

In praise of political legitimacy

The *miao* and *jiao* hymns of the Western Han*

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1. Theoretical scope

The forty Eulogia (*song* 頌) of the state ritual as assembled in the rear sections of the *Shijing* 詩經 (*Mao shi* 毛詩 #266–305) number amongst the earliest testimonies to the systematically handed down Chinese literary culture.¹ They supply information, among other things, about religious and political ideas and institutions as well as about the ritual practice of ancestral worship. At the same time they testify, not only to an early and well-developed literary culture, but also to its symbiotic connection with cultic activities. From the earliest times to the present day, verbal and even written communication has always been a part of Chinese ritual, be it that of the rulers or that of the people.² This is anything but surprising

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1 There is extensive scholarship and much controversy on dating these temple hymns. (Here and in the following, I use „hymn“ as a generic term for all official praise songs of Zhou and imperial times, including the Eulogia and Elegantiae of the *Shijing* as well as the sacrificial chants of the Han emperors.) However, the 31 „Eulogia of the Zhou“ (*Zhou song* 周頌, *Mao shi* #266–296) seem to be generally accepted as the oldest texts of the *Shijing*, with parts of them dating back maybe to the 11th century B.C., whereas the *Lu song* 魯頌 (#297–300) and the *Shang song* 商頌 (#301–305) appear as products of the second half of the 7th century B.C., at the earliest; see, e.g., Ch'en Shih-hsiang, „The *Shih-ching*: Its Generic Significance in Chinese Literary History and Poetics“, in: *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica* 39 (1969), pp. 371–413. As Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648) has already recognized (*Mao shi zhengyi* 20-1.341a, *Shisan jing zhushu* ed., 2 vols., Beijing 1987), the *Lu song* are not hymns directed to the ancestral spirits.

2 Lothar von Falkenhausen, „Issues in Western Zhou Studies: A Review Article“, in: *Early China* 18 (1993), p. 161, has emphasized „the degree of reliance on writing in communicating messages to the spirits“ as the particularity of the Chinese ritual, and remarked: „The genesis of Chinese writing was certainly linked to cultic concerns. To this day, the offering of written statements to the gods has been an essential part of popular religious practice in China.“ The importance of written „record-presentations“ (*ce* 冊) to the spirits as a distinct

in view of the fact that writing (*wen* 文, „pattern“) has always been valued as the definite expression of human culture (*wen*) and thus as a structured and structuring cosmic force,³ only initially, in pre-imperial times, rivalled and maybe outshone by music (*yue* 樂). Chinese ritual – and state ritual in particular – appears as essentially text-centred.

The ritual chants of the *Shijing* as well as the hymns of imperial times were handed down through the generations as sacred or official writings. However, within the ritual act itself they were hardly ever presented in written form but sung in conjunction with dance and music. Nevertheless, even in their oral presentation they remained part of Chinese written culture; their literary character was only temporarily suspended without invalidating their fundamental dependence on the context of writing. At first sight the overwhelming and, owing to the work of archaeologists, daily growing wealth of known bells, sacrificial vessels, and censers, etc. let the old rituals appear as „multi-media happenings“⁴ with the different elements enhancing each other.⁵ But at the same time the no less impressive number of epigraphs on all these paraphernalia conveys the image of a polyphonic performance of one common text which substantiates and embraces the totality of the ritual: incense and sacrificial offerings, as well as the sound of bells, communicated the inscribed texts to the spirits above.⁶ This communication of written – and in the case of the bronze epigraphs unchangeable – texts worked on different levels and in different directions. On the one hand, texts formulated outside of the

and in fact the most frequent ceremonial act in the Wu Ding period (1341–1281 B.C.) of the Shang dynasty has been realized by Chang Taiping, *The Ritual and Sacrificial Terms of the Shang Oracle Texts of Period I* (Ph.D. Dissertation University of Washington 1981), pp. 368–376, 414. See also John Lagerwey, „The Oral and the Written in Chinese and Western Religion“, in: Gert Naundorf et al. (eds.), *Religion und Philosophie in Ostasien: Festschrift für Hans Steininger zum 65. Geburtstag* (Würzburg 1985), pp. 301–321. About literacy in today's religious rituals in Taiwan, see Emily Ahern, *Chinese Ritual and Politics* (Cambridge 1981), esp. pp. 16–30, Kristofer M. Schipper, „The Written Memorial in Taoist Ceremonies“, in: Arthur P. Wolf (ed.), *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society* (Stanford 1974), pp. 309–324.

- 3 For particularly prominent pieces of evidence, see Xu Shen's 許慎 (c. 55–c. 149) postscript (*xu* 敘) to his *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (A.D. 100), drawing heavily on the pre-Han *Xici* 系辭 commentary to the *Zhou yi* 周易, and chapter 1 (*Yuan dao* 原道) in Liu Xie's 劉勰 (c. 467–c. 522) *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 (c. 501/502); for a brief survey, see Chow Tse-tzung, „Ancient Chinese Views on Literature, the *Tao*, and their Relationship“, in: *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 1 (1979), pp. 3–29.
- 4 Von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music in Bronze Age China: An Archaeological Perspective* (Ph.D. Dissertation Harvard University 1988), p. 693.
- 5 Stanley J. Tambiah, „A Performative Approach to Ritual“, in: *Proceedings of the British Academy* LXV (1979), p. 119, tentatively includes this feature in his „working definition of ritual“.
- 6 See von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music*, pp. 620–644; Constance A. Cook, *Auspicious Metals and Southern Spirits: An Analysis of the Chu Bronze Inscriptions* (Ph.D. Dissertation University of Washington 1990), pp. 169, 237.

ritual, namely in the political sphere,⁷ were brought into the ritual and, on the other hand, ritual was integrated into the political horizon of meaning and transformed into political liturgy. Again on the one hand, the texts were supposedly addressed to the supernatural powers, and on the other, they reached human eyes (epigraphs) and ears (hymns), too. But what precisely did the hymns accomplish for the ritual, and what did the ritual act accomplish for the messages expressed in the hymns?

For the hymns and the epigraphs we can establish a common and close intertextual dependence on the other texts of the political discourse; for it is their sense and ideology that underlies the actual ritual – and which is celebrated just there.⁸ The actual hymns, being in close accord with the inscribed texts, begin to appear less as independent and individual chants and more as a particular variant of a pre-existing „greater“ text. The exalted and exclusive situation of the ritual performance is marked by elevated and ceremonial forms of articulation, religious paraphernalia reserved exclusively for the ritual, proximity to the powers above and, all in all, a fundamental difference to the reality of everyday life. The interaction of all these features conveys a specific authority first to the hymns and then through these to the underlying „greater“ text. Just as the hymns, virtually relieved of all creative freedom,⁹ are affiliated – together with the inscribed texts – to the literary culture outside the ritual, so they unfold their normative meaning and at the same time that of the ritual performance. The ritual act presents and represents, confirms and renews an order simultaneously within and beyond itself and works as a sign, that is, referentially. In the same sense the canon of ethical and political values becomes apparent through the ritual chants of the political lit-

7 For the semantic and formal proximity of bronze epigraphs to the language of the political discourse and representation, see von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music*, p. 663; Cook, *Auspicious Metals*, passim.

8 For the phenomenon of extreme intertextuality within an exclusive and purposefully „restricted code“ (Ahern, *Chinese Ritual and Politics*, pp. 54–55) of preimperial ritual, see W.A.C.H. Dobson, *The Language of the Book of Songs* (Toronto 1968), pp. 247–255. Dobson is able to demonstrate how the Eulogia (*song*) are as closely interwoven with the court songs of the Great Eleganciae (*daya* 大雅) as they are sharply delimited from the folk songs of the Airs of the States (*guofeng* 國風). This observation is meaningful for the discussion of the hymns of the Western Han, too. The exclusive language of the hymns, at the same time constitutive to their strictly marked intertextuality, may be called an artificially „impoverished language“, that is „a language where many of the options at all levels of language are abandoned so that choice of form, of style, of words and of syntax is less than in ordinary language“ (Maurice Bloch, „Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation: Is Religion an Extreme Form of Traditional Authority?“, in: *European Journal of Sociology* 15.1, 1974, p. 60; Bloch has further developed his argument in the „Introduction“ to Maurice Bloch, (ed.), *Political Language and Oratory in Traditional Society* (London etc. 1975), pp. 1–28). In the same sense von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music*, p. 661, has observed that in the bronze epigraphs of Zhou times „[l]imited stock vocabulary and phraseology are applied to fixed structures of composition“.

9 See Bloch, „Symbols, Song“, p. 70; von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music*, p. 663.

urgy. To abandon this referential function, for example through poetic freedom, would cause the ritual event to fall into arbitrary exegesis and at last to end in dissolution. In this overall context it would seem appropriate to give up the rather narrow idea of the written text and to understand the hymns of the state ritual if not as written communication then certainly as the communication of writings.

The significance of the Chinese ritual chants is not exhausted in their referential function and their intertextuality but attains a high complexity through the political importance that the works of classical and classicist literature attach to ritual and music. The *Xiaojing* 孝經 ascribes the following statement to Confucius which since Han times has been quoted frequently: „To change the manners and alter the customs there is nothing superior to music. To appease the powers above and govern the people, there is nothing superior to the rites.“¹⁰ In this perspective ritual and music work as the primary means of creating socio-political and, especially since Han times, ultimately cosmic order. Ritual and music are not just representations of power – they are power itself.¹¹ This raises a certain paradox: if ritual, beside its performative, i. e. acting character, actually possesses an indicating function, by which it refers to a defined political ideology, and if this ideology vice versa ennobles ritual and its music to be the true instrument of political action, then the indicating function of ritual must be autoreferentially directed to the ritual itself. This is in fact characteristic for several ritual hymns of the Western Han (206/2 B.C.–A.D. 6) and manifest already in the *Shijing*, for example in the famous Little Elegancia *Chuci* 楚茨.¹² The ritual act presents itself – as explicit powerful political action.

Of course, ritual does not replace effective political and military action. But by defining the horizon of meaning of the latter it provides politics with a special legitimacy that seems to originate from higher spheres beyond politics itself. Only

10 *Xiaojing* 6.18b (*Shisanjing zhushu* ed.). The relevant ideas concerning the socio-political power of music and rites as developed in the texts of the Confucian tradition are present throughout the related monographs in the historiographical works of imperial China. For a concise discussion mainly of Han musical theory – including large parts of ritual theory as well – see Kenneth J. DeWoskin, *A Song for One or Two: Music and the Concept of Art in Early China* (Ann Arbor 1982) and „Early Chinese Music and the Origins of Aesthetic Terminology“, in: Susan Bush and Christian Murck (eds.), *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton 1983), pp.187–214. The latest bibliographical survey may be found in Martin Gimm, „China“, in: *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel/Stuttgart 1995), vol. 2, cols.695–766. Especially the *Xiaojing* passage quoted but also other sequences of this work were of paradigmatic significance in Han times because „of this emphasis on the transformational power of li and yueh“: Tsai Yen-zen, *Ching and Chuan: Towards Defining the Confucian Scriptures in Han China (206 BCE–220 CE)* (Ph.D. Dissertation Harvard University 1992), p.270.

11 It is fascinating to realize how the ancient Chinese notion of *ritual as power* corresponds to recent elaborate theories on ritual and ritualization of (political) action, for example in Catherine Bell's highly suggestive study *Ritual Theory, Ritual Praxis* (Oxford and New York 1992).

12 *Mao shi* #209 (*Mao shi zhengyi* 13-2.199c–202b).

then, for example, may violence be convincingly defined as a cosmic necessity. Ritual as a unique way of expressing cultural and political self-interpretation conveys nothing less than the normatively valid definition of reality, and to this end the performance of texts is of paramount importance. All nonverbal ritual activities without any reference to predefined notions would be *per se* open to any interpretation or maybe even incomprehensible. Mainly through the hymns it is the language as part of the ritual performance itself, that synchronically creates the intended meaning and defines the reality in and beyond the ritual act. Finally, the hymns work not only as a narrative, descriptive or defining element, but are an act in their own right. The descent (*jiang* 降) of the spirits to the sacrificial offerings, for example, is not described, but comes into being only through its linguistic representation.¹³

In summary, the functional significance of the ritual hymns may be described as that of an intersection, namely between the fixed literary cultural and political canon of values and the ritual performance. As texts the hymns are part of the written tradition, as chants they belong to the ways of acting out the ritual. They are the threshold, where the meaning of the canon and the authority of exalted performance are synchronized, conveyed to each other and brought to a common appearance. At the same time the hymns work as an important element in the process of creating that other reality, where communication with the spirits and cosmic forces succeeds.

The strategic role of the ritual hymns as outlined above may explain why the emperors of the Western Han and their statesmen, when setting the course for changes in government and foreign relations, carried out the political discourse as a debate about ritual and music. This debate may also create a sensitivity for the wording of the hymns, i. e. for the official ritual statements: for their specific content and form at certain historical moments as well as for the harsh criticism they were occasionally able to evoke. It is no accident that two great cycles of hymns of the Western Han are recorded in the *Hanshu* 漢書, as subsequently the ritual chants of all major dynasties are handed down in the official histories of traditional China. The cultural status of the ritual hymns is also mirrored in the arrangement of Guo Maoqian's 郭茂倩 *Yuefu shiji* 樂府詩集, compiled in about 1126: here the hymns of the past fill the first (*sic!*) twelve of its one hundred chapters.

13 See Whade T. Wheelock, „The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation“, in: *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50.1 (1982), pp. 63–64; Iwar Werlen, *Ritual und Sprache: Zum Verhältnis von Sprechen und Handeln in Ritualen* (Tübingen 1984), pp. 208–210. The idea of language use as an act creating reality is developed from two perspectives: firstly, from the anthropological notion of „word magic“ (see Stanley J. Tambiah, „The Magical Power of Words“, in: *MAN* n.s. 3.2, 1968, pp. 175–208), and secondly, from the linguistic speech act theory as founded by John Austin in *How to Do Things With Words* (New York 1962) and developed by John Searle in *Speech Acts* (Cambridge 1969) and later writings.

