

HANS VAN ESS

## What is Chinese? Culturalism or Ethnicism in Song China? With an Appendix on *Siku quanshu* Censorship of Ethnic Prejudice

### ABSTRACT:

A renewed interest in the question of Chinese identity has included the so-called Chinese–barbarian dichotomy (or, the difference between Chinese and barbarians) in Song times. Based on the works of three Song Confucians – Hu Anguo, Hu Yin, and Chen Liang – this article examines early arguments about *qi* (ether) as the reason for differences among human beings from different geographical locations. It shows that strong language against barbarians, which at some points may even sound nationalist or racist, did not lead to an elaborated argument for a biological difference between Chinese and barbarians or the biological superiority of the Chinese. The three authors argue from deeply rooted traditional Chinese thinking, and they define Chineseness in terms of adherence to a small set of cultural values. No claim is made to a special Chinese ethnicity. In addition to offering corrections to points made by major scholars, the present study reaffirms the validity of the concept of “culturalism” that was formulated by Joseph Levenson almost seventy years ago to describe how Song Confucians conceived of their own identity.

### KEYWORDS:

*Song, nationalism, ethnicism, culturalism, barbarians*

Forty years ago, Hoyt Tillman published his seminal article that examined “proto-nationalism” in the writings of Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143–1194). It remains standard for anyone dealing with the topic of Chinese nationalism in premodern times. In his paper Tillman empha-

➤ Hans van Ess, LMU Munich, Dept. Asian Studies, Sinologisches Seminar

THIS PAPER was presented March 29–30, 2019, at Arizona State University’s International Conference, “Culture and Power in China’s History,” which was partially funded by a grant from the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation. Much of the research for the present English-language article was done for my German thesis of habilitation in the 1990s. The result at that time was the book *Von Ch’eng I zu Chu Hsi. Die Lehre vom Rechten Weg in der Überlieferung der Familie Hu* [From Cheng Yi to Zhu Xi: The Learning of the Right Way in the Tradition of the Hu Family] (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003). Because I dealt heavily with the Confucian writings of Hu Anguo and Hu Yin, I was fortunate to have Professor Hoyt Tillman as my academic guest in Munich in 2000–01, and I profited greatly from scholarly exchange with him then.

sized that Chen Liang's strong words against barbarians may indicate that, contrary to the views of specialists on nationalism worldwide, there may have been seeds of proto-nationalistic feelings in China as early as the Southern Song period, although culturalism remained the norm.<sup>1</sup>

Only recently has there been a growing body of literature that has taken up the same subject. In accordance with the famous theory of Naito Torajirō 內藤虎次郎 (1866–1934) that modernity in China began with the Song 宋 dynasty,<sup>2</sup> both Ge Zhaoguang 葛兆光 and Nicolas Tackett have stressed that the idea of a Chinese nation may have its origins in Song times.<sup>3</sup> Shao-yun Yang, citing a vast array of sources, argues in a thought-provoking book that “culturalism” is a mischaracterization of what he terms “ethnocentric moralism.”<sup>4</sup> All these authors at least implicitly side with Prasenjit Duara, who in 1995 claimed that culturalism and national identity were two sides of the same coin.<sup>5</sup> While Yang is certainly right that the term *yidi* 夷狄 was not regarded as a neutral label by the Manchu emperors and that it hence does indeed make much sense to translate it as “barbarians” in the context of a discussion of Qianlong's thinking,<sup>6</sup> anti-barbarian rhetoric is not an argument against the idea of culturalism as advanced by Joseph Levenson and others.<sup>7</sup> This article reviews passages in the works of the Song historians Hu Anguo 胡安國 (1074–1138), Hu Yin 胡寅 (1098–1156), and Chen Liang. They are known to have used extremely strong lan-

<sup>1</sup> Hoyt Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China? The Case of Ch'en Liang,” *HJAS* 43 (1979), pp. 403–28.

<sup>2</sup> Miyazaki Hisayuki, “An Outline of the Naito Hypothesis and its Effects on Japanese Studies of China,” *Far Eastern Quarterly* 14.4 (1955), pp. 533–52.

<sup>3</sup> Ge Zhaoguang 葛兆光, “Songdai Zhongguo' yishi de tuxian: guanyu jinshi minzuzhuyi sixiang de yige yuanyuan” 宋代中國意識的凸現，關於近世民族主義思想的一個遠源，in idem, *Zhai ci Zhongguo* 宅茲中國 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), pp. 41–65. Nicolas Tackett, *The Origins of the Chinese Nation: Song China and the Forging of an East Asian World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2017).

<sup>4</sup> Shao-yun Yang, *The Way of the Barbarians: Redrawing Ethnic Boundaries in Tang and Song China* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 2019), pp. 21 and 141. Yang argues against “culturalism” because, according to him, there is no equivalent to the Western word “culture” in classical Chinese and also no concept of it (pp. 11–15), but he then speaks of a “Chinese ethnocultural identity” (p. 15). Although I cannot follow him in his criticism of “culturalism,” I would like to emphasize that in preparing the first draft of this article, I have profited enormously of Yang Shao-yun's dissertation, which is available at ProQuest.

<sup>5</sup> Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: U. Chicago P. 1986), p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> Yang, *Way of the Barbarians*, pp. 9 and 166, n. 27, refutes Lydia Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P. 2004), pp. 85–89.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1953), pp. 108–22; idem, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* (London: Routledge, 1958), pp. 98–106 ff.

guage against barbarians, but at the same time still seem to fit the idea of culturalism quite well.

Textual traces of the idea that Song authors felt an ethnic resentment rooted in a firm belief in a biological superiority of “Chinese” over “barbarians” are difficult to find in the works of Chen Liang and the two Hu, who without doubt were Chen’s two most influential antecedents. As Tillman himself stated, it is better to understand seemingly racist statements in texts, such as those by Chen Liang, by seeing the Central Lands (*zhongguo* 中國) of China as favored by excellent geographical conditions and the fear of losing those, than by explaining them by a consciousness of race or ethnic superiority. (The term “*zhongguo*” and its rendering as “Central Lands” are discussed at greater length in the next section.)

“Ethnicity” is a concept that presupposes an ethnic identity, something not easily shared by other ethnic groups. In order to be able to speak of Chineseness as an ethnic concept during the time of the Song dynasty, it is therefore necessary to identify not just what “barbarians” as an ethnic group did not possess, but also whether there was at that time the idea that there was something beyond some broad common cultural values that turned a Chinese into a Chinese, thus enabling us to speak of Chinese “ethnicity” or “ethnocentrism.” My article questions the assumption that “ethnicity” and “nation” are categories that can describe well the mindset of Confucians of Southern Song China; it also points to some aspects that show that the Confucian discourse on Chineseness and the barbarian at that time may have been much more traditional than is often assumed. In order to argue that “culturalism” still remains the best word to describe the debate in the Song, I will first review some early statements in ancient texts about “ethers” (*qi*) as a factor determining human behavior and then proceed to describe how the idea of “culturalism” was created by Song Confucians. This notion of culturalism was often referred to by use of the term “decorum and righteousness” (*liyi* 禮義) or the phrase “the Central States are the states of decorum and righteousness 中國者禮義之國也,” terms taken up in detail further along. It will be shown that the idea of “culturalism” was coined out of a belief that the environment shaped the behavior of human beings and that it was thus possible to become civilized once one accepted that the environment one had been born into had not been a favorable one. In that respect I agree with Chang Chi-shen 張其賢, who has stressed that geographical factors are since earliest times considered to be most important for the formation of a human being

in Chinese culture.<sup>8</sup> Thus, significant points in major scholarship are being challenged, using textual evidence from the twelfth and earlier centuries.

#### EARLY ARGUMENTS ABOUT “*qi* 氣”

Nicolas Tackett has argued that a “Hua person” – that is, a cultural Chinese – “was somebody whose culture had been determined by high-quality *qi*,”<sup>9</sup> and Shao-yun Yang has shown that arguments about “*qi*” (or, “ethers”) relevant to the difference between barbarians and Chinese occur much earlier than in the essays of Chen Liang that Tillman utilized. Yang has pointed out how “*qi*” plays an important role in this context in such classical texts as *Liji* 禮記, *Bohu tongyi* 白虎通義, and *Huainanzi* 淮南子. For example, he refers to the *Liji* chapter “Wangzhi” 王制, which says, “people of the five directional regions – the Central Lands,<sup>10</sup> and the Rong, and the Yi – all had their various natures, which they could not be made to alter 中國戎夷, 五方之民, 皆有其性也, 不可推移.”<sup>11</sup> In addition to this quotation, it is of great importance to read Zheng Xuan’s 鄭玄 (127–200) commentary, “The ethers of the earth cause them to be like this 地氣使之然也.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, it is clear that for Zheng Xuan, *Chinese qi* is not something that is inborn, but rather is due to the *qi*’s geographical factor. Zheng Xuan also wrote that the fact that the Western Rong and the Northern Di do not eat grain is due to the coldness of the ethers of *their* earth, which is also the reason for the fact that there are very few grains in their regions. Reading this, it is obvious that, for Zheng Xuan, “*digi* 地氣” is actually an external geographical factor that we can observe, not a hidden inborn nature of the earth or a mystical energy that transforms human beings.

The following is what the “Wangzhi” chapter had to say on geographical factors influencing customs of different peoples:

<sup>8</sup> Chang Chi-shen 張其賢, “‘Zhongguo’ gainian yu ‘Hua Yi’ zhi bian de lishi tantao” 中國概念與華夷之辨的歷史探討, Ph.D. diss. (Taipei: National Taiwan University, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> Tackett, *Origins of the Chinese Nation*, p. 163.

<sup>10</sup> The difficult term “*zhongguo* 中國” is translated as “Central Lands” in most of this essay. It obviously only meant “Central States” before the unification of the empire in 221 bc and was used in a conservative way afterwards. For this conservative use, I prefer the translation “Central Lands.” When exactly *Zhongguo* came to mean “China” is still open to debate. For a brief discussion, see next section.

<sup>11</sup> Shao-yun Yang, “‘Their Lands Are Peripheral, and Their Qi Is Blocked Up’: The Uses of Environmental Determinism in Han (206 BCE–220 CE) and Tang (618–907 CE) Chinese Interpretations of the ‘Barbarians,’” in Rebecca Futo Kennedy and Molly Jones-Lewis, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Identity and the Environment in the Classical and Medieval Worlds* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), p. 392.

<sup>12</sup> Kong Yingda 孔穎達, *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (SSJZS edn.), j. 12, p. 1338b.

Where the valleys are wide and the rivers large, the ground was differently laid out, and the people born therein had different customs. Their temperaments – hard or soft, light or grave, slow or rapid – were made uniform by different measures; their preferences for flavors were differently harmonized; their implements were differently made; their clothes were differently fashioned, but always suitably [for the geographical environment]. 民生其間者異俗: 剛柔輕重遲速異齊, 五味異和, 器械異制, 衣服異宜.<sup>13</sup>

The Han-era *Bohu tongyi* explains that the Yi and Di peoples have different customs from those prevailing in the Central Lands and thus are not born with a central and harmonious ether. Thus, “they cannot be transformed by “decorum and righteousness, *li yi* 禮義,” and therefore, [the central ruler] does not turn them into subjects.”<sup>14</sup> Again, “central and harmonious ether” should probably be understood, according to Zheng Xuan’s understanding outlined above, as meaning that barbarians are simply not born under such favorable conditions as ones that prevail in the Central Lands. The barbarians are rough because they lack the Chinese institutions of ritual and ceremonial behavior. It is important to realize that *Bohu tongyi* seems to have been written from the perspective of a peace party in the late-Han period. Importantly, its declaration – the barbarians cannot be transformed or civilized – must be read more as a political argument against attacking them and trying to incorporate them, rather than as a statement grounded in a deep philosophical or anthropological conviction.

