



**Undergraduate assignment feedback form**  
(to be completed by marker)

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| <i>Module Code: SICH3012</i><br><i>Module title: A Brief History of British Sinology</i>                         | <i>Student number: 2503167</i> |
| <i>For completion by marker:</i><br><i>Comments:</i>                                                             |                                |
| <i>Marker's signature:</i>                                                                                       | <i>Date:</i>                   |
| <i>Provisional mark:</i><br><b>NB.</b> All marks are provisional until confirmed by the final examination board. |                                |

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☒ I have not used AI in my assignment

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI agenerated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

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## Advance The Reputation of Younger Brothers

Hello everyone, today I'll report to you a history story,named:Advance The Reputation of Younger Brothers. My presentation is divided into three sections.This is my table of content.

Before we get this story underway formally, I would like to tell you some background information about that.

At first, what is the so-called Filial and Incorrupt? The system of Filial and Incorrupt originated from the Han Dynasty,let's look at its history on the slide.

At the first stage,its purpose was to encourage ethical conduct, not to recruit talent on state affairs. It was not popular.Later in the Eastern Han dynasty, it became an annual convention, which resulted in the selection of hundreds of Filial Incorrupts every year.

Due to the fact that too many people were recommended each year, there had been cases of fraud. So ministers of the country set up some rules about that.

However, after adding restrictions based on age, moral character and ability, the Filial and Incorrupt system became indistinguishable from other recommendation systems for recruiting political talents. The Filial and Incorrupt system

then became the sole one, while other categories gradually fell into disuse. Everyone relied on this as a means to rise to the top.

The phenomenon of cheating naturally became more and more prevalent, and so the ministers imposed stricter rules in an attempt to recruit genuine talents.

Then it progressively developed into the imperial examination system of later periods.

Ok just now we've already understood about the history of recommending Filial and Incorrupt. Then we can take a look at this picture that I drew, which can tell you what the relationship is between characters in the following story. At first, Xu Wu was Xu Yan and Xu Pu's elder brother, so they were brothers. And Wu had a grandson named Xu Jing. Jing had an elder brother (but we don't know his name). Jing's elder brother's son was Xu Shi, who was Jing's nephew.

Now that we all have familiarized the background information, we may proceed to the narrative itself.

Xu Wu 許武 (dates unknown) was recommended as a Filial and Incorrupt. He had two younger brothers, named Xu Yan 許晏 (dates unknown) and Xu Pu 許普 (dates unknown), but neither of them achieved much success. He wanted to

help them to have a good reputation,so he divided the family property into three parts. Then he chose the best one:fertile land,larger houses and strong servant.However, his two younger brothers,both of whom inherited an inferior and poor amount of property.Fellow villagers all praised Wu's younger brothers who were humble and courteous to him[Wu]. Owing to this,they got recommended [as Filial and Incorrupt] together. Afterwards, Wu, in front of clan relatives, transferred his property which was tripled than before to his two little brothers. Wu did not leave anything for himself.

Also, there was a story about [Wu's grandson]<sup>1</sup> Xu Jing 許荊(dates unknown).When he was young, served as a county official. His elder brother's son Xu Shi 許世(dates unknown)killed a person because of revenge. Those who bore a grudge against Shi held weapons to attack him[Shi].Jing heard that situation and met Shi's enemies. He knelt down in front of them,saying: 'Xu Shi was unworthy, because the fault lies with me for failing to guide him.My elder brother passed away early.[He (Jing's elder brother)only left one son as his offspring.] <sup>2</sup>I can pay with

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<sup>1</sup> Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han Shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), p.2471. 「祖父武」

<sup>2</sup> Fan Ye, *Hou Han Shu*, p.2472. 「一子為嗣」

my life for it.'

Shi's enemies said: 'The county all praised Xu clerk[you] as a sage, how dare we to infringe you?' Then they left. Therefore, [Jing]<sup>3</sup> became more prominent in good reputation.

When we have heard the entire story, we may well ponder two core questions based on that: The first question is why Wu wanted to help his younger brother get recommended? The second question is whether it makes sense that he assisted his younger brothers to get recommended deliberately?

We shall analyse them one by one: About the first question, as I just mentioned before, the system of Filial and Incorrupt, especially at its later stages, led to ordinary folks having limited choice to make a rise in their current situation. Hence, when he got recommended as a Filial and Incorrupt, he wanted to help his brothers make advances too.

And about the second question, maybe from the perspective of the country, his action (helping his brothers intentionally) was improper, because it would result in unreal recommendations which were counter to the country's

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<sup>3</sup> Fan Ye, *Hou Han Shu*, p.2472. 「荊名譽益著」

original intention for selecting talents with noble characters. However, if we set aside his action and solely focus on his original intentions, we can see that he merely wanted to ensure his younger brothers could have a better life. This spirit is truly admirable.

In our current society, we have no the system about the Filial and Incorrupt. Our situation is simpler than the Han dynasty, so we can learn from his spirit——thinking of others——whenever benefits are to be had. Of course, if principles must be taken into account in advance, we should also obey them. We cannot break the rules to preserve our own relationships. This is a capacity of weighing the advantages and disadvantages.

In addition, Wu chose the best part of their family properties, in order to highlight his brothers. It tells us: compared to his own reputation, Wu more care about his younger brothers, which is the spirit of dedication. Maybe we do not need to sacrifice our reputation, but it shows us what the admirable virtue is regarding others' gain as one's own. If we have this mindset in daily life, we'll have a better world without jealousy.

Moreover, Wu's grandson, Jing also gave us some

inspiration. Even if his nephew made a severe mistake, which was none of his business, he still took all the responsibilities, so that he moved Shi's enemies. He eventually figured things out, and brought a peaceful ending, which tells us: As we deal with matters, even major matters, we should handle it calmly and remember reflecting on oneself. Problems will be solved properly.

Okay, this is my presentation. Thank you for your attention, and these are bibliographies and internet images that I've used. Also, any recommendations will be greatly appreciated. Thank you all.

## Bibliographies

Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han Shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965)

# Advance The Reputation of Younger Brothers

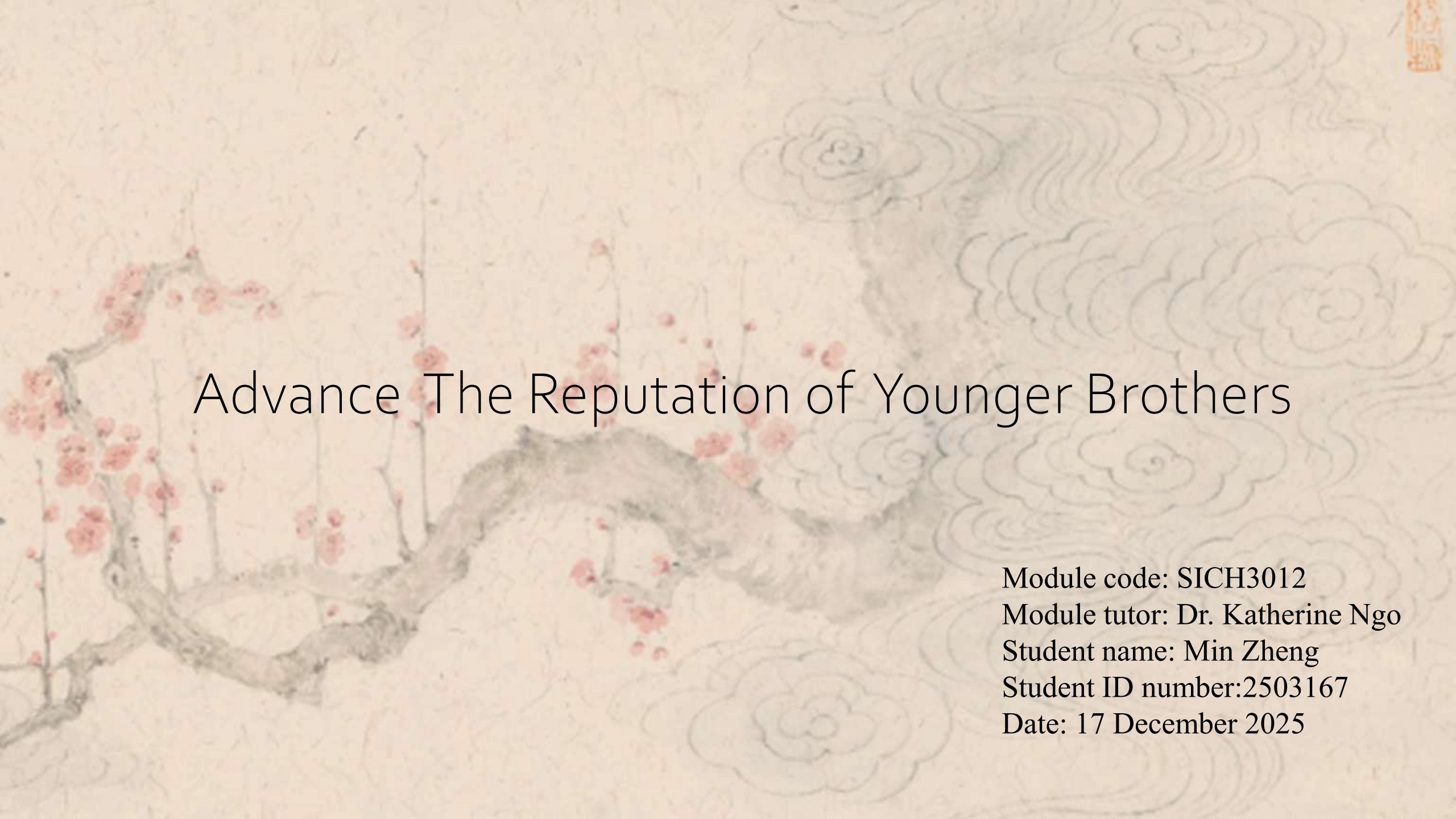
Module code: SICH3012

Module tutor: Dr. Katherine Ngo

Student name: Min Zheng

Student ID number: 2503167

Date: 17 December 2025



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1. Introduction of Background Information ●
2. The Narrative of the Story
3. Inspirations

# What is the Filial and Incorrupt system?



Originated from the Western Han dynasty <sup>1</sup>

For encouraging ethical conduct, not to recruit talent for state affairs. It's not popular. <sup>2</sup>

In the Eastern Han dynasty, it became an annual convention <sup>3</sup>

Every year, hundreds of Filial and Incorrupts were recommended <sup>4</sup>



Image source: <http://xhslink.com/o/5nn0ljZuNxl>, <http://xhslink.com/o/6M7U2PVY6rP>

<sup>1</sup> Qian Mu 錢穆, *Guo Shi Da Gang* 國史大綱, 1965, 208.(These are arguments derived from this book rather than direct textual citation from it.)

<sup>2</sup> Qian Mu, *Guo Shi Da Gang*, 208.

<sup>3</sup> Qian Mu, *Guo Shi Da Gang*, 209.

<sup>4</sup> Qian Mu, *Guo Shi Da Gang*, 210.



Ministers of the country set up some rules about that system <sup>5</sup>

It became indistinguishable from other recommendation systems for recruiting political talents <sup>6</sup>

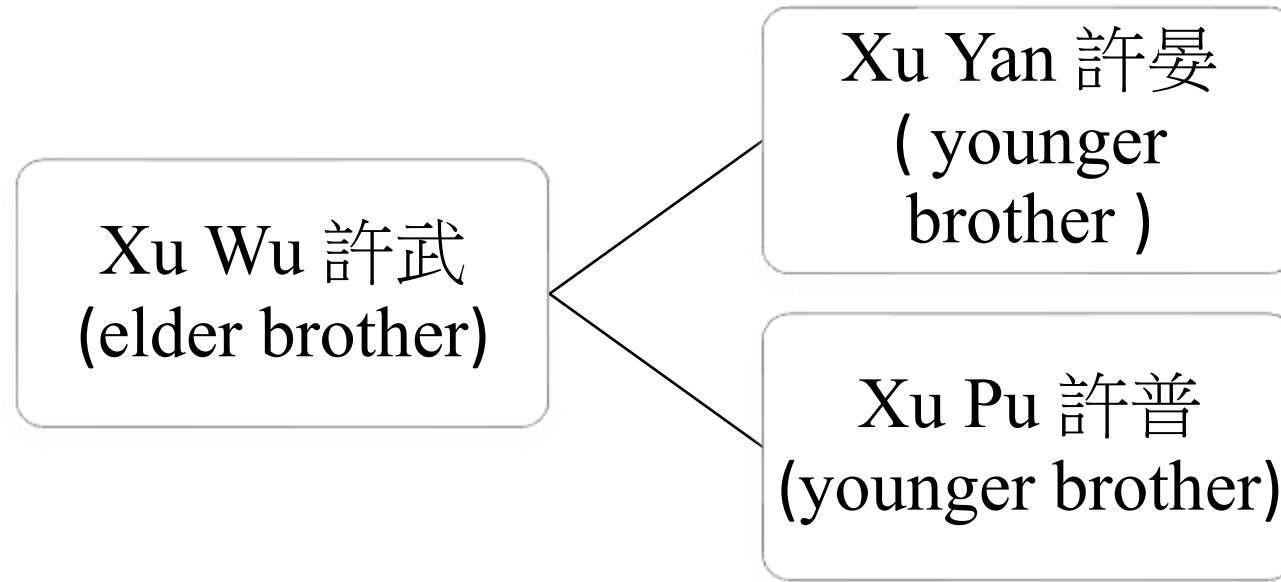
It gradually developed into the imperial examination system of later periods <sup>7</sup>

Image source: <http://xhslink.com/o/XKQL1Gyov>

<sup>5</sup> Qian Mu , *Guo Shi Da Gang* , 210.

<sup>6</sup> Qian Mu , *Guo Shi Da Gang* , 210.

<sup>7</sup> Qian Mu , *Guo Shi Da Gang* , 211.



Xu Wu 許武 (grandfather) — Xu Jing 許荊 (grandson)<sup>8</sup>

Xu Jing 許荊 (uncle) — Xu Shi 許世 (nephew)



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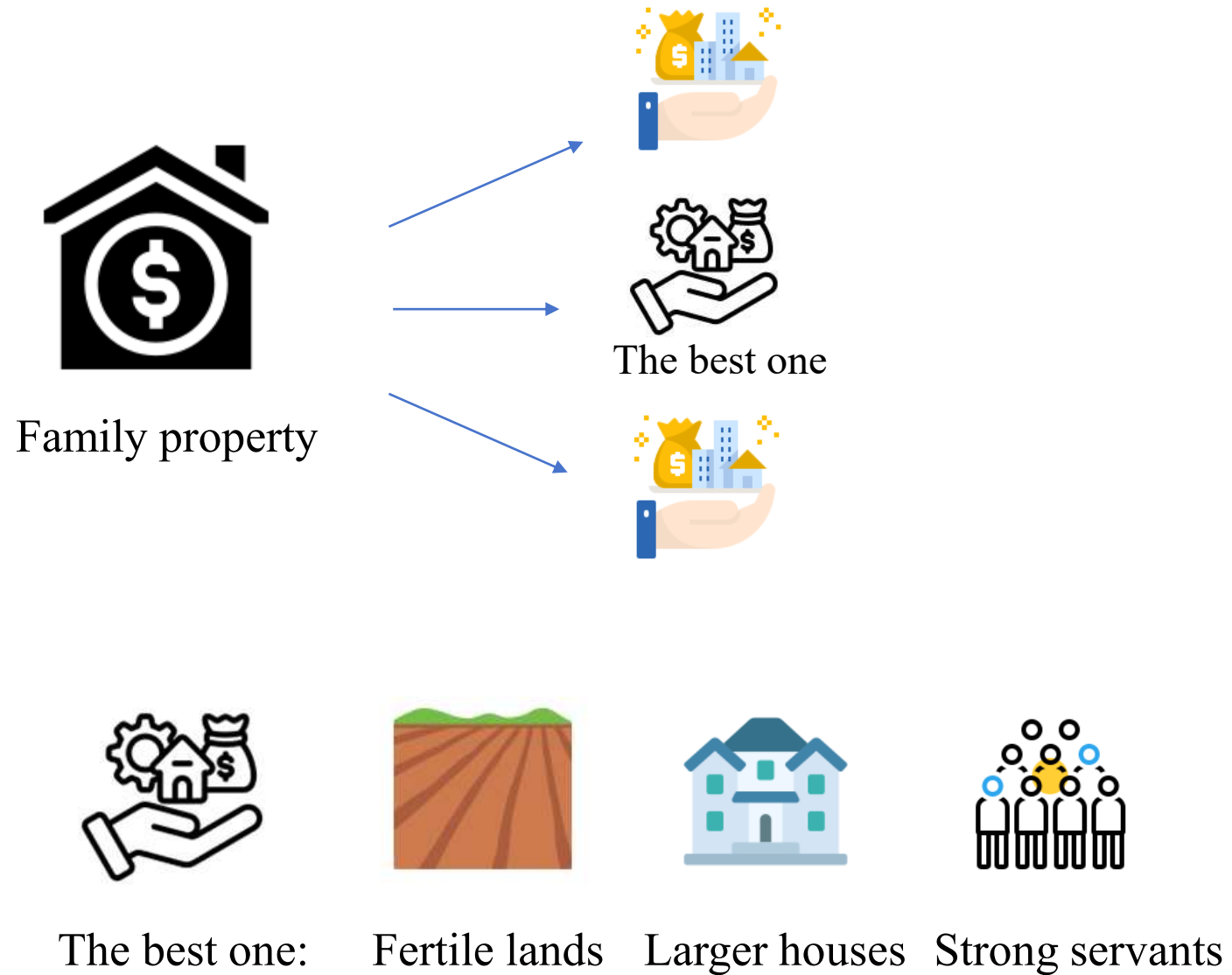
## 設計顯弟

