8. The Empire
(0221-0206)

Chín was respected for its military severity. Here, as poetically imagined, are three human sacrifices, waiting at the edge of the tomb of Chín Mù-gūng (r 0659-0621), the most renowned of the Spring and Autumn rulers of Chín:

8:1 (Shr̄ 131, Chín #6, early 04c).

131A Crisscross fly the yellow birds;
their nests at last they seek.
Who did follow Mù the Prince?
Dzǐgū's son, Yǎm Zík,
no one else but Yǎm Zík –
among a hundred men unique.
He stood beside the pit
and trembled as he looked at it;
Azure Heaven there on high
only our best will satisfy;
Could he but be ransomed, ah,
we'd let a hundred others die.

131B Crisscross fly the yellow birds;
and to their nests they throng.
Who did follow Mù the Prince?
Dzǐgū's son Jùng Hóng,
No one else but Jùng Hóng –
among a hundred, none more strong.
He stood beside the pit
and trembled as he looked at it;
Azure Heaven there on high
only our best will satisfy;
Could he but be ransomed, ah,
we'd let a hundred others die.

131C Crisscross fly the yellow birds;
and seek their nests anew.
Who did follow Mù the Prince?
Dzǐgū's son, Kām Hǔ,
no one else but Kām Hǔ –
a hundred men he could outdo.
He stood beside the pit
and trembled as he looked at it;
Azure Heaven there on high
only our best will satisfy;
Could he but be ransomed, ah,
we'd let a hundred others die.

This appalling ruthlessness was to be one of Chín's assets in the years ahead.

The Chín ruler Hwèı-wáng came to the throne in 0331, took the title King in 0324, and in 0316 annexed Shǔ, doubling the size of Chín. There followed Wǔ-wáng (0310) and Jāu-wáng (306), in whose long reign the *western* part of the Jōu enclave was conquered. In 0255. Syàu-wáng ruled for one year (0250). In 0249, Jwāng-wáng gave Lw̌ Bù-wéı 呂不韋 command of the force which conquered the *eastern* part of Jōu, ending the Jōu Kingship, and leaving Chín to replace Jōu. Lw̌ Bù-wéı was made a minister. The Lw̌-shr̀ Chūn/Chyōu, compiled under his patronage, was dated to "the 9th year of Chín" (0241), that is, the 9th year of the new dynasty as thus defined. Meanwhile, the next King, the future First Emperor,[1] had come to the throne in 0246.

Lǐ Sz̄ 李斯, the last and most important Chín political theorist, was born in Chǔ, and studied with Sywńdž. He went with Sywńdž to a conference in Jàu in 0250. Attached to the transcript of that conference is this conversation:

> **8:2** (SZ 15:3, excerpt, c0250). Lǐ Sz̄ asked master Sūn Chīng,[2] Chín for four generations has had only victories. Its troops are the strongest within the Four Seas, its might is felt among the Lords. They have not achieved this by benevolence and righteousness, but by managing affairs according to advantage [byèn 便]. Sūn Chīngdž said, This is not something you understand. What you call advantage is only a disadvantageous sort of advantage. What I call benevolence and righteousness are a highly advantageous sort of advantage. Benevolence and righteousness are how one perfects government. If government is perfected, the people will feel close to their superiors; they will delight in their ruler and think nothing of dying for him. Therefore it is said, Whatever concerns the army or its leadership are minor matters.
>
> Chín for four generations has had only victories, but it has always been anxious lest the world should unite to oppose it. This one may call "the war-making of a decadent age;" there is no fundamental unification. So when Tāng deposed Jyé, it was not that he took advantage of the topography [of the battlefield] of Míng-tyáu; when Wǔ-wáng executed [the evil Shāng ruler] Jòu, it was not that he waited for the morning of the jyǎ/dž day [the first in the 60-day cycle] and only then conquered him; rather, both relied on their previous conduct and prior cultivation; these are what one may call "the warmaking of benevolence and righteousness."

Here was the crux. Can unity be imposed by force, within and without the state, or is it better elicited by a humane government of the Confucian type?

Shortly after this, Lǐ Sz̄ cast his personal vote for the imposed unity option, and went to seek his fortune in Chín.

[1]The terms "Empire" and "Emperor" are conventional but misleading. Chín was a large unified state like France, not a dominion of disparate peoples like Persia or Rome.

[2]There is a dialect factor in connection with Sywńdž; his surname Sywń 荀 was pronounced Sūn 孫 – that is, without medial y – in the Chín/Hàn capital area.

At first, Lǐ Sz̄ served under Lw̌ Bù-wéı, another alien in Chín service. Probably in the middle 0240's, a crisis arose for all outsiders:[3] it had been officially suggested that aliens serving in high office were politically unreliable, and should be expelled from the state. To this Lǐ Sz̄ replied in a memorial which was quoted from the Chín archives by the Shř Jì:

> **Shř Jì** 史記 (SJ, c0135-c090). A history of China to the reign of Hàn Wǔ-dì, begun by the Dàuist-trained Grand Astrologer Sz̄mǎ Tán, continued by his Confucian son Sz̄mǎ Chyēn, and finished by Imperial command in late Hàn. It draws on diverse sources, from state papers to current legends, along with Tán's theory of Sinitic cultural unity. There are partial translations by Watson and Nienhauser.

8:3 (SJ 87, excerpts from Lǐ Sz̄'s memorial of c0242). Your subject has heard that the officials are debating whether to expel aliens. In my humble opinion, this would be a mistake. In the past, when Mù-gūng was looking for men, he chose Yóu Yẃ from the Rúng people in the west, obtained Bǎılǐ Syī from Wǎn in the east, welcomed Jyěn Shú from Sùng, and summoned Pí Bàu and Gūngsūn Jī from Jìn. These five were not natives of Chín, but Mù-gūng, by employing them, was able to annex twenty states and eventually to become hegemon over the Western Rúng.

Syàu-gūng, by putting in practice the laws of Shāng Yāng, reformed manners and altered customs, so that the population flourished, the state became rich and powerful, the people delighted in their duties, and the other feudal lords were amicable and submissive. He captured the armies of Chǔ and Ngwèı and gained 1000 leagues of territory, and the state to this day remains strong and well governed . . .

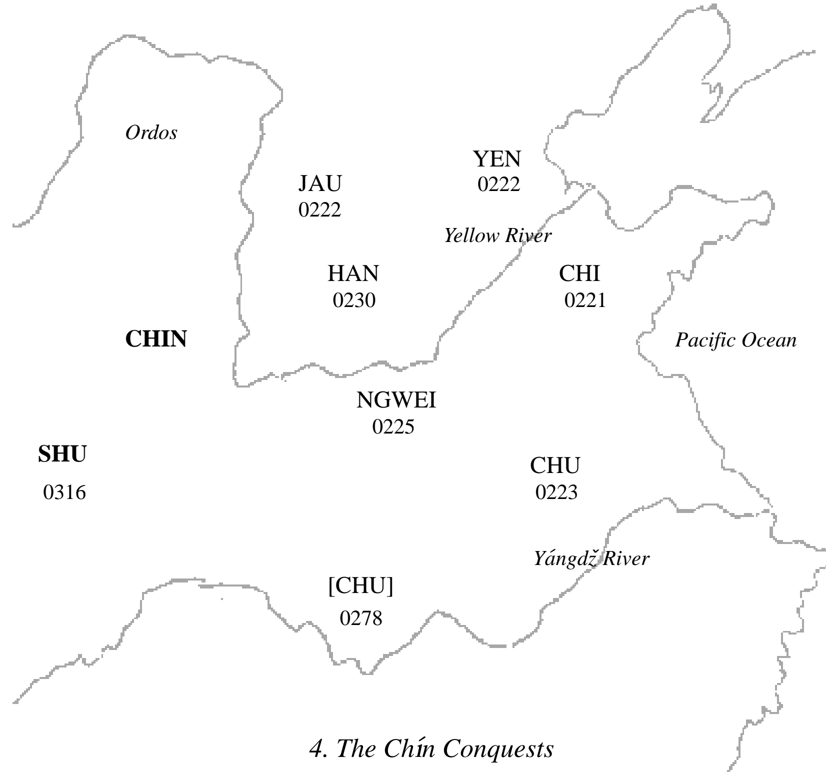
There are many objects not produced in Chín that are worthy to be deemed precious, and many gentlemen not native to Chín who are eager to render it loyal service. Now if His Highness expels aliens and thereby aids enemy states, if he depletes his population and thereby increases that of his opponents, he will empty his own state and plant resentment among the other states. If he hopes in this way to free Chín from danger, his hopes will be in vain.