The text of the Han-era *Erya* 爾雅 uses the notion of the existence of different *qi*-ethers in the Central Lands to explain that there are different animals in the territories of the four directions. Of special interest is the sentence, “this is [due] to the different ethers of the Central Lands 此四方中國之異氣也.”<sup>15</sup> This sentence also asserts that “*qi*” is different in different locations. According to Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010), *qi* here means “climate” and/or other geographical conditions.<sup>16</sup> This reading of *qi* would give a very naturalistic explanation that would not leave much room for understanding “ether” as an undefined mystical

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> 夷狄者, 與中國絕域異俗, 非中和氣所生, 非禮義所能化, 故不臣也。Yang, “Their Lands Are Peripheral,” p. 396; see Chen Li 陳立, *Bohu tong shuzheng* 白虎通疏證 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), j. 7, p. 318.

<sup>15</sup> Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010), *Erya shu* 爾雅疏 (SSZJS), j. 7, p. 2615: 東方有比目魚焉, 不比不行, 其名謂之鱮。南方有比翼鳥焉, 不比不飛, 其名謂之鸚鵡。西方有比肩獸焉, 邛邛距虛比, 爲邛邛距虛齧甘草, 即有難, 邛邛距虛負而走, 其名謂之蹙。北方有比肩民焉, 迭食而迭望, 中有積首蛇焉。此四方中國之異氣也。

<sup>16</sup> Xing Bing, *ibid.*, interprets “*qi*” as “*fengqi* 風氣” (“atmosphere”).

substance in the blood of living beings – an understanding which would be an argument in favor of real ethnic difference.

A similar passage is found in Fan Ye's 范曄 (398–445) *History of the Later Han*:

Now the Rong and Di are the [emanations] of the different ethers of the four directions. They sit squatting on their heels and with their legs crossed and are not distinct from birds and animals. Should they live dispersed within the Central Lands, they would then bring the heavenly ethers into upheaval, defiling and disgracing the good people. 夫戎狄者，四方之異氣也。蹲夷踞肆，與鳥獸無別。若雜居中國，則錯亂天氣，汙辱善人。<sup>17</sup>

This passage comes from a speech that warns against attacking the Xiongnu. Although its rhetoric is obviously guided by an anti-foreign sentiment, it would again seem to be appropriate to interpret the ethers here as “climate” (namely, geographical and other living conditions or environments) and as something that does not allow barbarians to reach a high cultural standard, like the one in the Central Lands. As in other early passages, this text conveys to readers that human beings are different in different parts of the world and that such differences are related to different ethers. Nevertheless, this statement can also be reduced to the very simple idea that different geographical conditions shape different human beings. We might argue that this is exactly what, until recently in the Western world, was also understood as the factor that created human “races.” In China, however, no true discourse about “race” or “ethnic diversity” developed beyond the very general category of inhabitants of the “Central Lands 中國,” or “All of the Xia 諸夏,” or “Hua-Xia 華夏,” on the one hand, and “barbarians,” on the other.

#### DECORUM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS (*LI YI* 禮義) AS CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CENTRAL LANDS 中國

It is important to note that *Bohu tongyi* says that it is impossible to transform the barbarians through *li* and *yi*, a point that much later Chen Liang was also to make.<sup>18</sup> Later, it was not just the absence of decorum and righteousness that characterized the “barbarian.” They became the defining criterion for the Central Lands, a term that probably only since the eleventh century can be interpreted to mean “China” in certain contexts. Originally, *zhongguo* was used to describe the *oekumene* of states and statelets governed by the Zhou dynasty. Numerous texts show that

<sup>17</sup> Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965) 25, p. 876.

from early times onward, decorum was seen as a distinctive feature of the Central Lands – a feature that was not originally shared by such states as Wu 吳, Yue 越, or even Qin 秦 and Chu 楚.<sup>18</sup> As late as the compilation of the standard-history work titled *Jinshu* 晉書, which was finished in 648 on the basis of earlier materials, Fu Jian 苻堅 (337–385), himself of non-Han origins, is quoted as saying that one should show decorum and righteousness to the Western Rong barbarians.<sup>20</sup> In that same book, someone could still say that in Wu – the lower Yangzi valley – people think that the Central Lands are not accustomed to battles on water.<sup>21</sup> Here, “Central Lands” clearly still refers to the territory of the Central Plain and the Chinese heartland “within the passes.” Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) seems at first sight to speak of *zhongguo* as “China” in *Xin Wudaishi* 新五代史, when he says that the “Ten States” of southern and southwestern China were not possessed by the Central Lands.<sup>22</sup> However, it is quite possible that Ouyang Xiu still meant that the South was lost and could not be governed by the legitimate dynasty ruling in North China. In my opinion, it seems that the term did retain its earlier usage as a geographical term for North China also in the work of Chen Liang, a scholar writing in the late-twelfth century.<sup>23</sup> In the *History of the Yuan Dynasty*, compiled at the end of the fourteenth century, the term *zhongguo* is clearly used for “China,” for example, when the text says that in the Central Lands, one says *hei* 黑 for Mongolian *kara* (“black”).<sup>24</sup> The Mongols quite clearly spoke about a “Chinese” language. Sometime between Ouyang Xiu and the compilation of the standard-history work *Yuanshi* 元史, a change in meaning may have occurred. Yet, whether *zhongguo* really meant “China” already in Song times has to be doubted. It was, I would argue, at that time most often still used when a special appeal should be made to the legitimacy to

<sup>18</sup> On Chen Liang’s repeating *Bohu tong*, see Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth Century China?,” p. 409. On the origins of the compound “*liyi*,” see Yang, *Way of the Barbarians*, p. 167, n. 52.

<sup>19</sup> *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959) 5, p. 192; 20, p. 1164; 31, p. 1448; 41, p. 1748; 97, p. 2697. See Luke S. Kwong, “What’s in a Name: Zhongguo (or ‘Middle Kingdom’) Reconsidered,” *The Historical Journal* 58.3 (2015), pp. 781–804.

<sup>20</sup> *Jinshu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 1974) 114, p. 2914.

<sup>21</sup> *Jinshu* 1, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> *Xin Wudaishi* 新五代史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974) 71, p. 873.

<sup>23</sup> I think that the sentence “摯中國衣冠禮樂而寓之偏方,” from the beginning of Chen Liang’s memorial (Chen Liang 陳亮, *Chen Liang ji* 陳亮集 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987], p. 1) does not mean, “had taken *Chung-kuo* and civilization and had lodged them in a remote peripheral place” (Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth Century China?,” p. 418), but “had taken the clothing and caps, as well as the [court] rites and [court] music, from the Central Lands and lodged them in a remote peripheral place.”

<sup>24</sup> *Yuanshi* 元史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976) 149, p. 3535.

rule that was guaranteed by the cultural superiority of certain territories in North China. These territories were seen as the inventors of social conventions dating back to Zhou times when the *zhongguo* were still individual states bound together only by the common norms they shared. When Song Daoxue thinkers, such as Hu Anguo, wanted to speak about China as a country, they used such terms as “Hua 華” or “Zhu-Xia 諸夏,” rather than *Zhongguo*.

The idea of the “Central Lands as a country of decorum and righteousness” is the textual basis for what Western historians of China have termed “culturalism”; however, at least to my knowledge, this has not yet been described adequately in sinological literature. Hu Anguo has famously written a commentary to the *Spring and Autumn Annals* that during the six centuries covered by the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties became the standard commentary to be mastered by all candidates who wanted to pass the palace examination. When Hu Anguo’s commentary to *Chunqiu*, the record for the 23rd year of Duke Xi 僖, explained why the Earl of Qi 杞伯 is called “Viscount of Qi 杞子,” one rank below his actual status, Hu first quoted the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 text in order to clarify that this “earl” was only called a “viscount 子” because Qi was a barbarian state: “That he was called a ‘zi’ was because Qi was barbarian 書曰子, 杞, 夷也.”<sup>25</sup> Hu Anguo proceeded to quote Du Yu 杜預 (222–285), who had written that the ruler of Qi in reality was an earl, but that Earl Cheng 成伯, the ruler of this state, “had first practiced barbarian rites 始行夷禮”<sup>26</sup>; therefore, Confucius sternly criticized him. An imaginary interlocutor then asked whether such a practice leads to disordering “names and reality 名實,” but Hu Anguo answered:

The *Annals* truly [concerns] the affairs of the Son of Heaven,<sup>27</sup> but they pay even more attention to the difference between China (Hua 華) and the barbarians.<sup>28</sup> The reason why the Central Lands

<sup>25</sup> Qian Weiqiang 錢偉彊, the modern editor of a new version of Hu Anguo’s *Chunqiu* commentary titled *Chunqiu Hushi zhuan* 春秋胡氏傳 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2010; hereafter, *CQZ*), j. 12, p. 189, n. 46, points to the fact that the *Wenyuan ge* 文淵閣 edition of *SKQS*, j. 12, p. 16b, titling Hu’s work *Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* 胡氏春秋傳, corrects *Zuozhuan* in this context and instead of the original *Zuozhuan* text’s “shu yue zi, Qi, yi ye 書曰子, 杞, 夷也,” writes: “That he was called a ‘zi’ (viscount) was to despise him for not behaving according to decorum 書曰子, 惡, 無禮也.” The *Siku* editors deliberately chose to avoid the term “yi” 夷 (barbarian), which the Manchu disliked. Note, however, that the issue of censorship is much more complicated. On this problem, see the very balanced discussion of the problem in Matthew Mosca, “Neither Chinese nor Outsiders: Yi and Non-Yi in the Qing Imperial Worldview,” *AM* 3d ser. 33.1 (2020), pp. 103–46.

<sup>26</sup> *CQZ*, j. 12, p. 189, n. 47, says that *Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* (SKQS edn.) 12, p. 16b, changes this to “did not use the rites of the Zhou 不用周禮.”

<sup>27</sup> Jiao Xun 焦循, *Mengzi zhengyi* 孟子正義 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), j. 13, p. 452.

<sup>28</sup> *CQZ*, j. 12, p. 189, n. 48, says that *Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* (SKQS edn.) 12, p. 17a, chang-



are the Central Lands certainly is decorum and righteousness. One single slip leads to “becoming a barbarian 爲夷狄,”<sup>29</sup> a second slip then leads to becoming birds and beasts, and thereby the human species is extinguished...<sup>30</sup> The barbarians [should] not bring China into disorder.<sup>31</sup> Duke Cheng changed this. That he was censured, by reducing him to “viscount,” served to preserve all of China. 春秋固天子之事也，而尤謹於華夷之辨。中國之所以爲中國，以禮義也，一失則爲夷狄，再失則爲禽獸，人類滅矣... 夷不亂華，成公變之，貶而稱子，存諸夏也。

The interesting point in this passage, which partly goes back to Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), is not the anti-barbarian rhetoric. The latter became the subject of heavy censorship by some teams of *Siku quanshu* editors who often avoided the term “*yi*” because they knew that the Manchus saw that term as directed against their own ancestors, the Jurchen. This was the same term to which the British before the first Opium War objected when the Qing used it while talking about the British in written correspondence.<sup>32</sup> What is of greater interest about the passage is the fact that the only criteria that turn China into China are decorum and righteousness. These famous criteria for China being China had been expressed for a long time in Chinese writings, for example, implicitly in the passage from the *Bohu tongyi* mentioned above,<sup>33</sup> but also in other texts from the Tang and Song periods. But Hu Anguo’s commentary was to become the standard commentary used for preparation at the

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es this to “inner and outer.”

