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Hanshu Postface (100A)

Translated by Anthony E. Clark

班氏之先，與楚同姓，令尹子文之後也。子文初生，棄於菅中，而虎乳之。楚人謂乳「穀」，謂虎「於釋」，故名穀於釋，字子文。楚人謂虎「班」，其子以為號。秦之滅楚，遷晉，代之間，因氏焉。

The ancestors of the Ban family were of the same clan as the Chu [royal family], and their descendants derive from Prime Minister Ziwen.¹ When Ziwen was first born, he was abandoned at Meng marsh, and a tigress nursed him.² The people of Chu refer to nursing as “*gou*” and to tigers as “*hutu*.” Thus, they called him Gou Hutu, and gave him the style Ziwen.³ The people of Chu [also] refer to tigers as “*ban*,” and Ziwen’s son [Dou Ban], took Ban as his appellation. When Qin destroyed Chu,⁴ the Ban family relocated to the area between Jin and Dai.⁵ In this way, Ban was made the sub-clan name.⁶

始皇之末，班壹避墜於樓煩，致馬牛羊數千群。值漢初定，與民無禁，當孝惠、高后時，以財雄邊，出入弋獵，旌旗鼓吹，年百餘歲，以壽終，故北方多以「壹」為字者。

¹ Ziwen appears in Ban Gu’s “Chart of Personages Past and Present” under the category of “wise” 智. See HS20.915. Ban Gu has thus placed his own ancestor in the same high category as such greats as Lao Peng 老彭 and Cang Jie 倉頡. Yuri Pines has placed the date of Ziwen’s death at c. 625 B.C. See Yuri Pines, *Foundations of Confucian Thought: Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period, 722-453 B.C.* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002), 311. However, the passage wherein his birth is recalled appears under the fourth year of Duke Xuan’s 宣公 reign (r. 608-591 B.C.) in the *Zuozhuan*, that is, 611 B.C.

² Yan Shigu 顏師古 (A.D. 581-645) states that Meng marsh is “Yunmeng marsh” 雲曹(夢)澤. See HS100A.4197. Yunmeng marsh was located in what is modern Hubei 湖北 province.

³ A young man’s style, or *zi* 字, was the name assigned to him at a capping ceremony, or *guan* 冠, once he reached the age of 20.

⁴ The Qin conquered Chu in 223 B.C.

⁵ The Warring States state of Jin 晉 was located in what is modern southwest Shanxi 山西, and Dai 代 was the name of a commandery in what is now Hebei 河北. Ch’ü T’ung-tsu suggests that the Bans were relocated by the Qin authorities in order to keep a better watch over their activities. This, according to Ch’ü, was common practice during the Qin and Han periods as a means of checking the influence of “powerful families.” Ch’ü states that “the Pan family, descendants of Tzu-wen 子文, a top official of the state of Ch’ü, was moved to the area between Chin and Tai, modern Shensi,” as a measure to reduce their power. See Ch’ü T’ung-tsu, *Han Social Structure* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 164. For Ch’ü’s entire discussion of “powerful families” during the Han, see 160-247.

⁶ HS100A. 4197. In Zheng Hesheng’s study of Ban Gu’s life, he notes that the Ban family was originally from the south, but relocated to the north. He also reminds the reader that several generations of the Ban family lineage cannot be known, and that the record restarts after the Qin had been founded. See Zheng Hesheng 鄭鶴聲, *Han Ban Mengjian xiansheng Gu nianpu* 漢班孟堅先生固年譜 (Taipei 臺北: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan 臺灣商務印書館, 1980), 1.

During the end of Qin Shi's reign,⁷ Ban Yi fled to Loufan, leading several thousand herds of cattle and sheep.⁸ When the Han was first established there were no sumptuary proscriptions with the people, and during the times of Emperor Hui the Filial and Empress Gao,⁹ Ban Yi used his wealth to build his power in the border region.¹⁰ When Ban Yi left for and returned from hunts, flags were raised and drums resounded. He lived more than a hundred years and died of old age. Accordingly, several people in the north took "Yi" as their style.¹¹

壹生孺·孺為任俠，州郡歌之·孺生長，官至上谷守·長生回，以茂材為長子令·回生況，舉孝廉為郎，積功勞，至上河農都尉，大司農奏課連最，入為左曹越騎校尉·成帝之初，女為婕妤，致仕就第，貲累千金，徙昌陵·昌陵後罷，大臣名家皆占數于長安·

Ban Yi sired Ru, a knight errant of whom [men of] the regions and commanderies sang [praises].¹² Ban Ru engendered Ban Chang, who became the governor of Shanggu.¹³ Ban Chang had a son [named] Hui who was made prefect of Zhangzi on the basis of being an "abundant talent."¹⁴ Ban Hui had Kuang, who was

⁷ Qin Shi Huangdi 秦始皇帝 is otherwise known as Ying Zheng 嬴政 or Zhao Zheng 趙政. He died in 210 B.C., and thus it must have been near this year that Ban Yi moved to Loufan. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 654.

⁸ According to Yan Shigu, Loufan 樓煩鄉 was a district located in the commandery of Yanmen 鴈門. See HS100A.4198. Yan also states that 墜 is the ancient character for 地. See *Ibid.* Yanmen was in what is modern Shanxi 山西.

⁹ Emperor Hui 惠帝 reigned from 195-188 B.C., and his mother, Empress Gao 高后, otherwise known as Lü Zhi 呂雉, lived from 241-180 B.C.

¹⁰ What, I believe, is suggested here, is that before the Han court had established its various sumptuary laws, Ban Yi and his clansmen relocated from Loufan to the northern border regions and developed a base of power, and given that the sources are scant regarding Ban Yi's activities, my reading remains speculative. What is certain is that the Ban clan's wealth and power in the frontier during Ban Yi's life was significant enough to have warranted the Han Court's attention. Yan Shigu states that, "The nation had not [yet] established prohibitions regarding clothing, chariots, and banners, and thus the Ban clan used its great wealth to become a powerful family in the border region" 國家不設衣服車旗之禁，故班氏以多財而為邊地之雄豪 (HS100A4198).

¹¹ HS100A.4197-4198.

¹² Ch'ü T'ung-tsu translates "遊俠" as "redressers of wrong," a groups of men whose power was "primarily based on sheer physical force, which enabled them to control behavior or even have life-or-death control over others" (Ch'ü, 161). The term "遊俠" is most commonly rendered as "wandering knights." It may be, then, that Ban Ru was not precisely among the group usually understood as "wandering knights" or what Ch'ü calls, "redressers of wrong."

¹³ Shanggu 上谷 was a commandery located in modern Hebei 河北.

¹⁴ Zhangzi 長子 was a district 縣 (distinguished from a [sub] district 鄉) located in modern Shanxi 山西. Yan Shigu equates Zhangzi with the district 縣 of Shangdang 上黨. During the Warring States era two states, Han 韓 and Zhao 趙, both established commanderies by the name of Shangdang 上黨郡. However, during the Qin 秦, the two commanderies were combined and given charge over Zhangzi.

recommended as “filially pious and incorrupt” and made a gentleman. His meritorious works accumulated and he became the chief commandant of agriculture at Shanghe.¹⁵ The grand minister of agriculture submitted an evaluation listing Ban Kuang at the top. He entered [the office of] bureau head of the left colonel of picked cavalry. During the beginning of Emperor Cheng’s reign,¹⁶ Ban Kuang’s daughter became a favorite beauty. He retired from his position and gathered wealth in the amount of several thousand cash according to his rank. He was relocated to [the tomb project at] Changling.¹⁷ Once the tomb project was discontinued, the great ministers and famous families were registered in [the capital] Chang’an.¹⁸

況生三子：伯、苻、稚。伯少受詩於師丹。大將軍王鳳薦伯宜勸學，召見宴昵殿，容貌甚麗，誦說有法，拜為中常侍。時上方鄉學，鄭寬中、張禹朝夕入說尚書、論語於金華殿中，詔伯受焉。既通大義，又講異同於許商，遷奉車都尉。數年，金華之業絕，出與王、許子弟為，在於綺襦紈之間，非其好也。

Ban Kuang had three sons, Bo, You, and Zhi. While Ban Bo was young, he received training in the *Shijing* from Shi Dan.¹⁹ The general in chief, Wang Feng, recommended Bo as appropriate for encouraging education, and he was [thus] summoned to Yanni Hall.²⁰ Bo had a beautiful countenance and his recitations and discussions [of the classics] had reason, thus he was promoted to regular palace attendant. At that time, the senior tutors Zheng Kuanzhong and Zhang Yu entered the Jinhua Hall morning and night to discuss the *Shangshu* and *Lunyu*, and Ban Bo was summoned to be received there.²¹ Once Bo had penetrated the greater meanings [of these texts], he continued to discuss their differences and similarities

¹⁵ Shanghe 上河 was located in what is now Ningxia province 寧夏, a region near the northern part of Han influence.

