin, “how long can this go on before we all become barbarians (Yi-Di) and animals?” 幾何其不胥為夷狄、禽獸矣乎？ The expression “barbarians are neighbors of the animals” also reappears in *juan 17*, where Hu Yin uses it to criticize Tang Gaozu and Shi Jingtang for becoming vassals to the Türks and Kitans respectively. Hu argues that the principle of barbarian moral inferiority precludes any

¹³⁶ The fourth-century historian Sun Sheng 孫盛 (ca. 302–ca. 373) attributed this saying to both Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220) and Sima Zhao 司馬昭 (211–265). According to Sun Sheng, both men declared that they would rather betray another person than give that person a chance to betray them, and proved as much by murdering anyone whom they had the slightest reason to suspect of plotting against them. This utterly ruthless approach to court politics enabled them to become the most powerful men of their respective times and to lay the foundations for their sons to establish the Cao-Wei and Western Jin dynasties respectively. SGZ 1.5; HHS 35.1212.

¹³⁷ DSGJ 23.849.

Chinese emperor or would-be emperor from submitting to the suzerainty of a barbarian ruler; this is clearly another case of veiled criticism directed at the Song-Jin peace agreement.¹³⁸

But Hu Yin also rejects the notion that barbarians are born without the human capacity for humaneness and moral duty. In fact, he believes that they are *born human* but come to behave as though they are not. He explores this idea in *juan 7*, when commenting on a palace coup in 318 that led to the massacre of nearly the entire aristocracy of the Xiongnu dynasty that had defeated the Western Jin and conquered north China just two years earlier. The comment takes the form of an imaginary dialogue with a questioner wondering whether the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy has any basis in reality:

“When Heaven gives birth to human beings, are they divided into Chinese and barbarians (Yi)?” I would answer, “No.” “In that case, when the sage [Confucius] regarded the Chinese as insiders and the barbarians as outsiders, and when he regarded the barbarians (Rong-Di) as inferior and the Central Lands as superior, wasn’t he being contrary to Heaven?” I would answer, “If they were barbarians (Yi-Di) but could do as the Central Lands do, then they too would be [people of] the Central Lands. It is just that they are devoid of humaneness and moral duty, greedy for gain and fond of killing, which is contrary to the *li* of humanity. That is why [Confucius] regarded them as inferior outsiders, strongly disapproving of their throwing the Central Lands into disorder with their behavior and seizing control of the land.”

「天之生人，有華夷之分乎？」曰：「否。」「然則聖人內華而外夷，賤戎狄而貴中華，無乃與天異乎？」曰：「使夷狄而為中國之事，是亦中國矣。惟其不仁不義，貪得而嗜殺，非人理也。故賤而外之，惡其以所行者亂中國而淪胥也。」

Hu Yin anticipates that this attempt at harmonizing universalistic and ethnocentric understandings of humanity will raise an obvious question as to the origins of barbarism. He answers this question with an interpretation of *qi* that amounts to a *Daoxue* theodicy:

One might ask, “If when Heaven gives birth to human beings, there is no division between Chinese and barbarians (Yi), then why are the barbarians (Yi-Di) devoid of humaneness and moral duty, greedy for gain and fond of killing, contrary to the *li* of humanity?” I would answer, “All [human beings receive] the *qi* of the Five Phases, yet there are wise sages and foolish men. This does not mean that Heaven is unduly partial towards the wise sages and miserly towards the foolish men. All [human beings live] within the space between [heaven and earth], yet there are the Central Lands and there are the barbarians (Yi-Di). This does not mean that Heaven makes the Central Lands good

¹³⁸ DSGJ 7.238; 16.598–600; 17.620.

and the barbarians bad. [It is just that] their concentrations [of *qi*] differ in purity and balance, which makes their apportioned capacities differ as well.

曰：「天之生人，無華夷之分，則夷狄何爲不仁不義，貪得而嗜殺，與人理異乎？」曰：「均五行之氣也，而有聖哲，有昏愚，非天私於聖哲而靳於昏愚也。均覆載之內也，而有中國，有夷狄，非天美於中國而惡於夷狄也。所鍾有粹駁偏正之不齊，則其分自爾殊矣。」

Hu Yin then turns to the subject of the palace coup, arguing that this demonstrated the Xiongnu people's inherent, *qi*-determined inability to improve themselves and rule a stable political regime without lapsing back into barbaric behavior:

The leaders of the five kinds of *Hu* all had exceptional talents, but they could not supplement these with learning in order to bring [their talents] to correctness and completion. For that reason, even though they sometimes managed by luck to do something good, their innate *qi* endowment was one of violence and cruelty. In the end, they could not conceal this even by exercising self-control.

五胡之魁，其才皆有過人者，而不能輔之以學，矯揉而成就之，故其所爲雖有幸中於善，而暴戾之氣稟於所賦者，終亦自勝不可掩也。

Hu Yin also argues that Heaven was delivering retribution on the Xiongnu for the violent acts that their ruler Liu Cong 劉聰 (d. 318) had committed, including the seizure of north China and the murder of the last two Western Jin emperors. Here, one senses that Hu is drawing parallels with the Jurchen invasion and hoping for a similar punishment to befall the Jurchens. This suspicion is all but confirmed when he ends his comments by affirming that “the sage [Confucius] was careful about the difference between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*)” 聖人所爲謹華夷之辨 and advocated physical separation between the two for the sake of sparing “future generations” 後世 (including Chinese and barbarians alike?) from such carnage.¹³⁹

Hu Yin reiterates his point about *qi* determinism in *juan* 17, claiming that Wen Yanbo's arguments in favor of resettling the Eastern Türks on the Ordos plateau were invalid because “the idea that the Central Lands and the barbarians (Yi-Di) cannot be placed together is not man-made, rather it is due to the fact that the *qi* of heaven and earth has differences in purity and

¹³⁹ DSGJ 7.245–246. The new Yuelu shushe edition of the *Dushi guanjian* (published in simplified characters) has 華夷之辨 instead of 华夷之辨, but this is a typographical error. The 1254 Southern Song printed edition preserved in the *Wanwei biechang* 宛委別藏 (and reissued in vols. 448 and 449 of the *Xuxiu siku quanshu*) has 華夷之辨.

balance” 中國、夷狄之不可同處亦非人爲，乃天地之氣有純正偏駁之殊也。¹⁴⁰ In *juan 8* to *juan 10* of the *Dushi guanjian*, however, Hu Yin departs from the notion that the barbarians’ *qi* endowment has made their moral inferiority innate and immutable. Instead, he repeatedly recognizes various fourth-century or fifth-century “barbarians” as more morally “worthy” 賢 than their Chinese counterparts in the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties. In *juan 8*, he declares the Former Yan 前燕 state’s chief minister and regent Murong Ke 慕容恪 (d. 367) to be the Duke of Zhou’s equal, and invokes a modified version of Cheng Yi’s self-critical interpretation of *Analects* 3:5: “the barbarians still had worthy men, unlike the Chinese states that did not” 夷狄之有賢，不如諸夏之亡也。¹⁴¹ In *juan 9*, Hu praises the kindness that the Northern Yan 北燕 chief minister Feng Sufu 馮素弗 (d. 415) showed toward a man who had snubbed him prior to his political rise. Hu remarks that even though Feng Sufu was a “man of the barbarians (Yi-Di)” 夷狄之人, “there are men of the Central Lands who have realized their [political] ambitions and do not equal [his magnanimity]” 中國得志之士有不及焉—perhaps a subtle swipe at Qin Hui’s persecution of Li Guang, Hu Yin, and other critics of the peace policy.¹⁴² Also in *juan 9*, the Later Qin 後秦 ruler Yao Xing’s 姚興 (366–416) wisdom leads Hu Yin to remark that Confucius had good reason to want to live among the nine kinds of eastern Yi barbarians, while his magnanimity is “not something that barbarians (Yi-Di) should be capable of” 非夷狄所能爲也。¹⁴³ In *juan 10*, Hu Yin comments that the Northern Wei ministers Lu Li 陸麗 (d. 465) and Gao Yun 高允 (390–487), who saved the dynasty from a political crisis but declined to receive any reward, have confounded his expectations that barbarians will always seek personal profit at others’ expense. Hu is moved to exclaim that their worthiness exceeded that of people from the Central Lands.¹⁴⁴

A large part of Hu Yin’s dilemma seems to have come from two conflicting rhetorical objectives: reinforcing his readers’ revanchism by appealing to their ethnic prejudices, and exhorting them toward higher moral standards by arguing that there were barbarians whose moral virtues made the Chinese look barbaric by comparison. The choice between these two seems to have been made even more difficult by the fact that Hu Yin sincerely admired the barbarians whom he praised and was not merely using them for rhetorical effect.¹⁴⁵ The

¹⁴⁰ DSGJ 17.621.

¹⁴¹ DSGJ 8.279.

¹⁴² DSGJ 9.324. The Feng family’s ethnic identity was ambiguous, as they claimed Chinese ancestry but were known to practice Xianbi customs: see WS 97.2126; JS 125.3127.

¹⁴³ DSGJ 9.310, 330.

¹⁴⁴ DSGJ 10.374. Hu Yin takes some liberty with the facts here: Lu Li (originally *Bölüku 步六孤 Li?) was of Xianbi origin, but Gao Yun was a member of the Chinese literati.

¹⁴⁵ In later sections of the *Dushi guanjian*, Hu also recognizes Kibir Garek as a magnanimous man, Li Keyong as a talented and loyal servant of the Tang court, and even the Kitan ruler Yelü Deguang 耶律德光 (Liao Taizong 遼太宗, r. 927–947), to whose suzerainty Shi Jingtang submitted, as a shrewd political strategist. In each case, Hu Yin makes a point of noting that these men had admirable qualities despite being barbarians, although he does not go as far as calling them “worthy men.” DSGJ 18.649, 26.952, 27.992, 29.1047.

rhetorical and intellectual tension is particularly evident in two sections of the *Dushi guanjian* that deal with the question of the Northern Wei's political legitimacy. In *juan* 12, Hu Yin argues that Xiaowendi's moral worthiness was such that he would have reunified north and south if he had not died in the prime of life. He anticipates his reader objecting that the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties were legitimate, and that Heaven would surely not have allowed a barbarian dynasty to achieve legitimacy and conquer the south. But he simply responds to this with a cryptic expression of uncertainty: "Alas! Is that so, or is it not?" 嗚呼，其然，豈其然乎？¹⁴⁶ The obvious subtext here is that Hu Yin cannot deny his admiration for Xiaowendi but also finds the idea of Northern Wei legitimacy troubling, since it implies that the Southern Song, too, might be in danger of losing the Mandate of Heaven to the Jurchen Jin. In *juan* 29, when discussing the brief Kitan occupation of north China in 947, Hu Yin argues that it is "Heaven's *li*" 天理 for barbarian states established in the lands of the Chinese to collapse or be conquered within three or four generations. But he again has to deal with the problem of the Northern Wei, which clearly lasted longer than that. Hu Yin makes a vague comment implying that the Northern Wei never became legitimate because it never conquered one of the Southern Dynasties, which had inherited their legitimacy from the Eastern Jin.¹⁴⁷ But this also implied that a barbarian dynasty could seize legitimacy from a Chinese dynasty simply by conquering it. In that case, Hu Yin was still undermining his revanchist message by refusing to deny that the Northern Wei had the potential for gaining legitimacy.

Consider also an instance early in *juan* 9, in which Hu comments on an Eastern Jin general who sheltered and befriended a Tegreg (Dingling 丁零) chieftain, only to lose his base of operations to a mutiny incited by the same chieftain. Despite having recognized the first three Former Yan emperors as "worthy rulers" 賢君 in the section immediately preceding this one, Hu takes the Tegreg chieftain's perfidy as evidence that one can only trust people of one's own ethnic group. He even employs Han Yu's rhetoric of barbarization to argue that being friendly and trusting toward barbarians is tantamount to becoming a barbarian:

Among the barbarians (Yi-Di), there are indeed morally superior men (*junzi*) with whom it is right to associate. The sage [Confucius] insisted on being careful about the difference between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*) because in general, "when they are not of our kind (*zulei*), their hearts are sure to be different." Moreover, the Central Lands are vast and their men of ability are many; how could one who desires to cultivate oneself lack [Chinese] teachers and peers to be friends with? How could one who desires to govern a state lack men of outstanding ability to employ? What need is there to have friendships with barbarians (Yi-Di) and disdain the [people of] Central Lands, as though they were not worth associating with? Any human being who does this must have a great impediment in his mind and be no different from a barbarian. That is why Han Yu said,

¹⁴⁶ DSGJ 12.432; cf. 1.42, where Hu Yin uses the self-critical interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 to direct glowing praise at Xiaowendi for observing the classical three-year mourning period, which Chinese rulers had long ceased to do.

¹⁴⁷ DSGJ 29.1073; cf. Chang, "'Zhongguo' gainian yu 'Hua Yi' zhi bian de lishi tantao," 247 n. 487.

“If the Central Lands used barbarian (Yi) ritual, then [Confucius] regarded them as barbarians,” this being the careful and strict message of Confucius’s *Chunqiu*.

夷狄之人固有君子，義可與也。聖人必謹華夷之辨者，以其大體「非我族類，其心必異」故也。且中國之廣，人材之眾，欲修身者豈無師友可親？欲治國者豈無俊傑可用？何必外交夷狄而陋中國，以為不足與乎？人而如是，是其心大有所蔽，與夷狄無以異者。故韓子曰：「中國而用夷禮則夷之」，孔子《春秋》謹嚴之旨也。¹⁴⁸

In the *Dushi guanjian*, Hu Yin frequently uses the *Zuozhuan* quotation about *zulei* to assert that trusting in the good faith and goodwill of barbarians is sheer folly; at times, he combines it with dehumanizing rhetoric about barbarians having “the wild hearts of wolves” 狼子野心 or “the faces of men and the hearts of beasts” 人面獸心.¹⁴⁹ In the passage just quoted, however, there is an obvious dissonance between the *Zuozhuan* quotation’s supposed emphasis on ethnic difference and the Han Yu quotation’s idea of ritual barbarization, despite Hu Yin’s attempt at blending the two. Is barbarism a question of what one *is* or a question of what one *does*? If one can become a barbarian simply by behaving barbarically, then how can *zulei* (that is, ethnicity) determine the nature of one’s heart?

In sections of the *Dushi guanjian* that have more to do with ethics and government than foreign relations, Hu Yin tends to take a more fluid and universalistic approach to the idea of barbarism, arguing that the Chinese are no better than barbarians when they behave immorally. We have already seen that in *juan* 16, he applies this argument to the practice of forcing sons to incriminate their fathers. But there are at least two similar cases. In *juan* 9, he points out that even barbarians understand the basics of good governance despite being ignorant of the Classics and the ways of the sage-kings. If Chinese governments fail to practice good governance, then, they will be unable to keep barbarians under control and will end up “descending into barbarism (Di)” 淪胥於狄 themselves. However, Hu Yin also extends this rhetoric of barbarization to foreign relations in *juan* 10, when condemning a Southern Dynasties ruler who violated a classical rule of warfare by taking advantage of his Northern Wei counterpart’s death to launch an invasion of the north. From Hu Yin’s point of view, the southern ruler’s decision to follow the “way of the barbarians (Di)” 狄道 for the sake of strategic expediency meant that this was merely a case of “barbarians attacking barbarians” 以夷狄攻夷狄. Borrowing his father’s strategy of making Chinese identity contingent on moral behavior, Hu Yin argues:

The Central Lands are the Central Lands only because they have humaneness and moral duty; when they lose these, then they become barbarians (Yi-Di). One who resides in the

¹⁴⁸ DSGJ 9.299.

¹⁴⁹ DSGJ 9.313, 17.637, 18.648, 29.1070.

Central Lands but behaves like a barbarian is in no way worthier than the barbarians. If one is not worthier than them, how can one expect to bring them to submission?

中國之所以爲中國，以有仁義而已矣，失則爲夷狄。中國居而夷狄行，則無以賢於夷狄矣。無以賢之，其能服之乎？¹⁵⁰

In the end, Hu Yin was torn between competing instincts that he had inherited from Hu Anguo, who in turn had probably been influenced by Cheng Yi's understanding of the *Chunqiu*. On one hand, there was a revanchist's insistence that the "difference between Chinese and barbarians" was a matter of putting barbarian invaders back in their proper place, as inferior beings to be physically excluded from the Central Lands. On the other hand, there was a moral philosopher's interest in using the concepts of barbarism and barbarization to represent the values of ritual, humaneness, and moral duty as the very basis of Chinese identity and humanity, without which the Chinese would have no valid claim to superiority over barbarians or even over animals. Further complicating the picture was Hu Yin's willingness as a didactic historian to use cases of morally worthy barbarians to shame his readers into improving themselves morally. The fact that his revanchist instincts never overshadowed or overwhelmed his moralism and didacticism shows that the intellectual history of the early Southern Song cannot be understood simply as a reaction to the Jurchen invasion. Hu Anguo, Hu Hong, and Hu Yin, the leading *Daoxue* philosophers of the Southern Song's first three decades, were not simply obsessed with interpreting the Classics as a justification for revanchism and "repelling the barbarians." In the next chapter, I shall show that the same is just as true of the *Daoxue* philosophers who came to prominence in the second half of the twelfth century.

¹⁵⁰ DSGJ 10.373.

Chapter 8

The *Daoxue* discourse of barbarism in Zhu Xi's generation, 1161–1223Zhang Shi on barbarism and the barbarians

The Song-Jin peace treaty of 1142 collapsed in 1161, the year of Hu Hong's death. The Jin emperor Wanyan Liang 完顏亮 (r. 1150–1161, posthumously demoted to Prince of Hailing 海陵王), who had grand ambitions to conquer the south, personally commanded a full-scale invasion of the Southern Song. The main body of the Jin invasion army suffered defeat by Song naval forces when attempting to cross the Yangzi; Wanyan Liang was about to launch a second crossing when his disgruntled generals mutinied and assassinated him. A challenger named Wanyan Yong 完顏雍 (Jin Shizong 金世宗, r. 1161–1189) then seized the Jin imperial throne, ordered the invasion army to retreat, and began making peace overtures to the Song court. Gaozong had apparently grown weary of his responsibilities as emperor by this time, and the Jin invasion's defeat supplied with him the chance to retire on a triumphant note. In mid-1162, while peace negotiations were still underway, he abdicated the Song throne to his heir apparent.¹

Xiaozong 孝宗 (r. 1162–1189) was originally from a collateral branch of the imperial clan and had been adopted by the childless Gaozong in 1135. Unlike his predecessor, he was highly sympathetic to the idea of reconquering the north. He thus rejected Jin demands for the return of four prefectures north of the Huai River that Song troops had captured in the aftermath of the Jin invasion army's withdrawal. In the summer of 1163, believing a Jin attack on the recently captured prefectures to be imminent, he approved the hawkish senior general Zhang Jun's 張浚 (1097–1164) proposal for a pre-emptive offensive on Jin military positions north of the Huai. In so doing, Xiaozong ignored the advice of his chief minister Shi Hao 史浩 (1106–1194), who also favored irredentism but believed the Song army was not yet ready to go on the offensive. Shi Hao then resigned his post in protest. The Song expedition was initially successful, but ended in a disastrous rout less than a month later when Jin forces counterattacked. This defeat discredited Zhang Jun's strategy and resulted in the resurgence of the pro-peace faction at the Song court, now led by the new chief minister Tang Situi 湯思退 (1117–1164).²

Tang Situi's faction reopened negotiations with the Jin over the disputed prefectures and drove Zhang Jun from office in 1164; Zhang died soon afterwards. Just months later, however,

¹ Tao, "The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127–1162)," 704–709.

² Gong Wei Ai, "The Reign of Hsiao-tsung (1162–1189)," in Paul Jakov Smith ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 713–718; Cui Yingchao 崔英超 and Zhang Qifan 張其凡, "Lun 'Longxing heyi' qianhou Nansong zhuzhanpai zhenying de fenhua yu chonggou" 論“隆興和議”前後南宋主戰派陣營的分化與重構, *Gansu shehui kexue* 甘肅社會科學 2004(3), 74–75.

the Jin army made a show of strength by raiding Song prefectures south of the Huai. Tang Situi's opponents blamed his appeasement policy for the raid, leading to his own political downfall and sudden death in exile. Nonetheless, in early 1165 the Song and Jin concluded a new peace settlement that returned the disputed prefectures to Jin control, but also reduced the size of the Song court's annual payments to the Jin court and raised Xiaozong's formal status vis-à-vis the Jin emperor from vassalage to symbolic kinship. Following Tang Situi's banishment, the mainstream at the Song court came to be occupied by a group of moderate ministers, many of whom had previously been supporters of the war party. Like Shi Hao, these ministers believed in the need for a temporary truce to buy time for internal reform and military preparation; only then could the Song have any hope of victory over the Jurchens. However, there remained a small but influential group of hawkish ministers like Yu Yunwen 虞允文 (1110–1174) and Zhao Xiong 趙雄 (1129–1193) who urged Xiaozong to launch another northern expedition, and Xiaozong's own interest in irredentism remained strong until Yu Yunwen's death.³

Zhang Jun's son Zhang Shi rose to prominence as a *Daoxue* philosopher during these years of crisis, conflict, and diplomacy. Zhang Shi had worked closely with his father on planning the failed northern expedition of 1163. After Zhang Jun's death, however, Zhang Shi became a leading advocate of the moderate revanchist position that the Song court should put its house in order and improve the lives of its subjects before starting another war with the Jin. He opposed any idea of permanent peace with the Jin but also saw military confrontation as impractical and potentially disastrous unless preceded by the “self-strengthening” 自強 measures of “cultivating moral power, appointing worthy ministers, and establishing good governance” 修德、任賢、立政. This attitude led him to clash repeatedly with Yu Yunwen and Zhao Xiong, whom he accused of being motivated by selfish ambitions for personal glory.⁴

Although Zhang Shi had an active career in officialdom, mostly in local administration, he came to be best known as a classical commentator and moral philosopher. He had studied under Hu Hong during the last two months of Hu's life; by accepting an appointment as head of the Yuelu Academy 岳麓書院 in 1165, he also effectively assumed leadership of the Hu family's Hunan branch of *Daoxue* philosophy. He and Zhu Xi had a famous extended discussion of philosophical questions at the Yuelu Academy in 1167, and corresponded regularly by letter thereafter. After Zhang's untimely death in 1180, Zhu edited and published his collected writings. Many of Zhang's exegetical and philosophical writings have since been lost, but his commentaries on the *Analects* and the *Mencius* (both completed in 1173) are extant. In neither of these works do we find the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy being used for revanchist rhetoric against the Jurchens; on the contrary, Zhang Shi speaks of barbarism as a moral condition that can afflict the Chinese as well.

³ Gong, “The Reign of Hsiao-tsung (1162–1189),” 718–720, 734–739; Cui and Zhang, “Lun ‘Longxing heyi’ qianhou Nansong zhuzhanpai zhenying de fenhua yu chonggou,” 75–77; SS 371.11530–11531.

⁴ Cui and Zhang, “Lun ‘Longxing heyi’ qianhou Nansong zhuzhanpai zhenying de fenhua yu chonggou,” 76–77; SS 396.12074–12075, 429.12770–12773; NXWJ 34.815–816.

We have already seen in Chapter 7 that Zhang Shi's interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 essentially elaborates on those of Cheng Yi and his disciples, rather than following the traditional ethnocentric interpretation of that line as an assertion of the barbarians' absolute inferiority. At one point in Zhang's *Mencius* commentary, he also tries to explain that Mencius was not being ethnocentric when he denigrated Xu Xing, the 'agrarianist' philosopher from Chu, as a "shrike-tongued southern Man barbarian" 南蠻駮舌之人. After all, Mencius had just praised Chen Liáng 陳良 (n.d.), a "product of Chu" 楚產 who "delighted in the Way of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius and went north to study it in the Central Lands" 悅周公、仲尼之道，北學於中國, as a "man of outstanding talent" 豪傑之士.⁵ Zhang Shi's argument here is clearly based on the trope of ideological and moral barbarization in Han Yu's "Yuandao":

The Chinese states are those that follow the Way of the sage-kings, that of centrality and correctness, harmony and peace, ritual and moral duty. The barbarians (Yi-Di)⁶ are those who turn their backs on ritual and abandon moral duty. The method of the *Chunqiu* is that when the Chinese states behave like barbarians, then they are regarded as barbarians, and when barbarians know how to admire ritual and moral duty, then they are promoted. This was so that ten thousand generations of rulers and scholars would take care to follow [Confucius'] standards in order to avoid becoming barbarians or animals. If one [follows] heterodox teachings and indulges one's predilections to the point of rebelling against the correct teaching of ritual and moral duty, then one has descended into barbarism (Yi) without knowing it. That is why Mencius, when speaking of Xu Xing, saw him as a shrike-tongued creature and did not think it overly harsh to cite the line about the Duke of Zhou attacking the Rong barbarians and Di barbarians and punishing Jing and Shu. Now, Xu Xing went from Chu to Teng [to propagate his teachings], so he was indeed a man of Chu, but Chen Liáng was also a "product of Chu." In Xu Xing's case, Mencius saw him as a barbarian (Rong-Di)⁷ and therefore treated him like a barbarian (Yi); in Chen Liáng's case, he saw him as a man of outstanding talent. That being so, when Mencius treated a person like a barbarian (Yi), how could this be because of [that person's] land of origin? It was because Chen Liáng studied the Way of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius, while Xu Xing's teachings had entered a state of barbarism.

⁵ *Mencius* 3A:4. I have added a tone mark to Chen's given name to differentiate him from Chen Liang 陳亮.

⁶ The *Siku quanshu* version of this line has the generic *Yi-Di*, while Chen Zhongxiang's 陳鍾祥 (b. 1810) edition of Zhang Shi's works has the specific *Nanman* 南蠻 ("southern Man barbarians"), possibly as a result of Chen's decision to censor a statement about barbarians that was potentially offensive to the Qing emperor. Ironically, the *Siku quanshu* editors are well known to have censored derogatory statements about barbarians in numerous texts, but they apparently did not censor this passage, probably because of its relativistic reading of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. See NXMZS 3.252.

⁷ The *Siku quanshu* version of this line has the generic *Rong-Di* 戎狄, while Chen Zhongxiang's edition has the specific *Nanman* ("southern Man barbarians"). See NXMZS 3.253.

蓋諸夏者，聖帝明王之道、中正和平禮義之所宗也。夷狄者，背禮而棄義者也。《春秋》之法，以諸夏而由夷狄之爲則夷狄之，以夷狄而知禮義之慕則進之。俾萬世爲治論學者，兢兢焉率循其則，以自免於夷狄禽獸之歸也。若夫異端之說，溺於所偏，以賊夫禮義之正，則是淪於夷而不自知也。孟子論許行，目之爲馱舌之類，至舉周公戎狄是膺，荊舒是懲之語而不以爲過者，爲是故也。夫許行自楚之滕，則固楚人也，而陳良亦楚產也。孟子於許行則以爲戎狄而夷之，於陳良則以爲豪傑之士。然則孟子之夷其人，豈以土地哉？以陳良所學者周公、仲尼之道，而許行之說入於夷狄之歸故也。⁸

Although the focus here is on the barbarizing effect of heterodoxy, Zhang Shi also implies that geography and ethnicity were irrelevant to Mencius; ideology alone mattered. A barbarian who learned the Way of the Sages would no longer be regarded as a barbarian.

One of Zhang Shi's other arguments expresses a surprisingly optimistic outlook on Chinese relations with the barbarians, given the geopolitical circumstances of his day. The text in which this argument occurs is from an undated series of short essays about the history of the Han and Eastern Jin dynasties. This particular essay concerns Han Wendi's merits as a ruler, and its middle portion argues that Wendi "also dealt with barbarians (Yi-Di) in accordance with the way [of rulership]" 待夷狄蓋亦有道。⁹ Zhang Shi cites as evidence the *Hanshu* account of Han Wendi's exchange of letters with Zhao Tuo 趙佗, the independent ruler of the Southern Yue 南越 state, in 179 BC. Zhao Tuo had recently assumed the title of emperor and launched raids on Han counties in Changsha 長沙, but Wendi chose to address Zhao in an unusually humble and mild tone: for example, by referring to himself as the son of an imperial concubine who had come to the throne unexpectedly, and by asking for peace without demanding any concessions from the Southern Yue. Zhao Tuo thereupon recognized Wendi as a "worthy Son of Heaven" 賢天子 and was awed into relinquishing his use of an imperial title and submitting to Han suzerainty. He even reciprocated Wendi's humility by deprecating himself as a "former clerk of Yue" 故越吏 in his reply letter.¹⁰

Hu Yin's *Dushi guanjian* already contained a short comment on Wendi's letter to Zhao Tuo, praising his humility and honesty and contrasting it to other rulers who invented prophecies, portents, and miracles to glamorize their humble origins. Hu Yin argues: "Telling the truth does no harm to one's moral power, and indeed leads the listener to delight in his heart and submit sincerely" 實言之，於德無損，而聽者心悅而誠服。¹¹ Zhang Shi's analysis of the letter builds

⁸ NXMZS 3.252–253.

⁹ NXWJ 16.637.

¹⁰ HS 95.3848–3852.

¹¹ DSGJ 1.38.

on this perspective with a reflection on *Analects* 15:6 (言忠信，行篤敬，雖蠻貊之邦行矣)，which Zhang apparently interprets to mean, “Sincerity and trustworthiness in speech and decency and respectfulness in action can be practiced even in relations with the countries of the barbarians (Man-Mo).”

I have pondered over Wendi’s letter [to Zhao Tuo] with great care, and have come to understand that sincerity and trustworthiness can be practiced with barbarians (Man-Mo) in such a manner. The letter begins with the line, “We are Emperor Gao’s son by a concubine and were cast out to govern a northern principedom at Dai.” In later ages, [emperors] who dealt with barbarians (Yi-Di) usually liked to use self-aggrandizing language and would either cover up such a background or embellish it before displaying it to [the barbarians]. Yet Wendi simply told the truth. He (i.e., Zhao Tuo) was himself a man of outstanding ability; when he saw us extending sincerity in this way, how could he not be moved to submission? ... Extrapolating from this, how can it not be true that sincerity and trustworthiness can be practiced with barbarians (Man-Mo)?

予嘗詳味帝所與書，則知忠信之可行於蠻貊如此。書之首辭曰：「朕，高皇帝側室子也，棄外奉北藩於代。」蓋後世之待夷狄，往往好為誇辭，於是等，皆在所蓋覆、矯飾以示之者也。而帝一以其實告語之。彼亦豪傑也，見吾推誠如此，則安得不服？... 推此一端，忠信可行於蠻貊，豈不信哉！¹²

Although Zhao Tuo was not technically a “barbarian” but rather a north Chinese whom the Qin government had sent to the Yue lands to serve as a local official, Zhang Shi uses his case to argue that even barbarians are capable of honesty and sincerity when accorded the same. This forms a sharp contrast to the dehumanizing rhetoric of barbarian duplicity that the first generation of Southern Song revanchists had used in 1138 when opposing the peace negotiations that were then underway.

Zhang Shi’s argument may be responding to Xiaozong’s fruitless attempts during the 1170s to negotiate with the Jin for an upgrade to the ritual protocol with which he received the Jin emperor’s letters of state.¹³ Zhang seems to be implying, very counter-intuitively, that if Xiaozong were willing to deal with the Jin in a spirit of humility and honesty, the Jin would not only agree to change the humiliating protocol (which required the Song emperor to descend from his throne) but also submit to Song suzerainty out of admiration for Xiaozong’s moral virtue. We have no reason to assume that Zhang Shi was simply being naïve. Perhaps he was trying to persuade Xiaozong not to make requests that would be needlessly provocative to the Jin and might result in another war that the Song was not ready for. If a display of humility failed to work its magic on the Jurchens, at least it would help the Song to avoid suffering military

¹² NXWJ 16.637.

¹³ Gong, “The Reign of Hsiao-tsung (1162–1189),” 735–736, 738–739.

disaster over a mere matter of ritual protocol. Zhang Shi's praise of Wendi's honesty about his unimpressive origins may also be a subtle criticism of the fanciful (if derivative) stories about Xiaozong's birth and adoption that were circulating at the imperial court, including a claim that the room in which he was born was filled with red light, "like the sun at mid-day" 如日正中.¹⁴ As a *Daoxue* philosopher, Zhang probably felt that Xiaozong should be enhancing his stature through moral self-cultivation rather than the invention of such myths.

Zhang Shi did allow a revanchist bias to influence his interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy on at least one occasion. In 1167, Zhang completed a chronology of history from the sage-king Yao to the year 1165, building on an earlier chronology by Shao Yong. Zhang's chronology, titled *Jingshi jinian* 經世紀年, is no longer extant, but three versions of its preface have been preserved: a highly abridged and edited version in Zhang Shi's collected works, which Zhu Xi compiled in 1184; an unabridged or slightly abridged version in the prose anthology *Wubaijia bofang daquan wencui* 五百家播芳大全文粹, compiled in 1190; and another slightly abridged version in Ma Duanlin's 馬端臨 (1253–1323) encyclopedia *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考, completed around 1317.¹⁵ In his preface, Zhang Shi explains to the reader that his use (or in some cases, non-use) of reign eras in the chronology reflects his judgment on the political legitimacy of various dynasties and regimes. For the period 221–263, for example, he uses the reign eras of the Shu-Han 蜀漢 state because he considers it to be a legitimate continuation of the Han dynasty; only upon the conquest of Shu-Han by the Cao-Wei state does he switch to using the Cao-Wei era. The *Wubaijia bofang daquan wencui* and *Wenxian tongkao* versions of the preface also include a comment on the Northern and Southern Dynasties and the Five Dynasties and Ten States:

From the [Cao-]Wei on down, the north and south were divided [between different regimes]. [Those in the north], like the Yuan-Wei, the Northern Qi, and the Later (i.e., Northern) Zhou were all [ruled by] barbarians (Yi-Di); therefore, I have tied legitimate rule to Jiangnan (i.e., the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties) alone. The Five Dynasties [and Ten States] were a confusing mix of constantly changing regimes; one therefore has no choice but to tie [legitimate rule] to those that had their capital in the Central Plains.

由魏以降，南北分裂，如元魏、北齊、後周，皆夷狄也，故統獨繫於江南。五代迭揉，則都中原者，不得不繫之。¹⁶

¹⁴ SS 33.615. One suspects that such stories originated with Gaozong's court as a way of legitimating Xiaozong's adoption as heir apparent, and that Hu Yin (who died before Xiaozong's accession) was also criticizing them by praising Wendi's honesty.

¹⁵ The 1184 and 1190 versions can be found in NXWJ 14.611–614. Ma Duanlin's version can be found in *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 5608.

¹⁶ NXWJ 14.613.

We can infer from these lines that Zhang Shi attempted to establish a straightforward rule of political legitimacy: no barbarian dynasty could merit the Mandate of Heaven, even when it ruled north China. This rule was obviously aimed at denying legitimacy to the Jurchen Jin, but it broke down as soon as Zhang Shi tried to make sense of the Five Dynasties period. He was apparently unconvinced by Ouyang Xiu's theory that there could be long periods during which no dynasty was legitimate, although he did concede that there was no legitimate emperor during Wang Mang's 王莽 (45 BC–AD 23) brief Xin 新 interregnum (AD 9–23). He thus had to decide which dynasties had held the Mandate of Heaven during the transitions between Tang and Song. However, even though three of the Five Dynasties were ruled by Shatuo Türks, Zhang could not identify a regime in the fragmented south that deserved to be recognized as legitimate. He therefore was forced to revert to the traditional notion that whichever regime ruled the north was *ipso facto* legitimate regardless of its ethnic origins.¹⁷ Zhu Xi's decision to exclude the above-quoted lines from his abridgement of the *Jingshi jinian* preface may have been motivated by a wish to protect Zhang Shi's posthumous reputation by covering up such inconsistent reasoning. But Zhu could also have acted from more self-interested reasons: his own *Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 資治通鑑綱目, which he was writing and revising throughout the 1170s, took the position that only the seven dynasties that had succeeded in unifying the Chinese world—namely, the Zhou, Qin, Han, Jin, Sui, Tang, and Song—should be recognized as legitimate. This argument was similar to the final version of Ouyang Xiu's "Zhengtong lun," except that Zhu Xi (like Zhang Shi) regarded the Shu-Han and Eastern Jin as legitimate continuations of the Eastern Han and Western Jin respectively.¹⁸ In that case, it is quite possible that Zhu Xi deleted Zhang Shi's claims about the legitimacy of the Southern Dynasties and Five Dynasties from the preface simply because he disagreed with them.

Lü Zuqian on barbarism and the barbarians

I shall turn now to Lü Zuqian, whose *Zuozhuan* commentary I quoted in the preamble to Part 4. During the 1170s, Lü was a highly influential teacher of *Daoxue* philosophy and classical scholarship at the Lize Academy 麗澤書院 in Jinhua 金華. He was on good terms with both Zhang Shi and Zhu Xi, and even collaborated with Zhu on the compilation of a major *Daoxue* anthology, the *Jinsi lu* 近思錄. However, Zhu Xi disapproved of his intellectual eclecticism, which had roots in the Lü family's tradition of broad learning, and also frequently urged him to give up his strong interest in historical texts like the *Zuozhuan*, *Shiji*, and *Hanshu*, which Zhu regarded as devoid of moral edification and a distraction from studying the Classics.¹⁹ Like

¹⁷ Zhang Shi's assessment of the Northern Dynasties has recently been taken as evidence of a more ethnocentric approach to the question of political legitimacy in the Southern Song. However, these interpretations ignore Zhang's decision to ignore ethnicity when recognizing the Five Dynasties as legitimate. See Xiong, "Chaoyue 'Yi Xia,'" 128; Liu, "Nanbeichao de lishi yichan yu Sui Tang shidai de zhengtong lun," 149–150.