One of Chín's advantages was its backwardness; its path forward was not cluttered with the leavings of obsolete cultures.[4] Lǐ Sz̄ is here arguing that the advantages of being backward should be consciously exploited. The catch is that a backward state needs a forward-looking leader to reach its full potential.

[3]The occasion may have been resentment of Jv̀ng Gwó 鄭國, a hydraulic expert from Hán who had built a drainage canal for Chín. Legend has grown around this and several relevant incidents, making the situation almost unavailable to serious history.

[4]It is often an advantage to be second. England led in many aspects of the Industrial Revolution, but was later overtaken by nations who had built on second generation technology. Trotsky (**History** 26f) calls this the Law of Combined Development.

Lw̌ Bù-wéı's book, LSCC 1-12, was finished in 0241. He was disgraced in 0237 and committed suicide on his way to exile in 0235. Chín's success came not from this or any other book, but from steady application of military force. The final conquests were Hán (0230), Ngwèı (0225), Chǔ (0223), Jàu and Yēn (0222), and finally Chí in 0221. The classical period was at an end.



4. The Chín Conquests

The First Emperor

The Question of Feudalism. One might imagine that, on the morning after the last conquest, the Chín leadership would ask, How is all this territory to be governed? The answer had already been decided: central control. As states were conquered, they were governed by men like Official Syǐ (#**5:113**), who had been trained and appointed by Chín, and were responsible only to Chín.

At some point the archaizing party, perhaps a remnant of the Lw̌ Bù-wéı group, did suggest refeudalizing:[5] parceling out the land to the ruler's family, and dividing Chín sovereignty itself on the Jōu model.

[5]According to **SJ 87**, the proposal was advanced by Chún'yẃ Ywè 淳于越, a man of Chí, who emphasized the security that would result from following ancient practice.

To this, the high legal official Lǐ Sž replied:

> **8:4** (SJ 6, excerpt, c0221). The sons and younger brothers enfiefed by the Jōu Kings Wýn and Wǔ were very numerous, but afterward they became estranged, attacking each other just as though they were enemies. The lords even invaded each other's territories, and put each other to death, and the Jōu rulers could neither restrain nor prevent them. Now, all within the Seas is subject to His Highness' divine and undivided rule. Let it all be made into administrative regions and districts, and let those who have earned merit be richly rewarded from revenues; this will be entirely adequate and easily instituted. But let the lands under Heaven have no divergent intentions: this is the way to secure peace. To set up feudal lords would not be suitable.

And the Emperor agreed, in these words:

> The First Emperor said, That the world has suffered endlessly from war is because there were Lords and Kings. Thanks to the favor of the Ancestors, the world is now at last stable. To again establish separate states would be merely sowing weapons of war. And if we should then seek to pacify them, how could it but be difficult? The opinion of the Chamberlain 廷尉 is correct.

And so Chín organized its territories into 36 administrative regions (jyẁn 郡),[6] and no Kings at all.

The First Emperor did not see himself as reviving Jōu, but as making a new beginning. He scorned the Jōu title King, and reached back to the Shāng title Dì 帝, with its overtones of divinity. His preferred title, "The First Emperor" (Shř Hwáng-dì 始皇帝), openly proclaimed a departure from earlier precedent.

The First Emperor's successor was to be designated "The Second Emperor" (Àr-shr̀ Hwáng-dì 二世皇帝), and so on for a myriad Emperors into the future. There would be no more dynastic transitions: Chín was there to stay.

Cosmic Cycles. The old Lw̌ Bù-wéı group ventured to dissent. They saw Chín as occupying a limited period within history: part of the Five Phases sequence. In the Lǎn, an addendum to the LSCC, they put it respectfully, comparing the First Emperor with several esteemed figures of antiquity:

> **8:5** (LSCC 13/2:1, excerpt, c0221). When an Emperor is about to arise, Heaven will first display omens among the people below. In the time of the Yellow Emperor, Heaven displayed great worms and crickets, and the Yellow Emperor said, The force [chì 氣][7] of Earth is dominant. Earth being dominant, for his color he honored yellow, and in his actions he imitated earth. Then in the time of Yw̌ . . .

[6]Plus the capital. The number of jyẁn later increased; Loewe **Biographical** 806f.

[7]The meanings of this word includes breath, vapor, ether, or other intangible force.

> . . . Then in the time of King Wv́n, Heaven displayed fire: a vermilion bird holding in its beak a cinnabar writing alighted on the Jōu ancestral shrine; and King Wv́n said, the force of Fire is dominant. Fire being dominant, for his color he honored red, and in his actions he imitated fire.
>
> What takes the place of Fire must be Water. Heaven has displayed the dominance of Water, so Water is dominant. Thus for a color, one should honor black, and in actions, imitate water. If the force of Water should arrive, but no one realizes it, its term will expire, and there will be a shift to Earth. What Heaven creates is the seasons, but it does not otherwise assist the farmers here below.

This makes the Emperor subordinate to a higher sequence of things.

The LSCC group also sought to diminish the influence of Legalism, a doctrine which thinks the worst of people, and may be deluded in doing so:

> **8:6** (LSCC 13/3:2, c0221). A man had lost his ax. He suspected his neighbor's son. Looking at his walk, it was that of an ax thief; his expression was that of an ax thief; his words were those of an ax thief – his whole movement and demeanor were nothing but those of an ax thief. Then while cleaning out a drain he found his ax. Next day when he again looked at his neighbor's son, his movement and demeanor were nothing like those of an ax thief. The neighbor's son had not changed; *he* had changed, and the change had no other reason than his own predilection.

The other person's evil nature may be only in one's own mind. And though Legalist harshness may work once, it may not be a good dynastic foundation:

> **8:7** (LSCC 14/4:2, excerpt, c0219). Of old, when Wv́n-gūng of Jìn was about to do battle with the men of Chǔ at Chv́ngpú, he summoned his Uncle Fàn and asked, The Chǔ are many, we are few; what should I do? Uncle Fàn replied, Your servant has heard that a ruler who is involved in ritual never gets enough of the civil, and a ruler who is involved in battle never gets enough of deception. You should deceive them.
>
> Wv́n-gūng told Yūng Jì what Uncle Fàn had said. Yūng Jì said, If you dry up the marshes to catch fish, how could you not catch something? But next year there will be no fish. If you burn the grass to hunt, how could you not catch something? But next year there will be no game. Though the Way of Deception and Deceit would be effective in these circumstances, it cannot be used twice. It is not a farsighted method.
>
> Wv́n-gūng followed Uncle Fàn's advice and defeated Chǔ at Chv́ngpú. When he returned, he gave rewards, and put Yūng Jì ahead of the rest. His advisors left and right remonstrated, saying, The victory at Chv́ngpú was due to Uncle Fàn's strategy. Our lord followed his advice, yet in giving rewards he has put him last. Something is wrong! Wv́n-gūng replied, Yūng Jì's advice would benefit a hundred generations. Uncle Fàn's advice would work only once. How could I put what would work only once ahead of what would benefit a hundred generations?

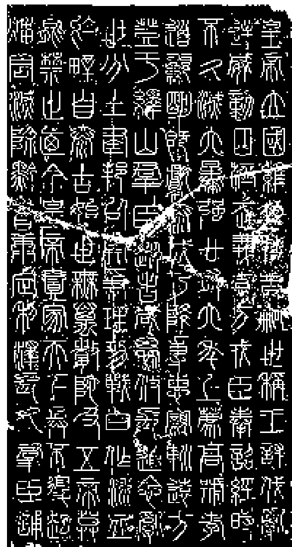
When Confucius heard of this, he said, To use deception in the face of difficulty is a fit way to repel an enemy. To return from battle and honor the worthy is a fit way to reward virtue. Though Wv́n-gūng did not end as he had begun, he was fit to be a Hegemon.