¹⁶ Emperor Cheng’s first reign year was 33 B.C.

¹⁷ Regarding Changling 昌陵, Michael Loewe states that it was “determined to build a tomb . . . lying far to the east of Chang’an, apparently with no consideration for the Zhaomu 昭穆 system. The new site was to be named Changling 昌陵. Orders given in 19 provided for the migration of prominent families there and the allocation of sites for the burial of high ranking officials, nobles, and others. But the whole project was abandoned in 16” (Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 253-254). The original site was Yanling 延陵; indeed, Yanling is where Emperor Cheng was finally buried. According to Loewe, it was “in view of the popular hardships that were being involved in its construction,” and because of the “migrants who had been displaced,” that the scheme was finally abandoned (Op. cit., 53).

¹⁸ HS100A.4198. For Yan Shigu’s comments on the records kept on families, see HS100A.4198.

¹⁹ For biographical information on the academician Shi Dan 師丹, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 475, and *Crisis and Conflict*, 172.

²⁰ Zhang Yan 張晏 describes Yanni Hall 宴昵殿 as a place where the emperor’s intimate kinsmen gather for banquets. See HS100A.4198.

²¹ For biographical information about Zheng Kuanzhong 鄭寬中 and Zhang Yu 張禹, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 723 and 696, respectively.

with Xu Shang.²² He was transferred to the post of chief commandant of chariots. Several years later, the occupations at Jinhua Hall were discontinued. He left from the hall, and the young men related to Empress Dowager Wang and Empress Xu formed a clique. Ban Bo did not, [however], take pleasure in the company of the fancily dressed.²³

家本北邊，志節慷慨，數求使匈奴。河平中，單于來朝，上使伯持節迎於塞下。會定襄大姓石、李輩報怨，殺追捕吏，伯上狀，因自請願試守期月。上遣侍中中郎將王舜馳傳代伯護單于，并奉璽書印綬，即拜伯為定襄太守。定襄聞伯素貴，年少，自請治劇，畏其下車作威，吏民竦息。伯至，請問耆老父祖故人有舊恩者，迎延滿堂，日為供具，執子孫禮。郡中益弛，諸所賓禮皆名豪，懷恩醉酒，共諫伯宜頗攝錄盜賊，具言本謀亡匿處。伯曰：「是所望於父師矣。」乃召屬縣長吏，選精進掾史，分部收捕，及它隱伏，旬日盡得。郡中震，咸稱神明。歲餘，上徵伯。伯上書願過故郡上父祖冢。有詔，太守都尉以下會，因召宗族，各以親疏加恩施，散數百金。北州以為榮，長老紀焉。道病中風，既至，以待中光祿大夫養病，賞賜甚厚，數年未能起。

Ban Bo's family was originally from the northern frontiers; he carried the resolute and full of emotion.²⁴ He requested several times to act as an emissary to the Xiongnu. During Emperor Cheng's *heping* reign period (28-25 B.C.), the Xiongnu chieftain was approaching the court, and the emperor charged Ban Bo with the task of managing a welcome at the borderland pass [to accompany him back to the capital]. Just at that time, the two great Shi and Li families of Dingxiang had joined to repay a grudge, and they killed an official who had been sent to pursue and arrest them.²⁵ Bo reported these circumstances to the emperor and consequently made a request that he be allowed be grand administrator for one year on a probationary basis. The emperor [thus] dispatched the palace attendant gentleman of the household, Wang Shun, to rush and replace Ban Bo as

²² For Xu Shang 許商, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 622.

²³ HS100A.4198.

²⁴ There are several possibilities for rendering the term “慷慨.” As Stephen Durrant has suggested, it may imply “highly emotional” (Sima Qian describes Xiang Yu's lamenting song as “慷慨”), or “bursting with energy.” Xu Shen 許慎 glosses the term as “robust though not fulfilling the heart's ambition” 慷慨，狀士不得志於心 (Xu Shen 許慎, *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Taipei 臺北: Wan juan lou tushu youxian gongsi 萬卷樓圖書有限公司, 2000), 507). However, it appears that in Ban Bo's case, he did indeed accomplish his ambitions.

²⁵ The precise identities of the Shi 石 and Li 李 families is uncertain. Dingxiang 定襄 was a district located in what is now Inner Mongolia. Thus, the events outlined here occurred some distance from the central court and were nearly beyond the borders of Han control. I have consulted the commentary of Yan Shigu for my translation of the Shi and Li family improprieties. Yan states, “They harbored a private vengeance and killed a man. A petty official pursued them, and they killed him also” 報私怨而殺人，吏追捕之，又殺吏 (HS100A.4199).

the protector of the Shanyu.²⁶ At the same time, Wang Shun presented to Ban Bo the documents and seal of office, promoting him to grand administrator of Dingxiang. The people of Dingxiang heard of Ban Bo's simple nobility and young age, and that he had himself requested to handle the troubles there. Fearing that Bo would descend from his chariot and make a show of intimidation, the petty officials and people sighed in alarm. When Ban Bo arrived, he sent an invitation to elders, family members, and men who [his clan] had gained favor with long ago, welcoming them to fill the [banquet] hall. He offered them cups [of wine] through the day, upholding the rites of son and grandson, [that is, he treated them with high respect], and the people of the commandery were increasingly at ease. The famous heroes who Bo had ritually [entertained] as guests all appreciated his kindness and the wine [he offered to them]. They all pleaded with Bo that he should [urgently] take in and make a record of the [region's] bandits, and they told him the places where the original schemers had gone into hiding. Ban Bo [then] said, "This [is why] I look to you, sirs!" Then, Bo summoned the district's chief petty officials and chose the best of them to be promoted to division heads. They were divided into groups to abduct [the criminals], and those who had gone into hiding were all taken into custody within ten days. Those in the commandery trembled [with fear], and everyone acclaimed his divine intelligence.²⁷ After the year had passed, the emperor summoned Ban Bo [to return from his tour at Dingxiang]. Ban Bo submitted a document to the emperor requesting that he be allowed to pass through his old [home] commandery to visit the tombs of his ancestors.²⁸ There was an imperial order for those below the rank of grand administrator and chief commandant to gather for a meeting. Ban Bo took this as an opportunity to summon his clansmen. He added favor to each according to his level of intimacy with him, and distributed several hundred cash to all. The northern region considered this glorious, and the elders made a record of it. Bo became ill from a wind while traveling, and once he had arrived, his illness was treated [with the salary] of a palace attendant imperial household grandee.²⁹ He accumulated a great store of awards and favors, [but] could not arise [from his sickbed] for several years.³⁰

會許皇后廢，班婕妤供養東宮，進侍者李平為婕妤，而趙飛

²⁶ For Wang Xun 王舜, the elder brother of Emperor Xuan's empress, Wang, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 552.

