

2005

Hou Hanshu 40-Selections

Anthony E. Clark

Whitworth University, aclark@whitworth.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.whitworth.edu/historyfaculty>



Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), and the [Cultural History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Clark, Anthony E. , "Hou Hanshu 40-Selections" Whitworth University (2005). *History Faculty Scholarship*. Paper 22.
<http://digitalcommons.whitworth.edu/historyfaculty/22>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the History at Whitworth University. It has been accepted for inclusion in History Faculty Scholarship by an authorized administrator of Whitworth University.

Anthony E. Clark - Draft translation of Hou Hanshu 40 - Selections
(2005)

40.1

班彪字叔皮，扶風安陵人也。祖況，成帝時為越騎校尉。父稚，哀帝時為廣平太守。

Ban Biao's style was Shu Pi, and he was from Anling in Fufeng. His ancestor (grandfather) was Ban Kuang, and during the time of Chengdi he became the Head-of-the-Left-of-the-Mounted-Calvary. His father, Ban Zhi, was the Grand-Protectorate of Guangping during the time of emperor Aidi.

→ 班彪字叔皮，扶風安陵人。祖況，成帝時為越騎校尉。父稚，哀帝時為廣平太守。

40.2

彪性沈重好古。年二十餘，更始敗，三輔大亂。時隗囂擁周彪曰：「往者周亡，戰國並爭，天下分裂，數世然後定。意者從橫之事復起於今乎？將承運迭興，在於一人也？願生試論之。」對曰：「周之廢興，與漢殊異。昔周爵五等，諸侯從政，本根既微，枝葉彊大，故其末流有從橫之事，執數然也。漢承秦制，改立郡縣，主有專己之威，臣無百年之柄。至於成帝，假借外家，哀、平短祚，國嗣三絕，故王氏朝，因竊號位。危自上起，傷不及下，是以即真之後，天下莫不引領而歎。十餘年閒，中外搔擾，遠近俱發，假號雲合，咸稱劉氏，不謀同辭。方今雄桀帶州域者，皆無七國世業之資，而百姓謳吟，思仰漢德，已可知矣。」囂曰：「生言周、漢之執可也；至於但見愚人習識劉氏姓號之故，而謂漢家復興，矣。昔秦失其鹿，劉季逐而羈之，時人復知漢乎？」

Biao, by nature, was greatly fond of antiquity. When he was just over twenty years old, Wang Mang was defeated and there was the rebellion at Sanfu. During that time, the supporters of Wei Ao formed a crown at Tianshui. Biao then fled from the difficulties [at the capital] and followed him. Wei Ao said to Ban Biao: "Nearing the defeat of the Zhou, the Warring States all contended, the kingdom was split apart, and it was not settled for several generations. Do you suppose that the works of the Vertical

and Horizontal strategists will again rise today? Does the Mandate repeatedly for one man? May you, sir, try and explicate this.” Ban Biao replied, saying: “The rise and fall of the Zhou dynasty is not like the Han. Formerly, there were the five noble ranks in the Zhou, and the feudal lords accordingly governed. The root (king) was weak, whereas the branches and leaves were strong. Thus, during the [dynasty’s] final years, there were the affairs of the Vertical and Horizontal strategists. [Political] power was divided in this way. The Han inherited the [political] system of the Qin, [but] it changed how the Prefectures and Commanderies were set up. Lords were empowered by specializing themselves and ministers were powerless for five-hundred years. Once we arrive to the reign of Chengdi, he borrowed from the outer-families; Aidi and Pingdi’s imperial tenures were truncated. The state was disrupted three times, and so Wang Mang arrogated [the power of] the court, and accordingly took the imperial prerogative. Crisis arose from the top and harm did not reach [those] below. After this had become true, there was no-one who was not caused to sigh. Within ten years, within and outside [of the state] was restless and disturbed, and everyone near and far expressed [their feelings]. Those with borrowed titles gathered like clouds, and everyone acclaimed the Liu clan, [although] they did not scheme with the same words (there accolades were a pretense). Presently, of all the heroic gentlemen who are led to the regional towns, none avail themselves to the occupations of Warring States period. The people all extol and lift their thoughts to the virtue of the Han. This is indeed obvious!” Ao said, “Sir, your disquisitions regarding the Zhou and Han are reasonable. However, you have yet to look at the simple people, study how to understand the reason the Liu clan attained its

[imperial] title, and what is referred to as the return of the Han house. This is careless, indeed! Formerly, the Qin lost [the state] as if losing a deer, and Liu Ji [the founder of the Han], accordingly captured it. Do the people of today know that the Han will again arise?"

40.3

彪既疾囂言，又傷時方艱，乃著王命論，以為漢德承堯，有靈命之符，王者興祚，非詐力所致，欲以感之，而囂終不寤，遂避河西。河西大將軍竇融以為從事，深敬待之，接以師友之道。彪乃為融畫策事漢，總西河以拒隗囂。及融徵還京師，光武問曰：「所上章奏，誰與參之？」融對曰：「皆從事班彪所為。」帝雅聞彪才，因召入見，舉司隸茂才，拜徐令，以病免。後數應三公之命，輒去。

Biao was angered by Wei Ao's words, and moreover was hurt by the difficulties of his era. He thus wrote the, "Essay on the Kingly Mandate," which stated that the virtue of the Han was inherited from Yao, and that [the Han] had the contract of the sacred Mandate. The arising of the kingly Mandate is not attained by connivance or force. Desire deluded him, and in the end Wei Ao was unenlightened. Accordingly, [Biao] absconded to West of the Yellow River. Once there, the Great-General, Dou Rong, considered him to be employable, and he respectfully entertained [Ban Biao] on the basis of his tutorial and friendship skills. Biao then plotted on Rong's behalf a service for the Han, in which they would gather [troops] at the area West of the Yellow River in order to repel [the advance] of Wei Ao. After [he had assisted the Han], Rong was summoned to return to the capital militia. [The emperor] Guangwu asked him, "Who was it that submitted the memorial [regarding this military assistance]?" Rong replied, "It was all

the work of Ban Biao.” The emperor marveled at what he had heard regarding Biao’s talents. Accordingly, he summoned him to enter for an audience, whereupon he elevated him to the post of Minister-of-Education [an account of his] great skill. He was then promoted the Prefect of Xu. Ban Biao departed from his post on the pretext of illness. He later received several dictates from the Three Dukes, and each time [he received the order] he went off.

40.4

彪既才高而好述作，遂專心史籍之間。武帝時，司馬遷著史記，自太初以後，闕而不錄，後好事者頗或綴集時事，然多鄙俗，不足以踵繼其書。彪乃繼採前史遺事，傍貫異聞，作後傳數十篇，因斟酌前史而譏正得失。其略論曰：

Ban Biao was highly talented and fond of textual transmission, and so he specializes his mind in the area of historical texts. During the reign of Han Wudi, Sima Qian wrote the *Shi ji*. The period after the Taichu era (XXXXXX) is deficient and without records. Later, many of those who were fond of affairs collected [records of] the events of their times; several of these [works] were vulgar and common, not worthy to follow in the tracks of Sima Qian’s work. Ban Biao, accordingly, continuously collected the historical record of forgotten events, while on the side linking together what he had heard, and he produced later biographies in several tens of chapters. He thus poured over former histories, critiquing and rectifying their strengths and failures. He abridged his discussions, saying:

(40.5-40.6)

40.7

彪復辟司徒玉況府。時東宮初建，諸王國並開，而官屬未備，師保多闕。彪上言曰：

Ban Biao was summoned to the estate of the Minister-of-Education Yu Kuang.¹ At that time, the construction of the Eastern palace had begun, all of the kings' states were being opened (the kings were being enfeoffed at their respective states), the official posts had not been completed (filled), and there were many weaknesses in the militia's protection [of the restored empire]. Ban Biao said to the emperor [in a memorial]:

(40.8-9)

40.10

書奏，帝納之。後察司徒廉為望都長，吏民愛之。建武三十年，年五十二，卒官。所著賦、論、書、記、奏事合九篇。

[Ban Biao's] memorial was presented, and the emperor accepted it. Thereafter, the Minister-of-Education [Biao] was found to be upright and was made the zhang of Wangdu, and the minor officials and people loved him.² During the *jianwu* thirtieth year (A.D. 54), Ban Biao was fifty-two, and retired from office. He authored rhyme-prose, disquisitions, memorials, and records; he rendered memorials to a total of nine chapters.

¹ This line is tentatively translated. I have taken *bi* 辟 to mean "summon," and am following the commentary, which suggests that Yu Kuang, or Su Kuang, was the Minister-of-Education during the twenty-third year of the *jianwu* era (A.D. 47). Ban Biao himself is also known to have held the post of Minister-of-Education.

² Wangdu was located in modern Hebei.

40.11

二子：固，超。超別有傳。論曰：班彪以通儒上才，傾側危亂之間，行不踰方，言不失正，仕不急進，貞不違人，敷文華以緯國典，守賤薄而無悶容。彼將以世運未弘，非所謂賤焉恥乎？何其守道恬淡之篤也！

[Ban Biao] had two sons, Gu and Chao; Chao is treated in a biography elsewhere.

In discussing [Ban Biao] it can be said that he was highly talented because of his understanding of Confucianism. During an era of perversions and dangerous rebellions, Biao's behavior did not transgress against to Way, and his words did not lose rectification.