A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship
Volume II

Qin, Han, Wei, Jin: Canon and Commentary

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Abbreviations

CSJC	*Congshu jicheng jianbian* 叢書集成簡編. Taibei: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1966.
HQJJ	*Huang Qing jingjie* 皇清經解. Ruan Yuan 阮元, comp., Canton: Xuehaitang 學海堂, 1829, and *Huang Qing jingjie xubian* 皇清經解續編. Wang Xianqian 王先謙, comp. Jiangsu: Zoushe Shuju 奏設書局, 1886–1888. Rpt. under title of *Qingjingjie, Qingjingjie xubian* 清經解，清經解續編, 13 vols. Nanjing: Fenghuang Chubanshe, 2005.
JXCS	*Jingxue congshu chubian* 經學叢書初編. Taibei: Xuehai Chubanshe, 1985.
SBBY	*Sibu beiyao* 四部備要 ed. Rpt. Taibei: Hanjing Wenhua Shiye Youxian Gongsi, 1983.
SBCK	*Sibu congkan chubian* 四部叢刊初編. Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1919.
SBYJ	*Sibu yaoji zhushu congkan* 四部要籍注疏叢刊. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1998.
SSJ	*Shisanjing zhushu fu jiaokanji* 十三經注疏附校勘記. Ruan Yuan 阮元, comp., 1808. Rpt., Taipei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1981.
TZJJ	*Tongzhitang jingjie* 通志堂經解. 16 vols. Nalan Xingde 納蘭性德, comp. 1680. Rpt. Yangzhou: Guangling Shushe, 2007.
ZZJC	*Xinbian Zhuzi jicheng* 新編諸子集成, 8 vols. Taibei: Shijie Shuju, 1983.

Conventions

1. When citing specific pages, these are listed after the entire entry has been documented. An example is the following: Joyce Marcus, "Rethinking Ritual," in *The Archaeology of Ritual*, ed. Evangelos Kyriakidis (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, 2007), 43–76; p. 48. This entry indicates that Marcus's complete chapter is found on pp. 43–76; the relevant page cited in the text is p. 48.

2. The first time a traditional figure appears in a chapter, I supply the Chinese characters and dates of birth and death.

3. All citations to the dynastic histories are to the standard punctuated edition produced by the *Zhonghua Shuju* between 1959 and 1977 in Beijing; all citations to the Thirteen Classics are to the SSJ edition as documented in the Abbreviations above.

4. Traditional Chinese works are cited by the English translation in the body of this work, except when the meaning of the title is either opaque, ambiguous, or too clumsy for repeated reference in translation; the Romanized titles are used in the footnotes. I do this in the first instance to be informative to readers ignorant of Chinese, and in the second instance to eliminate any possibility of ambiguity: *Historian's Records* versus *Shiji*, *Esteemed Documents* versus *Shangshu* and the like. Exceptions to this general practice are the tables, in which I use whichever title conserves the most space.

5. I depart from sinological convention when citing the names of publishing houses. After all, such names are not the titles of books but of respectable institutions. As an example, Zhonghua Shuju is fully capitalized. This affords these institutions the same respect commonly lent to similar entities in the West.

6. I Romanize all names of scholars from Taiwan in pinyin, unless their personalized names according to the modified and idiosyncratic Wade-Giles system used in Taiwan are commonly known or easily obtainable. But I make no special study to locate these individualized names.

7. Dates are all AD unless specifically noted as BC.

8. Technical terms are presented as follows: "lecturing" (*yan* 言). Proper names are presented without pinyin: Changle Palace 長樂宮.

Introduction

Volume 2 of the *History of Chinese Classical Scholarship* covers the half-millennium from the Qin and Han dynasties through the Wei to the end of the Jin period. The early part of this era witnessed the reconstitution of the Classics after the textual devastations wrought by the Qin regime as well as their eventual canonization by the crown. It saw the professionalization of classical scholarship as a state-sponsored enterprise, wherein private classical masters gave way to tenured academicians at court who specialized in single classics and who depended on their scholarship to obtain bureaucratic office. The formation of three major subgenres in the discipline of philology—textual criticism, lexicography, and commentary— provided the impetus for the development of other exegetical modes after this era to explain textual complexities.

The Western Han dynasty (206 BC–8 AD) was the inaugural age of classical scholarship. Not until the pinnacle of Qing dynasty evidential research in the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries would Chinese classical scholarship reach such heights of widespread social participation and intense personal commitment. The Han confidently sought the recovery of the classical tradition; the Qing sought the relevancy of the tradition through cleansing its texts and, ideally, interpreting its moral and political lessons. The Han harnessed the scholarly class to bolster the regime; the Qing sponsored the scholarly class to distance it from the practical business of government. In both cases, textual criticism was at the center of scholarship: the Han can be claimed to be the age when philology was founded, the Qing the age when it was perfected; in between was the long process of the maturation of the tradition and the development of specialized modes of exegesis and hermeneutics.

This close scholarly connection between the Han and Qing dynasties, as the latter assumed and exploited in novel ways the paths first trod by the former, is a conventional truism. On a superficial level, Qing classicists drew inspiration and motivation for their research from the examples of Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) and, rarely, Fusheng 伏生 (fl. 200 BC), the Qin/Han master of the *Documents*. Witness the frequent use of the name "Zheng" in the names of personal sobriquets or private studios.[1] Additionally, exceptionally erudite scholars were frequently

[1] Examples include Wang Chang 王昶 (1725–1806), one of whose private studios when he conducted collation work was named Zhengxuezhai 鄭學齋, "Study for Zheng's Learning"; Kong Guangsen 孔廣森 (1753–1787), whose own study was named Yi-Zhengtang 儀鄭堂, "Hall of Ceremony for Zheng"; bibliographer Zhou Zhongfu 周中孚 (1768–1831), one of whose styles was Zhengtang, as seen in the name of his important bibliographical study *Zhengtang*

compared to Zheng.[2] On the concrete level, methodological approaches were borrowed and scholarly results accepted, which constituted a direct intellectual connection explicitly made by Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) in his preface to Jiang Fan 江藩 (1761–1830/31), *Hanxue shichengji* 漢學師承記, which Ruan published in 1818. Ruan characterizes the connection between Han and Qing classical scholarship in felicitous and memorable parallel prose: "Reading this work one can realize that the inheritance of the rules of lineages of the grove of Confucians during the Han became the fountainhead of the classical learning of the scholars of the present dynasty" 讀此可知漢世儒林家法之承受，國朝學者之淵源.[3] Incidentally, Jiang Fan's style was Zhengtang 鄭堂, "Hall of Zheng"! Qing evidential scholars typically began within the confines of the period treated in this volume, starting with founding Han and Jin annotators and skipping directly to Tang commentators, as demonstrated in the early precedent of Zang Lin 藏琳 (1650–1713). I quote from his short biography in the *Draft History of the Qing*: "He studied the classics in the main through Han annotations and Tang commentaries" 治經以漢注唐疏為主.[4] The methodological slogan of "establish the facts and seek the truth" 事實求是 that guided much of Qing classical scholarship is itself a product of the Han, for it was a formulation of Ban Gu 班固 (32–92) to characterize the scholarly attitude of the royal prince, King Xian of

dushuji 鄭堂讀書記, "Notes on Books Studied in the Hall of Zheng"; Li Ciming 李慈銘 (1830–1895), who occasionally used literary name of Zhenghan 鄭盦, "Cauldron of Zheng"; and Wu Dacheng 吳大澄 (1835–1902), with one *hao* of Zhengkan, "Shrine to Zheng 鄭龕." The only example of a scholar taking the name of Fusheng that I have run across is Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞 (1850–1908), whose residence was named "Shifutang" 師伏堂, "Hall for Honoring Fu as Master." Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777) offers some insights on why his contemporaries honored Zheng Xuan in this way in his record of a visit to Wang Chang's studio, "Zhengxuezhai ji" 鄭學齋記, in *Dai Zhen wenji* 戴震文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1980), 177.

[2] In light of the previous bloated note, I here only offer one short, albeit important, example. Liang Yusheng 梁玉繩 (1744–1819) once praised the most learned man of his age, and arguably of the entire dynasty, Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728–1804), with the following comparison: "Qian Daxin of modern times is just the same as Zheng Xuan of ancient times" 今之竹汀, 猶古之鄭康成也. This is recorded in a poem written by Liang to his brother, "Ji di Chusu shu" 寄弟處素書, cited by Chen Hongsen 陳鴻森, "*Qian Daxin nianpu* bieji" 錢大昕年譜別記, Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica ed., *Qian-Jia xuezhe de zhijing fangfa* 乾嘉學者治經方法 (Taipei and Nankang: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Zhongguo Wen-Zhe Yangjiusuo Choubeichu, 2000), Appendix 1, 865–988; p. 865.