2. The hymns of the Western Han

From the times of the Western Han there are two cycles of ritual hymns handed down in the *Hanshu*:¹⁴ the *Anshi fangzhong ge shiqi zhang* 安世房中歌十七章 („Seventeen pieces of chants from the inner chamber to pacify the era“) from the times of Liu Bang 劉邦 (posthumous: Gaozu 高祖, r. as emperor 202–195 B.C.), founder of the dynasty, and the *Jiaosi ge shijiu zhang* 郊祀歌十九章 („Nineteen pieces of chants for the sacrifices at the suburban altars“) from the times of Liu Che 劉徹 (posthumous: Wudi 武帝, r. 141–87 B.C.). All the other more or less official chants of the state ritual of the Western Han are lost.¹⁵ Both cycles date from very different phases of the dynasty: the first one from the precarious, politically unstable years immediately after the founding of the dynasty, the second one from those three decades, when the Han reached the height of their military power, cultural splendour and political self-confidence.¹⁶

14 The texts are preserved in the „Monograph on ritual and music“ (*Liyue zhi* 禮樂志) of the *Hanshu* (12 vols., Beijing ¹1987), 22.1046–1070, and translated by Édouard Chavannes, *Les mémoires historiques de Se-ma Ts'ien* (5 vols., Paris 1895–1905; vol.6 Paris 1969), vol. 3, pp.605–629. The most accurate collated edition including a relatively comprehensive selection of important traditional commentaries is offered by Qiu Qionsun 丘瓊蓀, *Lidai yuezhi lüzhi jiaoshi* 歷代樂志律志校釋, vol.1 (Beijing 1964), pp. 187–216. For partly differently collated and punctuated versions see Lu Qinli 遼欽立, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin nanbeichao shi* (3 vols., Beijing ²1984), 4.145–155, and Yuefu shiji (4 vols., Beijing 1979), 1.3–9, 8.109–111. To my knowledge, after Wang Xianqian's 王先謙 notes in *Hanshu buzhu* 漢書補注 (Changsha 1900, repr. in 2 vols., Beijing 1983), 22.16a–33a, the only recent complete commentary of original value to all texts of both cycles is in Zheng Wen 鄭文, *Han shi xuanjian* 漢詩選箋 (Shanghai 1986), pp. 71–94 and 98–104. The annotations in Shi Ding 施丁 (ed.), *Hanshu xinzhuzhu* 漢書新注 (4 vols., Xi'an 1994), vol. 2, pp. 736–749, are rather modest. A translation into modern Chinese may be found in Liu Huaqing 劉華清, Li Jiannan 李建南 and Liu Xiangfei 劉翔飛, *Hanshu quanyi* 漢書全譯 (5 vols., Guiyang 1995), vol. 1, pp.675–681. A complete Japanese translation with short annotations is provided by Otake Takeo 小竹武夫, *Kanjo* 漢書 (3 vols., Tôkyô 1977–1979), vol. 1, pp.199–207 and 526–528 (notes). Kano Naosada 狩野直禎 and Nishiwaki Tsuneki 西脇常記, *Kanjo kôshi shi* 漢書郊祀志 (Tôkyô 1987), pp.219–248, have a better annotated translation of the second cycle. (The rhymes of both cycles are included in the still authoritative tables in Luo Changpei 羅常培 and Zhou Zumo 周祖謨, *Han Wei Jin nanbeichao yunbu yanbian yanjiu* 漢魏晉南北朝韻部演變研究 (Beijing 1958)). In addition to these works and those mentioned in the notes below I have used a greater amount of traditional Chinese commentaries for my translations. But still, several language and factual problems of the hymns remain unsolved, and in a few cases the decision for this or that interpretation must be somewhat arbitrary. In the following translations, however, I have reduced the notes to an absolute minimum; a full annotation and discussion of the textual problems will be provided in my dissertation.

15 The *Hanshu* (22.1043–1044) in fact mentions several other cycles which are completely lost; see Lu Kanru 陸侃如 and Feng Yuanjun 馮沅君, *Zhongguo shishi* 中國詩史 (3 vols., Beijing 1956), p. 170; also lost are the titles additionally mentioned in the „Monograph on literature“ (*Yiwen zhi* 藝文志) of the *Hanshu* (30.1753–1755).

16 See Michael Loewe, „The Former Han Dynasty“, in: Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. I: The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C.–*

If it is correct to adjudge such far-reaching significance to the ritual and its texts, that is to define the horizon of meaning of political action and to provide its

A.D. 220 (Cambridge 1986), pp. 103–222, esp. pp. 110–128, 152–179. I am very grateful to Prof. Loewe who, at the Paris conference and in further personal communication, has questioned the early dating of the *Anshi fangzhong ge* back to the reign of Han Gaozu as it is stated in the *Hanshu*. This basic question has so far never been raised and therefore never scrutinized. As the following discussion of the hymns will demonstrate, there is indeed a fundamental contradiction between the common image of Han Gaozu as a devoted despot of all scholarship and a cycle of temple hymns which is essentially based exactly on those pre-Confucian texts which should become the very core of the later Confucian canon of scripture. This contradiction does not arise out of two different sources or exegetic traditions but it is set up by the *Hanshu* itself. The simple alternatives, both of them arguing against this very source, are: abandon the hymns or modify the emperor's image. For various reasons which certainly need further discussion, I feel inclined to choose the latter solution. First, there is not a single piece of concrete evidence that the hymns related to Gaozu may have been written at a certain (which?) later date. Second, all actual or apparent historical references of the hymns can be (and have been) related to events within Gaozu's reign. Third, the *Hanshu* account (22.1043) on the initial creation of the state ritual and its music under Gaozu is *en detail* shaped in accordance with the supposed (imaginary) model of the „old music“ of the Zhou central court. All pieces of music, we read in this account, were played „like“ (you 猶) the old pieces already lost. Fourth, the person in charge of the music, Shusun Tong 叔孫通, was himself a native from the old state of Lu 魯 (see his biography in *Hanshu* 43.2124 and *Shiji* 史記, 10 vols., Beijing ¹⁰1987, 99.2720–2721), the state of Confucius and in Eastern Zhou times the place where the „old music“ of the Western Zhou central court is said to have been preserved (see *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 31.260c and *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhushu* 春秋左傳注疏 39.304a–306b [Xiang 29], both *Shisan jing zhushu* ed.); and moreover, he called „more than thirty erudites from Lu“ to arrange the ritual and musical system (*Hanshu* 43.2126, *Shiji* 99.2722). Fifth, there is some later evidence that this system designed by Shusun was not as accidental and fragmentary as it may appear from the *Hanshu* and *Shiji* accounts which provided the basis for the contemptuous view of later classicists. The *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (12 vols., Beijing ⁴1987) 35.1203 mentions – although with a strongly pejorative gesture – a *Han yi* 漢儀 („Ceremonies of the Han“) in twelve *pian* 篇, authored by Shusun Tong. Wang Chong's 王充 (27–c. 100) *Lun heng* 論衡 (Beijing daxue lishixi 北京大學歷史系, *Lun heng zhushi* 論衡注釋, 4 vols., Beijing 1979), vol. 2, p. 721, credits him with a *Yipin* 儀品 („Classes of Ceremonies“) in 16 *pian* which may or may not be the very same work; for further discussion see Huang Yizhou 黃以周 (1828–1899), „Du Han Liyue zhi“ 讀漢禮樂志, in his *Jingji zazhu wu zhong* 敬季雜著五種 (Jiangsu Nanjing jiangshe 江蘇南菁講舍 ed. 1894), *Shishuolue* 史說略 2.13b–16a. Finally, Gaozu himself at least once paid his homage to the Confucius shrine in Lu (*Hanshu* 1B.76); and it was the state ritual designed by Shusun Tong that made him realize „how majestic it is to be the emperor“ (*Hanshu* 43.2128, *Shiji* 99.2723). Of course, all these scattered mosaic pieces of evidence are not proofs in a strict sense that the *Anshi fangzhong ge* are from Gaozu's time – in fact, there are not so many absolute proofs for anything in early Han times – but enough to consider the possibility that there was an impulse to re-invent and emulate the (imaginary) august rituals of the golden past. In this case, the hymns under discussion may be taken serious as rare first hand material. It is also possible, as the following discussion should be able to demonstrate, to integrate them in a meaningful and coherent interpretation of Gaozu's reign and his notion of rulership. However, there is no reason to be dogmatic on this matter; the discussion may have just begun, and I am ready to become convinced of the opposite of my present point of view. The principal interpretation of form and contents of the hymns as presented below should be able to survive.

legitimation, then this function must be provable with a certain regularity in the hymns of two so clearly different historical situations. In the following examination of representative texts of both cycles the main question is, by which means and to which degree is this operational function realized through direct philosophical, religious or political expressions as well as through the different procedures of intertextual reference (formal characteristics, quotations, parallel lines of thought, etc.), by which the texts are affiliated to chosen parts of the literary tradition and the respective contemporary culture. The aesthetic elements of the hymns, too, will therefore be discussed as part of the operational function.

2.1 The seventeen *Anshi fangzhong ge* of Han Gaozu

The historical sources give no hint as to an institutional origin of these chants sung in the ancestral temple (*miao* 廟) and possibly at banquets, too.¹⁷ On the contrary: the fact that at least the music is ascribed to an otherwise completely unknown concubine suggests doubts concerning the existence of established institutional structures for the creation of rites and music in the first years of the dynasty. Despite the evidence of an Office of Music (*yuefu* 樂府) already in Qin

17 The *Shiji* does not mention this cycle. The title is the one placed in front of the chants in *Hanshu* 22.1046, but it is hardly authentic. In *Hanshu* 22.1043 the *Fangzhong ci yue* 房中祠樂 („Music for the sacrifice in the inner chamber“), is introduced as modelled after the *Fanzhong yue* of Zhou times and ascribed to the otherwise nowhere mentioned concubine Tangshan 唐山夫人, who has been accepted as the author of the hymns; see Luo Genze 羅根澤, *Yuefu wenxue shi* 樂府文學史 (1931, repr. Taipei 1981), p. 27; Xiao Difei 蕭滌非, *Han Wei liuchao yuefu wenxue shi* 漢魏六朝樂府文學史 (Beijing 1984), pp. 33–34. Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin ... shi*, p. 147, however, observes that the *Hanshu* credits Lady Tangshan only with the creation of the music, not of the texts. According to *Hanshu* 22.1043, in 194/193 B.C., on the occasion of extended musical orchestration under emperor Huidi (r. 195–188 B.C.), the *Fangzhong ci yue* was renamed as *Anshi yue* („Music to pacify the era“ – or „Music of the pacified era“?). Maybe the longer title *Anshi fangzhong ge* should be understood as a combination of the two earlier ones; see Lu Kanru and Feng Yuanjun, *Zhongguo shishi*, vol. 1, pp. 170–172. The word *fangzhong*, since the times of the Eastern Han (25–220) to this day often misinterpreted as „bedchamber“, „private chamber“ etc., is now broadly recognized as a „sacrificial chamber“ within the palace; see Xiao Difei, *Han Wei ... shi*, pp. 33–35, who argues that the *Fangzhong yue*, at least in Zhou times, was also played at banquets. Liang Qichao 梁啟超 understands *fangzhong* as the place within the ancestral temple, where the ancestral tablets were lined up; see „Zhongguo zhi meiwen ji qi lishi“ 中國之美文及其歷史, in his *Yinbing shi heji zhuanji* 飲冰室合集專集 (24 vols., Shanghai 1941), vol. 16, ch. 74, p. 33. The number of seventeen texts is a problem difficult to solve; several editions and commentaries subdivide the cycle into nine, ten, twelve or sixteen chants (see Qiu Qionsun, *Lidai yuezhi ... jiaoshi*, pp. 185–186, Otake, Kanjo, p. 526, n. 14, and the collators' notes in *Yuefu shiji* ch. 8.111). Again, the question of dating the different texts remains unsolved; Zheng Wen 鄭文, „«Han Anshi fangzhong ge» shi lun“ «漢安世房中歌» 試論, in: *Shehui kexue* 社會科學 (Lanzhou) 1985.2, pp. 97–103, tries to recognize direct relations between the contents of some chants and certain historical events and arrives at dates between 201 and 197 B.C. (An earlier, more or less identical version of this article is included in Zheng Wen, *Han shi yanjiu* 漢詩研究, Lanzhou 1981, pp. 1–21).

times (221–206 B.C.),¹⁸ nothing is known about its activities during the reign of Gaozu. Also, the accounts on re-shaping the ritual music, a vital political necessity within the establishment of the dynasty, betray no traces of that supposedly early Han ritual system mentioned in later sources. Instead they convey the image of a rather irregular, almost accidental procedure, completely dependent upon the knowledge of the former Qin erudite Shusun Tong and the scholars assembled by him. They, for the time being, had to base their compositions on the Qin music, although they in fact sought to emulate the elevated model of the Zhou kings.¹⁹ The sources remain silent about semantic or formal standards of the *Anshi fangzhong ge* – the only exception being a remark in the *Hanshu* stating that the emperor was fond of the „sounds of Chu“ (*Chu sheng* 楚聲), from which the *Fangzhong* music is said to have been composed.²⁰ This characterization and its reasoning, too, may increase the impression of a comparatively free composition of the hymns, still more or less untouched by overruling standards.

But the hymns themselves do not support this image. At first sight, it is all the more surprising and at second sight maybe all the more understandable, that their wording exhibits an exceedingly close liaison to the political language of Zhou times (1045–221 B.C.),²¹ especially to the early writings of the later Confucianist canon, which were not officially recognized until the reign of Han Wudi. This is surprising, because the historians introduce Gaozu as a strong personality, although of humble origins and of nearly no education; on the other hand it is understandable, because the unsure political and military situation at the outset of the Han dynasty seems to have necessitated that the government be linked ideologically through strong ties to an authoritative system of thought that conveyed the dignity of the past. On the level of content there are three main elements to be distinguished in the hymns: the expression of abstract ethical-political norms, the autoreferential presentation of the ritual performance, and the euphemistic praise of military actions. According to the doctrine formulated in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, „the great services of the state are sacrifice and warfare“,²² the hymns of Han

18 For the inscription of the term *yuefu* on an excavated bell, see Yuan Zhongyi 袁仲一, „Qindai jinwen, taowen zakao san ze“ 秦代金文陶文雜考三則, in: *Kaogu yu wenwu* 考古與文物 1982.4, pp. 92–94.

19 *Hanshu* 22.1043, 43.2126, *Shiji* 99.2722. For Shusun Tong and his ritual book(s) as well as for the emulation of the Zhou model see n. 16 above.

20 *Hanshu* 22.1043. This remark is commonly linked to Liu Bang's geographical origins.

21 The date 1045 as the year of the Zhou conquest is taken from David S. Nivison, „The Dates of Western Chou“, in: *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43 (1983), confirmed by Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels* (Berkeley 1991), pp. 217–236, and recently again by the same author (Xia Hanyi 夏含夷), „«Zhushu jinian» yu Zhou Wu wang ke Shang de niandai“ «竹書紀年» 與周武王克商的年代, in: *Wenshi* 文史 38 (1994), pp. 7–18.

22 *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan* 春秋左傳 27.209b [Cheng 13].

Gaozu indeed express the cornerstones of the Zhou kings' political actions.²³ Although constantly merging with each other during the whole cycle, the semantic elements identified still dominate the individual chants alternately. Therefore it becomes possible to set up a tentative classification, by which the texts may be divided into „political hymns“ (nos. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17), „hymns of celebration“ (1, 2) and „hymns of military praise“ (5, 12). The chants 10 and 13 are composed of both political formulas and expressions of celebration.

The implied subdivision of the corpus into seventeen texts and defined verses, as is now generally accepted, is essentially based on the reconstruction of the end-rhymes. The standard form is the rhyme on every second of the 135 verses,²⁴ but there are also occurrences of rhyming verses 1-2-4 within the unit of a quatrain. On the formal level, the short texts (consisting of four to ten verses) exhibit very simple structures: there is no metric change within the single text,²⁵ 13 out of 17 hymns are composed of the classical tetrasyllabic verse that makes up more than 93 per cent of the *Shijing*,²⁶ the remaining four texts being in trisyllabic metre. Changes of rhyme occur in only six chants and there only once in each text. Irregularities of rhyme cannot be credited to poetic license but appear simply as uneven and imperfect structures, for example when caused by the repetition of a whole verse. The by far dominant rhyming category, occurring in nine hymns, is *zhi* 職 (*-ək). In this category, the following words rhyme repeatedly: *de* 德 („virtuous power“) nine times, *ze* 則 („standard“) and *fu* 福 („blessing“) four times each, *ji* 極 („extreme“) and *yi* 翼 („respectful“, „respectable“) three times each, *guo* 國 („state“) and *zhi* 殖 („prosper“) twice each. It seems appropriate to

23 On the liaison of sacrifice, warfare and political legitimation in Zhou times see Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China* (Albany 1990).