<sup>29</sup> *CQZ*, j. 12, p. 189, n. 49, says that *Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* (SKQS edn.) 12, p. 17a, changes this to “then the human order is already lost 人理已亡.”

<sup>30</sup> The text in *ibid.* is longer: “Then the human species is extinguished and how should it establish itself between Heaven and Earth? 人類滅矣將何以自立于天地間哉?” The *Siku* editors obviously wanted to avoid the term beasts and birds because it was often used in connection with the word “barbarian.” For this passage, compare with the Cheng brothers, as quoted in Yang, *The Way of the Barbarians*, p. 120 ff. See Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Chengshi yishu* 程氏遺書, in Wang Xiaoyu 王孝魚, coll. and ed., *Er Chengji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), vol. 1, j. 17, p. 177.

<sup>31</sup> *CQZ*, j. 12, p. 189, n. 51, refers to *Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* (SKQS edn.) 12, p. 17a: “border corner, inner and outer 邊隅內外.”

<sup>32</sup> Lydia Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 2004), pp. 40–41, tries to downplay the negative tone that the word *yi* carried; for example, on p. 92, concerning Karl Gützlaff, that he “did not mention that it is the character *jian*, not *yi*, that bears the weight of moral opprobrium in the phrase *jian yi*,” namely, “*彘夷* treacherous foreigner.” Professor Liu’s exposition does not really work for the texts discussed below. For a discussion of Liu’s argument, see Mosca, “Neither Chinese nor Outsiders,” p. 106.

<sup>33</sup> The *Bohu tongyi* (*Bohu tong shuzheng*, j. 7, pp. 316, 318) uses only the negative argument that barbarians do not belong to the subjects of the central ruler because they do not conform to *li* and *yi*.

palace examinations for hundreds of years to come, and that turned this statement into orthodoxy.

As is well-known, while Mengzi, who held the opinion that human nature was inherently good, had spoken a great deal about “humaneness and moral justice 仁義,” Xunzi thought that human nature, regardless of whether it was Chinese or barbarian, was essentially bad and that human beings had to be civilized by something external to themselves. Therefore, the sages had created the norms and social practices for decorum and righteousness 禮義. Chinese were not predisposed to decorum, nor were they righteous by nature, but had to learn these virtues just as everyone else.<sup>34</sup> Were barbarians prevented from learning ceremonial behavior and righteousness because their own nature did not allow this? Or, did they simply have the bad luck to live in a region that did not provide the same excellent conditions as China and were therefore unable to acquire *li* and *yi*? I think that it is obvious that for most Chinese thinkers the latter was true, not the former.<sup>35</sup> This latter reality suggests that barbarians would at least in theory have been able to become “Chinese” by learning decorum and righteousness. However, it was difficult to do so in the places where they normally lived, without Chinese neighbors who knew *li* and *yi* and without the geographical conditions which made it possible to cultivate land and themselves since they did not live in an agrarian environment and society.

Du You 杜佑 (735–812), in his institutional compendium *Tongdian* 通典, clearly asserted that China was favored by natural conditions; it “was located in the middle of the world, and the ethers, received by the living beings born there, were the correct ones 華夏居土中, 生物受氣正.” He elaborated that by nature its people were harmonious and their capacity gracious; moreover, its land produced many different species. This was also the reason why sages and worthies were born there and could create norms and practices of politeness. Du stated that human civilization had made progress, but that the barbarians (*yidi*) of today resembled the world of [Chinese] antiquity before sages transformed it. The barbarian territory could not produce sages because it did not possess the same quality of *qi* as China – and hence could

<sup>34</sup> This is the essential argument of the 23d chapter of Xunzi 荀子; see Wang Xianqian 王先謙, *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988), pp. 434–49.

<sup>35</sup> Compare, however, Hu Yin 胡寅, ed. Liu Yiping 劉依平, *Dushi guanjian* 讀史管見 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), j. 1, pp. 19 ff, on Sima Guang’s 司馬光, *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956), p. 243, where Hu rejects Xunzi’s idea that *li* is an acquired attribute (Wang, *Xunzi jijie*, j. 23, pp. 434–49).

not be reached by decorum and righteousness.<sup>36</sup> Du You apparently thought that there were some specific conditions in the Central Lands that allowed for civilizational progress, but were not to be found in other places of the world.

Where did this progress come from? Mengzi had, of course, said that in order to teach decorum and righteousness to people, they had to be well fed first, a point that was standard knowledge among Daoxue thinkers of the Song period. In a paragraph on how the sages had brought about civilization, Mengzi also said that people – who were well fed and had enough clothing, but no education – necessarily came close to being like birds and wild beasts.<sup>37</sup> Wouldn't it follow that barbarians were lacking the conditions that had led to the introduction of the civilizing measures in the Central Lands? Even in the Central Lands, however, it was easy to lose civilization again. A well-known sentence in *Knowing Words* (*Zhiyan* 知言), the famous treatise written by Hu Anguo's son Hu Hong 胡宏 (1105–1161), runs:

Master Hu said: “After the Central Plains did not have the right Way (Dao) of the Central Plains anymore, the eastern and northern barbarians entered the Central Plains. Should the Central Plain again practice the right Way of the Central Plains, the eastern and northern barbarians will return to their territory (or, return this territory).” 胡子曰：中原無中原之道，然後夷狄入中原也。中原復行中原之道，則夷狄歸其地矣。<sup>38</sup>

The *Siku* editors, of course, deleted this sentence from their version of the text because they perceived that it insulted their ancestors, the Jurchen. Nonetheless, we might argue that it insulted the Chinese rulers of this territory much more than the barbarians, who simply took advantage of the fact that the Chinese did not behave in a morally superior way anymore. Hence, to Hu Hong, culture leads to power, and a loss of culture to a loss of power. It does seem that this is more than just “moralism.” Cultured behavior is what makes China strong.

Hu Hong's half-brother, Hu Yin, said: “The Central Lands are where decorum and righteousness come from, the most important [elements] for order among human beings. How could the [land of] the eastern and northern barbarians be compared to it? 中國者，禮義所自出，人治之大者矣，而何夷狄比耶。”<sup>39</sup> This comes very close to what both Hu Anguo

<sup>36</sup> Du You 杜佑, *Tongdian* 通典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984) 185, p. 985A-B.

<sup>37</sup> Jiao, *Mengzi zhengyi*, j. 3, pp. 93–95, and j. 11, p. 386.

<sup>38</sup> Wu Renhua 吳仁華, ed., *Hu Hong ji* 胡宏集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), p. 44.

<sup>39</sup> Hu, *Dushi guanjian* 讀史管見, j. 16, p. 584.

and Hu Hong also advocated: The heartland of China is, or should be, the moral standard of the world. Unfortunately, sometimes it was not. The defining characteristic of the Central Lands was, according to Hu Anguo, simply one thing – the cultivation of decorum and moral behavior, which Xunzi had promoted. Hu Yin fully agreed. There is no argument here about an ether that resided in the veins of inhabitants of the Central Lands.

It is interesting to note that in an earlier time, the *History of the Han Dynasty* had spoken of the state of Lu 魯 as the one state that had preserved decorum and righteousness of the Duke of Zhou.<sup>40</sup> He Xiu's 何休 (129–182) commentary to the ancient *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳 commentary to *Chunqiu* used the expression, “The Central States were the states of decorum and righteousness 中國者禮義之國也”;<sup>41</sup> however, although the idea was and had been for a long time omnipresent, this precise definition had not really proliferated before Hu Anguo took it up.<sup>42</sup> After the Hu family utilized this phrase, it became the self-definition or identity for China and, as such, has entered modern Chinese language – although therein the term “*liyi zhi bang* 禮義之邦” seems to be used more often today. This variation of the term already occurred in a speech by Fu Jian about the Western Rong. As we observed in *Bohu tongyi*, Fu Jian uses the negative example of the barbarians to define the Central Lands; he asserted that the Western Rong were “not a confederation of decorum and righteousness 非禮義之邦.” Therefore, he argued that the way to control these barbarians was, “to subdue and pardon them, show them the majesty of the Central Lands and to guide them by the laws of kingly reform, but not to use extreme military force or overly exhaust one's soldiers [fighting them] 服而赦之, 示以中國之威, 導以王化之法, 勿極武窮兵.”<sup>43</sup> In another passage in *Jinshu*, a general of the state of Former Qin reproached one of his former officials because the latter had made common cause with a northerner who was of the Xianbei 鮮卑 tribe: “I would have never thought that you, my minister, [a man from] the central province [of Qin], a state of decorum and righteousness, would have behaved like this! 不圖中州

<sup>40</sup> *Hanshu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962) 1B, p. 50.

<sup>41</sup> Xu Yan 徐彥, *Gongyang zhuan zhushu* 公羊傳注疏 (SSJZS edn.), j. 3, p. 2209 (Yin 隱 7).

<sup>42</sup> There are, of course, many earlier references to this idea in Tang times (see for example Huangfu Shi's 皇甫湜 (777–835) essay on the correction of the calendar by the Jin and Wei dynasties “Dong Jin yuan Wei zhengrun lun” 東晉元魏正閏論, in *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), vol. 7, j. 686, p. 7030–31 (12b–14b)). However, only because Hu Anguo's commentary to the *Annals* was the standard text for interpreting the *Annals* from Yuan 元 to Qing 清 times did the idea gain orthodox status to be mastered and repeated by anyone who wanted to pass the palace examinations in late-imperial China.

<sup>43</sup> *Jinshu* 114, p. 2914.

禮義之邦，而卿門風若斯。”<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, this was said by someone who was a civil servant of Fu Jian’s Former Qin dynasty – one that most traditional Chinese historians judged to be at least semi-barbarian and illegitimate. The Former Qin general obviously thought that it was the cultivated behavior attached to the Central Lands/States that transformed one into a member of civilization. Yet, only beginning in the Song did the idea that the Central Lands were the lands of decorum and righteousness become generally accepted. This extreme form of Chinese culturalism apparently had its roots in Hu Anguo’s interpretation of the ancient classic *Chunqiu*.

Hu Anguo referred to “decorum and righteousness” as characteristics of the Central States several times. He proclaimed, “The Central Lands are where decorum and righteousness come from; the northern and eastern barbarians are the neighbors of wild animals and birds. 中國者禮義之所出也，夷狄者禽獸之與鄰也。”<sup>45</sup> He certainly chose the word “neighbors” on purpose. It does seem clear that at this instance he wanted to show that the environment is what influences human beings – and barbarians to him clearly belonged to the human species.<sup>46</sup> Hu stressed this once again when he wrote, “These dignitaries wanted to turn their backs on China and make common cause with Jing and Chu and thus got close to birds and animals and became people of northern and eastern barbarians. 諸大夫欲背諸夏與荆楚，則是近禽獸為夷狄之民也。” For Hu Anguo, the barbarians were to the Central Lands just like inferior persons (*xiaoren* 小人) were to superior persons (*junzi* 君子).<sup>47</sup>

Hu Anguo also wrote that it was “trustworthiness and righteousness 信義” that turned a human being into a human being:<sup>48</sup>

That which turns a human being into a human being and turns the Central Lands into the Central Lands is nothing other than trustworthiness and righteousness.<sup>49</sup> With one slip one becomes a northern or eastern barbarian, with the second slip one becomes birds and wild animals. If birds and wild animals put pressure on

<sup>44</sup> *Jinshu* 115, p. 2944.