[3] See Jiang Fan 江藩, *Hanxue shichengji jianshi* 漢學師承記箋釋, ed. Qi Yongxiang 漆永祥, 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2006), "Xu," 4.

[4] *Qingshigao* 清史稿, 48 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1977), 43.13182 (*juan* 481).

Hejian 河間獻王, Liu De 劉德 (d. 129 BC),[5] and was applied by Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728–1804) to Zang Lin by virtue of his intellectual outlook and approach.[6]

The Western Han witnessed such seminal scholarly milestones as the selection of Confucianism as the imperial orthodoxy, the reassembly and canonization of the Classics, the establishment of regius chairs of erudite specialists, the convention of imperially sponsored academic conferences to set official interpretive lines, and the reconstruction of a ritual system appropriate for the dynasty. In short, this dynasty established the scope and content of the field of classical scholarship. In terms of political philosophy, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179– 104 BC) harnessed the tenets of *Gongyang's Commentary* in its teaching on Heaven- inspired loyalty to the central authority, the elevation of the lord over the ranks of ministers, and the principle of primogeniture in the matter of imperial succession. In terms of historiography, Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145/136–86 BC) created the rhetorical parameters and identified the major classical masters who restarted traditions of textual transmission in his "Grove of Confucians" collective biography; this biography, strangely lacking pertinent scholarly information, would inform how classicists were written by later historians and read by later generations with the rich supplementary data provided by Ban Gu in his own "Grove of Confucians" narrative. The Eastern Han dynasty, for its part, saw the invention of the foundational processes of the discipline; that is, the three glories of textual criticism through the collation work of the imperial bibliographer Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 BC) and his son Liu Xin 劉歆 (ca. 50 BC–AD 23), careers that spanned the transition from the Western Han to the Eastern Han; lexicography through the compilation of the great dictionary of Chinese characters by Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 58–ca. 147), *Explaining Simple Graphs and Analyzing Compound Characters* 說文解字; and commentary through the peerless example of the polymath for the ages, Zheng Xuan.

Examination of the Northern and Southern periods reveals that developments in classical scholarship were often based on new interpretive modes that were increasingly divorced from Han achievements. All such scholarship after the early Tang and up to the Qing was automatically suspect by eighteenth-century Han-school partisans, given the contaminating effect of the teachings of the "two sires" (*ershi* 二氏), Laozi and *Śākyamuni.* They polluted the "purity" of Han classical scholarship, a governing article of faith that commenced Ruan Yuan's preface to Jiang Fan's work as mentioned above. During the Wei and Jin eras, imperial projects devoted to the production of libraries of the classics, both on stone and paper, continued the trend that commenced in the Han of harnessing classical scholarship to political legitimacy. Finally, the rhetoric of the "Grove of Confucians" in the *History of Jin* reveals the image of classicists in this dynasty leading up to and including the fall of the North and the regrouping of the court

[5] *Hanshu* 53.2410.

[6] Cited in Zang's biographical sketch in the *Qingshigao.*

in the South at Jinye, modern Nanjing; the matter of this collective biography exposes which classics were pivotal in formulating the intellectual trends that coursed throughout this pivotal period, including a strand of classical "ritualization" that occurred with much ink spilt on ritual texts. Volume 3, *Northern and Southern Dynasties, Sui, and Early Tang: The Decline of Practical Philology and the Rise of Speculative Hermeneutics*, then will continue the story of classical Chinese scholarship after the court was firmly ensconced in Jianye within an intellectual atmosphere that, politically speaking, was tinged with Buddhist and Daoist otherworldliness. In such an atmosphere, political power was more fleeting, and rendered even less appealing, in the face of the mysteries of these new ontologies. In the North, steady work in classical scholarship provided a bastion of traditional culture and sources of self-reassurance for men working under the tainted aegis of foreign conquest dynasties. The reunification of the realm under the short-lived Sui dynasty and the subsequent golden era of Chinese culture ushered in under the long-lived Tang dynasty display major achievements in classical scholarship even while seeds of doubt about the validity of the textual approach to knowledge incubated and emerged toward the end of this era. Volume 3 will end with the early Tang period, when the bedrock of Tang classical scholarship was established on the foundation of the heritage of Sui classical masters.

In the present volume, I continue with the "great man" approach for this era, as indicated in the table of contents. Interspersed are short treatments of minor classicists who played their modest parts, modest perhaps only due to the vagaries of historical transmission. I evaluate them according to a five-part schema first proposed by N. G. Wilson to evaluate the classical scholarship of the major Byzantine official and writer Theodorus Metochites (1270–1332): "What does he preserve of ancient literature that would otherwise be lost? Does he edit or emend the texts? What commentaries did he write? In what respects is his literary criticism notable? Does he exploit the classical heritage in other ways?"[7] I would add one last desideratum: did he develop or refine any new research methodologies? Such textual ministrations include, of course, novel hermeneutic strategies to make the classics speak in new voices for each new age.

In retrospect, the Han dynasty, and to a lesser extent the Wei-Jin period, display a welter of scholarly approaches to the classics, each characterized by the texts it sought to explicate, whether old texts couched in ancient scripts recovered from hidden caches or old texts newly transcribed in modern script via the oral recitation of aged specialists. This debate between so-called Old Text and New Text schools turns out to be less about purity of scholastic lineage than about the provisional approach appropriate for the textual task at hand, and, most disappointing, a matter of protecting one's textual turf in the official curriculum. Still, in later ages, Han learning came to stand for finely argued textual criticism

[7] N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (Baltimore: Jones Hopkins University Press, 1983), 257

with little relevance for contemporary social concerns, in opposition to the scholarly approach of broadly imagined metaphysical hermeneutics as characterized by Song learning with immediate political and moral applications. We find that even this longstanding, cherished distinction between the Old Text and New Text learning of the Han period is an artificial construct invented during the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods, the apogee of Qing evidential research, to elevate their textually orientated approaches through the sanctity of the Han, while more interpretive approaches were stained by association with the Neo-Confucian speculative hermeneutics of Song learning of the mind. This is clearly seen in the fact that, of the score or so authors of the various treatises on the orthodox transmission of the Han school, none predate the end of the Qian-Jia era, with the first one appearing in 1818 (that of Jiang Fan). The fierce debates between Qing dynasty Han and Song partisans poisoned their perceptions of the rivalry between Han dynasty Old Text and New Text camps, who were much more amenable to accommodating rival methodologies, always leaving aside the sensitive issue of political patronage and sponsorship and the thrust of their interpretive efforts.

The case of Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), commonly regarded as the father of Qing scholarship and founder of the evidential research strain of classicism, is instructive in his catholicity of approach. It is true that in his study of the *Changes*, he used no works of any Ming scholar. But it is also true that he prized the readings of Song philosopher Master Cheng above all—"not going through Master Cheng [Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107)], how can the grand meaning be clarified?" 不由程子， 大義何由而明乎—a striking imprimatur of the importance he placed on the cosmologico-moral message of this classic apart from the technical integrity of its text.[8]

A pernicious mindset exists that automatically jumps to the conclusion that when a classicist adopts a particular approach to the text at hand, whether critical or interpretive, he must be making a statement of intellectual allegiance to a school with hard-and-fast boundaries and memberships. The classicist may be evincing such a stance, but not necessarily so. This erroneous outlook beset the Republican understanding of Qing classicists. The most obvious instance is the comparative stances of Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929) and Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895–1990). The former, from his earlier, insider perspective, viewed Qing classicists as schools of intellectual lineages bound by personal ties of master-disciple relationships that demanded loyalty to the lineage. The latter, with the freedom of his later, outsider vantage point, was able to view the shifting scenes of methodological choices as expedient means to textual ends, not pledges of loyalty to discrete schools that did not necessarily involve personal connections. We in the West have accepted the mid- Qing specialists' opprobrium against Song learning wholesale. This view needs correcting to restore the balance the tradition

[8] Gu Yanwu, *Rizhlu* 日知錄, 3 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2006), 1:10.

has always displayed.[9] A good starting point to construct a new and more holistic view of the entire tradition that culminated in the Qing, then, is a thorough examination of the inner workings of Han classical scholarship and its remote echoes during the Wei and Jin, the rhetoric of its historical representations, and the methodological legacies promoted and moved ahead during the Northern and Southern dynasties that culminated with the Sui and early Tang. This volume commences this long journey.

[9] Two examples of the use of Song interpreters to leaven the sometimes leaden Han glossologists's textual criticism, with Song speculation often winning out, are Liu Qiyu's massive study and translation of the *Shangshu* and Yu Wanli's work on newly excavated manuscripts. Both make liberal and welcome use of Song classicists. See Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 (1893–1980) and Liu Qiyu 刘起釪, *Shangshu jiaoshi yilun* 尚书效释译论, 4 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2005), and Yu Wanli 虞萬里, "You Tsinghua jian 'Yingao' lun *Guwen shangshu* 'Xian you yide' zhi xingzhi" 由清華簡尹誥論古文尚書咸有一德之性質, in *Yufangzhai xuelin* 榆枋齋學林, 2 vols. (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2012), 1:11–36

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Chapter 1

The Qin Disruption and Legacy

1.1. Traditional Views on the Qin

Volume 2 of the recent set of studies *History of Chinese Confucianism* 中国儒学 史 commences with a truism that isn't wholly true: "Han dynasty Confucianism inherited and developed the thought of pre-Qin Confucianism. . . . It enjoys an intimate relationship with the Confucian classical studies that flourished during the Han dynasty" 汉代儒学继承和发展了先秦儒学的思想 . . . . . 它与昌盛于汉代的儒家经学有着十分密切的联系.[1] Though true to a certain point, this first part conveniently glides over the entire Qin regime without striking a single point worthy of notice. However, it continues with a second part that is wholly true, concluding with a catch phrase of such importance as to justify the existence of this present work, focusing initially as I do on the twin Han dynasties: "Confucianism during the Han laid the foundation for the ruling position of Confucianism throughout the entirety of the last two thousand years of the feudal society of China, and of its ruling ideology" 汉代儒学奠定了整个两千年来的我国封建社会儒家统治地位和同志思想的基础. [2] Given the debt owed by the Han to Qin precedents and practices, especially in terms of classical scholarship, this present work must commence with a brief evaluation of the Qin.

The Qin dynasty (221–206 BC) enjoys a preeminent position among all Chinese dynasties for its unparalleled accomplishment in uniting the ancient Chinese realm and inaugurating the imperial era. The practical measures that standardized the various states' competing systems of weights, measures, writing, and the like made unification logistically feasible. The pervasive bureaucracy, its underpinning ideology and code of laws developed by the Qin, set the future course of Chinese political institutions on immovable tracks. Even the very concept of power deriving from the *imperium* of political office instead of the *regnum* of royal inheritance was part and parcel of this new unified world order. And never again would the Chinese worldview accept for long the partitioning

[1] Xu Kangsheng 許抗生 et al., "Liang Han juan" 兩漢卷, in *Zhongguo Ruxueshi* 中國儒學史, eds. Tang Yijie 湯一介 and Li Zhonghua 李中華, vol. 2 (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2012), 1.

[2] Xu et al., "Liang Han juan", 1.

of its territory into a less-than-empire- sized *oikoumene*.[3] Despite these very concrete and enduring contributions to the course of Chinese civilization, an intensely negative image of the Qin has prevailed historically in the Chinese public consciousness, at least until the modern Chinese reunification of 1949. The intensity of the objurgation of the Qin was largely based on the barbaric means of unification, built as it was on the violent force of law and the subsequent enshrinement of harsh legalist regulations as ruling policy rather than the traditional suasive power of moral virtue.

And yet, as Martin Kern has clearly demonstrated, the Han cultural debt to the Qin was pervasive.[4] For one thing, the Confucian masters at work in the early Han period had either been commissioned as erudites at the academy or functioned as independent masters during the Qin period, or at least trained by Qin teachers.[5] For another, the ritual foundation of the Han was largely based on Qin precedents. And the same literary forms and technical language that informed the composition of the famous Qin stone inscriptions were at work in the composition of the ritual hymns of the Han dynasty hardly a decade after the last of the Qin stones had been completed. It was a strange quirk of historiographical legerdemain that was able to foster the view that the ancient, aristocratic state of Qin was the destroyer of tradition while the plebian, upstart state of Han was its preserver.[6] In fact, according to Lothar von Falkenhause, the rites were at the heart of this continuity of tradition: "Given the later Confucian excoriation of Qin, it is a delicious irony to observe, in the light of the archaeological data, that Qin was the only part of China where the kinds of ritual that the Confucian ritualists considered orthodox were still being consistently reflected in elite funerary remains during the lifetimes of

[3] Mark Edward Lewis isolates the following broad innovations made by the Qin and developed by the Han: the distinction between the universal, superior culture of the imperial center and the limited, particular cultures of the regions and localities; the invention of the figure of the emperor; the universal use of a single, nonalphabetic script and a common literary culture; gradual demilitarization of both peasant and urban populations and the delegation of military service to marginal elements of society; and the emergence of great families who combined landlordism and trade with political office-holding. See Mark Edward Lewis, *The Early Chinese Empires: Qin and Han* (Cambridge, MA: Belnap Press of Harvard University, 2007). For the debt Qin and Han owed to earlier, preimperial precedents, consult Michael Loewe, ed., "The Heritage Left to the Empires," in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe, ed. and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 967–1032.

[4] Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-Huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation* (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 2000).

[5] For biographical epitomes of twelve early classicists who were trained under the Qin and later served the Han, see Ma Feibai 马非百, *Qin jishi* 秦集史, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1982), 1:337–41.

[6] All these issues are explored in depth and his debt to Japanese sinology detailed in Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-Huang.*

Confucius (551–479 BC) and his early disciples."[7] Alas, this informed view that widespread cultural continuity was maintained from the Qin to the Han did not impact the historically negative view of Qin, a view that was formulated in the early Han period.

Jia Yi's 賈誼 (201–169 BC) essay "On Censuring Qin" 過秦論 embodies the twin historical perspectives of unprecedented unification and malevolent rule remarked on above:

> The First Emperor arose to carry on the glorious achievements of the six generations. Cracking his long whip, he drove the universe before him, swallowing up the eastern and western Chou and overthrowing the feudal lords. He ascended to the highest position and ruled the six directions, scourging the world with his rod, and his might shook the four seas. . . .
>
> Thereupon he discarded the ways of the former kings and burned the writings of the hundred schools in order to make the people ignorant. . . . Yet after it had become master of the whole empire and established itself within the fastness of the pass, a single commoner opposed [the Qin] and its ancestral temples toppled, its ruler died at the hands of men, and it became the laughingstock of the world. Why? Because it failed to rule with humanity and righteousness and to realize that the power to attack and the power to retain what one has thereby won are not the same.
>
> 及至始皇，奮六世之餘烈，振長策而馭宇內，吞二周而亡諸侯，履至尊而制六合， 執捶拊以鞭笞天下，威振四海。…… 於是廢先王之道，焚百家之言，以愚黔首。……然後以六合為家，肴函為宮，一夫作難而七廟墮，身死人手，為天下笑者， 何也？仁義不施，而攻守之勢異也。[8]

Whether Jia Yi's evaluation was an *ad captandum* reaction designed to please the Confucian class or a sincere historical analysis, his conclusion has informed the tradition. To generations of Confucian classicists, the image that coalesced was not the glorious unification of the realm and the creation of the empire but the ruthless control of people and thought, the nefast monopolization and exploitation of resources; most egregiously was the resultant disruption of the flow of texts from the classical past that embodied the royal way first established by the storied Zhou dynasty. Even though the Qin produced few notable scholars, I have isolated three particular ways in which the Qin created the immediate need for and impacted the long-term development of formal, codified

[7] Lothar von Faulkenhausen, at Yuri Pines et al., eds., *Birth of an Empire: The State of Qin Revisited* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 46.

[8] *Jia Yi ji* 賈誼集 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1976), 2, 3; Burton Watson, trans., "Chia Yi (*Kuo Ch'in lun*) The Faults of Ch'in," in *Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 2 vols., ed. Cyril Birch (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 1:47, 48.

classical scholarship during the Han, in addition to providing the cultural continuum mentioned before: the negative ideological foil of the Qin's abysmal treatment of Confucians, the development of the erudite's office, and the unification of the script. The matter of transmitting the classics through unofficial channels and in truncated or even tattered form is lightly touched on at present, but it will be addressed more attentively in chapter 4.

1.2. The Burning of the Books

The last unforgivable crime mentioned in the previous section was erroneously characterized by the catchphrase of "burning of the books and the burial of the Confucians" (*fenshu kengru* 焚書坑儒).[9] The *Historian's Records* 史記 encapsulates the effect of this Qin scholarly proscription against classical scholarship succinctly: "Then followed the twilight days of the Qin emperor, who burned the *Odes* [*Poems*] and *Documents* and buried the scholars alive, and from this time on the texts of the Six Classics of the Confucians were defective" 及至秦之 季世，焚詩書，阬術士，六藝從此缺焉.[10] Another short epitome includes the Qin's unforgivable abandonment of the canonical rites: "Formerly, the Qin severed the way of the sages, killed the scholars of technical arts, burned the *Poems* and *Documents*, abandoned the rites and their performance,[11] stressed deceit and force, employed penalties and punishments, and transferred grain from the coastal areas to Xihe" 昔秦絕聖人之道，殺術士，燔詩書，棄禮義，尚詐力，任刑罰，轉負海之粟致之西河.[12] Ban Gu took these twin evils as metaphor for the intellectual life of the entire period: "The decline reached violent Qin, which burned the classical works, murdered Confucian scholars, devised the law that proscribed the works, punished the crime of affirming antiquity [to negate the

[9] The term designated as "Confucian," *ru* 儒, has been the subject of recent debate. It is difficult to render this term in English, and the current trend in Western sinology is to render it in romanization as "Ruist," and to parse it as "specialist in the rites and cultural learning" or something similarly vague and summative. The exclusivity of its ancient connection with Confucianism is not demonstrated but assumed due to the heavy emphasis of this school of thought on the rites. Still, for the purpose of this study, the term "Ruist" henceforth will be rendered as "Confucian," in line with the historical reading of this term. To ignore this traditional understanding of the name in a history of Chinese classical scholarship is to misrepresent the tradition. See the discussion later in this chapter for the etymology of *ru*.

[10] *Shiji* 121.31116; Burton Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian of China. Translated from the* Shih Chi *of Ssu-Ma Ch'ien*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 2:396.

[11] For the translation of *liyi* 禮義 as "rites and their performance," see my *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, vol. 1, chapt. 4, sect. 4.6, "Ritual Aspects of Commentary."

[12] *Shiji* 118.3086, author's translation. (Watson's rendering in *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, 2:374, is unsatisfactory.)

present], and from all of this arts of the Way subsequently became extinguished. " 陵夷至于暴秦，燔經書，殺儒士，設挾書之法，行是古之罪，道術由是遠滅。[13]

The terminology employed concerning the victims in both passages was "scholars of technical arts" (*shushi* 術 士), magicians and wonder-working thaumaturges, not Confucians. At the time, Confucians were scarcely distinguishable from *shushi*.[14] Nicolas Zufferey describes the tragedy as a single event, the single occurrence of "burying of the 'scholars and esoteric experts' [*wenxue fangshushi* 文學方術士]" in 212 BC, and properly notes that it was not even necessarily directed toward the Confucians but rather those scholars or experts concerned with the techniques of immortality, referred to as *fangshi* 方士 .[15] Yet *Historian's Records* elsewhere describes those who were buried as "all who chanted Confucius' works and imitated him" 皆誦法孔子.[16] Zuffrey's explanation of this discrepancy is not entirely satisfactory unless we concede the macaronic mix of different strains in early Han Confucianism. Nevertheless, this one-time tragedy was co-opted by later Confucians to underscore the evils wreaked on their intellectual ancestors by the hated Qin regime. Therefore, according to the traditional mindset, the Qin targeted Confucian classicists, and this baleful policy became the intellectual backdrop to the development of classical scholarship.

This pogrom against the old learning and selected scholars was set in motion by Chancellor Li Si 李斯 (ca. 280–208 BC) in a memorial delivered to the throne in 213 BC:

> The Chancellor, Your Subject, risks his life to say that formerly the world was divided and in disorder, and none was able to unify it, therefore the feudal lords rose to vie for hegemony at the same time. In their words, they all talked about the ancient, thereby regarding the present (system) as harmful, and elaborated empty words to confuse reality. Each cherished what he had acquired from private learning to criticize what the sovereign has established. Now the Emperor, having united and grasped the worlds, has discriminated between black and white and established a single authority. But they are partial to their own learning and join together to criticize the laws and teachings If things like this are not banned, then the ruler's power will be diminished above, and factions will form below.

[13] *Hanshu* 36.1968.

[14] Even worse, the Ru in Qin and early Han were an admixture of Confucian and Huang-Lao thought plus the arts and practices of the wonder-workers and magicians. Cf. Li Changzhi 李 長 之 , *Sima Qian zhi renge yu fengge* 司馬遷之人格與風格 (1997; rpt. Taibei: Liren Shuju, 2008), 9–10.

[15] Nicolas Zufferey, *To the Origins of Confucianism: The* Ru *in Pre-Qin Times and During the Early Han Dynasty* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003), 225–52.

[16] *Shiji* 6.258.

To ban them is appropriate.

> I would ask that you burn all the records in the Scribe's Offices which are not Ch'in's. If not needed by the Office of the Erudites, all songs, documents,[17] and writings of the hundred schools, which anyone in the world has ventured to keep, should be brought to the governors and commandants to be thrown together and burned. Anyone who ventures to discuss songs and documents will be executed in the marketplace. Those who use the ancient (system) to criticize the present, will be executed together with their families. Officials who witness or know of this crime yet fail to prosecute it will have the same punishment as the criminals. Thirty days after the ordinance has been issued, anyone who has not burned his books will be tattooed and sentenced to hard labor. What are exempted are books of medicine, divination, and horticulture. If one desires to learn laws and ordinances, he should make legal officials his teacher. The Emperor decreed: "We approve."
>
> 五帝不相復，三代不相襲，各以治，非其相反，時變異也。今陛下創大業，建萬世之功，固非愚儒所知。且越言乃三代之事，何足法也？異時諸侯并爭，厚招游學。今天下已定，法令出一，百姓當家則力農工，士則學習法令辟禁。今諸生不師今而學古，以非當世，惑亂黔首。丞相臣斯昧死言：古者天下散亂，莫之能一，是以諸侯并作，語皆道古以害今，飾虛言以亂實，人善其所私學，以非上之所建立。今皇帝并有天下，別黑白而定一尊。私學而相與非法教如此弗禁，則主勢降乎上，黨與成乎下。禁之便。
>
> 臣請史官非秦記皆燒之。非博士官所職，天下敢有藏詩、書、百家語者，悉詣守、尉雜燒之。有敢偶語詩書者棄市。以古非今者族。吏見知不舉者與同罪。令下三十日不燒，黥為城旦。所不去者，醫藥卜筮種樹之書。若欲有學法令，以吏為師。制曰：可。[18]

Despite the infamy of Qin's dual moves, some argue that the effect of Li Si's policy was arguably not as far reaching as later Confucian complainants would have it, nor was the incident of burying scholars more than a single tragic event. At any rate, the specialists who were buried alive were likely only some four hundred and sixty in number, and they were singled out for refusing to lend their support to a policy initiative.[19] According to one later source, the number reached seven hundred, and those who were lured to their death out of the fear that "the world would not support the laws that changed or replaced other laws" were designated as Confucians.[20]

[17] Or better, the *Poems* and *Documents*.
[18] *Shiji* 6.255; William H. Nienhauser, Jr., trans., ed., *The Grand Scribe's Records* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 1:147–48.
[19] *Shiji* 6.255.

It would be useful to examine recent reevaluations of the burning of the books that seek to lessen its impact, before concluding with the old but convincing counterarguments of Zhang Binglin 章 炳 麟 (1869–1936), the last grand master of Old Text learning during the late Qing and Republican periods. His analysis of the matter is very persuasive and, to me, confirms the extent of the proscription against the classics. Li Si's memorial as presented above seems to state that it was the private ownership of the classics and texts of the Hundred Masters as well as private interpretations of them that were proscribed; archival copies were available to erudites at the capital. Nor were works on medicine, divination, or agriculture forbidden. The greatest loss to intellectual life was historical chronicles: all were burned except for chronicles from Qin. And from the historical evidence, Qin chronicles were spare listings of facts—names, dates, ranks, offices, battles— certainly no attempt at interpretation or exemplary application. As Sima Qian put it:

> Since Qin gained its purpose, it burned all the copies of the *Poems* and *Documents* in the world; the case of the historical records of the feudal princes was particularly severe because of their role in criticism and satire. But the reason that the *Poems* and *Documents* are seen again is that many of them were stored in men's houses, but the historical records alone were stored in the Zhou palace, and for this reason were destroyed. What a pity, oh what a pity! Only remaining are the records of Qin, which do not record months or days, and the text is abbreviated and not detailed.
>
> 秦既得意，燒天下詩書，諸侯史記尤甚，為其有所刺譏也。詩書所以復見者，多藏人家，而史記獨藏周室，以故滅。惜哉，惜哉！獨有秦記，又不載日月，其文略不具。[21]

Despite Sima Qian's clear statement that the Qin "burned all the copies of the *Poems* and *Documents* in the world," Derk Bodde argues that the destruction was "not intended to be universal," as certain exceptions were detailed in Li Si's oral

[20] Quote from Wei Hong's 衛宏 (ca. 25–57) lost work, "Zhaoding *Guwen Shangshu* xu" 詔定古文尚書序, preserved at *Shiji* 121.3117 by commentator Zhang Shoujie 張守節 (fl. AD 736). The details of the trap set for some 700 Confucian masters at a narrow defile near Mount Li 驪山 are included in the same note by Zhang Shoujie.
[21] *Shiji* 15.686. For a thorough discussion of the impact on the development of Chinese historiography by the suppression of historical chronicles and the bare-bones nature of Qin chronicles, see Lǚ Shihao 呂世浩, *Cong Shiji dao Hanshu—zhuanzhe guocheng yu lishi yiyi* 從史記到漢書—轉折過程與歷史意義(Taipei: Guoli Taiwan Daxue Chuban Zhongxin, 2009), 24–46.

memorial.[22] Bodde says further that the "actual loss" was less than tradition had it, since the greater loss of books occurred with the burning of the Qin palace in 206 BC and the natural loss of Zhou literature by attrition would have occurred anyway.[23] The most lasting effect of this short-lived policy of the Qin was psychological. Bodde concludes, "It gave later scholars a lasting revulsion against the Qin empire, although this fact did not prevent occasional subsequent proscriptions of literature in imperial China."[24] Ultimately, the tyranny of the First Emperor, as encapsulated by the slogan "burning of the books and burial of the Confucians" served, according to Ulrich Neininger, as a "cohesive myth wielding together the diverging elements which accumulated under the roof of this favored school [Confucians]. Thus Qin Shihuang became the fiend who had emerged to destroy the Way guarded by the Confucianists."[25]

Zheng Qiao's 鄭 樵 (1104–1162) essay entitled "Qin Did Not Extinguish Confucian Learning" 秦不絕儒學論 is often taken as the last word on the topic of the burning of the books. In this essay he lays the blame on classical scholars themselves:

> During the Qin, Confucian learning and classical learning never were set aside, especially given that by the time of the Han, Shusun Tong had of himself more than one hundred disciples. Nor had the mores of Qi and Lu ever changed. Hence, after the demise of Xiang Yu, Lu was still a state that maintained the rites and regulated their performances, thus proving that during the Qin it never ever abolished Confucianism, and those whom the First Emperor buried were probably those who were merely not in accord with the policy deliberations for a time. When Xiao He entered Xianyang, he collected the laws and regulations, charts and writings of Qin, thus Qin never ever lacked documents or written records. Those which were burned were just the matter of a single event. Those of later generations who did not understand the classics all blamed the burnings of Qin to have caused scholars to not [be able to] view complete works. This doubtless is a matter of the suspicious transmitting

[22] Derk Bodde, "The State and Empire of Ch'in," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 1, *The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C.–A.D. 220*, ed. Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 70.

[23] Bodde, "State and Empire of Ch'in," 70.

[24] Bodde, "State and Empire of Ch'in," 71.

[25] Ulrich Neininger, "Burying the Scholars Alive: On the Origin of a Confucian Martyr's Myth," in *East Asian Civilizations: New Attempts at Understanding Traditions*, vol. 2, *Nation and Mythology*, ed. Wolfram Eberhard et al. (Munich: Simon & Mgiera, 1983), 129. For recent debate among Chinese scholars on this issue, see Li Kaiyuan 李開元, "Fenshu kengru de zhenwei xushi—banzhuang weizao de lishi"焚書坑儒的真偽虛實—半桩偽造的歷史, *Shixue jikan* 史學季刊 2010.6: 36-47, and Dai Guoxi 代國璽, "Kengru yishi zhenwei bian—yu Li Kaiyuan xiansheng shangque"坑如一事真偽辨— 餘李開元商榷, *Shixue jikan* 2012.1:105-112.

> suspicions. . . . The minister [Liu] Xiang said that men of Qin burned the books, yet the books are preserved. The various Confucians exhaustedly [reconstituted] the classics, yet the classics were lost; this probably was the start of this. Six pieces are lost from the *Poems*, which were six songs for reed pipes that originally lacked lyrics; some chapters are lost from the *Documents*, which had already been lost by the time of Zhongni [Confucius], none of this was due to burning by Qin. Only one or two out of a hundred of the written records since the Han have been preserved to the present day; men of Qin did not lose them, it is just that scholars themselves lost them.
>
> 秦時未嘗不用儒學與經學，況叔孫通降漢時自有弟子百餘人，齊魯之風亦未嘗替。故項羽既亡之後而魯為守節禮義之國則知秦時未嘗廢儒而始皇所坑者概一時議論不合者耳。蕭何入咸陽，收秦律令圖書，則秦亦未嘗無書籍也。其所焚者，一時間事耳。後世不明經者皆歸之秦焚使學者不覩全書，未免乎疑以傳疑。……臣向謂秦人焚書而書存，諸儒窮經而經絕蓋爲此發也。詩有六亡篇，乃六笙詩本無辭。書有遺篇，仲尼之時已無矣，皆不因秦火。自漢已來書籍至于今日百不存一二，非秦人亡之也，學者自亡之耳。[26]

The iconoclast Wang Chong 王 充 (27–ca. AD 100) acknowledges the actual damage to the textual tradition wreaked by the Qin, but he considerably tempers its negative impact with the comforting notion that contemporary commentators were just as insightful as older, traditional ones:

> Provided that the Five Classics, after having left the school of Confucius and down to the present day, had not been damaged, that they might be said to be of a piece, they would be trustworthy. But they have passed through the extravagant and depraved times of doomed Qin, had to bear the consequences of Li Si's iniquitous advice, and were burned and proscribed. It is due to the goodness of Fu Sheng that the classics were taken and concealed in some secret place. After the rise of the Han dynasty, the Five Classics were recovered, but many books had been lost or were destroyed, and the rest was not intelligible. The chapters and paragraphs had been thrown into confusion and mixed up, and were not complete. Chao Cuo and others separated the single words according to their own ideas. Thus the text was handed down from teacher to pupil, but how far its tenor was correct, nobody knew.
>
> Doomed Qin was perverse, and brought confusion into the classics, but, in spite of this perversity, it did not burn the works of the various schools of thought. The books of the various philosophers, one foot in length,

[26] Zheng Qiao 鄭樵, *Tongzhi* 通志, *Shitong* 十通 edition (Taipei: Xinxing Shuju, 1963), 71.831a.

and their lucubrations are all in existence. By studying them, we may correct the statements made by others, and select passages for the instruction of the descendants of those writers. The descendants will write again as their forefathers have done. They are equally learned, and may commit their knowledge to writing. The thoughts, thus expressed, may be as far reaching as those of the classics; why then pretend that this sort of writings misses the truth inherent in the classics? Ergo the classics are defective and incomplete. These writings are not short of one book, whereas in the Classics many chapters are wanting. Contrasting these two kinds of writings, which have more the character of filings?

使五經從孔門出，到今常令人不缺滅，謂之純壹，信之可也。今五經遭亡秦之奢侈， 觸李斯之橫議，燔燒禁防，伏生之休，抱經深藏。漢興，收五經，經書缺滅而不明， 篇章棄散而不具。鼂錯之輩，各以私意分拆文字，師徒相因相授，不知何者為是。

亡秦無道，敗亂之也。秦雖無道，不燔諸子，諸子尺書，文篇具在，可觀讀以正說，可采掇以示後人。後人復作，猶前人之造也。夫俱鴻而知，皆傳記所稱， 文義與經相薄，何以獨謂文書失經之實？由此言之，經缺而不完，書無佚本，經有遺篇，折累二者，孰與蕞殘？[27]

Zhang Binglin commences his own examination of the issue of the burning of the books by assigning the blame to Zheng Qiao for starting the trend to discount the damage to classical learning caused by this universal proscription. He faults Zheng Qiao for misreading Li Si's original memorial, stating that it should be parsed to mean that "those in the world who dare possess or store the *Poems*, *Documents*, the words of the hundred masters—books that are not relevant to the office of erudites . . ." 天下敢有藏詩書百家語非博士官所職者. This misreading was deliberate, designed to place the blame for the destruction of the Confucian textual heritage on Xiang Yu when he burned the Qin capital. For evidence, Zhang cites the fact that Li Si offered his memorial to the throne to directly counter the proposal of the erudites in the person of Chunyu Yue 淳于越 . A move to block the erudites would hardly allow them free rein to concoct other arguments based on continuing access to classical quotations, an act at the very center of "affirming antiquity but negating the present" 是古非今, a maxim

[27] *Lunheng* 論衡 (ZZJC ed.), 276; Alfred Forke, trans., *Lun-Hêng*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Otto Harassowitz, 1907). For some reason, section 82, "Shujie" 書解 was not translated by Forke. It is supplied without comment or attribution in the online edition presented by the series Les Classiques des Sciences Sociales, under title of *Lun-Hêng. Traduits et annoté par Alfred Forke*, 275–76. Downloaded from classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/wang.../lunheng/ wangchung_lunheng2.doc, May 2, 2013.

alluded to by Li Si in his memorial. Also, there would have been no reason for the Qin erudite Master Fu 伏生 to hide up a copy of the *Documents* in his wall if he had been allowed to possess this text as a Qin erudite.

Despite the real textual devastations wrought by the policies of the Qin that limited circulation of classical Confucian texts and the damage and loss resulting from the fighting at the fall of the dynasty,[28] many texts made it through in some form or another to the Han. The compilation of the encyclopedia *The Spring and Autumn Annals of Mister Lü* 呂氏春秋 (ca. 239 BC) was itself an important heritage of the pre-imperial Qin state.[29] And according to hoary tradition, prominent disciples of the Confucian Master Xunzi 荀子 (ca. 313–238 BC) received his legacy of classical learning and were active during the Qin. Preservation and transmission of much of the classical textual heritage, as anomalous as it sounds, was therefore one important, if counterintuitive, legacy of the Qin.

A prime example is the *Documents*. One Qin-era erudite, Fu Sheng, who already appeared above, takes the stage now. He was instrumental in transmitting this text in two formats. The first was as oral text:

> He was summoned but was unable to travel due to his age. So the Chamberlain for Ceremonials and Authority on Ancient Affairs Chao Cuo [ca. 200–154 BC] was sent to read [his version]. He [Fu Sheng] was more than 90 years in age and could not speak correctly, so his speech could not be understood. He had his daughter translate his words for Chao Cuo. The speech of people from Qi has many differences from that of Yingchuan speech [in Henan], so Cuo misunderstood twenty or thirty percent. He roughly transcribed and read the text according to his own understanding.
>
> 徵之，老不能行，遣太常掌故鼂錯往讀之。年九十餘，不能正言，言不可曉，使其女傳言教錯。齊人語多與潁州異，錯所不知者凡十二三，略以其意屬讀而已。[30]

The written version of the *Documents* had survived in poor shape within the walls of his home. The "Monograph on Literature" of the *History of Han* explains

[28] Wei Chin notes that though almost five thousand ancient bamboo strips unearthed in 1972 from two Han dynasty tombs in Yinqueshan 銀雀山, in the heartland of ancient Confucianism in Linyi 臨沂Shandong, that represented a welter of philosophical and military works, not a single Confucian text was among them; see Wei Chin, "Ch'in Shih-huang's Book Burning as Seen from the Bamboo Slips Unearthed in Ying-ch'ŭeh-shan [sic]," in *The Politics of Historiography: The First Emperor of China*, ed. Li Yu-Ning (White Plains, NY: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1975), 145–53.

[29] Zhang Quancai 章權才, *Liang Han jingxueshi* 兩漢經學史 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 1995), 60–61.

[30] Wei Hong, "Zhaoding *Guwen Shangshu* xu," *Shiji* 101.2746.

that "when the Qin burned the books and prohibited learning, only Fu Sheng of Qi hid up [the *Documents*] in his wall. When the Han arose this text had become lost; but they sought it [from Fu Sheng] and obtained 29 chapters [out of an original number of 100]. [Fu Sheng] used it to teach between the Qi and Lu regions" 秦燔書禁學，濟南伏生獨壁藏之。漢興亡失，求得二十九篇，以教齊魯之間.[31] Here Ban Gu also seems to ascribe Fu Sheng's act of hiding up the *Documents* to the Qin proscription.[32]

1.3. Erudites

In addition to the legacy of transmitted textual remains, as incomplete as they may have been, another important contribution to the development of classical scholarship by the Qin was the office of erudite. According to the *History of Han*, "Baiguan biao" 百官表, the office of "erudite" (*boshi* 博士) had first been established during the Qin.[33] Its purview was "to master ancient and modern matters" 掌通古今.[34] The title of erudite first appears in the *History of Han* in its account of the early Qin. During discussions between the Qin monarch and his court officials concerning the appropriate title for him as the unifier of the Chinese world, the "Basic Annals of Qinshihuang" records the highest officials reporting that "we ministers had respectfully deliberated with the *boshi*" 臣等謹與博士議 . The title that the emperor finally accepted to appropriately proclaim his achievements and transmit them to later generations was "the First Emperor of Qin."[35] The precedents that the officials cited of earlier titles, such as "Heavenly August One" 天皇, "Terrestrial August One" 地 皇 and "Grandest August One" 泰 皇 , were just the sort of ancient matters that would have been in the purview of the erudites. Mastery of the minutiae of past and current knowledge, especially knowledge pertaining to the rites, was the defining character of this office. In this case, such knowledge was applied in court deliberations.

Another function of this office—or rather, another task related to participating in court deliberations—was to offer remonstrance. This task is

[31] *Hanshu* 30.1706.

[32] For a more expansive treatment of the recovery of the *Documents* in the early Han, see chapter 4, section 4.1.1.

[33] I prefer Hucker's translation and spelling of "erudite" to Beilenstein's "erudit." Loewe's "academician" implies a relationship to scholarship that did not exist in its earliest appearance, nor did it always carry this connotation in all contexts. Cited from Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985), no. 4746; Hans Beilenstein, *The Bureaucracy of Han Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 19; and Michael Loewe, ed., *A Biographical Dictionary of the Qin, Former Han and Xin Periods* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 758.

[34] *Hanshu* 19.726. For the occasional pre-Qin period erudite, one each in Lu, Song, Wei, and Zheng, see Zhang, *Liang Han jingxueshi*, 62.

[35] *Shiji* 6.236.

exemplified by an erudite from Qi, Chunyu Yue, who was the lone voice of soberness in the midst of congratulations to the First Emperor on the part of some seventy academicians gathered in the Xianyang Palace 咸陽宮.[36] Loewe summarizes the event as follows:

> Chunyu Yue took part in the meeting held in 214 [BC] at which no less than seventy academicians proffered their congratulations to the First Qin Emperor on his successes. Calling on the experience of Yin and Zhou, he argued that in the large empire that had just been established it was necessary to secure support by setting up some of the Emperor's close relatives in hereditary position of power, rather than govern the realm by means of a provincial system. He failed to carry his case.[37]

The next entry in this chapter of the *Historian's Records* concerning the erudites reveals another function of the office: to identify spiritual prodigies. This function occurred when one erudite explained just which spirits were causing the storm on the Yangzi river that prevented the First Emperor from crossing over to the shrine on Mount Xiang 湘山; they turned out to be the two daughters of the ancient sage Yao 堯, who had become the wives of Shun 舜.[38] A second instance was when an erudite interpreted the First Emperor's dream of fighting with a spirit of the sea; he explained that such a spirit cannot be seen but was revealed by the presence of giant fish and kraken.[39]

From these various functions, it is apparent that erudites put their broad knowledge at the service of the emperor and his court but had no specific duties, powers, or quotas of officeholders. Hsŭ Fu-kuan 徐復觀 (1904–1982) explains that "their duties were to be on-the-spot consultants for the emperor and be at his disposal for assignments. . . . If the emperor had nothing to consult them about and had nothing to assign them, then the erudites had nothing to do." 其任務是由皇帝臨時諮 詢, 指派的若皇帝無所諮詢，無所指派則博士無所事事.[40] It is also apparent that erudites were masters of abstract knowledge but not specialists in the textual repositories of such knowledge. In other words, they were

[36] The number seventy cannot be substantiated in the historical record. A comment in the *Hanshu* is probably closer to the truth in counting "several scores" of erudites. *Hanshu* 19.726. Zhang Quancai identifies some nine Qin erudites by name. Zhang, *Liang Han jingxueshi*, 63. Ma Feibai has found proof of seventeen Qin erudites, but only identifies thirteen by name; see *Qin jishi* 2:482, and the tables on 2:893–901. The short biographies of these erudites in 1:337–41 were already cited above.

[37] Loewe, ed., *Biographical Dictionary*, 53. For this episode and the text of Chunyu Yue's memorial to the throne, see *Shiji* 6.254; Nienhauser, *Grand Scribe's Records*, 1:146–47.

[38] *Shiji* 6.248.

[39] *Shiji*, 6.263.

[40] Hsŭ Fu-kuan, *Zhongguo jingxueshi de jichu* 中國經學史的基礎 (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 2004), 72.

not experts in the Six Classics or any other textual traditions, even though they may have possessed such works and used them as repositories of knowledge. Yet their focus was on consulting about cultural knowledge both past and present, not on promoting text-based education.

Hsŭ Fu-kuan distills the characteristics of erudites in the Qin and early Western Han as the following: first was the political use of the knowledge they had mastered; second was a lack of defined duties and prescribed powers; third was the fact that most of them came from the ranks of the Confucians.[41] In fact, the terms were once paired by Sima Qian as follows:

> In the third year of his accession to the throne, he toured the commanderies and provinces in the east, assigned a mounted escort to make an offering on Mount Yi where he praised the merit and accomplishments of Qin. Thereupon he summoned seventy Confucian masters and erudites from Qi and Lu to come to the foot of Mount Tai. Some of them offered advice, saying....
>
> 即帝位三年，東巡郡縣，祠騶嶧山，頌秦功業。於是徵從齊魯之儒生博士七十人， 至乎泰山下。諸儒生或議曰。.....[42]

Later in the same paragraph, the title was abbreviated solely to "Confucian masters."[43]

The close connection between Confucian masters and erudites leads to a new angle from which to understand the term Ruist, which I translate here as "Confucian" out of respect to Chinese tradition. The etymology in the *Explaining Simple Graphs* dictionary points out the "yielding" nature of Confucian doctrine: "*Ru* (**ńo* 儒) means 'weakness' (*rou* **ńu* 柔)." Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 58–ca. 147) explains that "it was the designation of masters of technical arts. It is composed of the 'person' classifier and takes its sound from 'waiting' (*xu* **sio* 需)" 儒柔也。術士之稱。从人需聲.[44] Schuessler posits the semantic development of *xu* "to wait" as probably "a causative derivation" from *ru* 懦 (usually the modern *nuo*) or *ru* 臑: "lit. 'make (time) pliant = stretch (time)."[45] Xu Shen supplies the following gloss on the word *xu*: "*Xu* means 'to wait.' Encountering rain, one does not advance but stops and waits. It is composed of the rain classifier and takes its

[41] Hsŭ Fu-kuan, *Zhongguo jingxueshi de jichu*, 71–73. For a specialized study on early erudites, see Kuo Yung-chi 郭永吉, "Xian-Qin zhi Xi-Han boshi lunkao—jianlun boshi yu Ru de guanxi" 先秦至西漢博士論考—兼論博士與儒的關係, *Tsinghua Zhongwen xuebao* 2 (2008): 63–118.

[42] *Shiji* 28.1366.

[43] *Shiji* 28.1366.

[44] Cited in Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735–1815), *Shuowen jiezizhu* 說文解字注 (Taipei: Hanjing Wenhua Shiye Youxian Gongsi, 1983), 8a.3b–4a. Late Han phonetic reconstructions in Axel Schuessler, *ABC Etymological Dictionary of Old Chinese* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 445, 544.

[45] Schuessler, *ABC Etymological Dictionary*, 544.

sound from *er* (**ńə* 而)." 需顩也。遇雨不進，止顩也。从雨而聲。遇雨不進.[46] Zhang Binglin accepts the derivation of *ru* from *xu*, but he traces the path of its semantic development not from the *Explaing Simple Graphs* dictionary but from the *Changes*, hexagram no. 5, *Xu* 需 : "When clouds ascend the sky, it is *Xu*" 雲上於天需.[47] Because of this connection, Zhang identifies astronomy as the link between the word *xu* and the role of Confucians, for "the *Ru* also know celestial patterns" 而儒者亦知天文.[48] Still, it is the element of waiting that perhaps connects erudites with the Ru.

After a lengthy survey of the ancient sources as well a recent and modern scholarship, Nicolas Zufferey concludes that the best translation for *ru* in its pre-Qin and early Han usage is "literatus" or "scholar."[49] Given the possibility that the Ruists functioned similarly to the erudites, as intimated by Sima Qian's pairing of "Confucian [Ruist] masters and erudites" previously mentioned, and the fact that erudites had no specific brief or regular duties, we may be fully justified in parsing Zufferey's translation of *ru* as "literatus waiting assignment" or "scholar waiting office." A citation from Ying Shao's 應劭 (140–206) lost *Hanguan yi* 漢官儀 lends strong credence to the aspect of "awaiting appointment" of at least the erudites: "The seventy and more erudites during Emperor Wen's [180–157 BC] reign were erudites awaiting imperial edicts" 文帝博士七十餘人，為待詔博士, a title that seems but a clarification of the original meaning of *ru*.[50] And a strong association between the erudites and the Ruists is made by Chancellor Li Si. After Chunyu Yue offered his failed proposal that Qin enfeoff family members, Li characterized this brave erudite in his rebuttal memorial as "an ignorant *Ru*."[51]

The connection between early Ruists and Confucianism is no longer accepted without question in the West. In modern China, the term is used unconsciously to refer to Confucians without a thought of having to define it. Regardless of etymology, a closer look at the application of the term reveals different connotations. In the Han dynasty, the term portended a group of traditionalists that were useful to the state in three ways: they had a command of ritual and protocol, they highly valued literacy, and they were devoted to historical texts and quoted them freely.[52] Functionally, Ruists took the three guises of (1) government official, (2) follower of the Way of Confucius and Mencius, and, most relevant to

[46] Duan, *Shuowen jiezizhu* 11b.15b.

[47] *Zhouyi zhengyi* 周易正義 2.1b.

[48] Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (Zhang Binglin), *Guogu lunheng shuzheng* 國故論衡疏證 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2008), 483.

[49] Zufferey, *Origins of Confucianism*.

[50] Quoted in Hsŭ Fu-kuan, *Zhongguo jingxueshi de jichu*, 241n14.

[51] *Shiji* 6.254.

[52] Benjamin E. Wallacker, "Han Confucianism and Confucius in Han," in *Ancient China: Studies in Early Civilization*, eds. David T. Roy and Tsuen-hsuin Tsien (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1978), 223.

the history of classical scholarship, (3) classical master.[53] As officials came to serve a government that eventually became grounded on Confucian ideology, this variety of Ruist naturally came to refer to Confucian officials. And in the next chapter, we will be able to discern the gradual process of transformation from Confucian and Mencian followers to classical masters, following the Ruists's shift in emphasis from experts in ritual to experts in texts.

1.4. Unification of the Script

A final contribution the Qin made to the development of classical scholarship is the unification of the various regional scripts to conform to one model, a model created by—or at least developed under the direction of—the prime minister Li Si.

According to Xu Shen, eight different scripts were current during the Qin: the great seal (*dazhuan* 大篆), the small seal script (*xiaozhuan* 小篆), the seal script (as in seals and talleys, *kefu* 刻符), the worm script (*chongshu* 蟲書), the imperial seal script (*moyin* 摹印), the inscribed board script (*shushu* 署書), the inscriptions on weapons (*shushu* 殳書), and the clerical script (*lishu* 隸書).[54] Li created the small seal script, which soon evolved into the clerical script increasingly current in government bureaus during the Qin and Han dynasties and individual scholars' studios when private scholarship picked up again.[55] Li Si also composed a lexicographical work, more of an elementary primer than a critical dictionary, called the *Cangjie* 倉頡, in seven fascicles.[56] Based on Xu Shen's "Postface" to his great dictionary, Ban Gu provides the background and results of Li Si's work as follows:

> The *Fascicle from Historian Zhou* was a book used to instruct the young from the historian's office; it was in a different style than the works in old script from the walls of Confucius' domicile. The *Cangjie* in seven pericopes was composed by Prime Minister Li Si of the Qin. The *Yuanli* in six pericopes was composed by the Director of the Livery Office Zhao Gao. The *Broaden Learning* in seven pericopes was composed by Prefect Grand Historian Huwu Jing. The written characters mostly adopted those of the *Fascicle from Historian Zhou*, yet the seal style was somewhat different, being the so-called Qin seal style. At this time, the clerical style was innovated, which originated from overworked prison officials, who abbreviated characters out of carelessness or simplified them due to being rushed; it was used to manage corvée labor prisoners. After the Han arose, the teachers of calligraphy among the lanes and hamlets combined the three fascicles of the *Cangjie*, *Yuanli*, and *Broaden Learning* and limited each pericope to 60 graphs, in all 55 pericopes; these works were combined and called the *Cangjie*.
>
> 史籀篇者，周時史官教學童書也，與孔氏壁中古文異體。蒼頡七章者，秦丞相李斯所作也；爰歷六章者，車府令趙高所作也；博學七章者，太史令胡母敬所作也：文字多取史籀篇，而篆體復頗異，所謂秦篆者也。是時始造隸書矣，起於官獄多事， 苟趨省易， 施之於徒隸也。漢書[=興]，閭里書師合蒼頡、爰歷、博學三篇，斷六十字以為一章，凡五十五章，并為蒼頡篇。[57]

The changes in script are still apparent in the archaeological record, and they include the simplification and standardization for writing complex single-element graphs, the modification or outright substitution of one or more elements of simple multi- element graphs, and the increasing radicalization of graphs. The Qin reformers seemed to have two guiding principles: they were careful to preserve whole characters or large elements that preserved the phonetic components of the graphs and to ignore genetic features preserved through natural historical development out of a concern to create an up-to-date vehicle of writing.[58] The

[53] See Michael Nylan, "A Problematic Model: The Han 'Orthodox' Synthesis," in *Imagining Boundaries: Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts, and Hermeneutics*, ed. Kai-wing Chow, On-Cho Ng, and John B. Henderson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 17–56.

[54] Xu Shen, "Postface," *Shuowen jiezizhu* 15a.11a–11b. Another grouping of eight are the so-called "Eight Types of Clerical Script" (*bali* 八隸) of the late Han period, either indicating eight variations of clerical script or eight styles of the developing "Regular Script" (*zhengshu* 正書) or (*kaishu* 楷書). See Lü Simin 呂思勉, "Lun lishu bafen zhengshu" 論隸書八分正書, in *Wenzixue sizhong* 文字學四種(Shanghai: Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1985), 129–40.

[55] Legend has it that one Cheng Miao 程邈 created the clerical script after 10 years of thought and experimentation. Mentioned but not analyzed by Heming Yong and Jing Peng, *Chinese Lexicography: A History from 1046 BC to AD 1911* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 99.

[56] See the extensive treatment by Derk Bodde, *China's First Unifier: A Study of the Ch'in Dynasty as Seen in the Life of LI SSŬ* 李斯 *280?–208 B.C.* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1967), 148–61.

[57] *Hanshu* 30.1721. For the life of Li Si, consult his biography in *Shiji* 87.2539–62, Nienhauser, *Grand Scribe's Records*, 7:147–48; also translated at Bodde, *China's First Unifier*, 12–55. Recent Chinese studies include Qian Ning 錢寧, *Qinxiang Li Si* 秦相李斯 (Taipei: Jiuge 九歌, 2000) and a compilation of relevant primary materials and traditional critical evaluations in Zhang Zhongyi 张中义 et al., eds., *Li Sizi* 李斯子 (Henan: Zhongzhou Huashushe, 1981). For these early wordlists, and for dictionaries, see Hu Pu'an 胡樸安, *Zhongguo wenzixueshi* 中國文字學史, 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuju, 1984), 1:23–35.

[58] See Noel Barnard, "The Nature of the Ch'in 'Reform of the Script' as Reflected in Archaeological Documents Excavated under Conditions of Control," in Roy and Tsien eds., *Ancient China: Studies in Early Civilization*, 181–213.

reforms may alsohave included the simple suppression of local variant scripts.[59] William G. Boltz posits the motivation behind this reformation of the script as being part of the "same all- encompassing concern for uniformity and standardization that underlay the other measures [standardization of weights and measures, metal coinage, etc.]."[60] This is an obvious explanation, but perhaps insufficient. We should recall that Li Si's Confucian master was Xunzi 荀子 (479–221 BC), who included among his many theories applicable to political policy the "Rectification of Names" 正名. Of course, Li Si would have been applying this principle to the realm of raw legalist power politics, not to the realm of Confucian moral government. Xunzi's program of the rectification of names consisted of three parts, as explained by John Knoblock:

> The names established by the Later Kings; (2) the names of the various myriad objects in the world; and (3) the technical terms of inquiry. The names established by the Later King consist of the terminology of criminal law and penal classification of the Shang dynasty, the rank and dignity instituted by the founders of the Zhou dynasty, and the names for the various forms and implements of cultural life contained in the *Rituals*. . . . The terminology of criminal law and the penal classification for the Shang dynasty is no longer known, but from Zhou documents we know of their prestige. Xunzi undoubtedly believed that in commending Shang criminal law he is faithfully adhering to the practice of the founding kings of the Zhou dynasty.[61]

Elsewhere Knoblock notes that Xunzi may have had access to reconstructed works on the penal code of the Shang that contemporaries took for genuine Shang records, such as mentioned in the "Kanggao" 康誥 chapter in the *Documents*: "The King says, 'In things beyond your immediate jurisdiction, have laws set forth which the officers may observe; and those should be the penal laws of Yin, which were right-ordered'" 王曰：外事，汝陳時臬司師，茲殷罰有倫.[62] In addition to a concern for the terminology of the criminal code, Xunzi's stress on the rectification of names also encompassed the names of Zhou bureaucracy,

[59] Derk Bodde notes that "as many as 25 percent of the pre-Qin characters may have been totally suppressed by the Ch'in reformers for various reasons (such as being obsolete place names or personal names, names of obsolete utensils, etc.), leaving no descendants in later times." Bodde, "The Ch'in Empire," 57. For the most complete overview in English, see Bodde, *China's First Unifier*, 147–61.

[60] William G. Bolt, *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System* (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1994), 157.

[61] John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 3, Books 17–32 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 118.

[62] *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義 (SSJ ed.), 14.7b; James Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics*, 5 vols. (1895; repr., Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), 3:390.

theory of government organization, division of authority between offices, and their hierarchies.[63]

The impact of this theory, originally conceived and explained by Confucius, will be examined in conjunction with an analysis of the great dictionary of Xu Shen in chapter 6, who alluded to it in the "Postface" of his dictionary. Xu Shen willalso have more to say about the development of Chinese writing over the ages, up to and after the contributions of Li Si. For now, let us conclude this chapter with a fine crystallization by Li Xueqin of the importance of the Qin reform of the script:

> As is well known, the unification of writing under the Qin dynasty was a major turning point in the development of Chinese writing. The various writing styles in subsequent periods—the seal characters, the official style, the regular style, the running style, and the cursive style—all principally originated in the writing systems of the Qin dynasty. The Qin dynasty by law banned all writing styles inconsistent with the Qin style and at the same time publicized several word books . . . , using them as texts for writing. These books had a profound impact. The writings of Early Han continued along the same lines initiated by the Qin dynasty, and what eventually resulted was the unification of writing throughout China. Therefore, after only one or two centuries the people of Western Han were unable to identify the scripts that had been banished. Here began the difference between what is called Guwen 古文 or archaic script and Jinwen 今文 or contemporary script. Guwen refers to the writing systems that existed prior to the unification of writing and differed from the Qin system, and Jinwen refers to the writing system after unification.[64]

[63] Legge, *Chinese Classics*, 3:390.

[64] Li Xueqin, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations*, trans. K. C. Chang (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 448.