24 In addition to the works mentioned in notes 14 and 17, see Lu Kanru 陸侃如, „Yuefu guci kao“ 樂府古辭考 (1926, repr., in: *Lu Kanru gudian wenxue lunwen ji* 陸侃如古典文學論文集, 2 vols., Shanghai 1987, vol.2, pp. 701–821), vol. 2, pp. 712–715. Without doubt, the text as handed down is corrupt in several passages: for example, only the chants 10 and 11 have short titles placed behind them; in chant 6 two doublings of characters appear as superfluous (see next note), and in chant 4 there is obviously one verse (according to the rhymes probably the first) missing. The total number of 135 verses may be open to discussion, particularly because of the uncertainties of chant 6. Here as well as in the discussion of the *Jiaosi ge* the division of verses at irregular passages is in accord with the standard rhyme scheme with every second verse rhyming.

25 In the precluding verses of chant 6 there are two characters doubled (大海蕩蕩 / 水所歸 / 高賢淪淪 / 民所懷), producing an irregular metre. Several scholars have suggested omitting one character in each case, which would result in a purely trisyllabic metre throughout the whole text; see Wu Renjie 吳人傑 (fl. 1178), *Liang Han kanwu buyi* 兩漢刊誤補遺 (1189–1199, *Zhi bu zu zhai congshu* 知不足齋叢書 ed., *Bai bu congshu jicheng* 百部叢書集成, Taipei 1966–1969), 4.8a–b, recently also Lu Kanru, „Yuefu guci kao“, p. 713, Qiu Qionsun, *Lidai yuezhi ... jiaoshi*, p. 189, and Xu Renfu 徐仁甫, *Gushi biejie* 古詩別解 (Shanghai 1984), pp. 76–77.

26 See Gao Huaping 高華平, „Guyue de chenfu yu shiti de bianqian“ 古樂的沉浮與詩體的變遷, in: *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 中國社會科學 1991.5, p.204.

recognize these words, elevated by position and sound, as significant key terms which measure out the horizon of thought in this cycle and bind the hymns to chosen texts of the canonized tradition.

The discussion of the formal features of the *Anshi fangzhong ge* must touch upon the characterization given in the *Hanshu* as „sounds of Chu“. This attribution to a regional musical style would point to a specific cultural background. There is no lack of attempts to define the precise meaning of the term *Chu sheng* in literary as well as in musical tradition. To begin with, it is unclear what *Chu sheng* refers to. If one rejects the term as metaphorically embracing text and music as a whole, and insists that it must be valid for actual sound patterns, only part of these are reconstructable through the written texts: stanza and metric schemes, onomatopoetic expressions, and rhymes, possibly with dialectal variants. Apart from these features *sheng* may refer to specific musical phenomena which have left no traces in the texts: choice and tuning of instruments, pitches, tempi, melodies, etc. as well as all possible peculiarities of musical play. The cycle under discussion displays only three explicit references to the musical performance, two of them in the so-called „hymns of celebration“ (nos. 1 and 2) and one in a „hymn of military praise“ (no. 5). In all three cases the terminology denotes no special „southern“ phenomena but, on the contrary, central elements of that ideal musical order which was conceived of as having been realized by the Zhou kings. Chant 1 mentions the majestically towering „four[-sided] suspended [bells and lithophones]“ (*si xuan* 四縣), i.e. the arrangement of racks for these instruments like to the four sides of a room, as in Zhou times exclusively reserved for the king.²⁷ Chant 2 begins with the rarely used and therefore unclear (and much debated) term *qi shi* 七始 („seven primary [tones]“). In another passage the *Hanshu* quotes from the New Text version (*jinwen* 今文) of the *Shangshu* 尚書 the cultural hero Shun 舜 in direct speech: „I wish to hear the six pitch-pipes (*liu lü* 六律), the five notes (*wu sheng* 五聲), the eight sounds (*ba yin* 八音) and the seven primary [tones ...].“²⁸ Thus the term *qi shi*, despite its various later inter-

27 The *Hanshu* commentator Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581–645) glosses *xuan* as an old form of *xuan* 懸 (*Hanshu* 22.1046). The Zhou kings used the arrangement, also called *gongxuan* 宮懸 / 懸 („palace [like] suspended“), in both the sacrifices at the suburban altars and at the ancestral temple; see *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮注疏 23.157a–b (*Shisan jing zhushu* ed.), *Tongdian* 通典 (Wang Wenjin 王文錦 et. al., coll., 5 vols., Beijing 1988), 144.3684, 147.3742–3744, Martin Gimm, *Das Yüeh-fu tsa-lu des Tuan An-chieh: Studien zur Geschichte von Musik, Schauspiel und Tanz in der T'ang-Dynastie* (Wiesbaden 1966), pp. 106–122.

28 *Hanshu* 21A.972; see also *Shangshu dazhuan* 尚書大傳 1B.15b–16a (*Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 ed.). This passage is different from both the versions of the later „Old Text“ (*guwen* 古文) *Shangshu* (cf. *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義 5.30a, *Shisan jing zhushu* ed.) and of the *Shiji* 2.79; for a comprehensive discussion, on which my translation is based, see Bernhard Karlgren, „Glosses on the Book of Documents I“, in: *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 20 (1948), pp. 125–127. Karlgren's philological conclusion has been fully confirmed by a recently excavated fragment of the Eastern Han „Stone canon“ (*shijing* 石經)

pretations, e.g. as a music title,²⁹ seems to be proven as part of the traditional musical system. Chant 5 describes the military campaign as emanating the cultural influence of the *Xiao* 簫 and *Zhuo* 勺 pieces of music which were directly related to Shun and the early Zhou rulers.³⁰

The „four[-sided] suspended [bells and lithophones]“, the „seven primary [tones]“, and the „*Xiao* and *Zhuo* [music]“ do not refer to a particular music of Chu but attach the ritual performance of the first Han emperor directly to the dignified model of the Zhou kings and the cultural hero Shun. Moreover, archaeological evidence suggests the rejection of the idea of a Chu musical culture independent from the central Zhou court.³¹ Maybe there are still certain characteristics of Chu music that may be defined through literary sources³² and more or less clearly identified in the poetic structure of the early parts of the *Chuci* 楚辭. The present cycle, however, as will be demonstrated in the following textual analysis, betrays at best a superficial proximity to texts like the *Jiu ge* 九歌 by the trisyllabic verse of chants 6 to 9, the above mentioned 1-2-4 rhyming scheme and certain singular linguistic elements. These sporadic and disjointed features,

Shangshu, see Rao Zongyi 饒宗頤 and Zeng Xiantong 曾憲通, *Chu di chutu wenxian san zhong yanjiu* 楚地出土文獻三種研究 (Beijing 1993), pp. 63–64.

- 29 See Meng Kang's 孟康 (c. 180–260) commentary in *Hanshu* 22.1046. Kurihara Keisuke 栗原圭介, *Chûgoku kodai gakuron no kenkyû* 中国古代樂論の研究 (Tôkyô 1978), p. 267, as well as Rao Zongyi and Zeng Xiantong, *Chu di ... yanjiu*, p. 64, identify *qi shi* as the standard tones (*qi lü* 七律) of the heptatonic scale.
- 30 For the *xiao* (usually as *xiaoshao* 簫韶, also as *shao* 韶/招) and *zhuo* music as related to Shun and the early Zhou rulers see, e.g., the apocryphal *Yue wei* 樂緯 (in: *Chuxue ji* 初學記, 3 vols., Beijing 1989, 15.366) and *Hanshu* 22.1038; parallel passages are included in several Eastern Han works including the *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義, the *Baihu tong* 白虎通, and the *Duduan* 獨斷. It is also possible to read *xiao zhuo* as *xiao shao*, the music related to Shun; see Li Jiayan, „«Shi» ,yi ya', ,yi nan', ,yi yue', ,bu jian' jie“ «詩», 以雅', 以南', ,以臥', ,不僭' 解, in: *Li Jiayan gudian wenxue lunwenji* 李嘉言古典文學論文集 (Shanghai 1987), pp. 35–37. Another question is whether the music was played while campaigning (according to the early *Hanshu* commentator Jin Zhuo 晉灼, fl. c. 275, as quoted by Yan Shigu in *Hanshu* 22.1048), or after the campaign at the ancestral temple (according to Zhu Qian 朱乾, *Yuefu zhengyi* 樂府正義, 1789 ed., repr. 2 vols., Kyôto 1980, 2.3b–4a). In any case, there is no need to follow Li Guangdi 李光地 (1642–1718), as quoted by Wang Xianqian, reading *xiao zhuo* as homophone loan characters for *xiao shuo* 銷鑠 („exterminate and eradicate“).
- 31 For archaeological evidence, see Lothar von Falkenhausen, „Chu Ritual Music“, in: Thomas Lawton (ed.), *New Perspectives on Chu Culture During the Eastern Zhou Period* (Princeton 1991), pp. 47–106; Wu Zhao 吳釗, „Ye tan «Chu sheng» de diaoshi wenti“ 也談《楚聲》的調式問題, in: *Wenyi yanjiu* 文藝研究 1980.2, pp. 76–85. The traditionally emphasized cultural particularity of the old State of Chu within the *Zhou tianxia* 天下 has recently been questioned also on other subjects; see Heather A. Peters, *The Role of the State of Chu in Eastern Zhou Period China: A Study of Interaction and Exchange in the South* (Ph.D. Dissertation Yale University 1983), Cook, *Auspicious Metals*.
- 32 See Wu Chonghou 吳崇厚, „«Chu sheng» chutan“ «楚聲》初探, in: *Zhongnan minzu xueyuan xuebao (zhexue shehui kexue)* 中南民族學院學報(哲學社會科學) 1990.4, pp. 55–60, 78.

however, cannot be valued as the expression of an overall and consciously achieved aesthetic shaping. Suzuki Shûji 鈴木修次 concedes the *Anshi fangzhong ge* a sometimes tighter and more compact imagery as compared to the hymns of the *Shijing* and quotes as an example chant 1 introduced below; nevertheless, realizing direct connections to the poetic art of the *Chuci* remains the exception to the rule.³³ Ultimately, the characterization of the *Fangzhong* music as „sounds of Chu“ cannot be verified. But on the other hand the explicit references to the dignified music of the Zhou kings, regarded as the ultimate expression of culture that harmonizes the natural as well as the political cosmos, may be basically ideological rather than factual. According to all literary and archaeological evidence, already by the outset of the Han dynasty the music of the Zhou must be regarded as lost.³⁴ The related passages in the *Shiji* and the *Hanshu* suggest that the ritual music under Han Gaozu, although nowhere described in detail, was newly shaped³⁵ – but it seems impossible to grasp its form in concrete terms as *Chu sheng*.

The scope of thought and form of the *Anshi fangzhong ge*, together with the proposed classification may be exemplified by a few chosen hymns. Of the „political hymns“ I have chosen four texts (including the trisyllabic chant 6) to demonstrate the interchangeability and narrowness of the stock vocabulary:

Chant 1 (hymn of celebration)

The great filial piety is truly completed:	大孝備矣
the splendid virtuous power radiant and clear.	休德昭明
Majestically towering the four[-sided] suspended [bells and lithophones]:	高張四懸

33 Suzuki Shûji, *Kan Gi shi no kenkyû* 漢魏詩の研究 (Tôkyô 1967), pp. 6–7. The thesis held by Fang Zushen 方祖榮, *Han shi yanjiu* 漢詩研究 (Taibei 1969), p. 132, that Gaozu's hymns are kindred to the *Chuci* and only by recent literary historians misread as derived from the *Shijing*, remains without evidence. In fact, Fang is simply ignorant of several important Ming and Qing commentaries where the term *Chu sheng* is rejected in favour of tracing the *Anshi fangzhong ge* to the *Shijing* Elegantiae and Eulogia; see, e.g., Xu Xianzhong 徐獻忠 (1493–1569), *Yuefu yuan* 樂府原 (Zhang Suowang 張所望, 1556–1635, coll., 1609 ed.) 1.1b–2a, Zhu Jiazheng 朱嘉徵 (fl. 1642), *Yuefu guangxu* 樂府廣序 (Kangxi ed., 1676?) 23.8b, Chen Benli 陳本禮, *Anshi fangzhong ge* (*Han yuefu san ge jian zhu* 漢樂府三歌箋註, *Chenshi congshu* 陳氏叢書 ed. 1810) 1b. Zheng Wen, „Han Anshi fangzhong ge“ shi lun“, pp. 100–101, however, tries to prove the formal identity with parts of the *Chuci* by interpolating the interjection *xi* 兮 and thus reconstructing the supposed original form of the hymns. Considering the formal variety of the *Chuci*, manoeuvres of this kind appear as arbitrary to such a degree that they can only be accepted by additional reasoning and further coincidences. Just here the interpretation hold by Fang and Zheng fails; the texts themselves – and we have no more reliable witnesses – are attached not to the *Chuci* but to the *Shijing* by formal structure, vocabulary and the expressed system of thought.

34 See *Hanshu* 22.1043; von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music*, pp. 110–116.

35 *Shiji* 99.2722, *Hanshu* 22.1043–1044, 43.2126.

music fills palaces and halls.
 Manifold stands the forest of feathers –
 the clouds' shining dark and unfathomable.
 Golden branches, graceful flowers,
 multiformed yaktails, kingfisher banners!

樂充宮庭
 芬樹羽林
 雲景杳冥
 金支秀華
 庶旄翠旌

Chant 5 (hymn of military praise)

Within the seas there were traitors³⁶
 plunging the northeast into chaos and turmoil.
 By edict [We] formed up regiments for pacification –
 the military officers present the virtuous power!
 Emanating the music [they] lead the rebels into accord,
 the *Xiao* and *Zhuo* [music] unite[s] the evil [again with us]!
 Reverently [they] establish order,
 hold down and consolidate the principedom Yan.³⁷

海內有姦
 紛亂東北
 詔撫成師
 武臣承德
 行樂交逆
 簫勺群慝
 肅爲濟哉
 蓋定燕國

Chant 6 (political hymn)

The great sea is vast (,vast) –
 to which the waters turn;
 the sublime sages are mild (,mild) –
 for whom the people long!
 The great mountains tower up,
 the hundred [kinds of] plants prosper.
 Who do the people honour?
 They honour those of virtuous power!

大海蕩(蕩)
 水所歸
 高賢愉(愉)
 民所懷
 大山崔
 百卉殖
 民何貴
 貴有德

Chant 14 (political hymn)

Illustrious, illustrious the mighty shining,
 vast, oh!, the splendid virtuous power!
 Blissfully [We] receive the harmony of Heaven –
 this joy, such a blessing!

皇皇鴻明
 蕩侯休德
 嘉承天和
 伊樂厥福

36 *Hai nei* 海內 (,within the seas“) is the standard name for China in this time; see Ying-shih Yü, „Han Foreign Relations“, in: *The Cambridge History of China*, p. 378.

37 Shen Qinhan 沈欽韓 (1775–1831), quoted by Wang Xianqian, and Zheng Wen, „«Han An-shi fangzhong ge» shi lun“, p. 98, link the chant to the suppression of the revolt of Zang Tu 臧荼, prince of Yan, 202 B.C. (*Shiji* 8.381, *Hanshu* 1B.58); Chen Zhi 陳直, *Wenshi kaogu luncong* 文史考古論叢 (Tianjin 1988), p. 44, links it to the campaign of 195 B.C. against the then prince of Yan, Lu Wan 盧縮 (*Shiji* 8.391, *Hanshu* 1B.77).

Joyful and yet not unrestrained –
this is the standard for the people!

在樂不荒
惟民之則

Chant 15 (political hymn)

Profound standards, military virtuous power:
The people below prosper completely.
The superb name exists of old,
the great norm is respectable, respectable!