²⁷ A common rendering of "神明" is "gods." However, such a translation does not appear to fit the context of this account.

²⁸ Taking "冢" as "塚."

²⁹ Yan Shigu states that "it was a wind that harmed him" 為風所傷 (HS100A.4200). "Wind" is the technical name for a specific pathology in Chinese medicine that is discussed at length in the *Huangdi nei jing* 皇帝內經. For an excellent clinical description of the symptoms of a "wind" disease from the view of traditional Chinese medicine, see *Fundamentals of Chinese Medicine, Revised Edition*, translated by Nigel Wiseman and Andrew Ellis (Brookline, MA: Paradigm Publications, 1996), 79-80. For information regarding the post of imperial household grandee, see Hans Bielenstein, *The Bureaucracy of Han Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 25, 29, 153, 196 n. 26.

³⁰ HS100A.4199.

燕為皇后，伯遂稱篤。久之，上出過臨候伯，伯惶恐，起視事。

At that time, Empress Xu was deposed and Ban Jieyu offered nourishment at the eastern palace [to the Empress Dowager].³¹ The emperor advanced the attendant, Li Ping, to be the favorite beauty, and Zhao Feiyan to be empress [replacing Empress Xu].³² Accordingly, Ban Bo praised Ban Jieyu. After a considerable time, Emperor Cheng left [the palace] to pay Ban Bo a visit. Bo was alarmed and arose from [his sickbed] to look after affairs.

自大將軍薨後，富平、定陵侯張放、淳于長等始愛幸，出為微行，行則同輿執轡；入侍禁中，設宴飲之會，及趙、李諸侍中皆引滿舉白，談笑大噱。時乘輿幄坐張畫屏風，畫紂醉踞姐已作長夜之樂。上以伯新起，數目禮之，因顧指畫而問伯：「紂為無道，至於是虐？」伯對曰：「書云『乃用婦人之言』，何有踞肆於朝？所謂眾歸之，不如是之甚者也。」上曰：「苟不若此，此圖何戒？」伯曰：「『沈湎于酒』，微子所以告去也；『式號式諄』，大雅所以流連也。詩書淫亂之戒，其原皆在於酒。」上乃謂然歎曰：「吾久不見班生，今日復聞讜言！」放等不懌，稍自引起更衣，因罷出。時長信庭林表適使來，聞見之。

From after the death of the general in chief, Wang Feng, the noble of Fuping, Zhang Fang, and the noble of Dingling, Chun Yuzhang, and others, began to receive the emperor's favor.³³ They left [the palace] and traveled incognito, and while out roving, they grasped the reigns of the chariot together.³⁴ Some time later, the attendant(s) of the forbidden apartments set up a drinking banquet that extended to Zhao Feiyan, Li Ping, and all of the palace attendants, inducing everyone to down their wine and present their empty cups. The sounds of chatter and laughter resounded. While mounted within the canopy of their chariot, they opened a painting for protecting them from the wind. The painting depicted King

³¹ Empress Xu, originally Xu Kua 許誇, was the daughter of the courtier, Xu Jia 許嘉, and she married Emperor Cheng before he was the emperor. She bore him a daughter and a son; both died in their infancy. She was accused of invoking curses against the emperor and deposed in 18 B.C., and was finally forced to take poison in 8 B.C. Ban Jieyu fortunately survived her trial of imprecation and outlived her imperial husband. For Xu Kua see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 620. For the eastern palace 東宮, see *The Cambridge History of China, vol. 1*, eds. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 503.

³² For Li Ping 李平 and Zhao Feiyan 趙飛燕 see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 226 and 704, respectively.

³³ According to Yan Shigu, the general in chief mentioned here is Wang Feng. See HS100A.4201. For Zhang Fang 張方, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 111, and for Chun Yuzhang 淳于長, see op. cit., 53. Emperor Cheng assumed the pseudonym, "relative of the noble of Fuping" 富平侯家人 while on his incognito travels.

³⁴ Presumably, this is not the sort of thing an emperor of dignity should do.

Zhou, drunk and crouching over with his consort, Dan Ji, passing a long night of revelry.³⁵ The emperor, because Bo had recently gotten up [from his sickbed] acknowledged him with his eyes. The emperor turned, pointed to the painting, and asked Bo a question. Emperor Cheng asked, “How could such an unprincipled man as King Zhou come to this?” Ban Bo replied, “The *Shangshu* has said, ‘Now, [king Zhou] listens to the words of his woman.’³⁶ How could there be such crouching and depravity in the court? That which the common people hate turning to them is not severe as this.”³⁷ The emperor said, “If I am not to be like this, what [theme depicted on this] painting should I avoid?” Ban Bo replied, “Weizi announced his departure [from Yin] on the basis of [the king’s] ‘deep madness for wine.’³⁸ It is ‘great clamor and shouting’ that the ‘Greater Ya’ deplures.³⁹ The admonitions of the *Shi* and *Shu* all spring from the [excesses] of wine.” The emperor then sighed heavily and said, “It has been a long time since I have seen Ban Bo, and today I have again heard his excellent words.” Zhang Fang and his group were not happy [to hear what Bo had said]; they were little by little brought to change from dressing incognito, and they accordingly stopped

³⁵ Taking “踞” as “蹲” or “反企,” that is, “crouched over.” See *Xin xiu Kangxi zidian* 新修康熙字典 (Taipei 臺北: Qi ye shuju 啟業書局, 1998), 1893.

³⁶ As Yan Shigu suggests, this line is derived from the modern text version of the *Shangshu*. See HS100A.4201. This precise quote does not appear in the old text version, however, James Legge has translated the entire new text version of the “Great Declaration” 泰誓. Ban Bo is here alluding to the new text passage, and if his allusion is directed toward Emperor Cheng, which it surely is, then the emperor must have felt somewhat chastised. The “Great Declaration,” in both the new text and old text versions, is a battle cry to the troops of King Wen to rally behind the righteous overthrow of the corrupt Shang dynasty, then under the wicked rule of King Zhou. The new text passage attributes King Zhou’s misbehaviors to the fact that he listens to the ill advice of his consort, Dan Ji, rather than holding the reigns of court himself. The passage here quoted by Ban Bo is translated by Legge as, “Now, king Chou listens to the words of his woman: – he has cut himself off from Heaven; he has destroyed and ruined *all his hopes* from heaven or earth or men” 今殷王紂乃用其婦人之言，自絕于天，毀壞其三正 (James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, vol. 3, The Shoo King* [Taipei: SMC Publishing, 1991], 299). The critique that King Zhou’s cunning is derived from his obsession over Dan Ji is also found in the old text version, where it is stated, “He makes contrivances of wonderful device and extraordinary cunning to please his woman” 技淫巧以悅婦人 (Op. cit., 295). Thus, it appears that Ban Bo is alluding to the dangers of allowing one’s fondness for a consort to influence his governance, and the subsequent loss of Heaven’s Mandate as a result.

³⁷ Here, Ban Bo is again alluding to the wicked King Zhou. He is alluding to *Lunyu* 19.20, wherein it is stated, “King Zhou’s wickedness is not as severe as this (nowadays?); accordingly the gentleman hates to dwell downstream where all the wickedness flows” 紂之不善，不如是之善也。是以君子惡居下流，天下之惡皆歸焉 (Lunyu 19.20). Perhaps Bo is here making Emperor Cheng’s behavior appear even worse than King Zhou’s was.

³⁸ Ban Bo has alluded to the “Viscount of Wei” 微子 chapter of the *Shangshu*. For Yan Shigu’s commentary on the line, see HS100A.4202. Legge has rendered the *Shangshu* passage Bo has alluded to as, “. . . by our being lost and maddened with wine, we have destroyed *the effects of his* (i.e., the founder of the Shang) virtue in these after times” 我用沉酗于酒，用亂敗厥德于下 (Legge, *The Chinese Classics, vol. 3, The Shoo King*, 273-274). Thus, Bo is distilling the problems of the Shang, and Emperor Cheng for that matter, to the excesses of wine.