¹⁸ On Zhu Xi's *Zizhi tongjian gangmu*, see Tsong-han Lee, "Making Moral Decisions: Zhu Xi's 'Outline and Details of the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government,'" *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 39 (2009), 43–84.

¹⁹ ZZYL 83.2150, 121.2938, 122.2950–2952, 123.2960.

Zhang Shi, Lü Zuqian died in his forties; thereafter, his influence on the *Daoxue* tradition was eclipsed by the longer-lived Zhu Xi, despite the fact that Lü was a much more prolific writer than Zhang. In fact, his eclecticism has led some scholars to credit him with founding his own school of thought (the “Lü school” 呂學) or to classify him with the pragmatic or “utilitarian” Eastern Zhejiang (Zhedong 浙東) thinkers, who included Ye Shi and Chen Liang. However, Hoyt Tillman has sought to revise this view by arguing that the *Daoxue* community was more intellectually inclusive and diverse before Zhu Xi became its dominant voice in the 1180s, and that Lü Zuqian was effectively its leading figure in the 1170s.²⁰ Although Lü Zuqian had a close intellectual affinity to the Eastern Zhejiang thinkers, this did not preclude him from simultaneously being a member of the *Daoxue* community; indeed, Ye Shi and Chen Liang were also closely linked with that community before the 1180s.

Let me begin by contextualizing the passage in which Lü Zuqian presents his reinterpretation of the Xin You anecdote. The passage is found in the *Zuoshi boyi* 左氏博議, a collection of model essays on the *Zuozhuan* that Lü composed for his students while he was in mourning for his mother in 1166–1168. It begins with the following:

Things [that are alike] attract one another faster than wind and rain. There are Chinese people who live in a barbarian (Yi) land, like Duke Liu bringing good governance to Bin. As a Chinese, he drew Chinese [people] to him, and as quickly as turning on one’s heels, kings Wen and Wu arose and founded a kingdom. There are barbarian people who live in a Chinese land, like the [Later] Jin emperor [Shi Jingtang] who sent tribute [to the Kitan empire]. As a barbarian, he drew barbarians to him, and as quickly as turning on one’s heels, [his successor] became a prisoner of war to [the Kitan ruler] Yelü [Deguang]. From this we know that those who reside among the barbarians but are Chinese will surely change a barbarian [land] into a Chinese [land], while those who reside among the Chinese but are barbarians will surely change a Chinese [land] into a barbarian [land.] When things attract one another, it is always because they are of the same kind.

物之相召者，捷於風雨。地夷而人華者，公劉之治豳也。以華召華，不旋踵而有文、武之興王。地華而人夷者，晉帝之納款也，以夷召夷，不旋踵而有耶律之俘虜。是知居夷而華者，必變夷為華，居華而夷者，必變華為夷。物物相召者，未嘗不以其類也。²¹

²⁰ Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992), esp. Chapters 4–7. Wang Yu’s recent study of the Eastern Zhejiang “school” (*xuepai* 學派) begins with a comprehensive survey of Chinese interpretations of their relationship with *Daoxue*, starting with Zhu Xi’s efforts at defining the *Daoxue* community in a way that included Lü Zuqian but excluded other Eastern Zhejiang thinkers: see Wang Yu 王宇, *Daoxing tiandi: Nansong Zhedong xuepai lun* 道行天地：南宋浙東學派論 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2012), 1–30.

²¹ ZSBY 12.302–303. Hu Chang-tze interprets 變夷為華 and 變華為夷 as ethnic assimilation, but the emphasis on the word *zhao* 召 (“attract”) in this passage strongly suggests that it is talking about demographic change, not

This is essentially an argument about ethnocultural affinity. Since like attracts like, a barbarian land ruled by a Chinese ruler will attract Chinese immigrants, while a Chinese land ruled by a barbarian ruler will attract barbarian invaders (even if the ruler is a Türk and the invaders are Kitans). But the argument is evidently inapplicable to the case of the Rong barbarians of Luhun, since their migration to the area of Luoyang took place when the Eastern Zhou dynasty still ruled that area. Indeed, Lü Zuqian himself expresses surprise that the civilization of the Luoyang area could have declined so severely that its inhabitants came to behave like barbarians, since Luoyang was believed to be situated at the center of the world and endowed with an ideal climate—the very opposite of the barbarians’ peripheral and inhospitable lands.

Lü Zuqian therefore shifts to a more creative interpretation of the “like attracts like” argument. He argues that the Luoyang area’s decline consisted of the barbarization of its people’s minds and *qi*, in a way that exerted an attractive force on the minds and *qi* of the Rong barbarians of Luhun:

As soon as Xin You saw someone making sacrifices with his hair untied, he predicted a hundred years in advance that [the Yi and Luo rivers] would become [a land] of the Rong barbarians. As he had predicted, [the states of] Qin and Jin did resettle the [Rong barbarians of] Luhun there, but there is a good reason for this. It is minds alone that can harmonize with one another a hundred generations apart; it is *qi* alone that can form a connection between things a hundred *li* apart. The people of the Yi and Luo rivers dwelt in a land rich in the civilizing teachings and ritual culture of the Chinese, yet they made sacrifices with their hair untied. Their thoughts had already gone out beyond the deserts of the remote lands. Therefore, when their minds were resonating with [Rong barbarian] minds and their *qi* was stirring [Rong barbarian] *qi*, how could the resettlement of the [Rong barbarians of] Luhun not have ensued? When there is a marsh, rainwater will naturally flow into it; when there is odorous mutton, mole crickets and ants will naturally swarm to it; when one follows the customs of barbarians (Yi), barbarians (Rong-Di) will naturally come. It was not any other method that enabled Xin You to predict this a hundred years in advance.

辛有一見被髮之祭，預期爲戎於百年之前。而秦、晉之遷陸渾果不出其所料者，抑有由矣。曠百世而相合者，心也；跨百里而相通者，氣也。伊、洛之民雖居中華聲明文物之地，然被髮野祭，意之所向已在於大荒絕漠之外矣。故以心感心，以氣感氣，安得不爲陸渾之遷哉！既爲沮澤，潦水自歸；既爲羶肉，螻蟻自集；既爲夷俗，戎狄自至。辛有所以能預期於百年之前，非有他術也。²²

identity change. See Hu Chang-tze 胡昌智, “Lü Zuqian de shixue” 呂祖謙的史學, *Shumu jikan* 書目季刊 10.2 (1976), 126.

²²ZSBY 12.303.

Indeed, Lü Zuqian takes the argument further and claims that the Rong barbarians' migration to the Yi and Luo rivers was inevitable once this connection of minds and *qi* had been established. The blame for the migration thus lay solely with the people of the Yi and Luo rivers—not with the states of Qin and Jin or with the Rong barbarians, all of whom really had no free will or agency in the matter. This takes Lü to the conclusion of his passage, where (as we have seen) he uses this case and that of Li Chengqian to claim that barbarism begins in the mind and does not depend on one's geographical location or physical surroundings: one can effectively turn into a barbarian in Luoyang or Chang'an without having lived among barbarians.²³

However, by associating this kind of mental barbarism with the Yi and Luo population's practice of Rong-like customs and Li Chengqian's emulation of Türk culture, Lü Zuqian seems to imply that cultural barbarization is either synonymous with moral barbarization or an outward manifestation of it. The redefinition of barbarism as a purely moral problem remains incomplete because Lü does equate it with the "customs of barbarians"—that is, non-Chinese cultural practices. To some extent, then, one can agree with Hu Chang-tze that Lü's criterion for distinguishing Chinese from barbarians was "culture, rites, and customs" 文化禮俗.²⁴ However, Lü Zuqian's use of Su Wu as an example further complicates the picture, probably unintentionally so: if Su Wu's involuntary practice of the Xiongnu way of life ("digging up marmots [for food] and herding sheep") did not compromise his identity as a Chinese subject of the Han, then identity was more important than culture—or, at least, cultural change did not always lead to identity change. This implies that the people of the Yi and Luo rivers did not turn into Rong barbarians at the moment when they began making sacrifices in the wilderness with their hair untied; rather, the moment of barbarization came when, in their minds, they no longer thought of themselves as Chinese. As for which moment came first, that is apparently not a question that Lü Zuqian is interested to answer.

In 1170, Lü Zuqian delivered a series of lectures on the *Chunqiu* while teaching at the state-run academy in Yanzhou 嚴州 (modern Jiande city 建德市, part of the Hangzhou metropolitan area). His notes for the first of these lectures are extant, and contain an interpretation of the Qian conference of 721 BC that approaches the idea of barbarization from a significantly different angle. As we have seen, Cheng Yi and Hu Anguo both condemned peace conferences like the one held at Qian as acts of appeasement by the Chinese when faced with barbarian incursions. Unlike them, Lü Zuqian seems to read the Qian conference less as a problem of foreign relations than as one of ethnic identities becoming blurred in an increasingly multi-ethnic environment. Lü argues that the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy had been broken down by barbarian immigration by the time of the Qian conference. He contrasts this situation to

²³ Of course, Lü Zuqian forgets the fact that Li Chengqian did come of age in a Chang'an filled with Türks.

²⁴ Hu, "Lü Zuqian de shixue," 125.

the purportedly ancient system, described in texts like the “Yugong” and the *Zhouli* 周禮²⁵, of geographical zones proceeding concentrically from the capital city and ending with the barbarians in the two outermost zones:

In the geographical zones [established] by Yu and by the Zhou dynasty, the barbarians (Man-Yi) of the *yao* and *huang* zones lay a great distance beyond the *hou*, *dian*, *cai*, and *wei* zones. In those days, the difference between the Chinese and the Rong barbarians was certainly clear enough to not require clarification by sages. After the Way of the true king declined, foreign peoples wearing felt and fur began to dwell in the Central Lands, all jumbled together [with the Chinese]. Their territories overlapped [with those of the Chinese], hooves were mixed with feet, houses and yurts faced each other, and as these sights and sounds became familiar, gradually no one knew any longer that there was a difference between the Chinese and the Rong barbarians. Lu was known as a country that honored ritual and moral duty, yet even it invited barbarians (Rong-Di) into its heartland and lowered its ruler’s dignity by holding a conference with them. In that case, it is no surprise that the other [states] were confused and oblivious to the error of their ways. The *Chunqiu* (i.e., Confucius) was afraid that all [people] under heaven would thus forget the difference between the Chinese and the Rong barbarians, and therefore wrote, “Lord [Yin] had a conference with the Rong barbarians at Qian” to alert them and cause them to know that at the [conference’s] ceremonial site, this man was the Lord [of Lu] and that man was a Rong barbarian. With a single line, he caused people’s minds to return from a state of delusion, blocked the barbarians (Yi-Di) when they were at the height of their power, and distinguished the Chinese from the Rong barbarians. Is this not why the achievement of the *Chunqiu* is as great as heaven and earth?

禹服周畿，要荒蠻夷邈然處於侯甸采衛之外。當是時，華戎之辨固不待勝任而後明也。王道既衰，羶毳異類始錯居於中國，疆土相入，蹄踵相交，室廬相望，習熟見聞，寢不知有華戎之辨矣。魯號為禮義之邦，尚招戎狄入內地，屈其君之重而與之會，則其它蚩蚩者習而不察，固其所也。《春秋》懼天下遂忘華戎之辨，故書「公會戎於潛」以警之，使人知壇壝之上此為公而彼為戎。還人心於既迷，遏夷狄於方熾，涇渭華戎於一言之間，此《春秋》之功所以與天地並歟！²⁶

Two things about this passage are especially interesting. First, it is ostensibly about immigration’s damaging effects on the identity of the indigenous population, but the references to the lowering of the Lu ruler’s dignity and to the barbarians being at the height of their power strongly suggest that Lü Zuqian is also presenting a subtle criticism of the Song-Jin peace agreement and calling for a reassertion of Chinese superiority in diplomatic relations with the

²⁵ The relevant *Zhouli* passages, which are mutually contradictory, are at ZLZS 29.897, 33.1030, 37.1175. Two of these passages term the zones as *fu* 服 and one passage terms them as *ji* 畿.

²⁶ DLBJ 13.553.

Jurchens.²⁷ Second, by claiming that Chinese identity depends on physical separation from the barbarians, it contradicts Lü Zuqian's reading of the Xin You anecdote, in which a loss of Chinese identity precedes and indeed brings about the arrival of barbarian immigrants.

In the 1170 lecture, Lü Zuqian's revanchist sentiments evidently took precedence over his moral philosophy. But there is also a passage in the *Zuoshi boyi* in which Lü seems to try to reconcile the two, pairing veiled criticism of the Song-Jin peace agreement with a concern for moral principles. In this passage, he sharply criticizes the Jin 晉 general Li Ke 里克 (d. 650 BC), who decided not to pursue retreating Di barbarians whom his army had defeated at Caisang 采桑 in 652 BC. When Li Ke's colleague Liang Youmi 梁由靡 (n.d.) argued that he could achieve a complete rout of the Di by pursuing them, since they had no sense of shame that would compel them to stand their ground and fight, Li Ke replied that putting fear into the hearts of the Di was sufficient deterrence, whereas relentless pursuit could lead other Di groups to come to their aid. As a result of Li Ke's decision, the Di returned a few months later to raid the state of Jin and avenge their defeat. In impassioned rhetoric that indirectly criticizes Gaozong's decision to make peace with the Jurchens despite the Song military victories in 1140, Lü Zuqian berates Li Ke for squandering a rare victory and causing more suffering for the Chinese inhabitants of the frontier:

Our people on the frontier are slain in the fields year after year and are bandaging their wounds month after month; before the sound of their wailing and weeping has even died down, the [martial] music of drums and bells is already sounding [again in their land]! Why should we treat the barbarians (Rong-Di) so generously and our people so callously?

吾被邊之民歲暴骨而月裹瘡，哭泣之聲未絕而鼓鐸之音已振矣！是何待戎狄之厚而待吾民之薄耶？²⁸

But Lü goes further and argues that Li Ke's generosity toward the Di barbarians was not true generosity at all, since there was a limit to the tolerance of the Chinese. When the barbarians' depredations finally became unbearable, the Chinese would unleash the full extent of their fury

²⁷ Also interesting in this regard is a set of reading notes on the *Zuozhuan* that Lü Zuqian wrote in 1174. Lü was evidently struck by the revelation in the *Zuozhuan* that the Qian conference was held to "reaffirm the good relations [that had existed between Lu and the Rong] under Lord Hui" 脩惠公之好. In that case, Lü comments, there was nothing new or unusual about the Qian conference: "there must have been conferences with the Rong barbarians even before that day" 與戎爲會，蓋非一日矣. But he goes on to suggest that the first peace covenant between Lu and the Rong barbarians did begin soon after the Qian conference, when Lord Yin reluctantly agreed to the Rong request for a covenant and held a second conference for that purpose at Tang. Lü may be hinting that the Song dynasty's loss of dignity vis-à-vis the Jurchens did not begin with the peace agreement of 1142 or even with the Jurchen invasion, but rather with the Song-Jin treaty of alliance against the Kitans, symbolized by "the good relations under Lord Hui." DLBJ 13.558; cf. ZSZXS 1.5, which merely notes that the Qian conference is the first diplomatic contact between barbarians and the Central Lands that is recorded in the *Chunqiu*.

²⁸ ZSBY 10.241–242. For the relevant record in the *Zuozhuan* see ZZZY 13.353.

and invade the barbarians with overwhelming force, as the Han did with the Xiongnu and the Tang did with the Eastern Türks: “From this I know that Li Ke’s way of treating the barbarians (Rong-Di) cannot be called humane, while Liang Youmi’s strategy was never cruel” 吾是以知里可之待戎狄不得爲仁，而梁由靡之策亦未始爲虐也。²⁹ Lü is implying that a strong Song counter-offense against the Jurchens during Gaozong’s reign would have been an act of kindness, since (he both hopes and fears) the Jurchens can now expect a much more destructive reprisal when the Song finally decides it has had enough of their bullying.

Lü Zuqian next takes aim at members of the Southern Song peace party (whom he calls “those who advocate Li Ke’s theory” 主里克之說者) who use King Xuan 宣王 (r. ca. 827–782 BC) of the Western Zhou as a model of passive defense against barbarians. According to the ode “Liuyue” 六月, King Xuan’s army pursued Xianyun 獫狁/獯狁 raiders as far as a place called Taiyuan 大原/太原. Zhuang You’s 莊尤 (i.e., Yan You’s) oft-cited memorial to Wang Mang on warfare with the Xiongnu had argued that while there was no perfect strategy for dealing with nomads like the Xiongnu, King Xuan’s strategy was the best option, since it minimized military expenses by simply shooining raiding barbarians off like mosquitoes or flies. In contrast, Han Wudi’s strategy of full-scale invasion and the First Qing Emperor’s strategy of wall-building were both unsustainably expensive and onerous for the people.³⁰ Lü Zuqian argues that there is a subtle but vital distinction between Li Ke’s strategy and King Xuan’s strategy, since Li Ke allowed the Di barbarians to remain in Jin territory while King Xuan’s army only stopped chasing the Xianyun after they fled beyond the Zhou border at Taiyuan.³¹ Again, one can read a revanchist subtext in this argument, since the Jurchens were technically still occupying Song territory in north China. However, Lü Zuqian does not forget to temper his criticism of appeasement with a deeper moral message, for he considers it equally reprehensible to use deception in dealing with barbarians:

I have argued before that there are two forms of indulgence toward the barbarians (Rong-Di). One can feed their arrogance, causing them to have no fear of us, and wait for them to fall for a trick. This is what deceivers do, setting traps for animals to fall into. Or one can be lenient toward them, causing them to know that we are not worth fearing, upon which they will have the audacity to devour us greedily and without any restraint. This is what cowards do, opening their doors to invite robbers in. If we assess and investigate the truth behind every case of indulging barbarians in ancient and recent history, they always fall into one of these two types. The first type is one that sages cannot bear to do, while the second type is one that sages will never be willing to do.

²⁹ ZSBY 10.242.

³⁰ HS 94b.3824.

³¹ ZSBY 10.242.

吾嘗論縱戎狄者有二。驕之使不吾忌，待其自墮術中者，詐者之事也，爲阱以陷獸者也。寬之使知吾不足忌，遂敢肆其貪噬者，懦者之事也，開門以招盜也。古今之縱戎狄者，揣其情，研其實，不出二說而已矣。前一說，聖人不忍爲也；後一說，聖人不肯爲也。³²

We have already seen Zhang Shi's remarkable assertion that "sincerity and trustworthiness can be practiced with barbarians." Lü Zuqian, too, seems to want to remind his reader that the threat posed by the barbarians does not justify the use of any means, fair or foul, to defeat them. One is reminded of Liu Chang's quite different argument in the "Zhirong lun" that "one did not extend trustworthiness to [barbarians] as long as one could harm them." This contrast is another sign that *Daoxue* philosophers who made arguments about foreign relations felt an uncharacteristic need to negotiate a balance between their ethnic identity and their moral integrity.

More interpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy can be found in Lü Zuqian's two other works of commentary on the *Zuozhuan*: the *Zuoshizhuan shuo*, which Lü personally edited at an unknown date, and the *Zuoshizhuan xushuo*, which was probably compiled after his death from his students' notes.³³ These interpretations include striking cases of self-contradiction regarding the state of Chu. Lü's analysis of Chu's rise to hegemony emphasizes the idea that the barbarians can only rise when the Central Lands are in decline: the former represents "deviant *qi*" 邪氣; the latter, "primal *qi*" 元氣 that is invulnerable to invasion when maintained in good condition. "When the Central Lands are weaker than the barbarians (Man-Yi), it is always the fault of the Central Lands, never the fault of the barbarians" 此中國不如蠻夷，皆中國之過，非蠻夷之過, because the real responsibility lies with Chinese rulers (or, in times of political fragmentation, hegemon) who have failed to discharge their duties to their people.³⁴ Lü observes that the same is true of Chinese politics: morally inferior men (*xiaoren* 小人) rise to power when morally superior men (*junzi* 君子) lose influence, and over-powerful ministers become a problem when the ruling family is weak.³⁵ However, he does not make the argument that barbarian invasions are a result of moral barbarization among the Chinese.

³² ZSBY 10.243.

³³ Zhu Xi was probably referring to the latter text when he said, "Donglai (i.e., Lü Zuqian) has a *Zuoshi shuo* that is also good. It is other people's record of his oral statements" 東萊有《左氏說》，亦好。是人記錄他語言. ZZYL 83.2158.

³⁴ ZSZS 1.7, 1.9, 18.184. But Lü also argues elsewhere that Chu only grew strong enough to invade the Chinese states because its kings had wise advisers like the royal consort Deng Man 鄧曼 (fl. 699–690 BC) and the chancellor Dou Bobi 鬬伯比 (fl. 699 BC), thus illustrating the adage, "Even banditry has its Way" 盜亦有道: see ZSZS 1.11; the adage originates from the "Quqie" 祛箠 chapter of the *Zhuangzi*.

³⁵ For other examples of Lü Zuqian's tendency to draw analogies between the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy and the difference between morally inferior and superior men, see ZSBY 10.235; ZSZS 1.7, 5.56, 18.184.

In the *Zuoshizhuan shuo*, Lü Zuqian disagrees with King Zhuang of Chu's 楚莊王 (r. 613–591 BC) reputation as a “worthy ruler” 賢君 and argues that he “had an arrogant and treasonous ambition to usurp [the Zhou dynasty’s royal authority]” 傲然有篡逆無君之心, as evidenced by his irreverent act of inquiring about the weight of the Zhou king’s ceremonial tripods when meeting with a representative of the Zhou court.³⁶ Lü argues that because “the people of that time, in their customs and habits, all did not understand the great moral duty of subjects to their rulers” 當時之人, 風聲氣習都不知君臣之大義, the *Zuozhuan* author did not condemn King Zhuang for this offense and instead highlighted the wisdom of his later refusal to glorify warfare by erecting a “mound spectacle” 京觀 with the bodies of Jin soldiers killed in the Chu victory at Bi 郟 (597 BC). Slightly later, however, Lü blames the Chu people’s pervasive culture (*qixiang* 氣象 or *qixi* 氣習) of “coercion and bullying” 迫脅陵轢 for the tripods incident, arguing that even a worthy ruler like King Zhuang could not escape the influence of his environment and “family tradition” (*jiafa* 家法).³⁷

In the *Zuoshizhuan xushuo*, Lü Zuqian explicitly rejects his own earlier assessment of King Zhuang. He now absolves King Zhuang of all blame for the tripods incident, arguing that one cannot hold barbarians to the same moral standards as the Chinese:

From reading this passage [about King Zhuang refusing to erect a mound spectacle], [we know that] the culture of Chu was indeed different [from before] at the time of its rise. One might ask, “King Zhuang of Chu did not understand the great moral duty [of a subject to his ruler]. What about the incident with him asking the weight of the tripods, for example?” I would reply: “He was originally a barbarian (Man-Yi), so one cannot use this to fault him. ... Since Shang-dynasty times, they had never been brought to submission. One can see this from the Hymns of Shang in the *Odes*.³⁸ It is just that they later became strong and then gradually learned to practice the Central Lands’ institutions of covenants and conferences. When Dongpo (i.e., Su Shi) wrote the ‘Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun’ and said, ‘Qin and Chu descended into [a state of being] barbarians (Rong-Di),’ he had it exactly backwards. Qin and Chu were actually barbarians (Yi-Di) who gradually rose to become [like the] Central Lands and ceased to be barbarians. [Chu] need not be faulted for the incident of asking about the tripods.”

³⁶ Ironically, this incident occurred when King Zhuang was leading a military expedition against the Rong barbarians of Luhun who now lived near Luoyang. See ZZZY 21.602–604.

³⁷ ZSZS 5.66, 6.73. But see also ZSZS 2.23, where Lü Zuqian characterizes Chu’s “family tradition” as one of “diligence and frugality” 勤儉. For the mound spectacle incident, see ZZZY 23.652–655.

³⁸ This refers to the ode “Yinwu” 殷武, which speaks of a Shang military expedition against Jing-Chu 荆楚. Lü also alludes to this ode in ZSZS 1.7, where he uses it to argue that the Shang dynasty, at the height of its power, was capable of invading Chu.

看此一段，楚興氣象自別。或問曰：楚莊不知大義，如問鼎事何如？曰：他本是蠻夷，不可以此責他。... 自商時，渠亦未嘗馴服，觀《詩·商頌》可見。只是後來漸盛，然後漸學中國盟會制度。東坡作《王者不治夷狄論》，謂「秦、楚流入於夷狄」，正是倒說。蓋秦、楚正是夷狄漸流為中國，非為夷狄也。問鼎之事，不必責。³⁹

Lü Zuqian thus rejects the idea, previously endorsed by Su Shi and also Liu Chang and Hu Anguo, that Chu was a barbarized Chinese state. Instead, he categorizes Chu (as well as Qin) as an originally barbarian state that had become Chinese. In fact, Lü is also reversing his own earlier opinion, for we find him arguing in the *Zuoshizhuan shuo* that Chu was a Chinese state that Confucius *demoted* semantically to the level of the barbarians because its rulers did not honor the “three bonds”:

The ruler of Chu chose Shangchen as his heir apparent, but the chancellor Zishang said, “In the state of Chu, we usually choose younger sons as heirs.” From this we can see how barbarians (Yi-Di) are fundamentally different from the Central Lands. Generally speaking, the Central Lands are the Central Lands because they have the three bonds, while the barbarians are barbarians only because they do not have the three bonds. The three bonds are those between ruler and subject, father and son, and husband and wife. ... We see that there was a Heavenly King (i.e., a Zhou king) above them, yet [the rulers of Chu] illegitimately called themselves kings, thus dishonoring the ruler-subject bond; it is proper to choose one’s official wife’s eldest son as one’s heir, yet [the rulers of Chu] usually chose a younger son, thus dishonoring the father-son bond; Marqius Ai of Cai (r. 694–675 BC) praised [the beauty of the Xi ruler’s wife] Xigui, and [the Chu ruler] thereupon conquered Xi and returned [to Chu] with Xigui [as his concubine], thus dishonoring the husband-wife bond. The severing of these three bonds is the reason why the *Chunqiu* demotes Chu to the level of the barbarians (Yi-Di).

楚子立商臣為太子，令尹子上曰：「楚國之舉常在少者。」觀此見夷狄之與中國本不同。大抵中國之所以為中國，以其有三綱；夷狄之所以為夷狄，只緣無三綱。三綱者，君臣、父子、夫婦也。... 觀其上有天王，而僭稱王號，則無君臣之綱矣；立嫡以長，而常在少者，則無父子之綱矣；息媯繩於蔡哀侯，而息遂見滅，以息媯歸，則無夫婦之綱矣。三綱既絕，此《春秋》所以降楚於夷狄也。⁴⁰

³⁹ ZSZXS 7.174–175. Hu Chang-tze reads this passage as evidence of Lü Zuqian’s contempt for barbarians like King Zhuang. On the contrary, it is an attempt at justifying his increasingly positive opinion of King Zhuang. Hu, “Lü Zuqian de shixue,” 126.

⁴⁰ ZSZS 4.49. For the case of Xigui, including Marquis Ai’s motivation for praising her, see ZZZY 8.241–242, 9.252–253.

To a large extent, Lü Zuqian is simply taking two different ideas found in earlier *Chunqiu* commentaries to their logical (if mutually exclusive) conclusions. Sun Fu and Liu Chang claimed that the Chu rulers' immoral act of setting themselves up as kings—a blatant violation of their ruler-subject bond to the Zhou kings—was the reason for their semantic demotion to the level of barbarism in the *Chunqiu*. Lü Zuqian expands on this idea by linking it with all of the three bonds. However, Sun Fu and Liu Chang also followed Lu Chun in explaining the semantic promotion of Chu rulers in the *Chunqiu* as an act of recognizing Chu's restored ability to follow the diplomatic protocol of the Central Lands. In other words, Chu had been demoted to the level of the barbarians for an act of immorality, but that demotion's reversal did not have to be based on moral improvement, unless one assumed that only moral rulers had the ability to participate in covenants and conferences—an idea that the *Chunqiu* record certainly did not back up. Lü Zuqian takes this idea further by representing Chu's learning how to participate in conferences and covenants as a literal process of sinicization or de-barbarization.

Apart from Lü Zuqian's contradictory representations of Chu, he also seems to show some indecision or inconsistency over where the foundation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy actually lies, as well as whether that dichotomy ought to be static or fluid. In the *Zuoshizhuan shuo*, Lü Zuqian claims that the essence of barbarism is a failure to honor the ethical principles of the three bonds; in the *Zuoshizhuan xushuo*, however, he suggests that strong barbarian states can advance to a state of Chineseness by becoming politically sophisticated enough to participate in “the Central Lands' institutions of covenants and conferences.” Moreover, whereas the *Zuoshizhuan xushuo* represents Chu's ‘sinicization’ through participation in conferences as a neutral or even a positive development, the *Chunqiu* lectures of 1170 argued that the effect of Chinese states holding conferences with barbarians was wholly negative, since it would cause the Chinese to forget the differences between them and the barbarians.⁴¹ This contradiction is particularly ironic, since Lü Zuqian could have resolved it (assuming he felt a need to do so) by drawing a distinction between Chu as a barbarized Chinese state and the Rong barbarians as “real barbarians” or “pure barbarians.” Instead, he denied that such a distinction existed, apparently for no better purpose than to show himself capable of correcting the famous Su Shi even as he applied Su's argument about the Rong barbarians (i.e., that they should not be held to the same standards as the Chinese) to the state of Chu.⁴²

These inconsistencies had real-world implications in Lü Zuqian's geopolitical context, since the Jurchens had clearly “learned to practice the Central Lands' institutions of covenants and conferences” but had no intention of relinquishing their use of the imperial title. Lü Zuqian's account of the de-barbarization of Chu appears to open up the possibility that the Jurchens, too,

⁴¹ Lü's arguments about barbarism are thus less free of “ethnic determinism” than Tillman's analysis (influenced by the theory of “culturalism”) would seem to suggest. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 64.

⁴² It should be noted that unlike Zhu Xi, Lü Zuqian had no serious philosophical disagreements with Su Shi. In fact, the two men had disagreements over this subject, with Lü maintaining that Su Shi, Su Zhe, and Su Xun were not as heterodox as Zhu claimed, and Zhu in turn accusing Lü of defending the ideas of the Su family from criticism. See DLBJ 7.399; Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 21, 1334, 1428–1429.

could become equals of the Song—indeed, could become Chinese—merely by practising diplomacy in the Chinese way. It is highly likely that this was not Lü’s intention, and that he had gotten carried away by an urge to justify his improved opinion of King Zhuang by invalidating the very idea that Chu was barbarized by such acts as using the royal title and asking the weight of the Zhou king’s tripods, even though he himself had previously affirmed that idea. In one of Zhu Xi’s letters to Lü Zuqian, Zhu commented that Lü’s commentaries on the *Zuozhuan* were “detailed and wide-ranging” 詳博 but “suffered a bit from ingenuity” 頗傷巧 in their argumentation.⁴³ Zhu also commented to his students on more than one occasion that Lü’s big weakness as an exegete was “ingenuity” 巧.⁴⁴ I suspect that Zhu Xi was referring to this tendency of Lü Zuqian to propose creative and original interpretations of a problematic text, even when they lacked overall coherence and persuasiveness.⁴⁵

Zhu Xi, whose genius for philosophical synthesis is well known, had no patience for exegetical acrobatics of a more superficially clever kind. Unlike many others in the *Daoxue* community, for example, he was deeply skeptical of efforts at mining the language of the *Chunqiu* for hidden moral messages from Confucius. Zhu had major reservations about Hu Anguo’s commentary and frequently professed an agnostic attitude toward interpreting the *Chunqiu*, arguing that it was better to take it at face value as a historical record.⁴⁶ For example, a statement recorded in 1192–1199 shows that he regarded the so-called promotions of Chu as reflecting actual changes in the language that Chu rulers used in diplomacy with the Central Lands, rather than messages from Confucius.⁴⁷ Zhu Xi was also highly scornful of recent “ingenious contortions” 巧曲 of the *Chunqiu* that were aimed at using the careers of the Qi and Jin hegemony as a guide to political and military success against barbarians.⁴⁸ While he did not explicitly name the *Chunqiu* commentators whom he thought responsible for these contortions, it is likely that Lü Zuqian was one of them. Lü’s commentarial work was on the *Zuozhuan* rather than the *Chunqiu per se*, but Zhu Xi was particularly critical of the *Zuozhuan* for presenting an amorally pragmatic view of politics and frequently took Lü to task for encouraging people to study that text.⁴⁹

⁴³ Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 21, 1429.

⁴⁴ ZZYL 80.2092, 122.2949, 2953.

⁴⁵ For an earlier analysis of Zhu Xi’s criticism of Lü Zuqian’s “ingenuity” see Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy*, 129–130.

⁴⁶ ZZYL 80.2067, 83.2144–2158, 2162, 133.3198. On Zhu Xi’s radical skepticism about *Chunqiu* interpretation, see also Zhao, *Chunqiu xue shi*, 484–496. Zhu’s comments show, however, that he was very familiar with the various *Chunqiu* commentaries, including the Gongyang and Guliang and also those of Lu Chun, Sun Fu, Liu Chang, and Cheng Yi.

⁴⁷ ZZYL 83.2162.

⁴⁸ The phrase “ingenious contortions” is from a conversation recorded after 1189, but the earliest such comment from Zhu Xi is dated to 1179. See ZZYL 83.2173–2176.

⁴⁹ ZZYL 83.2149–2151.

Lü Zuqian's *Zuoshizhuan shuo* contains much praise of Lord Huan of Qi, whose military victories over barbarians he admired; he also engages in extensive analysis of the strategies by which Qi achieved its hegemony, as well as the reasons why Qi lost that position after Lord Huan's death. Lü argues that the Qi and Jin hegemonies deserve credit for stabilizing relations between the Chinese states and uniting them against the barbarians. After the end of Jin hegemony, he claims, "there was no difference between barbarians (Yi) and Chinese, and the armies of the Hu, the Yue, and the Man barbarians crisscrossed the Central Lands of the Chinese" 夷夏無辨，胡、越、蠻兵交中夏。⁵⁰ He also argues that while it was commonly believed that true kings relied on moral power and hegemonies relied on coercive force, the truth was that successful hegemonies all knew how to use moral power to complement coercive force.⁵¹ The sense of moral ambiguity in such assessments of the hegemonies was anathema to Zhu Xi, who once complained to his students:

The *Chunqiu* certainly does respect [the superiority of] the Chinese states and regard the barbarians (Yi-Di) as outer, but when the sage [Confucius] wrote this Classic back then, how could he have wanted to lead all the feudal lords under heaven to respect [the hegemony of] Qi and Jin? Ever since Qin Hui made peace with the barbarians (Rong), the literati have avoided talking about [the difference between] inner and outer, and the great message of the *Chunqiu* has been eclipsed!

《春秋》固是尊諸夏，外夷狄，然聖人當初作經，豈是要率天下諸侯而尊齊、晉？自秦檜和戎之後，士人諱言內外，而《春秋》大義晦矣！⁵²

Zhu Xi appears to be blaming Qin Hui for a decline in the quality of *Chunqiu* scholarship that eventually resulted in the amoral, pro-hegemon interpretations that he found so objectionable, even though it was ironically revanchists like Lü Zuqian who were most prone to glorifying the hegemonies. Indeed, the record of the conversation in which Zhu Xi criticized "ingenious contortions" of the *Chunqiu* shows that he went on to accuse Qin Hui of discouraging the study of the *Chunqiu*, due to its potential for providing rhetorical ammunition to critics of the peace

⁵⁰ Lü Zuqian even suggests that the Western Jin would not have fallen to the Xiongnu if it had a minister as competent as Guan Zhong. This seems to be as far as he can go toward arguing that someone like Guan Zhong could have prevented the Jurchen conquest of north China. ZSZS 2.14–18, 24, 3.34–37, 4.43–45, 13.146–147; see also Hu, "Lü Zuqian de shixue," 126.

⁵¹ ZSZS 12.139 (cf. 4.48).

⁵² ZZYL 83.2175. This comment was recorded by Chen Chun 陳淳 (1153–1217); Tanaka Kenji has shown that Chen studied under Zhu Xi from late 1190 to mid-1191 and again from late 1199 to early 1200: see Tanaka, "Shumon deshi shiji nenkō," 153–158. Cf. another statement recorded by Chen Chun at ZZYL 83.2173, in which Zhu Xi blames the recent eclipse of the *Chunqiu* message to people's interest in comparing the merits of Lord Huan of Qi and Lord Wen of Jin as hegemonies.

policy.⁵³ The accuracy of this accusation deserves further investigation, but that would lie beyond the scope of this chapter.⁵⁴ I shall therefore turn now to analyzing Zhu Xi's statements about barbarians and placing them in the context of the *Daoxue* universalist's dilemma.

Zhu Xi on barbarism and the barbarians

Zhu Xi's evolving attitude toward the revanchist cause has previously been analyzed by Qian Mu and Hoyt Tillman.⁵⁵ Zhu's letters and memorials from the early 1160s reflect a strong sense of revanchist fervor, but oral statements and conversations recorded in the *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 (Sayings of Master Zhu, Arranged By Category) show that by the 1180s, he had shifted to a pessimistic belief that the Song had wasted its best chance of victory in 1161–1163 and could now only afford a continuous standoff with the Jin at best. Finally, he came to the opinion in the late 1190s that avenging the Jingkang disaster had long ceased to be a legitimate cause, since the generation of Jurchens responsible for the disaster was now dead. Thus, Zhu Xi eventually decided that the meaning of revanchism had really been about punishing “the men who killed our fathers and grandfathers” 親殺吾父祖之人, rather than a permanent vendetta against the Jin dynasty and the Jurchen people. Like Zhang Shi, he dismissed Yu Yunwen and other hawkish ministers of the 1164–1174 period as incompetent opportunists who had advanced their careers by hijacking the revanchist agenda; on the other hand, “honest and upright men” 端人正士 of the time had all favored peace negotiations over revanchism because they knew that revenge had already lost its power as a motivation for war.⁵⁶ Tillman suggests that Zhu Xi's “hostility toward the war party” may have been aimed at the chief minister Han Tuozhou 韓侂胄 (1152–1207), who was persecuting the *Daoxue* community during the late 1190s and was largely responsible for another disastrous Song attack on the Jin in 1206.⁵⁷ This is unlikely to be the case, however, as Han only took up the revanchist cause after Zhu Xi's death.⁵⁸ It seems more likely that Zhu Xi was simply part of the broader ideological turn from revanchism toward moderate reformism after 1163, and that he had been influenced in the late 1160s and 1170s by Zhang Shi's assessment of Yu Yunwen and the other war hawks.

⁵³ ZZYL 83.2174. On the context for Zhu Xi's highly negative assessment of Qin Hui see Hartman, “The Making of a Villain,” 117–134.

⁵⁴ Qin Hui is known to have banned the writing of private histories during his tenure as Gaozong's chief minister, but I know of no other evidence of him suppressing the writing of commentaries on the *Chunqiu*. On the private history ban see Hartman, “The Making of a Villain,” 96–105.

⁵⁵ Qian Mu 錢穆, *Zhuzi xin xue'an* 朱子新學案 (Taipei: Sanmin shuju, 1971), vol. 5, 75–84; Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 413 and *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 170–171, 175–176, 179–180.

⁵⁶ ZZYL 133.3196–3201.

⁵⁷ Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 170.

⁵⁸ See Richard L. Davis, “The Reigns of Kuang-tsung and Ning-tsung,” in Paul Jakov Smith ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 790–796.

At the same time, it is clear from the *Zhuzi yulei* that Zhu Xi never stopped seeing the reconquest of north China as a legitimate cause even when revenge no longer had anything to do with it. In the 1190s, he argued that a successful reconquest would take ten to thirty years of preparation, and complained that the imperial court was not making any of the necessary sacrifice. If the court would only divert money from luxuries to the army, “then we’d be able to cut off the caitiffs’ heads and put them on display” 則虜首可梟矣.⁵⁹ In 1198, he lamented that he was too old to see the Song regain the Central Plains, but he evidently had not despaired of the reconquest happening sometime after his death.⁶⁰ In a conversation recorded in either 1190 or 1199, Zhu Xi also expressed confidence that the Song dynasty’s decline in power was only temporary and that Heaven, which he equated with the core *Daoxue* concepts of *li* 理 and *qi*, would eventually produce an “extraordinary man” 非常之人 to lead the reconquest of the north:

This, too, is simply what *li* is like. The movement of *qi* has always gone from rise to decline, then from decline to rise. It just keeps going in a cycle like that, so there is never decline without subsequent rise. That is why when [Heaven] has visited extraordinary disaster on the world, it will surely give birth to an extraordinary man [to reverse the disaster].

這箇也只是理如此。氣運從來一盛了又一衰，一衰了又一盛，只管人恁地循環去。無有衰而不盛者。所以降非常之禍於世，定是生非常之人。⁶¹

Zhu then quoted one of many ditties composed by Shao Yong, titled the “Song of the Generations” (“Jingshi yin” 經世吟⁶²), which tells the story of Chinese civilization in a way that gives equal credit to its sage-king founders and its Tang and Song reunifiers:

Fuxi, Xuanyuan (i.e., Huangdi), Yao, and Shun, 羲、軒、堯、舜,
Kings Tang and Wu and Lords Huan and Wen, 湯、武、桓、文,

⁵⁹ ZZYL 133.3200.

⁶⁰ ZZYL 133.3196. Tillman translates 今老矣，不及見矣 as “now I am old, but I still have not seen it accomplished,” but a more accurate translation would be “now I am old and will not live long enough to see it.” Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 169.

⁶¹ ZZYL 1.5.

⁶² The question of how Shao Yong understood the phrase *jingshi* (which appears in the title of his most important philosophical work) has aroused some controversy between scholars who interpret it as “ordering the world” and scholars who interpret it as “going through the ages.” In the “Jingshi yin” at least, both meanings are possible but the latter meaning seems stronger. For differing interpretations of *jingshi* see Don J. Wyatt, “Shao Yong’s Numerological-Cosmological System,” in Makeham ed., *Dao Companion to Neo-Confucian Philosophy*, 21–25; Chu Ping-tzu, “Review: Don J. Wyatt, *The Recluse of Loyang: Shao Yung and the Moral Evolution of Early Sung Thought*,” *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 28 (1998), 244; Alain Arrault, “Review: Don J. Wyatt, *The Recluse of Loyang: Shao Yung and the Moral Evolution of Early Sung Thought*,” *T’oung Pao* 86.1 (2000), 172–173.

Sage-kings, kings, and hegemonies, 皇、王、帝、霸，
 Fathers and sons, rulers and ministers. 父、子、君、臣。
 The Way of these four — 四者之道⁶³，
 Its *li* came to an end with the Qin dynasty. 理限于秦，
 When we came to the [end of the] two Han dynasties, 降及兩漢，
 [The empire] again went through a division into three parts. 又歷三分。
 East and west fell into disorder, 東西倣擾，
 South and north into turmoil; 南北紛紜，
 With the five kinds of *Hu* and the Ten Kingdoms, 五胡、十姓，
 The laws of the realm nearly descended into chaos. 天紀幾焚。
 If not for the Tang, we could not have gone on; 非唐不濟，
 If not for the Song, we could not have survived. 非宋不存，
 For thousands and tens of thousands of generations, 千世萬世，
 The Central Plains have produced great men! 中原有人！⁶⁴

To this, Zhu Xi added the comment:

A well-ordered age will surely be followed by an age of disorder, and an age of disorder will surely be followed by a well-ordered age. The barbarians (Yi-Di) are only barbarians; [Heaven] will have to return the Central Plains to us.

蓋一治必又一亂，一亂必又一治。夷狄只是夷狄，須是還他中原。⁶⁵

One is reminded of Cheng Yi's explanation for the Sui-Tang reunification, already quoted earlier: "When the disorder caused by barbarians (Yi-Di) has reached its height, there will surely be a hero who emerges to pacify it" 夷狄之亂已甚，必有英雄出而平之。⁶⁶ In Zhu Xi's mind, too, an ethnocentric understanding of political legitimacy seems to have merged with a cyclical theory of history to make the restoration of Chinese rule in the north appear inevitable.⁶⁷ As I mentioned earlier, however, Zhu Xi's theory of political legitimacy was not primarily ethnocentric: he regarded any dynasty that had failed to achieve reunification as illegitimate. In his time, no unambiguously "barbarian" dynasty had yet succeeded in conquering (or, from another

⁶³ It is unclear to me which four categories or persons are meant here.

⁶⁴ ZZYL 1.5; for the source of the poem see Guo ed., *Shao Yong ji*, 466.

⁶⁵ ZZYL 1.5.

⁶⁶ CSYS 18.236.

⁶⁷ It should be noted that Shao Yong also postulated much larger cycles of cosmic time that left little room for human agency. For Zhu Xi's attitude toward this theory see Don J. Wyatt, "Chu Hsi's Critique of Shao Yung: One Instance of the Stand Against Fatalism," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45.2 (1985), 659–662.

perspective, reunifying) the entire Chinese world, but we have seen that the Qin state's origins and position in the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy were a matter of some dispute in Song times. Moreover, Zhu Xi apparently agreed with Cheng Yi that the Tang imperial clan's various moral transgressions bore the taint of barbarism. In 1197, he commented on the perception that women of Tang times were less mindful of sexual morality: "The origins of the Tang came from the barbarians (Yi-Di), so they did not think it strange when women violated the norms of ritual" 唐源流出於夷狄，故閨門失禮之事，不以爲異。⁶⁸ Yet this apparently did not prevent him from recognizing the Tang as a legitimate dynasty.

When Zhu Xi said, "The barbarians are only barbarians," he was taking barbarian inferiority to the Chinese as a given. Zhu made his only recorded attempt at explaining the inferiority of barbarians in 1188, at the end of an exposition on differences in *qi* endowment:

Someone asked, "If *qi* endowment differs [from one person to another] in turbidity, then are there also [differences of] balance and completeness in the innate nature bestowed by Heaven?" [Zhu Xi] said, "There are no [differences of] balance and completeness. We can say that it is like the light of the sun and moon: if one is on open ground, one can see all of it; but if one is under a thatched roof, then there is an obstruction and one can only see some of it. Those who are turbid are turbid in their *qi*, so they are obstructed as if under a thatched roof. However, with human beings there is a *li* that allows them to penetrate their obstruction; as for animals, they also have this innate nature [that human beings have], but they are limited by their physical forms. They are born with extreme obstructions, through which there is no place to penetrate. As for the humaneness of tigers and wolves⁶⁹, the ritual sacrifices made by jackals and otters⁷⁰, and the dutifulness of bees and ants⁷¹, their penetration is limited to these only, like light passing through a crack. As for macaques, their physical forms are similar to human beings, so they are the most intelligent of animals⁷²; it is just that they do not know how to speak. When it

⁶⁸ ZZYL 136.3245. This claim attained great prominence in modern scholarship on the Tang after Chen Yinke quoted at the beginning of his *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao*: Chen, *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao*, 1. Many modern historians have used it to interpret cases of incest in the early Tang imperial family as a reflection of the steppe tradition of levirate marriage, but see a recent critique of this interpretation in Du Wenyu 杜文玉, *Tangdai gongting shi* 唐代宮廷史 (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 2010), 86–91.

⁶⁹ This alludes to an argument in the *Zhuangzi* that even tigers and wolves are humane because they love their fathers and sons: see the "Tianyun" 天運 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* and cf. ZZYL 4.60, 73.

⁷⁰ This refers to a supposed habit of jackals and otters to display their catch when they have caught more food than they can eat. The early Chinese interpreted these displays as ritual sacrifices signaling to human beings that the hunting and fishing seasons could begin: see the "Wangzhi" and "Yueling" 月令 chapters of the *Liji*. Zhu Xi again cites this example in ZZYL 4.60 (dated to 1196–1199), 4.66 (dated to 1199), and 4.73 (dated to 1199).

⁷¹ This presumably refers to the ability of bees and ants to form hierarchical societies. In similar expositions dated to 1196–1199, Zhu Xi claimed that ants were so small in size that they could only understand the loyalty that subjects owed to their rulers: ZZYL 4.58, 60, 73.

⁷² Zhu Xi associated the ability to stand erect with a higher level of intelligence: see also ZZYL 4.62.

comes to barbarians (Yi-Di), they are between human beings and animals, so they will always be difficult to change [for the better].

問：「氣質有昏濁不同，則天命之性有偏全否？」曰：「非有偏全。謂如日月之光，若在露地，則盡見之；若在蔀屋之下，有所蔽塞，有見有不見。昏濁者是氣昏濁了，故自蔽塞，如在蔀屋之下。然在人則蔽塞有可通之理。至於禽獸，亦是此性，只被他形體所拘，生得蔽隔之甚，無可通處。至於虎狼之仁，豺獾之祭，蜂蟻之義，卻只通這些子，譬如一隙之光。至於獼猴，形狀類人，便最靈於他物，只會說話而已。到得夷狄，便在人與禽獸之間，所以終難改。」⁷³

This passage's interpretation of barbarism almost seems like an afterthought; nonetheless, it reflects an unprecedented and perhaps unique effort at linking the idea of barbarism to key *Daoxue* concepts and theories. To some extent, it resembles both Hu Yin's theory about impure or imbalanced *qi* as the source of barbarian moral inferiority, and Cheng Hao's theory about the disequilibrium of *yin* and *yang* in animals and barbarians. However, Zhu Xi does not follow Hu Yin in ascribing humanity (albeit a morally distorted form of it) to barbarians, and his theory of the difference between human beings, barbarians, and animals is philosophically more complex than Cheng Hao's, since it involves the concepts of innate nature and *li*. Zhu's theory explains that human beings have different levels of goodness because of differing degrees of obstruction by turbid *qi*, but it also argues that human beings and animals have the same innately good nature.⁷⁴ Human beings have "a *li* that allows them to penetrate their obstruction" and thereby realize their nature, whereas animals have a different *li* that is manifested in their limiting physical forms and results in their inability to penetrate their obstructing *qi*.⁷⁵

Zhu Xi evidently had much more to say about the difference between human beings and animals than about the difference between human beings and barbarians. But the quotation from 1188 suggests that he assumed barbarians to have the same innate nature as human beings and animals. What, then, accounted for the barbarians' moral inferiority despite the fact that they resembled human beings in possessing human-like physical forms and the power of speech? Zhu Xi seems to have believed that they were endowed with *qi* that falls between human *qi* and animal *qi* in turbidity, thus severely but not totally obstructing their innate nature. He did not, however, clarify whether barbarians have the same *li* as human beings—that is, "a *li* that allows

⁷³ ZZYL 4.58.

⁷⁴ Vytis Silius elides this argument by mistranslating 至於禽獸，亦是此性 as "when we come to birds and beasts, their particular course of growth (*xing* 性)..." This produces a meaning that is exactly the opposite of what Zhu Xi intended. Silius, "Congruity (*li*) as Ethical Notion in Zhu Xi's Theory of *Renxing*," 110.

⁷⁵ In another conversation recorded in 1179–1189, Zhu Xi claims that human beings and animals have natures that "share the same source" 一源, but human beings' natures have the potential for illumination or enlightenment, whereas animals' natures have obstructions that cannot be penetrated. Zhu does not specify whether this obstruction consists of *qi*. ZZYL 4.57; Tanaka Kenji has established that the recorder, Yu Daya 余大雅 (n.d.), studied with Zhu Xi in 1179–1189: see Tanaka, "Shumon deshi shiji nenkō," 190–191.

them to penetrate their obstruction”—or a *li* of their own that is neither human nor animal. Tillman seems to have taken the former to be the case, stating that to Zhu Xi, “[a]lthough the barbarians possessed principle, their psycho-physical endowments so grossly obscured it that transforming them was extremely difficult.”⁷⁶ This appears to conflate the notion of a universal innate nature with the concept of a universal *li*, missing the fact that in the above-quoted passage from 1188, Zhu Xi postulates a universal nature but also a distinctive human *li*.

Chang Chishen claims that Zhu Xi’s “concept of the innate nature bestowed by Heaven” is the same thing as “universal *li*” 普遍之理, although he also argues that Zhu alternated between using “innate nature” (*xing* 性) to refer to “universal *li*” and using it to refer to “distinctive *li*” 特殊之理. According to Chang, Zhu Xi saw barbarians as human beings whose “lower-quality distinctive *li*” 較低等的特殊之理 had adulterated their *qi* to produce a diminished amount of “universal *li*,” thus diminishing their humanity or “human nature” 人性.⁷⁷ Chang cites the 1188 passage quoted above as evidence, but this is highly problematic: the passage clearly implies that Zhu Xi did not regard barbarians as human beings at all, and it makes no claim for the existence of a universal *li*. It should also be noted, however, that in the 1190s, Zhu Xi apparently shifted closer to Cheng Hao’s position of identifying *qi* balance, not *li*, as the source of the difference between human beings and animals. In 1191, for example, he repeated almost verbatim an argument in the *Chengshi yishu* (which Zhu himself had been responsible for editing) that human beings had the same minds (*xin* 心) as plants and animals and differed only in having “received the equilibrium of heaven and earth at birth” 受天地之中而/以生.⁷⁸ In another conversation in 1197–1200, he explained that the reason why animals, unlike human beings, could not be improved was not that they did not have “this *li*” 此理 but rather that their *qi* was so “muddled” 昏 that it was as if they did not have “this *li*” at all.⁷⁹ This seems to imply that Zhu Xi had come to regard human beings, barbarians, and animals as having the same universal *li* but different qualities of *qi*.⁸⁰ What Chang Chishen reads as inconsistency or imprecision in Zhu Xi’s use of the term *li* may actually reflect an evolution in his use of *li* as a concept.

⁷⁶ Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 263 n. 7.

⁷⁷ Chang, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao,” 252–254.

⁷⁸ ZZYL 4.59; CSYS 1.4. See also ZZYL 4.58, 65–66, 73.

⁷⁹ ZZYL 4.58.

⁸⁰ David Tien has cited some statements recorded in the 1190s as evidence that Zhu Xi believed in both a universal *li* and “individualized *li* that are actually manifested” according to differences in *qi* endowment. However, these statements do not actually assert the existence of individualized *li*. Zhu Xi is responding to questions about whether inanimate or insentient objects, such as dried grass, bricks, chairs, writing brushes, boats, and carts, “have *li*” 有理. Zhu affirms that they do, because *li* is immanent in all things and determines their physical properties. He even claims that a brick has a brick’s *li* and a chair has a chair’s *li*. But I do not think we can assume that he is thereby saying that a brick has a different individualized *li* from that of a chair; he may simply have been emphasizing that *li* is manifested in even these objects. It is important to note that Zhu Xi never claims that different kinds of animals and plants have different individualized *li*; instead, he argues that different kinds of animals and plants have different balances of *yin* and *yang*: for example, flightless birds have more *yin* than other birds; apes (who can stand

Kondō Kazunari has argued that since the statement that barbarians are not human and “will always be difficult to change [for the better]” occurred in the context of a theoretical discussion on the ontology of *li* and *qi*, it cannot be assumed to reflect Zhu Xi’s attitude toward “real barbarians (現実の夷狄).”⁸¹ We can assume that by “real barbarians,” Kondō was referring primarily to the Jurchens. On the surface, at least, Zhu Xi’s attitude toward the Jurchens appears to have been variable or inconsistent. We have already seen him claiming during the 1190s that the Jurchens, being “only barbarians,” were unfit to rule north China for long. But a conversation about the “northern caitiffs” 北虜 in 1191 seems to show him arguing that the Jurchens had left barbarism behind after conquering north China. He remarks that the Jurchen armies who had overrun the north were “like tigers and wolves from the mountains and forests who had been let loose on the plains—how can they have been mere human beings?” 如山林虎豹縱於原野，豈是人？ But he later observes that this is no longer the case with later generations of Jurchens: “On the whole, they were barbarians (Yi-Di) when they first appeared, but once they had achieved their ambitions and satisfied their desires, how were they any different from us?” 大抵當初出時是夷狄，及志得意滿，與我何異？⁸² It is important to note, however, that Zhu Xi’s intent was to persuade his audience (and probably himself as well) that the Jurchens, having grown used to lives of comfort, had lost their “barbaric” military prowess and were no longer invincible at war. He was not suggesting that they had really ceased to be barbarians and become moral equals of the Chinese.

Other evidence in the *Zhuzi yulei* suggests that Zhu Xi could be openly skeptical about barbarians’ capacity to change and become like the Chinese. In 1199, he was asked whether the customs of Goryeo were good. He replied that they “will always carry the ways of the barbarians (Man-Yi)” 終帶蠻夷之風, despite acknowledging that many Goryeo aristocrats had studied in the Song capital and passed the examinations as *bin’gong* candidates.⁸³ A similar case relating to the Jurchens is now quite well known, having been highlighted by Hoyt Tillman as a reflection of Zhu Xi’s “skepticism about the ability of barbarians to become acculturated to Confucian values.”⁸⁴ In 1198, right after Zhu Xi sighed and lamented that he would not live to see the reconquest of the Central Plains, one of his students mentioned that the previous Jin emperor

erect) have more *yang* than other animals. ZZYL 4.61–62; David W. Tien, “Metaphysics and the Basis of Morality in the Philosophy of Wang Yangming”, in Makeham ed., *Dao Companion to Neo-Confucian Philosophy*, 296–298. On unresolved problems with Zhu Xi’s explanations of the relationship between *li* and *qi*, see also John W. M. Krummel, “Transcendent or Immanent? Significance and History of *Li* in Confucianism,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 37.3 (2010), 422–428.

⁸¹ Kondō Kazunari 近藤一成, “Sōdai Yōka gakuha Ha Teki no Ka-I kan” 宋代永嘉学派葉適の華夷観, *Shigaku zasshi* 史学雑誌 88.6 (1979), 78 n. 38.

⁸² ZZYL 133.3195–3196.

⁸³ ZZYL 133.3191.

⁸⁴ Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 171; also Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 421, 426.

Shizong 世宗 (r. 1161–1189), known to the Song as Prince Ge 葛王, had been “committed to practicing humane governance” 專行仁政 and had earned the nickname “Lesser Yao and Shun” 小堯舜 from the people of the north. Zhu Xi’s first response was to say, “If he could honor and practice the Way of Yao and Shun, then he was free to even be a Greater Yao and Shun” 他能尊行堯舜之道，要做大堯舜也由他. But he then thought again and said, “How can he have changed from the ways of the barbarians (Yi-Di)? I fear he was just highly talented and happened to govern humanely by coincidence” 他豈變蠻夷之風？恐只是天資高，偶合仁政耳.⁸⁵ We cannot know for certain what Zhu Xi’s psychological or emotional state was when he pondered the question of whether a Jurchen ruler could practice humane governance and be worthy of comparison with the sage-kings. But it is likely to have been one of unease and ambivalence as he realized that his moral ideals were clashing with his Chinese identity. It is not so much that Jin Shizong “failed to impress” Zhu Xi (as Tillman puts it⁸⁶); rather, Zhu was refusing to let himself be impressed, so that he could avoid acknowledging the possibility that the Jin might one day become morally equal or even superior to the Song.

Whether Zhu Xi saw the Jurchens as capable of behaving morally seems to have depended on the point he was trying to make. In one conversation during the 1190s, one of Zhu Xi’s students asked him for his assessment of a strategic recommendation that the former chief minister Zhao Ding 趙鼎 (1085–1147) had made to Gaozong in 1136. Disagreeing with Zhang Jun’s aggressive strategy of attacking the Qi 齊 (1130–1137) state, a Jurchen-installed puppet regime ruled by the former Song official Liu Yu 劉豫 (1073–1146), Zhao had argued that the Southern Song should make peace with the Qi and let it remain as a buffer state rather than attempt to conquer it. This would enable the Song to avoid having to face the more formidable Jin directly. The question struck a residual revanchist nerve in Zhu Xi, who dismissed the idea as ridiculous and justified his assessment with dehumanizing language about the Jurchens that would not have been out of place in the foreign policy rhetoric of the early Tang:

The caitiffs are jackals and wolves, dogs and sheep. When they see awe-inducing strength, they become afraid, but when they see kindness, they indulge even more freely in bullying. If we really had achieved victory over Liu Yu in just one or two battles, [the caitiffs] would then have become afraid of us. After the Jingkan era, we could do nothing but fear them and make peace with them, and that is why they indulged even more freely in bullying us. If we really could achieve victory over Liu Yu, how could [the caitiffs] not become afraid? The caitiffs are nothing but birds and beasts; how can they be subdued with gentleness?

⁸⁵ ZZYL 133.3196.

⁸⁶ Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 426.

虜，豺狼犬羊也。見威則畏，見善則愈肆欺侮。若自家真箇曾勝劉豫，殺得一兩番贏，他便怕矣。靖康以後，自家只管怕他，與之和，所以他愈肆欺侮。若自家真箇能勝劉豫，他安得不懼？虜，禽獸耳。豈可以柔服也？⁸⁷

On another occasion during the 1190s, however, Zhu Xi described the fracturing of the Song-Jin alliance in a surprisingly honest tone of self-criticism, blaming it on the Song court's decision to accept Zhang Jue's 張穀 (d. 1123) defection⁸⁸ and offer asylum to the last Liao emperor⁸⁹:

Because of this, the caitiffs were furious and said, "At first they made this treaty with us, but now they are writing edicts to offer asylum to traitors and fugitives from our side!" Then they sent a denunciatory letter to call us to account, and besides that denunciatory letter there were others. They used extremely harsh language to rebuke us, all of which the [editors of] the present Veritable Records [for Huizong's reign] did not dare to quote. Huizong was very frightened and summoned Zhang Jue; he had no choice but to execute him and hand his head over to the caitiffs. [Huizong] also came up with arguments to justify the matter of [the Liao emperor]. This then led [the Jurchens] to develop feelings of contempt toward us and a desire to humiliate us. But [the Jurchen ruler] Aguda was different—he always spoke of observing trustworthiness and integrity. His generals asked for permission to lead their armies to punish us, but each time Aguda refused, saying, "We have already sworn a treaty with the Great Song; how can we break it?" Even a barbarian (Yi-Di) was able to observe trustworthiness and integrity, yet we broke the treaty and acted in bad faith, thus incurring the barbarians' wrath! Whenever I read the

⁸⁷ The *Zhuzi yulei* does not supply a date for this conversation, but Tanaka Kenji has identified three periods when its recorder Huang Zhuo 黃卓 (n.d.) studied under Zhu Xi: 1191, 1193, and 1198–1199. See ZZYL 131.3142; Tanaka Kenji 田中謙二, "Shumon deshi shiji nenkō zoku" 朱門弟子師事年攷統, *Toho gakuho* 東方學報 48 (1975), 319. On Zhao Ding's career and his policy disagreements with Zhang Jun in 1136, see Tao, "The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127–1162)," 674–677. On Zhu Xi's ambivalent view of Zhao Ding and preference for Zhang Jun, see Hartman, "The Making of a Villain," 134.

⁸⁸ Zhang Jue was a former Liao general who had surrendered Pingzhou 平州 (modern Lulong 盧龍 county) to the Jin and then rebelled and transferred his allegiance to the Song. The Song court, eager to gain a foothold in Pingzhou, accepted Zhang's defection, granted him an official title, and sent him a large reward of silk and silver after he claimed to have defeated a Jin army. A Jin sneak attack scattered Zhang's forces when he was out receiving this reward, forcing him to flee Pingzhou and seek asylum with the Song. The Jin were outraged upon seizing and reading the edicts that Zhang Jue had received from the Song court, which contained promises of joint military action against the Jin. The Song then attempted to placate the Jin by putting Zhang Jue to death, but the damage done to Song-Jin relations contributed to the Jurchens' decision to invade the Song. See SCBM 17.2b–5a, 11b–13a, 18.1a–3a, 10b–12a, 18.7a–8b, 12a–14a, 24.12b.

⁸⁹ Three different sources state that in early 1125 the Liao emperor, who was hiding in the Yin Mountains, planned to seek refuge with the Song but changed his mind at the last minute because he doubted the sincerity of the Chinese. However, only one of these sources—Cai Tao's 蔡條 (n.d.) *Beizheng jishi* 北征紀實—mentions the Song offer of asylum. Soon after this, Jin forces caught up with the Liao emperor and took him prisoner. SCBM 21.1a, 8a–11b, 24.3b–4a.

record [of these events], it makes my head ache; on every page there is not one thing that was done right.

由是虜人大怒，云：「始與我盟誓如此，今乃寫詔書招納我叛亡！」遂移檄來責問，檄外又有甚檄文，極所以罵詈之語，今實錄中皆不敢載。徽宗大恐，遂招引到張穀來，不柰何，斬其首與虜人。又作道理，分雪天祚之事，遂啟其輕侮之心。然阿骨打卻乖，他常以守信義為說。其諸將欲請起兵問罪，阿骨打每不可，曰：「吾與大宋盟誓已定，豈可敗盟！」夷狄猶能守信義，而吾之所以敗盟失信，取怒於夷狄之類如此！每讀其書，看得人頭痛，更無一版有一件事做得應節拍。⁹⁰

Chang Chishen interprets this passage as evidence of an unusually objective and impartial attitude toward the Jurchens.⁹¹ Peter Bol quotes the same passage to claim that in Zhu Xi's view, "fundamentally the same moral principles were endowed in all humans (including the *Yi di* of the present and past)."⁹² It should be evident by now that both these interpretations impose an artificial sense of coherence on Zhu Xi's various statements about the Jurchens. In reality, Zhu's attitude toward the Jurchens was too complex, contradictory, and ambivalent to be classified as either ethnocentrism or universalism, even (or perhaps especially) during the last decade of his life. He felt stunned and shamed by the realization that the Chinese, not the "barbarians," had been guilty of breaking the Song-Jin alliance first, but he continued to maintain that the reconquest of the north was justified and necessary, even if revenge was no longer a valid reason for it. He suggested that the Jurchens were no longer barbarians so as to show that reconquest was possible, but also asserted that they would always be barbarians so as to show that reconquest was inevitable. He claimed that the Jurchens were animals who only understood "awe-inspiring strength" and could not be "subdued with gentleness," but also had to concede, grudgingly, that at least one Jurchen emperor was capable of humane governance.

Two rather surprising characteristics of Zhu Xi's discourse on barbarians seem relatively consistent, however, and both are negative in nature. First, he did not follow many of his *Daoxue* predecessors and peers in adopting the concept of moral barbarization; second, he did not use the concepts of *li* and *qi*, with which he is so closely identified, to explain why the "ways of the barbarians" were so different from those of the Chinese. It seems likely to me that Zhu Xi ultimately chose not to take a firm position on whether the roots of barbarism lay in the barbarians' *li* or in their *qi*. In either case, the implications made the notion of moral

⁹⁰ ZZYL 127.3049–3050. These words were recorded by Huang Zhuo in the 1190s. It is unclear what records Zhu Xi read, and his account is a little anachronistic: Aguda died not long after Zhang Jue's revolt and defection to the Song, so when Huizong offered asylum to the Liao emperor in early 1125, the Jin ruler was Aguda's younger brother Wuqimai 吳乞買 (1075–1135). Moreover, Wuqimai finally agreed to the Jin generals' call for an invasion of the Song. Zhu Xi's claim at ZZYL 133.3199 that Aguda was still alive at the beginning of Gaozong's reign is similarly inaccurate.

⁹¹ Chang, "'Zhongguo' gainian yu 'Hua Yi' zhi bian de lishi tantao," 252.

⁹² Bol, "Geography and Culture," 81.

barbarization cosmologically impossible: since human beings and barbarians had an almost unbridgeable difference in their *li* or *qi*, Chinese people could not turn into barbarians by behaving or dressing like barbarians. Thus, although Zhu Xi complained during the 1190s that the types of clothing that the Song had inherited from the Tang were really based on the Xianbi fashion of the Northern Dynasties, rather than the Chinese style of dress in antiquity, he never claimed that the Chinese had become barbarians as a result.⁹³

As we saw earlier, Zhu Xi did accept Cheng Yi's interpretation of *Analects* 3:5, which suggests that he thought it possible for the Chinese to behave more immorally than barbarians. But he never echoed Cheng Yi's claim that human beings could turn into barbarians and finally into animals by behaving contrary to ritual.⁹⁴ Zhu Xi's unusual skepticism about *Chunqiu* commentaries and distaste for the *Zuozhuan* probably had much to do with this, since these texts had supplied most of the rhetorical resources and intellectual foundations for the discourse of barbarization. For example, Cheng Yi and Hu Anguo both interpreted the demotion of the Qǐ and Teng rulers in the *Chunqiu* as Confucius's response to their ritual or moral barbarization.⁹⁵ In contrast, Zhu Xi (in a conversation recorded in 1198) denied that the changing titles of the Qǐ and Teng rulers were semantic demotions at all. Adopting Sun Fu's alternative interpretation, Zhu Xi argued that these rulers, being from resource-poor states, were trying to reduce their expenses by using the diplomatic protocol for lower-ranking lords; Confucius was merely reflecting reality by recording the actual protocol that a lord used on such occasions. Zhu also echoed Zhao Kuang's objection that larger states that behaved immorally do not suffer such changes in their rulers' titles in the *Chunqiu*, laying Confucius open to the charge of a double standard if he were indeed engaging in semantic demotions.⁹⁶

Even when Zhu Xi invoked *li* and “the movement of *qi*” to support his cyclical theory of political rise and decline, he made no attempt at linking that theory to the differences in *li* and *qi* between human beings and barbarians. When he had to emphasize the ferocity or immorality of the Jurchens, he fell back on the traditional rhetorical strategy of dehumanization (e.g., “like tigers and wolves” and “nothing but birds and beasts”) instead of blaming their barbarian *qi*. This

⁹³ ZZYL 91.2326–2328. Shen Gua 沈括 (1031–1095) made a similar observation in his *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談, but did not pass any value judgment on the change in clothing styles: see MXBT 1.23. Ge Zhaoguang claims that Zhu Xi even criticized the clothes that the emperor wore for being “*Hu* clothing” 胡服, but this is a misreading of the line 今上領衫與靴皆胡服. Ge reads 今上 as “the reigning emperor,” but 上領衫 is actually the name of a kind of clothing (cf. 上領服 at ZZYL 91.2326). The line should therefore be read as, “the collared robes and boots of today are all *Hu* clothing.” Ge, “Songdai ‘Zhongguo’ yishi de tuxian,” 148.

⁹⁴ Zhu did argue that some human beings with very turbid *qi* were “not far from animals” 去禽獸不遠, but he did not claim that these were barbarians or barbarized human beings. ZZYL 4.73.

⁹⁵ They thus agreed with the *Zuozhuan* while disagreeing with Fan Ning and Zhao Kuang. CSJS 4.1101, 1112; CQHSZ 4.46, 12.182, 18.293.

⁹⁶ ZZYL 25.614–615. We have seen earlier that Zhu Xi had a similarly skeptical view of the semantic promotions that Chu rulers supposedly received in the *Chunqiu*.

suggests that as a philosopher, he was more interested in theorizing the differences in *qi* between human beings and animals and found it difficult to fit ethnic differences between human beings into that theoretical framework. By borrowing Cheng Hao's human-barbarian-animal-plant taxonomy, he was able to elide the significance of ethnic difference by limiting the scope of human morality to the Chinese, who (he implied) were the only beings capable of successful moral cultivation and thus the only truly human beings. However, this elision also created a discursive gap between Zhu Xi's interpretations of *li* and *qi* on the one hand and his statements about the Jurchens on the other, making his moral philosophy appear more ethnocentric and less ambivalent than his perception of the Jurchens actually was. Moreover, Zhu's vision of the human-barbarian-animal-plant taxonomy was unusually static for a *Daoxue* philosopher: as unwilling as he was to acknowledge the Jurchens' capacity for moral improvement, he was even less interested in the idea that human beings could degenerate into barbarians and animals. For this reason, Zhu Xi was probably less affected by the universalist's dilemma than many of the other *Daoxue* thinkers.

Two visions of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy: Chen Liang and Ye Shi

As I mentioned in the preamble to Part 4, Chen Liang and Ye Shi came to be characterized as nationalists or "proto-nationalists" in the 1970s on the basis of their statements about the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. Yet to my knowledge, no systematic comparison of Chen's statements with Ye's has been made in any language thus far. This is unfortunate, because any such comparison would quickly reveal that during the years 1177–1178 Chen and Ye, despite both being fervent revanchists, presented interpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy that were almost complete opposites of each other: Chen held that the dichotomy must be maintained through geographical separation, whereas Ye dismissed such separation as a by-product of the Chinese people's moral barbarization. To a large extent, the differences between Chen Liang's geography-centered interpretation and Ye Shi's morality-centered interpretation can serve to encapsulate the universalist's dilemma in *Daoxue* philosophy. This is not as surprising as it might seem at first, because Ye Shi and Chen Liang were affiliated with the *Daoxue* community in the 1170s and only drifted away from it in the 1180s.⁹⁷

As is now well-known from Hoyt Tillman's work on Chen Liang, the opening passage of Chen's 1178 memorial to Xiaozong argues that the Central Lands have received the "correctly balanced *qi* of heaven and earth" 天地之正氣, as well as the Mandate of Heaven. For that reason, it has been the sole locus of "the hearts of the people" 人心 and the civilization of "robes and caps, rites and ritual music" 衣冠禮樂 for a hundred generations of kings and emperors. It is impermissible, Chen claims, for "the deviant *qi* of barbarians (Yi-Di) from beyond heaven and earth" 天地之外夷狄邪氣 to violate the Central Lands, but this has indeed happened, forcing the Song dynasty to take up the "robes and caps, rites and ritual music of the Central Lands" 中國衣

⁹⁷ Chen Liang's early affiliation with *Daoxue*, particularly through the influence of Lü Zuqian, is analyzed in Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 75–99. Ye Shi's relationship with the *Daoxue* community will be discussed in a later note.

冠禮樂 and relocate them in the “peripheral region” 偏方 of the southeast. Although the Mandate of Heaven and “the hearts of the people” remain attached to the Song court in its new location, this situation cannot last for long. If the Xiaozong and his ministers should content themselves with “putting the Central Lands out of their consideration” 置中國於度外, this would be like a body having its “primal *qi*” 元氣 all concentrated in one limb, causing the other limbs to atrophy until finally the whole body dies.⁹⁸

A few things about this passage have previously escaped notice. First, Chen Liang is adopting a geographical understanding of the difference between perfectly balanced Chinese *qi* and imbalanced barbarian *qi* that long predates *Daoxue* philosophy—we have already seen it used in the *Bohu tongyi*, the *Zhoushu*, and the *Tongdian*.⁹⁹ Whereas those earlier uses were aimed at asserting the illegitimacy of Chinese expansionism, Chen Liang uses *qi*-based geographical determinism to assert the illegitimacy of barbarian invasion—unlike Tillman, I think Chen’s use of the expression 豈...可 conveys a sense of the unacceptable more than one of the inconceivable or implausible.¹⁰⁰ We have seen that Hu Yin also used the theory of *qi* endowment to explain the barbarians’ moral inferiority but did not link differences in *qi* to geographical space. Second, unlike *Daoxue* thinkers such as Cheng Yi, Hu Hong, and Lü Zuqian, Chen is not interested in exploring the reasons why barbarians are able to invade the Central Lands—he does not speak of moral barbarization or even moral decline. His interest is in explaining why the barbarians must be driven out. Third, even though Chen Liang himself was born in the “peripheral” southeast (in Yongkang 永康 of modern Zhejiang) and had never seen north China, he still associates the North China Plain exclusively with the Central Lands and does not believe civilization’s center to be as mobile as civilization’s physical manifestations (“robes and caps, rites and ritual music”).¹⁰¹ Hence the perceived need for the Southern Song to regain the Central Lands so as not to lose the Mandate of Heaven and the people’s hearts. Lastly, Chen Liang’s use of a physiological metaphor to justify irredentism is also interesting in light of the anti-expansionist uses of that metaphor that we saw at the beginning of Chapter 1.

⁹⁸ CLJ 1.1; cf. translations in Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 408 and Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 74.

⁹⁹ Chang Chishen is therefore seriously mistaken in claiming that Chen’s emphasis on *qi* as the basis of ethnic difference was a departure from Sui, Tang, and Northern Song discourses. Chang, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao,” 247, 250.

¹⁰⁰ Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 408 (cf. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 173).

¹⁰¹ I agree with Bol’s reading of 中國衣冠禮樂 as 中國之衣冠禮樂, rather than Tillman’s reading as 中國與衣冠禮樂, since the latter reading is incompatible with Chen Liang’s claim in the same passage that the Southern Song court is “putting the Central Lands out of their consideration.” Bol’s argument that Chen Liang saw the Central Lands as a “historical space” that the Song had lost seems more plausible than Tillman’s argument that Chen saw the Central Lands as a state or polity that could be moved around (“he held on to the oneness of *Chung-kuo* and civilization by asserting that they had somehow been carried south during the flight from the Jurchen”). Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 408, 419 (cf. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 173); Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 74–75.

The next passage of the memorial is crucial to its argument. Chen Liang asserts that the correctly-balanced *qi* of heaven and earth is now blocked up due to the Central Lands being filled with “the reek of mutton” 腥羶; here, Chen inaccurately stereotypes the Jurchens as sheep-herding steppe nomads. However, the *qi* of heaven and earth will eventually build up to a point where it has to “vent itself” 有所發泄 and fill the Central Lands again. At that point, the Southern Song in its peripheral region will lose the Mandate of Heaven and the hearts of the people to the Jurchens. Chen Liang claims that this has happened once before: the Eastern Jin’s efforts at regaining north China having failed over the course of a century, the correctly balanced *qi* of heaven and earth finally vented itself on the Northern Wei, which “arose and received it” 起而承之, causing Xiaowendi to move his capital to Luoyang, “adopt the robes and caps, rites and ritual music of the Central Lands” 修中國之衣冠禮樂, and thus gain the Mandate of Heaven and the hearts of the people. “Because of this,” Chen writes, “the reunifier of all under heaven finally came from the northwest and not the southeast—how can one not be terrified by this conjunction of heaven and man?” 是以一天下者卒在西北而不在東南，天人之際豈不甚可畏哉？¹⁰² The implication is that Heaven desires a reunification and will not allow the Song and Jin to coexist indefinitely: if the Song cannot conquer the Jin, the Jin must conquer the Song.

Chen Liang reiterates this point later in the memorial: the Southern Song has made no effort at recapturing the north since 1163; the correctly-balanced *qi* remains blocked by the “reek of mutton” but is surely about to vent itself; “if our dynasty is unable to arise and receive it, then there will surely be someone else who receives it” 苟國家不能起而承之，必將有承之者也. Chen provides another historical precedent: in the last phase of the *Chunqiu* period, the states of Wu and Yue were able to use their military strength to achieve hegemony over the Chinese states because “the *qi* of heaven and earth had vented itself onto small barbarian (Man-Yi) states” 天地之氣發泄於蠻夷之小邦, the Central Lands having finally run out of men deserving of that *qi*.¹⁰³ Chen then quotes Wang Tong (Wenzhongzi), who was one of his favorite philosophers.¹⁰⁴ As we saw in Chapter 4, Wang Tong recognized the Northern Wei as legitimate beginning from Xiaowendi’s reign. In the *Wenzhongzi* passage that Chen Liang quotes, Wang Tong’s brother Wang Ning 王凝 (b. ca. 585) identifies “the barbarians’ (Rong-Di) moral power” 戎狄之德 as the reason for the Northern Wei’s success in gaining the Mandate of Heaven, and Wang Tong indicates his approval of this view; Chen adds that this quotation “is something that today’s Classicists have not discussed before” 今世儒者所未講也.¹⁰⁵ Since many of the Southern Song

¹⁰² Both Tillman and Bol read the 卒 in this line as indicating a general principle, i.e., reunification always comes from the northwest. While it is true that past reunifications had always been achieved by regimes based in the north—namely, the Western Jin, Sui, Tang, and Song—it would have been self-defeating for Chen Liang to state this as an unchangeable law, since his intent was to spur Xiaozong into reunifying all under heaven from the southeast. CLJ 1.1–2; Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 420 (cf. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 174); Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 75.

¹⁰³ CLJ 1.3.

¹⁰⁴ For Chen Liang’s positive attitude toward Wang Tong and editing of the *Wenzhongzi*, see Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 95, 105–108.

¹⁰⁵ Chen Liang modifies *Rong-Di* to *Yi-Di* when quoting the *Wenzhongzi*. CLJ 1.3; Li, *Wenzhongzi kaolun*, 36.

Daoxue philosophers—including Hu Yin (despite his initial hesitation), Zhang Shi, and Zhu Xi—did not consider the Northern Wei to have had political legitimacy, it seems likely that Chen Liang’s assessment of the Northern Wei was shaped by his high regard for Wang Tong’s ideas.

Chen Liang’s theory of the *qi* of the Central Lands venting itself on barbarians has been neglected or misunderstood in past studies of his thought. Tillman misreads the idea as a belief that the eventual venting of *qi* would result in the “determined expulsion of the invaders” and “the liberation of the Central Plain,” and thus finds Chen’s anxiety about the prospect of reunification proceeding from the north “hard to fathom.” Tillman does speculate, however, that the anxiety has to do with “a fear of the sinicization of the Jurchen in progress in the north” and “the potential for a mixed Sino-barbarian dynasty conquering the south as the Sui had done at the end of the sixth century.” Because Tillman ignores (somewhat inexplicably) Chen Liang’s use of the Northern Wei precedent entirely, the only “solid written evidence” that he can find for explaining Chen’s anxiety is the Wu and Yue precedent: “Ch’en was warning that this case demonstrated that cosmic psycho-physical energy could find expression in a peripheral semi-barbarian state when *Chung-kuo* lacked leadership.”¹⁰⁶ It should be noted that Tillman’s characterization of Chen Liang’s theory of *qi* as a form of “proto-nationalism” becomes less persuasive once we take Chen’s acceptance of the Northern Wei’s legitimacy into account.

In Peter Bol’s more recent article about Middle-Period Chinese discourses on the concept of the Central Lands, his discussion of Chen Liang does address the Northern Wei precedent but omits the theory of *qi*-venting. Bol also interprets Chen Liang as saying, “If those who occupy the central plain adopt the culture of the *Zhong guo* as well, then they will be legitimate.” A similar interpretation has been made by Chang Chishen, who does discuss the *qi*-venting theory.¹⁰⁷ I believe these interpretations have missed important aspects of chronology, causality, and agency in Chen Liang’s theory. Chen does say that the Northern Wei gained the Mandate of Heaven and the hearts of the people by adopting the civilization of the Central Lands, but he does not say that the correctly-balanced *qi* of heaven and earth vented itself on the Northern Wei because of this cultural ‘sinicization.’ Instead, he says that the Northern Wei arose and received the *qi* of heaven and earth and *only then* was able to adopt Chinese civilization by virtue of possessing that *qi*. This implies that the Northern Wei did nothing to merit receiving the *qi* of heaven and earth; that *qi* had simply been blocked up for so long that even the reek of mutton (and presumably the Tuoba Xianbi people’s “deviant *qi*” as well) could not hold it back any longer. The initiator of these processes of ‘sinicization’ and legitimation was therefore the *qi* of heaven and earth, not the Northern Wei or Heaven.

¹⁰⁶ Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 421–422. Tillman’s *Utilitarian Confucianism* does not take note of the Northern Wei precedent either.

¹⁰⁷ Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 75; Chang, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao,” 249–250.

In that case, it is highly unlikely that Chen Liang was anxious about any ‘sinicization’ that was already underway in the Jurchen Jin dynasty, since he believed the *qi* that would make such ‘sinicization’ possible had yet to be vented. Chen’s memorial does argue that since the Jurchens have given up nomadism, “their cities and palaces, political administration and military organization are all no different from the Central Lands” 城郭宮室，政教號令，一切不異於中國。 But he does so not to warn of the Jurchens’ potential for acquiring legitimacy but rather to assure Xiaozong that since they now face the same logistical challenges as Chinese armies and are no longer an invincible horde of marauders, there is no reason for the Song court to be intimidated into maintaining peace with them.¹⁰⁸

Chen Liang’s Wu and Yue precedent adds another layer of complexity to his theory and even makes it paradoxical. Since neither Wu nor Yue was located in the Central Lands, Chen’s argument implies that it is possible for the *qi* of heaven and earth to be diverted to peripheral regions if the Central Lands are in decline. In that case, would it not be possible for the Southern Song to remain in peripheral Jiangnan (which, after all, corresponds to the lands of Wu and Yue) and still receive the correctly-balanced *qi* of heaven and earth, especially since the Song court, unlike Wu and Yue, has retained the “robes and caps, rites and ritual music of the Central Lands”? In fact, Chen Liang attempts to convince Xiaozong of Hangzhou’s strategic disadvantage vis-à-vis the north by arguing that fifty years as the Song capital have exhausted all its regional *qi*, which in any case was “peripheral *qi* of heaven and earth” 天地之偏氣.¹⁰⁹ But one could then question why this vacuum left by expended peripheral *qi* in Hangzhou would not be the perfect opening for the correctly-balanced *qi* of the north to vent itself southwards, as it had supposedly done in the case of Wu and Yue. Although Tillman has rightly questioned Rolf Trauzettel’s claim that Chen Liang was a revanchist “in an emotional rather than philosophically speculative manner,” Chen does seem to have subordinated his theory of *qi*-venting to the rhetorical needs of his revanchist argument to an extent that compromised the logic of its cosmology.¹¹⁰

Chen Liang’s other substantial treatment of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy is in an essay from a series of ten that Tillman dates to 1182.¹¹¹ This piece has previously been analyzed by Tillman and Bol, but my objectives here are to place it in the context of *Chunqiu* exegesis and to reevaluate it as rhetoric.¹¹² I should note that Chen’s 1178 memorial alludes briefly to the idea of moral barbarization and relates it to the writing of the *Chunqiu*, but only to make a bigger rhetorical point about the moral imperative of revanchism:

¹⁰⁸ This rhetorical strategy resembles Zhu Xi’s argument that the Jurchens, having grown used to luxury, need no longer be feared as warriors. CLJ 1.4.

¹⁰⁹ CLJ 1.7.

¹¹⁰ Trauzettel, “Sung Patriotism,” 211; Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 406.

¹¹¹ Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy*, 154, 179.

¹¹² Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 408–411; Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 75–77.

In the time of the *Chunqiu*, the calamity resulting from rulers and ministers or fathers and sons killing one another always settled down within a generation. Yet Confucius alone believed that once the three bonds were cut, then the Way of humanity would turn into that of animals and barbarians (Yi-Di). He therefore hurried [from state to state] in a state of anxiety, his sense of moral duty making it impossible for him to be at ease for a single day. But he finally could not find [a state willing] to take him in and instead directed his efforts toward the text of the *Chunqiu*, through which he could still strike fear into the hearts of usurpers and rebels. Now, one generation has passed and we have forgotten to avenge our rulers and fathers; how then can the Way of humanity remain secure?

昔者《春秋》之時，君臣父子相戕殺之禍，舉一世皆安之。而孔子獨以爲三綱既絕，則人道遂爲禽獸夷狄，皇皇奔走，義不能以一朝安。然卒於無所寓，而發其志於《春秋》之書，猶能以懼亂臣賊子。今者舉一世而忘君父之大讎，此豈人道之可安乎？¹¹³

The *Chunqiu* also occupies a central place in the 1182 essay, but the focus there is exclusively on Confucius's concern with preserving ethnic distinctions. The essay begins with a passage criticizing marriage alliances between Chinese states and barbarians, the main point of which is that such marriages are futile as a form of appeasement because barbarians do not practice ritual and morality and cannot be restrained using human relationships. This is not a particularly controversial argument, since (for reasons that remain poorly understood) marriage diplomacy had become an object of disapproval and derision in Chinese foreign policy discourse since the early eleventh century. But Chen also appears to be making a veiled criticism of the new Song-Jin peace agreement of 1165, which had established symbolic kinship between the Song and Jin emperors. The discussion then turns to classical antiquity: "The normal way of dealing with barbarians (Yi-Di) can be seen most clearly in the Zhou dynasty, and its decline can be seen most completely in the *Chunqiu*" 待夷狄之常道莫詳於周，而其變則備於《春秋》矣。The "normal way" of the Zhou, according to the essay, was simply to "not let the barbarians mix with the Central Lands" 不使之參於中國也。But "the Central Lands and the barbarians were mixed together and became one" 中國、夷狄混而爲一 at the beginning of the Eastern Zhou, leading to the successive rise of Chu, Wu, and Yue. Confucius, being worried about this unprecedented barbarian threat, wrote the *Chunqiu* in order to clarify "the difference between barbarians (Yi) and Chinese" 夷夏之辨 (*Yi Xia zhi bian*).¹¹⁴

Chen Liang's reading of the *Chunqiu* is highly conventional; there are no surprises here for any reader familiar with the commentaries by Sun Fu, Liu Chang, and Hu Anguo. According to Chen, Confucius subtly criticizes feudal lords for having conferences and covenants with

¹¹³ CLJ 1.2–3.

¹¹⁴ CLJ 4.48.

barbarians and demotes hegemon for excessive aggression in warfare with barbarian enemies, because “he essentially wanted them to each stop at being content in their own territory” 要使各安其疆則止矣。¹¹⁵ With Wu and Chu, however, Confucius had to make exceptions to the Zhou “normal way.” He cast their rulers out as barbarians when they usurped the royal title; promoted them semantically to “men” 人 when they became able to attend conferences and make covenants¹¹⁶; promoted them semantically to their noble rank (i.e., “viscount” 子) when they could practice proper diplomatic protocol; and implicitly commended them to varying degrees when they righted wrongs and fought enemies on behalf of the Central Lands. But whenever they engaged in duplicity and “used the way of the barbarians (Di)” 用狄道, he demoted them again.¹¹⁷ Moreover, Confucius did not approve of their monopolizing the position of hegemon or going by a noble rank higher than viscount, and he certainly did not approve of them usurping the title of king.¹¹⁸ Chen Liang argues that Confucius thus reestablished a distinction between Chinese and barbarians at a time when they had become indistinguishable; Lü Zuqian’s *Chunqiu* lecture of 1170 had already made a similar point with specific reference to Confucius’s treatment of the Qian conference.

The point of Chen Liang’s summary of conventional wisdom on the *Chunqiu* method becomes clear when he argues that Confucius intended the same principles he applied to Wu and Chu to be used for future barbarian states that challenged the Central Lands. The Xiongnu of Han times, the Uyghurs and Tibetans of Tang times, and the Kitans of the Song could not be dealt with according to the “normal way” of the Zhou, because they were strong enough to invade Chinese territory and “copy (literally “steal”) the culture of the Central Lands in order to elevate themselves” 竊中國之文以自尊異。¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, Chen argues, there were still principles that the Central Lands could uphold in relations with these powerful barbarians: a Chinese emperor should never marry a daughter to a barbarian ruler or rely on barbarians to

¹¹⁵ CLJ 4.48. A fragment from Chen Liang’s lost *Chunqiu* commentary, preserved in Wang Yinglin’s 王應麟 (1223–1296) *Kunxue jiwén* 困學紀聞, shows that he followed Cheng Yi, Hu Anguo, and Lü Zuqian in interpreting this principle of ethnic separation as the reason for Confucius’s disapproval of the Qian conference and Tang covenant. Chen’s commentary reads, “The sage [Confucius] did not share the Central Lands with barbarians (Rong-Di); therefore, the Central Lands do not share ritual and culture with barbarians” 聖人不與戎狄共中國，故中國不與戎狄共禮文. KXJW 6.768; cf. Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 424.

¹¹⁶ Tillman’s translation of 人 as “human” misses the context of semantic demotion and promotion in *Chunqiu* exegesis. Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 410.

¹¹⁷ Tillman argues from this phrase that “by conceding that foreigners possessed a barbarian *Tao* instead of talking in terms of one universal *Tao*, Ch’en demonstrated a degree of cultural relativism based implicitly upon differing historical evolutions in different geographical areas.” I fear that this reads too much into the text; after all, Sun Fu, Cheng Yi, and Hu Anguo all used “the way of the barbarians” 夷狄之道 / 狄道 as a synonym for immorality rather than a concept of a separate, foreign system of moral and cultural values. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 167–168.

¹¹⁸ Tillman mistranslates 子 (“viscount”) as “son” and 公侯 (“duke or marquis”) as “prince.” Ibid., 411; CLJ 4.49.

¹¹⁹ Tillman mistranslates 自尊異 as “pride themselves as being foreign and heterodox.” Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 411.

pacify rebels in the Central Lands, lest the difference between Chinese and barbarians be lost. Such mistakes had been made under the Han and Tang, and the Song had avoided repeating them by using annual payments to maintain peace with the Kitans. Yet the Song had also committed the unprecedented error of allowing the Kitan rulers to call themselves emperors, whereas Confucius had never allowed the Wu and Chu rulers to call themselves kings. This, Chen Liang argues, is the root of the calamity by which the Central Lands fell to Jurchen rule, and the ones to blame are ministers at the Song court who did not expound the principles of the *Chunqiu*.¹²⁰

Chen Liang ends this post-mortem analysis of the Jurchen invasion with a call to irredentism based on the principle of Chinese moral superiority and the urgent need to rescue the Chinese of the north from the dire influence of barbarism:

Now that the Central Plains have been changed by the barbarians (Yi-Di), it is acceptable for us to clarify the Way of the Central Lands and carry out thorough reforms for the sake of renewing ourselves. But if we let the people [of the Central Plains] gradually be transformed by the way of the barbarians (Di) without any end in sight, then how are we in any way superior to them?

今中原既變於夷狄矣，明中國之道，掃地以求更新可也。使民生宛轉於狄道而無有已時，則何所貴於人乎？¹²¹

One can sum up the essay's argument as follows: the Chinese and the barbarians must be kept separate and unequal; any violation of that principle ultimately results in the Chinese falling under barbarian rule and becoming barbarians themselves, unless a sage like Confucius intervenes to reestablish the difference between Chinese and barbarians in semantic terms; the Southern Song must act militarily to restore Chinese separation from and superiority to the Jurchens as soon as possible.

Let us compare this argument with that of the 1178 memorial. In the memorial, Chen Liang warns that if the Song court tarries too long in Hangzhou, the Jurchens may receive the correctly-balanced *qi* of heaven and earth, enabling them to adopt Chinese civilization, earn the Mandate of Heaven, and conquer the south. Chen thereby acknowledges the capacity for barbarians to become civilized in spite of their “deviant *qi*” and “reek of mutton,” although he clearly regards such an eventuality with dread. In the 1182 essay, on the other hand, Chen assumes that the Jurchens will not only remain barbarians but also cause their Chinese subjects to turn into barbarians. The essay is thus actually more conservative than the earlier memorial,

¹²⁰ CLJ 4.49.

¹²¹ Cf. the different translations in Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China,” 411 (cf. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 167–168); Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 76.

since it does not challenge the prevailing assumption that the *qi* of the barbarians makes them incapable of positive change. We should also note that neither the memorial nor the essay engages seriously with the idea of moral barbarization. The essay accepts Sun Fu's argument that Confucius demoted the Wu and Chu rulers to the level of barbarians for usurping the royal title and using the "way of the barbarians," but it also seems to assume that the people of Wu and Chu were literally barbarians and not just behaving barbarically. The essay's call to action also implicitly rejects any notion that the Chinese of the north were already morally barbarized before the Jurchens conquered them; these Chinese are only now being "transformed by the way of the barbarians" through no fault of their own.

We now turn to Ye Shi's earliest extant essay on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, which presents a stark contrast to Chen Liang's essay by borrowing heavily from the discourse of moral barbarization and applying it to the conduct of foreign relations. It is not impossible that Chen wrote his 1182 essay partly as a response to Ye Shi, although we have no evidence for this. Ye's essay is the first of four on the subject of foreign policy in an examination portfolio of fifty essays. Dates proposed for the portfolio have ranged from 1175 to 1184, but we have reason to infer that Ye Shi wrote at least the first three foreign policy essays in or around 1177.¹²² The first essay begins by outlining three principles that Ye Shi sees as integral to proper relations with foreign states: "morality" (*yi* 義), "identity" (*ming* 名, literally "name"), and "expediency" (*quan* 權).¹²³ According to Ye Shi, "morality" dictates that "the Central Lands do not rule over barbarians (Yi-Di)" 中國不治夷狄. As we saw in Chapter 1, this is an idea generally associated

¹²² The third essay in this series can be dated to 1177 based on a line referring to an incident in Song-Jin diplomacy "seven years ago" 七年之前 and another incident in "the year before last year" 前年. The relevant diplomatic incidents occurred in 1170 and 1175. The same essay refers to an 1175 revolt by tea merchants as an event of "recent days" 前日. Kondō Kazunari has dated the portfolio to 1175–1177 on the basis of these references. Winston Lo also claims (without citing evidence) that Ye wrote the essays sometime between 1175 and 1177 to practice for a future decree examination 制科/制舉, but ultimately did not take such an examination because he was able to pass the *jinshi* 進士 examination in 1178. There are at least four other theories on when Ye Shi wrote the portfolio essays: 1) Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) argued that he wrote them in 1184 for a decree examination scheduled to be held the following year, although there is no evidence that this examination was actually held. 2) Sun Yirang 孫詒讓 (1848–1908) believed that Ye wrote these essays "in his youth" 少時, in preparation for a future decree examination. The timeframe for Ye's "youth" is ambiguous but probably refers to a period before 1180. 3) Zhang Yide believes Ye wrote the essays in 1178–1181, when observing the mourning period for his mother. 4) Zhu Yingping believes Ye wrote them in 1178–1184, during the mourning period for his mother and when subsequently holding an administrative post at Pingjiang 平江 (Suzhou 蘇州). See SXBJ 4.689–690; Gong, "The Reign of Hsiao-tsung (1162–1189)," 735–736, 739; Kondō, "Sōdai Yōka gakuha Ha Teki no Ka-I kan," 57, 75–76 n. 11; Lo, *The Life and Thought of Ye Shih*, 51–52; Zhou Mengjiang 周夢江, *Ye Shi nianpu* 葉適年譜 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1996), 69; Zhang Yide 張義德, *Ye Shi pingzhuan* 葉適評傳 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1994), 61; Zhu Yingping 朱迎平, *Yongjia juzi—Ye Shi zhuan* 永嘉巨子—葉適傳 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 2006), 66.

¹²³ Winston Lo translates these terms as "propriety," "proper definitions," and "expediency" respectively; Peter Bol translates them as "principle(s)," "normative names," and "the ability to change according to the circumstances." Lo, *The Life and Thought of Ye Shih*, 140; Bol, "Geography and Culture," 86.

with anti-expansionist arguments since the Eastern Han.¹²⁴ “Identity” means that “the Central Lands should be the Central Lands and the barbarians (Yi-Di) should be barbarians” 中國爲中國，夷狄爲夷狄—that is, the differences between them should be maintained and neither side should imitate or conquer the other. “Expediency” is founded on the principles of morality and identity, and means that the Chinese should manage relations with the barbarians according to their reason for making contact with the Central Lands. The Chinese should wage war against barbarians if they attack and have diplomatic relations with them if they submit to Chinese suzerainty; conversely, one does not practice diplomacy with barbarians when they invade, or invade barbarians who have already submitted.¹²⁵

Ye Shi claims that the difference between the Chinese and the barbarians counts for nothing if any of these principles is lost:

Although the Central Lands are superior and the barbarians (Yi-Di) are inferior, nonetheless if we do not understand morality, then we have no way to manage them; if we do not understand identity, then we have no way to defend ourselves from them; if we do not understand expediency, then we have no way to respond to them.

中國雖貴，夷狄雖賤，然而不得其義則不可以治，不得其名則不可以守，不得其權則不可以應。¹²⁶

Ye Shi also argues that if *all* three principles are abandoned, then the Central Lands would be lucky just to survive, like a boatman attempting to cross deep waters without an oar. He then proceeds to a polemical narrative of Chinese history aimed at showing that the Chinese had indeed come to their present state by failing to uphold the three principles.¹²⁷

First, Ye Shi issues a contemptuous dismissal of Tang Taizong’s claims to have surpassed all previous rulers in his ability to conquer foreign peoples. Ye argues that Taizong’s expansionist policy was “shallow” 陋 and based on complete ignorance of “the sage-kings’ purpose for dealing with the barbarians (Yi-Di)” 先王所以待夷狄之意. Ye Shi explains that in the time of the sage-kings Yao and Shun, even the hills and valleys along the Huai River and the

¹²⁴ Bol thus reads this essay as a reflection of “an internal debate in which a commitment to morality and culture was pitted against an imperialist foreign policy.” However, I think anti-expansionism is only one part of Ye Shi’s argument. Bol, “Geography and Culture,” 86.

¹²⁵ SXBJ 4.684.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

coastal areas of the Shandong peninsula were home to barbarians—much unlike the northern barbarians of later times, who were separated from the Chinese by the Great Wall and large expanses of desert. But the sage-kings kept the barbarians at bay without the need for large empires, strong armies, and clever schemes, because they understood the principles of morality, identity, and expediency to be not only “tools for certain victory” 必勝之具 but also “the very reason why the Central Lands are the Central Lands” 中國之所以為中國. If they had given up these principles and relied on “deceit and brute force” 詐力, the Chinese would simply have “turned into barbarians (Yi-Di)” 化為夷狄.¹²⁸

Ye Shi next argues that unfortunately, the Qin and Han empires did in fact forget these three principles. The Qin unified the Warring States by force and then tried to conquer the Xiongnu, thus behaving more violently and cruelly than the barbarians. The Han, too, placed their trust in military strength alone and alternated between attacking and appeasing the Xiongnu:

The three principles were all lost from that point on, and there was no longer a [real] difference between the Central Lands and the barbarians (Yi-Di), only a distinction based on geographical location. If [the Chinese] were strong [militarily], then they would send expeditionary armies into the field followed by supply convoys, driving deep into [barbarian lands] to massacre [the barbarians] as if hunting birds and beasts. If they were weak [militarily], then they would bow their heads and abase themselves, offer gifts of gold and silver and silk, and marry their beloved daughters off to make sons-in-law of [the barbarians]—was there anything at all that they would spare? ... The barbarians have often suffered from the fact that the Central Lands do not practice trustworthiness and integrity. We use sweet words and generous gifts to entice and delight them, and [then] initiate war with the aim of wiping them out. In that case, the Central Lands have been in decline and deviation from the Way for a long time — how could it be due to [the events of] a single day?

蓋三者自是並亡，不復有中國、夷狄之分矣，特以地勢相別異耳。力彊則暴師轉餉，深入屠戮，如擊取禽獸；力弱則俯首屈意，出金銀繒帛，配愛女以壻之，亦獨何所愛？... 夷狄嘗苦中國無信義，甘言厚利以相啗悅，首開兵端，志在誅剪。然則中國之不振，其失道久矣，豈一日之故也？¹²⁹

Winston Lo has called the first line in this passage “an astounding statement and in the milieu of Confucian China, a declaration tantamount to the renunciation of cultural superiority.” Lo also claims that “within the microcosm of Yeh Shih’s mind, Confucian cultural universalism had to be dethroned before militant nationalism could hold sway,” and that Ye Shi achieved this by

¹²⁸ SXBJ 4.684–685.

¹²⁹ SXBJ 4.685.

“debunking the myth of the China-Barbarian dichotomy” and arguing that “the traditional notion of the barbarian had long been obsolete.”¹³⁰ However, Kondō Kazunari presented a very different assessment of Ye Shi’s views on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in an article published five years after Lo’s book. Although Kondō did subscribe to a theory that nationalism emerged in East Asia during the late Tang and Song, he also argued that Ye Shi was not proposing an idea of national self-determination when he argued that “the Central Lands should be the Central Lands and the barbarians should be barbarians.” Kondō pointed out that Ye Shi’s vision of antiquity and the three principles rejected ethnicity and geography as valid criteria for distinguishing Chinese from barbarians. Instead, Kondō claimed, Ye Shi still adhered to the “traditional view of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy” 伝統的な華夷観 in which the “essence” 本質 of Chineseness was “ideas or culture” 文化ないし理念, rather than ethnicity or territory.¹³¹

Kondō’s view is more accurate than Lo’s, since Ye Shi clearly did not see the new, purely geopolitical definition of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy as a justification for revanchism or even “nationalism,” but rather as an unfortunate deviation from the ideals of antiquity. Ye was arguing that the Chinese were no longer superior to barbarians, because their civilization had lost its moral compass for nearly fourteen hundred years, but he was also arguing that they should find a way to regain moral superiority. He was certainly not renouncing the idea of Chinese superiority, nor was he debunking it as a myth, since he clearly believed that it had once been real.¹³² But Kondō also makes the mistake of assuming that Ye Shi espoused a “traditional view of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy” that was based on culture: like Lo, his implicit framework of analysis is Levenson’s dichotomy of culturalism and nationalism. In reality, the idea of barbarization that Ye Shi drew on was concerned with *morality* not culture, and it was neither as traditional as Kondō thought nor as astoundingly new as Winston Lo thought. The idea of barbarization had originated in the late Tang with Han Yu, and so had the idea of a thousand-year civilizational decline. As we have seen, both ideas had become standard in *Daoxue* discourse since the time of the Cheng brothers. Ye Shi was merely merging them and reapplying them to the context of foreign relations.¹³³

Let us look at the rest of Ye Shi’s essay, where he moves from criticizing Han and Tang foreign policy for being opportunistic to criticizing Song foreign policy for being naïve:

¹³⁰ Lo, *The Life and Thought of Ye Shih*, 140–141.

¹³¹ Note that Kondō mentions Lo’s book in an endnote but does not comment on its arguments. Kondō, “Sōdai Yōka gakuha Ha Teki no Ka-I kan,” 61, 63, 78 n. 42.

¹³² T.H. Barrett made the same point in a review of Lo’s book. T.H. Barrett, “Review: *The Life and Thought of Ye Shih* by Winston Wan Lo,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39.1 (1976), 201.

¹³³ Kondō does link Ye Shi’s interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy to the *Chunqiu* commentaries by Sun Fu and Hu Anguo, and to Su Shi’s “Wangzhe buzhi Yi-Di lun.” But he identifies this shared discourse as nothing more than a “traditional view of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy.” Kondō, “Sōdai Yōka gakuha Ha Teki no Ka-I kan,” 68–70.

Alas! Having identity and morality but failing to hold on to them, having expediency but failing to use it, alternating between attacking and appeasing, wavering uncertainly based on relative strength and weakness—that is what the Han and Tang did, and it is not worth discussing since it is already past. Holding on to [identity and morality] when there was none to hold on to, using [expediency] when there was none to use, seeing appeasement as normal and becoming just like [the barbarians], so that everyone under heaven became used to hearing and seeing this and no longer knew the difference between the Central Lands and the barbarians (Yi-Di)—this is what the [Song imperial] ancestors did, and I dare not discuss it in depth.

嗟乎！有名、義而不能執，有權而不能用，或伐或和，視其勢之強弱而不能定，此漢、唐之事，不足論也，是既然矣。執之於無所執，用之於無所用，以和爲常，與之爲一，而天下之人熟於聞見，不知其爲中國、夷狄之異者，此祖宗之事，臣不敢深論也。

He then narrows his criticism down to one example: namely, the Song response to the rise of the Jurchens and the fall of the Kitan Liao dynasty. Ye Shi argues that the Song was obliged under the Chanyuan peace treaty of 1005 to render military aid to the Liao or at least offer sanctuary to the Liao emperor. Instead, the Song made the miscalculation of allying with the Jurchens to destroy the Liao for the sake of reclaiming the Yan region. That act of bad faith, he argues, is why the Song lost north China to the Jurchens.¹³⁴

Ye Shi ends the essay by presenting his solution to the Southern Song's predicament: a return to the three principles of morality, identity, and expediency that had served the sage-kings so well. He reiterates his earlier point that the Chinese cannot be truly Chinese unless they practice trustworthiness even with barbarians:

In that case, even though the barbarians (Yi-Di) have no integrity, they always look to the Central Lands for trustworthiness and integrity, but because the Central Lands regard the barbarians as having no integrity, we do not respond to them with trustworthiness and integrity. We do not understand that [trustworthiness and integrity] are the reason why we are the Central Lands, and we cannot abandon these just because the barbarians do not have them. If we examine the reasons for success and failure in past generations, ponder deeply over the roots of the present calamity, and restore the way of the sage-kings with regard to the three principles, then the Central Lands will have no difficulty dealing with the barbarians.

¹³⁴ SXBJ 4.685–686.

然則夷狄雖不義，常以信義望中國，中國以夷狄爲不義，是以不用信義答之。不知此其所以爲中國者，本不以夷狄之無而廢也。夫兼考前世成敗之故，深思今日致患之本，復脩先王三者之道，則中國之待夷狄固無難矣。¹³⁵

Given the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy's centrality to this argument, it seems somewhat bizarre that in the second portfolio essay on foreign policy, Ye Shi argues that the fact that the Jurchens are barbarians is irrelevant to the Song-Jurchen conflict and has been misused by ministers who favor appeasement over revanchism:

The northern caitiffs are our enemies with whom we have a blood feud, and can no longer be treated as barbarians (Yi-Di). Yet the people in charge of making policy have miscalculated by conciliating them on the pretext of their being barbarians.

夫北虜乃吾仇也，非復可以夷狄畜；而執事者過計，借夷狄之名以撫之。

This argument is one of several by which the essay seeks to present a strong case for the Song court to repudiate its peace treaty with the Jurchens and adopt an uncompromising policy of military confrontation. Ye Shi is effectively claiming that, although breaking treaties with barbarians is normally not a morally acceptable option for the Central Lands, the Song dynasty's duty to avenge the capture of the emperors Huizong and Qinzong means that a different set of rules applies to relations with the Jurchens. To Ye, the moral duty to “avenge the humiliation of one's father and elder brother” 報父兄之恥 takes precedence over the moral value of trustworthiness, and renders the Song-Jin treaty both “illegitimate” 無名 and “immoral” 非義.¹³⁶

One might wonder why Ye Shi went to the trouble of outlining his three principles of foreign policy and emphasizing the importance of trustworthiness toward barbarians in the first essay, if in the second essay he was going to the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy itself as irrelevant in the context of a vendetta. I suspect that competing impulses of moralism and irredentism were pulling Ye Shi in opposite directions when he wrote these pieces. If this suspicion is correct, then irredentism had won out by 1185, when Ye Shi received appointment to the Imperial Academy and wrote another series of policy essays with the intention of submitting them to the emperor.¹³⁷ The series included three essays on the topic “Conquering Yan” 取燕, all aimed at rebutting what Ye Shi claimed had become conventional wisdom about the loss of north China: namely, that its root cause was the Northern Song court's irredentist ambitions toward the Yan region.

¹³⁵ SXBJ 4.686.

¹³⁶ SXBJ 4.687.

¹³⁷ SXBJ 15.843–844; Lo, *The Life and Thought of Yeh Shih*, 55.

Ye Shi argues in the first “Conquering Yan” essay that since the Liao dynasty was clearly doomed by 1122, the Song court was fully justified in breaking the Song-Liao peace treaty and attempting to seize the Yan region, lest it fall into Jurchen hands and serve as a staging point for a Jurchen invasion of the Song. The only problem was that the Song army lacked the capability to defeat the Liao defenders of Yan, and thus exposed its weakness to the Jurchens.¹³⁸ In the third “Conquering Yan” essay, Ye Shi also argues that even if the Southern Song defeats the Jurchens and retakes the north, reconquering the Yan region will still be strategically vital, because it is the only defensible frontier between the north China plain and the steppe. Ye Shi then makes a claim that directly contradicts his earlier argument that the Song should follow the “three principles” and emulate the moral superiority of the sage-kings, rather than the military strength of the Qin and Han empires:

Besides, when the Qin unified the six other states and repelled the Xiongnu, it built the Great Wall to separate them [from the Qin empire]. How could the methods used in the time of Yao, Shun, and the Three Dynasties [of Xia, Shang, and Zhou], when the barbarians (Rong-Di) lived all jumbled up [with the Chinese], be applied in the empires of Qin and Han?

且秦一六國而攘匈奴，筑長城以隔之。秦、漢之天下，豈唐、虞、三代戎狄錯居之法可以行於其間哉？¹³⁹

The implication is that if defensible frontiers like the Yan region and the Great Wall were necessary to a contemporary empire like the Song, then it was pointless to speak as though they were not simply because the sage-kings had not needed them.

I would argue that in the portfolio essays of ca. 1177, Ye Shi was still strongly influenced by the *Daoxue* emphasis on restoring the Way of the sage-kings, while attempting to reconcile that emphasis with his fervent support for irredentism. The results of this intellectual tension included the paradox of simultaneously identifying “trustworthiness and integrity” and the relentless pursuit of vengeance as proper responses to the Jurchens. But the “Conquering Yan” essays of 1185 show that Ye Shi later committed himself to a pragmatic perspective that, while still regarding the methods of the sage-kings as the highest ideal for governance, nonetheless saw the achievement of tangible results to be more important to policy-making than potentially futile efforts at attaining that ideal.¹⁴⁰ This shift toward pragmatism brought Ye Shi closer

¹³⁸ SXBJ 10.761–762.

¹³⁹ SXBJ 10.763–764.

¹⁴⁰ Lo, Tillman, and Zhou Mengjiang have all argued that Ye Shi did not make a true break with *Daoxue* until around 1208, citing the fact that Ye defended Zhu Xi at court against a slanderous attack by an intellectual rival in 1188. They also note that Ye’s harshest criticisms of *Daoxue* are found in the *Xixue jiyán xumu* 習學記言序目,

intellectually to Chen Liang, who had made a similar intellectual transition away from *Daoxue* around 1178.¹⁴¹ From the 1180s on, Chen Liang and Ye Shi were leading members of a “results-oriented” 事功/功利 (often translated as “utilitarian”) school of thought, based in Zhejiang, that rejected *Daoxue* for being too abstract in its philosophy and purist in its classicism to meet the urgent needs of political reform and revanchism. One certainly gets this sense of “results-oriented” thinking from one of the concluding essays of the 1185 series, in which Ye Shi ridicules former chief minister Zhao Ding and others from the first generation of Southern Song irredentists for indulging in empty talk during the 1130s:

[Zhao Ding] joined the literati of the time in discoursing on the superiority of the Central Lands and the inferiority of the barbarians (Yi-Di). This is something that *Chunqiu* commentators often talk about, and one cannot say it is not good. Nonetheless, the Central Lands cannot be superior for nothing, and the barbarians cannot be inferior for nothing. There are these people called Jurchens; how can we achieve victory over them simply by discoursing with our mouths and tongues and parsing subtle principles?

與其一時士大夫共爲貴中國賤夷狄之論，此說《春秋》者所常講也，不可以爲不美。雖然，中國之不可以徒貴，夷狄之不可以徒賤也。所謂女真者，豈口舌講論，析理精微之所能勝邪？¹⁴²

Whereas Ye Shi’s second foreign policy essay from the 1177 portfolio accused proponents of appeasement of “conciliating [the Jurchens] on the pretext of their being barbarians,” here he accuses other revanchists of using the verbal denigration of barbarians as a substitute for action against the Jurchens.

which he wrote while in retirement after 1208. Zhang Yide argues persuasively, however, that Ye Shi defended Zhu Xi in 1188 not out of ideological affinity but rather *in spite of* ideological differences that Ye had already expressed in a memorial to Xiaozong in 1187. Conrad Schirokauer and Peter Bol also point out that in 1188, Ye Shi was not identifying himself with *Daoxue* but rather objecting to its potential use as a negative label for all literati who criticized the political status quo. Schirokauer further notes that Ye Shi’s inclusion in the imperial court’s proscription of *Daoxue* as “false learning” 偽學 in 1196 is no evidence of his ideological affiliations, since the 59 men on the proscription list were intellectually very diverse. Lo, *The Life and Thought of Ye Shih*, 153–159; Zhu, *Yongjia juzi*, 67–68, 70; Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 187, and *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy*, 247; Zhou Mengjiang 周夢江, “Ye Shi yu Zhu Xi” 葉適與朱熹, *Hangzhou shifan xueyuan xuebao* 杭州師範學院學報 1997(5), 8–13; Zhang, *Ye Shi pingzhuan*, 38–39, 68–75; Conrad Schirokauer, “Neo-Confucians Under Attack: The Condemnation of *Wei-hsueh*,” in John Winthrop Haeger ed., *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1975), 172, 181, 184–196; Peter K. Bol, “Review: Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy*,” *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 24 (1994), 308–309.

¹⁴¹ See Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism*, 99–108.

¹⁴² SXBJ 15.825.

Ye Shi's eventual resolution of the tension between moralism and irredentism can be found in the *Xixue jiyān xumu* 習學記言序目, a large collection of intensely iconoclastic reading notes that he produced during the sixteen years of his retirement (from 1208 to 1223). In Ye's reading notes for the *Shiji* chapter on the Xiongnu, he presents a reformulation of the historical narrative from the first foreign policy essay in his 1177 portfolio:

It should be noted that the sage-kings' *Odes* and *Documents* referred to some peoples by the names "Man barbarians," "Yi barbarians," "Rong barbarians," and "Di barbarians" because they did not practice ritual, moral duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness and therefore had to be categorized differently [from those who did]. Originally, it had nothing to do with differences between far and near, or inner and outer. ... After the *Chunqiu* [period], ritual and moral duty were destroyed in the transition to the Warring States; the teaching of culture declined, and all made warfare their profession; the Way of the Sage-kings was completely lost. There was no longer a difference between Chinese and barbarians (Rong); all were merged into a single territory. Thus everything within the Nine Provinces came to be called the Central Lands of the Chinese based on geographical location alone, while those beyond the Nine Provinces arose and became rival states.

按帝王《詩》、《書》所以號名蠻夷戎狄者，以其無禮義忠信為相別異之稱也，初不論遠近內外。...《春秋》以後，禮義壞而為戰國，文教衰而專武事，先王之道盡廢。華戎無別，混為一區，於是九州之內但以地勢為中夏，而在九州之外者方起而為敵國矣。

Ye Shi's intent here is to argue that Sima Qian was wrong to link the barbarians of the *Chunqiu* period with the origins of Han-period barbarian peoples like the Xiongnu. According to Ye Shi, Sima Qian was conflating two completely different forms of barbarism: the barbarism of the time of the sage-kings and the *Chunqiu*, which was defined by a lack of morality; and the barbarism of the Warring States and later periods, which was defined purely by geopolitics.¹⁴³

Another reading note, commenting on Han Wudi's war with the Xiongnu, suggests that whereas the Ye Shi of ca. 1177 had dismissed the second definition of barbarism as illegitimate and meaningless, the older Ye Shi assumed that there was no way of going back to the original moral version of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. Like the Qin and Han, the Song dynasty would have to respond flexibly and even opportunistically to the strategic realities of its time:

The barbarians (Yi-Di) whom Yao, Shun, and the Three Dynasties [of Xia, Shang, and Zhou] dealt with were groups within the Nine Provinces who did not practice ritual and moral duty. Therefore, when [the Chinese] cultivated ritual and moral duty, the

¹⁴³ XXJY 20.290.

barbarians submitted without the need for a strong military. As for the Qin and Han and later periods, there were no longer barbarians in the Central Lands, while it was impossible to predict the rise and decline and relative strengths of foreign peoples in outer regions. In that case, how could there be any fixed method for the Central Lands to deal with them? One simply makes peace when one can make peace and attacks when one can attack. The essential policy is to be vigilant in defense and strengthen the border, not exhausting the country on foreign wars, while ensuring that the barbarians cannot attack us, that is all.

堯、舜、三代之待夷狄，九州之內無禮義之俗也。故禮義修而夷狄服，不必盛兵力也。若秦漢以後，中國無復夷狄，而外區異種盛衰小大不可預知，則中國所以待之者又烏有定法？可和則和，可征則征，其要在於備守謹，封陲固，不虛內以事外，使夷狄不能加而已。¹⁴⁴

Kondō Kazunari has used these passages in the *Xixue jiyuan xumu* to argue that because Ye Shi was never able to reject the “traditional view of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy” completely, he suffered from an “unresolvable aporia” 解決不能のアポリア between tradition and reality, a “dilemma” ジレイマ of simultaneously wanting to promote realism in foreign relations and endorse the model of the sage-kings.¹⁴⁵ I think Kondō’s argument greatly underestimates the originality of Ye Shi’s narrative of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. No other Tang or Song thinker ever suggested that the sage-kings were able to maintain distinctions between the Chinese and the barbarians without having to separate them physically, and that the geographical boundaries that now separated them were evidence that the Way of the Sage-kings was lost. We have seen that for Chen Liang, for example, physical separation was the very foundation of the sage-kings’ “normal way” for dealing with barbarians.

I also think these passages show that Ye Shi did resolve his dilemma between moralism and realism by deciding that the problem of moral barbarization belonged to ancient history and was irrelevant to present-day policy-making. Whereas Ye’s original definition of “expediency” had precluded both diplomatic appeasement and unprovoked aggression as morally viable options for the Chinese, he now subscribed to a much more pragmatic and amoral understanding of what expediency entailed: “One simply makes peace when one can make peace and attacks when one can attack.” He still acknowledged that a civilizational decline had happened during the Warring States period and under the Qin and Han dynasties, and that the Chinese and the barbarians were now morally indistinguishable and separated only by geographical borders. But he seems to have concluded that there was no good trying to reverse this decline, and that the best *practicable* foreign policy was to make sure that the geographical borders still counted for something. That meant defending the present boundaries of the Song state, while preparing to take advantage of opportunities to push the northern boundaries back to where they once had

¹⁴⁴ XXJY 20.290–291.

¹⁴⁵ Kondō, “Sōdai Yōka gakuha Ha Teki no Ka-I kan,” 66–67.

been. In an age in which Chinese moral superiority was long gone and was not coming back anytime soon, one would have to make do with using military superiority to preserve what now passed for the difference between Chinese and barbarians. By the time Ye Shi wrote the *Xixue jiyuan xumu*, then, he effectively agreed with Chen Liang (whom he outlived by about thirty years) that the right way to deal with the barbarians was to keep them out of the Central Lands, by force if necessary. The main difference is that Ye Shi still believed that this had not always been the right way.

Conclusion to Part 4: Barbarians and philosophers

In an essay published in 1997, the Chinese historian Luo Zhitian argues that the premodern concept of a Chinese-barbarian dichotomy (*Yi Xia zhi bian* 夷夏之辨) “had two faces, one open (*kaifang* 開放) and one closed (*fengbi* 封閉),” and that the open face, which saw the differences between the Chinese and the barbarians as mutable aspects of “culture” (*wenhua* 文化), was always the mainstream discourse: “this is a big area of difference with modern Western nationalism.” Luo also argues, however, that circumstances of foreign invasion or conquest could shift the balance between the “open” and “closed” faces:

Although the ethnic difference between Chinese and barbarians was primarily cultural, during the development of this concept, it sometimes also developed a non-cultural interpretation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy (*Yi Xia zhi bian*) due to influence from the political situation. At such times, the tendency was to draw a line between the Chinese and the barbarians and not allow barbarians to become Chinese. The Chinese-barbarian dichotomy then became a closed system. While this tendency was not the mainstream, it still existed over the long run and even held the position of the leading intellectual trend in certain periods.¹

Slightly later in the essay, Luo clarifies that by “certain periods,” he means Chinese history from the Song to the late Ming: “from the Song onwards, the political circumstances were essentially increasingly unfavorable to the Chinese, and the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy therefore became increasingly strict; as it became increasingly strict, it increasingly interpreted the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy in terms of non-cultural factors.” Luo quickly qualifies his statements by adding that this trend never developed to the point of turning the dichotomy’s “closed” face into the mainstream discourse; for example (he argues), Chen Liang was intellectually marginal compared to the *Daoxue* philosophers who occupied the mainstream.²

Luo’s insistence that the “mainstream” interpretation of premodern Chinese identity was always “open” seems to be little more than a half-hearted concession to presentist ideological concerns, for he immediately goes on to suggest that the “closed” interpretation of the dichotomy did prevail whenever the barbarians posed a significant threat:

¹ Luo had completed his Ph.D. at Princeton University four years earlier, under the supervision of Yu Ying-shih. Luo, “Yi Xia zhi bian yu daozi zhifen,” 76; this essay expands on a slightly earlier (1996) piece by the same author: “Yi Xia zhi bian de kaifang yu fengbi,” 213–224.

² *Ibid.*, 83.

In history, when Chinese dynasties were strong, they mostly displayed the open side of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, and when the Chinese and barbarians were evenly matched or the barbarians were stronger than the Chinese, the Chinese literati would usually emphasize the negative, closed side. Essentially, they were mostly driven by political considerations. This is only speaking in terms of broad trends. When it comes to specifics, it was often the case that the two coexisted and competed, sometimes reaching a situation of compromise. However, usually it was the side that cohered with the political circumstances that held the advantage.³

This theory essentially assumes that premodern Chinese ethnic identity was normally weak but became strong whenever the Chinese faced external threats: in such cases, they transformed from cultural assimilationists into xenophobes, proto-nationalists, or racists. There is an attractive simplicity to this logic, and Luo Zhitian does acknowledge that it is a broad generalization.⁴ Nonetheless, his theory is so reductionistic that it seriously misrepresents historical reality.

First of all, Luo assumes that the ‘open’ version of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy was centered on differences in culture. This assumption is flawed, albeit hardly atypical among modern historians.⁵ Tang and Song writers variously identified barbarism with immorality, ideological heterodoxy, and improper ritual, but none of them represented the barbarians’ inferiority as the consequence of having a different or inferior “culture.” Luo also uses Tang Taizong and Han Yu as his primary examples of the “open” face of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy, not realizing that these two men were engaging with completely different rhetorical contexts and discourses. As we saw in Parts 1 and 2 of this dissertation, Taizong’s barbarophilic rhetoric of universalism was aimed at countering his ministers’ anti-expansionist arguments, whereas Han Yu’s rhetoric of barbarization was aimed at persuading his intellectually pluralistic readers of the necessity for an ideological orthodoxy by representing that orthodoxy as fundamental to Chinese identity itself. Moreover, while Taizong’s rhetoric was the product of a time of Chinese military strength, Han Yu’s was not: the Tang had lost its westernmost territories and protectorates to the Tibetans, and the imperial court was struggling just to regain control over its armies in Hebei.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Liu Pujiang’s recent work on Tang and Song discourses of political legitimacy has similarly asserted the existence of a historical “law” 規律 by which the Chinese would be culturalists when militarily stronger and at peace with other peoples, but racists when militarily weaker and threatened by foreigners. Liu cites Luo Zhitian’s 1996 article and also the discussion of culturalism and nationalism in Prasenjit Duara’s influential *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), which was in turn influenced by the theory of Southern Song proto-nationalism advanced by Trauzettel and Tillman. Liu, “Zhengtong lun xia de Wudai shiguan,” 91–92 and “Nanbeichao de lishi yichan yu Sui Tang shidai de zhengtong lun,” 149.

⁵ See the preceding footnote and the discussion of the concept of “culturalism” in this dissertation’s Introduction, as well as the conclusion to Part 2.

Similarly, the idea that Chinese people could descend into moral barbarism actually gained popularity during the Northern Song, a period Luo Zhitan would identify as one “when the Chinese and barbarians were evenly matched or the barbarians were stronger than the Chinese.” If we follow Luo’s reasoning, the Song literati should have favored the argument that the “line between the Chinese and the barbarians” was impermeable from either side, making barbarization and sinicization equally impossible. Cheng Yi and his followers would also have had no reason to reject the ethnocentric interpretation of *Analects* 3:5 and adopt an interpretation in which the Chinese could be more barbaric than the barbarians. Clearly, “political considerations” had at best only a secondary influence on the Song-period discourse of barbarization. Moreover, we have seen that in the Southern Song, ethnocentric and universalistic understandings of barbarism “coexisted and competed” even in the minds and writings of individual *Daoxue* philosophers like Hu Anguo, Hu Yin, Zhang Shi, Lü Zuqian, and Zhu Xi, while the supposedly proto-nationalistic Chen Liang and Ye Shi produced surprisingly ‘open’ interpretations of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy during the 1170s. The notion that the Song literati were divided into ‘open-siders’ and ‘closed-siders’ does not even begin to capture the complexity and paradox created by the awkward combination of revanchism and moralism on the Southern Song intellectual scene.

For further illustration of this complexity, let us look at the only major figure in twelfth-century *Daoxue* philosophy who has not come up in our discussion thus far: Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139–1192). Our only sources for Lu’s views on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy are the transcripts of lectures on the *Chunqiu* that he delivered at the Imperial University in 1182 and 1183.⁶ The first topic in the 1182 lecture concerned Confucius’s reason for recording the Chu state’s territorial expansion in detail despite his supposedly negative assessment of Chu. Lu Jiuyuan argued that Confucius only paid so much attention to the expansion of Chu because he was worried about future Chu aggression against the Central Lands:

When the sage [Confucius] regarded the Central Lands as superior and the barbarians (Yi-Di) as inferior, he was not being unduly partial to the Central Lands. The Central Lands have received balanced *qi* from heaven and earth, and so that is where ritual and moral duty are found. To regard the Central Lands as superior is not really to regard the Central Lands as superior; it is to regard ritual and moral duty as superior. Even though [the Central Lands] had gone through decline and disorder, the sage-kings’ institutions and laws had survived and the legacy of their influence had not been fully extinguished. When the barbarians became militarily strong and began swallowing up smaller states, they were about to take advantage of their strength to invade and conquer the Chinese

⁶ The modern Zhonghua shuju edition of Lu Jiuyuan’s collected works misreads the title 太學《春秋》講義 (“Lecture Notes on the *Chunqiu* for the Imperial University”) as 《大學》、《春秋》講義 (“Lecture Notes on the *Great Learning* and the *Chunqiu*”). The *Siku quanshu* edition of Lu’s works has the correct title. LJJ 23.276; Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵, *Xiangshan ji* 象山集 (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 23.

states. If this happened, there would be no place left for ritual and moral duty. This was a matter of great worry for the sage [Confucius]. Chu conquered the states of Xian, Huang, Jiang, Lù, and Yong and now also Shuliao, and the sage [Confucius] deigned to record each conquest because he regarded the fate of the Central Lands with such anxiety!

聖人貴中國賤夷狄，非私中國也。中國得天地中和之氣，固禮義之所在。貴中國者，非貴中國也，貴禮義也。雖更衰亂，先王之典刑猶存，流風遺俗未盡泯然也。夷狄盛強，吞併小國，將乘其氣力以憑夷諸夏，是禮義將無所措矣。此聖人之大憂也。楚人滅弦、滅黃、滅江、滅六、滅庸，至是又滅舒蓼，聖人悉書不置，其所以望中國者切矣！⁷

This interpretation suffers from weak historiographical logic: Chu conquered Shuliao in 601 BC, fifty years before Confucius was born; moreover, by the time Confucius supposedly composed the *Chunqiu*, Chu had long been locked in a strategic stalemate with Jin and had also been weakened by its war with Wu. Confucius therefore had little reason to worry about Chu expansionism during his lifetime; Lu Jiuyuan seems to be projecting his own anxiety about the Southern Song's geopolitical situation onto the ancient sage. But the most striking feature of Lu Jiuyuan's interpretation is not this sort of anachronistic presentism; rather, it is the fact that he finds it necessary to explain why Confucius was biased against barbarian states like Chu at all—in other words, why a sage would have ethnic allegiances or prejudices. One is instantly reminded of Hu Yin in the *Dushi guanjian* feeling compelled to explain that Confucius was not “being contrary to Heaven” by regarding barbarians as inferior outsiders.

Lu Jiuyuan revisits the theme of Confucius's anti-Chu bias in his 1183 lectures. He argues that Confucius was not unduly partial toward Chu's main rival, the state of Jin: “it was right to do so because of the difference between Chinese and barbarians (*Hua Yi zhi bian*)” 華夷之辨當如是也。Five months later, however, he clarifies that Confucius's pro-Jin position was predicated on the Central Lands' moral superiority and not on ethnic identity: “Jin could be regarded as superior because it was of the Central Lands; the Central Lands could be regarded as superior because they had ritual and moral duty” 晉之所以可貴者，以其為中國也；中國之所以可貴者，以其有禮義也。According to Lu Jiuyuan, Confucius finally demoted the Jin ruler semantically because his actions failed to live up to ritual and moral duty, leading the sage to lose hope in him.⁸

Hu Yin and Lu Jiuyuan display a sense of uneasiness with Confucius's ethnocentrism that is absent from pre-*Daoxue* discourse on the inferiority of the barbarians—another indication, I would argue, that *Daoxue* thinkers found the balance between ethnic identity and moral

⁷ LJY 23.277.

⁸ LJY 23.279, 281.

universalism difficult to manage. Perhaps the *Daoxue* community had lost its best ideological justification for ethnocentrism by accepting Cheng Yi's self-critical reinterpretation of *Analectis* 3:5: if Confucius did not think barbarians were always morally inferior to the Chinese, then surely his followers could not either. But I suspect that a general impulse toward moral self-criticism and introspection also made ethnocentrism less appealing as an intellectual comfort zone for Southern Song *Daoxue* thinkers. These thinkers may well have been troubled by the notion of Chinese moral superiority because they feared it would make the Chinese too complacent to pursue sagehood through moral self-cultivation. People who kept comparing themselves to barbarians might easily forget to compare themselves to the sages, and thus fail to realize that they still had a long way to go before they achieved their full human potential. But if the *Daoxue* thinkers did make a choice not to let their ethnic identity take precedence over their message of moral self-cultivation, it was certainly not an easy position to square with their revanchist sympathies.

Lu Jiuyuan's solution to the tension between ethnocentrism and universalism was to harmonize environmental determinism with moralism. Like Hu Yin, he blamed the barbarians' imbalanced *qi* for their moral inferiority while implying that the Central Lands could also lose their superiority if they lost ritual and moral duty. A barbarian conquest of the Central Lands would be a disaster only because it would result in the extinction of ritual and moral duty; by the same token, it would be just as disastrous for the Chinese to reject ritual and moral duty of their own accord, since this would be tantamount to a descent into barbarism and finally into animality. In fact, we have seen that Cheng Yi and Hu Hong argued that moral barbarization was always a prelude to barbarian conquest, since barbarians would always be drawn to their own kind⁹; Lü Zuqian applied a similar argument to barbarian immigration into the Central Lands.

The environmental determinism of *Daoxue* discourse on the *qi* of barbarians and animals thus complemented the rhetoric of barbarization, making it possible for *Daoxue* philosophers to be ethnocentric and moralistic at the same time.¹⁰ Nonetheless, the coexisting concepts of moral barbarization and barbarian *qi* did produce a philosophical conundrum: how could the Chinese turn into barbarians when Chinese *qi* was fundamentally different in balance from barbarian *qi*? Did immorality have a deleterious effect on Chinese (or human) *qi*, just as moral self-cultivation served to further improve the purity of one's *qi*? Lü Zuqian came close to making this claim with

⁹ Hu Yin repeated this argument in the *Dushi guanjian* and claimed that the effects of the Tang emperors' moral barbarism and barbarophilia extended into the Five Dynasties, as seen from the Kitan conquest of Later Jin in 947. See DSGJ 29.1072.

¹⁰ Chang Chishen overlooks this complementary dynamic when he interprets an emphasis on the inferiority of barbarian *qi* as a "new line of thinking" 新思路 on the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy (which he terms "geographism" 地理主義) that emerged and became dominant in the Southern Song. Chang uses Hu Yin, Chen Liang, and Zhu Xi as examples of the new discourse but ignores the long prior history of Chinese discourse on barbarian *qi*, going back to the White Tiger Hall conference. He also makes the common mistake of assuming that the "culturalism" 文化主義 that "geographism" supposedly replaced was the "traditional line of thinking" 傳統思路 in the Sui, Tang, and Northern Song periods. Chang, "'Zhongguo' gainian yu 'Hua Yi' zhi bian de lishi tantao," 254–259.

his image of barbarized Chinese minds resonating with Rong barbarian minds and barbarized Chinese *qi* stirring Rong barbarian *qi*. But *Daoxue* thinkers never subjected the question of how barbarization actually happened in terms of *qi* to rigorous exploration. Their emphasis was always on barbarism as a moral state, not a physical or biological state. The discourse of moral barbarization therefore bore only a superficial resemblance to ideas of racial superiority or racial purity. Even Zhu Xi, who differed from other *Daoxue* thinkers in ignoring the idea of barbarization altogether, nonetheless made no attempt at refuting that idea explicitly by arguing that Chinese *qi* could not turn into barbarian *qi*.

Another question that *Daoxue* philosophers generally preferred not to explore was whether barbarians could ever overcome the limitations of their *qi* and become moral. Related to this was the question of whether a barbarian dynasty could be moral enough to gain the Mandate of Heaven and rule the Central Lands legitimately. When the philosophers found it impossible to avoid these questions, their answers tended to be inconsistent or ambivalent. Hu Yin acknowledged the existence of morally praiseworthy barbarians and even barbarian sages in history, claimed that the Way of the Sages could be practiced by barbarians too, and believed that Xiaowendi of the Northern Wei was worthy of reunifying and ruling the entire Chinese world. Yet he also felt that there was something wrong with the idea of a legitimate barbarian dynasty and tried to maintain that imbalanced barbarian *qi* made such a thing impossible even when barbarian rulers “sometimes managed by luck to do something good.” Lü Zuqian alternated between regarding Chu as a morally barbarized Chinese state and regarding it as a sinicized barbarian state. Zhu Xi claimed that the barbarians’ *qi* made it nearly impossible for them to change, denigrated the Jurchens as animals whose only response to kindness was to indulge more freely in aggression, and rejected the idea of a Jurchen ruler being as sagely as Yao or Shun. But he also found himself impressed by Aguda’s integrity and believed that the Northern Song court could have averted the Jurchen invasion by observing similarly high moral standards. Ironically, Chen Liang was the only Southern Song thinker who unequivocally affirmed that the Jurchens had the potential to gain political legitimacy, although he did not think they had to earn that legitimacy through moral improvement: they could simply become undeserving beneficiaries of the Southern Song court’s inaction if the pent-up balanced *qi* in north China finally reached an uncontrollable level of pressure and vented itself.

Worth noting in this regard is an essay on the *Zuozhuan* in Ye Shi’s 1177 portfolio. Like his first essay on foreign relations, it represents the Central Lands’ loss of ritual and moral duty as a consequence of expansionist attempts at conquering barbarians, although it identifies the first such expansionists as Zhou kings, not Qin and Han emperors. But Ye also goes further in this essay by arguing that the barbarians were then able to appropriate the practice of ritual and moral duty from the Chinese:

When all under heaven is well-governed, ritual and moral duty are found in the Central Lands; when [all under heaven] is in disorder, ritual and moral duty are found among the barbarians (Yi-Di). When the Zhou dynasty was at its height, the barbarian peoples

anxiously sought to share in its ritual and moral duty, yet they were not permitted to. This was not because they were thought to be inferior and not worth ruling; it was just that the way of ruling the Central Lands cannot be used to rule barbarians. Thus when the Central Lands had all their ritual and moral duty, they were invulnerable to attack. When the Zhou dynasty was in decline, [its kings] set their own country aside and attempted to rule over barbarians. Whoever rules over barbarians loses the [people of the] Central Lands, and whoever loses the [people of the] Central Lands loses ritual and moral duty. Hence the barbarian peoples took hold of the power over ritual and moral duty and used it to contend with the Chinese states.

天下之治也，禮義在於中國；其亂也，禮義在於夷狄。當成周之盛也，夷狄之人皇皇焉思與其禮義而不得者。非以爲賤而不足治也，篤於治中國者其道不可以治夷狄耳。故禮義備，而中國無隙。及其衰也，舍其國而治夷狄。夫治夷狄者失中國，失中國者失禮義也。故夷狄之人執禮義之權以與諸夏抗。

Ye Shi returns to this theme at the very end of the essay:

The calamity of the *Chunqiu* [period] was that the basic laws had changed, while the lesser laws remained intact. Because the basic laws had changed, even when the barbarians (Yi-Di) turned into [people of] the Central Lands, they still could not behave correctly; because the lesser laws remained intact, the feudal lords from the Three Dynasties [of Xia, Shang, and Zhou] continued to exist for several centuries.

蓋《春秋》之禍，大綱已易而小紀未壞。大綱已易，故夷狄化爲中國而不能正；小紀未壞，故三代之諸侯其存者猶數百年。¹¹

This argument appears to take an interpretation like Lu Jiuyuan's to its logical conclusion: if the Central Lands were only superior as long as they had ritual and moral duty, then the barbarians could gain superiority if possession of ritual and moral duty passed to them. In that case, a barbarian invasion need not entail the extinction of ritual and moral duty but rather its restoration to the Central Lands under new rulers from outside. Indeed, Ye Shi seems to imply that it would have been better for 'sinicized' barbarian states like Chu to become fully moral and displace the Zhou feudal states entirely, rather than have a prolonged state of semi-barbarism on both sides. Such an argument carried obvious implications for the Song-Jin conflict. But Ye Shi did not relate it to the context of Song-Jin relations in his essay or develop it in any of his other writings—perhaps because the revanchist in him found it intolerably universalistic. The danger of arguing that one's identity was entirely contingent on one's morality was that the force of the rhetoric could very quickly make identity seem unnecessary altogether, such that there was really

¹¹ SXBJ 6.716, 718.

no inherent difference between Chinese and barbarians after all. This was not a position that any Song thinker felt prepared to take—therein lay the universalist's dilemma.

Epilogue

Two voices from the Song-Yuan transition: Hao Jing and Zheng Sixiao

Early in the spring of 1234, the last Jurchen Jin capital at Caizhou 蔡州 (modern Runan county 汝南縣) fell to a combined assault by Mongol and Southern Song armies—the result of a Mongol-Song alliance negotiated in the summer of 1233, shortly after the Jin emperor fled the Mongol siege of his previous capital, Kaifeng. The Jin emperor perished in the fall of Caizhou, apparently by suicide. Having achieved vengeance on the Jurchens at last, the Southern Song court soon decided to fulfil long-cherished irredentist ambitions through an ill-advised plan to seize the former capitals of the Northern Song (Kaifeng, Yingtian, and Luoyang) from Mongol control. That summer, Song armies occupied Yingtian and Kaifeng before suffering a decisive and disastrous defeat by Mongol forces at Luoyang.¹

This abortive campaign led to over forty years of war between the Mongol empire and the Southern Song, which technically ended with the Song court's surrender to Khubilai Khan's (r. 1260–1294) invasion army in 1276 but effectively also included a further three years of loyalist resistance. After the loyalist court's retreat from the southern coast to the small island of Yashan 崖山 (or Yaishan, south of Guangzhou) in 1278, the entire Chinese world effectively came under the rule of a foreign people for the first time in history.² The Yuan invasion and conquest of south China—Yuan being the dynastic name Khubilai adopted in 1271—thus posed an obvious challenge to southern understandings of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy. Had the Mandate of Heaven truly passed to a barbarian ruler, and could one still claim that the Chinese were morally superior? In this Epilogue, I consider two perspectives on these questions: one from Hao Jing 郝經 (1223–1275), a Yuan peace envoy who was also a *Daoxue* philosopher; the other from Zheng Sixiao 鄭思肖 (1241–1318), a Song loyalist scholar who went into reclusion after the Mongol conquest. We shall see that the political and moral convictions held by these two men led them to adopt completely different positions on the tension between ethnicity and morality that lay at the heart of the universalist's dilemma.

¹ See Richard L. Davis, "The Reign of Li-tsung," in Paul Jakov Smith ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 855–863.

² The Mongols encircled and defeated the loyalist fleet in March 1279, and the last Song emperor (a mere boy) died by drowning during or immediately after the battle. For an account of the Mongol-Song war see Peter Lorge, *War, Politics and Society in Early Modern China, 900–1795* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 73–90.

Hao Jing: Universalistic peacemaker

In the late spring of 1260 Khubilai, who had just been elected Great Khan of the Mongols, chose Hao Jing as his envoy to negotiate peace terms with the Song court. The Song chief minister Jia Sidao 賈似道 (1213–1275) ordered Hao's arrest shortly after he crossed into Song territory, reportedly on a charge of espionage. Hao remained in detention in Zhenzhou 真州 (modern Yizheng 儀徵) until 1275, when he was released as part of a desperate Song attempt at averting the final phase of the Mongol invasion by diplomatic means. He fell ill during his return journey to the Yuan capital Dadu 大都 (modern Beijing) and died a few months later, at the age of fifty-two.³

Despite his long incarceration by the Song court, Hao Jing's loyalty to Khubilai remained unshakeable. Shortly after arriving in Song territory, he explained his decision to enter Khubilai's service and accept his assignment as an envoy in an impassioned letter addressed to Li Tingzhi 李庭芝 (1219–1276), the Song governor of the Huai River region:

In the Yimao year (1255), [Khubilai] issued orders to recruit [literati], and I set off [to serve him] in high spirits, thinking, “The chaos of war has raged for more than forty years, and has there been anyone capable of employing the literati [during that time]? Today, whoever can employ the literati and practice the Way of the Central Lands is the [true] lord of the Central Lands. If at this time the literati do not accept employment for themselves, then our people's bodies will end up oiling the executioner's axes and becoming manure in the wilderness—not one of them will survive!” ... That is why, when my lord [Khubilai] entrusted this mission to me without doubting [my loyalty], I, too, accepted it without hesitation.

歲乙卯下令來徵，乃慨然啓行，以爲：「兵亂四十餘年，而孰能用士乎？今日能用士而能行中國之道，則中國之主也。士於此時而不自用，則吾民將膏鈇鉞、糞土野，其無孑遺矣！」... 是以主上以是命僕而不疑，僕亦受之不辭。⁴

³The traditional explanation for Hao Jing's detention was that Jia Sidao had made a secret peace deal with the Mongols the year before and wanted to keep Hao from revealing its embarrassing details. This explanation occurs in various sources, including Zheng Sixiao's *Xinshi*. However, Herbert Franke and Richard Davis have rejected it as spurious. YS 157.3708–3709; Zheng Sixiao 鄭思肖, *Xinshi* 新史, in Chen Fukang 陳福康, *Jingzhong qishu kao* 井中奇書考 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 2001), 504–505; Davis, “The Reign of Li-tsung” and “The Reign of Tu-tsung and His Successors to 1279,” in Paul Jakov Smith ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 870, 895–896, 926–927, 939.

⁴Hao Jing 郝經, *Lingchuan ji* 陵川集 (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 37, 13.a–b.

Many modern historians have pointed to the line, “whoever can... practice the Way of the Central Lands is the [true] lord of the Central Lands” as evidence that Hao Jing believed barbarians to be capable of becoming like the Chinese and thereby earning the right to rule the Chinese world.⁵ But the letter also reflects Hao Jing’s belief that it was his moral duty to save human lives by effecting the Mongols’ transformation into civilized rulers.⁶ It is telling that Hao first used the poignant imagery of human beings turning into oil for axes and manure for the soil in an essay addressed to Khubilai, titled “Sizhi lun” 思治論 (Discourse on Longing for Good Governance). In it, he argued that the Mongols had been extraordinarily successful at conquering territory but did not understand how to govern that territory by means of humaneness and moral duty, laws, administrative institutions, and the promotion of agriculture and education. In his view, conquest for conquest’s sake was inherently unsustainable: “Since when has [any state] waged war for forty years without stopping? How can those people still left alive avoid ending up oiling executioners’ axes and becoming manure for the grass?” 焉有用兵四十年而不已者乎？遺民安得不膏鈇鉞、糞草莽乎？⁷

We should not forget that Hao Jing’s childhood coincided with the exceptionally violent Mongol conquest of the Jurchen Jin, which had forced his family to leave its ancestral home in Shanxi even before he was born. The forty-year period of war to which he referred had commenced in 1211, when the Mongols began invading the Jin, and had yet to end since the fall of the Jin was almost immediately followed by the Mongol-Song war. Yet Hao Jing saw Khubilai as this war-torn world’s best hope for peace. According to him, this was because the Mongol Khan’s eagerness to engage the services of the literati, who alone understood the moral Way of the Central Lands, held the promise of transforming the Mongols’ pursuit of world domination into a humanitarian enterprise—a war to end all war. In the “Sizhi lun,” he sought to convince Khubilai that “laws, ritual, and moral duty” were the keys to reunifying the Chinese world, by elevating them to a metaphysical principle via the concept of primal *qi*:

⁵ E.g., Zhao Xufeng 趙旭峰, “Song-Yuan zhiji Hao Jing de minzu sixiang guan” 宋元之際郝經的民族思想觀, *Yunnan caimao xueyuan xuebao* 雲南財貿學院學報 2006(6), 16–18; Yun Chunxi 允春喜, “Neng xing Zhongguo zhi dao ze Zhongguo zhi zhu—Hao Jing ‘Yong Xia bian Yi’ de sixiang he shijian” 能行中國之道則中國之主—郝經“用夏變夷”的思想和實踐, *Beijing gongye daxue xuebao* 北京工業大學學報 2010(5), 53–57.

⁶ One important recent study of Hao Jing’s thought misses this context by reading his words about oil and manure as a “dire warning” to the Southern Song about the consequences of resisting Khubilai. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Christian Soffel, *Cultural Authority and Political Culture in China: Exploring Issues with the Zhongyong and the Daotong during the Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012), 23–24.

⁷ Hao, *Lingchuan ji* (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 18, 15b–17b.

Laws, ritual, and moral duty are the primal *qi* of all under heaven. They may be either incomplete or complete, but they always exist and are never lost. Even if all under heaven is lost, the primal *qi* is never lost. Therefore whoever can revive laws, ritual, and moral duty will be able to unify all under heaven.

綱紀、禮義者，天下之元氣也。或偏或全，必有在而不亡。天下雖亡，元氣未嘗亡也。故能舉綱紀、禮義者能一天下也。⁸

But in another essay, the “Lizheng yi” 立政議 (Discussion on Establishing Good Governance) of 1260, Hao Jing tried to stress the urgency of the need for reviving laws, ritual, and moral duty by claiming that they had been almost completely lost since the fall of the Jurchen Jin. If Khubilai made no effort at reviving the institutions of the Tang, Song, Liao, and Jin dynasties, then civilization would come to an end and the Mongols would become an object of both ridicule and lament to later generations. On the other hand, Hao argued, even if Khubilai could not match the achievements of the Han and Tang (despite having more territory and people at his disposal than those dynasties did), surely he could at least aspire to be as worthy as the Northern Wei emperor Xiaowendi or the Jurchen Jin emperors. In order to do so, he ought to adopt Chinese political and ritual institutions in the way that the Northern Wei and Jurchen Jin dynasties had done.⁹

Hao Jing’s praise for Xiaowendi and the Jurchen Jin emperors makes it evident that he did not subscribe to the ethnocentric idea, endorsed by some Southern Song *Daoxue* thinkers like Zhu Xi, that barbarians were incapable of learning ritual and moral duty—let alone using these values to rule the Chinese. In fact, Hao Jing also wrote an essay titled “Shiwu” 時務 (The Trend of the Times) to argue that it was ludicrous to think that the Chinese were inherently superior to barbarians, since Chinese civilization (here termed “the Central Lands”) had already been lost for the last thousand years.¹⁰ There seems to be an odd disjuncture between this claim and the assertion in the “Lizheng yi” that civilization was only now in danger of being completely lost,

⁸ Ibid., *juan* 18, 18a.

⁹ Ibid., *juan* 32, 20a–21a. Although Hao Jing’s tone here is somewhat patronizing, I doubt that it would be as offensive to Khubilai as Hoyt Tillman suggests. Hao Jing is not claiming that the Mongols can only hope to equal the Northern Wei and the Jurchen Jin, not the Han and Tang. Rather, he is employing a rhetorical strategy of lowered expectations in order to make Khubilai’s pride compel him to emulate the Han and Tang. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman (Tian Hao 田浩), “Song, Jin, Yuan wenhua sixiang pengzhuang yu ronghe: Tanjiu Hao Jing de Yi Xia guan, zhengtong lun yu Daoxue yanbian” 宋、金、元文化思想碰撞與融合：探究郝經的夷夏觀、正統論與道學演變, in Zhang Xiqing 張希清 ed., *10–13 shiji Zhongguo wenhua de pengzhuang yu ronghe* 10–13 世紀中國文化的碰撞與融合 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006), 45.

¹⁰ Tillman, citing Qin Hongchang 秦鴻昌, dates this essay to ca. 1254—that is, shortly before Hao Jing’s decision to serve Khubilai. Tillman (Tian Hao), “Song, Jin, Yuan wenhua sixiang pengzhuang yu ronghe,” 57 n. 1.

not to mention the claim in the “Sizhi lun” that civilization, being made of primal *qi*, could never be completely lost. This disjuncture should alert us to the likelihood that Hao Jing did not have a single coherent interpretation of the history of Chinese civilization, but rather multiple narratives that he could use for different rhetorical contexts.

Hao Jing begins the “Shiwu” by claiming, like innumerable other Classicists over the centuries, that civilization had reached the height of perfection under the rule of the sage-kings Yao and Shun and continued at that height under the Three Dynasties of Xia, Shang, and Zhou. The Qin dynasty had destroyed this civilization by ruling oppressively and attempting to exterminate Classicism. We have seen similar narratives of civilizational decline from the Ancient Style writers and the Song *Daoxue* philosophers, but Hao Jing differs from them by crediting the Han dynasty with successfully restoring classical civilization. He claims that if the Qin had lasted longer than it did, human beings would have become extinct, for even those who escaped death under cruel laws would have lost their innate moral nature and become as stupid and ignorant as plants and animals. But Heaven had mercy on humanity and replaced the Qin with the Han, which rebuilt the civilization of the Three Dynasties, albeit imperfectly and incompletely so.¹¹ Unfortunately, civilization collapsed again after the end of the Eastern Han:

After the end of the two Han dynasties, there was no longer correctly balanced *qi* in heaven and earth and there were no longer men of many talents under heaven.¹² By the time of the [Western] Jin dynasty, cunning and deceitful [men] were employed [at court], and there was thus no longer a bond between rulers and subjects; calumny was rampant, and there was thus no longer a bond between fathers and sons; rebellious and jealous [women] were chosen as wives, and the bond between husbands and wives was thus destroyed; people turned against their own flesh and blood, and the bond between brothers was thus severed. Finally there came the warfare and strife of the barbarians (Yi-Di), and the last bit of goodness left from the Han was finally extinguished. The Central

¹¹ Hao, *Lingchuan ji* (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 19, 16a–16b.

¹² One is struck by the similarity between this line and the theory of *qi* venting in Chen Liang’s 1178 memorial, as well as the opening line of the Southern Song loyalist Wen Tianxiang’s 文天祥 (1236–1283) famous “Zhengqi ge” 正氣歌: “There is a correctly balanced *qi* in heaven and earth” 天地有正氣. However, it is highly unlikely that Hao Jing was responding to the intellectually marginal Chen Liang. It is possible that Wen Tianxiang’s poem was partly responding to Hao Jing—it was written in or after 1279, when Wen was a prisoner of the Yuan. As Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書 has pointed out, however, Wen’s interpretation of *qi* theory is not very original: it borrows tropes directly from an essay by Shi Jie and a stele inscription by Su Shi. On Qian Zhongshu’s criticism of the “Zhengqi ge” as a derivative work, see most recently Liu Shinan 劉世南 and Li Taosheng 李逃生, “Cong ‘Songshi xuanzhu’ buxuan ‘Zhengqi ge’ kan Qian Zhongshu de ‘shenmei piping’” 從《宋詩選注》不選《正氣歌》看錢鍾書的“審美批評”, *Jiangxi shehui kexue* 江西社會科學 2013(4), 83–86.

Lands were thereupon lost. Therefore, the rites and ritual music were destroyed in the Qin, and the Central Lands were lost in the Jin; it was all finished! So our people can no longer benefit from the goodness of the Three Dynasties and the two Han dynasties!

二漢之亡，天地無正氣，天下無全才。及于晉氏，狙詐取而無君臣，讒間行而無父子，賊妒聘而夫婦廢，骨肉逆而兄弟絕。致夷狄兵爭，而漢之遺澤盡矣。中國遂亡也。故禮樂滅於秦，而中國亡於晉。已矣乎！吾民遂不霑三代、二漢之澤矣乎！¹³

One is reminded of Cheng Yi's argument (later adapted by Hu Hong) that the Western Jin elite's moral barbarism led to the barbarian insurrections that overran north China, and that even the Tang dynasty remained morally tainted by "barbarian ways." It is important to note in this regard that Hao Jing proudly traced his family's tradition of classical learning to an ancestor who was a student of Cheng Hao; from about 1243 onwards, he also identified himself with Zhu Xi's synthesis of the *Daoxue* tradition, which the Southern Song scholar Zhao Fu 趙復 (ca. 1200–1277) had transmitted to Dadu after being taken captive by the Mongols in 1235.¹⁴ Unlike Cheng Yi, however, Hao Jing also implies that the concept of the Central Lands has lost all meaning since the fall of the Western Jin—not because the barbarians had continued to rule north China ever since then (they clearly had not), but because the moral civilization that was the true essence of the Central Lands had not been restored even under the Tang and the Northern Song. Hao's narrative thus also bears some similarity to Ye Shi's argument that the real difference between Chinese and barbarians was lost after the Qin and Han empires began behaving barbarically toward the barbarians.

Hao Jing then proceeds to his main point, which is that ethnicity now has no bearing on one's worthiness to gain the Mandate of Heaven, since the Chinese lost their moral superiority to the barbarians after the Han:

Even so, it is never the case that Heaven must surely approve of someone, for Heaven approves only of the good. It is never the case that the people must surely follow someone, for they will only follow someone who has moral power. Since the Central Lands have been lost, how can it be that only a person of the Central Lands would be able

¹³ Hao, *Lingchuan ji* (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 19, 17a.

¹⁴ See Yan Xuanjun 晏選軍, "Nanbei Lixue sixiang huihe xia de Hao Jing" 南北理學思想匯合下的郝經, *Jinyang xuekan* 晉陽學刊 2003(6), 10; Tillman (Tian Hao), "Song, Jin, Yuan wenhua sixiang pengzhuang yu ronghe," 25–43.

to govern well? The sage [Confucius] said, “If barbarians (Yi) are promoted to the level of the Central Lands, then I regard them as the Central Lands.” If a person is good, then it is permissible to approve of him and permissible to follow him. Why should it matter whether he is of the Central Lands or of the barbarians?

雖然，天無必與，惟善是與；民無必從，惟德之從。中國而既亡矣，豈必中國之人而後善治哉？聖人有云：「夷而進於中國則中國之。」苟有善者，與之可也，從之可也，何有於中國於夷？¹⁵

Here we see the second half of Han Yu’s famous “Yuandao” formula being attributed to Confucius himself. In an otherwise excellent essay on Hao Jing’s thought, Hoyt Tillman takes Hao’s attribution for granted, calling it “a sage’s words about barbarians [that] are even a kind of principle of the *Chunqiu*,” and identifies an emphasis on morality over ethnicity as “traditional Confucian thinking since the sages of the Shang and Zhou.”¹⁶ This overlooks the significance of Hao Jing’s choice to quote the “Yuandao,” rather than a real classical text, in support of his argument for the barbarians’ potential to become morally equal and even identical to the Chinese. Before this, two luminaries of the early thirteenth-century intellectual and literary scene in Jurchen-ruled north China, Zhao Bingwen 趙秉文 (1159–1232) and Yang Huan 楊奐 (1186–1255), had already used the “Yuandao” formula to assert the legitimacy of a long-past dynasty: in Zhao’s case it was the Shu-Han, a “remote, unsophisticated state” 僻陋之國 whose founder nonetheless had the admirable desire to “share all under heaven” 公天下 with his wise chief minister; in Yang’s case it was the Northern Wei, which he saw as more deserving of legitimacy than the “dissolute and cruel” 荒淫殘忍 Liu-Song dynasty in the south.¹⁷ But Hao Jing was, as far as we know, the first Chinese literatus to use Han Yu’s formula to assert the legitimacy of the dynasty that he himself served. Thus, whereas Tillman reads Hao Jing’s argument as nothing more than a “traditional” aspect of Classicist discourse, rather than an “idea that he himself invented to resolve a new dilemma,” I would suggest that it deserves to be recognized as an

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Tillman (Tian Hao), “Song, Jin, Yuan wenhua sixiang pengzhuang yu ronghe,” 57.

¹⁷ Neither Zhao Bingwen nor Yang Huan acknowledged Han Yu as the originator of the formula that they were quoting; Zhao simply attributes it to the *Chunqiu* itself. Tillman follows Yan Xuanjun in citing the Zhao Bingwen precedent, but neither he nor Yan recognizes Zhao’s debt to the “Yuandao”—Tillman merely remarks that “many commentators on the *Chunqiu* said something similar.” It is interesting that Zhao Bingwen likens the Shu-Han state’s geographically peripheral position to barbarism: this perhaps reflects north Chinese attitudes toward the Sichuan region in Zhao’s time. Ibid., 57 n. 2; Yan, “Nanbei Lixue sixiang huihe xia de Hao Jing,” 15 n. 17; Zhao Bingwen 趙秉文, *Fushui ji* 滄水集 (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 14, 10b; Yang Huan 楊奐, *Yang Huan ji* 楊奐集, in *Li Junmin ji/Yang Huan ji/Yang Hongdao ji* 李俊民集/楊奐集/楊弘道集 (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 282.

innovative attempt at evading the universalist's dilemma by debunking the classical idea of barbarian inferiority altogether.¹⁸

Hao Jing ends the essay by arguing that ethnicity's irrelevance to the issue of political legitimacy is proven by the case of the Former Qin and Northern Wei states, which brought greater benefit to their subjects than many ethnically Chinese dynasties:

That is why the Former Qin was held to have brought good governance to all under heaven for thirty years, while the Northern Wei lasted for several generations and all within the four seas was nearly at peace. The [Western] Jin was able to conquer the Wu but unable to hold on to its gains; the Sui was able to achieve reunification but unable to last more than two generations. From this we know that Heaven's approval is based not on land but on the people; not on the people but on the Way; not even on the Way but merely on the determination to exert oneself in putting it into practice, that. Alas! Later generations had the same land and the same people as the Three Dynasties and the two Han dynasties, but were unable to achieve the good governance of the Former Qin and the Northern Wei—how sad!

故苻秦三十年而天下稱治，元魏數世而四海幾乎。晉能取吳而不能遂守，隋能混一而不能再世。以是知天之所與，不在於地而在於人，不在於人而在於道，不在於道而在於必行力爲之而已矣。嗚呼！後世有三代、二漢之地，有三代、二漢之民，而不能爲元魏、苻秦之治者，悲夫！¹⁹

The somewhat self-contradictory sequence of “land—people—the Way—putting the Way into practice” that Hao Jing goes through seems to have two aims: first, elevating the importance of practicing “the Way” over other possible sources of legitimacy (such as territorial extent and ethnicity) as much as possible; second, refuting the idea (most closely associated with Ouyang Xiu and Zhu Xi) that only dynasties that succeeded in reunifying north and south could be legitimate. One is also reminded of Huangfu Shi's assertion of geography's irrelevance to political legitimacy in the “Dongjin Yuan-Wei di zhengrun lun”:

¹⁸ Tillman (Tian Hao), “Song, Jin, Yuan wenhua sixiang pengzhuang yu ronghe,” 58.

¹⁹ Hao, *Lingchuan ji* (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 19, 17a–17b.

The Central Lands are what they are because of ritual and moral duty; the barbarians (Yi-Di) are what they are because they do not have ritual and moral duty. How could [this distinction] be tied to the land?

But there is a clear difference in intention. Huangfu wanted to show that the Northern Wei rulers, being barbarians, were illegitimate even though they ruled the traditional “Central Lands” of north China, whereas Hao Jing was arguing that the Former Qin and Northern Wei emperors, being practitioners of the Way, were legitimate even though they had not conquered the south. The difference reflects three different modes of thinking about the criterion for political legitimacy that developed over the course of some six centuries: the pro-northern bias of the Tang period; the emphasis on reunification that began with Zhang Wangzhi and Ouyang Xiu; and Hao Jing’s insistence on the primacy of good governance and the practice of the Way.

Zheng Sixiao: Guilt-ridden loyalist

In late December 1275, about five months after Hao Jing’s death, a Yuan army surrounded the city of Suzhou 蘇州 and received the surrender of its garrison. The city’s officials seem to have used the absence of their famously loyal prefect Wen Tianxiang 文天祥 (1236–1283) as an opportunity to defect—although one can hardly blame them for wanting to avoid the fate of nearby Changzhou 常州, where the populace had recently been massacred by the Yuan army as a consequence of holding out for months and refusing all calls to surrender. The residents of Suzhou at this time included the thirty-four year-old Zheng Sixiao and his aged and sickly mother. Zheng now found himself torn between two filial duties: should he continue taking care of his mother, or obey his late father Zheng Zhen’s 鄭震 (1199–1262) exhortation to choose death rather than serve two dynasties? He finally chose not to commit suicide or endanger himself by resisting the Mongols, and instead turned to writing poetry to express his loyalist sentiments, vent his disgust with the Suzhou officials, and lament his moral dilemma.²⁰

The fall of Suzhou laid the Southern Song capital at Hangzhou completely open to attack from the north, while Yuan advances down the Yangzi River had already caused the collapse of Hangzhou’s western flank. The Song court finally chose unconditional surrender in February

²⁰ Zheng, *Xinshi*, 402–417, esp. 416. For a controversy over whether the date given for Suzhou’s surrender can be reconciled with other sources, see Chen, *Jingzhong qishu kao*, 309–311. On the massacre of Changzhou and the fall of Suzhou see also Davis, “The Reign of Tu-tsung and His Successors to 1279,” 938–939. On Zheng Sixiao’s dilemma, see also Hoyt Cleveland Tillman (Tian Hao 田浩), “Yin ‘luan’ er dao zhi de xinli chuangshang: Hanzu shiren dui Menggu ruqin huiying zhi yanjiu” 因“亂”而導致的心理創傷：漢族士人對蒙古入侵回應之研究, *Beida shixue* 北大史學 10 (2004), 84–85.

1276. That autumn, Zheng Sixiao wrote an essay that was both an oath of continued loyalty to the Song and a call to arms against the Yuan. But he decided to scramble the essay's words up to avoid suspicion, reasoning that he could restore its original form and reveal it to the world after he succeeded in initiating a loyalist revolt against the Yuan invaders. The essay begins by expressing Zheng's refusal to accept that the Song dynasty had lost the Mandate of Heaven to barbarians:

The sages are legitimate and of the Central Lands. Those barbarians (Yi-Di) are dogs and sheep, not human beings; they are illegitimate and not of the Central Lands. It was once said that the geographical barrier of the Yangzi River cannot withstand the calamities of the *yangjiu* cycle.²¹ The evil Yuan has rebelled against Heaven and usurped the political legitimacy of the Central Lands, desiring to unify [all under heaven] as barbarians. If human strength cannot overcome this, there is still Heaven's *li*. Since antiquity, the barbarians have never conquered the Central Lands, but there also has never been a state that did not end. If [a dynasty] loses all under heaven by being inhumane, then even sagely wisdom cannot save it. But our dynasty has never been inhumane for so much as a day. Traitors and rebels have blocked up the state's lifeblood, and corrupt and cruel officials have abused and exploited the people, but the ruler above did not lose his moral power. Now that these dogs and sheep have increasingly indulged their ruthlessness and rebelliousness, putting all their strength into invading southwards, I point to myself and say, "I am here! The enemy will surely meet destruction at my hands! If I permit the barbarians to cause chaos, I shall not go on living!"

聖人也，爲正統，爲中國。彼夷狄，犬羊也，非人類，非正統，非中國。曾謂長江天險莫掩陽九之厄，元兇忤天，篡中國正統，欲以夷一之。人力不勝，有天理在。自古未嘗夷狄據中國，亦未嘗有不亡國。苟不仁失天下，雖聖智亦莫救。我朝未嘗一日不仁。亂臣賊子天闕國脈，貪官虐吏剝削民命，君上本無失德。今犬羊愈恣橫逆，畢力南入，吾指吾在此！賊決滅於吾手！苟容夷狄大亂，當不復生！²²

But Zheng soon reverts to lamenting his inability to abandon his mother in order to fight the Mongols. In spite of the militant rhetoric that he writes in secret, he cannot translate his loyalism into action without compromising one of his moral duties. Yet his inaction also leaves him morally compromised: "If I abandon loyalty, I cannot be counted filial; if I abandon filiality, I

²¹ In Chinese numerology since Han times, the *yangjiu* cycle has been thought to bring calamity to the world in the one-hundred-and-sixth year of every *yuan* 元 epoch. See HS 21a.984; Hong, *Rongzhai suibi*, 292.

²² Zheng, *Xinshi*, 466.

cannot be counted loyal—for this reason, I have delayed [taking action] for two to three hundred days, while boring a hole through the clouds in the southern sky with my eyes [looking to Heaven]” 捨忠不足爲孝，捨孝不足爲忠，以是遲遲二三百日間，雙睛望穿天南之雲。²³ By his account, the mental and emotional stress has nearly driven him mad. He rails against Heaven for allowing the fall of “a dynasty that practiced the Way” 有道之國, and against peers who had earlier sworn undying loyalty to the Song but were now fawning on the barbarians while rebuking him for foolishly clinging to the past. He ends the essay by declaring his wish for a glorious death and calling on all loyal and moral men to join him in restoring the Song.²⁴

Zheng Sixiao’s mother died in late 1276 or 1277. He could no longer claim to be torn between his duties to family and to dynasty—unless his lack of a son meant that he felt he had to stay alive long enough to carry on the family line.²⁵ But fear or indecision seems to have kept him from carrying out his earlier plans to start a revolt. In early 1278, he found himself writing a second call to arms to try and convince himself that filial duty to his deceased parents required him to raise up an army in support of Wen Tianxiang and other leaders of the loyalist resistance, who were then struggling to maintain a foothold on the southern coast. As with the first call to arms, Zheng encoded this text so as not to be suspected of plotting insurrection. Nine months later, he had yet to take any real action and wrote a third essay in language filled with shame and self-loathing at his procrastination. In it, he declared his intention to actually do something at last: “I now make a fervent vow in my heart with a single word, ‘action,’ and will finally put [my plans] into practice” 今惟以「行」之一字痛誓於心，終施於事. Yet he did little over the next four years besides writing one oath after another, each of them claiming that this time, he was really going to fulfil his father’s expectations and give his life to restore the Song dynasty.²⁶ He would later complain that he could not find any men of sufficient talent and moral character to work with, and that military talent was especially hard to come by, but one may wonder how much effort he truly put into the search.²⁷ After the loyalist resistance met its end at Yashan in

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 467.

²⁵ In 1278 and again in 1279, Zheng writes that he has no son—in the latter instance, he calls himself supremely unfilial for having no offspring to carry on the family line. We do not know whether he was married and, if he was, whether he had any daughters. Chen Fukang and Tillman assume that he was unmarried; Tillman believes this was by choice and a result of trauma caused by the Mongol invasion. Tillman also argues that the ritual mourning period for Zheng’s mother prohibited him from joining the loyalist cause, but this is not supported by Zheng’s writings in 1278 (see below). Ibid., 469, 472; Chen Fukang 陳福康, *Jingzhong qishu kao* 井中奇書考 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 2001), 21 n. 1; Tillman (Tian Hao 田浩), “Yin ‘luan’ er dao zhi de xin li chuang shang,” 85–86.

²⁶ Zheng, *Xinshi*, 468–470, 473, 528. Yang Ne has written a trenchant analysis of the disjuncture between Zheng Sixiao’s rhetoric and his actions (or inaction): see Yang, “‘Xinshi’ zhenwei bian,” 241–242.

²⁷ Zheng, *Xinshi*, 525.

1279, he consoled himself by writing another volume of loyalist poetry and by embracing a vision of the Song dynasty as a metaphysical ideal that was both eternal and immanent in all things: “it neither relies on the possession of territory for its existence, nor ceases to exist when it has no territory” 不以有疆土而存，不以無疆土而亡。²⁸

One is tempted to see this vision as a kind of national identity, but it is significant that Zheng Sixiao actually likens it to a son’s hero-worship of his father: “It is like a filial son’s attitude toward his father: he sees nothing in front and nothing behind, for he has eyes only for his father, who is as exalted as Heaven. How could he treat his father as present when alive but absent when dead? And how could he see himself having two fathers?” 譬如孝子於其父，前乎無前，後乎無後，滿眼唯父，與天同大。寧以生爲在，死爲不在耶？又寧見有二父耶？²⁹ From this analogy and the many reverential references to his father in his other writings, it seems clear to me that losing his father at the age of twenty-one had a profound impact on Zheng Sixiao that led him to construct his adult identity around his father’s ideals. He admits to having been an unmotivated and wayward youth and only coming to appreciate being admonished and even whipped by his father (who was evidently a stern moralist) after entering adulthood—by which time his father had already died. This, too, may have added to his desire to honor his father belatedly through his deeds.³⁰ Appeals to his father’s moral example frequently appear alongside (and serve to explain) his expressions of commitment to the loyalist cause and his longing for martyrdom: “My father’s integrity was strong and pure, and he regarded moral principles with extreme clarity; if he were here, I am sure he would have died at the enemy’s hands” 吾父立節剛潔，見理極明；苟在，逆知必死於此賊。³¹ Likewise, his mental anguish over failing to take action appears to be disproportionately tied to the feeling of having let his father down. Indeed, one could say that he transfigured his devotion to a dead father into devotion to a dead dynasty.

In the summer of 1282, Zheng Sixiao finally decided to decode his calls to arms from 1276 and 1278 and reread them, in the hope of rousing himself to action. Even this served only to inspire him to edit and compile his loyalist writings, as though they were his collected works. For some reason, he began to believe that his death was imminent and that it was important to ensure that his writings were preserved for a future generation who would appreciate his true sentiments. That winter, he gave instructions for his writings to be interred with his coffin. In the

²⁸ This vision is expressed in an autobiography written in 1280. *Ibid.*, 418–465, 489–490.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 490.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 469, 471, 473, 490.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 468.

spring of 1283, however, he changed his mind and placed the text, to which he had given the title *Xinshi* 心史, in a hermetically sealed metal coffer that he then lowered into a well.³² There it remained for the next three hundred and fifty-five years until rediscovered in December 1638.³³ Zheng Sixiao lived on for another thirty-five years, to the age of seventy-seven. One hopes that the act of committing his loyalist voice to the well, where it would be concealed but not silenced forever, freed him from the guilt of having survived the Song-Yuan transition.

If, as I have suggested, Zheng Sixiao's primary motivation for embracing and sustaining a loyalist identity was a fear of disappointing his dead but ever-present father, what should we make of the intensely ethnocentric and racist rhetoric that he employs in texts like his first call to arms and his "Dayi luexu" 大義略敘, a detailed narrative history of the fall of the Southern Song?³⁴ Frederick Mote has argued that Zheng's "devotion to the Sung cause was far less a matter of racial antagonism than of attachment to what he regarded as the tenets of Confucian morality."³⁵ I am inclined to agree, and to add that these moral tenets held a particularly strong meaning for Zheng Sixiao because their observance represented loyalty to his father's values. That said, it is also likely that his use of dehumanizing language against the Mongols was partly driven by his effort to move himself to action when even the weight of his father's example had not sufficed to do so. Barbarophilic rhetoric emphasizing the Mongols' brutish lack of humanity and morality allowed him to redirect his self-loathing into righteous hatred of the enemy and

³² Ibid., 529–530.

³³ Since the late seventeenth century, there has been a controversy over whether the *Xinshi* is the authentic work of a Southern Song loyalist, or instead a particularly elaborate late Ming forgery. In my opinion, numerous scholars, most recently including Yang Ne, Chen Fukang, and Zhong Han, have made a strong enough case for the authenticity of the *Xinshi*. In contrast, the three reasons recently provided by Achim Mittag for regarding the *Xinshi* as a late Ming work are, in my view, extremely inconclusive, as are the eight reasons given by Chang Chishen (who remains undecided) for doubting the text's authenticity. I would raise one point that has not received adequate attention thus far: if, as Chen Fukang has shown, there is solid evidence that the text of the *Xinshi* began to circulate among late Ming literati in 1639, then there is little reason why a late Ming literatus (or group of literati) would want to forge such a stridently anti-foreign work at a time when the greatest threat to the Ming dynasty was internal rebellions and not a foreign invasion. No one could have foreseen in 1639 that it would be the Manchus, not one of the rebel leaders, whose dynasty came to rule the Chinese world for the next two centuries or so. See Yang Ne 楊訥, "'Xinshi' zhenwei bian" 《心史》真偽辨, *Yuanshi luncong* 元史論叢 5 (1993), 235–242; Chen, *Jingzhong qishu kao*, esp. 134–151, 266–324; Zhong Han 鍾焯, "'Xinshi • Dayi luexu' chengshu shidai xinkao" 《心史 • 大義略敘》成書時代新考, *Zhongguoshi yanjiu* 中國史研究 2007(1), 133–149; Achim Mittag, "Scribe in the Wilderness: The Manchu Conquest and the Loyal-Hearted Historiographer's (*xinshi* 心史) Mission," *Oriens Extremus* 44 (2003/04), 27–42; Chang, "'Zhongguo' gainian yu 'Hua Yi' zhi bian de lishi tantao," 426–432.

³⁴ For examples from the "Dayi luexu," which was written in the spring of 1282 and revised in the spring of 1283, see *ibid.*, 516, 519, 523–524.

³⁵ Frederick W. Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yuan Period," in Arthur F. Wright ed., *Confucianism and Chinese Civilization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975 [1964]), 284–285.

reassure himself that their downfall was both certain and imminent. In the “Dayi luexu,” for example, he writes:

The bonds between rulers and ministers, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, brothers, and friends are the basis of human relationships. The Tatars (i.e., Mongols) have all gone against their innate natures and are truly worse than animals. It is fitting that they should have incidents of ministers assassinating their rulers and sons murdering their fathers. That is what makes barbarians (Yi-Di) barbaric. How can Heaven bear not to destroy the Tatars and restore the Song as soon as possible, in order to save the morals of our time [from barbarism]? How can anyone who has even a bit of humanity in his heart not be longing for the Great Song? ... But since antiquity, there has never been a world with only *yin* and no *yang*, and there has never been an age in which everyone was a barbarian. It would certainly be easy for heaven and earth to make a complete turnaround!

夫君臣、父子、夫婦、兄弟、朋友，人倫也，韃人皆悖其天，誠禽獸不若，宜其有臣弑君、子弑父之事，此夷狄之所以爲夷狄也。天亦奚認不早滅韃興宋，以救世道耶？稍有人心者，云胡不大宋之思耶？... 然古未嘗有有陰無陽之天地，亦未嘗有純是夷狄之世。天旋地轉，其機固易！³⁶

I would suggest also that Zheng found it necessary to stiffen his resolve and justify his loyalism by denying that the Yuan dynasty had gained the Mandate of Heaven. In order to do so, he emphasized that the last Southern Song emperors had not behaved like the bad last emperors of earlier dynasties. But he also had to rebut pro-Yuan arguments like Hao Jing’s, in which ethnicity was of no relevance to a dynasty’s moral fitness to rule, by asserting that only a Chinese dynasty could ever stand a chance of being legitimate. The first argument can be found in Zheng’s two calls to arms, while the latter is most evident in a remarkable essay on political legitimacy written around 1278, the “Gujin zhengtong dalun” 古今正統大論.³⁷ The essay’s central argument is expressed in the following passage:

Sagehood, political legitimacy, and [rule over] the Central Lands were originally one and the same thing. Now I have separated them in this discussion because I truly had no

³⁶ Zheng, *Xinshi*, 524–525.

³⁷ Zheng writes that this essay is the product of three years spent thinking about the subject of legitimacy after experiencing the “great chaos” 大亂 of the fall of the Southern Song, which would give it an approximate date of 1278: *ibid.*, 489.

choice. That is why not every [dynasty] that gains [the rule of] all under heaven can be called the Central Lands, not every [dynasty] that can be called the Central Lands can be regarded as legitimate, and not every legitimate dynasty's emperors can be regarded as sages. Only a sage can combine all under heaven, the Central Lands, and legitimacy in one person.

聖人、正統、中國，本一也。今析而論之，實不得已。是故得天下者，未可以言中國；得中國者，未可以言正統；得正統者，未可以言聖人。唯聖人始可以合天下、中國、正統而一之。³⁸

The argument that a dynasty could gain control of the entire Chinese world (i.e., “all under heaven”) and yet not be legitimate had previously been applied only to the Qin and Wang Mang's Xin, both of which later Classicists considered to be extremely immoral—the Qin for being oppressive and attempting to extirpate Classicist learning, the Xin for having been founded through usurpation. Zheng Sixiao, too, rejects the Qin and Xin as illegitimate, but he also identifies a category of dynasties that have unified all under heaven but, for reasons of ethnicity, are neither “the Central Lands” nor legitimate. This category includes the Sui dynasty, whose founder Yang Jian 楊堅 (541–604) he regards as a Xianbi masquerading as the scion of an eminent Chinese clan and thus “originally a barbarian (Yi-Di)” 本夷狄. The Tang is also nearly included in the same category because Zheng believes its emperors were “actually the descendants of barbarians (Yi-Di)” 實夷狄之裔 and were moreover guilty of immoral acts like fratricide and incest. Zheng chooses to make a concession and recognize the Tang dynasty as “the Central Lands” on account of its longevity and the peace and prosperity that prevailed during the reigns of Tang Taizong and Tang Xuanzong. Nonetheless, he still refuses to see the Tang as a legitimate dynasty—unlike Zhu Xi, who blamed the Tang emperors' immoral behavior on their barbarian origins but did not doubt their legitimacy. This insistence on classifying the Sui and Tang as barbarian dynasties is Zheng Sixiao's most radical departure from mainstream thinking on political legitimacy, and it is obviously aimed at denying any possible precedent for asserting the Yuan dynasty's legitimacy.³⁹

Apart from the Tang, other dynasties that qualify to be called “the Central Lands” but not to be regarded as legitimate include the Western and Eastern Jin and the Southern Dynasties. In their case, the key criterion for legitimacy that they failed to meet was not ethnicity but governance: the two Jin dynasties “absolutely did not govern well” 絕無善治, while the

³⁸ Ibid., 488.

³⁹ Ibid., 487.

Southern Dynasties “kept the lifeblood of the Central Lands flowing by one feeble artery” 藐然綴中國之一脈 but also “all did not govern well” 俱無善治. As for dynasties that only ruled part of the Chinese world and were neither the Central Lands nor legitimate, these fall into two categories: barbarian-ruled regimes, and regimes founded by usurping the throne of a legitimate dynasty. The first category includes the various states and dynasties in north China between the Western Jin and the Sui, including the Former Qin and the Northern Wei. The second category includes the Cao-Wei. Zheng Sixiao’s comments on the Five Dynasties suggest that he placed the Later Tang, Later Jin, and Later Han in the first category and the Later Liang and Later Zhou in the second. Zheng argues that because the Later Zhou was illegitimate, Song Taizu’s usurpation of that dynasty was as morally justified as the Han had been in replacing the Qin and the Tang had been in replacing the Sui.⁴⁰ There is a logical contradiction or a double standard here, however: why should the Later Zhou be seen as illegitimate if it was ethnically Chinese and had been founded by usurping an illegitimate barbarian dynasty, the Later Han? Clearly, Zheng Sixiao refused to pursue his moral logic to the point of delegitimizing his loyalty to the Song.

Other regimes that Zheng Sixiao excluded from consideration for legitimacy included the various southern regional states of the Five Dynasties period and the Wu state of the Three Kingdoms period—but not the Shu-Han, which Zheng recognized as a true continuation of the Eastern Han. Thus Zheng Sixiao’s list of legitimate “Central Lands” dynasties contained only the sage-kings, the Xia, Shang, and Zhou, the Western Han, the Eastern Han, the Shu-Han, and the Song.⁴¹ Whereas Hao Jing’s “Shiwu” argued that the Central Lands had been effectively lost since the Western Jin, Zheng Sixiao maintains that “the Central Lands” survived through the Eastern Jin and the Southern Dynasties. It died out with the Sui conquest of Chen, had a partial restoration under the Tang, died out again in the Five Dynasties period, and then experienced a full revival under the Song. The Yuan conquest now threatened to extinguish it once more. But what if Hao Jing was right and the Yuan had indeed learned to “practice the Way of the Central Lands?” Zheng’s essay claims that even this would be a monstrous violation of cosmic order:

Among all the inauspicious things under heaven from ancient times to today, none is as gravely inauspicious as ministers doing what rulers do and barbarians (Yi-Di) doing what the Central Lands do. For barbarians to do what the Central Lands do is not good fortune for the barbarians—in fact, it turns the barbarians into monsters and freaks. It is like cattle and horses suddenly becoming capable of human speech, wearing clothes over their

⁴⁰ Ibid., 487–488.

⁴¹ Ibid. Zheng does not explore the question of which kings and emperors from these dynasties were sages, but judging from his definition of a sage-ruler (ethnically Chinese, legitimate, and in control of all under heaven), the Eastern Zhou kings and the Shu-Han and Southern Song emperors would not qualify for sagehood.

fur and tails, and wearing sleeves over their four hooves. Even a little child who sees this would only call them monstrous cattle and horses and not dare to call them human beings. It would truly be extremely strange! The “Zhongyong” says, “When one is a barbarian, he acts in a way appropriate to the barbarians.”⁴² This saying sums up the principle of barbarism throughout history. Tuoba Gui and the Sixteen Barbarian (Yi) States did not act in a way appropriate to their status as barbarians.⁴³ Even though Tuoba Gui’s rites, ritual music, and ritual implements illegitimately did what the Central Lands do and brought disorder to basic human relationships, this was no different from putting clothes on cattle and horses and calling them human beings. This was actually a great monstrosity for the barbarians (Yi-Di); would it not have been better for the barbarians to do what barbarians do and follow their innate natures? The difference between rulers and ministers and the difference between the Chinese and the barbarians (Yi) have been the most important distinctions under heaven from ancient times to today—how can anyone be permitted to mess them up?

臣行君事、夷狄行中國事，古今天下之不祥莫大於是。夷狄行中國事非夷狄之福，實夷狄之妖孽。譬如牛馬一旦忽解人語，衣其毛尾，裳其四蹄，三尺之童見之，但曰牛馬之妖，不敢稱之曰人。實大怪也！《中庸》曰：「素夷狄行乎夷狄。」此一語蓋斷古今夷狄之經也。拓跋珪、十六夷國不素行夷狄之事，縱如拓跋珪之禮樂文物僭行中國之事以亂大倫，是衣裳牛馬而稱曰人也。實為夷狄之大妖，寧若即夷狄而行夷狄之事以天其天也？君臣、華夷，古今天下之大分也，寧可紊哉？⁴⁴

Unlike some of the *Daoxue* thinkers, Zheng does not use *qi* as a basis for arguing that barbarians cannot become like the Chinese. Rather, he acknowledges that they can become like the Chinese but asserts that they should not, because this would violate their “innate natures” (*tian* 天) and turn them into monstrosities. However, Zheng contradicts this argument in the later “Dayi lueyu,” in which (as we have seen) he claims that the Mongols have “gone against their innate natures” by not honoring the various bonds that form “the basis of human relationships,” and that this immoral violation of innate human nature is what makes them barbaric. In that case, Zheng Sixiao did not have a consistent position on whether a barbarian had an innate nature

⁴² The “Zhongyong” is a chapter of the *Liji* that acquired special importance in the *Daoxue* tradition due to Zhu Xi’s influence. This line’s original meaning was that a morally superior man (*junzi*) always acts in a manner appropriate to the situation in which he finds himself instead of merely trying to escape that situation, even if that situation be poverty, living among barbarians, or facing danger and difficulty: see LJZY 52.1431.

⁴³ Tuoba Gui (Daowudi 道武帝, r. 399–409) was the first Northern Wei emperor. Zheng Sixiao seems to have confused him with Xiaowendi, as seen from a note in the text that states that he “had the illegitimate posthumous title of Wendi” 偽諡文帝. Zheng, *Xinshi*, 486.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

fundamentally different from that of a Chinese person. Despite his repeated attempts at equating the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy with the difference between human beings and animals, even he, it seems, was not completely immune from the tension between ethnocentrism and moralism.

Zheng Sixiao's essay also tries to refute two potential counter-arguments to his rejection of all barbarian rulers as illegitimate: the Northern Wei's claim to descent from Huangdi, and Mencius's problematic claim that Shun and King Wen were barbarians. One might differentiate these as an argument from lineage and an argument from classical precedent. Zheng essentially refutes both arguments by dismissing them as illogical and factually incorrect. Against the argument from lineage, he writes:

One might say, "The Tuoba and today's nomadic peoples of the far north are all descended from Huangdi, so we can accept them on those grounds, at least." I would reply, "That is like the descendants of ministers who have abandoned the *Odes* and the *Rites*, some delighting in being slaves, others turning to banditry. How can one use their ancestors' status to rank them with morally superior men? Besides, [the lands] beyond the remote frontiers [of the Central Lands] have always had a kind of monstrous *qi* that gives birth to barbarians (Yi-Di). For example, there are the country of furry men, the country of ape-men, the country of dogs, and the country of women. These races are extremely different from us and are certainly not of the same race as the people of the Central Lands. They have existed since the beginning of the world, so it is false to claim that they are descendants of Huangdi or of the Xia dynasty."⁴⁵

或曰：「拓跋氏及今極北部落皆黃帝後，姑假之亦可。」曰：「譬如公卿、大夫之子孫，棄墮《詩》、《禮》，或悅為皂隸，或流為盜賊，豈可復語先世之事而列於君子等耶？況四裔之外素有一種孽氣，生為夷狄，如毛人國、猩猩國、狗國、女人國等。其類極異，決非中國人之種類。開闢以後即有之，謂黃帝之後、夏后氏之後，則非也。」⁴⁶

Zheng thus uses the marvels and monsters found in the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 to assert the difference between barbarian *qi* and Chinese *qi*, and to represent it as an unbridgeable racial divide. As far as we know, the *Shanhai jing* had not previously been used as evidence for

⁴⁵ The reference to the Xia dynasty alludes to Sima Qian's claim that the Xiongnu were descended from a member of the Xia ruling house: see SJ 100.2879.

⁴⁶ Zheng, *Xinshi*, 486–487.

barbarian inferiority, not even in anti-expansionist arguments, because the Classicists considered its contents too fanciful to be credible. The ‘fact’ that there were already barbarians before there were sage-kings also allows Zheng to deny the possibility that any barbarian could be descended from a Chinese sage-king—a denial that conveniently ignores the discourse of barbarization altogether. As for the argument from classical precedent, Zheng Sixiao adopts a dual strategy for neutralizing it. He uses Sima Qian’s biography of Shun and account of the Zhou dynasty’s origins to refute the *Mencius*, despite the higher prestige that the *Mencius* enjoyed over the *Shiji* in Song times. But he also argues that Shun and King Wen were such great sages that even if they *were* barbarians, one cannot assume that the same would be possible for “barbarians (Yi-Di) of later ages” 後世夷狄.⁴⁷

That Zheng Sixiao had to resort to such extreme and unconventional tactics to deny the possibility of a legitimate barbarian dynasty suggests to me he was relatively ill-served in this regard by earlier Song discourses on political legitimacy. These discourses had generally focused more on the issues of political ethics and reunification than on ethnicity—with the exception of Zhang Shi, who was himself inconsistent in rejecting the Northern Dynasties but (grudgingly) accepting all of the Five Dynasties as legitimate. This leads one to wonder which perspective—Hao Jing’s or Zheng Sixiao’s—better reflects the attitude taken by the majority of the first generation of southern literati who had to come to terms with Mongol rule. Recent studies that cite Zheng’s *Xinshi* have taken different positions on how representative his views were: Liu Pujiang and Xiong Mingqin believe that he and Zhang Shi reflect a general shift toward greater ethnocentrism, racialism, or “nationalism” among the Southern Song literati, whereas Luo Zhitian and Chang Chishen argue that even if the *Xinshi* is indeed Zheng Sixiao’s work and not (as various scholars have suspected) a late Ming forgery, it nonetheless reflects only a marginal, minority attitude among the Yuan dynasty’s new subjects in south China.⁴⁸ This disagreement is very difficult to resolve, due to the likelihood of secrecy and self-censorship among other Song loyalists of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.⁴⁹ However, Zheng Sixiao’s own

⁴⁷ Ibid., 487.

⁴⁸ On the question of the text’s authenticity, see n. 33 above. Liu, “Zhengtong lun xia de Wudai shiguan,” 92 and “Nanbeichao de lishi yichan yu Sui Tang shidai de zhengtong lun,” 149–150; Xiong, “Chaoyue ‘Yi Xia,’” 128; Luo, “Yi Xia zhi bian yu daozi zhifen,” 82–83 and “Yi Xia zhi bian de kaifang yu fengbi,” 223; Chang, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao,” 260.

⁴⁹ On this subject, see the discussion in Jennifer W. Jay, “Memoirs and Official Accounts: The Historiography of the Song Loyalists,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 50.2 (1990), 598–601. Christian Soffel has more recently pointed out the relative rareness of even subtle hints of anti-Yuan sentiment or ethnocentrism in Wang Yinglin’s 王應麟 (1223–1296) *Kunxue jiwén* 困學紀聞, which was written between 1285 and 1292. Soffel also notes (correcting Jay) that one cannot read too much into Wang’s earlier reference to the enemy as “snakes and swine” 蛇豕 in official documents produced during the Mongol invasion, since this is an allusion to the *Zuozhuan*. See Christian Soffel (Su Feixiang 蘇費翔), “Nansong mo rujia dui yizu qinfan de taidu—Wang Yinglin yu Mengguren” 南宋末儒家對異族侵犯的態度—王應麟與蒙古人, in Zhang Xiqing 張希清 ed., *10–13 shiji Zhongguo wenhua de*

sense of isolation and alienation from his peers and his feeling of disgust toward their defeatism and accommodation to Yuan rule, repeatedly expressed in the *Xinshi*, would seem to suggest that his stubborn devotion to the Song cause found little sympathy, let alone admiration, from the Jiangnan literati even before the loyalist resistance met its end.⁵⁰

In any case, recent scholarship by Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing and Yao Dali has highlighted the high incidence of Yuan loyalism among south Chinese literati during the Yuan-Ming transition, disproving Frederick Mote's earlier contention that "the fall of the Yuan was accompanied by no such wave of loyalty as had attended the fall of the Sung."⁵¹ Moreover, the early Ming court in Nanjing was unwilling to reject the Yuan as illegitimate on the grounds of ethnic difference—a situation that greatly frustrated Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺 (1357–1402) when he attempted to advance an interpretation of political legitimacy quite similar to Zheng Sixiao's (a similarity that was, of course, unknown to him).⁵² This suggests that about eighty years of Yuan rule in south China had sufficed to entrench an assumption that a dynasty's position in the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy did not determine its worthiness to rule and command the loyalty of the literati. Unlike Zheng Sixiao and Fang Xiaoru, the overwhelming majority of classically educated Chinese had freed themselves from the universalist's dilemma through the route first offered by Hao Jing: that is, by elevating moral values like loyalty, moral duty, and humaneness above ethnicity as the foundation for literati identity. In the past, historians have generally credited the Yuan dynasty's success at gaining Chinese acceptance to the "vitality and resilience" of a "culturalist" interpretation of Chinese civilization.⁵³ But I hope to have shown through this dissertation that the morality-centered discourse that historians (somewhat misleadingly) term "culturalism" is itself a product of the late Tang and Song—periods of great rhetorical and philosophical creativity that gave new meanings to the concepts of Chineseness and barbarism.

pengzhuang yu ronghe 10–13 世紀中國文化的碰撞與融合 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006), 204–222.

⁵⁰ For examples see Zheng, *Xinshi*, 467–468, 485, 491, 499–500.

⁵¹ Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing 蕭啓慶, "Yuan-Ming zhiji shiren de duoyuan zhengzhi jueze: yi gezu jinshi wei zhongxin" 元明之際士人的多元政治抉擇：以各族進士為中心 (2003), reprinted in *Yuandai de zuqun wenhua yu keju* 元代的族群文化與科舉 (Taipei: Lianjing, 2008), 211–269; Yao Dali 姚大力, "Zhongguo lishi shang de minzu guanxi yu guojia rentong" 中國歷史上的民族關係與國家認同, *Zhongguo xueshu* 中國學朮 2002.4 (2002), 187–190; Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yuan Period," 288.

⁵² Fincher, "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation." For the text of Fang's essays on legitimacy see Jao, *Zhongguo shixue shang zhi zhengtong lun*, 151–157. Mittag's argument that these essays were probably written by another author after 1449 strikes me as a case of circular reasoning based on the assumption that no one in the early Ming could have thought in this way: "Scribe in the Wilderness," 37–38.

⁵³ E.g., Fincher, "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation," esp. 63–64; John D. Langlois, Jr., "Chinese Culturalism and the Yuan Analogy: Seventeenth-Century Perspectives," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40.2 (1980), 356–358; Tillman (Tian Hao), "Yin 'luan' er dao zhi de xinli chuangshang," 90–91.

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Appendix 1 Rethinking the theory of Hebei's barbarization

Most recent Chinese interpretations of Han Yu have followed Chen Yinke in linking Han's anti-Buddhist sentiment to the theory that the Hebei military provinces' defiance of imperial authority was rooted in a cultural divide. As we saw at the beginning of Part 2, Chen noted that the Hebei military originated from surrendering rebel armies whom the court permitted to remain in their respective locations after the An Lushan rebellion. These included significant numbers of foreign *Hu* troops who had previously served in An Lushan's northeastern frontier armies. Chen Yinke claimed that the Chinese troops in Hebei were also "*Hu*-acculturated" (*Huhua*) due to long exposure to these foreigners; they had thus lost their sense of cultural affinity to the Tang court elite and instead identified culturally with the foreign troops. To Chen's mind, this identification with the *Hu* effectively amounted to a sense of ethnic separatism. Chen's essay on Han Yu further argued that when Han condemned Buddhism as a barbaric religion, he was motivated by a realization that *Hu* and "*Hu*-acculturated" troops had barbarized a part of the Chinese heartland. In other words, his vehement opposition to a foreign religion was part of a broader reaction against foreign intrusions of any kind.¹

Despite the authority routinely accorded to Chen Yinke's theory of Hebei barbarization in Chinese historical scholarship, the theory is mainly founded on a kind of ethnocultural essentialism that equates the difference between civilian (or literati) and military values with the difference between Chinese and *Hu* cultures. In other words, *Hu* culture is assumed to be distinctly warlike and Chinese culture to be distinctly peace-loving and scholarly, so a preference for martial activities over scholarly pursuits is interpreted as evidence of *Hu* origin or "*Hu*-acculturation." Chen made this assumption explicit in his influential *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao* 唐代政治史述論稿, arguing of late-Tang Hebei society that "it was fond of warfare and had no esteem for literature and education; in essence, its gradual *Hu*-acculturation had gone deep while its Han-acculturation was only superficial."² Edwin Pulleyblank, whose analyses of the An Lushan rebellion owe much to Chen Yinke's theories, has traced the supposed barbarization of the Tang military to the shift from the *fubing* 府兵 militia system to permanent, professional frontier armies in the early eighth century:

With the formal abolition in 737 of the practice of sending militiamen and other conscripts back and forth on tours of duty and the enlistment instead of permanent frontier armies the role of non-Chinese elements in the Chinese defense forces became more firmly entrenched.... And, there is good reason to think that the Chinese in these [frontier] armies... were also more or less 'barbarized,' that is, they had become deeply imbued with the military ethos of their barbarian comrades in arms."³

¹ Chen, *Jinmingguan conggao chubian*, 329.

² Chen, *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao*, 29.

³ Ironically, Pulleyblank began this essay by dismissing the hoary myth that premodern China was "a pacifist, or at least, a very pacific country," only to then adopt a version of that myth by equating a "military ethos" with barbarians. Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 33, 39–40.

Likewise Charles Hartman, who was influenced by both Chen Yinke and Pulleyblank, has written that because “the professional soldiers and mercenaries that replaced the conscripts of early T’ang were largely of foreign origin,” as a result “the early T’ang equilibrium between literary and military values dissolved into a dichotomy that came to be defined largely along cultural lines: to be literary was to be Hua, to be military was to be Hu.”⁴

Contrary to these arguments, there is not a single text from the eighth and ninth centuries that suggests that the Tang army had become exclusively identified with foreign-born troops; instead, numerous sources show that the distinction between *fan* 蕃 (foreign) troops and *Han* 漢 (Tang/Chinese) troops remained important to the very end of the dynasty. Moreover, any professional army is likely to develop a “military ethos” by virtue of the nature of its work, and the Tang frontier armies of the early eighth century were no exception. If they had a distinct subculture that differed greatly from that of the literati, this was not necessarily a product of influence from foreign soldiers. Nor was this military subculture unique to Hebei, although there is good evidence that it became particularly strong there because of the political dominance enjoyed by military men. The court elite’s attitude of insensitivity and disdain toward this subculture probably contributed to the Hebei military’s desire for independence from court control—why should soldiers, having tasted autonomy and political authority, willingly surrender it to haughty civilians in the name of loyalty to the emperor? It does not follow from this, however, that the Chinese soldiers in Hebei no longer saw themselves as Chinese, or that the court elite regarded them as barbarians rather than just illiterate boors.

Hartman’s full-length study of Han Yu cites three anecdotes as evidence that the court elite of Han’s day believed Hebei to have been barbarized into “an independent, separatist, largely Hu culture.”⁵ The first anecdote comes from Du Mu’s 杜牧 (803–852) epitaph for Lu Pei 盧霏 (ca. 809–839). The epitaph claims that Lu grew up in the Hebei military province of Chengde 成德 without ever hearing of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius or of the world outside Hebei. He knew nothing but horse breeding, hunting, polo, and warfare until the age of nineteen, when he heard of “the sage-kings’ Way of classical learning” 先王儒学之道 and the imperial capitals (Chang’an and Luoyang) from a Classicist 儒者 named Huang Jian 黄建 (n.d.). Huang told Lu Pei that classical learning would open the door to high office at court, allowing him and his descendants to live in affluence and peace. Inspired by this revelation, Lu left his family, spent ten years teaching himself the Classics in a Daoist monastery, and then went to Chang’an in 838 to take the *jinshi* examination. He impressed the capital elite with his extensive knowledge of Hebei’s strategic geography, and claimed that this knowledge could enable imperial armies to regain control of the region. Unfortunately, he was killed by bandits while traveling in 839.⁶

⁴In a footnote, Hartman explains that *Hua* “means racially Chinese.” Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 122–123, 317 n. 11.

⁵*Ibid.*, 123, 125–128.

⁶QW 755.7824; FCWJ 9.767–768.

Both Chen Yinke and Hartman use Lu Pei's epitaph as evidence of a profound cultural difference between "barbarized" or "*Hu*-acculturated" Hebei and the rest of the Tang.⁷ This implicitly assumes that Lu Pei's original way of life was objectively less "Chinese" than that of a classically-educated literatus, and that a literatus like Du Mu would have perceived it as such. Both assumptions are flawed. Besides the problem of essentializing "Chineseness" by equating it with literati culture, it would also be overly simplistic to conclude from Lu's epitaph alone that the typical Hebei person was totally ignorant of the classical tradition and the outside world. Even Du Mu acknowledges that in Zhenzhou 鎮州 (modern Zhengding 正定), the capital of Chengde, there was a Classicist scholar (Huang Jian) who knew about the imperial capitals and whom "the townspeople respected and addressed as 'Master'" 鎮人敬之，呼爲先生。⁸ Du clearly recognized that the people of Chengde still held classical scholarship in high regard in spite of (or perhaps because of) its rarity in their province. Ma Jizhao has pointed to a passage in the *Tang zhiyan* 唐摭言 as evidence that the Lu Pei epitaph greatly overstates the decline of classical learning in Hebei. The *Tang zhiyan* passage includes a list of the Tang court's quotas for examination candidates from various provinces in the year 845, and indicates that Chengde (here called by its alternative name Zhen-Ji 鎮冀) and the other Hebei provinces were limited to eleven *jinshi* candidates and fifteen *mingjing* 明經 candidates each. Ma argues that these quotas would have been meaningless if the Hebei provinces did not produce examination candidates or only produced a mere handful each year.⁹

Moreover, Du Mu's depiction of Hebei in the Lu Pei epitaph should be balanced against another depiction in one of his essays, the "Zhanlun" 戰論 (Discourse on Warfare):

Hebei has frugal and simple customs and [its people] do not produce clever but useless works of craftsmanship. They are artless, tenacious, and strong-willed, equally single-minded as warriors and as farmers. Its famous cities and its strong fortresses tower like a mountain chain; its tall mountains and wide rivers are interlocked. Add to that its soil, which abounds in fast steeds for cavalry charges against the enemy, and one can see why its people are victorious when they march out to war and prosperous when they remain at home. Without coveting the products of the empire (literally "all under heaven"), they are able to cultivate whatever they need, just like a peasant household with a large farm does not need to own pearls in order to be rich. The empire, on the other hand, cannot do without Hebei. When [the people of] Hebei become caitiffs (*lu*, i.e., enemies of the state), then we are left without fine armor, crack troops, sharp swords, strong bows, and fast

⁷ Chen, *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao*, 28–29; Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 125.

⁸ QTW 755.7824; FCWJ 9.767.

⁹ TZY 1.2; Ma Jizhao 馬吉照, *Hebei Tangshi dili yanjiu* 河北唐詩地理研究 (Baoding: Hebei daxue chubanshe, 2012), 63–68; see also Zhang Guogang 張國剛, *Tangdai fanzhen yanjiu* 唐代藩鎮研究 (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1987), 84–88. Ma and Zhang are among a very small number of Chinese scholars who have openly disagreed with Chen Yinke's theory of Hebei barbarization. Ma emphasizes the cultural affinity between Hebei literati and Chang'an literati during the ninth century, while Zhang emphasizes the fact that the imperial court continued to exert political influence over Hebei.

steeds. Should the barbarians (Yi-Di) unexpectedly raise alarms on our four frontiers, encroach on our territory, and get through our external [defenses] to reach the interior [provinces], what would we use to fend them off?

夫河北者，俗儉風渾，淫巧不生，樸毅堅強，果於戰耕。名城堅壘，峇嶺相貫，高山大河，盤互交鎖。加以土息健馬，便於馳敵，是以出則勝，處則饒，不窺天下之產，自可封殖，亦猶大農之家，不待珠璣然後以為富也。天下無河北則不可，河北既虜，則精甲銳卒利刀良弓健馬無有也。卒然夷狄驚四邊，摩封疆，出表裏，吾何以禦之？¹⁰

In the Lu Pei epitaph, Du Mu frames Lu Pei's transformation from hunter-herdsman to literatus in terms of an escape from parochial ignorance and a life of constant war. In the "Zhanlun," however, he idealizes the simple, spartan life of the Hebei warrior-farmer, represents Hebei's martial subculture as an essential element in the empire's defense, and maintains a clear distinction between rebel "caitiffs" and foreign barbarians. Despite the difference in tone between these two depictions of Hebei, we can infer quite confidently from both that Du Mu never associated Hebei's military subculture with barbarism.

The second anecdote that Hartman cited relates to an incident in 821. After the Hebei military province of Lulong 盧龍 submitted to direct imperial rule, a group of imperial officials was sent in to reestablish direct court control. Some of them reportedly antagonized the Lulong troops by denigrating them as "renegade caitiffs" (*fanlu* 反虜) and mocking their illiteracy.¹¹ Hartman translates the phrase *fanlu* as "rebel barbarians," while Pulleyblank earlier translated it as "rebellious savages."¹² Both translations overlook the fact that in the Tang empire, the label *lu* could be applied to any enemy of the state, whether Chinese or foreign—we see this, for example, in the passage just quoted from the "Zhanlun."¹³ Moreover, illiteracy in Tang armies was hardly unique to Hebei, nor was illiteracy unique to the military in pre-modern societies. This example is thus irrelevant to the issue of barbarization.

The third anecdote is more persuasive than the others, but still problematic nonetheless. It comes from an epitaph written by Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772–842) for the spirit road stele (*shendao bei* 神道碑) of Shi Xiaozhang 史孝章 (800–838).¹⁴ Xiaozhang was a military officer's son who, like Lu Pei, embraced classical scholarship as a young man, earning him the nickname of "scholar" 書生 from his friends in the Wei-Bo 魏博 military province.¹⁵ In 822, his father Shi

¹⁰ QTW 754.7813; FCWJ 5.649.

¹¹ JTS 129.3611; XTS 127.4448; ZZTJ 241.7793.

¹² Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 126; Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 50.

¹³ On the semantic content of *lu* see also Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, 360; Drompp, *Tang China and the Collapse of the Uighur Empire*, 175.

¹⁴ According to the *Zizhi tongjian*, Shi Xiaozhang was originally named Shi Tang 史唐 and changed his name to Xiaozhang in 829. ZZTJ 244.7864.

¹⁵ JTS 181.4686; XTS 148.4790; LYX 3.99; TWC 57.618.

Xiancheng 史憲誠 (d. 829) led the Wei-Bo troops in a mutinous attempt at forcing their governor Tian Bu 田布 (785–822) to reassert the province's autonomy instead of following the imperial court's orders to make war on neighboring Chengde. Tian Bu, who was loyal to the imperial court and also obliged to avenge his father's recent murder by the Chengde army, chose to end his dilemma by falling on his sword. Since the Tang court lacked the means to punish the Wei-Bo army's mutiny, it had to confer official approval on the mutineers' choice of Shi Xiancheng as their new governor.¹⁶

According to Shi Xiaozhang's epitaph, he eventually decided to persuade his father to submit to the court for the sake of restoring Hebei's honor and preserving their family's future. Xiaozhang went down on his knees and made the following appeal, addressing his father like a minister remonstrating with his ruler:

Your subject humbly observes that here to the north of the great river (i.e., the Yellow River), our land is rich and our troops are strong, yet the worthy men of the empire (literally “all under heaven”) hold us in contempt and look upon the Heshuo region (i.e., Hebei) as though we were barbarians. Why is this so? It must be because most of the men who control this territory acquired it through strategic opportunism, and not by just and moral means. Now your subject's parents have received titles and fiefs [from the court] and risen to high status; the emperor has extended the fullest measure of grace to our family. If we do not thoroughly change our ways and improve our conduct to demonstrate our trustworthiness clearly to the court, we will have no way to silence the mockery of wise men and recognize our enlightened ruler's intentions [toward us]. Once our steadfast loyalty is widely known, our family's fortunes can be made to last. If we seize this timely opportunity, then we can avert a disaster that would otherwise befall us as swiftly as turning on one's heels.

臣竊惟大河之北，地雄兵精，而天下賢士心侮之，目曰河朔間，視猶夷狄，何也？蓋有土者多乘兵機際會，非以義取。今臣家父侯母封，化爲貴門，君恩至矣。非痛折節礪行，彰信於朝廷，無以弭讖者之譏，寤明君之意。節著於外，福延於家。乘時蹈機，禍不旋踵。¹⁷

The *Xin Tangshu* biography of Shi Xiaozhang contains a paraphrase of these words and is clearly based on the epitaph by Liu Yuxi, which was included in Liu's collected works (the original stele is lost).¹⁸ Liu Yuxi claims that by the time Shi Xiaozhang finished speaking, tears were

¹⁶ JTS 141.3852–3853, 181.4685–4686; XTS 148.4785–4786, 210.5935; ZZTJ 242.7806–7807; TGSB 2.46.

¹⁷ LYX 3.99–100; TWC 57.619. The epitaph places this incident between 822 and 828. Shi Xiaozhang's *Xin Tangshu* biography names the emperor at the time as Wenzong 文宗 (r. 827–840) and goes on to speak of the imperial court's punitive expedition against another Hebei governor, Li Tongjie 李同捷 (d. 829), in 827–829. This implies that Xiaozhang's remonstrance occurred in 827 or 828. The *Zizhi tongjian* seems to conflate Shi Xiaozhang's remonstrance on this occasion with a slightly later case of remonstrance against Shi Xiancheng's intent to side with Li Tongjie against the imperial court. The *Xin Tangshu* separates the two instances of remonstrance, while Shi Xiaozhang's epitaph and *Jiu Tangshu* biography do not mention the second occasion. See JTS 181.4687; XTS 148.4790; ZZTJ 243.7858.

¹⁸ Shi Xiaozhang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography does not quote his words to Shi Xiancheng. JTS 181.4687; XTS 148.4790.

streaming down his face.¹⁹ But the whole conversation during which Xiaozhang supposedly made this argument may be a product of Liu Yuxi's imagination.²⁰ The conversation is not mentioned in another epitaph for Shi Xiaozhang (composed by one Li Jingxian 李景先) that was excavated from his tomb in 2004. That excavated epitaph states instead that during the tense period immediately after Shi Xiancheng's rise to the governorship, Shi Xiaozhang secretly sent letters to the imperial court to affirm his loyalty to the emperor, an act for which he was rewarded with three titles, including that of Deputy Governor 副節度使.²¹ This contradicts the epitaph by Liu Yuxi, which states that the imperial court rewarded Shi Xiaozhang with these titles after the emperor heard of his tearful remonstrance with Shi Xiancheng and "praised him saying, 'He (i.e., Shi Xiancheng) has a [good] son indeed'" 嘉之，曰：「彼真有子」.²² Liu Yuxi may have felt that Shi Xiaozhang's secret communications with the court made him vulnerable to criticism as an unfilial son, and therefore invented the remonstrance episode in order to create an image of filiality.

Moreover, although Shi Xiaozhang's family certainly had foreign ancestry (their specific ethnicity is disputed), Liu Yuxi quotes him as blaming unethical behavior, not ethnocultural differences, for Hebei's purported image as a quasi-barbarian region.²³ Therefore, Liu Yuxi's piece alone cannot prove that in the 820s or 830s, there was a general perception of Hebei as culturally or ethnically "barbarized." Yet the Shi Xiaozhang epitaph seems to have inspired the eleventh-century editors of the *Xin Tangshu* to begin and end its section on the autonomous military provinces with claims that the Hebei governors "caused their people to see themselves as Qiang and Di [barbarians]" 使其人自視由羌狄然 and "made barbarians (Yi-Di) of their

¹⁹ The various versions of this account all emphasize Shi Xiaozhang's weeping as a sign of his sincerity. LYX 3.99–100; TWC 57.619; JTS 181.4687; XTS 148.4790; ZZTJ 243.7858.

²⁰ Deng Xiaonan's use of the epitaph to draw inferences about Shi Xiaozhang's "subjective self-identity" 自我主觀認同 and understanding of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy thus seems overly simplistic and unmindful of the text's genre. Deng, *Zuzong zhi fa*, 85–86.

²¹ Guo Maoyu 郭茂育 and Zhao Zhenhua 趙振華, "Tang 'Shi Xiaozhang muzhi' yanjiu" 唐《史孝章墓誌》研究, *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu* 中國邊疆史地研究 17.4 (2007), 116.

²² LYX 3.99–100; TWC 57.619 (cf. JTS 181.4687; XTS 148.4790). The *Quan Tangwen* version of the epitaph changes 有子 to 孝子, so that the sentence means, "He is truly a filial son": see QTW 609.6153.

²³ Shi Xiancheng's *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* biographies describe his ethnic origin as Kai/Qay 奚, but it was long suspected, on the basis of his surname, that he was actually a Sogdian. The excavated tomb epitaph of Shi Xiaozhang has further complicated the issue, as it suggests that Xiaozhang identified himself with both the Türk royal clan of Ashina and a certain "Ge clan" 葛氏. Guo Maoyu and Zhao Zhenhua have read the epitaph as evidence that Shi Xiancheng and Shi Xiaozhang were Türks, Zhang Long has read it as evidence that they were Sogdians passing off as Kai/Qay, and Yin Yong has read it as evidence that they were Uyghurs passing off as Sogdians. One ultimately cannot choose between these different theories, due to the impossibility of identifying the "Ge clan" with any degree of certainty. See Guo and Zhao, "Tang 'Shi Xiaozhang muzhi' yanjiu," 117–118; Zhang Long 張龍, "Shi Xiancheng fuzi yu fanzhen Wei-Bo—yi 'Shi Xiaozhang muzhi' wei xiansuo" 史憲誠父子與藩鎮魏博—以《史孝章墓誌》為綫索, *Minzushi yanjiu* 民族史研究 10 (2011), 32–34; Yin Yong 尹勇, "Tang Wei-Bo jiedushi Shi Xiancheng zushu zai yanjiu—jianlun 'fan Sute' wenti" 唐魏博節度使史憲誠族屬再研究—兼論“泛粟特”問題, *Shoudu shifan daxue xuebao* 首都師範大學學報 2010(4), 17–22.

people” 夷狄其人 by resisting imperial authority.²⁴ In fact, the *Xin Tangshu* goes even further than the epitaph by claiming that the people of Hebei *perceived themselves* as barbarians and actually *became* barbarians. This may be a result of their projecting Northern Song concerns about the Kitan-ruled Yan 燕 region onto the context of late-Tang Hebei. Mou Zhenyu has recently pointed out that Chen Yinke’s theory of Hebei barbarization was directly inspired by these passages in the *Xin Tangshu*.²⁵ In that case, the theory actually originated in the eleventh century, and Chen Yinke merely reintroduced it to modern historiography. But that does not make the theory any more historically accurate; the evidence for it still ultimately comes down to a single line of reported speech in a ninth-century epitaph, probably taken out of context.

The idea that Han Yu’s anti-Buddhist ideology was a response to Hebei’s autonomy under allegedly “barbarized” soldiers can likewise be shown to be a product of flawed reasoning and preconceived notions. Chen Yinke cites Han Yu’s famous valedictory preface for Dong Shaonan 董邵南 (n.d.) as evidence that he perceived Hebei as both politically and culturally alienated from the Tang court, but I would argue that Chen and many later commentators on this preface have misread the preface’s context. Dong Shaonan was an unsuccessful *jinshi* candidate whom Han Yu had known and held in high regard since 799. Around 807, Dong finally despaired of finding employment with the imperial court and decided to move to Hebei and offer his services to the autonomous governors.²⁶ Han Yu’s preface consoles Dong by assuring him that because Hebei (the region of “Yan and Zhao” 燕趙) has been known since ancient times for having “many men whose strong emotions move them to sorrowful songs,” the people there will surely be able to empathize with his frustrations and give him an opportunity to realize his aspirations. Han then muses:

But I have heard that customs change according to [the nature of the ruler’s] influence, so how can I know that [Hebei] is no different now from what was said of it in ancient times? For now, let us determine that from [the outcome of] your trip there. Do your best, Mister Dong!²⁷

然吾嘗聞風俗與化移易，吾惡知其今不異於古所云耶？聊以吾子之行卜之也。董生勉乎哉！

²⁴ XTS 210.5921, 213.6021.

²⁵ Mou Zhenyu 牟振宇, “Chen Yinke ‘huhua shuo’ youlai tanxi” 陳寅恪 “胡化說” 由來探析, *Xueshu tansuo* 學術探索 2008(2), 95–98.

²⁶ I have accepted Zhang Qinghua’s dating of this preface rather than the traditional dating to 803, which was based on nothing more than a rough estimate of the number of times Dong Shaonan would have failed the *jinshi* examinations before giving up. For reasons that will become clear in the discussion below, I agree with Zhang that the geopolitical situation around 807 was most conducive to Dong Shaonan’s search for employment in Hebei. Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 118, 241.

²⁷ Hartman’s reading of 董生勉乎哉 as “Take courage Master Tung” mistakenly ascribes either the intransitive meaning “to take courage” or the passive meaning “to be encouraged” to the verb 勉. In fact, 勉 can only carry the following meanings: 1. To encourage someone (transitive); 2. To do one’s utmost (intransitive). Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 145.

He ends the preface on a similarly whimsical and optimistic note that alludes to two ancient worthies from the state of Yan, the statesman-general Yue Yi 樂毅 (n.d.) and the assassin Jing Ke 荊軻 (d. 227 BC):

You have inspired some thoughts in me: pay respects at Yue Yi's grave for me, and have a look in the marketplace to see if there is again a dog butcher there like the one of old [who was a friend of Jing Ke]. If there is, greet him for me and say, 'There is now an enlightened Son of Heaven on the throne; you can come out and serve [him]!'"

吾因子有所感矣。爲我吊望諸君之墓，而觀於其市，復有昔時屠狗者乎？爲我謝曰：「明天子在上，可以出而仕矣！」²⁸

Chen Yinke confidently states, "it is extremely obvious that Han Tuizhi did not approve of Dong Shaonan's trip to Hebei, so there is no need to explain this further."²⁹ Many other interpreters of the preface have made similar claims since the Qing period. They argue that Han Yu, being a loyal Tang official, must have disapproved of Dong's decision to serve the disloyal governors of Hebei. His remark about changing customs and his refrain, "Do your best, Mister Dong," must therefore have been intended as subtle, ironic warnings to Dong that nothing good would come from trying his luck in a barbarized, rebellious region like Hebei. Hebei may have been a land of opportunity for worthy men in ancient times, but it was no longer so; better to stay in Chang'an and wait for a chance to serve the "enlightened Son of Heaven." Other interpreters have argued that Han Yu did approve of Dong Shaonan going to Hebei, and was urging him to do his part in persuading the people there to change their rebellious ways and submit to the court. Some have even assumed that Han expected Dong to accomplish this propaganda mission simply by awakening people's consciences with the preface's powerful prose. Yet other interpreters suggest that the preface's praise for the reigning emperor is actually sardonic criticism of his failure to recognize Dong Shaonan's talent and bring the Hebei provinces to submission.³⁰

Such tortured readings of the preface for Dong Shaonan are all based on the assumption that Han Yu perceived Hebei as a morally degenerate region in open rebellion against the empire. But the preface's optimistic tone actually matches several of Han Yu's other writings from the period 806–809. These texts—two poems and a valedictory preface—express great confidence

²⁸ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 247–248. For biographies of Yue Yi and Jing Ke, see SJ 79.2427–2434, 86.2526–2535.

²⁹ Chen, *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao*, 29.

³⁰ For two recent surveys of such interpretations, see Min Zeping 閔澤平, "Yiyi nizhi yu guodu quanshi—dui Han Yu 'Song Dong Shaonan xu' piping de jiantao" 以意逆志與過度詮釋—對韓愈《送董邵南序》批評的檢討, *Sanxia daxue xuebao* 三峽大學學報 26.6 (2004), 50–52 and "Wenben piping yu wenhua piping—dui Han Yu 'Song Dong Shaonan xu' jiedu moshi de fenxi" 文本批評與文化批評—對韓愈《送董邵南序》解讀模式的分析, *Xinan daxue xuebao* 西南大學學報 34.3 (2008), 166–169. Min argues that Han Yu's primary intent was to criticize the emperor, but also assumes that Han did not approve of Dong Shaonan's decision to seek employment in Hebei. Hartman's interpretation is that Han Yu approves of Dong's trip only if he is prepared to perform a propaganda mission for the imperial court: see Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 145.

that the accession of a “great sage” 大聖, namely the emperor Xianzong, had already initiated a restoration of court authority over the military provinces. In 806 Han Yu was especially excited by the swift suppression of two renegade governors—one in the Ordos region and another in Sichuan—and wrote a paean celebrating these victories as signs of Xianzong’s “sagely moral power” 聖德.³¹ He also had high praise for Liu Ji 劉濟 (757–810), the governor of Lulong, whose attitude toward the imperial court was appropriately deferential. Indeed, Han Yu’s valedictory preface for Li Yi 李益 (ca. 746–ca. 829), a member of Liu Ji’s staff, shows that by 806, he believed that a sixty-year cycle of disorder had begun with An Lushan’s rebellion and was now approaching its end. In Han Yu’s opinion, Liu Ji’s respect for imperial authority made it likely that Hebei’s submission would begin from the same place where its rebellion had begun—Youzhou (i.e., Fanyang 范陽), Lulong’s provincial capital.³² It is thus highly likely that Han’s encouragement to Dong Shaonan was sincere: he did think that Dong should try to find employment there, especially in Lulong (which corresponded to the Yan region), and he did not think Dong would be betraying the emperor in any way by doing so, since he believed Lulong’s return to imperial rule was imminent.³³

Chen Yinke and other interpreters have, in my view, read too much significance into the line in which Han Yu wonders whether the customs of Yan have changed since the days of the Warring States. Chen claims that this line and Du Mu’s epitaph for Lu Pei are all the evidence one needs for deducing that “the society of Hebei in those times was completely *Hu*-acculturated and was no longer the old [society] of the Eastern Han, Wei, Jin, and Northern Dynasties.” Hartman similarly considers the preface for Dong Shaonan to be “a lamentation for the cultural and spiritual decline of Yen and Chao.”³⁴ However, none of Han Yu’s writings suggests that he perceived the autonomy of the Hebei military provinces as a problem of cultural change or “barbarization.” In his view, the autonomy of Hebei was a political problem that would have a political solution. Moreover, he continued to think so even after the formal return of Chengde, Lulong, and Wei-Bo to central government control in 821 went horribly wrong. The reasons for this debacle lay primarily in poor personnel decisions made by the Tang court. The court transferred the governor of Wei-Bo, Tian Hongzheng 田弘正 (764–821), to Chengde, but a prior history of enmity between the Wei-Bo and Chengde armies led the Chengde army to kill Tian

³¹ Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 395, 408–411; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 265. Unlike some other historians, I have seen no evidence of a strong link between Han Yu’s hope for a restoration of imperial authority over rebellious provinces and his ambition for a restoration of the Way of the Sages. Neither of the two was seen as a necessary condition for the other. In fact, the rhetoric used to express the two ideals contained an unresolved paradox: if the Way of the Sages had been lost since Mencius’s death and had to be restored by Han Yu, how then could Xianzong be a great sage? For one study that attempts to interpret Han Yu’s political and ideological agendas as a single comprehensive vision, see Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 129–135, 145–155.

³² The preface was written in 809 but recounts a conversation that took place in 806. Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 264–266.

³³ Hartman cites both the preface for Li Yi and the preface for Dong Shaonan as evidence of Han Yu’s position on the Hebei issue, but his acceptance of the traditional date of 803 for the latter preface prevents him from reading it in the context of the former. Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 142–145.

³⁴ Chen, *Tangdai zhengzhishi shulun gao*, 30; Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*, 145.

and install its own candidate in his place.³⁵ This was the incident that caused the court to appoint Tian Hongzheng's son Tian Bu as his successor and order him to command the Wei-Bo army on a punitive campaign against Chengde. We have already seen that these orders resulted in another mutiny in Wei-Bo, ending in Tian Bu's suicide and replacement by the independent-minded Shi Xiancheng in 822.

As for Lulong, the insensitivity and arrogance that the new court-appointed governor Zhang Hongjing 張弘景 (760–824) and several members of his staff displayed (already mentioned above) so enraged the local troops that they soon mutinied and killed most of Zhang's staff, including Han Yu's former student Zhang Che 張徹 (d. 821). Zhang Hongjing himself was taken captive but later released; he departed Lulong in disgrace and died less than a year later.³⁶ Various accounts of the mutiny, including an epitaph that Han Yu wrote for Zhang Che in 823 or 824, differ slightly with regard to the timing and circumstances of Zhang's death.³⁷ However, all accounts state that Zhang Che was not among the officials who had offended the Lulong troops and that the troops initially meant to spare his life. The Veritable Records for Muzong's 穆宗 (r. 820–824) reign and the *Jiu Tangshu* both indicate that Zhang's death was the result of a tragic misunderstanding that arose when he mistakenly assumed the mutineers were leading him off to his execution and launched into an angry tirade against them.³⁸ On the other hand, Han Yu's epitaph portrays Zhang Che's harangue as a heroic attempt at alerting a visiting imperial envoy to the mutiny and thus securing Zhang Hongjing's release.³⁹ Yet Han Yu, too, does not paint Zhang Che's killers as cruel brutes. Instead, Han humanizes them by claiming that their admiration for him as a “man of integrity” 義士 only increased when he went on berating them to his last breath. Clearly, much of this depiction—including an account of Zhang Che's actual words—came from Han Yu's imagination, but it is significant that Han imagined the Lulong troops to have values not entirely different from his own. In light of this, Han Yu's earlier hope that Dong Shaonan would find kindred spirits in Lulong seems even less of a mystery.

³⁵ JTS 141.3851–3852; XTS 148.4784; ZZTJ 242.7796–7797.

³⁶ JTS 129.3611–3612; XTS 127.4448; ZZTJ 241.7793, 242.7794–7795. For the date of Zhang Hongjing's death, see JTS 17a.510.

³⁷ For the epitaph, see Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 545–548; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2632–2633. On the problem of dating the epitaph, see Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2634; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 449. For a summary of the differences between accounts, see the *Zizhi tongjian kaoyi* at ZZTJ 242.7795. The *kaoyi* does not discuss the *Xin Tangshu* account (XTS 127.4448), which essentially follows the epitaph by Han Yu but omits Han's implausible statement that Zhang Che was killed more than a month after the mutiny began.

³⁸ ZZTJ 242.7795; JTS 129.3612. These accounts differ only over whether Zhang Che was imprisoned with Zhang Hongjing before he was killed, and whether he was killed on the first day of the mutiny or a few days later.

³⁹ Past interpretations of this epitaph have missed this aspect of Zhang Che's intent. The crucial line, which has been the subject of some confusion for editors, is: “Censor Zhang is a man of loyalty and integrity; he will surely report [our mutiny] to these others (i.e., the visiting envoy and his retinue) on his governor's behalf” 張御史忠義，必爲其帥告此餘人。 See Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 546–547; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2632, 2636–2637. Hartman's translation of the epitaph misreads the phrase 推門求出 as “he pushed on the door and tried to escape”; in fact, Zhang Che was asking the guards to let him out of the room in which he and Zhang Hongjing were being held, so that he could meet the imperial envoy. Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 127.

When in 822 the imperial court sent Han Yu to negotiate a resolution to the mutiny in Chengde, he apparently avoided Zhang Che's fate by respecting the local troops' grievance against Tian Hongzheng and appealing to their self-interest, rather than haranguing them for disloyalty to the emperor—a charge that the Chengde troops clearly resented.⁴⁰ Many historians interpret the Chengde negotiation as one of the two most heroic moments in Han Yu's life (the other being his Buddha relic memorial), but I would suggest that it reflects his pragmatic side as well. The mission could not have succeeded if Han Yu believed that an unbridgeable cultural or moral divide separated him from the soldiers of Hebei. In contrast to the uncompromising attitude of hostility toward Buddhism that Han Yu frequently attempted to project, his approach to the question of the autonomous Hebei provinces was relatively moderate.

⁴⁰ The earliest extant detailed account of the negotiation with the Chengde troops is in Li Ao's 李翱 (774–836) obituary or posthumous biography (*xingzhuang* 行狀) for Han Yu, on which all subsequent accounts are based. Li Ao's account was almost certainly based on Han Yu's own narrative (oral or written) of the encounter, which at least reflects Han's perception of the Chengde troops. It is highly unlikely that Li Ao fabricated these details himself, given that he had written a memorial to Xianzong in 819 to complain about fictitious or exaggerated content in obituaries submitted to the Historiographical Office and request that such content be banned. QTW 634.6399–6400 (cf. THY 64.1110), 639.6461; JTS 160.4203; XTS 176.5264; ZZTJ 242.7808, 7812–7813; Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the T'ang*, 71–74.

Appendix 2 The problem of Han Yu's position on elixirs

In late 820, a few months after writing a letter to Meng Jian 孟簡 (d. 823) that vehemently denied rumors of his conversion to Buddhism¹, Han Yu received appointment to a post at the imperial court. Shortly before his departure from Yuanzhou 袁州 (modern Yichun 宜春), Meng Jian traveled up the Gan River 贛水 by boat to meet him for a private conversation on an islet. We do not know if the subject of Buddhism came up on this occasion. The only detail of the conversation that Han Yu later reported is that Meng Jian generously offered him a vessel containing an immortality elixir that he had recently been ingesting, saying, “I have obtained this secret formula and cannot be the only one to escape death” 我得迷藥，不可獨不死。²

Han Yu does not say whether he accepted Meng's offer³, but he seems at this time to have become interested in a different elixir being used by another longtime acquaintance, Zhou Yuan 周願 (styled Junchao 君巢, n.d.). On the journey from Yuanzhou to Chang'an, he passed through Anlu 安陸 and sent two poems ahead to Zhou, who was prefect of nearby Suizhou 隨州. The second of these lamented that four of their mutual friends were “long turned into dust” 久作塵, and then used this morbid reflection as an opening to ask for a favor:

I know that since our last parting, you have obtained a golden elixir,
And beg to acquire a spoonful to save my sickly body.
金丹別後知傳得，
乞取刀圭救病身。⁴

We know from one of Liu Zongyuan's letters that Zhou Yuan had offered to share some of his elixirs with Liu at least twelve years before. Liu declined the offer, professing to have no interest in physical immortality, and even chided Zhou for emulating the “emaciated [immortality-

¹ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 211–216. I analyze this letter in Chapter 3.

² Ibid., 554–555; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2571–2572.

³ Lo Lien-t'ien assumes that he did, but I do not think we can be so certain. Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 117.

⁴ A slightly later poem, written when Han Yu was passing through Xiangyang 襄陽, ends with a similarly worded request for the influential governor Li Fengji 李逢吉 (758–835) to help him secure “a sinecure in which to lodge my sickly body” 閒官寄病身. There is actually no strong evidence that Han Yu was in particularly poor health at this time; in fact, he apparently wrote the poem to Li Fengji in a state of drunkenness after an all-night banquet that Li had held in his honor. The two poems' references to sickliness may be conventional expressions of self-deprecation used when requesting favors. A line from the poem to Li Fengji has also been read as evidence that Han Yu was not immune to the charms of female entertainers. Admirers of Han Yu have tried to argue that he did not sincerely desire Li Fengji's patronage, since Li had a reputation as a political schemer and was an enemy of Han's primary patron, Pei Du 裴度 (765–839). According to this apologist reading, Han's request for a sinecure was meant to communicate that he had no wish to serve Li Fengji actively. Qian, *Han Changli shi xinian jishi*, 1193, 1196; Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 101–102, 108–109, 117, 120; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 397–399.

seeking recluses] in the mountains and marshes” 山澤之臞 instead of following the Way of the sage-kings and Confucius.⁵ Ironically, then, Han Yu was more amenable to using elixirs than Liu Zongyuan, whom he had always criticized for disloyalty to the Way of the Sages.

Immortality-seeking via the use of elixirs was very common among the Tang elite, and Han Yu was clearly aware of its dangers before 820.⁶ Yet Han expressed no condemnation of elixir-taking until he wrote Li Gan’s 李干 (766–823) epitaph in early 823, by which time the practice had claimed the lives of eight of his acquaintances, including Li Gan and Meng Jian.⁷ According to the epitaph for Li Gan, Meng Jian became seriously ill one year after his meeting with Han Yu—that is, in the winter of 821–822. When a member of Meng Jian’s family came to Chang’an and Han Yu inquired about his condition, he was told that Meng’s elixir had caused the illness and that he was trying to regain his health by expelling the elixir from his body through urination. Meng’s efforts at recovery failed, however, and he died on February 11, 823.⁸

Han Yu’s epitaph for Li Gan, who died just eight days after Meng Jian⁹, contains exceptionally frank criticism of elixirs and their credulous consumers, including the following line: “I do not know in which age the theory of elixirs arose, but it has killed countless people; yet the people of this age only grow fonder of it, such is their folly!” 余不知服食說自何世起，殺人不可計，而世慕尚之益至，此其惑也！ Han Yu claims that the epitaph is meant as a warning against elixir-taking and therefore includes shockingly graphic descriptions of the symptoms of elixir poisoning that Gui Deng 歸登 (754–820) and Lu Tan 盧坦 (748–817)

⁵ Liu Zongyuan’s letter of reply to Zhou Yuan is undated but seems to have been written not long after Liu’s exile to Yongzhou in 805. At the time of the letter’s writing, Zhou Yuan was serving on the staff of Li Fu 李復 (n.d.), the Governor of Lingnan 嶺南節度使. Since the next Lingnan governor, Yang Yuling 楊於陵 (753–830), took office in 808, this would mean that the letter can be dated to 805–808. LZY 32.840; ZZTJ 237.7649–7650; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 398; QTW 620.6257–6258.

⁶ On Tang-period elixir culture, see Yan Jinn-shyung 顏進雄, “Tangdai fushi wenhua tanxi” 唐代服食文化探析, *Hualian shiyuan xuebao* 花蓮師院學報 10 (2000), 249–272.

⁷ The epitaph for Li Xuzhong 李虛中 (762–813) states that the carbuncles on his back that appeared a month before his death were caused by a mercury-containing immortality elixir that he had obtained in Shu 蜀 (Sichuan). Han Yu links the carbuncles to a prophetic dream that Li Xuzhong reported to him, but he does not develop this detail into a criticism of elixirs in general. See Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 6.441.

⁸ Han Yu’s account states that Meng “was ill for two years and finally died” 病二歲，竟卒. The date given for Meng’s death in his *Jiu Tangshu* biography appears to be one year late; the correct date is found in the reign annals for Muzong 穆宗 (r. 820–824). Zhang Qinghua states that Meng Jian died while holding the post of deputy prefect at Jizhou, but Meng’s official biographies make it clear that he was posted to two other prefectures as prefect in 821–822 and then to Luoyang in 823. Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 419; Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 555; JTS 16.501, 163.4258; XTS 160.4968–4969.

⁹ The epitaph states the date of Li Gan’s death. Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 553; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2571.

suffered. The fact that the Li Gan epitaph deviates considerably from the conventions for that genre—for example, by giving no information on its subject’s ancestry and hardly any information on his career, and disclosing the highly unflattering detail of his hematuria—strongly suggests that it was not actually meant for Li Gan’s tomb. Instead, it was an anti-elixir polemic written in the guise of an epitaph.¹⁰ Moreover, this polemic’s existence makes Han Yu’s earlier silence about elixirs difficult to comprehend. In an undated question that he supposedly wrote for the Bianzhou prefectural examinations around 798, Han Yu had condemned the Daoist belief in immortals as “absurd” 妄 and a deviation from the Way of the Sages; in the poems “Xie Ziran” 謝自然 (ca. 795) and “Whose son is this?” 誰氏子 (811), he also criticized immortality-seekers who abandoned their families and withdrew from society.¹¹ But the Li Gan ‘epitaph’ was his first and only overt attack on immortality elixirs in particular. Han Yu’s previous reluctance to criticize one of the most characteristic Daoist immortality techniques calls for explanation, particularly since Xianzong was an avid consumer of elixirs at the time when Han boldly claimed that his reverence for a Buddhist relic would shorten his life.

I would suggest that when Xianzong began consuming the alchemist Liu Bi’s 柳泌 (d. 820) elixirs in 818–819, Han Yu consciously avoided criticizing Liu Bi so as not to offend or undermine their mutual patron, Li Daogu 李道古 (768–820). Daogu, a member of the imperial clan, had commissioned Han Yu to write a memorial inscription for his father in 816; he was also the man who recommended Liu Bi to Xianzong. He was later blamed for indirectly causing Xianzong’s death and exiled to the far south, where he died soon afterwards. Han Yu’s epitaph for Li Daogu (probably composed in 821) mentions his exile on account of Liu Bi but attributes his death to an unspecified illness, whereas the later ‘epitaph’ for Li Gan reveals that Daogu, too,

¹⁰ Dong You 董道 (ca. 1079–1140) reports that an inscribed stele bearing this epitaph came into the possession of one Li Zhongwei 李仲微 (n.d.) during the Northern Song; the calligraphy was attributed to Han Yu’s student Li Ao 李翱 (774–836). However, since the provenance of this stele is unknown, it cannot serve as evidence that the epitaph was buried in Li Gan’s tomb. According to Zhu Xi, Jiang Xiufu 江休復 (Jiang Lingji 江鄰幾, 1005–1060) noted the atypical nature of the Li Gan epitaph and could not explain it. Lin Shu 林紓 (1852–1924) commented in 1914, “I don’t know how Mister Li’s family could gain any prestige from this text. Did they bury it deep [in the tomb] to rebuke their late father’s shameful deed, or was it written but not carved on stone, merely to add to the number of [Han Yu’s] collected works? We cannot be certain.” 吾乃不知李氏家人何重於此文。乃瘞幽以詆其先人之醜，或且作而不刊，為集中備數文字？亦未可定。 The epitaph actually states that Li Gan’s wife (who was Han Yu’s grand-niece) had predeceased him, and that his three orphaned sons were still small children. It has been suggested that this situation gave Han Yu the authority, as a senior relation of Li Gan by marriage, to write the epitaph as candidly as he saw fit. But I find it unlikely that Li Gan’s parents and siblings would have exercised no oversight over what went into his epitaph. See Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 553–554; Zhang, *Han Yu nianpu huizheng*, 442–443; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2572; Dong You 董道, *Guangchuan shuba* 廣川書跋 (*Siku quanshu* edition), *juan* 9; Zhu, Yan, and Liu eds., *Zhuzi quanshu*, vol. 19, 569; Lin Shu 林紓, *Han Liu wen yanjiu fa* 韓柳文研究法 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1933 [1914]), 52; Lin Boqian 林伯謙, *Gudian sanwen daolun* 古典散文導論 (Taipei: Xiuwei zixun, 2005), 63.

¹¹ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 108; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 19–20, 546.

died of poisoning caused by Liu Bi's elixirs.¹² Presumably, Han Yu no longer felt obliged to protect Li Daogu's posthumous reputation by the time he wrote the Li Gan 'epitaph.' The fact that Daogu and five of the seven other men mentioned in the 'epitaph' died during the period 820–823, as well as the fact that Meng Jian and Li Gan died just eight days apart, would also have heightened Han Yu's feelings of alarm at the consequences of imprudent elixir ingestion.

This raises another question, however: why did Han Yu make no attempt to convey the Li Gan 'epitaph's' anti-elixir message directly to Xianzong's successor Muzong 穆宗 (r. 820–824)? Muzong had begun ingesting elixirs by 823, despite the fact that he had executed Liu Bi as a scapegoat for Xianzong's death. Muzong's death at the young age of 29 in early 824, officially attributed to complications arising from a stroke suffered during a polo game two years before, was suspected to be another case of elixir poisoning. Yet the sources reveal that the only man who dared to submit a memorial warning him about the danger of elixirs was a reclusive commoner named Zhang Gao 張臯 (n.d.).¹³ If even Zhang Gao knew about Muzong's habit, surely Han Yu, who held posts in Chang'an throughout Muzong's reign, cannot have been ignorant of it. He Zhuo 何焯 (1661–1722) argued that the Li Gan 'epitaph' did in fact represent Han Yu's "subtle words" 微詞 of warning to Muzong, but if Han employed such a strategy for remonstrance, it seems unusually timid given what we know of his temperament.¹⁴

It is certainly possible that Han Yu held his tongue for fear of suffering another round of exile to the south. But there is also good reason to suspect that he avoided remonstrating with Muzong because his own turn to elixir-taking in 820 made him vulnerable to the charge of hypocrisy. Like many other members of the Tang elite, Han Yu may well have been unable to resist taking a gamble on a new elixir that a certain expert alchemist claimed was both safe and beneficial. Both a poem by Bai Juyi (written ca. 834) and an anecdote recorded in the *Qingyi lu* 清異錄, a Song-period anecdote collection attributed to Tao Gu 陶穀 (903–970)¹⁵, claim that Han Yu's own death on December 25, 824 resulted from ingestion of elixirs containing sulfur. According to the *Qingyi lu*, these elixirs were roosters that had been fed with sulfur-laced feed, kept celibate, and then slaughtered and stewed after a thousand days. The *Qingyi lu* implies that Han Yu, who "was quite fond of female company in his later years" 晚頗親脂粉, consumed one stewed rooster every other day as an aphrodisiac or remedy for impotence, and that this was initially effective but finally had lethal effects.¹⁶ We have supporting evidence for the fatal use of

¹² Li Daogu's official biographies corroborate his death by elixir poisoning. Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 423–432, 515, 555; ZZTJ 240.7754–7755; JTS 131.3642; XTS 80.3584.

¹³ JTS 16.501, 504, 171.4449–4450; XTS 118.4289; ZZTJ 242.7822, 243.7830.

¹⁴ Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 554; Qu and Chang eds., *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu*, 2572–2573.

¹⁵ On the disputed attribution to Tao Gu, see Zhu Yi'an 朱易安 and Fu Xuanzong 傅璇琮 *et al.* eds., *Quan Song biji diyi bian* 全宋筆記第一編, Vol. 2 (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2003), 3–4; Cheng Ch'ien 鄭襄, "Gujin fei Han kaobian" 古今諱韓考辨, *Shumu jikan* 書目季刊 11.4 (1978), 20.

¹⁶ Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 115, 117; Zhu and Fu *et al.* eds., *Quan Song biji diyi bian*, Vol. 2, 53.

sulfur as an aphrodisiac from Han Yu's contemporary Li Zhao 李肇 (fl. 818–824), who recorded that the Daoist alchemist Wei Shanfu 韋山甫 (d. 822) “used sulfur to aid people in indulging their carnal desires; as a result, his methods became highly popular, and many died from sudden illnesses” 以石流黃濟人嗜欲，故其術大行，多有暴風死者。¹⁷ Indeed, Pei Lin's 裴潏 (d. 838) memorial of remonstrance against Xianzong's elixir-taking named both Liu Bi and Wei Shanfu as alchemists who had been recommended to Xianzong for their immortality elixirs.¹⁸

If it is true that Han Yu took sulfur for the purpose of prolonging his sex life, rather than prolonging his life *per se*, that would make his position on elixirs a case of “those who ran fifty paces laughing at those who ran a hundred paces,” to borrow a famous analogy from Mencius. The vehement anti-elixir rhetoric of the Li Gan ‘epitaph’ has led Han Yu admirers since Song times to question the reliability of the Bai Juyi poem and the *Qingyi lu* anecdote, arguing that a man like Han Yu would surely practice what he preached. Some scholars have tried to show that the “Tuizhi” 退之 mentioned in Bai Juyi's poem was not really Han Yu at all.¹⁹ Others have attempted to argue that Han Yu did consume sulfur, but only as a remedy for sickness—a claim not so different from that which Han himself made in his poem to Zhou Yuan.²⁰ One possibility that has not been sufficiently considered is that Han Yu was already suffering from the symptoms of sulfur poisoning by the time he wrote the Li Gan ‘epitaph.’²¹ In that case, he may have seen the ‘epitaph’ as a means of protecting his posthumous reputation by belatedly condemning the practice that had killed Li Gan and was in the process of killing him too.

¹⁷ TGSB 2:46; cf. TYL 6.590–591. Yan Jinn-shyung, “Tangdai fushi wenhua tanxi,” 261–265 discusses the importance of aphrodisiac elixirs in Tang elite culture and postulates a link to the Daoist concept of immortality-seeking through sexual techniques.

¹⁸ JTS 171.4446–4448; XTS 118.4287–4288.

¹⁹ The Southern Song scholar Fang Songqing 方崧卿 (1135–1194), who produced an annotated edition of Han Yu's works and a chronology of Han's life, claimed that the “Tuizhi” in Bai's poem was another man, Wei Zhongli 衛中立, who had the same style name as Han Yu. Chen Yinke, Lo Lien-t'ien, and Cheng Ch'ien have all rejected Fang's theory as implausible and argued that there is enough evidence to infer that the Bai Juyi poem does refer to Han Yu. See Chen, *Yuan Bai shi qianzheng gao*, 335–337; Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 117–120; Cheng, “Gujin fei Han kaobian,” 17–19.

²⁰ Lo Lien-t'ien remains somewhat skeptical about the *Qingyi lu* story and prefers to maintain that Han Yu took elixirs as a kind of health tonic or remedy for sickness. Cheng Ch'ien, building on a theory first proposed by Wang Ruoxu 王若虛 (1174–1243), has argued that Han Yu was only taking sulfur as a remedy for a chronic illness. Cheng identifies this illness as beriberi, which had apparently caused the death of Han Yu's nephew Han Laocheng 韓老成 in 803. But Cheng's evidence that Han Yu also suffered from beriberi in 824 is extremely limited; he resorts to special pleading when trying to deny the relevance of Han Yu's request for an elixir from Zhou Yuan; and his assertion that Han ingested sulfur as a health remedy for years without any harmful effects clearly contradicts his dismissal of the *Qingyi lu* story as absurd on the grounds that no rooster could survive ingesting sulfur for three years. Cheng does succeed in disproving another theory that Han used sulfur as a remedy for syphilis, a disease that was still confined to the Americas at this time. Lo, *Han Yu yanjiu*, 121 (but see also 108–109); Cheng, “Gujin fei Han kaobian,” 3–22. For Han Laocheng's death from “the soft-legged disease” 軟腳病 see Ma ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 336, 339.

²¹ The obituary by Li Ao states that Han Yu's final illness began in 824, but since neither he nor any of Han's other close friends and students (including Huangfu Shi and Zhang Ji) mentions elixir poisoning when writing about Han's death, it is reasonable to surmise that Li's account may not be reliable on this point. QTW 639.6461.

Appendix 3

The 1035 debate between Shi Jie and Ouyang Xiu

Major intellectual differences between Ouyang Xiu and Shi Jie became apparent as soon as they began to communicate in writing. Shi sent his first letter to Ouyang from Yunzhou in 1033 or early 1034, possibly after hearing of Ouyang's turn to Ancient Style prose, but Ouyang did not reply until mid-1035. By that time, Ouyang had held a post in Kaifeng for a year and had heard much glowing praise for Shi Jie from literati who passed through the Southern Capital while traveling to Kaifeng via the Grand Canal. He had also read a number of Shi's essays, possibly circulated by the same traveling literati, and had seen a rubbing of Shi's "two portraits" inscription in Wang Gongchen's house.¹²⁸⁵ In his letter to Shi Jie, he acknowledged the "spirit of loving antiquity and worrying about the world" 好古閔世之意 that suffused Shi's works, but commented that these works suffered from flaws of "excessively high self-praise, excessively harsh criticism of the present age, and arguments that seem not to look into the sources of things deeply enough" 自許太高，詆時太過，其論若未深究其源。¹²⁸⁶

Ouyang Xiu declined to elaborate on these criticisms, claiming that they were best explained in a face-to-face meeting, and chose instead to focus on criticizing Shi Jie's idiosyncratic style of calligraphy, which apparently consisted of distorting the shapes of characters so that squares became circles and straight lines became slants. According to Ouyang, he was greatly disturbed when someone (possibly Wang Gongchen) explained to him that the "two portraits" inscription's "strange" 怪 calligraphy was self-consciously designed "to be different from the present age" 與世異—what we would now call an experiment in *avant garde* art. As he argued to Shi Jie, such a pursuit of novelty and nonconformity for its own sake was contrary to Confucius's preference for moderation over extremes. Could it be that Shi Jie was "fond of being different in order to claim superiority" 好異以高? Ouyang asked in a provocative tone, and that his rising reputation was built on "haughtily making yourself different for the sake of shocking the people of this age" 昂然自異以驚世人?¹²⁸⁷

Shi Jie was evidently stung by Ouyang Xiu's criticisms, which seemed to echo the rebukes he had received from Shi Jianzhong and Sun Fu after the "two portraits" incident. His reply to Ouyang began with sardonically exaggerated expressions of self-deprecation and claimed that his strange calligraphy was simply a result of poor technique, not a desire to be

¹²⁸⁵ Ouyang states that he also saw a handwritten letter from Shi Jie to Wang Gongchen, possibly the 1034 letter in which Shi asked Wang to assume leadership of the Ancient Style revival. JSWJ 16.1763–1764; CLWJ 15.180–181.

¹²⁸⁶ JSWJ 16.1764.

¹²⁸⁷ JSWJ 16.1764–1765, 1767.

different. But he then confirmed Ouyang's diagnosis of "excessively high self-praise" and "excessively harsh criticism of the present age" by asserting that his true claims to difference lay in following the Way of the Sages in an age when everyone else was a Buddhist or a Daoist, in writing in the language of the Classics in an age when everyone else was "being a Yang Yi" 爲楊億—that is, writing in the style of allusive parallel prose that originated with Yang—and in attacking Buddhism, Daoism, and parallel prose with all his might. Shi claimed that while Ouyang Xiu was fixated on superficial matters of calligraphic style, *he* was devoting himself to the far weightier matter of teaching the Way of the Sages.¹²⁸⁸ Ouyang Xiu responded with a letter clarifying that he, too, thought little of the art of calligraphy, seeing it as little more than a trivial hobby like drinking tea or looking at paintings. Nonetheless, one had to follow rules and conventions when writing characters in order to be accepted and understood by others. He also took Shi Jie to task for claiming arrogantly to be the only man in the world who rejected Buddhism, Daoism, and parallel prose:

Buddhism and Daoism are practiced by deluded people, while overly embellished literary composition is practiced by shallow people. How do you know that in this age there are no other enlightened, sincere, honest, and upright superior men who do not practice these? By thinking you are different from everyone else, you assume that there are no superior men like yourself under heaven.

夫釋、老，惑者之所爲；雕刻文章，薄者之所爲。足下安之世無明誠質厚君子之不爲乎？足下自以爲異，是待天下無君子之與己同也。¹²⁸⁹

One suspects that this was Ouyang's point all along: he was offended by Shi Jie's pretensions to unique moral superiority and merely cited the issue of calligraphy as the most visible symptom of the problem. Shi's defiant response gave him an opening to get to the heart of the matter: namely, the narcissistic tenor of Shi's polemics.¹²⁹⁰

Ouyang Xiu's literary talent and capacity for original thinking exceeded Shi Jie's by far, and he seems to have realized by the time he wrote his second letter that he could run rings around Shi both intellectually and rhetorically.¹²⁹¹ However, he restrained himself from embarrassing Shi Jie further and instead soon made an effort to show that he bore no ill will toward the man. In early 1036, he wrote to the Director of the Censorate to protest the rescinding of Shi Jie's appointment to that department. Ouyang argued that Shi's memorial of remonstrance

¹²⁸⁸ CLWJ 15.175–177.

¹²⁸⁹ JSWJ 16.1767–1768.

¹²⁹⁰ My reading of the debate is thus different from that of Peter Bol, who seems to read Ouyang Xiu as a traditionalist and a pragmatist who felt that "merely claiming to be right was not quite enough" unless one could also achieve the political power to realize one's ideals. Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 182–183.

¹²⁹¹ Shi Jie's prose works are interesting to intellectual historians because of the militancy and radicalism of their arguments, but these arguments lack the creative flair and mental agility of Ouyang Xiu's writing. They are too facile and derivative to be convincing even as rhetoric.

to Zhenzong, which had cost him the appointment, was not unjustified; he also praised Shi as “principled, decisive, filled with integrity, studious, fond of debating over right and wrong; truly a gentleman who loves to do his moral duty” 剛果，有氣節，力學，喜辯是非，真好義之士也。¹²⁹² Ouyang’s protest was ineffective, but Shi had the opportunity to reciprocate the gesture half a year later when the Song court demoted Fan Zhongyan into exile on the charge of building a faction. After Yu Jing 余靖 (1000–1064) and Yin Shu also suffered demotion for speaking up for Fan Zhongyan, Ouyang Xiu quickly (and perhaps semi-deliberately) brought about his own demotion by writing an insulting letter to a Minister of Remonstrance, Gao Ruo’ne 高若訥 (997–1055), who had denigrated Fan.¹²⁹³ En route to exile in Yiling, Ouyang passed through the Southern Capital, where Shi Jie met him for a drink and even presented him with a satirical poem supporting his attack on Gao Ruo’ne.¹²⁹⁴

Ouyang Xiu’s respect for Shi Jie’s single-minded devotion to Han Yu’s concept of Classicist orthodoxy seems to have grown over time, particularly after both men found themselves on the losing end in the factional politics of the imperial court. In early 1045, some months after Shi Jie’s two-year career as an instructor in the Imperial University ended under a barrage of slanderous accusations from ministers whom he had criticized, Ouyang Xiu wrote a poem expressing sympathy for Shi and a world-weary desire to join him in leaving the world of court politics behind. To Ouyang’s indignation, Shi Jie’s sudden death several months later was greeted with an accusation that he had faked his demise as part of a treasonous plot involving the Kitans and Fu Bi. The accuser was Xia Song, who bore both a personal grudge against Shi Jie and a political antipathy toward the reform party to which both Fu Bi and Ouyang Xiu belonged. In 1046–1047 Ouyang Xiu, who had gone into exile for the second time due to an accusation of incest, found himself reading and rereading Shi Jie’s collected works. In two eulogistic poems about Shi Jie, Ouyang expressed a longing to circulate a thousand copies of Shi’s works throughout the world and to compose a tomb epitaph that would defy the official consensus by affirming his innocence.¹²⁹⁵ Finally, on the occasion of Shi Jie’s long-delayed burial in 1065, Ouyang Xiu wrote a highly generous epitaph that interpreted the most eccentric and controversial aspects of his personality as his greatest strengths.¹²⁹⁶

¹²⁹² JSJ 47.1179–1181; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 61–62.

¹²⁹³ JSWJ 17.1785–1788; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 68.

¹²⁹⁴ CLWJ 2.15; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 69–70.

¹²⁹⁵ Chen Zhi’e dates the poems to 1045–1046, while Hong Benjian dates them to 1046–1047. See JSJ 2.56–57, 3.68–69, 75–76; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 127–130. On Ouyang Xiu’s incest scandal and exile to Chuzhou 滁州, see Liu Tzu-chien (James T.C. Liu) 劉子健, *Ouyang Xiu de zhixue yu congzheng* 歐陽修的治學與從政 (Taipei: Xin wenfeng chubanshe, 1984 revised edition), 210–214.

¹²⁹⁶ JSJ 34.895–898; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 130.

Shi Jie's commitment to his abrasive, eccentric, and individualistic brand of ideological and literary exclusivism appears to have remained undiminished to the end of his life, judging from a series of three essays, titled "Guai shuo" 怪說 (Discourse on Strangeness), that were written in or around 1045.¹²⁹⁷ In the first essay, Shi Jie turns the charge of "strangeness" back on his critics by arguing that the world has simply grown accustomed to what is truly strange: namely, the religions of Buddhism and Daoism, both of which have been eating away at the civilization of the Central Lands like pests for a thousand years. Much of this essay's rhetoric is strongly reminiscent of the "Zhongguo lun" in equating heterodoxy with barbarism:

The Central Lands have always been a land governed by sages, populated by the four categories of subjects (i.e., literati, peasants, artisans, and merchants), and filled with men in robes and caps. Yet now half of the people in the Central Lands are barbarians (Yi) who shave their heads and fasten their robes on the left, and who are neither literati nor peasants, neither artisans nor merchants. Now, *that* can be called strange. The Central Lands are a land governed with the moral power of the Way, where the rites and ritual music are employed, and filled with the five constant virtues (i.e., humaneness, moral duty, ritual, wisdom, and trustworthiness). Yet now empty, unclassical teachings have spread throughout this land, and it is filled with weird, absurd, illusory, and deluding theories. Now, *that* can be called strange.

夫中國，聖人之所常治也，四民之所常居也，衣冠所常聚也。而髡髮左衽，不士不農，不工不商，爲夷者半中國，可怪也。夫中國，道德之所治也，禮樂之所施也，五常之所被也，而汗漫不經之教行焉，妖誕幻惑之說滿焉，可怪也。¹²⁹⁸

The second essay extends Shi Jie's argument about strangeness to the "Way of Yang Yi" 楊億之道, claiming that Yang Yi—in a bid to dominate the literary scene—invented his ornate style of parallel prose in order to render the world's people deaf and blind to "the way of the Duke of Zhou, Confucius, Mencius, Yang Xiong, Wenzhongzi (i.e., Wang Tong), and Han Yu" 周公、孔子、孟軻、揚雄、文中子、韓吏部之道. Shi Jie ends the essay by lamenting that he is actually trying to return the world to normality, only to get accused of strangeness by a world to which normality has become strange.¹²⁹⁹ The third essay expresses Shi Jie's defiance toward those who would warn him against taking such combative and contrarian positions, lest they invite a devastating backlash from the mainstream. In language that combines Shi's love of

¹²⁹⁷ Chen Zhi'e dates the "Guai shuo" to 1035 based on its similarity to Shi Jie's arguments in his reply to Ouyang Xiu, and also speculates that it was among the essays that Ouyang criticized in his first letter. However, the second essay claims that "the Way of Yang Yi has been in the world for forty years" 天下有楊億之道四十年矣. This implies that the "Guaishuo" was composed in 1045, the year of Shi Jie's death, since Yang Yi developed his "Mount Kunlun" style of poetry in 1005–1008. CLWJ 5.62; Chen, *Shi Jie shiji*, 55–56, 64.

¹²⁹⁸ CLWJ 5.60–61.

¹²⁹⁹ CLWJ 5.61–63. One notices in this essay an important difference between Han Yu and Shi Jie: whereas there is no connection made in Han Yu's works between ideas about writing in the Ancient Style and ideas about reviving the Way of the Sages, Shi Jie attempted to show that the two were one and the same thing, and that parallel prose, "the Way of Yang Yi," was therefore as much an enemy of orthodoxy as were Buddhism and Daoism. This seems to reflect an effort at fusing Han Yu's literary and ideological agendas into a coherent whole.

martial metaphors with Han Yu's rhetoric of martyrdom in the letter to Meng Jian, he reacts to the warning by jumping up, glaring and scowling at the speaker, and ranting that as a follower of the Way of the Sages, he is duty-bound to "counter-attack" 反攻 against any teaching that threatens it, even at the cost of his life.¹³⁰⁰ It was precisely this sort of fanatically militant devotion to the Way of the Sages that struck Ouyang Xiu as at once deeply admirable and strangely irrational.

¹³⁰⁰ Shi Jie also likens himself to a slave who will fight to the death to defend his master's house from burglars, an interesting echo of the burglary metaphor used in the 1033 letter to Sun Shi. See CLWJ 5.63–64.