浚則師德
下民咸殖
令問在舊
孔容翼翼

Chant 16 (political hymn)

In the steadfastness of the great norm
[We] receive the shining of the [Heavenly] Emperor!
To the joy of the people below
may sons and grandsons maintain the brilliance!
Receiving and following, mild and gentle,
[We] obtain the brilliance of the [Heavenly] Emperor!
The chosen offerings are superbly fragrant,
may [We] live long und remain unforgotten!

孔容之常
承帝之明
下民之樂
子孫保光
承順溫良
受帝之光
嘉薦令芳
壽考不忘

The texts, being representative for the cycle, exhibit two features in particular: an abundance of archaisms both in language and notion that link the texts to the political language of the *Shijing*, the *Shangshu*, the bronze epigraphs of Zhou times and later texts of the orthodox tradition such as the *Yili* 儀禮, and a basic monotony created by a vocabulary as abstract as it is restricted, dominating above all the highly formalized „political hymns“. The texts draw on a narrow, clearly defined sector of the literary tradition and appear identical to each other to the point of interchangeability. The „political hymns“ appear less as an ensemble of individual chants, demarcated from each other, but rather as variations of one single text.³⁸ It is just this phenomenon that may be responsible for the enduring discussion on the proper number of texts and how to define their borders. In the present cycle the notion of a particular text of intrinsic value seems to be suspended. Proceeding from the chants quoted and once again referring to the rhyming words mentioned above, it is possible to identify a handful of Zhou political/ritual key terms around which the *Anshi fangzhong ge* are centred. Alone the following nine terms or semantic clusters are to be found more than 120 times, condensed in 85 of the 135 verses:

38 For a similar statement on the Zhou bronze inscriptions, see von Falkenhausen, „Issues“, p. 164.

- „filial piety“ (*xiao* 孝);
- „virtuous power“ (*de* 德);
- „four extremes“ (*si ji* 四極);
- expressions of happiness, joy, benevolence, mildness, blessing;
- expressions of norm, rule, model, standard;
- expressions of peace, calming down, suppressing;
- expressions of light imagery;
- expressions of respect and reverence;
- expressions of longevity and permanence.

By use of this terminology the Zhou designed a political system of thought in which the king was responsible for the order of the *tianxia* to Heaven/God on High as well as to the ancestral spirits. It is characteristic of the concept and its terminology, readable in the present cycle, too, that the constitutive concepts are always laid out in two directions, with the king as the axial point between the powers above and the people below, including his descendents: by his ritual and political actions he receives, and at the same time emulates, the ancestors' virtuous power to become himself a model future ancestor. He receives the blessings from and presents his reverence to those above and before him – he spreads his benevolence over and receives the respect of those below and after him.³⁹ Thus the shining brilliance of virtuous power continues along the vertical and the temporal axis. Through the *Anshi fangzhong ge* Han Gaozu, emperor of the reunified *tianxia*, presents himself as inheritor of that ideal political and cultural order lost more than five hundred years before and now to be re-enacted.⁴⁰ Down to which details the present hymns followed the sanctified words of the past may be illustrated by just a few examples:

Chant 13 ends with the couplet: „[We] receive and maintain the blessings of Heaven – / may the superb name remain unforgotten!“ A *topos* in *Shijing* and *Shangshu*, the key word *tianxiu* 天休 („blessings of Heaven“) is reserved for the virtuous founders or renewers of the old dynasties: the legendary Shun, the first Shang king Tang 湯, the first Zhou king Wu 武 (r. 1049–1044 B.C.) and, lastly, the founder of the new capital Luo 洛, the Duke of Zhou 周公 (interim ruler 1042–1036 B.C.).⁴¹ In the *Shangshu* – across all the boundaries of any possibly

39 Due to this double relation, always expressed by the same vocabulary, it is at times possible to reconstruct the respective subjects of the quoted hymns the other way around.

40 See Jan Assmann, „Kollektives Gedächtnis und kulturelle Identität“, in: Jan Assmann and Tonio Hölscher (eds.), *Kultur und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt/M. 1988), p. 16: „In ihrer kulturellen Überlieferung wird eine Gesellschaft sichtbar: für sich und für andere. Welche Vergangenheit sie darin sichtbar werden und in der Wertperspektive ihrer identifikatorischen Aneignung hervortreten läßt, sagt etwas aus über das, was sie ist und worauf sie hinauswill.“

41 *Mao shi* #304 (20-4.358c), *Shangshu zhengyi* 5.29c, 8.50b, 11.73a–b, 88a, 15.102c, 16.113b; dates after Nivison, „The Dates of Western Chou“, pp. 525, 546. It is not until the

original or later interpolated chapters – the term is used mainly in the different „proclamations“ (*gao 誥*). Praising the „blessings of Heaven“ Han Gaozu claims precisely to line himself up with the sage rulers of the past.

The phrase *bing de* 秉德 („adhering to the virtuous power“) as used in verse 4.1⁴² is a stock formula in Western Zhou (1045–771 B.C.) political/ritual rhetoric⁴³ and denotes the characteristic of „virtuous power“ as something having been received and firmly grasped. Also the abundant light imagery (terms used: *zhao* 照, *qing* 清, *jing* 景, *xian* 顯, *ming* 明, *zhao* 昭, *huang* 皇, *yao* 燿, *ri yue guang* 日月光, *zhu* 燭, *guang* 光) of the *Anshi fangzhong ge* is modelled after the Confucianist scriptures and the Zhou bronze epigraphic texts.⁴⁴ The phrase *jue fu* 厥福 („such a blessing“) as in verses 14.4 and 17.4 is highly archaic by the use of the pronoun *jue*. During Western Zhou times it was still in standard use but was gradually replaced by *qi* 其; indeed, in some inscriptions of the Eastern Zhou (771–221 B.C.) it was consciously used as an archaism.⁴⁵

Again, it may be instructive that those mostly alliterating or rhyming binomes, rare and difficult to understand as they were used in the early texts of the *Chuci* and developed to a key element of poetic expression in the *fu* 賦 of the second century B.C.,⁴⁶ are next to absent in the present cycle. Probably the only contemporary binome of southern provenance was *yaoming* 杳冥 („dark and unfathomable“) in verse 1.6, and again in the doubled form *yaoyao mingming* in verse 11.7.⁴⁷ Beyond the chants of these two hymn cycles, this binome is alien to the imaginary or actual songs of Han times but extensively used in the *fu* as well as in six *Chuci* passages; in the latter, it preferentially appears in the context of heavenly journeys and intercourse with the spirits.⁴⁸ In the present cycle the binome,

Chunqiu Zuo zhuan (21.166b [Xuan 3], 38.297b [Xiang 28], 60.475b [Ai 16]) that *tianxiu* is used in a broader sense. However, on the whole the present hymns display only scarce parallels to the *Zuo zhuan*.

42 The enumeration of the verses follows the scheme „hymn.verse“.

43 See esp. for the extended phrase *bing ming de* 秉明德 („adhering to the shining virtuous power“) Jao Tsung-yi, „The Character *te* in Bronze Inscriptions“, in: Noël Barnard (ed.), *The Proceedings of a Symposium on Scientific Methods of Research in the Study of Ancient Chinese Bronzes and Southeast Asian Metal and Other Archaeological Artifacts* (Melbourne 1976), pp. 148–150.

44 See Cook, *Auspicious Metals*, pp. 218–229, 237.

45 See Dobson, *The Language*, pp. 35, 127; Cook, *Auspicious Metals*, p. 242.

46 See David R. Knechtges, „Problems of Translating Descriptive Binomes in the *Fu*“, in: *Tamkang Review* XV (1984/85), pp. 329–347.

47 For a discussion of this binome composed of two synonyms, see Jiang Liangfu 姜亮夫, *Chuci tonggu* 楚辭通故 (4 vols., Jinan 1985), vol. 4, pp. 466–469, 630–631. The *Shuowen* paleographically explains *yao* as „the sun under the tree“, i. e. the light of dusk, and defines it as *ming* and this, again, as *you* 幽 („dark, unfathomable“).

48 Twice as *yaoming* in *Xi shi* 惜誓 and *Qi jian* 七諫 (section *Zi bei* 自悲), three times as *yao mingming* in *Jiu ge* (Dong jun 東君, *Shan gui* 山鬼) and *Jiu tan* 九歎 (*Yuan si* 怨思) and once as *yao yi mingming* 杳以冥冥 in *Jiu zhang* 九章 (*She jiang* 涉江); see *Chuci buzhu* 楚

together with several formal structures and a few phrases, suggest the actual presence of contemporary southern literature at Gaozu's court. Whereas in the present cycle these scattered tones are far from sufficient to drown the ubiquitous voices from the orthodox Zhou liturgy, their very existence may indeed serve as proof – that namely the particular characteristics of texts like the *Jiu ge*⁴⁹ were not unknown but deliberately banished from the ritual hymns of the first Han emperor.

Binomes of doubled characters, well known from the *Shijing* and the bronze inscriptions,⁵⁰ are amply used in the *Anshi fangzhong ge*. There are fifteen doubled characters, and of these *mingming* 冥冥 („unfathomable, unfathomable“) twice, and *yiyi* 翼翼 („respectable, respectable“) even three times. Of the fifteen binomes, three are traceable to the Eulogia of the *Shijing*, two to the Great Elegantiae and one each to the Little Elegantiae (*xiaoya* 小雅) and the Airs of the States. Significantly, these doubled characters preferentially occur at the beginning of lines, as they do in many *Shijing* chants, a feature that may reflect a slow hieratic rhythm of musical and even magical significance.

Expressions of longevity and permanence are of paramount significance in the ideological horizon of Zhou political liturgy. Gaozu's hymns offer the following verses:

- 8.7–8 „Of the long nothing is longer –
extended without limits!“ (final verse)
- 9.9–10 „The spread of the virtuous power is great –
through generations longevity may expand!“ (final verse)
- 10.9–10 „The way of filial piety attends the generations –
[We] establish refinement and rules!“ (final verse)
- 11.3–4 „Our state boundaries are enduring and far –
[We are] illuminating and shining to the four extremes!“
- 11.7–8 „Dark, dark, unfathomable, unfathomable –
may eternal blessings be broadened!“ (final verse)
- 13.7–8 „[We] receive and maintain the blessings of Heaven –
may the superb name remain unforgotten!“ (final verse)

辭補注 (Bai Huawen 白化文 et al., coll., Beijing ²1986), 11.228, 13.249, 2.76, 2.80, 16.292, 4.130. According to the tentative datings by Takeji Sadao 竹治貞夫, *Soji kenkyū* 楚辭研究 (Tōkyō 1978), and David Hawkes, *The Songs of the South: An Ancient Chinese Anthology of Poems by Qu Yuan and Other Poets* (Harmondsworth 1985) five of these texts (the exception is *Jiu tan*) took shape just before the Han dynasty or probably in the second century B.C.

49 See David Hawkes, „The Quest of the Goddess“, in: *Asia Major* n.s. 13 (1967), pp. 71–94, for the magical and sensual features both in contents and language that the *Jiu ge* display as important elements in the intercourse with the spirits.

50 See Chou Fa-kao, „Reduplicatives in the Book of Odes“, in: *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica* 34 (1962/63), pp. 661–698.

- 15.3–4 „The superb name exists of old,
the great norm is respectable, respectable!“ (final verse)
- 16.3–4 „To the joy of the people below
may sons and grandsons maintain the radiance!“
- 16.7–8 „The chosen offerings are superbly fragrant,
may [We] live long und remain unforgotten!“ (final verse)
- 17.7–8 „The people below are in peace and joy –
may [We] obtain blessings without limits!“ (final verse)

Strikingly, eight out of ten passages that emphasize permanence are final verses. In other words, eight out of seventeen hymns end with the *topos* of permanence or longevity. According to the *Wu yi* 無逸 („No ease!“) chapter of the *Shangshu* only the virtuous rulers enjoyed longevity (*shou* 壽). The notion of longevity (also *meishou* 眉壽), central to the ancestral cult of the Zhou, has been recognized in about 80 per cent of the bronze inscriptions and seems to have been the „main concern of the sponsors of the ritual“.⁵¹ In the *Shijing*, *shou* is chiefly praised or implored in the „high“ texts of the Eulogia and Elegantiae and thus marked as a *topos* of political language: the *Airs* mention the term three times, the *Little Elegantiae* fourteen times, the *Great Elegantiae* three times, and the *Eulogia* eleven times. The final verses 16.8 and 17.8 of the *Anshi fangzhong ge* are verbatim quotations of the *Shijing*.⁵²

It is essential to recognize the fundamental difference between, firstly, the imploring of longevity that may be transferred through virtuous power and which extends beyond one's own person to generations of descendants,⁵³ and secondly, the search for immortality which is always restricted to the individual.⁵⁴ The longevity of a Zhou king, as implored by Han Gaozu, was secured by political and ritual means and always directed towards a political and dynastic permanence that went beyond the individual but yet did not transcend the natural limits of human destiny. In this explicitly impersonal sense the *topos* of permanence is also employed in the *Anshi fangzhong ge*: referring twice to the „superb name“ (*ling wen* 令聞), once on the borders of the state and three times on the succession of the generations.

51 Von Falkenhausen, *Ritual Music*, p. 683; see also Ying-shih Yü, „Life and Immortality in the Mind of Han China“, in: *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964/65), p. 87.

52 See *Mao shi* #130, 173, 249 (6-4.105a, 10-1.152b, 17-3.273a). The verses 16.7–8 are also verbatim quotations of the *Yili* (*Yili zhushu* 義禮注疏, *Shisan jing zhushu* ed.) 3.13c.