<sup>45</sup> *CQZ*, j. 21, p. 345.

<sup>46</sup> This had not always been the case in Chinese intellectual history. See Yuri Pines, “Beasts or Humans: Pre-Imperial Origins of Sino-Barbarian Dichotomy,” in Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran, eds., *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 59–102.

<sup>47</sup> *CQZ*, j. 1, p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> *CQZ*, j. 24, p. 408.

<sup>49</sup> This is an indirect quote from *Liji*, sect. “Guanyi” 冠義 (SSJZS edn.), j. 61, p. 1679, which, however, says, “That which turns a human being into a human being is decorum and righteousness 人之所以為人者，禮義也。”

human beings,<sup>50</sup> then human beings will eat each other.<sup>51</sup> 人之所以爲人，中國之所以爲中國，信義而已矣。一失則爲夷狄，二失則爲禽獸。禽獸逼人，人將相食。

While clearly having in mind the Mencian dichotomy of human beings and birds and wild animals, Hu Anguo stated that in between “man” or even “mankind 人類” and animals there were the barbarians (*yidi*). He did, of course, not exclude the possibility that barbarians could, when living in the Central Lands, acquire the customs prevailing there. That prospect was, however, to become a major preoccupation for him as well as for his son Hu Yin.

It is interesting to note that in all the texts quoted above, the idea of a Chinese “ethnicity” – not to speak of “nation” – is definitely not to be found. What comes closest to this concept of “ethnicity” are references to one famous passage in *Zuozhuan*,<sup>52</sup> where Hu Anguo pointed to the distinction between Chinese and barbarians, who “were not of our clan and kind 非我族類.” The *Zuozhuan* sentence had probably not been intended to hint at ethnic differences; nevertheless, in Hu Anguo’s language, it could have become the basis for an ethnic argument.<sup>53</sup> According to his commentary, semi-barbarian states, such as Chu or Qin, had the option to move up and down, i.e., they were “swing-states.” Yet, Hu Anguo neither mentions the possibility of real barbarians becoming cultured, nor does he give a reason why they were so different from the inhabitants of the Central Lands.<sup>54</sup> Although he emphasizes that historically when marriage alliances were concluded, the partners “were not of the proper kind 非其類,”<sup>55</sup> there is no extended argument on ethnic difference.

This passage from the *Zuozhuan* had, of course, been used before, usually when an emperor had to be warned against foreigners living on the fertile soil of the Central Lands. The *Jinshu* compilers had made extensive use of the phrase. Most famous of the *Jinshu* uses is in the biography of Jiang Tong 江統, which quotes his essay on “Removing the Rong-Barbarians” (“Xi Rong lun” 徙戎論). It argues that the fertile lands within the passes where Chang’an lay were much too valuable to have it accessible to the barbarians, “who were not of our clan and kind.”

<sup>50</sup> Compare Jiao, *Mengzi zhengyi*, j. 11, p. 374.

<sup>51</sup> *CQZ*, j. 24, p. 408.

<sup>52</sup> Kong Yingda 孔穎達, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi* 春秋左傳正義 (SSJZS edn.), j. 26, p. 1901.

<sup>53</sup> *CQZ*, j. 24, p. 224.

<sup>54</sup> See the material quoted in the appendix to this article.

<sup>55</sup> *CQZ*, j. 1, p. 7.

Their “aims and manners 志態” were different from those of China (Hua 華).<sup>56</sup> Thus, it would seem that what Hu Anguo said about the distinction between China and barbarians was actually not very innovative.

TERRITORIAL ARGUMENTS IN  
HU YIN'S *DUSHI GUANJIAN* 讀史管見

We have seen that Du You thought that barbarians could not produce sages because the ethers which they received from their lands were not as favorable as those in the Central Lands. Furthermore, the Cheng brothers in one passage seem to have claimed that the difference between human beings, on the one hand, and animals and barbarians, on the other, was just based in their respective ethers. While human beings received the right ether (*zheng qi* 正氣), animals and barbarians received ether that was imbalanced (as judged from the perspective of the ideal equilibrium of Yin and Yang). However, what the Cheng brothers really meant in that statement is not entirely clear since the textual basis is not beyond doubt. From this difficult passage, we can ascertain that apparently, even in Song times, it was difficult to determine if barbarians were closer to animals than to human beings.<sup>57</sup>

But what about territorial arguments for barbarian difference in the works of the Hu family? Chang Chi-shen has argued that positive assessments of individual barbarians in the Hu family's commentaries are a relic of traditional views that prevailed before the Southern Song period, while a more negative attitude arises from their experience of the Sino-Jurchen conflict.<sup>58</sup> My own opinion is that Hu Yin's ambiguous attitude, occasionally expressed in explicit praise of his-

<sup>56</sup> *Jinshu* 56, pp. 1529–34; quotation pp. 1531 ff.

<sup>57</sup> Yang, *Way of the Barbarians*, p. 119 ff.; and Wang, *Er Cheng ji*, vol. 1, j. 1, p. 4. The message of this text is not just that human beings possess “utmost spirit” (*zhi ling* 至靈), but also that one's own heart is the same as that in plants, trees, birds and animals. Humans just receive the balanced equilibrium (*hong* 中) of Heaven and Earth. This is a very Buddhist statement. According to this text's Song-dynasty editors, who likely were Hu Anguo and his sons (see Hans van Ess, “The Compilation of the Works of the Ch'eng Brothers and Its Significance for the Learning of the Right Way of the Southern Sung Period,” *TP* 90 [2005], pp. 264–98), this passage is in just one recension of the text. Moreover, the passage is followed by a remark that the difference between men and [other] living beings is due only to whether the ether is balanced or unbalanced: “With only Yin, one cannot become complete; with only Yang, one cannot give birth. Those who receive an unbalanced mix of Yin and Yang become birds, animals, plants, trees and *yi* and *di* barbarians, while those who receive balanced ether become people. 獨陰不成, 獨陽不生, 得陰陽之偏者為鳥獸草木夷狄, 受正氣者人也。” However, parallel text in *Er Cheng ji* (vol. 1, j. 11, p. 122) is less clear, yet ascribes the superiority of humans, on the one hand, over animals and barbarians, on the other, to the principle of equilibrium 中之理. Although this passage speaks of an imbalance of yin and yang as the reason for one's becoming an animal or a barbarian, it does not mention ether (*qi* 氣).

<sup>58</sup> Chang, *Zhongguo gainian*, p. 247.

torical barbarians,<sup>59</sup> must also reflect his own life experiences when he wrote *Dushi guanjian*, which was his commentary to Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑. At the time, Hu Yin had been banished to the extreme southern frontier region of the Song empire and complained about living among barbarians.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, he certainly also experienced human sentiments and reactions among the tribal peoples he considered to be barbarians. It seems reasonable to assume that he soon realized that they were more human than his own theory allowed.

Of course, the theory of ether (*qi*) provided an important source for explaining the different degrees of intelligence among human beings; yet, it remains difficult to ascertain whether Daoxue thinkers believed that *qi* was actually inborn in individual humans merely by chance or that particular ether was determined by social or geographical conditions. They were simply not as explicit as their Confucian predecessors, such as Zheng Xuan or Xing Bing, had been. Reading Song-period debates on this topic, one gets the impression that Daoxue thinkers, without fully realizing it, grappled with our modern issue of determination either by genes or by society's conditioning.

When commenting on the death in 318 of Liu Cong 劉聰, a Xiongnu ruler who had succeeded Liu Yuan 劉源 as emperor of a new Liu-Han dynasty in 310, Hu Yin wrote:

[One may ask the question,] "When Heaven gave birth to mankind, was there a difference between China and the barbarians?" I answer: "No." [Additional question,] "But was the sage then not different from Heaven when he considered China to be inner and the barbarians to be outer, or when he denigrated the eastern and northern barbarians and honored the Central Lands?" I answer: "If the eastern and northern barbarians were to do the affairs that are being done in the Central Lands, then their [lands] would also be the Central Lands. Only because they were not humane and not righteous, were avaricious about things and loved to kill, which means that they did not accord with the natural order of mankind, did [Confucius] treat them as lowly and outer. He hated that with their actions they threw the Central Lands into disorder and pulled [the Central Lands] down into the filth." [One may further ask,] "But if when Heaven gave birth to mankind there was no difference between China and the barbarians, why were the eastern and northern barbarians not humane and not righteous,

<sup>59</sup> E.g. Hu, *Dushi guanjian* j. 8, p. 279.

<sup>60</sup> Hans van Ess, *Von Ch'eng I zu Chu Hsi*, pp. 264-67, cited in full in the "acknowledgments," preceding n. 1, above.



why were they avaricious to snatch and loving to kill, and thus deviated from the natural order of mankind?"

天之生人，有華夷之分乎？曰：否。然則聖人內華而外夷，賤戎狄而貴中國，無乃與天異乎？曰：使夷狄而為中國之事，是亦中國矣，惟其不仁不義，貪得而嗜殺，非人理也，故賤而外之，惡其以所行者，亂中國而淪胥也。曰天之生人，無華夷之分，則夷狄何為不仁不義，貪得而嗜殺，與人理異乎？<sup>61</sup>

Going beyond his father, Hu Yin did indeed say that barbarians could, in theory, become members of the Central Lands.

The question that came at the end of the above passage was quite blunt: Where does the difference come from, if it is not inborn? Hu Yin answered:

While we all [receive] the ethers of the five phases, there are still the wise and worthy and the benighted and stupid, but this is not because Heaven is partial towards the sage and worthy or stingy toward the benighted and stupid. While we are all covered [by the heavens] and carried along by the Earth, there are still the Central Lands and the eastern and northern barbarians, but this is not because Heaven likes the Central Lands and hates the eastern and northern barbarians. It is because there is an unevenness of pure and mixed, of one-sided and right, that is concentrated in us, so that the distribution by itself is different. All the leaders of the five [tribes of] barbarians had some talents that enabled them to surpass others, but the leaders were unable to elevate the barbarians with learning, to correct wherein they were weak and to bring them to completion. Therefore, the leaders might have been able in that they did sometimes hit upon what was good, but an ether of ruthlessness and cruelty was inherent in what they had been endowed with, so that in the end they, too, were themselves overwhelmed by it and were not able to conceal it.<sup>62</sup>

曰均五行之氣也而有聖哲，有昏愚，非天私于聖哲而斬于昏愚也；均覆載之內也，而有中國，有夷狄，非天美于中國而惡于夷狄也，所鍾有粹駁偏正之不齊，則其分自爾殊矣。五胡之魁，其才皆有過人者，而不能輔之以學，矯揉而成就之，故其所為雖有幸中于善，而暴戾之氣稟于所賦者，終亦自勝，不可掩也。

As interesting as this text is in ascribing the differences among human beings to an ether that is given to human beings when they are born,<sup>63</sup> it still does not provide an answer regarding where this differ-

<sup>61</sup> Hu, *Dushi guanjian*, j. 7, p. 245; cf. Yang, *Way of the Barbarian* pp. 150 ff.

<sup>62</sup> Hu, *Dushi guanjian*, pp. 245 ff.