When rewards are large, people will want them. When people want rewards, they can be conditioned. If they are conditioned to be deceptive, then their success will be failure and their victory will be defeat . . .

Of course the safety of the state lay in employing the right kind of ministers:

8:8 (LSCC 13/5:3, excerpt, c0220). When the ruler is worthy and the age is orderly, worthy men occupy high positions . . . So in the present age, if one seeks for an officer who understands the Way, . . . what desire cannot be realized, what deed cannot be achieved?

Confucian ideas like just war did prove useful in portraying the unification process as a fully justified conquest. In 0219, the First Emperor visited the east. In a stone inscription set up on Mount Yì, his achievement is described thus:



8:9 (Chín Inscription #1, SJ 6, first half, 0219).[8]

Long ago, in days of old,
He came unto the Royal Throne.
He smote the fractious and perverse,
His awe was felt on every hand,
Warlike and just, upright and firm.

[8]For these inscriptions, see Kern **Stele**.

His orders the generals received,
And in no very lengthy time
They had destroyed the Cruel Six.
In his six-and-twentieth year,
He offering makes to Those Above,
Resplendent in filiality.
And as he offers up his deed,
So there descends a special grace;
He tours in person the distant lands.
To Mount Yì he now ascends,
His ministers and retinue
All thinking how to make it long.

The Cruel Six were the states Chín had extinguished between 0230 and 0221. They were "cruel" in that "just war" theory *required* that they be cruel.

Law. The Chín laws continued in force, and were applied uniformly across the Empire. Weights and measures were standardized. The script was given its modern form, a simple style which had evolved for the use of clerks.

The Syūngnú 匈奴. Like other border states, Chín in the late 04c had tried to expand into the northern steppe lands. In the time of the First Emperor, the Syūngnú had become weaker than the peoples east and west of them. Chín planned to take the Ordos: the grazing lands lying within the northward loop of the Yellow River. The project looked dubious to many. How to suggest this?

Remonstrance. The Gwǎndž people began by trying to establish an agreed institutional basis for dissent from policy, as essential to a wise sovereign:

> **8:10** (GZ 56, excerpt, c0216). Chí Hwán-gūng asked Gwǎndž, I wish to possess and not lose; to gain and not relinquish; is there a Way to do this? He answered, Don't invent, don't innovate; when the time comes, follow it. Don't let your personal likes and dislikes harm the public good. Find out what the people dislike, and take those things as your own prohibitions . . . That the Yellow Emperor instituted the discussions in the Bright Terrace was so that the sovereign could view the worthy . . . These were the means by which the Sage Emperors and Wise Kings possessed and did not lose; gained and did not relinquish.
>
> Hwán-gūng said, I want to do as they did. What should I call it? He answered, Call it a Discussion of Complaints . . . Those who point out the faults of their superiors should be called Correction Officers . . . I request that Dūng-gwó Yá take this on. He is one who can contend in the presence of his ruler, in the interest of correct procedure.
>
> Hwán-gūng said, Good.

This amounts to the regular airing of grievances by the people, which had already been suggested in the late 04c (#**6:27**). To this it adds the idea that not everyone is qualified to oversee the complaint process in practice.

From another source there was criticism of the Ordos enterprise as such. For a literary model, the LSCC people also went back to the Dzwǒ Jwàn, in this case, to the account of an ill-fated long-distance campaign by Chín in 0628. The LSCC authors altered much in the DJ story, but the point was the same:[9]

> **8:11** (LSCC 16/4:2, excerpt, c0217). Of old, Chín Mù-gūng raised a host to attack Jv̀ng. Jyěn Shú remonstrated, saying, It should not be done. Your subject has heard that, when attacking the city of another state, one does not take the chariots further than a hundred leagues, or the men further than thirty leagues; their spirit being high and their strength at its peak, when they arrive, they can vanquish the enemy if they resist, or pursue them swiftly if they retreat. But now it is proposed to travel several thousand leagues, and in addition, to cross the territories of several other lords, in order to attack this state. Your servant does not understand how this can be done. Let the Sovereign reconsider his plan for it.
>
> Mù-gūng did not listen. Jyěn Shú was seeing off the host outside the gate, and wept, saying, Alas, for the host! I see it depart, but I will not see it return. Jyěn Shú had sons named Shv̄n and Shr̀, who were to go with the host. Jyěn Shú told his sons, If Jìn ambushes the host, it will surely be at Yáu. If you do not die on the southern ridge, it will surely be on the northern ridge; it will be easy for me to recover your bodies . . .

Chín *was* defeated by Jìn, and its leaders were captured. In the prototype DJ story, Mù-gūng had apologized to his defeated army. The penance attributed to him in the LSCC version *exceeds* that prototype in an interesting way:

> When Mù-gūng heard this, dressed in plain clothing [as in mourning] and from the tower of the ancestral shrine, he spoke to the multitude, saying, Heaven is not siding with Chín; it caused this Bereaved One not to heed the remonstrance of Jyěn Shú, and so brought on this disaster.
>
> It was not that Mù-gūng wanted to be defeated at Yáu, but his wisdom was insufficient. When wisdom is insufficient, then one is untrusting, and when words [of others] are not trusted, the fact that the host would not return derives from this. Thus great is the damage caused by insufficiency.

This deals explicitly with the inadequacies of the ruler. Here, as with the above Gwǎndž tract (#**8:10**), the damage done is to the people, and it is to the people (not, as in the Dzwǒ Jwàn story, to the defeated host) that Mù-gūng is made to apologize. The incorporation of the people in the concept of the state, at least in the thinking of certain writers, had evidently come a long way.

[9]How do we know that they had this DJ story in mind? Well, we don't. There is no gimmick that solves questions like this for us. But experience with literary expression in the period (which was often indirect or allusive), and awareness of the political scene (which was urgent and dangerous), will tend to suggest it. **Methodological Reminder**: Humanistic research takes time (p197n). We need to know what these people knew, and how they wrote about it. Acquaintance with *what texts actually do* is part of the toolkit. It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that it *is* the toolkit.

Actual criticism remained difficult. Chín was both autocratic and absolutist. The ideal of such a system had been praised by the Gwǎndž theorists:

> **8:12** (GZ 45, excerpt, c0240). Of old, when Yáu governed the world, it was like clay in a mold for the potter to work; like metal in a furnace for the founder to cast. His people: he summoned them and they came; he dismissed them and they went. What he allowed them, they did; what he forbade them, they stopped. Yau's government was a fine understanding of orders of requirement and prohibition, and nothing else.

The consequence was that protest, whether from below or from within, had no institutional basis, and a daring critic, having protested, had no place to hide. It was a risky business. The LSCC people were at least willing to take the risk.

But the Syūngnú campaign *succeeded*. By 0215, general Mńg Tyén 蒙恬 had driven them off, occupied the Ordos, fortified it, and built a military road made level for heavy carts by "filling in valleys and leveling hills," to supply the new border outposts. The "Great Wall" (Cháng-chńg 長城, "Long Wall"), linked up several shorter defensive walls, earlier constructed by Chín and other northern states, into a single defensive perimeter, "a myriad leagues" long.[10] That wall defined the northern reach of Chín at its moment of greatest power.