³⁹ Ban Bo alludes to Mao 255, another invective against King Zhou. Legge renders the ode as, “But amid clamour and shouting, you turn day into night” 式號式灑，俾晝作夜 (下 (Legge, *The Chinese Classics, vol. 3, The Shoo King*, 508). Again, Bo’s allusion suggests that a ruler obsessed with wine approaches ruin. For “流連,” I am following Yan Shigu’s gloss as “嗟歎,” or “to deplore” or “lament.” See HS100A.4202.

leaving [the palace]. At that time, the mistress of the women's quarters at Changxin Palace suddenly met with someone who was sent to tell her what he had seen [in court regarding Ban Bo].⁴⁰

後上朝東宮，太后泣曰：「帝間顏色瘦黑，班侍中本大將軍所舉，宜寵異之，益求其比，以輔聖德。宜遣富平侯且就國。」上曰：「諾。」車騎將軍王音聞之，以風丞相御史奏富平侯罪過，上乃出放為邊都尉。後復徵入，太后與上書曰：「前所道尚未效，富平侯反復來，其能默虐？」上謝曰：「請今奉詔。」是時許商為少府，師丹為光祿勳，上於是引商、丹入為光祿大夫，伯遷水衡都尉，與兩師並侍中，皆秩中二千石。每朝東宮，常從；及有大政，俱使論指於公卿。上亦稍厭游宴，復修經書之業，太后甚悅。丞相方進復奏，富平侯竟就國。會伯病卒，年三十八，朝廷愍惜焉。

Later, the emperor held court at the eastern palace, [where Empress Dowager Wang Zhengjun was in residence].⁴¹ Empress Dowager Wang wept, saying, "The emperor's face grows more thin and dark each day. The palace attendant, Ban Bo, who was originally recommended by the general in chief, Wang Feng, is rightly favored as exceptional, and more like him should be sought in order to assist [the emperor's] sagely virtue.⁴² The noble of Fuping, Zhang Fang, should moreover be transferred to his own state." The emperor responded, "Agreed." The general of the chariots and cavalry, Wang Yin,⁴³ heard about this and used the critiques of the chancellor, [Xue Xuan], and the imperial counselor, [Zhai Fangjin], to present a memorial to the emperor about the transgressions of Zhang Fang, the noble of Fuping.⁴⁴ The emperor then sent Zhang Fang out to act as the chief commandant in the frontier region, but he was later summoned to reenter [the palace]. Empress Dowager Wang submitted a document to the emperor that stated, "My former appeals to you have not yet been employed, and Zhang Fang, the noble of Fuping, has returned. How can I remain silent about this?" The emperor apologized and said, "May my decree [expelling Zhang Fang] be presented this day." At that time, Xu Shang was the privy treasurer and Shi Dan was the superintendent of

⁴⁰ HS100A.4201. According to the Meng Kang 孟康 (fl. 3rd century B.C.), the Changxin Palace 長信宮 was the residence of the Empress Dowager, who was at the time, Wang Zhengjun, and the "ting lin biao" 庭林表 was an official woman's post. Yan Shigu asserts that the graph, "庭," is not part of the official title. See HS100A.4202.

⁴¹ For the Empress Dowager, Wang Zhengjun 王政君, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 564-565.

⁴² It may have been that the mistress of the women's quarters was the source of the Empress Dowager's information regarding Ban Bo and the emperor's favorite courtiers such as Zhang Fang and Chun Yuzhang. This would explain the inclusion of the mistress of the women's quarters in the previous passage.

⁴³ Wang Yin 王音 (?-15 B.C.) was a cousin of Wang Zhengjun, and was recommended, Like Ban Bo, by Wang Feng. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 562.

⁴⁴ The chancellor, Xue Xuan 薛宣, and the imperial counselor, Zhai Fangjin 翟方進, made accusations against the misbehaviors of Zhang Fang, including the murder of the husbands whose wives he desired. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 680.

imperial household.⁴⁵ The emperor thereupon directed Xu Shang and Shi Dan to become imperial household grandees. Ban Bo was transferred to the post of chief commandant of waters and parks, and Bo, Xu, and Shang all acted as palace attendants. They all held ranks earning salaries of two thousand piculs. Every (morning?) the emperor held court at the Eastern Palace, and they normally accompanied him. When there were matters of great administrative importance they were always sent to deliver the edicts to the dukes and chamberlains. The emperor also, little by little, came to dislike wandering and banquet [revelries], returning to occupation of cultivating himself with classical texts. Empress Dowager Wang was greatly pleased. The chancellor, Zhai Fangjin, sent another memorial to the emperor informing him that Zhang Fang, the noble of Fuping, had finally returned to his [home] state. Just at that time, Ban Bo died of an illness at the age of thirty-eight. The court grieved pitifully over his death.⁴⁶

旂博學有俊材，左將軍(師)[史]丹舉賢良方正，以對策為議郎，遷諫大夫、右曹中郎將，與劉向校祕書。每奏事，旂以選受詔進讀群書。上器其能，賜以祕書之副。時書不布，自東平思王以叔父求太史公、諸子書，大將軍白不許。語在東平王傳。旂亦早卒，有子曰嗣，顯名當世。

Ban You was a man of wide learning who had superior talents. The general of the left, Shi Dan, recommended Ban You as “capable and good,” and “sincere and upright.”⁴⁷ He was employed to be a gentleman in order to respond to [imperial] inquiries. He was transferred to the post of grandee remonstrant, and then to bureau head of the right and leader of the gentlemen of the household. He worked with Liu Xiang collating texts in the imperial library.⁴⁸ Each time their works were reported [to the emperor], Ban You was selected to receive the summons to enter the court and read the various texts. The emperor esteemed Ban You’s abilities, and bestowed to him duplicate copies of the works in the imperial archives. At that time, books were not in general circulation. Liu Yu, the king of Dongping, requested copies of the *Taishigong* (i.e., *Shiji*) and the works of the various philosophers on the basis of being Emperor Cheng’s uncle (i.e., the son of Emperor Xuan).⁴⁹ It was made clear by the general in chief, [Wang Feng], that it

⁴⁵ Xu Shang 許商 and Shi Dan 師丹 (?-3 B.C.) were both, according to Michael Loewe, assigned to these posts in 14 B.C. Thus, the events outlined in this passage probably occurred during the same year. For Xu Shang and Shi Dan, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 622 and 475, respectively.

⁴⁶ HS100A.4202.

⁴⁷ For Shi Dan 史丹, see Loewe, *Bibliographic Dictionary*, 475.

⁴⁸ For Liu Xiang 劉向, see Loewe, *Bibliographic Dictionary*, 372-375. It was in A.D. 26 that Liu Xiang, along with his son, Liu Xin 劉歆, and several other scholars, that the project to collect and collate the texts of the imperial library was ordered. The *Qilue* 七略 (Seven Summaries) was written as a result of their efforts, however, only fragments of this work remain. Ban Gu’s “Treatise on Classic Writings” preserves some excerpts from the *Qilue*.

⁴⁹ For Liu Yu 劉宇, see Loewe, *Bibliographic Dictionary*, 401. The state of Dongping 東平 was located in modern Shandong 山東. Yan Shigu suggests that this small anecdote is included to highlight the special favor shown to Ban You. See HS100A.4203.

would be unacceptable to allow it. This is discussed in the “Biography of the King of Dongping” (i.e., HS18.3320). Ban You also died young, but he left a son, Ban Si, who was famous at that time.⁵⁰

稚少為黃門郎中常侍，方直自守。成帝季年，立定陶王為太子，數遣中盾請問近臣，獨不敢答。哀帝即位，出稚為西河屬國都尉，遷廣平相。

When Ban Zhi was young, he held the posts of gentleman of the yellow gates and regular palace attendant; he was sincere and upright, and self-restrained.⁵¹ During Emperor Cheng’s final year,⁵² the king of Dingtao was nominated the heir apparent,⁵³ and palace patrolmen were dispatched to solicit the [opinions] of his intimate ministers.⁵⁴ Ban Zhi was the only one who did not dare to respond.⁵⁵ Once Liu Xin acceded the throne as Emperor Ai, Ban Zhi was sent to Xihe, a tributary state, to act as the chief commandant.⁵⁶ He was [later] transferred (promoted) to the post of chancellor at Guangping.⁵⁷

王莽少與稚兄弟同列友善，兄事莽而弟畜稚。莽之卒也，修總麻，賻贈甚厚。平帝即位，太后臨朝，莽秉政，方欲文致太平，使使者分行風俗，采頌聲，而稚無所上。琅邪太守公孫闕言災害於公府，大司空甄豐遣屬馳至兩郡諷吏民，而劾闕空造不祥，稚絕嘉應，嫉害聖政，皆不道。太后曰：「不宣德美，宜與言災異者異罰。且後宮賢家，我所哀也。」闕獨下獄誅。稚懼，上書陳恩謝罪，願歸相印，入補延陵園郎，太后許焉。食故祿終身。由是班氏不顯莽朝，亦不權咎。

When Wang Mang was young, he was an intimate friend of Ban You, as if they were brothers. He served Ban You as an older brother, and looked after Ban Zhi as a younger brother. When Ban You died, Wang Mang dressed in mourning

⁵⁰ HS100A.4203.

⁵¹ The terms, “方直” and “自守” do not appear as Han categories of distinction used for recommending an individual to a particular post, such as “方正” or “孝廉.” Thus, they are rendered here as descriptive adjectives.

⁵² That is, 7 B.C.

⁵³ The king of Dingtao 定陶王 was Liu Xin 陸欣, who later reigned as Emperor Ai 哀帝 from 6 B.C. to A.D. 1. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 378-386. Liu Xin acceded as king of Dingtao at the age of four in 22 B.C., and was made the heir apparent in 8 B.C.

⁵⁴ Yan Shigu states that “盾” is alternatively read as “允.” See HS100A.4203.

⁵⁵ Yan Shigu states: “This says he was cautious” 言其慎. See HS100A.4204.

⁵⁶ The tributary state, Xihe 西河 was located in what is now Inner Mongolia, and was thus quite distant from the capital.

⁵⁷ Guangping 廣平 was located in modern Hebei 河北.

clothes and paid for the funerary textiles, chariots, and horses, at great expense.⁵⁸ When emperor Ping (1 B.C. – A.D. 6) assumed the throne,⁵⁹ Empress Dowager Wang Zhengjun acted as regent while Wang Mang held the reigns of state. At that time, Wang Mang desired to bring about great peace in the state by means of letters, and so he dispatched emissaries to divide among the common customs [of the people] and gather hymns and songs.⁶⁰ Ban Zhi did not present any. The grand administrator of Langya, Gongsun Hong, told of a calamity in the ducal estate.⁶¹ The grand minister of works, Zhen Feng, dispatched subordinates to rush to the two commanderies, Guangping and Langye, to ridicule Gongsun Hong's statements to the petty officials and commoners⁶² and accuse Gongsun Hong of contriving inauspicious portents without basis, and Ban Zhi of declining to report auspicious portents, and of detesting and harming the sagely governance; they were both contrary to the Way. The empress dowager, Wang Zhengjun, stated, "It is correct to punish someone who does not proclaim [the court's] virtue and goodness differently than one who speaks of inauspicious portents. Furthermore, it is the clansmen of someone like Ban Jieyu for whom I feel sympathy." Gongsun Hong was alone was sent to prison and executed, so Ban Zhi was alarmed and submitted a petition to the emperor recalling his goodwill and apologizing for his own crime. Zhi requested to be allowed to surrender his seals of office and come back to fill in as a gentleman of the parks at Yanling.⁶³ The empress dowager approved and Ban Zhi was provided with his previous salary until he died. Resulting from this event, the Ban clan did not appear in the court of Wang Mang, and thus never suffered incrimination.

初，成帝性寬，進入直言，是以王音、翟方進等繩法舉過，而劉向、杜鄴、王章、朱雲之徒肆意犯上，故自帝師安昌侯，諸舅大將軍兄弟及公卿大夫、後宮外屬史許之家有貴寵者，莫不被文傷詆。唯谷永嘗言「建始、河平之際，許、班之貴，傾動前朝，熏灼四方，賞賜無量，空虛內臧，女寵至極，不可尚矣；今之後起，天所不饗，什倍於前。」永指以駁譏趙、李，亦無間云。

Previously, Emperor Cheng had a magnanimous nature and advanced men who were direct in their speech. Therefore, Wang Yin, Zhai Fangjin, and others, employed the law to mention the emperor's faults. Liu Xiang, Du Ye, Wang

⁵⁸ The term used here for "mourning clothes" is "緦麻," which means literally that Wang Mang dressed in the mourning garments normally worn by a distant relative. In other words, Wang Mang's relationship with the Ban clan was extremely close.

⁵⁹ 1 B.C.

⁶⁰ Here, Wang Mang is echoing the tradition that the poems of the *Shijing* were collected by the king in order to better understand the popular sentiments of the common people, and thus be able to bring about peace. Such a collection of popular songs was also carried out earlier in the Han for the Music Bureau.

⁶¹ For Gongsun Hong 公孫闕, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 128. However, Loewe adds nothing to the account narrated in this passage.

⁶² For Zhen Feng, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 718-719.

⁶³ Yanling 延陵 was the tomb complex where Emperor Cheng was finally buried.

63
Zhang, Zhu Yun, and that group, gave free reign to their ideas in opposing the emperor. Accordingly, from the imperial tutor, the noble of Anchang, imperial uncles, great generals, brothers, dukes, chamberlains, and grandees, to the outer subordinate imperial consorts who were favored, such as the Shi and Xu clans, all were slandered and harmed by documents. Gu Yong was the only man who spoke out, saying, "Within the time of the *jiانشي* (32-29 B.C.) and *heping* (28-25 B.C.) reign periods of Emperor Cheng, the nobility of Xu Kua and Ban Jieyu shook the front court, and their power intimidated the four quarters. They were given rewards without measure, emptying the emperor's personal treasury.⁶⁴ The favor of these women was so extreme that it cannot be surpassed. What could arise from this in the future, would be that Heaven's disfavor will multiply ten times more than before." Gu Yong pointed at [Xu and Ban] in order to criticize indirectly Zhao Feiyan and Li Ping, and, moreover, not to find fault with [the Bans].⁶⁵

稚生彪·彪字叔皮，幼與從兄嗣共遊學，家有賜書，內足於財，好古之士自遠方至，父黨揚子雲以下莫不造門·

Ban Zhi had a son named Ban Biao, who was styled Shupi. When he was young, Biao wandered about in pursuit of learning along with Ban Si, his older first-cousin.⁶⁶ The [Ban] household held the texts [earlier] given to [Ban You] and had a sufficient store of wealth, and scholars who were fond of antiquity came from ^{far away} distant places [to visit their library]. Men who were among his father's (i.e., Ban Zhi) group of associates, from Yang Xiong on down, all arrived at their door.

嗣雖修儒學，然貴老嚴之術·桓生欲借其書，嗣報曰：「若夫嚴子者，絕聖棄智，修生保真，清虛澹泊，歸之自然，獨師友造化，而不為世俗所役者也·漁釣於一壑，則萬物不奸其志；栖遲於一丘，則天下不易其樂·不結聖人之罔，不嗅驕君之餌，蕩然肆志，談者不得而名焉，故可貴也·今吾子已貫仁誼之羈絆，繫名聲之韁鎖，伏周、孔之軌躅，馳顏、閔之極摯，既繫攀於世教矣，何用大道為自眩曜？昔有學步於邯鄲者·曾未得其髣髴，又復失其故步，遂匍匐而歸耳！恐似此類，故不進·」嗣之行已持論如此·

Although Ban Si was learned in Confucianism, he nonetheless valued the arts of Laozi and Zhuangzi. Huan Sheng (i.e., Huan Tan)⁶⁷ desired to borrow texts [from

⁶⁴ Charles O. Hucker renders the "內藏" as "Palace Storehouse," stating that this ~~is~~ place was "a storage vault for goods considered the Emperor's personal property." See Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 4272.

⁶⁵ Yan Shigu's glosses "間" as "非." See HS100A.4205.

⁶⁶ The term "從兄" implies one's male cousins, more specifically, the sons of one's paternal uncles who are older than oneself.

⁶⁷ Huan Tan 桓譚 (c. 43-A.D. 28) was ~~indeed~~ one of Yang Xiong's acquaintances, with whom he engaged in intellectual discussions along with Liu Xin. It appears that Huan was among the intellectual ^{group} coterie of friends, including

the Ban Family], but Ban Si [refused] him, saying, 'One such as Zhuangzi resists sagacity and discards wisdom, while cultivating life and protecting the genuine. He purifies, empties, makes peaceful, and returns to what is self-so. He takes as his only friend and teacher the fashioner of change, and does not act according to the customs of his era. When fishing in a single gully, the myriad objects do not interfere with his intentions, [and] when sojourning on a single hillock, the kingdom cannot change his joy. He is not caught in the net of the sage, nor is he enticed by the bait of the arrogant ruler. Without restraint, he gives free reign to his intentions. That which he discusses cannot be named, and so it can be valued. Now, you, sir, have already been linked by the fetters of benevolence and propriety, and are held by the reins of the sounds of the famous. You submit to the ruts of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius, hastening to the greatness of Yan and Min.⁶⁸ You are already tangled in the teachings of the generation indeed! Of what use is the great Way in becoming famous? In antiquity, there was the man [from Shouling] who tried to learn how to walk [like the people] in Handan. Before he had learned [to walk] like them, however, he continued to forget how he used to walk. Accordingly, he had to crawl home [on his hands and knees]. I am afraid that you are of this type, and that is why you do not advance.'⁶⁹ It was Ban Si's manner to argue in this way.

叔皮唯聖人之道然後盡心焉。年二十，遭王莽敗，世祖即位於冀州。時隗囂據壘擁眾，招輯英俊，而公孫述稱帝於蜀漢，天下雲擾，大者連州郡，小者據縣邑。囂問彪曰：「往者周亡，戰國並爭，天下分裂，數世然後乃定，其抑者從橫之事復起於今乎？將承運迭興在於一人也？願先生論之。」對曰：「周之廢興與漢異。昔周立爵五等，諸侯從政，本根既微，枝葉強大，故其末流有從橫之事，其勢然也。漢家承秦之制，並立郡縣，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，危自上起，傷不及下。故王氏之貴，傾擅朝廷，能竊號位，而不根於民，是以

Ban Biao, Ban Zhi, and ^{others} other Bans, ~~for~~ Ban Biao's most famous disciple, Wang Chong, held Huan in high esteem. Like Wang Chong and Ban Gu, Huan Tan is said to have been interested in the general meanings of texts rather than ^{literal} literal exegesis. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 164.

⁶⁸ The "Yan" 顏 referred to here is Confucius' disciple Yan Yuan 顏淵 (514-483 B.C.), and ^{the} "Min" 閔 is another of his disciples, Min Sun 閔損 (fl. 500 B.C.). Thus, Ban Si is criticizing Huan Tan for being a follower of Confucius and his disciples.

⁶⁹ Here, Ban Si is alluding to a passage from the "Autumn Floods" 秋水 chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, wherein Gongsun Long 公孫龍 ^{asks} Prince Mou of Wei 魏牟 ^{how} he might better understand the teachings of Zhuangzi. Prince Mou's ^{response} informs Gongsun Long that he is like the man from Shouling 壽陵 who wants to learn how to walk as the people of Handan 邯鄲 do. Unfortunately, the man is unable to learn to walk as they do, and in the end forgets how to walk altogether. The parallel is clear; Ban Si is suggesting that Huan Tan is like the poor man from Shouling. For this passage see *Zhuangzi jin zhu jin yi* 莊子今注今議, commentator Chen Guying 陳鼓應 (Hong Kong 香港: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1990), 434-436. For an English translation, see Victor H. Mair, *Wandering on the Way: Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Bantam Books, 1994), 161-164.

即真之後，天下莫不引領而歎，十餘年間，外內騷擾，遠近俱發，假號雲合，咸稱劉氏，不謀而同辭。方今雄桀帶州城者，皆無七國世業之資。詩云：『皇矣上帝，臨下有赫，鑒觀四方，求民之莫。』今民皆謳吟思漢，鄉仰劉氏，已可知矣。」囂曰：「先生言周、漢之勢，可也，至於但見愚民習識劉氏姓號之故，而謂漢家復興，疏矣！昔秦失其鹿，劉季逐而拊之，時民復知漢序！」既感囂言，又愍狂狡之不息，乃著王命論以救時難。其辭曰：

Ban Biao focused only on the Way of sagely men, and then he devoted all of his energy to [studying] them. When he was twenty years old he encountered the defeat of Wang Mang, and Shizu (i.e., Emperor Guangwu) was enthroned at Jizhou [in 25].⁷⁰ At that time, Wei Ao occupied Long (Tianshui) with many supporters, gathering bravados and worthies,⁷¹ and Gongsun Shu declared himself emperor at Shuhan.⁷² The kingdom was as swelling clouds; the great linked together in the regions and commanderies, while the small occupied the districts and estates. Wei Ao asked Ban Biao a question, stating, "When the Zhou was approaching destruction, the warring states all contended, the kingdom was split apart, and it was not settled for several generations. Could it be that the affairs of the Diplomatists shall again arise in our own time? Must the right to the throne devolve in turn onto one man? I wish you, sir, to discuss this." Biao replied: "The rise and fall of the Zhou is not like the Han. Formerly, the Zhou established the five noble ranks,⁷³ and the feudal lords accordingly governed [the state]. The root was weak, but the branches and leaves were strong. For this reason, there were the works of itinerant diplomatists at the end of the Zhou; such were their strengths. The Han inherited the institutions of the Qin, and likewise established the commanderies and districts. Lords were empowered by being specialists and ministers were powerless for five hundred years. Once we arrive at the reign of Emperor Cheng, he borrowed from the distaff families,⁷⁴ and the imperial tenures

⁷⁰ Emperor Guangwu 光武帝 (r. A.D. 25-57) was enthroned in 25 after defeating Wang Mang. Jizhou 冀州 was a major administrative division located in what is modern Hebei 河北. For Emperor Guang, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 389.

⁷¹ Wei Ao 隗囂 was a warlord who held control of part of the Gansu 甘肅 corridor. He led a separatist movement against Emperor Guangwu, and was not defeated until 33. He died of illness. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 568.

⁷² Gongsun Shu 公孫述 was a minister in the court of Emperor Ai who later served Wang Mang. After Wang Mang's defeat, he set himself up with the title of Son of Heaven 天子 in 25. He died fighting the incumbent Emperor Guangwu in 36. See Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 130. Shuhan 蜀漢 is a general reference to what is now Sichuan 四川.

⁷³ The "五等" are the 公, 侯, 伯, 子, and 男.

⁷⁴ The term "distaff families" implies the relatives of the imperial consorts. As we have seen, Ban Gu's great-aunt, the *Jiyeu* (daughter of Ban Kuang), was a favored consort of Emperor Cheng. Thus, one of the "distaff families" that Cheng "borrowed" his efficacy from the Ban family. However, this passage pejoratively implies that such reliance upon "distaff families" results in the shortening of imperial tenure. Certainly, Ban Gu is suggesting here that the reigns of Cheng, Ai, and Ping, were truncated due to their inappropriate reliance upon such ignoble consorts as Li Ping and Zhao Feiyan.

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of Ai and Ping were truncated. The state was disrupted three times. Perils arose from above (i.e., the emperor), but no harm was done to those below (i.e., the commoners). Accordingly, the Wang family was ennobled, exerted its authority in court, and was able to arrogate the imperial title and position without being rooted in the people. Therefore, after all this had become true, the entire kingdom withdrew and sighed. In ten years, within and without were in turmoil, and near and far rose up. Those with borrowed titles gathered like clouds, all acclaimed the Liu family, and everyone departed [from the capital] without making plans. At present, of the heroic gentlemen who are led to the regional towns, all are without the qualifications of the Warring States era. The *Shi* states, "August indeed is god on high! He descends his brilliance and examines the four directions seeking to establish the people."⁷⁵ Now, the people all extol and contemplate the Han, lifting up (choosing) the Liu family. This is indeed obvious!' Wei Ao said, 'Sir, your disquisitions regarding the situations (strengths?) of the Zhou and Han are reasonable.⁷⁶ However, if you merely take as a reason that the ignorant masses all know the name of the Liu family and say the Han will be restored, that would be negligent indeed! Formerly, the Qin lost [the state] as if losing a deer, and Liu Ji [the founder of the Han], chased and captured it. . Will the people of today know the Han again?' Biao was struck by Wei Ao's speech, and was worried by his unceasing arrogance and craftiness. Accordingly, he wrote the 'Essay on the Kingly Mandate' to save his era from its distress. His document stated:

昔在帝堯之禪曰：「咨爾舜，天之曆數在爾躬。」舜亦以命禹。臯于稷契，咸佐唐虞，光濟四海，奕世載德，至于湯武，而有天下。雖其遭遇異時，禪代不同，至于應天順民，其揆一也。是故劉氏承堯之祚，氏族之世，著乎春秋。唐據火德，而漢紹之，始起沛澤，則神母夜號，以章赤帝之符。由是言之，帝王之祚，必有明聖顯懿之德，豐功厚利積業之業，然後精誠通於神明，流澤加於生民，故能為鬼神所福饗，天下所歸往，未見運世無本，功德不紀，而得屈起在此位者也。世俗見高祖興於布衣，不達其故，以為適遭暴亂，得奮其劍，游說之士至比天下於逐鹿，幸捷而得之，不知神器有命，不可以智力求也。悲夫！此世所以多亂臣賊子者也。若然者，豈徒闕於天道哉？又不賭之於人事矣！

'In antiquity, during Emperor Yao's abdication, he said, "Oh, you Shun, the will of Heaven rests upon your person." Shun, moreover, used these words to transmit the Mandate to Yu. Then, Ji and Xie both served Tang (Yao) and Yu (Shun), enlightening the four seas, making their generations grand with multiplied virtue until Tang and Wu had attained the kingdom. Even though the difficulties they encountered were of different eras, and their imperial lineages were not the same, once we see how they responded to Heaven and accorded with the people, [we

Tang and Yao.

⁷⁵ Mao, 241.

⁷⁶ I have rendered the term "ke ye 可也" as "reasonable." It may otherwise be translated as "possible."

know that] their principle was the same. ^{In the same way} For this reason the Liu family inherited the reign-authority of Yao; its family's generations are recorded in the *Chunqiu*. Tang (Yao) ruled by virtue of Fire, and the Han continues it. In the beginning, [Gaozu] arose from Pei ^(M)marsh, and then the spirit of the mother wailed at night as a sign of the Red Emperor's agreement. From this it can be said that the reign-authority of the emperor must be by virtue of enlightened sagacity and manifest merit, as well as an occupation by rich worth and great advantage long accrued. Afterward, [the emperor's] true sincerity will penetrate to the enlightened spirits and flowing virtue will be added to the living people; he will accordingly be able to make prosperous offerings to the spirits, and the kingdom will turn to him. An occasion has never been seen that generations have revolved without fundamental [evidence] of [a man's] merit and virtue that can be recorded, and yet specially attained the dignified status of emperor. ^(but) The commoners of his generation witnessed Gaozu's rise from the masses and could not arrive at the reason; they surmised that he encountered the harshness and chaos [of his era] and was able to wield his sword with force. The wandering scholars of persuasion likened the kingdom to a deer chase; the diligent and speedy obtain it. They did not understand that the ^{spiritual} vessel (i.e., the imperial seal) is mandated. It cannot be sought after by means of wisdom or power. Lamentable indeed, are the many rebellious ministers and cunning sons of ^{this} generation. How could such a group of people be so obtuse regarding the Way of Heaven and disregard the affairs of man?

夫餓饑流隸，飢寒道路，思有短褐之褻，儻石之畜，所願不過一金，然終於轉死溝壑。何則？貧窮亦有命也。況虐天子之貴，四海之富，神明之祚，可得而妄處哉？故雖遭罹阨會，竊其權柄，勇如信，布，彊如梁、籍，成如王莽，然卒潤鑊伏質，亨醢分裂，又況么麼，尚不及數子，而欲闡奸天位者虐！是故鷲蹇之乘不騁千里之塗，燕雀之嘯不奮六翮之用，棗梲之材不荷棟梁之任，斗筲之子不乘帝王之重。易曰「鼎折足，覆公餗」，不勝其任也。

'Now, the starving are like the wandering reprobate, cold, hungry, and roaming the roads. They imagine wearing the coarse inner garments of a servant, bearing a small portion of millet, and consent to only a few coins. Yet this being so, they [still] topple dead into a gully. How is this so? The impoverished also have their ^{own} Mandate. How could the nobility of the Son of Heaven, the prosperity of the four-seas, and the blessings of the enlightened spirits, be seized and recklessly occupied? Accordingly, while some encounter a time of misfortune and arrogate the power and authority [of the emperor], such as the courageous Han Xin⁷⁷ and Ji Bu,⁷⁸ the strong Xiang Liang⁷⁹ and Xiang Yu (Ji),⁸⁰ and the capable ^{accomplished}

⁷⁷ For Han Xin, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 147-149.

⁷⁸ For Ji Bu, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 181.

⁷⁹ For Xiang Liang, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 598-599.

⁸⁰ For Xiang Yu, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 599-602.

like Wang Mang, they ^{ended} end up in the glistening cauldron [boiled alive], bent over the cutting block [and losing their heads], ~~or~~ ^{or} cooked and minced ^{or} ~~into several~~ ^{or} pieces. Moreover, how can those who are meager and unequal to such as the above men ^{with} desire in their blindness and cunning to occupy such a heavenly status [as king]? Accordingly, a chariot with a lame old steed cannot swiftly traverse a road of a thousand *li*, and swallows and sparrows of the land cannot fly with the vigor of those [grander birds] of six pinions. The structure of braces and joists cannot bear the duty of beams and ridgepoles, and a common shallow man cannot rule with the consequence of a king. It is said in the *Yijing* that, "A tripod with a broken leg topples out the Duke's grain." It cannot bear its own responsibility.

當秦之末，豪桀共推陳嬰而王之，嬰母止之曰：「自吾為子家婦，而世貧賤，卒富貴不祥，不如以兵屬人，事成少受其利，不成禍有所歸。」嬰從其言，而陳氏以寧。王陵之母亦見項氏之必亡，而劉氏之將興也。是時陵為漢將，而母獲於楚，有漢使來，陵母見之，謂曰：「願告吾子，漢王長者，必得天下，子謹事之，無有二心。」遂對漢使伏劍而死，以固勉陵。其後果定於漢，陵為宰相封侯。夫以匹婦之明，猶能推事理之致，探禍福之機，而全宗祀於無窮，垂策書於春秋，而況大丈夫之事乎！是故窮達有命，吉凶由人，嬰母知廢，陵母知興，審此四者，帝王之分決矣。

'During the end of the Qin dynasty, the bravados ^{joined} together elected Chen Ying, and made him king.⁸¹ His mother stopped him saying, "When I became the wife [of your father] in your household, sir, your family had ~~for generations~~ ^{for generations} been poor and humble, for it to suddenly become prosperous and wealthy would be inauspicious. It would be better to entrust your army to the command of another; if this affair ends successfully there will be small profit, but if it ends unsuccessfully the return will be calamity." Ying followed her advice and the Chen family, ~~on the basis of this,~~ ^{was accordingly} were at peace. Wang Ling's mother, moreover, saw the Xiang family's certain demise and the Liu family's imminent establishment [as heir to the kingdom].⁸² During that time, Ling was a general for the Han, and his mother was captured by Chu. An emissary of the Han came [to Chu] and Ling's mother saw him and said, "I wish you to inform my son that the honorable king of Han will surely obtain the kingdom. My son must earnestly serve him, and not be of two minds [on this matter]." Then she faced the Han emissary and killed herself with a sword in order to ^{strengthen} strengthen and encourage her son, Ling. Afterward, the Han was established and ^{Wang} Ling was made grand counselor and enfeifed as a captain. Now, if the perspicacity of common women can envisage the reasonable outcome of affairs, ^{explore} explore the bounds of misfortune and fortune, ^{maintain} maintain the ancestral sacrifices ^{without end,} and have their ^{events} recorded into the annals of history, how much more so can the efforts of great ministers? Therefore,

⁸¹ For Chen Ying, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 42-43.

⁸² For a ~~more complete~~ record of this account, see HS40.2046-2047. For Wang Ling, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 535.

deprivation and prominence are mandated [by Heaven], and auspiciousness and inauspiciousness derive from [the agencies of] man. Ying's mother understood failure, and Ying's mother understood success. By investigating these four [deprivation, prominence, auspiciousness, and inauspiciousness], the distinctions of the king are decided. *(LW) = Attention to detail.*

蓋在高祖，其興也有五：一曰帝堯之苗裔，二曰體貌多奇異，三曰神武有徵應，四曰寬明而仁恕，五曰知人善任使。加之以信誠好謀，達於聽受，見善如不及，用人如由己，從諫如順流，趨時如嚮赴；當食吐哺，納子房之策；拔足揮洗，揖酈生之說；寤戍卒之言，斷懷土之情；高四皓之名，割肌膚之愛；舉韓信於行陳，收陳平於亡命，英雄陳力，群策畢舉：此高祖之大略，所以成帝業也。若乃靈瑞符應，又可略聞矣。初劉媪任高祖而夢與神遇，震電晦冥，有龍蛇之怪。及其長而多靈，有異於眾，是以王，武感物而折券，呂公賭形而進女；秦皇東游以厭其氣，呂后望雲而知所處；始受命則白蛇分，西入關則五星聚。故淮陰，留侯謂之天授，非人力也。

高祖 / dates, etc. Loewe...

'Now, Gaozu's rise [to power] had five [features]. First, he is said to have descended from the emperor Yao. Second, he is said to have had a physical countenance with many extraordinary distinctions. Thirdly, he is said to have had verifying omens of his divine subjugation [of the kingdom]. Fourth, he is said to have been magnanimous, enlightened, humane, and compassionate. Fifth, he is said to have understood men's talents and employed them [accordingly]. Additionally, he was trustworthy, sincere, and fond of stratagems; he was exceptional at listening [to advice], *looked to* saw the talented as if he were not as capable, *was himself* as they were, and used men as he would himself. He followed remonstrances as if following a current; and hastened to the times as an echo pursues a sound. On one occasion he spat out his meal and accepted the advise of Zi Fang;⁸³ [and later] he pulled up his feet from being cleaned in order to defer to the persuasion of Li Sheng.⁸⁴ He was enlightened by the words of a soldier, and no longer longed for his home-soil.⁸⁵ He elevated the reputations of the four recluses, and rejected his affection for the flesh.⁸⁶ He promoted Han Xin among the ranks of the military,⁸⁷ and received Chen Ping as one whose destiny was to have fled [into his service

⁸³ Zi Fang 子房 is Zhang Liang 張良, one of Gaozu's ministers. For the account of his advise to the emperor see HS40.2029-2030. Also, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 683-686.

⁸⁴ Li Sheng 酈生, or Li Yiji 酈食其, like Zi Fang, was also a minister of Gaozu who offered advice to him. See HS40.2029-2039. Also, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 234-235.

⁸⁵ The soldier here is probably of minor rank. His title in the text is *shuzu* 戍卒.

⁸⁶ For the account of Gaozu's recognition of the four recluses, see HS40.2033-2036.

⁸⁷ Han Xin 韓信 was an intimate of Xiao He 蕭何, Gaozu's minister, and was refused to join Gaozu's retinue. Xiao He, however, managed through machinations to reverse Gaozu's decision, resulting in Han Xin's employment as grand general 大軍. *For Xiao He see, Loewe*

after departing from Xiang Yu at Chu].⁸⁸ The bravados arrayed their power and the various strategists were finally employed. This was Gaozu's great scheme that afforded him the imperial prerogative. Being so, his receipt of the sanction of the sacred *rui* is still heard in recapitulation.⁸⁹ Previously, Liu Ao, when she bore Gaozu in her womb, encountered a spirit while dreaming, and there was thunder, lightning, and darkness.⁹⁰ There were the oddities of the dragon and the snake. Once he had matured, there were many divine [signs] and things that distinguished him from the common people. Accordingly, Wang and Wu were moved by what [they had observed] and destroyed his [wine debt] tickets, ^{and} Duke Lu saw his countenance and offered him his daughter.⁹¹ The Qin emperor traveled east in order to suppress Gaozu's *qi* [force of influence].⁹² Empress Lu looked into the clouds and knew where Gaozu was [while he was in hiding from the Qin Emperor].⁹³ When Gaozu had at first received the Mandate, the white snake was divided; and when he entered the pass, the Five Stars aligned.⁹⁴ Accordingly,

⁸⁸ Chen Ping 陳平 ^{dates} was originally an officer under the auspices of Xiang Yu 項羽, but ^{after} fearing punishment during an intrigue among Xiang's retainers, Chen Ping ^{was finally} accepted by Gaozu, and became an intimate who shared his chariot. See HS40.2039-2040. For Chen Ping, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 35-37.

⁸⁹ The sacred *Rui* 靈瑞 was said to have been a sacred jade that represented the ratification of Heaven's Mandate.

⁹⁰ Liu Ao 劉媪, ^{dates} or Dame Liu, was Gaozu's mother, who is said in his biographies in the *Shiji* and *Hanshu*, to have conceived ⁱⁿ supernatural circumstances. Liu Ao ^{is recorded as once having} rested beside a large marsh, ^{on that occasion,} she dreamt of an encounter with a spirit, and at that moment, thunder and lightning appeared in the sky. When Gaozu's father went looking for his wife, Liu Ao, ^{he witnessed a scaly dragon above her.} The account, in the typical terse style of Han writing, ^{then relates} that Liu Ao became pregnant ^{and bore} Gaozu. The reader is thus inclined to assume that Gaozu was accordingly conceived of by his mother and the dragon spirit. See HS1A.1. Also, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 245.

⁹¹ Wang Ao 王媪 and Wu Fu 武負 were women who sold wine. They destroyed the tickets of Gaozu's wine debts ^{after witnessing oddities above him while he was in effect,} passed out from alcohol consumption. See HS1A.2. Duke Lu 呂公, ^{who is recorded to have had the distinct ability to physiognomize people,} noticed Gaozu's countenance and offered him his daughter based upon his ^{prediction} that Gaozu would later amount to a high position. After some remonstrance from his wife, