

PICTORIAL ART AND ITS PUBLIC IN EARLY IMPERIAL CHINA

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THE PROBLEM OF PATRONAGE IN LATTER HAN CHINA

During the reign of Emperor Huan (147-67) of the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) a family of merely local renown invested 'everything they had' in the construction of four decorated offering shrines for recently deceased men of the clan. According to inscriptions at the shrines, some of these men had held minor offices; others had devoted themselves to the study of the Confucian classics. They were typical of that class of scholars, officials and aspiring officials who were both the product and the mainstay of the Han imperial bureaucracy, the same bureaucracy that, some two centuries earlier, had displaced the hereditary military aristocracy characteristic of pre-Han society.¹ Today the Wu family enjoys something more than local renown, and all because of their decorated shrines, which have received the attentions of scholars for almost a thousand years. This venerable historiography may account for the fact that the shrines have been mentioned more frequently than most monuments in comparisons between Han and pre-Han times. Generally speaking these comparisons have not focused upon the social differences between petty lords and aspiring bureaucrats, but have emphasized instead the abandonment of the 'stylized' forms of pre-imperial vessel decor in favor of more 'realistic' modes of representation in Han times.² There is a difficulty with this comparison. Although more representational than the cauldron decor of the ancient kings, the pictures displayed at these shrines are far from what we would call 'realistic'. This discrepancy has given rise to much speculation concerning the style of the Wu Shrines engravings. The date, location, and function of the shrines have all been cited to explain the oddities of their style. Amidst this wealth of scholarship, no more than a few lines have been written of the patronage of these monuments, yet it may well be in its patronage that the art of the Han contrasts more sharply with the art of pre-imperial China.

In 1948 it was suggested that the didactic and political character of many Han reliefs was due to the influence of the state controlled art production apparatus of the Han empire. The histories tell us that lacquerwares, mirrors and

other art objects were produced under the supervision of several bureaus ultimately responsible to the emperor. Thus it was supposed that, both in theme and in style, the Wu Shrine reliefs could be understood as reflections of imperially sponsored art, imperfectly crafted by provincial artisans. With the hindsight afforded by more recent discoveries one might argue that the Wu Shrines are neither representative nor reflective of Han pictorial art in general; a number of regional styles can now be distinguished. More importantly, a closer look at the historical record in this essay will show that the themes and style of the Wu Shrines — though political and didactic — did not represent the interests of the central government, but rather the needs of local elites.³

Acknowledging the regional character of the Wu Shrine reliefs does not so much reduce their importance as alter their significance. Of all the regions in which Han funerary monuments are found today, the greater Shandong region is the most promising for the study of patronage and its possible impact on iconography and style. This region's funerary reliefs are arguably more numerous, richer in iconography, and more thoroughly infused with Confucian themes than those of any other region of China. The scholars and officials who inhabited this region were also a special breed. Shandong was the homeland of Confucius himself, and in Han times the greatest Confucian scholars still gathered in this part of China. Because of its highly developed agriculture and industry, including salt, silk, and iron production, it was the favored location for the fiefs of imperial relatives, while large numbers of important officials mentioned in the histories either came from this region or were assigned to it. In the case of the Wu Shrines, the patrons of which were Confucian scholars and officials, it is reasonable to suppose that these two sets of regional peculiarities — those of art and those of history — were related.⁴

Having thus qualified the scope and significance of the Wu Shrines, it does not follow that the traditional comparison with pre-Han material is altogether uninformative from the point of view of patronage. Even a brief and broad comparison between the scholar-officials of the Wu clan and the aristocratic lords of pre-Han times reveals how profoundly art and its purposes had changed after two or three centuries of imperial rule in China. In pre-imperial times, when a hereditary lord commanded the production of ritual vessels or other art forms employed at court, he and his artisans knew the exact social stations of those who would view this art. The audience for this material could even be limited to a specified number of surnames, vassals of the lord. It was not necessary for a duke or marquis to persuade the guests at a sacrifice of his qualifications to hold office. Rather, the ceremony was designed to verify with elaborate forms of social symbolism the relative rankings of the participants at the sacrifice. Seating arrangements, gestures of greeting, offering, acceptance, access to ritual implements, and possession of ritual vessels were among the methods used to proclaim the fixed social stations of the participants. The vessels and other ritual implements were openly displayed to declare the station of the lord whose artisans cast them.⁵

The same cannot be said of the reliefs at the Wu Shrines. Like most scholar-gentry, the men of the Wu clan who held positions in the imperial bureaucracy,

depended upon recommendations from local officials for advancement. The criteria for recommendation varied, but generally they reflected the moral standards of Confucian teaching, the most common requirement being that candidates be certified 'filial and incorrupt.' As we shall see below, the erection of offering shrines to ancestors was one way to gain a reputation for filial piety, and a good reputation was often the key to recommendation. In such cases we can say that the shrine and its imagery functioned as tokens for the piety the clan hoped others would attribute to its members. But the Wu clan, unlike the lords of pre-imperial China, could not know all the officials who might view their shrines. In fact, should the clan acquire a reputation for filial piety, a recommendation might come from some third party who had only heard of the clan's reputation. The symbols projected by the shrines could thus affect audiences well beyond the sphere of those who had seen them.

Unlike the ceremonial accoutrements of ancient China, the Wu Shrines were not intended to verify the social birthright of the clan. The status of the clan was not fixed by birth. Therefore some of the scenes at the shrines refer to specific events in the lives of clan members that demonstrate official recognition or achievement. These images were designed to persuade visitors to the shrines of the filial devotion of clan members, of their administrative competence, of the purity of their aspirations, of their membership in certain social groups, and of their wealth and influence in the community. The shrines were not so much declarations of fact as arguments which might use facts to attain a projected goal.

Declarative statements are by nature simpler than arguments, and the formal strategies of an art of display can be expected to differ from those of an art of persuasion. The latter, for instance, might incorporate allusions to literature so as to increase the load of messages being conveyed. This in turn might be expected to encourage a more narrative, realistic art. But a closer look at the literati and their rhetoric will show that their arguments were often more equivocal than candid, and the art which projected these arguments more rational than realistic.

THE STYLE OF THE WU SHRINES

The engravings at the Wu Shrines have been described as flat, conventionalized, stylized, formal, awkward, archaic, and, generally speaking, quite limited in terms of representational possibilities.⁶ All the figures appear rather staid (plate 1). The artist made no attempt to portray the material properties of things, whether it be the sumptuousness of silk or the sinewy bulk of horse flesh. Indeed his technique would not have allowed for much sensitivity, for the contours of supple cloth and rippling muscle require a pliant line responsive to numerous minor turns and deflections. Such a line is difficult to achieve if, as here, one prefers to draw with a compass and square.

Close inspection shows that the carvers at this shrine used compass and square to design the forms of virtually all the figures. What is more, the circles used to construct figures often bear simple mathematical relations to one

another. The principle of construction is illustrated in figures 1, 2, and 3. Plate 1 is a detail showing three attendants from an illustration of the story of Confucius meeting Laozi. The three gentlemen stand with hands folded respectfully into their sleeves. They all share more or less the same pose, but it is not immediately evident that the curves of the right-hand sleeve and the left-hand shoulder were incised along the arcs of circles drawn with a compass (figure 1). Even harder to detect is the center of the larger circle on the smaller circle's perimeter in two of the figures. Once the principle is identified, other examples crop up. The jaws and neck of the horse in this composition, for instance, are also built on circles, with the center of the larger circle set on the perimeter of the smaller one. Even the eye of the horse is composed of an isosceles triangle, finely engraved, like all other lines, with a sharp pointed tool. One could characterize this style as 'measured,' but not merely in the metaphorical sense.

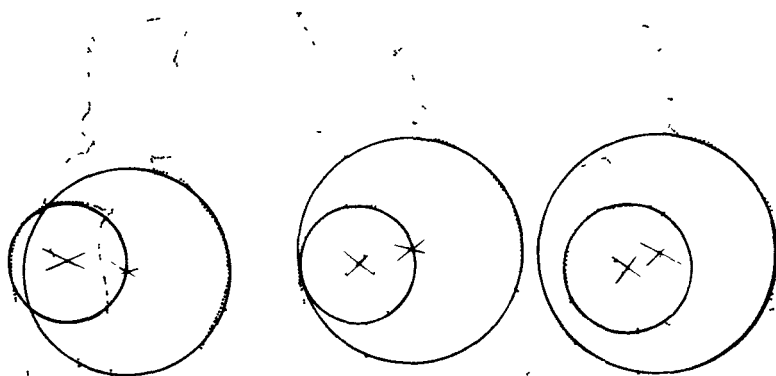


Figure 1 Drawing reconstructing some of the arcs used in designing the three attendants shown in Plate 1

It is impossible to appreciate the trouble and ingenuity that went into this style until more complex figure groups, such as those illustrated in plate 2 and figure 2, are examined. The diagram in figure 2 shows that the neck, jaw, chest, rump and stomach of each horse were constructed from circles as geometrically perfect as those describing the carriage wheels. The sleeves and banners of the riders, too, are arcs drawn with a compass. Again, there is evidence of a deliberate attempt to relate these circles in some way. The circle describing the chest of the rear horse has its center on the perimeter of the circle describing the chest of the horse in front of it. The center of the circle that forms the front horse's nape lies on the perimeter of the small circle for the jaw; and the center of the circle of which the horse's belly is an arc lies just about at the point where two other circles intersect, one being the circle of the nape and the



Three attendants from the story of 'Confucius and Laozi.' Detail of a rubbing of a stone engraving from the Wu Shrines, Jiaxiang, Shandong. D 147-67

Two mounted escorts, two foot soldiers, and a carriage. Detail of a rubbing of a stone engraving from the Wu Shrines, Jiaxiang, Shandong. D 147-67. After Eduard Chavannes, *Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale*, 2 vols, plus atlas (Paris, 1909-15), atlas, no. 129



Kneeling scholar or official. Detail of a rubbing of a stone engraving from Tongshan, Jiangsu. Second century AD



4 Two-headed birds (auspicious omens) alighting on a roof. Detail of a rubbing of a stone engraving from Liangchengshan, Shandong. Second century AD



5 Illustration to the story of a virtuous woman. Detail of a rubbing of a stone coffin from Xinjin, Sichuan. Second century AD. After Wen Y., *Sichuan handai huazhuang xuanji* (Beijing, 1956), no. 40

other the circle of the rear horse's chest. Further analysis shows that the center of the circle which describes the rear banner lies on the perimeter of the circle describing the front horse's belly. Several other smaller circles operate within this figure group, and additional searching would doubtless reveal other levels of geometric relationship.

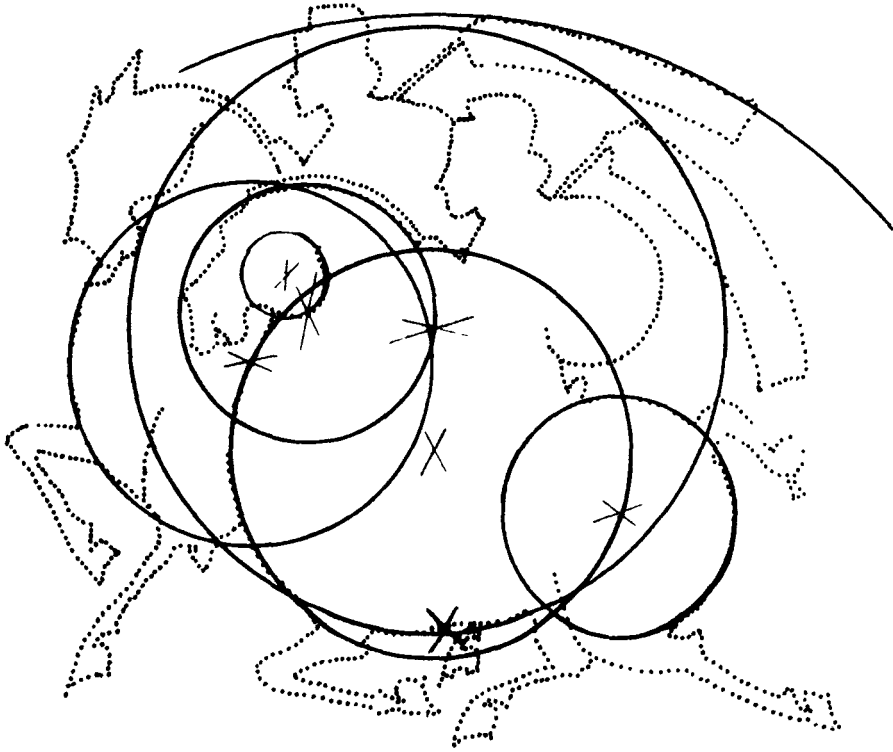


Figure 2 Drawing reconstructing some of the arcs used in designing the two mounted escorts shown in Plate 2

The simplicity of contour resulting from this process belies the complexity of design underlying the composition. To transform a nest of inter-related circles into the forms of two mounted riders, the artisans had to deliberate consciously over each and every curve, albeit in a mechanical fashion. There was no room for unintended lines or capricious strokes in such a method. We are dealing here with a most serious attempt to apply rational, even mathematical, principles to the representation of natural forms.

The Wu Shrines and related reliefs, such as those from Songshan, are only the most extreme examples of this style. Similar, though less precise, examples can be found at any number of sites in Shandong and Jiangsu, such as Tongshan or Liangchengshan (plates 3 and 4). Plate 3 shows a kneeling figure from Tongshan, Jiangsu, a detail from a larger domestic scene. In this detail the use of the compass to draw the series of arcs running up the arms and around the legs of the figure is obvious and requires no further illustration. The two-headed

bird in plate 4 is an auspicious omen shown alighting on the roof of a home, presumably that of the deceased.⁷ Its clumsy form seems a study in irrational design, an aeronautical engineer's nightmare. The wobbly legs appear to totter under the rotund body, and the long tail and club like tail feathers make its position on the roof still more precarious. These features are irrational from the perspectives of either physical bodies or flight, yet an undeniable rationality underlies these forms. In figure 3 for instance, it is clear, that each clumsy tail feather is an arc in a series of successively larger circles. The smallest of these circles has a diameter very close to that of the circle describing the bird's chest and belly. Other arcs show up in the rings around the neck, and, of course, all the straight lines in the composition were made with a square and the angles determined by a compass.

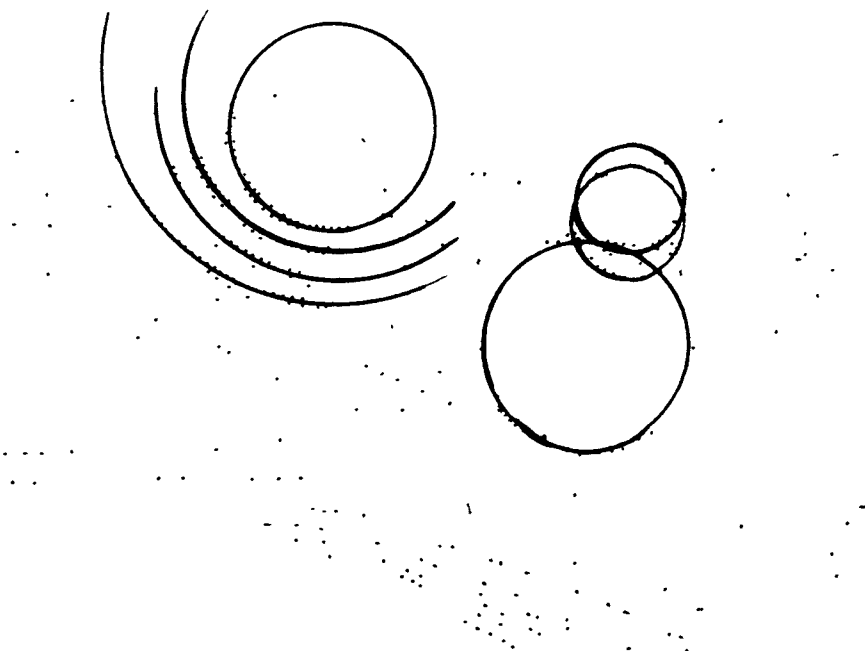


Figure 3 Drawing reconstructing some of the arcs used in designing the two-headed bird shown in Plate 4

The diagnostic features of this style are not to be limited to the use of mechanical instruments. It is also characterized by the habit of analyzing each figure, man or beast, into its typical components, reducing those components to some mathematically precise form, and then repeating this form as a pattern wherever possible. For human figures the usual components are heads, hats, sleeves, hems, and so on; for animals the joints between parts are likewise carefully discriminated, but in addition the fur, feathers, or scales tend to be analyzed even more thoroughly and repeated as a pattern. One senses almost a compulsion to reduce the unmanageable variety of nature to some describable and thus controllable lexicon of forms.

The use of mechanical instruments in the reliefs of this region requires such

a deliberate decision and introduces such artificial constraints as to call into question the motives that might have encouraged it. Some authorities have suggested that this was as realistic a style as the Chinese were capable of conceiving at the time.⁸ But it is not easy to attribute the severe formal limits of this style entirely to the early date of the monument. At about the same time, in a more remote sector of the empire, a stone carver had little difficulty suggesting the way silk clings to the curvy figure of a young woman (plate 5), although his only formal device was suppleness of contour. Here, too, one finds no evidence of the use of mechanical instruments.

It has been proposed that Shandong was provincial and cut off from more progressive forms of art theoretically practiced in the capital. This view, too, is no longer viable. It is now apparent that more sophisticated forms of perspective than what we find at the Wu Shrines had been mastered in Jiangsu as early as the first century BC. If one argues that Shandong was provincial, and this is debatable, Jiangsu was still more provincial. The idea that funerary art is by nature conservative begs the question, for it prompts one to ask why the artists in Jiangsu and Sichuan were not as conservative as those in Shandong. For the same reasons, the suggestion that the reliefs at the Wu Shrines really are realistic is untenable, both because they are patently artificial and because more realistic approaches to form were available at the time.⁹

Each of these suggestions attempts to explain some presumed insufficiency on the part of the carvers of these shrines, but the fact is that the Wu Shrine engravings are of the highest quality. The engravings are unrealistic, to be sure, but there is no evidence of an unsure hand, incompetent design, or misunderstood composition. On the contrary we find everywhere the signs of careful design and precise, consistent, deliberate carving. The absence of realism is not to be confused with incompetence, yet theories about provincial styles and conservative traditions seem designed to explain the inadequacies of the style rather than its characteristic features.

Many years ago Wilma Fairbank proposed that the repetitive forms of the Wu Shrine figures might be due to the use of stamps, and on these grounds argued that the awkwardness of the style was not due to technical clumsiness but rather was a matter of choice. This theory has not met with general acceptance, but few would deny that traces of some sort of shop practice can be discerned in the reliefs. The use of copybooks, cartoons, stencils and other shop aids immediately comes to mind. No copybooks have survived from Han times, but the bibliographical chapter of the *History of the Former Han* lists a book entitled *Method for Painting Confucius and his Disciples*.¹⁰ This sounds very much like a copybook. As for stencils, one can readily imagine the application of compass and square first to paper or cloth as cartoons so that the design could be later applied as a stencil. The habit of dividing a figure into parts and sub-parts is so methodical that one could even imagine the work being carried out in unit-processes so as to save time. Such an idea is not far removed from Fairbank's notion of the use of stamps, but it is one thing to use mechanical aids and quite another to produce a composition which reveals — even revels in — the use of those aids.

The subject of stencils calls to mind the well-known reliefs from Shaanxi,

most of which date to the opening of the second century AD. The repetition of individual figures is so common among stones from this region that few would doubt the use of some form of stencil in their fashioning. Yet the designs from that region are far livelier and more three-dimensional than those from Shandong (plate 10). Moreover, there is no evidence of the use of compass and square. From this observation the weakness of any attempt to explain style exclusively through reference to methods of manufacture becomes evident.¹¹ Most funerary engravings in Han China are likely to have been made with the aid of stencils or copybooks. The pertinent question for us is why some designs – however made – were favored by the Shandong literati when alternate, more realistic, forms were possible. For this reason it may be preferable after all to adopt the essence of Fairbank's thesis, that the unusual style of the shrines was a matter of choice, and that this choice is somehow related to the function of the shrines.

In any scheme in which the Wu Shrines must foreshadow the realistic art of later times, the rational features of its style appear irrational. But if we acquaint ourselves with the network of conflicting demands faced by members of the Wu clan, as by other literati of the time, then the shrines themselves can be seen as instruments designed to meet the social aspirations and conflicts of their patrons, the literati. Here four aspects of literati patronage are proposed as relevant to the iconography and style of these shrines. First, that funerary monuments were, in a sense, 'public,' i.e., open to inspection by large numbers of politically relevant persons. Second, that social pressures encouraging the building of funerary monuments also encouraged the literati to interfere, or participate, in the design of those monuments. Third, that these monuments functioned as vehicles of persuasion through which the literati could promote personal or public goals. And fourth, that certain peculiarities of the Han social order encouraged a rhetoric among the literati which was inherently duplicitous. This duplicity is a diagnostic feature of the art promoted and publicly displayed by that group.

THE PUBLIC DIMENSION OF HAN FUNERARY MONUMENTS

If the sacred vessels of pre-imperial and early imperial China were cast under the charge of individual nobles, then the funerary monuments of early imperial China were often paid for by collections of individuals with local or national standing, such as bureaucrats, aspiring bureaucrats, retired scholars, teachers, students, or any of a variety of local elites. The collective nature of Han patronage emerges both from the study of inscriptions on locally commissioned monuments and from the biographies in the standard histories. Recent work on monument inscriptions shows that memorial tablets were commissioned by groups of local elites involving as many as fifty or more contributors. Many may have been sub-bureaucratic officials who required cooperation from prominent local figures. Others may have been followers or clients of the deceased. In either case these elites would have been linked to the deceased (or his clan) by personal and professional ties binding those who sought official

employment through the recommendation system.¹²

Inscriptions often eulogize the accomplishments of regional elites too unimportant for notice by historians, but a similar picture of collective patronage could be painted using the Han histories. The biography of the scholar-statesman Han Zhao^d (mid-second century) tells us that upon his death several leading public figures cooperated to erect a memorial tablet. When Han's colleague Chen Shi^e died, his friends had a tablet carved out for him. In the same way the famous statesman Yang Zhen's^f tomb was commissioned by his followers.¹³ Collective patronage of this sort must be distinguished from that of dukes and kings, for it reflects the fact that the benefits derived from the monument were in many cases collective rather than individual.

The benefits of patronage were often collective because Han society and government operated through collections of individuals. The county magistrate, frequently transferred to new localities, required the cooperation of local gentry families, local teachers, retired bureaucrats, and other people of influence if he hoped to achieve anything in his new community. A teacher or scholar of local renown might boast any number of former students and protégés as his social 'subordinates,' and could count on these individuals in time of need, such as when seeking appointment for a protégé or himself, or at his funeral. The aspiring young bureaucrat required the good auspices of these same people. Should he acquire a reputation for filial piety, it would be among this body of local notables that his name would shine, and nowhere else. All such persons possessed the prerogative to participate in the polity of the Han empire, either as bureaucrats or as men who could influence bureaucrats. Some authorities refer to this body of individuals as the Han 'public.' It was this body of individuals which constituted the primary audience for funerary monuments, and those monuments were specifically designed with this 'public' in mind.¹⁴

Not all monuments were commissioned collectively. The funds for the mausolea of some powerful magnates mentioned in the histories probably came directly from the pockets of those potentates. One such magnate was the powerful eunuch Hou Lan.^g Throughout the mid-second century Hou Lan tyrannized the empire in general and the literati in particular:

In AD 169 (the eunuch) Hou Lan returned to his home for his mother's burial, constructing a large tomb. At this time Zhang Jian,^h who was Investigator, remonstrated against the excesses of Hou's followers, (saying that) all together they had confiscated 381 households and 118 plots of arable land. They had erected buildings in 16 districts, each with tall pavilions, pools and gardens, and halls and terraces that faced one another, decorated with brocade designs and red lacquer, to the standard of the highest ranks, rivalling the palace itself. They also made tombs for themselves, stone vaults (below ground) and twin towers (above ground), with shrines more than 100 (Chinese) feet high. They ruined people's homes and dug up other people's tombs . . . stealing (men's) wives and daughters.¹⁵

Hou Lan and his followers had direct access to power through the court and could scarcely have been worried about the opinions of leading literati.

The *History of the Latter Han* indicates that from about the middle of the second century such men, together with others independent of the traditional channels of recommendation, began to constitute an important patronage group for funerary monuments. But here we speak of a separate group whose influence and wealth set them at a distance from both the symbolic and institutional ties binding the Han public. If monuments belonging to this group could be identified, it is unlikely that they would resemble the most commonly known funerary monuments, with their many references to Confucian themes and ideals. Some possible candidates have come to light recently, but a discussion of this tradition of funerary decor would take us too far from the subject of literati patronage.¹⁶

Only a few years before Hou Lan constructed the tomb for his mother the Wu clan had completed the construction of their shrines. The inscriptions at these shrines do not point to collective patronage but rather imply that the clan leaders commissioned them. One might argue that the shrines are therefore an example of individual patronage. But the shrines cannot be taken as pure examples of individual patronage; not so much because the clan should be regarded as a collective body as because the public nature of the monument meant that considerations regarding its form involved people outside the clan.

By the time these shrines were constructed funerary services had become among the most public of occasions in the lives of the literati. The *History of the Latter Han* claims, for instance, that more than thirty thousand people attended the funeral services of Chen Shi. It is said that among those present were his superiors and patrons (or their representatives) but the guests would also have included his followers and colleagues. Likewise, when the respected scholar Zheng Xuan¹ (127-200) died, 'all those who had studied with him, from the governor on down, put on their mourning robes to attend the funeral, over a thousand in all.' Bamboo slips from a Western Han tomb show that as early as the first century BC funeral guests traveled hundreds of miles to participate in such ceremonies. This was the tomb of a man without any hint of national significance. The guests might have traveled further still for a national figure such as Chen Shi.¹⁷

A work written in the middle of the same century supports what common sense would tell us – funeral guests had to be fed, housed and even entertained during the long services:

Nowadays when the common people attend a funeral they expect to have wine and meat. If they (decide to) stay at the home of those in mourning, they demand to have song and dance and entertainment, and will laugh incessantly at acrobats and actors.¹⁸

Even making the usual allowances for exaggeration, all of these sources suggest that, in Han times, funerals were among the most important social affairs that any clan could host. In Chen Shi's case, the memorial tablet erected by his friends was doubtless on view during the long ceremonies. Under these circumstances, this tablet would become a token, signifying, at one level, Chen's own accomplishments (directly inscribed on the tablet), at a second level, the loyal devotion of his friends (whose names would be inscribed on the

tablet), and at a third level, his associates' public commitment to the Confucian ideals he supposedly espoused, whether or not all those associates really practiced Confucian norms of behavior. This last level of meaning constituted an important component in the reputation of any individual who sought success through the recommendation system.

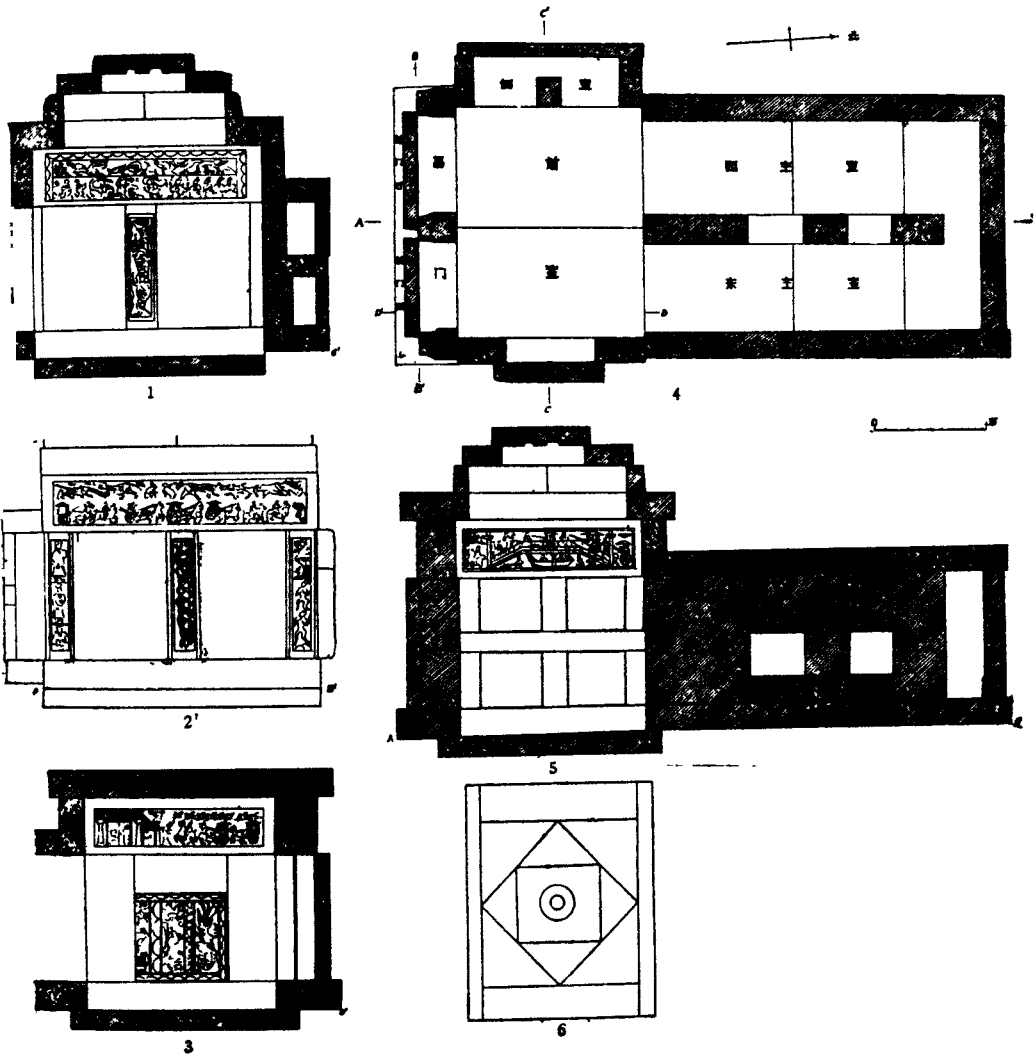


Figure 4 Diagrams of a decorated Han tomb at Cangshan, Shandong. The diagrams illustrate (1) the tomb entrance viewed from inside, (2) the tomb entrance viewed from outside, (3) east wall of the front chamber, (4) floorplan, (5) longitudinal section viewed from the east, (6) plan of the ceiling over the front chamber. The arrow at top points north, the scale represents one meter. Dated AD 151. After Zhang Qihai, 'Shandong cangshan yuanjia yuan nian huaxiang shi mu,' *Kaogu* 1975, no. 2, figure 1

Other sources suggest that the tomb itself must have been available for view by at least some guests at the funeral. There are many records, to be considered

shortly, which speak of families competing for the most lavish funerals and most splendid tombs, practices which would require that the tomb be seen. We know that prior to interment the coffin would be escorted to the tomb in a grave procession involving a great many of the guests. Since the interment of the coffin climaxed the funeral activities, it is unlikely that the deceased would have been dumped unceremoniously underground; rather any number of rites would have been carried out in the tomb itself. The tomb would need to be cleansed of evil spirits; burial gifts might be offered to the deceased; the tomb occupant would be announced to the bureaucrats of the underworld at this time. From the late first century BC on, we find ever greater numbers of tombs equipped with hinged doors and other features of ordinary dwellings. Some of these, especially those rich in tomb decoration, were large enough to accommodate anywhere from a few to a dozen or more individuals (figure 4). These tombs could have provided a space for such ceremonies, some of which may have involved the several apotropaic deities often engraved on the doors and beams (plate 6). In addition, images reflecting the Confucian ideals ascribed to the deceased in his memorial tablet could have been seen on the walls or even the coffin itself during the rites (plate 5). Literary records of these activities are difficult to find, but archaeological evidence is highly suggestive in this regard, and some aspects of ritual have been inferred from such evidence.¹⁹ Viewed under these conditions, the designs in the tomb, like the funerary tablet itself, would acquire a meaning above and beyond the literal content of its imagery.

THE ROLE OF THE LITERATI IN FUNERARY MONUMENT DESIGN

The evidence suggests that it was in the interests of the patrons, collective or individual, to interfere in decisions regarding the monument. The clan, subordinates, or colleagues of the deceased were saying as much about themselves with such monuments as about their departed friend. There are a few cases where we know that collective patrons 'interfered' with decisions regarding the monument. After the burial of the famous statesman Yang Zhen, it was reported that birds were observed weeping over his grave. This was interpreted as a sign from Heaven testifying to his extraordinary virtue, and so, lest the world forget, his followers had images of these birds carved at his tomb.²⁰

Whenever images pertaining to the deceased appear on the walls of a monument (such as at the Wu Shrines, or the tombs at Cangshan¹ and Holingol), it can be assumed that such images were designed under the direction of the patron group in charge. There is even one record which indicates that a scholar painted his own tomb:

Chao Ch'ï^k . . . [Zhao Qi was] a man of many talents and artistic skills, he was skilled in painting. He built himself a tomb at Ying-ch'eng [Yingcheng], (for which) he painted the four worthies . . .²¹

It is entirely conceivable that, except for the standard auspicious and apotropaic deities guarding the doors and beams of many tombs (plate 6), the patron group may have made any number of decisions regarding the decor of a tomb.

or shrine.

What kinds of considerations, then, would enter into the design of a monument? At this point our knowledge is so scanty we can only offer an educated guess, but at least most of the following would have to be taken into account.

(1) The deceased him/herself. As mentioned above, many of the funerary preparations were aimed at providing a proper resting place for the deceased. Guardian deities were carved on the doors and beams, while felicitous immortals might dance along the walls and scenes of entertainment enliven the dreariness of the tomb. If the deceased were not satisfied, he could bring ill luck to the clan. If he were content, he could bring blessings. A tomb from Cangshan in southern Shandong dated AD 151 bears an inscription which says in part:

We erected (this) tomb so as to give it to our dear mother, whose spirit is conscious; may she pity her grieving sons and grandsons so that they may prosper and all live to old age.²²

The inscription then provides a list of the kinds of subjects represented on the walls of the tomb, presumably with a view to pleasing the deceased. Such inscriptions, together with other kinds of evidence, argue that the proclivities of the deceased were among the factors influencing the decor of funerary monuments.

(2) The advice of various professionals might enter into the design. The chief of the team building the monument would need to be familiar with standard practices, such as the disposition of the usual demon-gobbling deities on the doors, lintels, and other strategic areas. Other professionals such as diviners would also have been consulted. It is known that professional advisors supervised burials paid for by the court. Such advisors are still common in Asia today, and if the fashions in the capital were imitated in the countryside, it is possible that this group may have affected the design of monuments as well.²³ If so, they, too, can be expected to have taken charge of the more standard features of the burial, since propriety consists in what is customary rather than what is novel.

(3) The most complex body of considerations, and those probably undertaken by the patronage group itself, would be those anticipating public response to the monument. If it were too small, the group might be criticized for parsimony; if too large, it might offend higher-ranking clans in the area. Narrative themes extolling Confucian virtues such as frugality and restraint would be likely to meet with approval, but it was also essential that the economic health of the clan be manifest to rivals in the area. If no entertainment scenes were provided, the deceased him/herself might object. If these scenes were so lavish as to suggest the excesses enjoyed by eunuchs such as Hou Lan, the ire of other literati might be roused. The list could be lengthened indefinitely, but the pattern is clear. The decision-making process for most patronage groups of the time consisted of a delicate balancing act whereby inherently conflicting messages were to be projected to a variable public which would define the reputation and the fate of the patrons of the monument. This situation encourages duplicity, and as we shall see in the following sections, duplicity can be considered a diagnostic feature of the funerary monuments of the Han literati.

PERSONAL MOTIVES FOR ERECTING FUNERARY MONUMENTS

The foregoing sections suggest that Han tablets, tombs, and shrines could say one thing in the inscriptions or imagery but signify something else when understood in the proper social context. The duplicity suggested by our argument should not be construed as a product of twentieth century cynicism. Serious skepticism concerning the motives of those who lavishly honored the dead was expressed as early as the first century BC by scholars participating in the famous debate over the nationalization of the salt and iron industries. In the heat of one altercation a scholar exclaimed:

Nowadays when the parents are alive their children do not show love and respect, but when they die their children would elevate them to very lofty positions through extravagant (spending). Even though they have no sincere grief, they are nonetheless regarded as filial if they give (their parents) a lavish burial and spend a lot of money. Therefore their name becomes prominent and their glory shines among the people. Because of this even the commoners emulate (these practices) to the extent that they sell their houses and property to do it.²⁴

This passage complains moralistically about the hypocrisy of ceremonies for the dead but at the same time gives a clue to the motive for this hypocrisy — the establishment of a ‘glorious’ reputation. The benefits to be derived from such a reputation are obvious if one considers the workings of the recommendation system and helps to explain the level of investment indicated in this passage, a level corroborated by other accounts. Presumably, it was hoped that the returns would justify the investment. That these practices remained current in the first and second centuries AD is evident from the several imperial edicts decrying the custom of lavish burials, such as Guangwu’s¹ edict of AD 31:

The world regards lavish burials as (a sign) of virtue and frugal burials as (a sign) of cheapness, so much so that the rich vie with one another in their excesses, while the poor exhaust their savings (to provide a presentable burial). The laws have been unable to restrain this (trend), and propriety has been unable to stop it. (Therefore) I proclaim to the empire that all loyal officials, filial sons, and good brothers should adopt frugal practices in sending (their loved ones) to their final rest.²⁵

More edicts of a similar nature were issued under several later emperors well into the second century.²⁶

Apart from imperial edicts, which reflect the moralizing concerns of the Confucian literati, independent testimony confirming the practice and its consequences can be had from Wang Chong,^m writing in the first century AD:

People condemn (those who) do not fulfill the rites and are full of praise for (those who) piously fulfill all the rites. He who is praised by the people finds support in all his enterprises, while the one who is disliked meets with opposition whatever he says or does.²⁷

Wang Chong's implication is that the pressure to conform publicly to Confucian norms was economic as well as social, and it could affect the success of any enterprise. By the fulfillment of the rites Wang may have meant Confucian norms in general, but it is to be understood that among the most conspicuous of rites to be obeyed by anyone was the display of proper respect for one's parents at the ceremonies attending their passing, namely, the mourning rites.

After the second decade of the second century AD, the economic repercussions of failure to perform properly mourning ceremonies clearly extended beyond one's standing in the local community. By that time the government had taken concrete steps to encourage displays of filial piety at the passing of one's parents. Sometime between AD 114 and 120, Empress Dowager Dengⁿ decided to require the three-year mourning period prescribed in the classics upon the death of the parents of lower-level officials:

According to the old rules, the highest officers with a salary of 2,000 piculs and the inspectors did not have to carry out the three year mourning period; because of this all the officials both within and without the palace (i.e., capital and provincial officials) neglected the mourning rites. In the Yuanchu period (114-20) Empress Dowager Deng issued an edict to the effect that, except for the very highest ranks, any official who failed to complete personally the mourning ceremonies (for his parents) should not be eligible for office.²⁸

This rule required three years of retirement and placed restrictions on clothing, travel, entertainment, sex, and so forth for the same period. It is hardly surprising that it was hotly disputed when applied to the highest ranking officers and was alternately revoked and reinstated for high-level officials until the end of the second century.²⁹ Thus, when Empress Dowager Deng and succeeding rulers attempted to extend the rule to higher levels, the effect was probably still greatest at the lowest levels, where prospective candidates for officialdom were most vulnerable to charges of unfilial behavior.

Hopeful candidates are unlikely to have interpreted the empress's policy literally. The intent of the regulation was clear. **Concrete evidence of fulfillment of the rites of mourning was to be expected of anyone seeking office or promotion.** Judging from the texts reviewed here, however, it is difficult to conceive how any burial which economized on the tomb or its furnishings could avoid charges of parsimony. Over time this ruling might be expected to encourage the construction of funerary monuments. This is consistent with the archaeological record, as the majority of extant Han reliefs are thought to date to the second century.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MOTIVES FOR ERECTING FUNERARY MONUMENTS

Apart from personal gain, politics and public policy could also play a role in the erection of monuments in Han times. Through official or unofficial channels the literati could promote their own causes with a variety of visual art forms

ranging from proto-‘posters’ to full-scale mausolea. In the second century, for instance, we find a number of references to displaying portraits of exemplary individuals. The governor of Yuzhou once eulogized the virtues of Chen Ji^o to the court, with the result that the government displayed Chen’s likeness in all the towns of the empire as an inspiration to others. The famous Confucian scholar Cai Yong,^p of whom we shall speak again, had his portrait displayed between Yanzhou and Chenlu (present-day southwest Shandong and northeast Henan) for similar reasons. The histories do not go into detail, but these portraits could have been painted on either wood or paper, and, if so, may be regarded as an early form of poster art.³⁰

In these cases the display of portraits was initiated by government officials, but in other instances the idea appears to have originated among the public at large, even if eventually carried out through official auspices. The case of the filial girl Su Xianxiong^q is one such example. Her father, it seems, had drowned in a river. Unable to deal with her grief, she eventually threw herself in after him. Six days later her body was found floating together with his. This was taken as an example of extraordinary filial devotion, and ‘all within the commanderies and counties extolled (her exemplary conduct); so they erected a memorial tablet for her, upon which her portrait was drawn.’ Here the Chinese, like the translation, is ambiguous as to whether the tablet was given official backing. Even if in the end the district magistrate supervised the affair, it would appear that the monument was erected in response to local opinion. At least one such instance is recorded in the works of Cai Yong, in which a district magistrate is said to have erected a temple due to the considered opinion of local ‘elders.’³¹

More clearly related to political issues is the case of Yan Du,^r who in 168 became a victim of the struggles between the eunuchs and the literati. Upon his passing ‘the (people) of his home town had his portrait placed in the (local) temple for Qu Yuan.’^s Qu Yuan is the paradigm of the loyal official who dies a victim of court slander or a near-sighted ruler. In this instance Yan was killed by government forces, so it is unlikely his portrait received support from this sector. Rather, the placement of Yan’s portrait in the temple of Qu Yuan was a method whereby the literati could advertise the martyrdom of one of their own. In this sense the tablets erected for Han Zhao and Chen Shi, mentioned in a previous section, harboured a political message which must have been obvious to contemporaries, for Chen Shi was outspoken in his criticism of court cliques. Likewise, the tomb of Yang Zhen, which was patronized by his followers, possessed definite political associations. Yang had suffered and eventually died due to his opposition to the eunuchs. During his career he had often cited Heavenly omens as warnings to convince the emperor to reform, but to no avail. After his death, as was noted earlier, birds appeared weeping over his grave. This, too, was seen as an omen, but an omen certifying Heaven’s testimony to his pristine virtue. When images of these birds were carved at the site of his burial, they doubtless acquired the status of a challenge to eunuch vengery and a vindication of literati virtue.³²

The political utility of Yang Zhen’s monument should not be seen in contradiction to possible religious or personal motives for honoring him with a

decorated tomb. It is not that the message of his monument was merely political (as opposed to personal or religious); the reverence of his colleagues could only have deepened in proportion to Yang's political courage and the degree to which they identified their own interests with his. True, other sources cited previously imply that for many the motive for erecting a monument was primarily economic. It should not surprise anyone that economic, political, and personal motives could give rise to much the same body of imagery; in any case the patrons would have to utilize imagery with commonly recognized connotations in order to get the message across. The use of funerary monuments to convey specific messages to the Han public was the same for the virtuous and the vile alike. **By projecting the right signs a man could turn virtue to vice and back again, like turning lead into gold. In the Han political system virtue, like gold, was a highly esteemed and thus saleable commodity. Candidates were supposed to be 'filial and incorrupt.'** But how does one measure virtue? Since the heart cannot be measured, its character could be understood most easily through outward signs, and it was these signs which led to the development of a rhetoric of virtue, of which funerary monuments were a part.

THE DUPLICITY OF FUNERARY MONUMENTS

It was in the nature of the recommendation system to encourage duplicity, for material rewards were granted especially to those who publicly eschewed material interests. Chi-yun Chen has characterized the Han literati as 'an ambivalent social group' due to their double role in society. On the one hand they were salaried officials; on the other hand they were supposed to be champions of independent ethical ideals. According to Chen:

This double status put the literati in a position of conflict between their political, their social, and their cultural attachments, as well as between their high ideals and their institutionalized interests.³³

The result was a paradoxical admixture of social pressure to embrace supra-material values and economic incentives to pursue material rewards.

The peculiar craft of hypocrisy which thrived under these conditions tended to confound the more idealistic literati. One of these was Wang Fu,[†] who in the mid-second century, singled out the display of funerary monuments for special abuse:

Nowadays the wealthy and powerful in the capital and the powerful magnates in the provinces do not have enough money to serve their parents while they are alive, but after they are dead they give them lavish burials with jade suits tied with gold and coffins of exotic woods; they are all given much jewelry and (figurines of) carriages and servants; they build large tombs, planting pine and cedar, building shrines over them, going to endless extravagances.³⁴

Wang Fu notes with particular rancor that the rich would spend a great deal on funerary services for parents, but would not waste much money on

them while alive, a perversion of the ideal of filial sacrifice. Such moral issues could arise precisely because funerary monuments could simultaneously signify unworldly detachment and material success. Since both messages could be beneficial to an ambitious clan, Wang's pleading probably had little effect on the practice of lavish burials.

This blend of moral and material meaning might be expected to reflect itself in the character of funerary monuments, and in this regard it will be instructive to return to our discussion of the Wu Shrines. For close to two thousand years these shrines have stood, quite literally, as a monument to the filial sentiments of their patrons, and they were no doubt interpreted in the same manner when they were first built. In many ways the Wu clan typifies those whose success, even if only regional, depended on the traditional operation of the recommendation system. Several members of this clan held positions in local government, and one member, Wu Liang,³⁵ adopted the life-style of some of the most respected Confucian leaders of the day, that of the 'retired' scholar.³⁵

The shrines themselves offer a paradigm of the kind of duplicity described in this essay. The ostensible purpose of the shrines was filial devotion. Wu Liang himself, whose name has become attached to the shrines as a group, was so detached from worldly affairs that he refused an appointment offered by local officials. The inscription even tells us that he had no desire for anything but the time to read the classics in the pursuit of truth.³⁶ Yet the same inscription also leaves little room for doubt that the patrons of these shrines were just the sort of people to whom Guangwu referred in his edict, i.e., people who would spend the family fortune to avoid a burial that could be called 'cheap':

His filial sons, Chung-chang^y [Zhongzhang] and Chi-li^w [Jili], and his filial grandson, Tzu-ch'iao^x [Ziqiao], personally followed the path of sonly duty and spent everything they had. They chose excellent stones from south of the southern mountains; they took those of perfect quality with flawless and unyellowed color. In front they established an altar and an area; behind they erected an offering shrine. The clever workman Wei Kai^y [Wei Gai] engraved the text and carved the designs; he arranged everything in its place, he gave free rein to his talent and the gracious curves were exposed to all. This work will be transmitted to the sight of later generations and for ten thousand generations it will endure.³⁷

The public nature of the monument is evident from the last lines, which indicate the shrine was expected to be exposed to the sight of others over a long period of time. The cost of the monument, referred to proudly here, advertises the clan's financial health but at the same time sublimates it by interpreting the expenditure as a sacrifice motivated by supra-material concerns, i.e., filial devotion.

If it is the costly stones and the fine carving that account for the expenditure, then for those supra-material concerns we shall have to look to the themes and the style of the engravings. Among the filial piety stories there, all of which play on the theme of sacrifice, the story of Dong Yong^z touches on the matter of burial practices. As the story goes Dong Yong's mother died while he

Head of a tiger tomb guardian. Detail of rubbing of a stone pilaster (see Figure 4,1) on Cangshan, Shandong. Dated AD 151



Illustration to the story of Dong Yong. Nineteenth-century woodblock copy of a rubbing from the Wu Shrines. After Feng Zhenpeng and Feng Yunyuan, *Jinshi so*, vols. n.p., 1821, reprint ed. (Taipei, 1974), II. 1334





8 King Cheng and the Duke of Zhou. Detail of a rubbing of a stone engraving from the Wu Shrines, Jiaxiang, Shandong. AD 147-67. After Chavannes, *Mission*, no. 128



9 The sage rulers Fu Xi and Nu Wa. Detail of a rubbing of a stone engraving from the Wu Shrines, Jiaxiang, Shandong AD 147-67. After Chavannes, *Mission*, no. 123



10 Upper register: deer and other beasts amidst cloud scrolls; lower register: a tiger like beast stalks a running man with an axe. Detail of a stone relief from the lintel above the entrance to a tomb at Mizu, Shaanxi. Dated AD 107. Shaanxi Provincial Museum, Xi'an

was still young. He devoted his years to caring for his father (plate 7). One day his father passed away, and he sought to arrange a proper burial for him. As he had no money, however, he was forced to sell himself as a slave in order to raise the cash. In the end he was freed through the efforts of the weaving goddess, sent by Heaven to redeem him.³⁸ The happy ending does not alter the point of the story, though, which is that no material interest, not even one's own life, should stand in the way of true filial devotion.

Frugality and restraint were among the most characteristic teachings of Confucius, who, together with his disciples, is also depicted at the Wu Shrines. The Duke of Zhou^{aa} was perhaps the sage Confucius admired most. For the Han literati, the scene of King Cheng^{ab} and the Duke of Zhou (plate 8) signified a number of the most fundamental Confucian ideals, including loyalty, filiality, and frugality. Not long after these shrines were built, the Latter Han commentator Cai Yong wrote an essay on the 'Hall of Light,' the ancestral temple of the ancient sage-kings. In that essay he cited a passage from the *Book of Rites* which recounted the story of King Cheng and the Duke of Zhou:

King Cheng was young and weak, and the Duke of Zhou occupied his position (as ruler) in order to govern the kingdom. He held court with all the lords in the 'Hall of Light', establishing the rites and (ceremonial) music, and issuing the measures and decrees (of government). Thereby the whole world submitted (to Zhou authority).³⁹

The scene at the Wu Shrines depicts the moment when, after seven years as regent, the Duke, the most capable statesman in the kingdom, gave up his regency to the frail young king. No physical power in the kingdom could have forced him to do so at this time; it was only the Duke's profound loyalty which caused him to forego voluntarily the power of the throne. The depth of his loyalty is emphasized in this scene (plate 8) as the Duke attempts to compress his physical bulk into a space commensurate with the inferior status he willingly assumes, while officers holding court tablets bow reverently at either side. Although the young king stands on a platform, in a space set apart by a parasol, and wears a tall three-point crown, the highest point of his crown still falls short of the Duke's hat as he kneels before his lord.

In essence this is a story of loyalty and sacrifice, but this particular story harbored a more complex range of associations than is at first evident. For the Han literati this scene could not fail to arouse thoughts of the almost legendary Hall of Light, where the scene was believed to have taken place. Cai Yong notes that under the Zhou kings, the Hall of Light was the ancestral temple of the royal house and as such was the hall where the feudal lords learned the value and meaning of filial piety. Apart from loyalty and filial piety, which were associated with this building by tradition, the hall itself embodied the Confucian ideals of frugality and restraint in its design:

The Hall of Light of the Zhou dynasty was made with a roof of thatch and pillars of stalks. The stairs were made of earth in three tiers, in order to manifest frugality and discipline. . . . For this reason the Temple of Purity (Hall of Light) has a roof of thatch, so as to display frugality. Now what is virtue? It is frugal and measured.⁴⁰

The architecture of the Hall of Light is not actually depicted at the Wu Shrines, but this was not necessary. Any scholar would know that the story had occurred in the sacred Hall of Light, an institution so important to Han Confucians that it had been reconstructed in the mid-first century AD. By the same token, Wu Liang and his friends would not have required an exegesis to reveal that this story, like that of Dong Yong and many others at this shrine, projected the ideals of sacrifice, filiality, and frugality.⁴¹

These ideals stand in stark contradiction to the message of the stone, which testifies to the wealth of the clan. The contradiction was sublimated but not resolved by the contention that the expenditure was a sacrifice motivated by filial devotion. **The monument itself declares a certain degree of economic strength,** while the fine print on the walls asserts instead the value of poverty. In this way the clan could simultaneously eschew and pursue material interests.

THE LITERATI AND THE ART OF ARTIFICE

How is the duplicitous rhetoric of the funerary monuments relevant to the artificial style of the Wu Shrines and related monuments? At the very least it casts doubt on the notion that these shrines were erected by pious but ingenuous provincials, as ignorant of worldly politics as of space and perspective. **It would further support Wilma Fairbank's contention that the style of the shrines was more a matter of choice than incompetence.** This writer has also previously submitted that the archaism of much funerary art in Shandong may have been due to a process of conscious selection promoted by the logical ideals of the Han literati, an elite which construed the structure of both cosmos and society in terms of easily identified units arranged in hierarchical sequences. It was proposed that these formal requirements encouraged a simple style devoid of all but the most essential information.⁴² Parallels can be found in European art history if one looks to recent studies which suggest that, where the textual burden of the image has high priority, much of the information extraneous to the verbal message (such as details of texture and weight) may be eliminated as trivial.⁴³ Since the themes depicted at the Wu shrines often derived their meaning directly from classical texts, such studies prompt one to inquire further into the attitudes of Han scholars towards those texts.

Han scholarship was characterized by meticulous attention to the exegesis of individual terms, working from the premise that all the words recorded in the classics were meaningful, often in hidden ways. The object of scholarship was to manifest the hidden Reason in the sacred script, even at the cost of straining the credulity of contemporaries. The famous scholar and historian Ban Gu^{ac} (d. AD 92) described the evolution of this type of scholarship and the material incentives that lay behind it:

(Between the time when Emperor Wu^{ad} established fellows for the study of the classics and the end of the first century BC), the transmitters of the [Classical] heritage had increased and multiplied, [like a tree] producing branches and leaves in profusion. On the explanation of one Classic more

than a million words [had been written], and the host of great masters had increased to more than one thousand men, for this, indeed, was the way which led to appointments and profit.⁴⁴

Ban Gu recognized a duplicity in scholarship comparable to that we have identified for funerary monuments, the pursuit of truth camouflaging the pursuit of profits. Indeed, the scholars he refers to here were doubtless an important constituent of those who built funerary monuments with a view to the same ends. Wu Liang himself, after all, was just such a scholar. Ban Gu also noted a propensity toward imaginative exegesis in Han scholarship:

The scholars of wide [learning] no longer bore in mind the meaning [of the saying] 'Hear much and put aside points of which you stand in doubt'; they busied themselves with subtle analysis, trying to eschew [real] difficulties, and with facile phrases and cunning expressions broke up the body [of the text].⁴⁵

This type of scholarship gave birth to a body of literature called the apocryphal books, books of mystical exegesis on the classics wherein each and every character was interpreted as essential and charged with meaning. This meaning could be unlocked through the application of current cosmological theories, which presupposed the rational operation of nature and society. Tjan Tjoe Som has remarked that Dong Zhongshu's^{ae} treatise on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was perhaps among the first apocryphal texts. It was Dong who discovered that Heaven's purpose could be revealed through a proper reading of classical texts, maintaining that the classic of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* offered the key to an understanding of the cosmic and social spheres of order.

they form a compendium for rulers and their composition forms a definite system; they reveal the order of the Five Elements, and therewith the principle of Heaven; by understanding them the origins of the yin and yang, and of the Four Seasons may be known. The *Spring and Autumn Annals* record the past for the enlightenment of the future; by means of analogy present events, especially calamities and strange phenomena, may be explained, if the events in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* are properly understood.⁴⁶

So authoritative did this approach to the classics become that Ban Gu adopted it in his exposition of major Confucian doctrines, the *White Tiger Hall Discussions*. A few passages from this work will serve to illustrate the use of analogy and punning in this brand of scholarship:

Why does the Son of Heaven (the emperor) erect a *pi-yung*?^{af} [It is the place where] rites and music are practiced, and whence his spiritual influence is proclaimed. *Pi* means *pi*^{ag} 'jade disk'; it imitates the roundness of the jade disk, which models itself on Heaven. *Yung* means that it is 'dammed up' *yung*^{ah} with water; it represents [the king's] reforming influence flowing forth. *Pi* [also] means *chi*^{ai} 'to accumulate'; to accumulate the spiritual power [proceeding from the prevalence] of the

(Confucian) Way in all under Heaven . . . The *Wang chih*^{aj} (chapter of the *Classic of Rites*) says: ‘The Son of Heaven [has a building] called *pi-yung*, the Feudal Lords [have a building] called *p’an-kung* (pangong)’.⁴⁷

To this day no one knows why the moat surrounding a particular royal building of ancient times was called the *biyong* (*pi-yung*). Neither did the author of this text. But the latter did not hesitate to infer that the *bi* in *biyong* was derived from the idea of *bi*, a disk; or perhaps it was from *pi*, ‘to accumulate’? In Han times such pseudo-philological connections were often drawn on the basis of the consonance or assonance of two terms. Consonance of sounds was sufficient to imply consonance of meaning in Han scholarly circles, because it was believed that such correspondences could not be accidental.

So insistent was this scholarship upon the significance of every written statement that even the absence of statements had to be explained:

Why is (the *pi-yung*) not called *yuan*^{ak} ‘round’ [-*yung*]? It takes its example from the jade disk, which is charged with spiritual power. How (then) do we know it is round? Because it is called *pi-yung*.⁴⁸

Such was the stuff of the Han scholar’s scholarship. Wu Liang himself must have spent many hours pondering equally onerous puzzles. It is a premise of this kind of scholarship that everything actually said is significant, and what is trivial is by definition unsaid (though not the reverse). If the meaning is not transparent, perhaps a pun was intended, or a reference to another book, but the text, as a mirror of Heaven and society, must be rational.

What about the illustrations of classical texts we find on the walls of the Wu Shrines? Is it possible that random features of dress, such as the texture and weight of cloth, were too irrational in character to find favor with literati such as Wu Liang and his clan? Were such mundane features too likely to detract from the moral content of the image, the ‘text’ of the narrative? Could the mere recognition of accidental forms threaten the scholar’s claim for a rational and benevolent Heaven? ‘Precedent’ for such an interpretation is not lacking, if we are willing to look to other cultures distant in time and space. E.H. Gombrich has suggested, in a study of nineteenth century theories of ornament, that ‘certain formal conventions or styles can serve as convenient metaphors for moral qualities,’ and he amply illustrates this idea with a variety of Victorian writings.⁴⁹ True, Victorian England seems distant in every respect from Han China, but it is far from certain that Han intellectuals were inclined to any less moralizing than their Victorian counterparts. A passage from the *Classic of Rites*, a favorite of the time, suggests that Confucians were perfectly capable of moralizing about such things as clothing design:

In ancient times the regulations for the ruler’s robe corresponded to the compass, the square, the inked string, and the balance [in its design] . . . The (circumference) of the sleeve was round to correspond to the compass; (the perimeter of the) collar was like a carpenter’s square; a taut string was drawn from the shoulder to the ankle that (the clothing might) correspond to the straight; the lower part (the hem) was adjusted like a (balanced) pair of scales so as to correspond to the level. The round part came into

play when bowing and saluting so as to (convey the proper) demeanor, while the straight line and the (other) square parts were to straighten the ruler's government.⁵⁰

Nothing, not even the cut of cloth, could be ascribed to chance.

This exegesis on the cut of the ruler's clothes might have been written for the figures at the Wu Shrines, whose clothing tends to have straight hems and circles for sleeves. But it would be unwarranted, and unnecessary, to contend that the Wu clan or their artist had modeled the figures in the engravings on a particular passage from the *Classic of Rites*. By the second century AD the compass and square, or the shapes they produce (one of which figures in Ban Gu's exegesis on the *bryong*), had long served as metaphors, even clichés, for correct government, as in this passage. The compound 'compass-square' in the Chinese of the period means 'regulation, order.' At the Wu Shrines this same compound, the compass and square, operates as a metaphor in the hands of Fu Xi^{al} and Nu Wa,^{am} the first in the line of Confucian sage rulers, as emblems of good government and social harmony (plate 9).⁵¹ Apart from this, the compass and square figure everywhere in the shrines where a circle or straight line is made, such as in the tails and sleeves of the two sages. Taking this well-known metaphor into account, one wonders if some compass-welding craftsman, trying to cut corners, as it were, once approached a Shandong literatus with a design and became an instant success for reasons he had not anticipated? After all, should a scholar once recognize that the 'gracious curves' in his shrine had been made with a compass, could he avoid more metaphorical speculation about good government, or even virtue, which, according to Cai Yong, is 'measured'?

Perhaps we should turn this question around by inquiring whether our Shandong scholar could have tolerated a style, a realistic style, in which the noble events illustrated looked no different from the affairs of ordinary life. There is reason to believe that the Han literati would take great pains to re-create the ambience of the antique which would set their exalted world apart from that of the vulgar crowd. The *History of the Latter Han* tells us that:

In AD 29 the Imperial Academy was rebuilt, (researched and) styled after (the manner described in) the classics, with equipment such as *bian*^{an} and *dou*^{ao} (sacrificial) vessels and weapons (of the type mentioned in the classics). (Scholars) wearing clothes with square collars and practicing measured (lit., 'square') steps (in imitation of the classics) moved about within.⁵²

One wonders if this 'measured' ambling is not the same as that we find in the *Zhuangzi*,^{ap} when a critic of Confucian scholars portrays the 'sage men' as 'limping and wheeling about in (the exercise of) benevolence, pressing along and standing on tiptoe in the doing of righteousness.' Both texts attribute some highly artificial form of locomotion to Confucian scholars. The *History* explains it as a reconstruction of some kind of ambulation ostensibly practiced by pre-imperial Confucians; the *Zhuangzi*, probably written in pre-imperial times,

dismisses such display as artificial.⁵³ Perhaps both were correct. It was, after all, the artifice which distinguished the paces of university pedants from those of ordinary folk.

In Han times, square collars and 'measured' steps, like retiring from office or erecting a shrine, were public gestures signifying dedication to Confucian ideals. Once we understand these conventions, it is easy to see how the very artifice of the style could have set the noble figure of King Cheng apart from the men of a less rational, less exalted world. The arcs and angles of the forms disavow any interest in materiality and simultaneously demonstrate the ubiquity of rational order in Heaven and among men. Having shaved away the bumps and blunders of physicality, this style leaves room for little more than the standard phrases of literati rhetoric, scraps of sermons on loyalty, filiality, and frugality. If this thesis should prove to be a more plausible explanation than provincialism or ignorance, then the unnatural style of these shrines could be construed in terms of the duplicity demanded of literati monuments, a noble, measured style denying the material quality of the stone it covered.

Conceived in this manner the figurative funerary art of the Shandong literati represented neither the triumph of realism nor the demise of abstraction. It was not realistic because its themes were elevated and anything but worldly; it was in some sense abstract because the style was unnatural. As the product of a new patronage group, it may be contrasted with the art of bronze vessel decor, but the difference between the two cannot be construed to represent a formal evolution from decoration to representation. This difference, as described in this essay, represented more properly a revolution wherein art changed its symbolic functions as the society of early China entered its imperial phase. In the process, the candid display of wealth and power gave way to a more sophisticated and persuasive projection of both material and supra-material messages. With the emergence of a literate, socially mobile patronage group, a new, figurative art had entered an age of propaganda.

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NOTES

1 The Wu shrines may well be the most discussed monuments in all of early Chinese art. For the classic overview of the shrines and their historiography see Wilma Fairbank, 'The Offering Shrines of Wu Liang Tz'u,' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6 (1941), pp. 1-36, reprinted in *Adventures in Retrieval* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 43-86; see also Doris Croissant, 'Funktion und Wanddekor in der Opferschreine von Wu-Liang-Tz'u. Typologische und Iconographische Untersuchungen,' *Monumenta Serica* 23 (1964), pp. 95-105. For a synthetic view of Han society and the social changes brought about by the Han empire see Michael Loewe,

Everyday Life in Han China (London and New York, 1968). For a comprehensive discussion of pre-Han vessel decor see Fong Wen, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China* (New York, 1980). I wish to record my gratitude here to Chi-yun Chen, who read a draft of this article at an early and critical stage. I have endeavored to incorporate as many of his numerous suggestions, insights, and corrections as possible. Many thanks as well to Lin Shoujun of the Institute of Archaeology, Chinese University of Hong Kong, for much fine advice, and to the staff of the Institute for their help in providing access to the rare source materials there. I am also very much indebted to James

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- 2 One of the earliest scholars to espouse the stylized-realistic model was not a trained sinologist, but has had much influence in the field. See M. Rostovtseff, *The Animal Style in South Russia and China* (Princeton, 1929). See also Alexander Soper, 'Life-motion and the Sense of Space in Early Chinese Representational Art,' *Art Bulletin*, 30 (1948), pp. 170-1, Max Loehr, 'Some Fundamental Issues in the History of Chinese Painting,' *Journal of Asian Studies* 23/2 (February, 1964), p. 186. William Watson, in *The Chinese Exhibition* (London, 1974), p. 117, summed up this tradition of thinking this way: 'The break with the tradition of non-realistic, formalizing art occurred about the middle of the first century BC. Verisimilitude then counted seriously in painting and sculpture for the first time [in China] . . . The famous mural reliefs of the Wu Liang tombs [sic] in Shantung [Shandong] depict scenes of exemplary filial piety and incidents from the life of Confucius, but also real events of comparatively recent history, and the style reflects that of contemporary painting.'
 - 3 Soper, 'Life-Motion,' p. 171. Nagahiro Toshio accepted and referred to Soper's idea in his survey of Han bas-reliefs. See Nagahiro Toshio, *Kandai gazo no kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1965), p. 118. While it is evident that painting and other arts at court were under the direct control of several bureaus, the variety of regional styles in the Latter Han suggests either local artisans catering to private patrons like the Wu family, or an amazing variety of court styles for local artisans to emulate. Since even the production of such luxury items as bronze mirrors fell increasingly into private hands during the Latter Han, the idea of relatively independent local traditions seems more compelling. For details on the production of artwares for the court see Chen Zhi, *Liang han ping shi hao luncong*, (Xi'an, 1958), pp. 96-109; 156-170. The term patronage is ambiguous and requires definition. One authority notes that 'throughout history . . . it is difficult to separate the genuine personal taste for art from a generosity conditioned primarily by utilitarian motives and engendered by a desire to assert power, social prestige, religious convictions, and so on.' The term 'patronage' in this essay is to be understood in this sense. Francis Haskell, 'Patronage,' in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, 15 vols (New York, 1958-68), XI. 118-19.
 - 4 Li Falin, in *Shandong han huaxiang vanju* (Jinan, 1982), pp. 7-18, provides a good review of the art of Shandong and the historical peculiarities of the region in Han times.
 - 5 Lester James Bilsky, *The State Religion of Ancient China*, 2 vols (Taipei, 1975), I 81-100.
 - 6 Wilma Fairbank, 'A Structural Key to Han Mural Art,' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7, no. 1 (April, 1942), pp. 52-88, reprinted in *Adventures in Retrieval*, pp. 89-140, see p. 89, Soper, 'Life-Motion,' p. 174; Hsio-yen Shih, 'I-nan and Related Tombs,' *Artibus Asiae* XXII (1959), pp. 299-300, Lawrence Sickman, in Lawrence Sickman and Alexander Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China* (Baltimore, 1971), pp. 79-81.
 - 7 Regarding the stones from Songshan see Zhu Xilu et al., 'Shandong jiaxiang songshan faxian han huaxiangshi,' *Wenwu* (September, 1979), pp. 1-6, Jean M. James, 'Some Recently Discovered Late Han Reliefs,' *Oriental Art*, 26, no. 2 (Summer, 1980), p. 190. Regarding the stones from Tongshan see *Jiangsu xuzhou han huaxiang shi* (Beijing, 1959), pp. 7-11.
 - 8 Ludwig Bachhofer, in *A Short History of Chinese Art* (London, 1947), pp. 92-3, was among the first to suggest this, but some later writers have also adopted this position.
 - 9 The use of parallel perspective in panel paintings from Jiangsu dating to the first century BC is discussed in Martin J. Powers, 'A Late Western Han Tomb near Yangzhou and Related Issues,' *Oriental Art* XXIX, no. 3 (autumn 1983), pp. 275-90, Soper, in 'Life-Motion,' p. 174, proposed that the style of the Wu shrines could be explained via three factors (1) the distance from the capital, i.e., provincialism, (2) the conservatism of funerary art; (3) the difference between painting with a brush and stone carving. Any of these proposals would fail to explain the more realistic stone carvings of Sichuan. The provincialism theory is especially inappropriate for Shandong, since large numbers of the most famous scholars and officials in the histories were natives of this area. This is reflected in Chen Zhengxiang's map of the birthplaces of the highest ministers in the Western Han, where distinct concentrations are to be seen in southern Shandong and northern Jiangsu. Chen Zhengxiang, *Zhongguo wenhua di* (Hong Kong, 1981), pp. 1-2, map 3.
 - 10 Fairbank, 'Structural Key,' pp. 110; 132. For the reference to copybooks see Ban Gu (died

- AD 92), *Han shu* (Beijing, 1962), 30.1717.
- 11 It has always been difficult for art historians to assign the proper degree of emphasis to materials and techniques, without either understating or overstating their role. For a balanced discussion of the issue see E.H. Gombrich, *The Sense of Order* (Ithaca, 1979), pp. 180-3, 195-200. The use of copybooks or stencils in Shaanxi reliefs is more obvious for some figures than others, but it cannot be argued that shop practices affected the style of some figures and not others if the style of all figures is consistent, as is the case in Shaanxi. For an example of two identical figures from this region the reader may compare the tigers illustrated in Kate Finsterbusch, *Verzeichnis und Motivindex der Han Darstellungen*, 2 vols (Weisbaden, 1966), II. figs 459 and 491. The stone illustrated in plate 10, like the stones of the Wu shrines, was probably painted when new, but from the contour of figures such as the tiger-like beast, or the sense of weight in the sleeves of the running figure, it is evident that the original painting involved considerably more recession in space than the reliefs of the Wu shrines. Hsio-yen Shih noted the more lifelike appearance of the Shaanxi reliefs (which pre-date the Wu shrines by about fifty years) in 'I-nan and Related Tombs,' pp. 300, 305.
 - 12 Patricia Ebrey, 'Later Han Stone Inscriptions', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40, no. 2 (December, 1980), pp. 348-50. On recommendations and the Han recruitment system see Hans Bielenstein, *The Bureaucracy of Han Times* (Cambridge, 1981), chapter 6.
 - 13 Fan Ye (d. AD 445) and Sima Biao (AD 240-305), *Hou han shu* (Beijing, 1965) 62.2063, 2067; 54.1767-68. Hereafter, 'HHS'.
 - 14 Lien-Sheng Yang, 'Great Families of the Eastern Han,' in *Chinese Social History*, trans. and ed. by Sun Zen E-tu and John De Francis (Washington D.C.: 1956), reprinted in *The Making of China*, ed., Chun-shu Chang (New Jersey, 1975), pp. 122-3. On the use of funerary monuments for a good reputation, see pp. 134-36. On politics and public opinion in the second century AD see Chi-yun Chen, *Hsun Yueh* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 20 ff. It should be noted that although public opinion was an important factor in the careers of literati across the empire, the expectations of prominent elites in different regions might well have varied according to the different economies and histories of each region. For this reason this paper restricts its interest to the role of public opinion in the greater Shandong region.
 - 15 HHS 78.2523. The meaning of the term translated here as 'shrines' is not transparent. Literally the term refers to a covering for a room, the room itself, a chamber or a portico. Sometimes this character refers to the site of sacrifices. The paragraph in question moves from a discussion of funerary monuments below ground to those above, and so a portico-like structure in front of the tomb, placed near a pair of stone towers, is most likely to have been an offering shrine. The Wu shrines are constructed in just this fashion, open on one side like a portico, and with stone towers nearby. The figure "100" would appear to be an exaggeration.
 - 16 There are other passages in the histories pointing to the eunuchs as an important patronage group for funerary monuments after the mid-second century AD, e.g. HHS 78.2521, HHS 78.2530. Hans Bielenstein traces the rise of eunuch power to this period, noting that 'the career officials were bitterly opposed to the eunuchs, since these had not come up through the ranks like themselves and yet were a challenge to their own influence in government.' *Bureaucracy*, p. 150. Because of this, whatever the nature of their funerary monuments, they would not have been subject to the same kinds of public pressures as the literati. This writer is currently preparing a study of a group of stylistically and structurally related tombs from northeast China that appear to be unrelated to most other monuments in the region. The distinguishing features of these tombs, apart from their elaborate structure, is the absence of any reference to Confucian imagery and the use of a highly sophisticated, realistic style of carving. It is possible that these tombs might be linked to a patronage group independent of the recommendation system such as the eunuchs or other court-centered cliques.
 - 17 HHS 62.2067; 35.1211. In his study of funerary customs in Han times Yang Shuda lists a variety of similar examples from the histories. Yang Shuda, 'Handai sang-zang zhidu kao,' *Qinghua xuebao* 8.1 (1932), pp. 26 ff. A late Western Han tomb in Jiangsu contained bamboo strips announcing the deceased to the spirits of the underworld and, among other things, listing some of the guests at his funeral, some of whom had travelled great distances to participate. See Wang Qinjun *et al.*, 'Jiangsu xu-jiang huchang wuhao hanmu,' *Wenwu* (November, 1981), pp. 17-20.
 - 18 Huan Kuan (active 1st half of 1st c. BC), *Yantie lun* (Shanghai, 1974), p. 69.
 - 19 For a discussion of Han attitudes towards death and the dead see Michael Loewe, *Chinese Ideas of Life and Death* (London, 1982), chapters 3 and 11. Perhaps the most famous of the late Western Han decorated tombs is Luoyang tomb #61, discussed in English by Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, *Han and Tang Murals* (Boston, 1976), pp. 21-2. This tomb could comfortably accommodate perhaps six or more people. Tombs of this size are more common by the middle of

- the second century, when the Wu shrines were made. It is evident that some of the articles and probably some or most of the decorations in tombs were designed with a view to the underground spiritual bureaucracy, which had to be presented with proper documentation and evidence of the status of the deceased. See Ying-shih Yu, 'New Evidence on the Early Chinese Conception of Afterlife — a Review Article,' *Journal of Asian Studies* XLI no. 1 (November, 1981), pp. 82-5. For a discussion of archaeological evidence for burial rites see Robert Thorpe, 'Mortuary Art and Architecture of Early Imperial China' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1980), pp. 221-8.
- 20 HHS 54.1767-8. On the political use of omens in Han times see Hans Bielenstein, 'An Interpretation of Portents in the Ts'ien Han Shu,' *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, 22 (1950), pp. 127-43, Chi-yun Chen, *Hsun Yueh*, pp. 15-17. For reports on the excavation of Yang Zhen's family cemetery, see *Wenwu* (February, 1961), pp. 56-66, *Kaogu* (1963) #1, pp. 30-3.
- 21 Zhang Yanyuan (AD 9th c.), *Lidai mingshua ji*, trans., William Acker, *Some Tang and Pre-Tang Texts on Chinese Painting*, 2 vols (Leiden, 1954 and 1974), II. 6-7. In his remarks on this passage, pp. 8-9, Acker discusses Paul Pelliot's doubts about its interpretation. Pelliot felt that the Chinese did not justify the interpretation that Zhao Qi actually painted the tomb himself. Acker politely disagrees. The Chinese quite clearly and literally says that he 'painted' the tomb. For the tomb at Holingol see Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, *Han and Tang Murals*, p. 41. For the tomb from Cangshan, see note 22 below.
- 22 Zhang Qihai, 'Shandong cangshan yuanjia yuannian hua-xiangshi mu,' *Kaogu* (1975) #2, p. 126. Zhang felt that, despite the style of the reliefs in this tomb, the cyclical date inscribed there should be assigned the date AD 425 instead of AD 151. This view was subsequently overturned. See Zhang Xunliao, 'Shandong cangshan yuanjia yuannian huaxiangshi tiji di shidai he youguan wenti di taolun,' *Kaogu* (1980) #3, pp. 271-8. See also note 19. For a full discussion and paraphrase (in modern Chinese) of the Cangshan inscription see Li Falin, *Shandong*, pp. 95-101.
- 23 HHS zhi 6.3152 notes that imperially funded burials for nobility, concubines, favored officials, and the like 'all had special commissioners from the emperor to arrange the funeral for them.' In his essay on contemporary excesses, Wang Fu maintains that the fashions of extravagant burials in the capital extended to the provinces as well. Wang Fu (active mid 2nd c.), *Quanfu lun*, annot. Wang Jipei (b. 1775), collated by Peng Duo (Beijing, 1975), p. 134. This does not mean that provincials also required professionals to arrange funerals, but, considering the importance and complexity of funerals, this must be considered a genuine possibility.
- 24 Huan Kuan, *Yantie lun*, pp. 69-70.
- 25 HHS 1B.51 Pleas for modest burials go all the way back to the *Mo zi* (fifth c. BC) and the *Lu shi chunqu* (third c. BC). For the former the reader may consult Burton Watson's fine translation *Mo Tzu Basic Writings* (New York, 1963), pp. 65-77, the latter reference can be found in *Lu shi chunqu ji shi*, comp. Lu Buwei (d. 235 BC) (Taipei, 1975), 10 4b-8a. This plea by Guangwu is consistent with his other frugal policies, such as slashing a number of offices in charge of the palace grounds HHS zhi 26.3600. Apart from their propaganda value, such measures may also have been motivated by economic considerations following the interval of war separating the two Han dynasties.
- 26 HHS 2.115, 4.186, 5.207.
- 27 Wang Chong, *Lun heng*, 4 vols (Beijing, 1979), IV.1455, trans., Alfred Forke, *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen* 11 (1908), pt 1, p. 123.
- 28 HHS 39.1307.
- 29 HS 5.234, 7.299, 7.302, 7.304, 62.2051-2.
- 30 HHS 62.2068, 60B.2006, 62.2067, 62.2069, note 2. The display of paintings of exemplary rulers and ministers in the palaces of early Han emperors is well-known. See Lawrence Sickman and Alexander Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China*, pp. 67-8. The earliest reference to such may be the mention of illustrations of the 'Nine types of Ruler' in the manuscripts unearthed at Mawangdui near Changsha. For a discussion of these see Li Xueqin (Ling Xiang), 'Lun mawangdui han mu boshu 'yi yin juozhu',' *Wenwu* (November, 1974), pp. 22 and 24. These early examples should perhaps be distinguished from those of the Latter Han in that all were produced for royal or imperial patrons. It would seem to be in the Latter Han that we first find the extensive use of portraits for promoting the interests of an elite distinct from royalty.
- 31 HHS 84.2799-1800. Patricia Ebrey, 'Han Inscriptions,' p. 337.
- 32 HHS 64.2108. Yang Zhen's story is told in HHS juan 54.
- 33 Chi-yun Chen, *Hsun Yueh*, p. 13.
- 34 Wang Fu, *Quanfu lun*, p. 137. In this passage Wang focuses on the more powerful elites, but elsewhere in this essay he indicates that the practices of capital elites were copied in the provinces. See note 23.
- 35 Fairbank, 'Offering Shrines,' pp. 49-52.
- 36 Wu Liang's inscription is transcribed in its entirety in Eduard Chavannes, *Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale*,

- 2 vols plus atlas (Paris, 1909-15), I no. 1193.
- 37 Fairbank, 'Offering Shrines,' p. 50.
- 38 Liu Xiang (80-9 BC), *Lie nu zhuan* (Si bu bei yao ed.), 5.6b-7b; Feng Yungpeng and Feng Yunyuan, *Jinshi suo*, 2 vols., N.P., 1821, reprint ed. (Taipei, 1974), II. 1335.
- 39 From Cai Yong's (133-192), *Mingtang lun*, cited in HHS zhi 8.3179.
- 40 HHS zhi 8.3180, 3177, 3179.
- 41 For the Han reconstruction of the 'Hall of Light' see HHS 2.100, 79.2545-46. For its archaeological reconstruction see Zhongshu Wang, trans., Kwang-chih Chang, *Han Civilization* (New Haven, 1982), pp. 38-40.
- 42 Martin J. Powers, 'An Archaic Bas-relief and the Chinese Moral Cosmos of the First Century A.D.,' *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981), pp. 25-40. In a letter responding to this article Lawrence Sickman suggested that I might usefully look into questions surrounding the patronage of funerary monuments. In many respects this paper grew out of his suggestion.
- 43 See, for instance, Norman Bryson, *Word and Image* (Cambridge, 1981). In chapter one, to which the reader is referred, Bryson seeks to articulate a workable alternative to the stylized-realistic dichotomy which has so long dominated the discipline of art history. Some of the ideas he proposes appear more readily applicable to the art of the Han literati than the older model, which tends to be inconsistent with archaeological evidence.
- 44 Tjan Tjoe Som conducted a thorough study of Han scholarship, its history and characteristics in his translation of *Po Hu T'ung*, 2 vols (Leiden, 1949), especially I: 82-154. For the citation from Ban Gu see I: 143.
- 45 *Po Hu T'ung*, I. 143.
- 46 *Po Hu T'ung*, I: 98-9; on the apocryphal books see I. 100-20, on Dong Zhongshu's text as an apocryphal book see I: 101.
- 47 *Po Hu T'ung*, II. 485. For an account of the Biyong and its archaeological reconstruction see Zhongshu Wang, *Han Civilization*, pp 9-10.
- 48 *Po Hu T'ung*, I 485.
- 49 E.H. Gombrich, *The Sense of Order*, chapter 2, especially p. 44.
- 50 *Liyi zhusu*, *Shisanjing zhusu* ed., 58.32b.
- 51 The compass and square figure at some point or other in most Warring States and Han political discourses, e.g. *Lu shi chunqiu jishi*, 3.16b-18b, 25.11a-13a, *Huaman yizheng*, ed., Liu Jiali (Beijing, 1924), 15.4a-5a, *Liyi zhusu*, 37.5b. For an account of the iconography of Fu Xi and Nu Wa, see Cheng Te-k'un, 'Yin-yang wu-hsing and Han Art,' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 20 (1957), pp. 162-86
- 52 HHS 79.2545. In the same spirit, the *Bo hu tong* explains that the use of round and square shapes in the *biyong* 'expresses the idea that one's spiritual power should be [perfect] as a circle, and one's conduct should be square,' which is to say, 'correct' *Po Hu T'ung*, II 485.
- 53 The author of this passage in the *Zhuangzi* was contrasting the highly artificial mannerisms of the Confucian scholars against the ideal, natural world he had just described. Wang Fuzhi (1627-1679), annotator, *Zhuangzi jie*, (Beijing, 1976), 9.83, James Legge, trans., *The Texts of Taoism*, 2 vols, *The Sacred Books of the East* series, ed., Max Muller, vols XXXIX-XL, reprint ed. (New York, 1962), I 278. Wang Fuzhi's note explains that the characters Legge translates as 'limping and wheeling' describe 'an unnatural form of walking, (as though) unable to walk but forcing (oneself) to walk'. The words translated 'pressing along' he explains as 'halting, forced steps.' One wonders if the 'measured' steps of Han scholars were any less strained.

GLOSSARY

a	宋山	b	銅山
c	兩城山	d	韓韶
e	陳寶	f	楊震
g	侯覽	h	張儉
i	鄭玄	j	蒼山
k	趙岐	l	光武

m	王 充	n	鄧 太后
o	陳 紀	p	蔡 邕
q	叔 先 雄	r	延 篤
s	屈 原	t	王 符
u	武 梁	v	仲 章
w	季 立	x	子 儵
y	衛 改	z	董 永
aa	周 公	ab	成 王
ac	班 固	ad	漢 武 帝
ae	董 仲 舒	af	辟 雍
ag	璧	ah	壘
ai	積	aj	王 制
ak	圓	al	伏 犧
am	女 媧	an	邊
ao	豆	ap	莊 子

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