<sup>63</sup> This is what Zhu Xi, too, has to say about human endowment; see Wang Xingxian 王星賢, ed., *Zhu zi yulei* 朱子語類 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), j. 4, pp. 56–57 ff.

ence actually comes from. There must be an external agent, but Hu Yin does not address or explain who or what this agent is. Maybe it was simply evident for a Confucian scholar, like Hu, that Zheng Xuan had long ago explained this as geographical environment, so that it did not need to be pointed out again.

In 349 the Zhao ruler Shi Hu 石虎, a Xiongnu, died; thereupon, Shi Zun 石遵, one of his sons, deposed his brother Shi 石世, who had been installed as new emperor. Shi Zun ultimately established himself by killing both his brother and the latter's mother. Hu Yin commented rather philosophically on this event in *Dushi guanjian*; he began by saying that all forms in Heaven and Earth are revolving by means of ether. He thought that ether is yin and yang, two forces that never leave each other. Spreading, they become the ten thousand things, and when "form and ether join together, patterns and concrete matters become apparent 形氣合而理事著."

After this introduction, which interestingly makes use of the Hua-yuan Buddhist concept of patterns (*li* 理, often glossed as principles, patterns, or coherence, probably meaning something like "ideal forms") and concrete matters (*shi* 事), Hu Yin continues to explain how yin and yang manifest themselves as natural categories:

When they are illumining, they then become sun and moon; when they are transforming, they become coldness and heat; when they are nearby, they are day and night; when they extend, they become years and seasons; and when they are far away, they become ancient and modern; all [this happens] just within one breath through the nose and mouth. Although the ethers are mixed, when one [either yin or yang] wins, everything is then [ordered] according to its categories. Therefore, among the ten thousand things, there is the category of the sun and the category of the moon, there is the category of coldness and the category of heat, there is the category of the day and the category of night, as well as the category of the years. Heaven, Earth, trees, stones, wind, rain, dew and thunder, there is none of them which does not have its own category.

故明之爲日月，變之爲寒暑，近之爲晝夜，衍之爲歲時，遠之爲古今，皆鼻口之一噓一吸耳。氣雖渾淪，及其勝也，各以其類，故在萬物有日之類，有月之類，有寒之類，有暑之類，有晝之類，有夜之類，有歲之類。天地木石風雨露雷，莫不各有其類。<sup>64</sup>

Although in the last sentence this is not fully clear, Hu Yin appears to be simply saying here that all things in this world have their own cat-

<sup>64</sup> Hu, *Dushi guanjian*, j. 8, p. 271.

egories that arise from, or are related to, the two phases of Yin and of Yang. This view gets even more obvious in what follows:

Among human beings, there is the category of the good and there is the category of the bad, there are the categories of sages and the categories of worthies, as well as the categories of stupid and unqualified and the eastern and northern barbarians. 其在人也, 有善之類, 有惡之類, 有聖之類, 有賢之類, 有愚不肖之類, 有夷狄之類.

One thing is clear here: barbarians are also human beings – albeit classified below the stupid and unqualified ones because their ether is more turbid and more Yin than the ether of other human beings. Why is that so? Hu Yin again does not say.

In this context it might be of interest to note that there is a statement by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) which is relevant to understanding the issue. Asked whether the fact that there are different degrees of turbidness of ether proves that there are both one-sided and complete natures bestowed by Heaven, Zhu Xi answers that this is comparable to the light of the sun or the moon: Standing outside one fully sees them, while they can be visible or invisible when one is standing underneath a thatched roof because there is an obstacle shading them off. The turbidness of human nature is caused by ether; therefore, from the perspective of being blocked, this is just like standing underneath a roof. Fortunately, in the case of mankind, there is the possibility of penetrating this state of being blocked. However, although animals have also received the same nature, it is due to physical conditions that they usually do not have the chance to penetrate their obstruction, or if they do, their penetration is only partial.

Monkeys resemble humans and are the most intelligent of all other animals – to the degree that they only lack the ability to speak. Barbarians are in between human beings and wild beasts. This is the reason why, in the end, it is difficult for barbarians to change.” 至於獼猴, 形狀類人, 便最靈於他物, 只不會說話而已。到得夷狄, 便在人與禽獸之間, 所以終難改。<sup>65</sup>

Zhu Xi does not say much more about this, so we can only guess that in the end he agrees with Hu Yin: barbarians are indeed human beings who should also be able to penetrate their state of being blocked; however, they simply lack the environment that would induce them to do so.

<sup>65</sup> Wang, *Zhuzi yulei*, j. 4, p. 58.

Hu Yin continues:

Yang pushes forward the five blessings,<sup>66</sup> and they rise according to category; Yin pushes forward the six extremes,<sup>67</sup> and they descend according to category. Catastrophes and auspicious signs respond according to categories, and the ten thousand things join together according to categories. Therefore, superior persons focus on to which category they want to belong and do not cause the categories to become confused. Persons who accumulate good deeds will have an abundance of reasons to celebrate, while those who accumulate deeds which are not good will certainly suffer from an abundance of disasters. All this is so because things follow their categories. For the rewards of Heaven, there are no words that could be heard and no signs that could be seen, but their reasonable order cannot be confused. Be it big or small, slow or fast, there is no case that does not react according to category.

陽推五福，以類而升；陰推六極，以類而降。災祥以類而應，萬物以類而聚，是故君子慎所類焉，不使類之亂也。積善之家，必有餘慶，積不善之家，必有餘殃，以類想從故也。天之報施，無言可聞，無象可見，而理不可誣，或大或小，或遲或速，未有不以類而應者也。

Hu Yin then proceeds to inform his readers that the reason why the Shi-Zhao dynasty fell soon afterwards was that the Shi family had committed evil deeds and were then repaid with the revenge taken by others using the same evil deeds. Here, the otherwise strongly anti-Buddhist Confucian, Hu Yin, made a very karmic argument. Again, we do not find an answer regarding the reasons for the difference between Chinese and barbarians, and there are no further explanations regarding the origin of the quality of the ether that people receive. Such explanations seem to be difficult to find in Song Confucian texts; however, it seems to me that geographical conditions are the most plausible answer to the question, since they are the only answer that had been given to this question in commentaries to canonical texts before Hu Yin. As far as the aspect that is important for Hu Yin is concerned, there is no difference at all between Chinese and barbarians. They both are treated by the heavenly order alike: Those who do good deeds will be rewarded, and those who commit evil deeds will be punished. Reading this text, one may begin to wonder whether Chen Liang when he spoke about the ether of the Central Lands really made a very special new argument that did not have any precedents in what his Confucian

<sup>66</sup> Kong Yingda, *Shangshu zhushu* 尚書注疏 (SSJZS edn.), j. 12 (chap. “Hongfan” 洪範), p. 193: Long life, riches, health, love of virtue, and the fulfillment of one’s destination until the end.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*: Short life, illness, sorrow, poverty, evil and weakness.

predecessors had written. This is why the next section returns to Chen Liang's essay to see whether it actually spoke about an ethnic difference between Chinese and barbarians.

CHEN LIANG AND THE RIGHT  
ETHER OF THE CENTRAL LANDS

As is well-known, Chen Liang started his memorial to Xiaozong 孝宗 (r. 1127–1194) by saying that the Central Lands were:

the right ether of Heaven and Earth, the place where heavenly destiny was concentrated, where the hearts of men all met, where [official] clothing, caps, rites and music were assembled, what had been inherited by emperors and kings for a hundred generations, a place that should not be violated by the evil ethers of the eastern and northern barbarians from beyond Heaven and Earth. 中國，天地之正氣也，天命之所鍾也，人心之所會也，衣冠禮樂之所萃也，百代帝王之所以相承也，豈天地之外夷狄邪氣之所可奸哉！<sup>68</sup>

Chen Liang used the same word “concentrated” (*zhong* 鍾) that we found in one of Hu Yin's essays above, wherein Hu proclaimed that all human beings had been given the same ether of the five phases. In contrast to Chen Liang, Hu Yin had said that the barbarians live under the same sky and on the same earth as the Chinese. For Chen, however, the Central Lands were the territory that had both the right ethers and culture.

Continuing, he lamented that the barbarians with their “evil ethers 邪氣” were, after all, able to rape and pillage the Central Lands, so that their inhabitants ultimately had to take the “clothes, caps, rites and music of the Central Lands 中國衣冠禮樂,” the insignia of Chinese culture that had been described by earlier thinkers in more general terms as “decorum and righteousness,” and bring these insignia to a remote or peripheral place that Chen apparently did not classify as belonging to the “Central Lands.” He argued that this was truly dangerous. In the end, he predicted that should the right ether of Heaven and Earth be blocked up by goatish smell of the foreign flocks, the ether would certainly at some point rise and be released somewhere else, and that it would certainly also not be possible to attach the hearts of the people to the Song dynasty for long to, or “in,” this remote region of what today is Hangzhou. He drew a parallel to the demise of the Eastern Jin 晉 (317–420), when the Liu-Song 劉宋 (420–479) dynasty seized power.

<sup>68</sup> Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, ed., *Chen Liang ji* 陳亮集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), p. 1, and Tillman, “Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth Century China?,” p. 408.

Yet, the “right ether of the Central Lands” – and he again clearly does not mean “China” here, but the old heartland of Chinese civilization in the North – rose and was released and taken over, not by the Han Chinese Liu-Song dynasty, but by the foreign Wei 魏 ruler Xiaowen 孝文 (r. 471–500), who adopted the clothes, caps, rites, and music of the Central Lands. The traditional Chinese forms of clothes, caps, rites, and music in the South, however, were not things to which Heaven’s mandate and the hearts of the people wanted to attach themselves.

Thus, while Chen Liang did indeed speak of the Central Lands as the land where the right ether was located, he made a perfectly culturalist explanation of what the essence of the Central Lands actually was. He did refer to the theory that we have heard before, namely that the barbarians had received an ether that was worse than the ether of the people living in the Central Lands. Nevertheless, he did not speak of “evil ether” in the case of the founder of the Tuoba 拓拔 Wei dynasty – an ethnically non-Han foreigner. This ruler had been able to acquire the right ether of the Central Lands and utilize it to become the ruler. This historical case thus proved that barbarians were indeed able to become Chinese after they lived long enough in, and adopted the culture of, the Central Lands. In fact, it seems that what Chen Liang was saying is that when barbarians had lived under the favorable conditions provided by the Central Plain this was what inevitably had to happen.

Chen Liang ended his introduction with an interesting sentence: “Therefore, the one who unifies all under Heaven will finally be in the northwest, not in the southeast. Are not the boundaries of the realms of Heaven and men something we have to be in the utmost awe of? One single day of a careless feeling of safety [may] mean a great disaster lasting for hundreds of years. 是以一天下者，卒在西北而不在東南，天人之際，豈不甚可畏哉？一日之苟安，數百年之大禍也。” This sentence, which at first might appear like a prophesy predicting the rise of the Mongols, contains a quotation that has not yet been pointed out in Western works on Chen Liang. Chen makes the quotation by referring to the “boundaries of the realms of heaven and men” – a famous expression that Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145?–87? BC) used in the last chapter of his *Shiji*.<sup>69</sup> In chapter 15 of the *Shiji*, we find a remark which is related to the one by Chen Liang in a different way:

Someone said: “The east is where things are first born, the west is where things become complete and mature.” Now the ones who

<sup>69</sup> In his autobiography in *Shiji* 130, p. 1344, Sima Qian says that he wanted to show something “about the boundaries of the realms of heaven and men.” The phrase occurs also in *Shiji* 27, p. 1344; and 117, p. 3319.

wanted to create something have always been in the southeast, but those who reaped the fruits of the efforts have always been in the northwest. Therefore, Yu arose among the Western Qiang, Tang got up from Hao, when the Zhou became kings, they attacked Yin relying on Feng and Gao, when the Qin became emperor, he used Yongzhou to arise, and when the Han arose, it started from Shu-Han.

或曰，“東方物所始生，西方物之成熟”。夫作事者必於東南，收功實者常於西北。故禹興於西羌，湯起於亳，周之王也以豐鎬伐殷，秦之帝用雍州興，漢之興自蜀漢。<sup>70</sup>

Sima Qian was the first to recognize the strategic importance of the land between the passes, that in Chen Liang's view was an integral part of the “Central Lands” – although the ancient state of Qin had in Spring and Autumn times been considered as semi-barbarian at the least. Sima noted a law of history that the unifiers of China usually came from the northwest, Qin's territory, the geographical advantages of which had been described so well by Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–168 BC) in his “Essay on Surpassing the Qin” (“Guo Qin lun” 過秦論).<sup>71</sup> I believe that the “right ether” that Chen Liang was speaking of was related to this idea of Sima Qian.

## CONCLUSION

The right ether was not something spiritual; it was a description of what Sima Qian, the Hu family, and Chen Liang all thought: the land with the best geographical features, the best of all thinkable worlds that was located in the Central Plain. Barbarians came from a much worse position than people who had formerly lived in this world of the Central Plain. The barbarians did not profit from a land with right ether; therefore, it was not possible for them to conquer this land as long as its Han Chinese rulers stuck to what had made them strong, namely decorum and righteousness – the cultural values that human beings can, as Mengzi said, only acquire when their physical needs are satisfied, which was much easier accomplished there than anywhere else. However, as soon as the Han Chinese rulers lost their cultural values, barbarians could invade; the Chinese themselves had fallen below their own normative level. Barbarian culture was naturally low because barbarians did not live under such favorable conditions as the inhabitants

<sup>70</sup> *Shiji* 15, p. 686.

<sup>71</sup> *Shiji* 6, pp. 276–84; 48, pp. 1961–65.

of the Central Lands. This is what is meant by the idea that their ether was turbid and not as clear as the one of the inhabitants of the Central Lands; they had to strive harder than others. Yet, reading Chen Liang closely, one finally has to arrive at the conclusion that he thought that after having lived in the Central Lands for long enough, even barbarians would acquire the right ethers. Thus, while it is obvious that strong prejudices existed in Song China, they did not result in the idea of a nationalism that relied on the idea that there was an inborn superiority of Han Chinese over their neighbors.

A “nation” is much more than just a dynasty that has equal status with a neighboring dynasty. It needs to be rooted in the idea of difference and uniqueness – and this idea cannot be drawn from the sources, at least not those written by the authors under scrutiny in this article. It does seem that the works of such Song Confucians as Hu Anguo, Hu Yin, and Chen Liang, despite their strong words against barbarians, cannot be understood as making a true “ethnic” distinction or difference between Chinese and barbarians. When barbarians were described as culturally inferior, this inferiority was never deduced from their ethnicity but from the fact that they had not been able to receive the superior ethers from the Central Lands. Chineseness, too, was never described in terms of *ethnic* superiority. The superiority was a cultural one. This is why I would argue that it is better to stick to the term of Chinese “culturalism” when speaking of Song Confucianism and avoid a terminology that imposes an ethnic consciousness that thinkers of that era apparently did not have.

It would seem that the two Hu’s and also Chen Liang’s thought was much more traditional than progressive: when reviling foreigners, they quoted extensively from earlier sources or made use of the same tropes to be found therein. Just as is the case of Hu Anguo and Hu Yin, Chen Liang’s thought is firmly grounded in his political ideas about the imminent danger for his dynasty and his own home. These ideas remain traditional; his usage of words, such as “Central Lands,” or of ideas about the coming conquerors of China were not his own inventions or evidence of a brilliant mind predicting a bleak future, but rather quotations dating back to time-honored texts, such as the *Shiji* of Sima Qian.



## Appendix

*Anti-Barbarian Rhetoric in Hu Anguo's  
Chunqiu zhuan, and Manchu Censorship*<sup>72</sup>

Regardless of whether Song authors were culturalists, racists or realists, it is obvious that Qianlong and the Manchu elite disliked the wording that such men as Hu Anguo, Hu Yin, Chen Liang, and even Zhu Xi had used, especially the terms, *yi* and *di* barbarians.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, the Manchus censored passages that they thought were insulting to themselves or their ancestors. To understand what the Manchu thought was racist Han Chinese language, it is necessary to look at how such passages were changed.

In his famous commentary Hu Anguo altogether wrote commentaries to altogether 718 passages in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. About 15% of this total of 718 commentaries (over 100) deal with the subject of, to translate it in a neutral way, eastern and northern peoples – the Yi and the Di. The popularity of Hu's *Chunqiu zhuan* is responsible for the fact that it was included in four different versions in the imperial collection, titled *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書. In the Wenyuange edition of *Siku quanshu*, we find three different versions of his work:

- \* *Text A: Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* 胡氏春秋傳, a plain edition of the text of the *Annals* itself with Hu Anguo's commentary in 30 *juan*.
- \* *Text B: Chunqiu Hu zhuan fulu zuanshu* 春秋胡傳附錄纂疏, which includes the text of the *Annals* with Hu Anguo's commentary and a subcommentary by Wang Kekuan 汪克寬 (1301–1369 [1372?]) in 30 *juan*.
- \* *Text C: Chunqiu daquan* 春秋大全, a copy of Text B, but in 37 *juan*, as printed in Hu Guang's 胡廣 (1370–1418) complete edition of the Song standard commentaries to the Five Classics *Zhouyi* 周易, *Shangshu* 尚書, *Shijing* 詩經, *Liji* 禮記 and *Chunqiu* 春秋, with a long introduction including statements by commentators who wrote after Hu Anguo, as well as maps and tables.
- \* *Text D. Hushi Chunqiu zhuan* 胡氏春秋傳 (in fact = Text A), as given in *Siku quanshu huiyao* 薈要, which is a collection of some of the most important texts of the *Siku quanshu* that the Qianlong emperor wanted to have readily at hand.

<sup>72</sup> This part of the article builds on earlier research, part of which was published in German in Hans van Ess, "China und die Barbaren: Ein Beitrag zur Zensurpraxis im Ssu-k'ü ch'üan-shu," *Saeculum: Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte* 55 (2004), pp. 237–51. Compare Bernhard Führer, "The Text of the Classic and the Commentaries Deviates Greatly from Current Editions: A Case Study on the *Siku quanshu* Version of Huang Kan's *Lunyu yishu*," in idem, ed., *Zensur: Text und Autorität in China in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), pp. 19–38; also see Mosca, "Neither Chinese nor Outsiders," pp. 127–30.

<sup>73</sup> The *Zhuji yulei* entry, which I have pointed to above (n. 63) in its *Siku quanshu* version, uses *manliao* 蠻獠 instead of *yidi* 夷狄 (*Zhuji yulei* [SKQS edn.], j. 4, p. 4b).

In text A, Qing editors completely deleted eight out of 718 commentaries;<sup>74</sup> five commentaries were deleted in text B;<sup>75</sup> while the editors of text C were so careful as to delete eleven commentaries and to strongly reformulate two more of them.<sup>76</sup> In text D, all commentaries are present although in some the text has been substantially altered.

All this suggests that the editorial teams that worked on the various texts of this title to be included in the *Siku quanshu* actually edited them independently from each other. Although there are overlaps between the omissions in all three different versions in which out of the altogether four editions commentaries to *Chunqiu* passages are actually missing, there is only one entry that has been deleted by all three Qing editorial boards, namely a passage that comments on the Duke Wen 8 (here and below, the numeral after the name of the duke indicates the year of the duke's reign; the word "Duke" will be eliminated). The text from the commentary to Xi 23, which I quoted at the beginning of this article, was changed in text A and completely deleted in texts B and C because of its abusive language. Nevertheless, that passage remained completely unchanged in the imperial edition D, probably because, as has been speculated in a note above, apart from its language it made an acceptable culturalist argument for China as, the "land of decorum and righteousness." Qianlong certainly thought that it was his own task to live up to this standard.<sup>77</sup>

Interestingly, an anti-barbarian comment in Xiang 7, 12th month, reintroduces the sentence from Xi 23 that the Central Lands are the place from where decorum and righteousness come. This text talks about a meeting of several feudal lords at which the Earl of Zheng participated. According to the *Annals*, he died before he had even met the other lords. Hu Anguo quotes all three ancient commentaries on this text. All the *Siku quanshu* versions of this commentary – with the exception of text D – suppress the *Guliang* 穀梁 opinion according to which Confucius

<sup>74</sup> Compare *CQZ*, j. 1, pp. 6 and 7, with text 4, SKQS edn., "Classics 經" sect., fifth category (*Chunqiu* 春秋), no. 29, *Chunqiu zhuan* 春秋傳, j. 1 (Yin 2), p. 8a–b, 2 entries; *CQZ*, j. 14, p. 224 and text A, j. 14 (Wen 8), pp. 15b–16a, 3 entries; *CQZ*, j. 24 p. 408 and text A, j. 24 (Zhao 12), p. 21b; *CQZ*, j. 30, p. 499–501 and text A, j. 30 (Ai 13), p. 7b and 8a, 2 entries.

<sup>75</sup> Compare *CQZ*, j. 12, pp. 182 ff, with text B, SKQS edn., "Classics," fifth category, no. 63, *Chunqiu Hu zhuan fulu zuanshu* 春秋胡傳附錄纂疏, j. 12 (Xi 僖 23–24), p. 52a–b, 2 entries; *CQZ*, j. 14 (Wen 8), p. 224 and text B., j. 14, p. 53a; *CQZ*, j. 19 (Cheng 3), p. 306 and text B, j. 19, p. 27b.

<sup>76</sup> Compare *CQZ*, j. 1, pp. 6–7 with text C, SKQS, "Classics," fifth category, no. 66, *Chunqiu daquan* 春秋大全, j. 1 (Yin 2, 2 entries), pp. 38a, 41a; *CQZ*, j. 14, pp. 182 ff, in Xi 23–24 and text C, j. 14, pp. 45a, 48a–49a; *CQZ*, j. 13, p. 205 (Xi 33) and text C, j. 16, p. 29b; *CQZ*, j. 14, p. 224 (Wen 8) and text C, j. 17, p. 63a; *CQZ*, j. 22, p. 306 and text C, j. 22, p. 37a (Cheng 3), *CQZ*, j. 23, p. 321 and text C, j. 23, p. 36a (Cheng 9); *CQZ*, j. 21, p. 345f, and text C, j. 25, p. 36a–b (Xiang 7); *CQZ*, j. 30, p. 496, and text C, j. 37, p. 11a (Ai 10); *CQZ* 30, p. 499 ff, and text C, j. 37, p. 24b (Ai 13). The two reformulated entries are in Xuan 宣 3, *CQZ*, j. 16, p. 255 and text C, j. 19, pp. 31b–32a, and in Xuan 11, *CQZ*, j. 20, pp. 40b–41a. Note that the preceding paragraph in C, j. 20, pp. 39b–40a, is also heavily truncated.

<sup>77</sup> It should, however, be noted that, not only in texts A, B, and C did the editors censor Cheng Yi's sentence, "One single slip leads to becoming a barbarian 爲夷狄; a second slip leads to becoming birds and beasts, and the human species is extinguished." Also text D changed the wording, obviously because there was no culturalist understanding possible without the statement that the Central Lands are characterized by *li* and *yi*. See *CQZ*, j. 13, pp. 205–6 and 209, n. 25, and Text A, j. 13, p. 14b; Text B, j. 13, p. 57a; text C, j. 16, p. 29b; and *Siku quanshu huiyao* 四庫全書薈要 (Xuxiu 續修 SKQS edn.), vol. 36 (Text D), p. 116 (j. 13, p. 14b).

“did not let people of northern and eastern barbarians to encroach upon a prince of the Central Lands 不使夷狄之民加乎中國之民。”<sup>78</sup> Hu Anguo had said that the ruler of Zheng 鄭 was different from other rulers of his time who had themselves been responsible for being murdered. Hu added, “The Central Lands are where decorum and righteousness come from; the northern and eastern barbarians are the neighbors of wild animals and birds 中國者禮義之所出也，夷狄者禽獸之與鄰也。” This sentence was censored in different ways in all versions to avoid the term *yidi*. Hu Anguo’s intended to show that this case of a murder of a ruler was different from other cases because it involved barbarians helping to kill a Chinese ruler who, in contrast to themselves, “valued decorum and righteousness and [thus] was a [true] prince of the Central Lands 貴禮義為中國之君.” The ruler was good; however, his “high officials wanted to turn their backs on China and make common cause with Jing and Chu and thus were close to birds and animals and had become a people of northern and eastern barbarians 諸大夫欲背諸夏與荆楚，則是近禽獸為夷狄之民也。”<sup>79</sup> Again, these are the words that were censored in all four *Siku* versions.<sup>80</sup>

The argument that human beings are different from birds and wild animals just because of culture is made again in a commentary to an entry concerning the tenth month of Xiang 30, on the occasion of a meeting about a fire disaster that occurred in the state of Song 宋 at Shanyuan (or Chanyuan) 澶淵; this latter place was historically important because there was to be a second important meeting there in 1005, when the Song dynasty concluded a peace treaty with the Tangut Xixia 西夏.<sup>81</sup> The *Chunqiu* meeting of a large number of people from different states took place to observe the burial of Duke Jing 景 of Cai 蔡, who had been murdered by his son. Hu Anguo starts by saying that generally the *Annals* do not write about a burial of a murdered prince unless the murderer has been punished and then explains that this case was different because in this case all feudal lords in the empire were responsible. Hu commented:

The only reason why humans are different from birds and wild animals, why the Central Lands are more valuable than the northern and eastern barbarians is that they have the closeness of father and son and the righteousness that pertains to ruler and subject. If a prince kills his ruler, he is not even like birds and wild animals or like northern and eastern barbarians. Not to be able to punish him, is this not just like abolishing human relations and destroying Heaven’s order?

人之所以異於禽獸，中國之所以貴於夷狄，以其有父子之親，君臣之義爾。世子弑君，是夷狄禽獸之不若也，而不知討，豈不廢人倫滅天理乎？<sup>82</sup>

Text C again simply cut out this whole passage, while text A replaced the sentence, “Why the Central Lands are more valuable than the northern and eastern

<sup>78</sup> Yang Shiyun 楊士勛, *Chunqiu Guliang zhushu* 春秋穀梁注疏 (SSJZS edn.), j. 15, p. 2426.

<sup>79</sup> *CQZ*, j. 21, p. 345.

<sup>80</sup> That text D, p. 181 (j. 21, p. 11a–b) also censored this is probably due to the fact that it was considered a general insult against barbarians, categorizing them in some sense with birds and wild animals.

<sup>81</sup> Christian Schwarz-Schilling, *Der Friede von Shan-yüan (1005 n. Chr.)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1959). See also Tackett, *Origins of the Chinese Nation*.

<sup>82</sup> *CQZ*, j. 23, p. 384.

barbarians 中國之所以貴於夷狄,” with the sentence, “why a person is able to have five senses and hundred bones complete 而能具五官百骸者.” Text D said, “Why he is the heart of Heaven and Earth and the blossom of the five elements 爲天地之心, 五行之秀.”<sup>83</sup> Again, the insult to barbarians, as such, has been deleted from the text. The editors of text B found an interesting solution: just cut out the two sentences in which barbarians occurred, and thus produced a text which dealt just with the difference between humans and birds and animals.

In order to even better understand what the censors were interested in and why, it is instructive to also have a look here at the passage from Wen 8, which was quoted above more completely. The commentary begins:

In winter, the tenth month, day *renwu*, Gongzi Sui met Zhao Dun of Jin and swore an oath at Hengyong. On the day *yiyou*, Gongzi Sui met with the Rong of Luo and swore an oath at Bao. 冬十月壬午, 公子遂會晉趙盾盟于衡雍. 乙酉, 公子遂會雒戎盟于暴.

[Hu Anguo]: ... The sage [Confucius] is careful about the difference between China (*Hua*) and the barbarians (*yi*). Thereby he makes clear ‘clans and kind’ (*zulei* 族類), and separates within and outside. The city of Luo is in the center of Heaven and Earth, and yet the Rong in their ugliness lived there. That means that they had brought China to extreme turmoil. That [the text] twice calls him a *gongzi* (prince) and each time gives the [specific] day of the meeting serves to profoundly distinguish them by giving the correct name and territory. Thereby, [Confucius] showed that the Central States and the eastern and northern barbarians are never allowed to mingle. Since the Eastern Han, however, they have been living intermingled with the Rong without differentiation, and under the Jin [dynasty] it even came to such an extreme that the Divine Land was submerged by [the Rong], and under the Tang, there was also turmoil caused by Rong and Di for generations. 聖人謹華夷之辨, 所以明族類, 別內外也. 雒邑, 天地之中, 而戎醜居之, 亂華甚矣. 再稱公子, 各日其會, 正其名與地以深別之者, 示中國夷狄終不可雜也. 自東漢已來, 乃與戎雜處而不辨, 晉至於神州陸沉, 唐亦世有戎狄之亂.<sup>84</sup>

It is obvious that the *Siku* editors thought that this was insulting to Manchus. All the more interesting is the fact that emperor Qianlong was expected to tolerate the wording in this passage. Text D was the only *Siku quanshu* version to preserve the passage. Only the word “*yidi*” was changed into “Rong.”<sup>85</sup> The word “*yidi*” apparently was too much to tolerate.

Two things are of particularly importance here. The first one is the difference that, according to Hu Anguo, the sage made between Han Chinese and barbarians (*jin Hua Yi zhi bian* 謹華夷之辨),<sup>86</sup> and the second the sentence that directly follows about “clans and kind” (*zulei* 族類) that comes from the famous passage

<sup>83</sup> Text A, *j.* 23, p. 8b; text B, *j.* 23, p. 26a; text C, *j.* 28, p. 39a-b; text D, *j.* 23, p. 8b.

<sup>84</sup> *CQZ*, *j.* 14, p. 224.

<sup>85</sup> Text D, p. 125 (*j.* 14, p. 16a).

<sup>86</sup> Li Wai-ye 李惠儀, “Hua-Yi zhi bian yu yizu tonghun” 華夷之辨與異族通婚, in Chiao Chien 喬健, Chiu Tien-chu 邱天助, and Luo Hsiao-nan 羅曉南, eds., *Tanqing shuyi: Qing, hunyin ji yi wenhua de kuajie lunshu* 談情說異, 情·婚姻暨異文化的跨界論述 (Taipei: Center for the Study of Foreign Cultures, Shih Hsin U., 2012), pp. 45-63.

in *Zuozhuan*, Cheng 4.<sup>87</sup> The first sentence about the importance of a differentiation between Han Chinese and barbarians is used ten times by Hu Anguo.<sup>88</sup> Interestingly, several times Hu shows not only that Chinese could easily be turned into barbarians if they did not pay attention to culture, politeness and ritual distinctions, but also that semi-barbarian states – that had once belonged to China, such as Wu or Chu, but had fallen into a state of barbarian habits – could also find their way back into the community of the Central States. According to Hu Anguo, to be barbarian was a very flexible gauge; although it does not become clear in the *Chunqiu zhuan* whether it was also flexible in as far as real barbarians were concerned. There were several swing-states: Zheng is characterized as such. It went with the Central States when it saw its advantage therein, and it went with the barbarians when that was more advantageous.<sup>89</sup>

The second passage referring to “clan and kind” is particularly important. This term that had been related to the China/barbarian division for a long time was used four times by Hu Anguo;<sup>90</sup> furthermore, it was a difficult issue for the *Siku* editors to solve because it came from a canonical text that could not be easily changed. At Yin 2, there are two commentaries to *Chunqiu* passages that were problematic. Both were completely cut out in versions A and C, but were allowed to stay in texts B and D. Text B deletes almost all occurrences of the word *di* and *yi* and exchanges them for other solutions, while text D leaves them untouched. A first passage that is interesting here concerns Hu Anguo’s commentary which says “That for the Central Lands, there are the Rong and Di, is like that for the superior person, there are inferior persons 中國之有戎狄，猶君子之有小人。”<sup>91</sup> In text B this reads: “That for the inner, there is the outer, is just like that for the superior person, there are inferior persons 內之有外，猶君子之有小人。” Text D runs: “That among the Rong and Di, there are those who are good and those who are not, is just like that for the superior person, there are inferior persons 戎狄之有善否，猶君子之有小人。”<sup>92</sup>

Here the Qianlong edition changed the idea that the Rong and Di were inferior to the Han Chinese into an idea almost its opposite: Just like [in China] there were superior persons and inferior persons, there were also good and bad people among the Rong and the Di – a sentence that clearly said that all people are equal. A little bit further down Hu’s commentary said:

<sup>87</sup> *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhushu* (SSJZS edn.), j. 26, p. 1901.

<sup>88</sup> *CQZ*, j. 1, p. 6 (Yin 2), j. 9, p. 120 (Zhuang 23), where only the term “*yi*” has been changed in the SKQS versions, j. 12, pp. 182–83 (Xi 23–24), j. 14, p. 224 (Wen 8), j. 15, p. 229 (Wen 9), j. 16, p. 255 (Xuan 3), j. 17, p. 270 (Xuan 9), j. 20, p. 321 (Cheng 9), and j. 25, p. 422 (Zhao 16).

<sup>89</sup> *CQZ*, j. 19, p. 306 (Cheng 3). The entry is deleted in texts B (j. 19, p. 27b) and C (j. 22, p. 37a), but text A (j. 19, p. 10a–b) only changes the word *yidi* to *jingman* 荆蠻 (i.e., southern barbarians, or southern barbarians from Chu), and *di* 狄 (to treat as barbarian) to *wai* 外 (to treat as exterior). Text D (j. 19, p. 10a–b) did not change anything here. It was apparently assumed that Qianlong was accustomed to this kind of language and could stand it as long as there was no additional critique involved.

<sup>90</sup> Yin 2, Wen 8, Xuan 3, Cheng 4, are entries that with the exception of Yin 2 also talk about the proper distinction between barbarians and Han Chinese

<sup>91</sup> *CQZ*, j. 1, p. 6. Compare the missing text in text A, j. 1, p. 8b, and C, j. 1, p. 38a.

<sup>92</sup> Text B, j. 1, p. 28b, text D, p. 23, j. 1, p. 8b.

Therefore, when Chinese make common cause with the Rong and the Di and deliver offerings of gold and silk to them, the leader willingly takes on a subordinate position; such strategy should not be implemented. If Rong and Di attend court in China but elevate themselves to a position above the marquises and kings, it would confuse norms and disrupt order;<sup>93</sup> such ceremony must not be practiced. 是故以諸夏而親戎狄，致金縉之奉，首顧居下，其策不可施也。以戎狄而朝諸夏，位侯王之上，亂常失序，其禮不可行也。<sup>94</sup>

Now we have Text B in the Siku (significantly changed language given in italics):

Therefore, as for Chinese making common cause with *foreign territories* and delivering offerings of gold and silk, means that the head intends to be situated below; such a strategy should not be followed. As for *men coming from foreign territories* at an audience in China to take a position above the one of marquises and kings, means that the regular [norm] is confused and the order is neglected; such a ceremony must not be practiced. 是故以諸夏而親外域，致金縉之奉，首顧居下，其策不可施也。以外域人而朝諸夏，位侯王之上，亂常失序，其禮不可行也。<sup>95</sup>

Text D (significantly changed language in italics):

Therefore, as for a *Chinese serving the Rong and the Di* and delivering offerings of gold and silk *just to carelessly look for convenience and peace*; such a strategy should not be followed. As for Rong and Di at an audience in China *to take liberties with the ruler and have an equal position in the covenants*,<sup>96</sup> means that the regular is confused and the order is neglected. Such a ceremony must not be practiced. 是故以諸夏而事戎狄，致金縉之奉，苟圖便安，其策不可施也。以戎狄而朝諸夏，或狎主齊盟，亂常失序，其禮不可行也。<sup>97</sup>

While Hu's commentary clearly speaks of the submission of Han Chinese to barbarians, text B warns of a situation that is just like the one Lord Macartney wanted to be in when he went to China, that is, to be treated as an equal. The Qianlong emperor denied this expectation, just as the *Chunqiu*, in this censored version, actually demanded. Text D, the version for the emperor to have at hand, interestingly enough demanded that the Central Lands, on the one hand, should not serve the barbarians, while the barbarians, on the other hand, should not be allowed to take liberties with the central ruler – an opinion that Qianlong certainly shared.

There was no ethnic argument in any of these passages whatsoever. Yet, Hu Anquo's commentary finally makes use of the statement from the *Zuozhuan* that we mentioned before:

<sup>93</sup> Compare *Hanshu* 48, p. 2240.

<sup>94</sup> *CQZ*, j. 1, p. 6.

<sup>95</sup> Text B, j. 1, p. 29a.

<sup>96</sup> This is a quotation from *Zuozhuan*, Zhao 1 (*Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhushu* [SSJZS edn.]), j. 41, p. 2021. Compare the translation by Steven Durrant, Wai-yee Li, and David Schaberg, *Zuo Tradition* (Seattle: U. Washington P., 2018), p. 1311: “the princes... presiding over the sacred covenants by turns.”

<sup>97</sup> Text D, j. 1, p. 8b.

When Qiang and Hu [barbarians] live within the passes without any restrictions for going in and out, “not being of our clan and kind, their hearts will necessarily be different.” This is the foundation for a stair leading to an “infiltration of China”.<sup>98</sup> One will not [have to wait] for long for a disaster resulting from this!<sup>99</sup> 以羌胡而居塞內，無出入之防，非我族類，其心必異，萌猾夏之階，其禍不可長也。

Except for the word “*di*,” text B did not delete much from Hu’s commentary, although there is a clear ethnic statement contained in it. Such statement was sanctified by the fact that it was from a Confucian classic. Yet, text D went further with censorship. It deleted the passage about “clan and kind” from the *Zuozhuan* and instead said that this continued, “one day after another 日復一日.” Once again, Qianlong apparently was not supposed to hear about ethnic differences within his empire. On the other hand, he was warned that allowing foreigners to live within his borders could be dangerous.

In the second problematic commentary to a passage in the second year of Duke Yin, Hu Anguo criticized marriage alliances that took place between Chinese and foreigners. He says that the partners “were not of the proper kind” 非其類.<sup>100</sup> Text B replaced this with, “they sent their own flesh and blood into regions far away,” while text D said that “the selection of the partner was not made with regard to virtue 擇配不以德.”<sup>101</sup> It is obvious that, in this case, Hu Anguo had spoken in a way that could be read as making an ethnic difference. It was turned into a cultural or moral one by the editors of Qianlong’s text.

In Xuan 3, the *Annals* contains an entry: “The Viscount of Chu attacked the Rong of Luhun 楚子伐陸渾之戎.” Hu Anguo commented:

When Yi and Di attack each other, this is not recorded. So why is it recorded here? It is because Luhun [Rong tribes] were next to the royal capital and because the Rong and Han Chinese were mingling and living so that clan and kind were not separated. Moreover, Chu came as far as Luo and surveyed its troops at the borders of Zhou, and thus took the opportunity to ask about the size and the weight of the tripods of Zhou.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, this was especially written into the records in order to pay attention to the difference between China and the barbarians, as well as to prohibit the gradual infiltration of China by the barbarians. 夷狄相攻不志，此其志何也？為陸渾在王都之側，戎夏雜處，族類之不分也。楚又至洛，觀兵于周疆，問周鼎之大小輕重焉，故特書于策，以謹華夷之辨，禁猾夏之階。<sup>103</sup>

Text A deletes two sentences: “Rong and Chinese were mingling and living so that clan and kind were not separated 戎夏雜處，族類之不分也”；and “to the difference between China and the barbarians, as well as to prohibit the gradual infiltration of China by the barbarians 謹華夷之辨，禁猾夏之階.” Text A simply stated, “in order to pay attention to this 以謹之.” Text B replaces “Rong and Chi-

<sup>98</sup> *Shangshu zhushu* (SSJZS edn.), j. 3 (“Shundian” 舜典), p. 130.

<sup>99</sup> Or alternatively: “Such a disaster must not be allowed to last for long!”

<sup>100</sup> *CQZ*, j. 1, p. 7.

<sup>101</sup> Text D, p. 24, j. 1, p. 9a.

<sup>102</sup> *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhushu* (SSJZS edn.), j. 21 (Xuan 3), p. 1868.

<sup>103</sup> *CQZ*, j. 16, p. 255. Compare text A, j. 16, pp. 9b–10a, text B, j. 16, p. 28a–b, text C, j. 19, pp. 31b–32a.

nese were minglingly living 戎夏雜處,” with “they were living as neighbours of the royal domain 逼處畿甸,” and the last sentence with, “in order to pay attention to the difference between inner and outer and to forbid the gradual beginnings of disorder 謹中外之辨, 禁啓亂之階.” Text C also drops the first sentence and then starts: “The city of Luo lies in the center of Heaven and Earth and is a territory of central importance to the assistance of the kingly domain. And yet, the Luhun [Rong tribes] were next to the royal capital, settling as a close neighbor 洛邑在天地之中, 爲畿輔之重地. 而陸渾在王都之側, 實逼處.” Of course, the last sentence about clan and kind not being separated also had to be changed into the much more friendly idea that the Luhun Rong were simply settling as close neighbors.

Thus, it is obvious how careful the editors of the imperial collection *Siku quanshu* were to avoid anything that could have enraged the emperor. Interestingly, text D remained in this case completely unchanged. It was not a problem to speak of ethnic difference here. The reason for this may be that the Manchu themselves actually practiced ethnic division, not only within the banner system but also with their practice of closing up their own homeland to Han Chinese immigration (*fengjin zhengce* 封禁政策). There apparently were different standards for the emperor and his subjects with regard to what was appropriate to read.

In Xuan 111, the states of Chu 楚, Chen 陳 and Zheng 鄭 concluded an alliance. Again, we find a long commentary with several remarks about barbarians that have been changed in different ways in the different versions of the text. Only the middle part is important in our context, since here Hu Anguo first makes the culturalist argument that if there are rebellious subjects and treacherous sons, there are then no rulers and no fathers anymore, which means that “the Central Lands turn into northern and eastern barbarians, and the human species degenerates into birds and wild animals 中國變爲夷狄, 人類殄爲禽獸.”<sup>104</sup> The first part of this sentence is a culturalist critique of the Central Lands, but the parallel sentence seems to exclude the barbarians from the human species. The censors of text A therefore changed the sentence into, “then the whole empire becomes robbers and murderers and cannot be ordered anymore 天下相率而爲寇賊, 不可以治,” while those of text B said, “there is not the slightest bit of Heaven’s order left, and the human species degenerates into birds and wild animals” 天理無復少存, 人類殄爲禽獸.” Text C again cut out the whole passage while text D said, “then one takes lord and father as superfluous things and murder and rebellion become ordinary business 則以君父爲弁髦, 以弑逆爲常事.”<sup>105</sup> Here, text D was also censored in order to protest against the exclusion of northerners from humankind. On the other hand, the censors of text A and D were not bothered by the idea of the last commentary that mentions the term *zulei* in the context that a Han Chinese state should not make common cause with those “who were not of our clan and kind” 非我族類” when they wanted to attack another Han Chinese state.<sup>106</sup> The reason for this was most likely that Hu Anguo had also said that it was indeed perfectly possible and permissible to make a military alliance with other peoples when the purpose of warfare was to drive out criminals and bad rulers.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> *CQZ*, j. 17, p. 275.

<sup>105</sup> Text A, j. 17, p. 12b; text B, j. 17, p. 36a–b; text C, j. 20, p. 40a; text D, p. 149, j. 17, p. 12b.

<sup>106</sup> *CQZ*, j. 20, p. 321, Cheng 9.

<sup>107</sup> The editors of text B (j. 20, p. 17a–b) and C (j. 23, p. 36a) did not, however, dare to transmit this passage.



One final text that has been changed in all editions concerns the definition of human beings and the Central States, which occurs under Zhao 12. The central issue here is that Hu Anguo asked the question, what transformed a human being into a human being. He answered:

That which turns a human being into a human being and turns the Central States into the Central States is nothing other than trustworthiness and justice. With one slip one becomes a northern or eastern barbarian, with the second slip one becomes a bird or wild animal. If birds and wild animals put pressure on human beings, human beings will then eat each other. 人之所以爲人，中國之所以爲中國，信義而已矣。一失則爲夷狄，二失則爲禽獸。禽獸逼人，人將相食。<sup>108</sup>

Texts B and C again excised this passage with its reference to Cheng Yi,<sup>109</sup> while it was transmitted in text A, probably because its editors thought that the fault for degeneration given here was to the Central States themselves who were culturally negligent. Text D solved the problem by changing the “barbarians” in this passage to the state of Chu that had extinguished Chen, a state in the Central Lands.<sup>110</sup>

The different teams that had to edit the several versions of Hu Anguo’s commentary obviously made different choices when they censored his text. It was up to each team to find a way to produce an acceptable version. Some leeway was actually given for relatively bolder editors to delete only very little of Hu’s works, but timid editors, such as those for text C, were more ready to censor him. Racist arguments that attacked northern tribal peoples and regarded them to be close to beasts and birds were clearly not something that Manchus and their loyalists wanted to read in high-Qing times, but cultural arguments that acknowledged that mistakes could be committed by all human beings were well received.

### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CQZ Qian Weiqiang 錢偉彊, ed., *Chunqiu Hushi zhuan* 春秋胡氏傳

<sup>108</sup> CQZ, j. 24, p. 408. The text has already been discussed, above.

<sup>109</sup> See above, n. 30.

<sup>110</sup> Text D, j. 24, p. 21a–b.