It soon became prudent to celebrate this triumph rather than to oppose it. The LSCC did this by arguing that the wise ruler will *ignore* remonstrances. For their parable, they again chose a controversial long-distance campaign:

> **8:13** (LSCC 16/5:4, excerpt, c0214). When Ngwèı attacked Jūngshān, Ywè Yáng was general, and when he had conquered Jūngshān and returned to report to Wńn-hóu, he had a look of satisfaction with his accomplishment. Wńn-hóu sensed this, and told the secretary: "The documents submitted by the officials and the visitors: get them together and bring them here." The secretary got together two baskets and brought them to him. He made the general look at them, and all the documents were opposed to the policy of attacking Jūngshān. The general hastened back, faced north, bowed twice, and said, The success at Jūngshān was not due to your servant's prowess; it was the sovereign's achievement.
>
> In those days, the advisors who were in opposition increased day by day. The impossibility of taking Jūngshān: How could it have required two baskets? One inch would have disposed of it. Wńn-hóu was a worthy ruler, and yet things were like this; how much the more so in the case of a middling ruler? The problem for a middling ruler is that he cannot but do *something*, but he also cannot help but sympathize with the opposition.

[10]These walls are called "long" because unlike city walls, which encircle the city and return to their starting point, they are linear. They enclose nothing, but rather draw a line which marks a boundary, or at least a claimed boundary. For the "Great Wall" as it exists today, in a form far grander than the Chín prototype, see Waldron **Great**.

In any affair of permanent value, no feeling or expression or action but will be in support; how could there be any doubt or opposition among the officials? When they are unanimously in favor, there are no defeats. This is how Tāng and Wǔ achieved great things against Syà and Shāng, and how Gòujyèn was able to avenge his defeat. If the small and weak [rulers of the past] could be united in action and accomplish such things, how much more so with the great and strong?

For a modern reader, this piece and #**8:11** may seem to cancel out. But the LSCC is not a unified theory; it is a minority view expressed under adverse and changing conditions. Each part made local sense when it was written.

The Chín Erudites not only produced policy comments; they also worked on their texts. The Jūng Yūng, which (#**5:100**) had influenced the Mencians, was extended, adding an anachronistic reference to Chín institutions. The Mencians had hated the blood-soaked Shū text called the Wǔ Chv́ng (#**5:107**); it and other Shū were now purged, yielding a repertoire of 29 approved Shū.[11]

The School Scene. How were these views and interpretations handed on? In part by individual teaching, but at least some of the time in a school setting. A Gwǎndž treatise seemingly written at about this period gives us a glimpse of what a day at such a school might have been like. Note the rigid decorum:

8:14 (GZ 59, excerpts, c0214).

The master sets forth teaching, the disciples take it their model.
Enthusiastic, respectful, receptive, they absorb what they receive.
Seeing the good, they follow it; hearing the right, they accept it.
They are gentle and filial, without pride or belligerence.
They have no evil designs; their conduct is always correct.
At home or outside they are always the same:
They will invariably move toward those of virtue.
Their expressions are proper; inwardly, they are exemplary.
Rising early and retiring late, their attire is always proper.
Learning at morn and practicing at eve, they are assiduous.
Concentrating ceaselessly: such is the model student.

The service of the younger is to retire late and rise early;
In sweeping and rinsing, they maintain decorum . . .

(The omitted middle portion describes eating meals and cleaning the room).

[11]The Shū specialist Fú Shv̄ng 伏勝 kept copies of the final 29 Shū, but concealed them in early Hàn, when his privileged position ended, and Confucian texts were still generally prohibited. The 0210 Chín ban on Confucian texts (see p221) was repealed in 0191; thereafter he openly taught his "modern script" Shū (so called because written in the new Chín script). Later schools of Shū interpretation all derive from Fú Shv̄ng. Sywńdž's pupil Fóuchyōu Bwó 浮邱伯, though very old when Hàn became receptive to the Confucian classics, had a similar role in the dissemination of the Shr̄.

At the end of the text comes a section on the students training themselves, after the master has retired, in the technique of argument:

> When the master is about to retire, the students all rise.
> They offer pillow and mat, and ask where he will place his feet.
> (They ask this the first time; later on they do not).
> When the master has retired, each seeks out his friends.
> Cutting and polishing, each improves his arguments.
> When the daily routine is completed, it begins over again.
> These are the guidelines for students.

Parallels to some of these details may be found in the Indian Dharma Sûtras.[12]

Peace. With the Chín political unification, and the standardizing of chariot axles, among other things, people could go anywhere conveniently and safely. Travel flourished, opportunities for trade or favorable relocation multiplied, and unofficial doctrines spread. Graft and profiteering had always been a concern. The last of the Lord Shāng essays addresses these problems plus a new one: corruption in the system of military procurement for the armies on the frontier.

On salary inflation, parasitism, and consequent rural hardship:

> **8:15** (SJS 2:4, excerpt, c0214). If salaries are high and taxes many, the multitude who are supported will weigh heavily on those who are doing the farming. If those supported are reduced in status and put to work, the dissolute and idle population will have no way to eat, and if they have no way to eat, they will take up farming . . .

On grain speculation and consequent rural poverty:

> **8:16** (SJS 2:5, excerpt, c0214). Do not allow merchants to buy grain, nor farmers to sell grain. If farmers cannot sell their grain, then the lazy and idle will exert themselves and be energetic; if merchants cannot buy grain, they will have no particular joy over abundant years . . .

On waste and graft in military procurement for the frontier armies:

> **8:17** (SJS 2:15, excerpt, c0214). Let there be no women in the army markets, but order the merchants to have people gather armor and weapons, so that the army will be well furnished. Also let no one privately transport grain to the military markets . . .

> **8:18** (SJS 2:19, excerpt, c0214). Let those who forward grain not use rented carts or carry goods on the return trip. Carts, oxen, carriages, and wagons must all be according to the registry. If so, then the going will be swift and the coming will be rapid, and the traffic will not weigh heavily on the farmers . . .

[12]The oldest of these, the Âpastamba Dharma Sûtra, is somewhat earlier than this Gwǎndž chapter. For its rules for resident students, see Olivelle **Dharmasūtras** 9-16.

On how to limit travel:

> **8:19** (SJS 2:8, excerpt, c0214). Abolish inns. The false, the troublesome, the profiteers, and the dubious characters will not travel; the innkeepers will have nothing to eat, and will have to turn to farming . . .

On the specific danger that travel will spread the old high culture:

> **8:20** (SJS 2:14, excerpt, c0214). If ministers and nobles are learned and adept in disputation, let them not travel about or live in the various districts; then the rural people will have no way to hear intricacies or see ingenuities . . . clever farmers will have no ground for abandoning old ways, and stupid farmers will not become clever or fond of study . . .

Banning the Books. The spread of the old learning, with its pre-Chín and thus anti-Chín tendency, worried Lǐ Sz̄. In 0213, he submitted this memorial:

> **8:21** (SJ 87, excerpt, quoting Lǐ Sz̄'s 0213 memorial). Of old, the world was in disorder and no one was able to unify it, hence the various lords arose. In their words they extolled the past to the detriment of the present, and elaborated empty expressions to the confusion of the truth. All valued what they had privately studied, in opposition to what their superiors had established. Now, His Majesty possesses all the world; he has separated white from black and has attained sole authority, yet private students join together in opposing the institutions of Legalist doctrine. I have heard that when an order is handed down, they discuss it in terms of their private views. At home, their hearts are opposed; in public, they argue along the byways. They gain reputation by opposing the ruler, achieve prominence with eccentric opinions, and foster sedition by leading the multitude astray. If this is not prohibited, the ruler's power will decline above, and factions will form below. The best course will be to prohibit it.
>
> Your subject requests / that all who possess literary documents, the Shr̄ and Shū, or the sayings of the Hundred Schools, be made to dispose of them. / If within thirty days of this order, they have not disposed of them, they are to be branded and sent to labor on the walls. Writings not to be disposed of are those on medicine, divination, or forestry. Any who wish to study these subjects may take the officials as their teachers.

Methodological Moment. But a version of that memorial in a different chapter of the SJ substitutes, between the / marks above, the following:

> **8:22** (SJ 6, excerpt) . . . / that the archive officials should burn everything but the records of Chín, and, save for those in the possession of the court erudites, whoever in the world dares to keep the Shr̄ and Shū, or the writings of the Hundred Schools, should gather them together for the officers to burn. Those who dare to discuss the Shr̄ and Shū among themselves should be executed and their bodies publicly exposed; those who use the past to criticize the present should be executed together with their families. Any officials who know of violations but do not bring them forward shall be judged equally guilty / . . .

The difference is not minor; it is drastic. Which version is the original?

Embarrassingly enough, the long version leaves intact the short version's provision that violators shall be branded and sent to hard labor. But how do you kill someone and then send them to hard labor? Medically, it cannot be done. What we seem to have, then, is the archive text of Lǐ Sz̄'s memorial, included in SJ 87 by the eclectic Sz̄mǎ Tán, plus a second, falsified version, demonizing Lǐ Sz̄ by making him recommend picturesque cruelties, which was interpolated in SJ 6 by Tán's son Sz̄mǎ Chyēn, who, being Confucian-trained, hated Lǐ Sz̄. Chyēn's atrocity version has held the attention of readers down to the present. But close comparison of the two readily shows that it is not the original.

That same year, Lǐ Sz̄ was made Chancellor of the Left, and the period of Chín latitude toward Confucian ideas in the public sector was at an end.

The requirement to denounce criminals created a culture of betrayal even among the literate. Sensing betrayal became an important survival value:

> **8:23** (LSCC 18/3:1, excerpt, c0212). Once, by the sea, there lived a man who loved gulls. Whenever he was by the shore, he would go over to the gulls. The gulls would flock to him until they numbered in the hundreds, and still they would keep coming – before him and behind, to his left and to his right, everything would be gulls. All day long he played with them, and they would not leave him. His father told him, I hear the gulls come to you. Catch one and bring it here, so *I* can play with it. Next day, the man went to the shore, but not a single gull would come to him.

Filial Piety. Chín might be hostile to the diffusion of Confucian ideas or persuasions among the people (#**8:20**, **8:21**), but it did recognize a widely accepted value which the Confucians had taken into their system: filial piety. Lack of filial respect was a crime in Chín law. A father could not himself put an unfilial son to death, but he could petition the authorities to do so:

> **8:24** (Shwèıhǔdì #D85, c0220?). One who is exempt by age from labor service denounces another for unfilial behavior and asks that he be killed . . . He is to be promptly arrested and not allowed to escape.

> **8:25** (Shwèıhǔdì #E18, c0220?). Denouncing a son. Commoner A of a certain village said in his denunciation: "My son, the commoner C of the said village, is unfilial; I ask that he be killed. This I venture to request."
>
> Forthwith the Prefectural Officer E was ordered to go and arrest him. Prefectural Officer E's report: "With the prison bondservant X, I arrested C; we found him in the house of Y."
>
> The Assistant N has interrogated C. His statement: "I am A's son. I have indeed been unfilial toward A." He has not been found guilty of any other crime.

How this confession was obtained we are not told. The concluding comment about the lack of a previous criminal record was normal procedure: second offenses were much more seriously regarded by Chín law than first ones.

LSCC now revisits the "Upright Gǔng" motif (#**3:46**), but this time, filial obligations are submerged, and only the law is to be obeyed:

> **8:26** (LSCC 19/2:5, c0211). In the time of Jāu-wáng of Jīng,[13] there was an officer named Shŕ Jǔ. In character, he was fair and upright, and without selfishness. The King made him a judge. Someone was murdered. Shr̄ Jǔ set out to catch him, but it turned out to be his own father. He turned his carriage around and returned. Standing in the courtyard, he said, "The murderer is your subject's father. If I were to apply the law to my father, I would be unable to bear it, but to cast aside the laws of the state is impermissible. It is the duty of an officer." With this, he put axe and placard [naming his crime] on his back, and asked to die before the King. The King said, "To pursue but not overtake, how does that require a guilty finding? Resume your office." Shŕ Jǔ declined, saying, "One who does not feel a personal responsibility to his father cannot be called a filial son. One who serves his ruler by bending the law cannot be called a loyal subject. That the sovereign's command exculpates him is a mercy from on high, but to not dare put aside the law is the subject's duty." Without removing the axe and placard, he cut his throat in the King's courtyard.
>
> When the law is violated, the violator must die. His father broke the law, but he could not bear [to execute him]; the King excused him, but he was not willing [to accept it] – Shr̄ Jǔ's way of serving as a subject may be called both loyal and filial.

The disapproval of the "upright son" with which #**3:46** ended is lacking here. Law reigns alone, and filial duty is present only in name.[14]

The elimination of Confucian ideas generated this warning:

> **8:27** (LSCC 20/4:1, c0210). Things in the same category summon each other; things with the same spirit come together; sounds in tune will echo each other. Thus if you strike "C" then a "C" responds; strike "E" and an "E" emerges. With a dragon we summon rain, with a form we pursue the shadow that it makes. The causes of disaster or fortune are thought by many to be Fate, but how could they know? So when a state is in disorder, it is not merely in disorder, it also inevitably attracts bandits. If it were only disordered, it need not necessarily perish, but once it attracts bandits, there is no way it can survive.

This is the converse of the Mencian theory: an unprincipled government will attract unprincipled people ("bandits"). That prediction would soon be fulfilled.

[13]This is the older name of the state of Chǔ 楚. It is substituted for "Chǔ" since Chǔ was the personal name of the First Emperor, and could not be used in public writings.

[14]LSCC here sends a mixed message. LSCC 19/2:3 suggests that turning in one's relatives (a deed ascribed to a man from Chín) is despicable, and that principled refusal is noble. But the implacable character of the law is the moral of the next piece (19/2:4), and of this concluding item (19/2:5, **#8:26**). The last word of the LSCC text at this date is thus on the side of law, however monstrous a particular application of it may seem.

The Last Inscription. In 0210, the Emperor, accompanied by his new Chancellor Lǐ Sz̄, ascended Mount Gwèıjī. The inscription erected there makes no Confucian rhetorical gestures, but praises the Emperor in Legalist terms:

8:28 (Chín Inscription #7, SJ 6; first half, 0210).

His Divine Majesty 皇帝, accomplished and outstanding
Has subdued and unified all the cosmos,
His virtue and kindness are forever.

In his thirty-seventh year,
He personally tours the world,
Beholding all the distant regions.

Then he ascends the Gwèıjī height,
And observes the people's customs:
The black-haired ones [common people] are all reverent.

The many officials recite his deeds,
Tracing the origin of his feats,
Recalling his illustrious ways.

The Sage of Chín beholds his state,
He first fixed its terms and standards 刑名,
He has showed forth the ancient code.

He first made the laws and rules,
Distinguished duties and offices,
And thereby established constancy.

The Six Kings were partial and perverse,
Rapacious and uncontrolled,
They led the many to make themselves strong.

Cruel and harsh, without restraint,
Proudly relying on their strength,
They often resorted to armor and arms.

They sent their agents secretly,
Pursuing an Alliance plan,
To realize their malign intent.

Within, they made deceitful schemes,
Without, they came to invade our land.
Bringing disasters in their wake.

With righteous might he punished them,
Wiping out their cruelties,
And their disturbances are no more.

The Sage's virtue spreads far abroad,
Within the Six Directions,
His grace is endlessly bestowed.

The Emperor died on the way back from this expedition. With him were the Chancellor Lǐ Sz̄, the favored official Jàu Gāu, and the Emperor's youngest son Hú-hàı. The three conspired to suppress the Emperor's testament delegating the rulership to his eldest son Fú-sū, and instead to install Hú-hàı.

There followed a period of intense palace intrigue. The general Mv́ng Tyén was forced to commit suicide, and the Syūngnú promptly reoccupied the Ordos. The Chín dynasty began to unravel.

The Second Emperor

In this way did an inexperienced and, as it turned out, incompetent person become the Second Emperor of all-powerful Chín. Hú-hàı's first act was to force the suicide of the Heir Apparent and those who were loyal to him, thus beginning the dismantling of a harsh, but an undeniably effective, government. At first, Hú-hàı held things together. He revisited the sites where his father had earlier erected inscriptions, thus symbolically claiming the land as his own.

The First Emperor, in the first of those inscriptions (#**8:9**), had claimed to be filial. This should not be seen as the meek subordination of a humble person. A Confucian text of this period spells out the higher meaning of filiality . . .

> **Syàu Jīng** 孝經 "The Classic of Filial Piety," an 18-chapter work whose core 6 chapters were composed in early Chín by Confucians holding rank as erudites; the last sections were added in Hàn. It features Dzv̄ngdž as the questioner of Confucius. Translated by Legge.

. . . as appropriate to rulers, and as itself conferring the virtues of rulership, including power over the people:

> **8:29** (Syàu Jīng 3, excerpt, c0220). In high position, yet not arrogant: he is lofty but not imperiled. Observing moderation and scrupulous of rule: he is full but not excessive. "Lofty but not imperiled" is how he long preserves his place of honor; "full but not excessive" is how he long preserves his wealth. If wealth and honor do not depart from him, only then can he secure the altars of soil and harvest, and produce harmony among the people. This is the filiality of the Lords . . .

And the piece concludes with the Shr̄ fragment quoted by Dzv̄ngdž in #**5:36**.

In quoting this and other passages from the Syàu Jīng, the erudites behind the Lw̌-shr̀ Chūn/Chyōu had made filial piety the root principle of the state:

> **8:30** (LSCC 14/1:1, excerpt, c0219). Those in charge of the world or ruling a state must put basics first and details last. What one calls basics are not ploughing and weeding, planting and harrowing – one attends to *people*. Attending to people is not enriching the poor or companioning the lonely, it is attending to the basic principle. And for attending to the basic principle, nothing is greater than filial piety . . .

Filial in character, yet colossally extravagant in execution, was the plan for the First Emperor's mausoleum: not so much a tomb as an underground realm. To execute the plan, myriads of workers were levied from all over the country. This produced widespread popular hardship, and led to protests.

One such protest appears in a parable in the final stratum of the LSCC.

Methodological Instant: Its protagonist is Hwèıdž (page 201). His image in the Jwāngdž is fictional, but did it have a basis? The LSCC story confirms two features of that image: his association with the state of Ngwèı, and his reputation as the most adroit persuader in Ngwèı. No story is definitive, but one text can sometimes clarify our opinion of the historical value of another text.

Rhetorically, it is notable for its adroit *reversal* of a filial piety argument:

8:31 (LSCC 21/1:2, excerpt, c0209). Ngwèı Hwèı-wáng had died, and the date for his burial had been set. But Heaven poured down snow, enough to reach to the eye of an ox. The officials remonstrated with the Heir Apparent, saying, The snow is very bad. If we proceed with the burial under these conditions, the people will suffer hardship, and we fear the funds will be insufficient. We request a postponement of the time and a change of the day. The Heir Apparent said, To be a man's son, and yet not to carry out the burial of the former King because of the hardships of the people and the inadequacy of funds, would be unrighteous. Do not speak of this again. None of the officials dared say anything, but they told the Syīshǒu,[15] and the Syīshǒu said, *I* have nothing to say to this; must it not rather be Master Hwèı? I ask that you inform Master Hwèı.

Master Hwèı said, Very well. He went in his chariot to see the Heir Apparent, and said, Is the date for the burial set? The Heir Apparent said, Yes. Master Hwèı said, Of old, when King Jìlì was buried at the foot of Mount Hwō, an underground spring ate away the burial mound, exposing the front of the coffin. King Wv́n said, Ah, the Former Sovereign must wish to see the officials and people once more, and so he had the spring reveal him. He called an assembly, and the people all viewed it. On the third day, he was reburied. This was King Wv́n's kind of righteousness.

Now, the day of burial has been fixed, but the snow is heavy . . . it is hard to walk. Can the Heir Apparent, merely because of a previously set day, not be ashamed to be hasty with the burial? I pray that he will change the day. The Former King must want to tarry a little, to care for the altars and give peace to the black-haired people, so he has made the snow be so heavy. To postpone the date and change the day, would have been King Wv́n's kind of righteousness. If you do not, people will think you are ashamed to model yourself on King Wv́n. The Heir Apparent said, Good. I will respectfully postpone the date, and pick another day for the burial.

Hwèıdž did not argue in vain. Not only did he cause the Heir Apparent of Ngwèı to delay burying his father, he expounded the Way of King Wv́n. How can one call it a small achievement?

[15]The untranslatable title of a high office in Ngwèı.

Work at the mausoleum went on. There were no human sacrifices, like those of Chín Mù-gūng long ago (#**8:1**); rather, thousands of life-size terracotta *statues* of warriors were buried as the Emperor's guards in the other world:

Those conscripted to do the actual excavation work were severely punished if they were late in arriving. That too drew a fable by way of protest:

> **8:32** (LSCC 21/1:3, c0209). Hán was walling Syīn-chv́ng. The schedule called for completion in 15 days. Dwàn Chyáu was in charge of the work. One district was two days late [with its section]. Dwàn Chyáu arrested the supervisor. The imprisoned man's son hastened to inform border guard Dž-gāu, saying, Only Your Excellency can save his servant's father from death; I pray that I may entrust this to him. Border guard Dž-gāu said, Very well. He went to see Dwàn Chyáu, and with his aid ascended to the top of the wall. Border guard Dž-gāu looked far to left and right, and said, A fine piece of work, this wall. You will certainly be highly rewarded. From antiquity until now, a work so great as this, and one accomplished without punishments or executions, there has surely never been.
>
> Border Guard Dž-gāu left, and Dwàn Chyáu sent a man by night to release the imprisoned supervisor from his chains and set him free.

The usual mechanism of administrative self-correction, namely, remonstrance from the ranks, turned out to be too dangerous to be applied.

At first, the tactic was one of recommendation, and as usual, by means of a story illustrating the success of the recommended behavior. In this LSCC story, the leader of an attack on an enemy city, Jàu Jyèndž, gives orders to attack, but from a position of safety behind a screen. The soldiers do not advance, and he calls them weak. The official Jú Gwò disagrees: he points out that the soldiers merely reflect the quality of their leader.

8:33 (LSCC 23/1:4, excerpt, c0209) . . . When Wv́n-gūng had been on the throne two years, he trained them in courage, and by his third year the soldiers were daring. In the Battle of Chv́ng-pú he five times defeated the men of Jīng.[16] He surrounded Wèı, took Tsáu, and captured Shŕ-shv̀. He secured the Son of Heaven's position and made himself an honored name in the world. *He used these soldiers*. Thus it is the *ruler* that is incapable, how should the *soldiers* be weak?

Jyèndž then came out from behind his rhinoceros-hide screen, and stood within range of the arrows and stones. He beat the drum once, and the soldiers all scaled the wall; the battle ended in a great victory. Jyèndž said, Should I get a thousand armored chariots, it would not be worth as much as having heard the one remark of the messenger Jú Gwò.

This was perhaps not well received. The writers consoled themselves with a merely wry comment about another ruler, the one Mencius had served:

8:34 (LSCC 23/5:4, excerpt, c0209). King Sywǣn of Chí liked archery, and loved to have people tell him he could draw a heavy bow. The bow he used had a pull of no more than three stone. He showed it to his retinue. They tried to draw it, but gave up without succeeding, and said, This can be no less than nine stone; if not the King, who could use it?

The truth about the King of Chí was that the bow he used was not above three stone, yet to the end of his life he imagined he was using a nine-stone bow. How pathetic! If not an upright officer, who will be able not to flatter the ruler? . . . The problem of the ruler of a disordered state consists in the fact that he regards a three-stone as a nine-stone.

The only solution to the problem of remonstrance in oppressive times was not to offer remonstrance, but to support the ruler in his delusions of competence. Thus was the problem of the self-deluded ruler literarily shrugged off. So was the duty to do something about self-deluded or otherwise inadequate rulers.

With Chín in administrative disarray and incapable of putting itself right, with territory lost to the neighboring tribes and rebellions breaking out at home, the stage was set for the entry of another player.

Chǔ. Local rebellions needed a sponsor, a higher authenticating power. Chǔ was ready to play that part. Chǔ, with its non-Sinitic heritage, had always been discontent under Chín rule, and now, with Chín in disarray, it saw an opportunity to be the general sponsor, coordinator, and ultimate beneficiary, of the many spontaneous but local rebellions.[17]

[16]Chǔ, but here Jīng, observing the taboo on the name of the First Emperor's father.

[17]Most of the states were Sinitic, or had been culturally assimilated before they were conquered; Chǔ was the exception. We may contrast the Greek states, which had a common culture and language, but (Finley **Ancient**) were never unified as a single state.

Chǔ had reappeared as a kingdom under a new King, Hwáı-wáng. Probably during his illness in 0207, a Chǔ poet revisited a non-Sinitic tradition known at an earlier Chǔ court (#**6:42**), and bade the King's soul return and rule:

8:35 (Chǔ Tsź, Dà Jàu, "The Great Summons," excerpts, c0207).

Green spring follows the Withering; white sun shines, oh.
The air of spring goes forth; All Creatures stir, oh.
Dark and cold diminish; Soul, do not flee, oh!
Let the soul return, and not go far away, oh!

Let the soul come back,
and go not east, go not west; go not south, go not north, oh!

In the east is the great sea; its waves breaking ceaseless, oh.
Pairs of dragons drift side by side, coiling up and down, oh.
Mist and rain congeal; to brilliant white thickening, oh.
Soul, go not eastward, to Tāng Valley impenetrable, oh.

Soul, go not south!
In the south is hot fire for a thousand leagues, and coiling serpents, oh.
In mountain forests remote, tigers and leopards ready to spring, oh.
Ngūngyūng and ghost-fox, and deadly python, oh.
Soul, go not southward, where creatures will harm you, oh.

Soul, go not west!
In the west and the Flowing Sands, they go on endlessly, oh.
The boar-head, the slant-eye, the scraggly-hair hanging down, oh.
The long-claws, the jagged-fangs; loud and wild their laughter, oh.
Soul, go not westward; where there are many harmful things, oh.

Soul, go not north!
In the north is Cold Mountain, its gaunt heights red, oh.
Uncrossable Dàı River, too deep to sound, oh.
Sky white and thick; cold freezing everything, oh.
Soul, go not there, to the northern end of the world, oh.

And after tempting the King's wandering soul with the pleasures of his palace, the poet ends by praising the world as it shall be under the King's rule:

Filling the roads for a thousand leagues, they come like clouds, oh.
The High Lords in their power, to judge the people like gods, oh.
Caring for ill and lonely, that orphan and widow may live, oh.
Soul, come back, and make a True Beginning, oh!

Fields and cities apportioned, and people prosperous, oh.
Fair favor extending to all, virtue reaching wide, oh.
First awe, then peace; excellence brilliantly manifest, oh.
Soul, come back! Let reward and penalty be fitting, oh.
Your reputation, like the sun, brightening All Within the Seas, oh.
Virtue equal to that of Heaven, the Myriad Folk orderly, oh.
North to Yōu-líng, south to Jyāu-jř, oh.
West to the Yáng-cháng Pass, east as far as the Sea, oh.
Soul, come back! Promote worthy officers, oh!

Extend your rule, put an end to cruelty, oh!
Raise the best, suppress the worst, punish the wrongdoers, oh!
Be the upright and honest in power, as with Great Yw̌ of old, oh!
Let the heroes guide affairs, and their influence reach far, oh!
Soul, come back! For the sake of state and home, oh!
Mighty and awesome, Heaven's Power is manifest, oh.
In their dignity, the Three Princes ascend and descend, oh.
The Several Lords are present, the Nobles take their places, oh.
Early dawn has come; the targets are placed, oh.
Holding bow and grasping arrow, they show perfect courtesy, oh –
Soul, come back! Restore the ways of the Three Kings, oh!

And the highly Confucian final ceremonies end with a ritual archery contest.

Joining Chǔ. Chv́n Shv̀ 陳舍 was the first Chín rebel to turn to Chǔ. His movement had begun in 0209. It quickly expanded. Chv́n Shv̀'s formal name was Shv̀ng 勝 "Victory." He and his mate Wú Gwǎng 吳廣 made their move as members of a party of conscript laborers, sent to work on Chín fortifications. The party were delayed, and delay (see #**8:32**) meant death:

> **Chǔ/Hàn Chūn/Chyōu** 楚漢春秋 (CHCC) "The Epic of Chǔ and Hàn." Attributed to Lù Jyǎ of early Hàn. Tells of the rivalry between Syàng Yw̌ and Lyóu Bāng and the perilous early years of Hàn. CHCC is the source for some of the most exciting parts of the Shř Jì. Lost in Táng, and now known only from quotations in Shř Jì commentaries.

8:36 (SJ 48, excerpt, late 02c). In the first year of the Second Emperor, in the seventh month, they sent out nine hundred men from the left [poor] side of town to garrison Yẃ-yáng. They camped on the way at Great Marsh County. Chv́n Shv̀ng and Wú Gwǎng were among those required to go; they were made camp chiefs. It happened that there was a great downpour, and the road became impassible. They realized that they had lost all hope of arriving by the assigned time, and for missing the assigned time, the law provided that they should all be beheaded. Chv́n Shv̀ng and Wú Gwǎng took counsel together, saying, "If we go on, we will die; if we undertake some great scheme, we will die. As long as we are going to die, may we not as well die in the hope of establishing a state?

This they did. Their enterprise, based on the city of Chv́n, was recognized by the revived Chǔ court. Several nearby towns murdered their Chín-appointed officials and joined Chv́n Shv̀. Following the lead of the Chǔ court, where old ways, including Confucian thought, were welcome, Chv́n Shv̀ added to his retinue Kǔng Fù, the son of Dž-shv̀n, the last head of the Analects school in Lǔ, thus affirming the older ideology. But then rival rebellions broke out, and in the resulting confusion, Chv́n Shv̀, the King, was murdered by his chariot driver. Kǔng Fù, aged 57, died with the rest of Chv́n Shv̀'s appointees.

Back at the Chín court, with all political action useless or dangerous, the literati at the Academy still felt they had to do something. Thus it happened that the last advice given to Chín by the successors of Lw̌ Bù-wéı, filling out the rest of the six-chapter plan of this part of the book, was merely informational.

Agriculture. From Spring and Autumn on, the power of the state had rested on the land, its conquest and cultivation. Chín's conquests had been completed, but it remained to make the most of those conquests. It is then not surprising that the last four sections of LSCC 26, the end of the work, incorporate, seemingly entire, an agricultural text in more or less poetic form, ascribed to the mythical Jōu ancestor Hòu Jì, the Lord of Millet. When in 0771 the Jōu were forced to leave their northwestern homeland, it was Chín which had inherited that strategically advantageous territory. Now Jōu (in the voice of Hòu Jì) again comes together with Chín, in a treatise whose concern for the proper season echoes the groundplan of the original 12 Jì chapters of the LSCC (#**3:82-84**). It concludes with an assurance that doing everything at the appropriate season makes for health and longevity:

> **8:37** (LSCC 26/6:8, c0206). So a planting done at the right season will thrive; a crop grown out of season will be scanty. With stems of the same length, the seasonable one will be heavier; its grains more numerous.
>
> When equal weights are hulled,
> the seasonable one will yield more rice.
> When equal amounts are consumed,
> the seasonable one will better sate hunger.
>
> So, with a crop planted at the right season,
>
> Its aroma will be fragrant,
> its taste sweet,
> its energy strong.
> Eat it for a hundred days:
> The ears and eyes will be percipient
> and the mind will be sharp.
> The four limbs will be strengthened,
> no noxious vapors will enter,
> and the body will receive nothing harmful.
>
> The Yellow Emperor said, If the Four Seasons are irregular, one need only adjust the Five Grains.

Man can compensate for the caprices of nature, and the state can be secure through understanding of its agricultural basis. This advice would be equally relevant to Chín, then in turmoil, or to anything that might succeed Chín.

Syàng Yw̌ 項羽. The successors were hard at work. Chv́n Shv̀ was killed by a subordinate in 0208, but other rebels appeared. A Chǔ successor was made the King of Chǔ. As war weeded out the weak, the final contenders emerged: Lyóu Bāng 劉邦, a commoner from Lǔ with uncommon organizational gifts, and Syàng Yw̌, a Chǔ nobleman of unmatched martial prowess.

Chǔ recognized both as Kings. Lyóu Bāng, who at the end of 0207 had successfully entered the Chín capital area, claimed it as his territory, but Syàng Yw̌, on behalf of the Chǔ King, gave him the land of Hàn instead. Their rivalry soon developed into a war between Chǔ, represented by Syàng Yw̌, and Hàn, Lyóu Bāng's domain. The early Hàn romance Chǔ/Hàn Chūn/Chyōu, from which we have quoted above, told the dramatic tale of the end of Syàng Yw̌. This account has been famous down the years, in the original and as an opera. It is the kind of thing no book on the period can omit. Here is how it ends:

> **8:38** (SJ 7, excerpt, late 02c). King Syàng camped at Gāı-syà. His troops were few, his food was gone; the Hàn armies and the soldiers of the Lords had surrounded him several lines deep. In the night, from the Hàn camps on all four sides, he heard songs of Chǔ. King Syàng was startled, and said, "Has Hàn already gained all of Chǔ? How many Chǔ men they have!" King Syàng got up in the night and began to drink in his tent. He had a beautiful woman named Yẃ whom he always favored and took with him, and a fine horse named Dapple which he always rode. King Syàng now sang a sad air of heroic melancholy, and himself made verses for it:
>
> My strength tore up the mountains, ah! The age I overtopped,
> The times give no advantage, ah! and Dapple's hoofs are stopped.
> Dapple's hoofs are stopped, ah; what more can I do?
> Yẃ, ah! Yẃ, ah! how can I lose you too?
>
> He sang it several times, and the beautiful woman echoed it. King Syàng's tears ran down in several streams, and his attendants to left and right all wept too. Not one of them could bear to raise his head to watch.
>
> King Syàng then mounted his horse and rode forth. The stout officers and their mounted followers under his banner were eight hundred some men. While it was still night, they broke through the encirclement and galloped south. At dawn, the Hàn armies saw what had happened, and ordered cavalry commander Gwàn Yīng to pursue them with five thousand riders.
>
> King Syàng crossed the Hwáı; those who could keep up with him were only a hundred some men. When King Syàng reached Yīn-líng, he became confused and lost his way. He asked a farmer, but the farmer deceived him, saying "Go left." He went left, and stumbled into a marsh. For this reason, the Hàn pursuers caught up with him. King Syàng once more led his troops to the east, but by the time he reached Dūng-chv́ng, he had only twenty-eight riders left. The Hàn pursuing cavalry numbered several thousand.
>
> King Syàng realized that he could not get away. He said to his riders, "It is eight years from the time when I first raised troops until today. I have fought more than seventy battles. All who opposed me I destroyed; all I attacked submitted. I was never defeated; in the end, as Hegemon, I possessed the world. Now at last I find myself hemmed in here. It is Heaven destroying me; it is no fault of mine in arms.

Today I am resolved to die, but I should like to make a sally for you gentlemen and win three victories – for you gentlemen, I shall break through the encirclement, behead a commander, and cut down a flag, so that you gentlemen will know that it is Heaven destroying me, and no fault of mine in battle." He then divided his riders into four companies, facing four ways, and the Hàn army surrounded them several ranks deep. King Syàng said to his riders, "I will now get one of their commanders for you." He ordered the riders facing in four directions to ride down, planning to form again in three companies east of the mountain. Then King Syàng gave a great shout and rode down, and the Hàn troops broke in confusion; he did in the end behead one Hàn commander. The Lord of Chr̀-chywǽn led the cavalry in pursuit of King Syàng. King Syàng glared and shouted at him, and the Lord of Chr̀-chywǽn's men and horses were startled and gave way for several leagues. His riders regrouped in three places; the Hàn army did not know which group King Syàng was in.

King Syàng now thought to cross the Wū River on the east. The Wū River station chief was waiting with a ferry boat. He said to King Syàng, "Though the land east of the river is small, its area is still a thousand leagues, with several tens of myriads of people; it too is worth ruling over. I beg the Great King to quickly cross. Only your servant has a boat; when the Hàn army arrives, it will have no way to cross." King Syàng laughed and said, "Heaven is destroying me; what use is there in crossing over? Moreover, years ago, with eight thousand youths from east of the river, I crossed over and headed west; now I return without one man of them. Even if the fathers and brothers east of the river pitied me and made me king, how could I face them? Even if they did not speak of it, would I not be ashamed in my heart?" He then said to the station chief, "I see Your Excellency is a worthy man. I have ridden this horse five years; in all who faced him there was not his equal; he once went a thousand leagues in a day. I cannot bear to kill him; I make Your Excellency a present of him."

He then had his riders dismount and go on foot, carrying short swords. When they joined battle, he alone killed several hundred of the Hàn army. King Syàng bore on his body more than ten wounds. He turned and saw the Hàn cavalry marshal Lw̌ Mǎ-túng, and said, "Are you not my old friend?" Mǎ-túng turned toward him, and gestured to Wáng Yì, saying, "This is King Syàng." King Syàng then said, "I hear that Hàn has put a price on my head: a thousand in gold, and a city of a myriad households. I will do you the favor." He then cut his own throat and died.

Wáng Yì took his head and others trampled on each other, contending for Kìng Syàng; several tens were killed in the ensuing scuffle. When it was all over, Rider of the Guard Yáng Syǐ, Cavalry Marshal Lw̌ Mǎ-túng, and Guardsmen Lẃ Shv̀ng and Yáng Wǔ, had each gotten one limb. When the five put the body together, the pieces fitted.

And so they divided the prize territory into five fiefs.

Envoi

To the earlier Nine Songs (#**6:67-68**), the revived Chǔ court had added a tenth and eleventh Song, memorializing those who had fallen in the service of Chǔ and its imperial ambition. We quote them here in farewell to Syàng Yw̌:

8:39 (Chǔ Tsź, Nine Songs #10, c0207).

Those Who Died For the State

Spears of Wú we grasp, ah! armor of hide we wear,
Wheel-hubs clash below, ah! swords slash through the air;
Pennons hide the sun, ah! like clouds the foemen swarm –
Crisscross fall the arrows, ah! but on our captains storm.

Our lines are overwhelmed, ah! our ranks are put to flight,
A dead horse falls on the left, ah! and a wounded one on the right;
Axles twain are tangled, ah! turn the team around –
Seize the jaden drumsticks, ah! let the signal sound!

Heaven's times smile not ah! the gods are of angry mind,
The fearful slaughter done, ah! we leave the field behind.

They never shall return, ah! forever they are gone,
The level plain is distant, ah! the road runs on and on;
Swords yet girt about them, ah! their longbows firm they hold –
Head from body severed, ah! but still their hearts are bold.

Brave you were indeed, ah! and in battle skilled,
Valiant to the end, ah! your fearless blood you shed;
Though perished be your bodies, ah! your spirits still strike dread –
Your immortal souls, ah! are heroes among the dead.

The memorial service concluded with a solemn dance, accompanied by this address to the spirits of the fallen warriors:

8:40 (Chǔ Tsź, Nine Songs #11, c0207).

The Service To The Souls

The service ends, ah! in a flourish of drum.
The dancers' fronds, ah! are held at plumb.
The maidens' voices, ah! now softly hum.
The fragrant orchid, ah! the chrysanthemum –
Through endless ages, ah! of time to come.

And so our story ends as it began, in a showdown between Chǔ and the North. In that last contest, there perished the Last Warring State, the China That Was Not To Be, amid the ruins of the Empire That Was To Last Forever. And it did last forever, starting with its successor, the Hàn Dynasty. The heroic attempt of Syàng Yw̌ – to reinstate something along the old lines – had decisively failed.

What the Warring States had long labored to produce, and what they had destroyed themselves in the process of producing, now securely existed.