53 See *Mao shi* #241 (16-4.252b–c). The impersonal character of the Zhou notion of longevity is of course closely related to the virtuous power: „*De* is not the private property of individuals, it belongs to the clan and can be transmitted to posterity.“ (Vassily Kryukov, „Symbols of Power and Communication in Pre-Confucian China (On the Anthropology of *De*): Preliminary Assumptions“, in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* LVIII.2, 1995, p. 315)

54 See also Ying-shih Yü, „Life and Immortality“, pp. 87–88.

2.2 The nineteen *Jiaosi ge* of Han Wudi

In a somewhat cursory passage of the *Hanshu* „Monograph on ritual and music“, the creation of the „Nineteen pieces of chants for the sacrifices at the suburban altars“⁵⁵ is directly linked to the reform of the imperial sacrifices in 114/113 B.C.⁵⁶ and to the re-orientation of the Office of Music:

When Wudi laid down the ritual of the sacrifices at the suburban altars, he sacrificed to [the highest heavenly deity] Great Unity (*Taiyi* 太一) at Ganquan 甘泉 and thus gave it the [supreme] position of the *Qian* 乾 trigram [northwest of the capital]; he sacrificed to Lady Earth (*Houtu* 后土) at Fenyin 汾陰, on a square mound within a swamp. Thereupon he determined the Office of Music to select poems for the nightly recitations; there were the tunes from [the areas of the former states] Zhao, Dai, Qin, and Chu. He appointed Li Yannian 李延年 (c. 140–c. 87 B.C.) as commandant of harmonies and often recommended Sima Xiangru and some dozens of others to compose chants and rhapsodies. One discussed the essentials of the male and female pitches in order to adapt them to the melodies of the eight [instrumental] sounds and created the chants in nineteen pieces. When [the emperor] on the first xin 辛 day in the first month of the year performed the sacrificial service at the round mound at Ganquan, he let seventy boys and girls sing in chorus, and there were sacrifices from dusk to dawn.⁵⁷

The „Monograph on the sacrifices at the suburban altars“ (*Jiaosi zhi* 郊祀志) dates the new beginning of ritual music immediately after the suppression of Nanyue 南越 in spring 111 B.C.: at that time the emperor recognized that „the

55 The texts of this cycle are clearly delimited from each other by numbered „titles“ that consist of the first two or three characters of the text and which are placed behind the individual chant. In addition, following some of these „titles“ there are remarks dating and relating the respective chant to concrete historical events, not without contradictions to other passages of the *Shiji* and *Hanshu*. Under the „title“ *Tianma* 天馬 („Heavenly horses“, no. 10, *Hanshu* 22.1060–1061) there are two independent chants to be dated of 113 respectively 101 B.C. and thus in fact extending the „19 pieces“ to twenty hymns. The *Shiji* „Book on music“ (*Yueshu* 樂書, 24.1177) mentions not only „19 pieces“ of the „present emperor [Wudi]“ but moreover contains essentially shorter variants of the two hymns on „Heavenly horses“ (24.1178). However, this passage has been proven to be corrupt; see Yu Jiayi 余嘉錫, „Taishigong shu wangpian kao“ 太史公書亡篇考 (*Yu Jiayi lunxue zazhu* 余嘉錫論學雜著, 2 vols., Beijing 1963, vol. 1, pp. 1–108), pp. 38–49, and Qiu Qiongsun, *Lidai yuezhi ... jiaoshi*, pp. 2–9. There are no authors assigned to the individual chants; according to the explicit datings of some texts and tentatively reconstructable ones of others, the remark in the *Hanshu* (22.1045), that „Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 and some dozens of others“ had authored the „chants in 19 pieces“, cannot be understood as referring to one single act of creation. The earliest – questionable – dating given is 123/122 B.C. (chant 17, *Hanshu* 22.1068), the latest 94/93 B.C. (chant 18, 22.1069). Again, it remains unclear whether the successively composed hymns accumulated in the ritual performance or were replaced by each other.

56 See Michael Loewe, *Chinese Ideas of Life and Death* (London 1982), pp. 130–132.

57 *Hanshu* 22.1045.

sacrifices of the people have dance and music [lead by] drums, but today [Our imperial] sacrifices at the suburban altars are without music".⁵⁸ The *Hanshu* depicts the musical arrangement of the ritual hymns – not the composing of the texts! – as constitutive for the institutionalization of music at court, even if the Office of Music has not been established by Wudi, but probably redetermined in its basic functions and duties.⁵⁹ The embedding in an institutional framework is but one feature that on the very conceptual level distinguishes the *Jiaosi ge* from the earlier *Anshi fangzhong ge*. The *Hanshu* passages quoted make clear that the later chants were sung not at the ancestral temple but during the sacrifices at the suburban altars and thus directed to different cosmic powers.⁶⁰ From the times of Wudi there are no hymns of the ancestral temple handed down.

To six of the twenty *Jiaosi ge* (nos. 10a, 10b, 12, 13, 17, 18) there are short appendices pointing to the factual occasion of their composition, as well as a dating (which is at times incorrect). Four of the chants (3–6) are marked as *Zou zi yue* 鄒子樂, and after two hymns (7, 8) the *Hanshu* includes textual corrections of one verse in each by Kuang Heng 匡衡, chancellor from 36–30 B.C.; the first of these corrections is dated 32 B.C. The survey of the external appendices to the texts makes the hymns and, by extension, the state ritual as a whole appear in a rather different sphere of thought as compared to the earlier cycle. The ties with events and dates display not only an alleged history of composition spanning three decades but a new dramatic element in the ritual act: this is no longer the place of tradition and remembrances where elements of a „golden past“ are at free disposal for the current needs of political legitimation, but rather the place of the „Other

58 *Hanshu* 25A.1232, parallel *Shiji* 12.472, 28.1396.

59 In addition to the Qin bell (see n. 18 above), there are other pieces of evidence that the Office of Music existed before the times of Wudi; see, e.g., *Hanshu* 22.1043, *Shiji* 24.1177, and Jia Yi's 賈誼 (200–168 B.C.) *Xinshu* 新書 4.4b (*Sibu congkan* ed.). For a comprehensive discussion, also on the other problematic points of the passage quoted above, refer to Zhang Yongxin 張永鑫, *Han yuefu yanjiu* 漢樂府研究 (Nanjing 1992), pp. 45–54, and Anne M. Birrell, „Mythmaking and Yüeh-fu: Popular Songs and Ballads of Early Imperial China“, in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109.2 (1989), pp. 233–235. The safe dating of the establishment of the office remains unsolved. Zhang Yongxin, Jean-Pierre Diény, *Aux origines de la poésie classique en Chine* (Leiden 1968), p. 84, as well as Suzuki Shûji, *Kan Gi shi no kenkyû*, pp. 91–92, suggest a fundamental reform and re-orientation of the office in 111 B.C.; thus my translation of the phrase *li yuefu* 立樂府 as „determined the Office of Music“. For the history of the office since then, see also Masuda Kiyohide 増田清秀, *Gafu no rekishiteki kenkyû* 樂府の歴史的研究 (Tôkyô 1975) and Michael Loewe, *Crisis and Conflict in Han China 104 BC to AD 9* (London 1974), pp. 193–210.

60 There are, however, some hints that several of the chants for the suburban altars might have been sung at the ancestral temple, too; cf. the corrupt *Yueshu* passage (*Shiji* 24.1178) mentioned in n. 55 above and the preface to Ban Gu's 班固 (32–92) *Liang du fu* 兩都賦 („Rhapsody on the two capitals“, *Wenxuan* 文選 1.2a, *Sibu congkan* ed.). In the *Hanshu* passage (22.1071) that sounds like a fragment of a critical memorial directed against the *Jiaosi ge*, it is stated that the „present Han songs for the suburban altars and the ancestral temple have no [praise for the] ancestors' affairs“.

Time“ where a sanctified system of order is transferred with ideological gestures to the here and now. The state ritual now becomes the place where the present time receives its own sanctification: the reference to current events establishes a simultaneousness between political practice and its legitimation. The particular function of religion to offer a sphere of non-simultaneousness against the banality of daily experience⁶¹ is considerably suspended. The following analysis of the formal and semantic characteristics of the *Jiaosi ge* tries to work out this rare phenomenon in Chinese culture and to discuss it within the context of the harsh criticism that the hymns of Wudi possibly suffered under some contemporaries, but then certainly in the political discussions of the following generations.

As in the case of the earlier cycle, the *Jiaosi ge* may be classified into different semantic categories which, however, display a very different pattern: in addition to a now larger set of „hymns of celebration“ (chants 1, 8, 11, 15, 16, 19) there are two new types distinguishable which I will tentatively call „seasonal hymns“ (2–6) and „hymns on political omens“ (10a, 10b, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18). „Political hymns“ and „hymns of military praise“, as introduced above, are no longer detectable. Text 7 as composed of various elements is not easy to classify; text 9, probably a sun hymn, appears as a strange alien element, being composed of unrestrained rhymeless and rather colloquial prose.

The *Jiaosi ge*, in all 433 verses,⁶² include several texts of considerable length, namely the „hymns of celebration“: chant 1 (48 verses), chant 8 (40 verses), chant 11 (42 verses), chant 15 (38 verses), chant 16 (20 verses), and chant 19 (28 verses). Of a similar format are also the three „hymns on political omens“, chant 12 (36 verses), chant 10b (24 verses) and chant 17 (20 verses), as well as hymn 7 (24 verses). The structured abundance of form betrays the work of conscious aesthetic shaping. All texts (with the exception of chant 9) have changes of rhyme; as a rule, the rhyme changes after every four verses, thus dividing the texts into very short sections. Moreover, the chants 1, 10b, 15 and 19 exhibit equally tight strophic structures by using recurring formulas. Three chants (8, 11, 12) contain changes of metre and in addition a special couplet structure composed of one tetrasyllabic and one trisyllabic verse,⁶³ attributing to an effect of vivacity. On the whole, the trisyllabic verse dominates this cycle, making up eight of the chants completely and three in part.

61 See Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München 1992), p. 84.

62 For the underlying principles in stating this number, see the remarks in n. 24 above.

63 The same metric pattern sporadically appears in various texts of the *Chuci* and even makes up the form of the two magical „Summons“, *Da zhao* 大招 and *Zhao hun* 招魂. To me, it appears as a matter of interpretation whether to divide the verse into a 4/3 scheme with every second verse rhyming or to define 7-character-units with every verse rhyming. I prefer the more dramatic 4/3 pattern because it is in accord with the surrounding verses of uniform metre: they all rhyme with every second verse, and both their fast rhyme changes and short strophic units convey a staccato-like rhythm.

Because of their complexity and the more elaborate discussion that they deserve, the examples of the different semantic categories will be separately introduced:

Chant 2 (seasonal hymn): „The Sovereign approaches“

The Sovereign approaches the altar of the centre,	帝臨中壇
[those of the] four directions line up under the eaves.	四方承宇
Through bundles and bundles of myriad changes	繩繩意變
in full attendance [the spirits] obtain their positions.	備得其所
Clear and harmonious the sixfold united [universe] – ⁶⁴	清和六合
[We] regulate the numbers after the five.	制數以五
[The country] within the seas is peaceful and tranquil –	海內安寧
[We] cause culture to prosper, weapons to stop!	興文偃武
Lady Earth rich and fruitful –	后土富媪
brilliantly shining the three illuminating ones! ⁶⁵	昭明三光
Exalted, exalted, joyfully spreading –	穆穆優游
in auspicious vestments [We] raise the [colour] yellow!	嘉服上黃

Chant 3 (seasonal hymn): „Azure Yang“

Azure Yang begins to stir –	青陽開動
roots of woody plants and grasses shoot.	根莖以遂
It moistens and damps in universal affection –	膏潤並愛
those walking the earth are entirely reached.	歧行畢逮
The sound of roaring thunder lets the buds come to bloom –	霆聲發榮
those [insects] inhabiting mountain caves bend to listen.	蠞處頃聽
The dead sprays sprout anew,	枯槩復產
thus fulfilling their destiny.	乃成厥命
The numerous people harmonious, harmonious,	眾庶熙熙
the spread [of favour] reaches to infants and embryos.	施及夭胎
The swarms of beings luxuriant, luxuriant –	群生嘒嘒
these are the blessings of spring!	惟春之祺

The latter hymn is linked to the following chants *Zhu ming* 朱明 („Vermilion shining“), *Xi hao* 西顛 („Western radiant white“), and *Xuan ming* 玄冥 („Dark unfathomableness“) by the note *Zou zi yue* („music of Master Zou“) appended to each. Together with chant 2, *Di lin* 帝臨 „The Sovereign approaches“, these texts

64 *Liu he* 六合 is a rather late denotation of the four directions, above and below, that is, the universe; see *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 17.3b, *Huainan zi* 淮南子 (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 1.2b. In the political panegyrics of Han times, e.g. the *fu* on capitals, the term always denotes the extension of the empire.

65 *San guang* 三光 denotes the sun, the moon, and the stars; see *Huainan zi* 1.3a.

are formally synchronized, too: each hymn consists of twelve tetrasyllabic verses with every second verse rhyming. Slight and probably insignificant differences appear only in the frequency of rhymes (three in chant 3, two in the others) and the places of their change (after four or eight verses).

The *Hou Hanshu* „Monograph on sacrifices“ (*Jisi [zhi] 祭祀志*) relates the following account of later times when the sacrifices at the suburban altars had been transferred to the suburbs of the Eastern Han capital Luoyang 洛陽: „On the day of Spring’s Beginning, spring is welcomed in the eastern suburb and sacrifice is made to the Azure Sovereign and [its assistant deity] *Goumang* 句芒. Chariots, banners, vestments, and decorations are all azure. ‚Azure Yang‘ is chanted and eight rows of dancers perform the ‚Cloud plumes‘ dance.“⁶⁶ Parallel accounts follow concerning the festivities welcoming the other seasons, altered only in the respective sets of correlative phenomena (season, direction, sovereign, assistant deity, colour, hymn, dance).⁶⁷ In accordance with the system of the „five phases“ (*wu xing* 五行), chant 2 of the present cycle, which to this day is often mistaken as being directed to Lady Earth,⁶⁸ receives its due place as a hymn of

66 *Hou Hanshu*, zhi 8.3181.

67 There is a laconic account in the *Shiji* „Book on music“ (24.1178) that relates the chants 3–6 of the present cycle to seasonal sacrifices in Ganquan. However, as the passage immediately following, this passage, too, may be corrupt as it neglects chant 2, the then primary hymn.

68 For discussions on the problem, see Wang Niansun 王念孫 (1744–1832), *Dushu zazhi* 讀書雜誌 (*Jinling shuju* 金陵書局 ed., repr. 2 vols., Taipei 1963), 4-4.17b–18a, *Hanshu buzhu* and Yang Shuda 楊樹達, *Hanshu kuiguan* 漢書窺管 (2 vols., Shanghai 1984), vol. 1, p. 132. As recognized already by Wu Renjie and confirmed by Wang Xianqian, Zheng Wen, Masuda Kiyohide and others, the text is directed to the Yellow Sovereign of the centre. The prevalent misunderstanding is due to the double function of Lady Earth in the ritual system of Wudi: in the dualist opposition of heaven and earth, *Houtu* represents earth and is opposed to the Great Unity. In the concept of the five phases, however, *Houtu* is as assistant deity subordinate to the Yellow Sovereign, who resides in the centre and is again attached to the phase of earth; for a survey of the relevant texts, see Wolfram Eberhard, „Beiträge zur kosmologischen Spekulation Chinas in der Hanzeit“, in: *Baessler-Archiv* 16 [1933], pp. 1–100 (repr., in: *Sternkunde und Weltbild im alten China: Gesammelte Aufsätze von Wolfram Eberhard*, Taipei 1970), pp. 49–51. Wudi’s sacrifice to the Five Sovereigns since 134 B.C. in Yong 雍 and since 113 B.C. in Ganquan is well established (*Shiji* 28.1384, *Hanshu* 25A.1216). In Ganquan, their altars, corresponding to their related directions, were grouped around the raised *Taiyi* altar. As the centre was occupied by *Taiyi*, the Yellow Sovereign of the centre was placed in the southwest (*Shiji* 12.469, 28.1394, *Hanshu* 25A.1230), i. e. between the Vermilion Sovereign of the south and the White Sovereign of the west, reigning over summer and autumn, respectively. The separate sacrifice to *Houtu* in Fenyin 汾陰 was inaugurated December 114 B.C. (*Shiji* 12.461, 28.1389, *Hanshu* 6.183, 25A.1221–1222). Moreover, in the newly constructed „Hall of Light“ (*Mingtang* 明堂) southeast of the holy Mount Tai 泰山, *Houtu* was also honored since 106 B.C. on the lower floor and the Five Sovereigns together with *Taiyi* were on the upper (*Shiji* 28.1401, *Hanshu* 25B.1243).

the (newly invented) „middle“ season (eighteen days before Autumn's Beginning) and as which it is directed to the Yellow Sovereign of the centre.⁶⁹

Of Wudi's hymns, only these five in their austere, classical tetrasyllabic form, their independence from single historical events, and their cosmological frame of thought lasted through Eastern Han times and became the model for the „Chants to the Five Sovereigns“ (*wu di ge* 五帝歌) of the following dynasties. Based on the correlative *wu xing* cosmology the five chants mirrored the phases of cosmic order. In this context the appended remark „music of Master Zou“ exhibits its meaning as relating the texts to the very origins of contemporary political cosmology: Master Zou does not refer to the Han literatus Zou Yang 鄒陽 (c.206–c.129 B.C.), as is sometimes suggested,⁷⁰ but to the Zhou philosopher Zou Yan 鄒衍 (305–240 B.C.), credited with the founding of the *wu xing* theory.⁷¹ However, it is very possible that the appended remark does not originally date from the times of Wudi, but was introduced at some later unknown date. In any case, through later ideological discussions (see below), the reference to Zou Yan may have served to define these four or maybe five texts as an independent group, separating them from the other chants of the times which soon became rejected as „unclassical“, and thus sanctioning their further employment.

Masuda Kiyohide has reasoned that hymn 2, lacking the appendix „music of Master Zou“, may have been composed as a contemporary completion of the existing set of „seasonal hymns“ in 104 B.C. when the dynasty was officially assigned to the cosmic virtuous power of earth.⁷² This thesis is well supported by

69 *Hou Hanshu*, zhi 5.3123; in 8.3182, „Vermilion shining“ is falsely attached to this „season“. In a similar way, Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) comments to *Zhouli* 19.128a („The altars for the Five Sovereigns are established at the four suburbs“) that the sacrifice to the Yellow Sovereign was conducted at the southern suburban altar of the Vermilion Sovereign. This variant seems to have been chosen even at the above mentioned sacrifices in the „Hall of Light“. The contradiction seems to reflect the unresolved conflict between the ancient concept of four seasons and directions and the later of the five phases, that requested a fifth „season“ and „direction“. As can be traced, for instance, at the diviner's boards (*shi* 式) of Han times, both systems seem to have in a way coexisted for a considerable time; see Li Ling 李零, „«Shi» yu Zhongguo gudai de yuzhou moshi“ «式» 與中國古代的宇宙模式, in: *Zhongguo wenhua* 中國文化 4 (1991), pp. 10–23; for a more general discussion of the problem see Angus C. Graham, *Yin-Yang and the Nature of Correlative Thinking* (Singapore 1986), pp. 42–66, and John B. Henderson, *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology* (New York 1984), pp. 10–11.

70 See Liang Qichao, „Zhongguo zhi meiwen“, p. 37, Luo Genze, *Yuefu wenxue shi*, p. 29, Lu Kanru and Feng Yuanjun, *Zhongguo shishi*, vol. 1, p. 174, and Qiu Qionsun, *Lidai yuezhi ... jiaoshi*, p. 198.

71 See the discussion in Masuda Kiyohide, *Gafu no rekishiteki kenkyū*, pp. 32–46. In the *Hanshu* „Monograph on literature“ (30.1733) Ban Gu himself glosses „Master Zou“ as Zou Yan; moreover, in *Shiji* 28.1368–1369 and 74.2344–2345 Zou Yan is referred to as „Master Zou“.

72 Masuda, *Gafu no rekishiteki kenkyū*, p. 39. For the adaptation of the virtuous power of earth, see *Shiji* 12.483, *Hanshu* 6.199, 25B.1245; for the particular significance of this symbolic political act, see Michael Loewe, *Crisis and Conflict in Han China*, pp. 29–32,

the five chants themselves: the vivid nature imagery of chants 3 to 6 follows in detail the older system of thought of the „Monthly ordinances“ (*yue ling* 月令) as unfolded in the *Lüshi chunqiu*, then, having been supposedly derived from this, in the *Liji* 禮記 and also in the *Huainan zi*.⁷³ The nearly identical versions in the *Lüshi chunqiu* and the *Liji* represent the old notion of four seasons with their respective characteristics of the natural world and the corresponding human behaviour as conducted by the ruler. Here, the abstract characteristics of a „middle“ season are all too obvious a later interpolation, artificially attached at the end of the summer „ordinances“.⁷⁴ The *Huainan zi*, on the other hand, displays the younger *wu xing* system by re-defining the complete last month of summer (*ji xia* 季夏) as the „middle“ season.⁷⁵ At a closer reading, however, it appears that only the abstract features of cosmological significance (colour, number, direction, etc.) are altered to define this „season“ in its own right, whereas all descriptions of natural phenomena and human behaviour follow the old „ordinances“ for this month as given in the *Lüshi chunqiu* and the *Liji*. The „season of the middle“ has no distinctive natural reality at all – and it is precisely this difference as a set of concrete features linked to an abstract concept on the one hand, and the very abstract notion alone on the other, which distinguishes chants 3 to 6 from chant 2. In „Azure Yang“, as quoted above, the verses 2, 5–6 and 10 are almost verbally adopted from the „Monthly ordinances“, relating the characteristics of spring. The same kind of reference, which in addition to the natural phenomena also includes elements of the social, political and military activities appropriate to the respective season, moulds the chants 4 to 6, too. Alone chant 2 is exceptionally abstract and combines the elements of cosmological speculation (the centre, the number five, the colour yellow) with commonplaces of political rhetorics that strongly remind us of similar phrases in the *Anshi fangzhong ge*. In fact, the two reduplicatives *shengsheng* 繩繩 („bundles and bundles“) in verse 3 and *mumu* 穆穆 („exalted, exalted“) in verse 11 are both to be traced directly to the Great Elegan-

and „Water, Earth and Fire – the Symbols of the Han Dynasty“, in: *Nachrichten der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 125 (1979), pp. 63–68. Together with the proclamation of the new era *taichu* 太初 („Great Beginning“) in 104 B.C. the cosmic patron element of the dynasty was changed from water to earth which, according to the theory of the five phases, was correlated with the „direction“ or region of the centre, yellow as the imperial colour and five as standard of order for everything countable, e.g. institutions.

73 See *Lüshi chunqiu*, ch. 1–12, *Liji*, ch. *Yue ling*, (14.124a–17.160b), *Huainan zi*, ch. 5, *Shize xun* 時則訓. For a survey of the *yue ling* system and its traces in several other texts, see John Major, *Heaven and Earth in Early Han Thought: Chapters Three, Four, and Five of the Huainanzi* (Albany 1993), pp. 217–224.

74 *Lüshi chunqiu* (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 6.3a–b, *Liji zhengyi* 16.143c–144b. James Legge, *The Li Ki* (2 vols., Oxford 1885), vol. 1, p. 281, calls this passage „a supplementary section“ with „all the appearance of an after-thought, suggested by the superstitious fancies of the compiler“.

75 *Huainan zi* (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 5.6b–7a.

tiae and the Eulogia of the *Shijing*,⁷⁶ and, moreover, are the only instances in the homogeneous tetrasyllabic chants of the cycle where reduplicatives occur at the beginning of verses.

According to all these pieces of evidence, chant 2 as the superficially most „political“ text (in the sense of the „political hymns“ of Gaozu) of the whole cycle seems to be a classicist artifact, both new in its cosmological notion and archaistic in its poetical diction. It is the hymn praising the newly adopted phase and virtuous power of earth and as such it is placed before the other „seasonal hymns“ in the first position (in the „natural“ sequence its position would have been the third). With the whole set of the „seasonal hymns“ the complete cosmic cycle is ritually presented; with „The Sovereign approaches“ being the first of the chants, the power of earth is given prominence, as is the place of the dynasty in the political cycle, being part of the cosmic one. The sources remain silent about the dating of this hymn, and Masuda’s vote for 104 B.C. is certainly the safest. According to both the *Hanshu* and the *Shiji*, two efforts – the first in 180 B.C., the second in 166 B.C. – to relate the dynasty officially to the power of earth seem to have failed.⁷⁷ On the other hand, there is chant 17 of the *Jiaosi ge* which is dated as early as 123 B.C.:

Chant 17 (hymn on political omens): „Turning to the top of [Mount] Long“

Turning to the top of [Mount] Long ⁷⁸	朝隴首
[We] look out over the western crest:	覽西垠
Thunder and lightning [escort Our] burnt offering – ⁷⁹	靈電爓
[We] have caught the white unicorn!	獲白麟
Thus: it has five toes	爰五趾
to manifest the virtuous power of [the colour] yellow!	顯黃德
[We] made plans [against] <i>Xiongnu</i> bestiality –	圖匈奴
the <i>Xunyu</i> are exterminated!	熏鬻殛
Eradicated is the wiliness,	闢流離
suppressed the calamities! ⁸⁰	抑不詳

76 For *shengsheng*, see *Mao shi* #256 (18-1.287b), for *mumu Mao shi* #235, 249, 282, 299, 301 (16-1.236c, 17-3.272c, 19-3.328a, 20-1.343c, 20-3.352c).

77 For 180 B.C. see *Shiji* 84.2492 and *Hanshu* 48.2222, for 166 B.C. see *Shiji* 10.429, 96.2681–2682, and *Hanshu* 25A.1212–1213, 42.2099.

78 According to Yan Shigu’s gloss, *longshou* 隴首 denotes the peak of Long slope (*longdi zhi shou* 隴坻之首), i. e. the Mount Long 隴山, a mountain range c. 180 km west-northwest of Chang’an 長安. The Long mountain pass (*longguan* 隴關) marked the western border of the Han central area „within the passes“ (*guanzhong* 關中).

79 According to *Shiji* 12.457–458, 28.1387 and *Hanshu* 25A.1219 the unicorn was burnt at the altars of the Five Sovereigns in the then ritual centre Yong 雍. By the rising smoke burnt offerings were directed to the heavenly powers. An edict of 95 B.C., however, states that the unicorn was presented in the ancestral temple; see *Hanshu* 6.206.

[We] regale the envoys of the hundred [spirits],	賓百僚
[those of] mountains and rivers relish [the offerings].	山河饗
[But] secretly [they] turn the poles –	掩回轅
with manes [waving] long [their horses] dash off!	鬣長馳
[They] rise to the Master of Rain –	騰雨師
[he] sprinkles [both] sides of the path! ⁸¹	洒路陂
Meteorites fall down,	流星隕
stimulating these [benign] winds! ⁸²	感惟風
[The spirits] gallop away on clouds leading home –	籥歸雲
having appeased [Our] deep emotions!	撫懷心

Of course, the couplet „Thus: it has five toes / to manifest the virtuous power of [the colour] yellow“ cannot but be linked to the cosmic phase of earth – in November/December 123 B.C.⁸³ Although one may well speculate that the proposals of 180 and 165 B.C. were not the only occasions to discuss the question of the cosmic phases it is certainly reasonable to take this hymn – against the statements of the *Hanshu* – as a retrospective praise song but probably still of Wudi's times.⁸⁴

80 My reading of this difficult couplet follows the commentaries of Wang Niansun, *Dushu zazhi* 4-4.19a–b and Zhou Shouchang 周壽昌 (1814–1884), *Hanshu zhu jiaobu* 漢書注校補 (1882, *Guangya shuju congshu, shixue congshu* 廣雅書局叢書史學叢書, ed. 1891, repr. *Baibu congshu jicheng*) 15.7b.

81 In *Zhouli* 18.119a the Master of Rain (*yushi* 雨師) is described as a heavenly deity to be sacrificed by burnt offerings. He is also mentioned in the *Chuci*-Text *Yuan you* 遠遊 (*Chuci buzhu* 5.171). According to *Shiji* 28.1375 and *Hanshu* 25A.1206–1207 the Qin already had a special temple for him in Yong. According to the *Han Fei zi* 韓非子 (3.3a, *Sibu congkan* ed.), the Master of Rain had also sprinkled the path when the Yellow Emperor had summoned the spirits on Mount Tai and created the music of the „clear jue“ (*qing jue* 清角) mode.

82 All the enumerated atmospherical phenomena (thunder, lightning, rain, meteorites, winds) are stated as the auspicious response of the satisfied powers above and thus as the success of the ritual act; similar expressions are to be found in chants 1, 8, 11, 12 and 15 (see notes 107 and 110 below). It should be remembered that these frequent statements are not descriptive but performative (see n. 13 above): Because the hymns were prepared in advance, the supposed responses were not actually experienced but authoritatively announced during the ritual act. The notion of meteorites is particularly interesting as it proves an early and obviously not yet systematized stage in the interpretation of omens as finally established by Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (c.179–104 B.C.): in all later accounts as in the *Hanshu* „Monograph on astronomy“ (*Tianwen zhi* 天文志, ch. 26) and the „Monograph on the five phases“ (*Wu xing zhi* 五行志, 27C–C.1508–1511) meteors (*liuxing* 流星) and meteorites (*liu)xing yun* (流星隕) are thought of announcing natural as well as political disasters; see also the preface to the *Qian Hanji* 前漢紀 (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 1.1a.

83 For this – in comparison to the chant's appendix in *Hanshu* 22.1068 – more precise dating, see *Hanshu* 6.174. Sima Xiangru's *Fengshan wen* 封禪文 (*Shiji* 117.3071, *Hanshu* 57B.2608; *Wenxuan* 48.8a), *Shiji* 12.457–458, and *Hanshu* 25A.1219 also mention the event.

84 Again, this means playing the *Hanshu* off against the *Hanshu*; in my scepticism about the early date I am grateful to follow Prof. Loewe's considerations.

Since Eastern Zhou times the unicorn was a phenomenon of Confucian political mythology,⁸⁵ in Later Han times rising to one of the most prominent omens of virtuous rulership: for the years 76 to 88 alone the historians relate no less than fiftyone appearances of unicorns.⁸⁶ In this political dimension the *lin* 麟 is introduced by the last sentence of the *Chunqiu*: „In the 14th year (481 B.C.), in spring, during the hunt in the west a unicorn was captured.“⁸⁷ The *Gongyang* 公羊 commentary, authoritative during Wudi's reign, explicates this note as follows: „The *lin* is a benevolent beast. It comes in the times of a [virtuous] king. In times without a [virtuous] king it does not come [...].“⁸⁸ As evident from other passages of pre-Han literature, the unicorn was established as a political omen long before the times of Wudi – but by now it had been developed into a powerful image. Beyond the question of its authenticity, the *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 is in full accord with the *Zeitgeist* of Wudi's reign, when it mentions the unicorn four times. The *Huainan zi* notes the unicorn's appearance (or nonarrival) seven times, always as an expression of cosmic and political harmony (or discord). As early as 134 B.C., Wudi himself, in his famous „Edict to the Capable and Good“ (*zhao xian liang* 詔賢良), had mentioned the unicorn:

[Kings] Zheng and Kang of the Zhou had established the punishments but had not employed them; their virtuous power reached [even] to birds and beasts, their instructions extended to the four seas [...] Unicorns and phoenixes were in the suburbs and marshes, the [Yellow] river and the [river] Luo brought forth the chart and the writing.⁸⁹

The *Chunqiu* account had mentioned that the unicorn was captured „in the west“, namely in the old state of Lu 魯. Later readers did not attribute any particular symbolic significance to this remark, and the following reports about appearances of the legendary animal did not bring it up again. Not until the text – and context

85 I use the notion of (political) mythology following Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 52: „Für das kulturelle Gedächtnis zählt nicht faktische, sondern nur erinnerte Geschichte. Man könnte auch sagen, daß im kulturellen Gedächtnis faktische Geschichte in erinnerte und damit in Mythos transformiert wird. Mythos ist eine fundierende Geschichte, eine Geschichte, die erzählt wird, um eine Gegenwart vom Ursprung her zu erhellen. [...] Durch Erinnerung wird Geschichte zum Mythos. Dadurch wird sie nicht unwirklich, sondern im Gegenteil erst Wirklichkeit im Sinne einer fortdauernden normativen und formativen Kraft.“

86 See Wu Hung, *The Wu Liang Shrine: The Ideology of Early Chinese Pictorial Art* (Stanford 1989), p. 91.

87 *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan* 59.470b–471a [Ai 14].

88 *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhushu* 28.158c–159a (*Shisan jing zhushu* ed.).

89 *Hanshu* 6.160. Again, all great panegyrists of Han times, mostly in their *fu*, further employed and popularized the image of the unicorn and made it a central *topos* of political rhetorics. According to Sima Xiangru's *Shanglin fu* 上林賦 (*Shiji* 117.3025, *Hanshu* 57A.2556; *Wenxuan* 8.7a), the unicorn dwelled in Wudi's hunting park. The *Sanfu huangtu* 三輔黃圖 (*Sibu congkan* ed.) 2.3a mentions a Unicorn Pavilion (*qilin ge* 麒麟閣) within the emperor's Everlasting Palace (*weiyang gong* 未央宮).

– of the present hymn is there any reference to „the west“, and even the events of November/December 123 B.C., however „real“, did not occur at Mount Long but about halfway between there and Chang’an, in the old ritual centre of Yong (south of the present Fengxiang 鳳翔 in Shaanxi) which had been inherited from the Qin. The present chant, moreover, seems to be the very first passage that attaches the colour white, in Han cosmology emblematic of the west, to the unicorn.

In 138 B.C. the Han envoy Zhang Qian 張騫 (died 113 B.C.) had set off from the Long Pass to the states of Central Asia to find new allies against the permanent threat of the *Xiongnu* 匈奴. Although his mission failed, the information he brought back on his return in 126 B.C. for the first time conveyed concrete knowledge of the „western regions“ (*xiyu* 西域) and were a *sine qua non* for „Han China’s success in its subsequent western expansion“.⁹⁰ Since 124 B.C. Wudi resolutely campaigned against the *Xiongnu* (also called *Xunyu* 熏鬻) and more than once got troops of more than 100 000 men on the move.⁹¹ If a ritual hymn related to the historical moment of 123 B.C. takes up the old and noble political *topos* of the unicorn as an omen of virtuous rulership, links it to the highly symbolic locality of Mount Long, sings of the view to the west, celebrates (or anticipates) the suppression of the *Xiongnu*, and praises the appreciation of the powers above – then it becomes clear that the present „Hymn of the white unicorn“ (*bai lin zhi ge* 白麟之歌), as it is called elsewhere,⁹² serves as a powerful liturgic expression of political legitimation. The canonized account of the *Chunqiu*, and especially its rather casual reference to the west, has been ingeniously transformed into a new meaning and made available to contemporary political needs. In a kind of typological pattern, Wudi’s capture of the unicorn, that significantly took place at the ritual centre of the empire, appears as the definitive fulfilment to the events of 481 B.C.

Wudi’s search for immortality, his wish to emulate the model of apotheosis set by the legendary Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi* 黃帝), and his promotion of the magicians (*fangshi* 方士) are *topoi* in historical writings and can be traced back to various accounts in the *Shiji* and to personal comments of Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145–c. 86 B.C.). Even the state cults, culminating in the great *feng* 封 and *shan* 禪 services, seem to have been shaped under the strong influence of those who claimed to know the path to personal immortality.⁹³ Some verses of the *Jiaosi ge* reflect this contemporary frame of thought, and most outspoken are the final

90 Ying-shih Yü, „Han Foreign Relations“, p. 407.

91 See the tabular survey in Michael Loewe, „The Campaigns of Han Wu-ti“, in: Frank A. Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbank (eds.), *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge, Mass. 1974), pp. 112–113.

92 See *Hanshu* 6.174 and Ban Gu’s preface to his „Rhapsodies on the two capitals“ (*Liang du fu* 兩都賦) in *Wenxuan* 1.2a.

93 On all these questions, see Ying-shih Yü, „Life and Immortality in the Mind of Han China“.

couplets of chants 9 („The *Zihuang* – why does it not descend!“)⁹⁴ and 18 („[We] ascend [the mountain island] Penglai / to join infinity!“). Also the „Heavenly horses“ of Ferghana (Dayuan 大宛), obtained after „clearly the most expensive [campaign] to be mounted in the entire history of the dynasty“⁹⁵ in 101 B.C., have been interpreted as the object of Wudi’s desire for spiritual beings that might carry him to heaven.⁹⁶ They are praised in the two texts of hymn 10 and by elaborate narrative techniques fused with the image of a water-born (maybe hybrid dragon-)horse; the chants refer to Han cosmology as well as to the political control of great parts of Central Asia.

The „hymns on political omens“ are often read within the horizon of Wudi’s search for immortality. Together with some supposed Han (folk?) songs of unknown origins the hymns are labelled as „Daoist“ or „Songs of roaming in the spheres of the immortals“ (*you xian shi* 遊仙詩).⁹⁷ It should be noted, however, that the *Jiaosi ge* have almost nothing in common with those anonymous songs, particularly with regard to vocabulary, but may be proved as being closely bound to the representative genre of Western Han court literature, the *fu*. This, no doubt, has to be explained by the defined status and function of the ritual hymns, and it is the highly official status that rules out the idea of reading the texts as quasi private expressions of thought, even those of the emperor’s thought. The omen hymn quoted unmistakably betrays its ties to a whole complex of political and cosmological notions. In the same way the other „hymns on political omens“ are texts in praise of politically interpreted events and refer to a specific political mythology. It is not by accident that the historians’ accounts on omens appear in the respective chapters on ritual, i.e., those chapters that are devoted to the representative

94 In the commentaries *zihuang* 訾黃 or just *huang* is understood as denoting the hybrid beast on which the Yellow Emperor is said to have been ascended to heaven and which is called *chenghuang* 乘黃 in the *Shanhai jing* (see Hao Yixing 郝懿行, 1755–1823, *Shanhai jing jianshu* 山海經箋疏, 1804, *Huan du lou* 還讀樓 ed. 1886, repr. Chengdu 1985) 7.5b and *feihuang* 飛黃 in *Huainan zi* 6.6b.

95 Ying-shih Yü, „Han foreign relations“, p. 410. On the campaigns against Ferghana, see *Hanshu* 61 and 96A as well as (the evidently later compiled) chapter 123 of the *Shiji*.

96 See Arthur Waley, „The Heavenly Horses of Ferghana: A New View“, in: *History Today* 5 (1955), pp. 95–103; Ying-shih Yü, „Life and Immortality“, pp. 97–98.

97 See the Japanese studies of Kamatani Takeshi 釜谷武志, „Kan Butei gafu sôsetsu no mokuteki“ 漢武帝樂府創設の目的, in: *Tôhōgaku* 東方學 84 (1992), pp. 52–66, and „Yūsenshi no seiritu to tenkai“ 遊仙詩の成立と展開, in: Yoshikawa Tadao 吉川忠夫 (ed.), *Chūgoku kodōkyōshi kenkyū* 中国古道教史研究 (Kyōto 1992), pp. 323–362; Sawaguchi Takeo 澤口剛雄, „Kan no gafu ni okeru shinsen dôka no shisô“ 漢の樂府における神仙道家の思想, in: *Tôhō shūkyō* 東方宗教 27 (1966), pp. 1–22 and „Kan Gi gafu ni okeru Rôshô dôka no shisô (ge)“ 漢魏樂府における老莊道家の思想(下), in: *Tôhō shūkyō* 44 (1974), pp. 14–32; Konishi Noboru 小西昇, „Kandai gafushi to shinsen shisô“ 漢代樂府詩と神仙思想, in: *Mekata Makoto hakushi kanreki kinen Chūgokugaku ronshū* 目加田誠博士還曆記念中国学論集 (Tôkyō 1964), pp. 137–160; Tamada Tsuguo 玉田繼雄, „Kandai ni okeru gafu no shinsen kaji to kyōmei“ 漢代における樂府の神仙歌辞と鏡銘, in: *Ritsumeikan bungaku* 立命館文学 430-431-432 (1981), pp. 46–72.

and symbolic political actions which are *per definitionem* public actions. It seems appropriate to rethink the emperor's supposed personal inclination towards magic practices within this very horizon, the more so since the respective activities in search of immortality are recorded in the ritual chapters, too.

The chants of Wudi, in particular the „seasonal hymns“ and the „hymns on political omens“, display a notion of political legitimation fundamentally different from the paradigms of Zhou times as followed by Han Gaozu in mimetic assimilation. First, it is significant that no hymns of the ancestral temple have been handed down.⁹⁸ The dictum to be found in the *Chunqiu fanlu*, „The sacrifices at the suburban altars are more important than that of the ancestral temple, Heaven is more illustrious than man“,⁹⁹ defining Heaven as the highest ancestor of the „Son of Heaven“, provides if not a contemporary expression then at least a succinct later interpretation of Wudi's religious practices. His ritual chants give virtually no space to the notion of dynastic succession and permanence that dominate so many of the final verses of Gaozu's hymns. At the same time most of the abstract expressions of political ethics (filial piety, virtuous power, expressions of standard and rule, etc.) are erased; of significant exception is only chant 2 quoted above. Anyway, the pointed observation „rule needs origin“ („Herrschaft braucht Herkunft“)¹⁰⁰ is true for Wudi as well. In ritual, he also has to create a distinctive factor of political legitimation that owes its persuasive power to the very fact of being derived from a sphere outside of political action itself, namely from a sphere of „other“ and unconditional reality. As Gaozu puts into effect this difference of reality on the temporal axis to present himself – ironically the founder of the dynasty – as the worthy heir of an obligating past, Wudi replaces this kind of dynastic legitimation by a cosmic basis of rule, dramatically present in the appearance of auspicious omens. In this perspective his search for immortality may appear as something different from just private yearning: just as Gaozu, following the Zhou model, had honoured his ancestors and thus presented himself as a ruler of virtuous power to be again honoured and emulated by his descendants, so Wudi strove to equal the immortal Yellow Emperor in order to become a new model of ruler supported by cosmic powers.¹⁰¹ The reconstruction of the whole system of the state ritual, always justified by the supposed practices of the Yellow Emperor, as well as the hymns under discussion may indeed suggest a recognition

98 However, the *Hanshu* account (22.1073) on the dissolution of the Office of Music in 7 B.C. still mentions the existence of twenty drummers for the *Anshi* music (nineteen of them dismissed in 7 B.C.). This suggests a certain continuity in performance of at least the music and maybe the hymns, too, since Gaozu's times.

99 Su Yu 蘇輿 (died 1914), *Chunqiu fanlu yizheng* 春秋繁露義證 (1909, Beijing 1992) 15.414.

100 Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 71.

101 On the image of the Yellow Emperor as a sage ruler which can be traced to the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 and the *Guanzi* 管子, see Jan Yün-hua, „The Change of Images: The Yellow Emperor in Ancient Chinese Literature“, in: *Journal of Oriental Studies* XIX.2 (1981), pp. 117–137.

of the quest for personal apotheosis as a political expression going beyond individual inclinations.

Chant 15 (celebration hymn): „Blossoms glitter, glitter“

Blossoms glitter, glitter, ¹⁰²	華燿燿
firm with numinous roots!	固靈根
The spirits' wandering:	神之旂
passing Heaven's gate, ¹⁰³	過天門
of chariots of a thousand teams	車千乘
flocking at [Mount] Kunlun! ¹⁰⁴	敦昆侖
The spirits' emerging:	神之出
pushing Jade Chamber open,	排玉房
roaming around in multiple form,	周流雜

102 *Loc.class.* of *yeye* 燿燿 (variant for 燿燿) is the Little Elegantia #193 (*Mao shi* 12-2.178b), where *yeye* denotes the mighty shine of lightning.

103 See the parallel verses 5–6 in chant 1 of the cycle: 九重開 / 靈之旂, in a similar way chant 11 sets off with the spirits' pouring from Heaven's gate. The *Jiu ge* chant *Da Siming* 大司命 („Great Master of Fate“) starts with the couplet: „Widely open is Heaven's gate, / in rich profusion [] ride the dark clouds.“ (*Chuci buzhu* 2.68). In *Huainan zi* 1.4a–b Heaven's gate (*tianmen* 天門) is explained by the Xu Shen 許慎 (c. 55–c. 149)/Gao You 高誘 (c. 168–212) commentary as the „gate of the Palace of Purple Tenuity (*Ziwei gong* 紫微宮), where the Heavenly Emperor resides“. *Ziwei* is „the name of the barrier of fifteen stars the Chinese pictured as encircling the celestial pole [...] It was known as the palace of the Celestial Emperor, and theoretically the Han emperor's palace was a replica of it.“ David R. Knechtges, *Wen xuan Or Selections of Refined Literature*, vol. 1, Princeton 1982, pp. 116–118, n. ll. 143, with a detailed discussion; see also p. 120, n. ll. 164–165.

104 Since the 4th century B.C. the complex cosmological, religious and political meaning of Mount Kunlun 崑崙 (崑崙) had been developed in those texts of the younger southern literary tradition being constitutive for the language and notion of the *Jiaosi* celebration hymns. As in the early *Chuci* texts *Li sao*, *Tian wen*, *Jiu ge*, and *Jiu zhang*, the term is also mentioned in *Shanhai jing*, *Huainan zi*, and *Mu tianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳. Again, the *Lüshi chunqiu* notes it several times. Geographically located somewhere in the far west, Kunlun was imagined as the *axis mundi*: the mountain has (corresponding to Heaven) nine gates (*Shanhai jing jianshu* 11.3b) and is the earthly capital of the Heavenly Emperor (2.21a, 11.3a). Here the rivers of different colours have their sources (2.22b, 11.3b–5a, *Huainan zi* 4.2b–3a), including the Yellow river, as Wudi had personally stated after consulting „old charts“ (*Hanshu* 61.696, *Shiji* 123.3173). He who climbs the mountain's three levels becomes first immortal, then a spirit with control of wind and rain and finally reaches Heaven and the residence of the Supreme Emperor (*Huainan zi* 4.3a). This kind of cosmic mountain in the center of the world, since Mircea Eliade's works well known as universal to human culture, is always a holy place of transition. Clearly bearing this in mind, Wudi transferred the name Kunlun to the covered way around his „Hall of Light“ (*Hanshu* 25B.1243, *Shiji* 12.480–481, 28.1401; see also n. 68 above). „By means of the cosmic mountain K'un-lun, communication was made with the Chinese god-on-high, Shang-ti. Passing over the K'un-lun Way was the same as climbing K'un-lun Mountain: those who ascended to its summit gained everlasting life. The Ming-t'ang was thus located, in a religious sense, at the Center of the world, and was a bridgeway to Heaven.“ (Howard Wechsler, *Offerings of Jade and Silk*, New Haven and London 1985, p. 201.)

shooting through Thoroughwort Hall! ¹⁰⁵	拔蘭堂
The spirits' moving:	神之
with feather tufts waving up, waving up ¹⁰⁶	旌容容
riding in rush, in rush,	騎沓沓
spreading in swarms, in swarms!	般縱縱
The spirits' coming:	神之徠
gliding respectably, respectably,	泛翊翊
[causing] sweet dew to fall,	甘露降
auspicious clouds are gathering! ¹⁰⁷	慶雲集
The spirits' drawing up:	神之掄
approaching altar and eaves;	臨壇宇
[those of Mount] Jiuyi are in crowds – ¹⁰⁸	九疑賓
Kui and Long are dancing! ¹⁰⁹	夔龍舞
The spirits calmly take a seat,	神安坐
circling at the blessed time;	鵜吉時
reverently, in respect, in respect	共翊翊
[We] unite with those longed for! ¹¹⁰	合所思
The spirits are joyous and cheerful –	神嘉虞
[We] offer the following goblet;	申貳觴

- 105 Jade Chamber (*yufang* 玉房) and Thoroughwort Hall (*lantang* 蘭堂), well known in later poetry, seem to be neologisms here.
- 106 *Rongrong* 容容 („waving up, waving up“), glossed by Yan Shigu as 飛揚之貌, can be traced to southern literary tradition; see, for example, *Jiu ge*, *Shangui* (*Chuci buzhu* 2.80) and *Jiu zhang*, *Bei hui feng* 悲回風 (*Chuci buzhu* 4.160).
- 107 The „sweet dew“ (*ganlu* 甘露, also in chant 7) sent down and the gathering „auspicious clouds“ (*qingyun* 慶雲) are both omens of cosmic/political harmony; for early references on the „sweet dew“, rising to particular importance under Xuandi 宣帝 (r. 74–49 B.C.), see *Liji* 22.199b, *Huainan zi* 8.1b, Dongfang Shuo 東方朔 (154–93 B.C.), *Fei you xiansheng lun* 非有先生論 (*Wenxuan* 51.10b). The „auspicious clouds“ are described in the *Hanshu* „Monograph on astronomy“ (26.1298) as an extraordinary atmospheric appearance. The omen catalogue in the *Songshu* 宋書 (8 vols., Beijing ²1983) attaches the multicoloured „auspicious clouds“ to times of supreme peace (29.836). As is clear from various passages of *Shiji* and *Hanshu*, unusual atmospheric and light phenomena were understood as the spirits' answer to the sacrifice, signalling their appreciation.
- 108 *Jiuyi* 九疑 (variant: 嶷) is the name of a mountain in the south of present Hunan 湖南, according to legend the burial place of Shun. Just as Qin Shihuang 秦始皇 did in 211 B.C. (*Shiji* 6.260), Wudi personally sacrificed there in 107/106 B.C. (*Hanshu* 6.196). I read *bin* 賓 („crowds“) for *bin* 賓 („guest“) according to the verbatim parallel phrases in *Li sao* (百神翳其備降兮 / 九疑續其並迎; *Chuci buzhu* 1.37) and *Jiu ge*, *Xiang furen* (九嶷續兮並迎 / 靈之來兮如雲; *Chuci buzhu* 2.68).
- 109 Read *long* 龍 as 籠. According to the political mythology of Han times, Shun had charged Kui 夔 with the order of music and Long 籠 with the verbal contact between ruler and people; see *Shangshu* 3.19b–20a, *Shiji* 1.39, *Hanshu* 19A.721–722, on Kui also *Shiji* 2.81, 24.1197, *Hanshu* 22.1038.
- 110 Again, as in the couplet 17–18 (see n. 107 above), this is an autoreferential statement of the success of the ritual performance (see n. 82 above).

the blessings stream out and away,¹¹¹
 extend into distance and permanence!
 [The spirits] pour and spread their grace
 on the banks of [the river] Fen;¹¹²
 [they] raise the golden brilliance,
 pervading the grandiose river!
 [The light] proliferates as clouds,
 increases the sunbathed waves –
 all around [We] demonstrate the bliss,
 let the chant ascend to heaven!

福滂洋
 邁廷長
 沛施祐
 汾之阿
 揚金光
 橫泰河
 莽若雲
 增陽波
 徧臚驩
 騰天歌

On the surface, the political contents of this hymn are limited to the autoreferential praise of the successful ritual and its auspicious omens, as well as to the *topoi* of a political mythology. The different elements of this mythology were conscientiously chosen and considerably reshaped: the cosmic mountain Kunlun (now integrated in the new ritual centre); the mythical emperor Shun (now honoured as an ancestor); and the emblem of true rulership, the precious tripod, originally attached to the ritual cosmogenesis effectuated by the Great Yu 禹¹¹³ – but now related to the Yellow Emperor.¹¹⁴ Through these references Wudi presents his rule on a self-defined ancestral line which stretches into the cosmic dimension.

In the present hymn, the chosen „ancestors“ of a mythological and thus supertemporal ancestral line are not removed models but, as exemplified in Shun’s dancing dignitaries, just as present as the venerable emblem and political omen of the tripod. As the tripod emanates its brilliance into nature and ennobles the river Fen as the „grandiose river“ (*taihe* 泰河), it stands for the political semiotization of the cosmos as developed by Dong Zhongshu to become the leading doctrine of rulership. Not a figure of remembrance, but a dramatic appearance closes this chant which in its prelude verses (Heaven’s gate, Kunlun) has enacted contemporary southern cosmology.

111 I have been unable to trace the rhyming binome *pang-yang* 滂洋 („stream out and away“) to another passage except from the *pang yangyang* 滂洋洋 in the *Gaotang fu* 高唐賦 (*Wenxuan* 19.3a) attributed to Song Yu 宋玉 (c. 290–c. 223 B.C.).

112 In 114 B.C. Wudi had erected the altar of *Houtu* on a hill by the southern bank of the river Fen 汾. In the following year at this very place a precious tripod (*bao ding* 寶鼎) appeared – in the political mythology since Eastern Zhou times the definite symbol of a ruler’s legitimacy; see *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan* 21.166b–c [Xuan 3], *Hanshu* 6.184, 25A.1225, *Shiji* 12.464–465, 28.1392. The acquisition of the tripod is celebrated in chant 12. The „golden brilliance“ (*jin guang* 金光) of the next verse probably denotes that of the bronze tripod.

113 See *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan* 21.166b–c [Xuan 3] and the references in *Mozi* 墨子 (Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, 1848–1908, *Mozi jiangou* 墨子閒詁, 1894, 2 vols., Beijing 1986) 11.388–389, *Lüshi chunqiu* 23.1b, and *Huainan zi* 2.5b, 2.12b. On the universal practice of ritually repeating the creation of the (cultural) world, see Mircea Eliade, *Das Heilige und das Profane* (Frankfurt/M. 1985), pp. 23–60.

114 See *Shiji* 12.464–468, 28.1392–1394, *Hanshu* 25A.1225–1228.

In this chant, the distinct semantic dramatization of the ritual act correlates with the modernism of verbal expression.¹¹⁵ From the perspective of literary history the continuous trisyllabic verse with fast changes of rhyme (there are seven rhymes in the present hymn) cannot but be linked to the chants of the *Jiu ge*.¹¹⁶ Compared to the block-like tetrasyllabic verse, symmetrically composed of 2 x 2 characters and thus maybe representing the rhythmical potentialities of the old instruments of ritual music (bells, drums, lithophones),¹¹⁷ the trisyllabic meter in connection with fast changes of rhyme and short strophic structures (see the recurring „The spirits’ [...]“¹¹⁸) suggests a kind of staccato rhythm.¹¹⁸ The internal trisyllabic division in the scheme 1–2 (as opposed to 2–1), dominating 84 per cent of the respective *Jiu ge* verses, again increases the pace.¹¹⁹ Even in this formal nuance the trisyllabic verses of the present cycle correspond with those of the *Jiu ge*. Finally, simultaneously with the elements of notion and form, the very vocabulary anchors the present hymn in the context of contemporary southern literature. Of all multiple-termed expressions, including the reduplicatives, the only one traceable to the *Shijing*, and there only once in a Little Elegantia, is *yeye* of verse 1. On the other hand, in addition to several verbatim coincidences in particular with passages of the *Chuci* there is a considerable amount of phrases unknown in other works of the literary tradition as handed down. Of course, we grasp but scattered fragments of early poetic literature; still, one cannot escape the observation that many expressions of the hymn under discussion seem to have been rather rare if not neologisms. Sensual creations such as „Jade Chamber“ and „Thoroughwort Hall“ no doubt represent a particular kind of literary imagery well known from the *Jiu ge*. Through their verbal concurrence with the *fu* of Sima Xiangru, other hymns not quoted here again betray a strong inclination to the poetic language of the south.

Summarizing the various features of Gaozu’s *Anshi fangzhong ge* and Wudi’s *Jiaosi ge* there is striking evidence that the respective principles of composition and the implied horizon of thought are diametrically opposed to the development of state Confucianism during the first century of the Han as related in the official histories.¹²⁰ While the first cycle draws heavily upon the early Confucianist scriptures at a time long before their official approval, these same scriptures are close to absent in the second cycle composed after their establishment as the or-

115 On the iconic and persuasive significance of the formal structure of ritual language, see Tambiah, „A Performative Approach“, pp. 134–140.

116 See Takeji, *Soji kenkyū*, pp. 547–549.

117 On this thesis, see Gao Huaping, „Guyue de chenfu yu shiti de bianqian“, pp. 210–211.

118 See Takeji, *Soji kenkyū*, p. 573.

119 See Takeji, *Soji kenkyū*, p. 578.

120 For a survey, see Robert P. Kramers, „The Development of the Confucian Schools“, in: *The Cambridge History of China*, pp. 747–765.

thodox canon in 136 B.C.¹²¹ It should be remembered that traditionalizing, especially by extensive use of „sacred“ archaic language, is the normal case in ritual strategies of developing authority and legitimacy.¹²²

In the *Jiaosi ge*, however, it is not difficult to recognize the paradigm of „modernism“ that Michael Loewe has established in the interpretation of Wudi’s political and military actions. In perfect accord with these politics of departure and expansion, the ritual chants demonstrate an enormous self-confidence beyond any canonized norms and any experience of deficiency in view of a supposed golden past.¹²³ Within the horizon of this self-confidence and programmatical self-interpretation chant 8 autoreferentially praises the creation of „new tones“ (*xin yin* 新音) for the state ritual. Jean-Pierre Diény has noted: „Pour la première fois, à notre connaissance, le Fils du Ciel osait donner pour mission à un service officiel de cultiver la musique nouvelle et, qui plus est, de l’introduire dans les cérémonies religieuses. [...] Wou-ti libérait la musique. La poésie allait en profiter.“¹²⁴ And again: „Pour orner les cérémonies nouvelles que concevait son orgueilleux génie, Wou-ti voulut une musique capable de séduire les dieux et les hommes. Il ne pouvait être question de faire confiance aux adeptes timorés de la musique ancienne.“¹²⁵ This appraisal by the modern historian of literature is consciously contrary to the traditional Chinese judgement of Wudi’s ritual music. Maybe already by some of Wudi’s contemporaries¹²⁶ and certainly with full force two generations later, a fundamental criticism against unorthodox ritual music and words was leashed to pave the way for a new classicism echoing the model of the Zhou.

The „new tones“ or „new sounds“ (*xin sheng* 新聲) are related to the creations of Li Yannian, head of the Office of Music, in the *Shiji* and the *Hanshu*.¹²⁷ But it was an admirably hazardous undertaking to include this very term in the ritual chants themselves, since for centuries it had been understood as denoting the negative counterpart of the orthodox „old music“ (*gu yue* 古樂) or „noble music“ (*ya yue* 雅樂) of the ritual, exemplified in the Eulogia and Elegantiae of the *Shijing*. In this distinct pejorative sense the term „new tones/sounds“ can be found already in Eastern Zhou books like *Guoyu* 國語 and *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋; in the *Han Fei zi* the „new sounds“ are stigmatized as „sounds of a perishing

121 See, also for the further institutionalization in 124 B.C., *Hanshu* 6.159, 6.171–172, 19A.726, 88.3593–3594.

122 See Bloch, „Symbols, Song“; Tambiah, „A Performative Approach“, pp. 121–123, *passim*, and „The Magical Power of Words“, p. 182; Bell, *Ritual Theory*, pp. 120, 138, *passim*.

123 On this type of „Defizienz-Erfahrung“, see Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 79.

124 Diény, *Aux origines*, p. 40.

125 Diény, *Aux origines*, p. 49.

126 See the probably corrupt passage in *Shiji* 24.1178.

127 *Shiji* 125.3195, *Hanshu* 93.3725, 97A.3951.

state“ (*wangguo zhi sheng* 亡國之聲).¹²⁸ Jean-Pierre Diény has demonstrated extensively how the pejorative terms *xin sheng*, *Zheng Wei zhi sheng* 鄭衛之聲 („sounds of the states of Zheng and Wei“) and *yin sheng* 淫聲 („lewd sounds“) were used as perfect synonyms, for example in the highly classicist *Yueji*¹²⁹ – which is said to have been (re-)constructed just in the days of Han Wudi!¹³⁰ „New sounds“, especially at court, were regarded as stimulating sensual excitement to the degree of sexual excesses, thus driving the state straight to its ruins; and quite naturally, according to the *Liji*, their composers had to be sentenced to death.¹³¹ In this frame of thought it becomes immediately clear that later classicists were not amused when forced to witness „new tones“ contaminating the elevated state ritual. The *Hanshu* discussion following the texts of the *Jiaosi ge* consequently disqualifies Wudi’s music *in toto* as „sounds of the state of Zheng“ (*Zheng sheng* 鄭聲),¹³² thus thoughtfully surrendering the hymns to eternal perdition: the dictum became adopted by almost all later orthodox treatises on music.

The discussion on Wudi’s ritual music and hymns as part of a wider argument on the whole shape of the state ritual, had been forced by the memorials of Kuang Heng from 32 B.C. onwards and finally led to the abolishment of the Office of Music in 7 B.C.¹³³ The notion of the heterodox „new sounds“ may have referred concretely to contemporary southern or maybe to the newly introduced Central Asiatic music, but in any case to particular sounds from the geographical and cultural periphery.¹³⁴ The idea of „old music“, always meaning the music of the Zhou central court, however, was nothing but a mere chimera: all archaeological and literary evidence suggests that the ritual music of the Zhou had already been

128 *Han Fei zi* 3.2b; the passage is also, somewhat damaged, included at the very end of the „Book on music“ (*Shiji* 24.1235). In fact, after some general remarks on the origins of music and the corrupt passage on the Wudi hymns, the „Book on music“ is nothing more than the *Yueji* 樂記 chapter of the *Liji* (with minor character variants and some differences in the paragraph order) with the attached story from the *Han Fei zi*.

129 Diény, *Aux origines*, pp. 17–40.

130 See *Hanshu* 30.1712, also *Suishu* 隋書 (6 vols., Beijing 1987) 13.288. The problem of ascribing the *Yueji* compilation to Prince Xian of Hejian (河間獻王, r. 155–129 B.C.) is as complicated as it is significant for the discussion of music in Han times; for a more detailed discussion the interested reader may refer to my forthcoming dissertation.

131 See *Liji zhengyi* 13.116a.

132 *Hanshu* 22.1071.

133 On the whole discussion, see Michael Loewe, *Crisis and Conflict*, pp. 154–192.

134 It is in fact unclear, which elements did dominate Li Yannian’s new creations. The *Jiaosi ge*, however, betray distinct links to contemporary southern literature. On the whole discussion, in addition to the extensive study by Diény, see Xiao Kangda 蕭亢達, *Handai yuewu baixi yishu yanjiu* 漢代樂舞百戲藝術研究 (Beijing 1991), pp. 14–36; Zhu Qianzhi 朱謙之, *Zhongguo yinyue wenxue shi* 中國音樂文學史 (Beijing 1989), pp. 138–151; Suzuki Shūji, *Kan Gi shi no kenkyū*, pp. 72–89; Xiao Difei, *Han Wei liuchao yuefu wenxue shi*, pp. 27–47. To me, the often claimed folk music influence on the ritual hymns seems to be without real evidence.

lost by Gaozu's times.¹³⁵ The mobilization of such apparent realities, the fierceness of the argument, and, above all, the prominent space this debate is granted by the historians amply demonstrate the real status of the topic – and the significance of the ritual hymns: the ideological horizon of political action is at stake.

135 See notes 34 and 35 above.

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