許武舉孝廉。以二弟晏、普未顯，欲令成名，於是割財產為三分，自取肥田廣宅、奴婢强者；二弟所得悉劣少。鄉人皆稱弟克讓，以此並得選舉。武乃會宗親，產三倍於前，悉以推二弟，一無所留。

又許荊少為郡吏。兄子世嘗報讎殺人，怨者操兵攻之。荊聞，迎怨者跪曰：「世前無狀，咎皆在荊，不能訓導。兄早沒，一子<sup>9</sup>願殺身代之。」怨家曰：「許椽郡中稱賢，吾何敢侵！」遂委去，名<sup>10</sup>譽益著。

<sup>9</sup> Fan Ye , *Hou Han Shu* , 2472. 「一子為嗣」

<sup>10</sup> Fan Ye , *Hou Han Shu* , 2472. 「荊名譽益著」



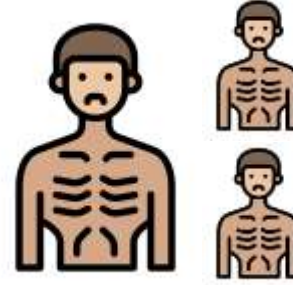
An inferior and poor amount of property might include something like that:



Barren lands



Poor and small houses



Skinny servants



Got praised by fellow villagers



*Became Filial and Incorrupt*

## Xu Jing and Shi's enemies



Therefore, [Jing] became more prominent in good reputation.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Fan Ye , *Hou Han Shu* , 2472. 「荊名譽益著」



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Questions about this story

What kind of spirits can we learn from this story?



# Bibliographies

Chen Jingyi 陳鏡伊, *the Collectanea of Ethical Exemplars* 道德叢書  
( Taipei: Shijie shuju)

Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han Shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965)

Qian Mu 錢穆, *Guo Shi Da Gang* 國史大綱, 4th edn. (Taiwan: Taiwan Shangwu  
Yinshuguan Gufen Youxian Gongsi, 2017)

# Image sources

<http://xhslink.com/o/5nn0ljZuNxI>

<http://xhslink.com/o/6M7U2PVY6rP>

<http://xhslink.com/o/XKQIL1Gyov>

<http://xhslink.com/o/S10K9DuARB>

<https://www.flaticon.com/>

[作揖\\_百度百科](#)

<http://xhslink.com/o/7YgUvkjr8oN>

The background is a traditional Chinese ink wash painting. On the left, a gnarled branch of a plum tree extends across the frame, adorned with numerous small, vibrant red blossoms. The right side of the image is filled with stylized, swirling clouds rendered in light grey ink, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall composition is balanced and aesthetically pleasing, typical of classical Chinese art.

Thank you for your attention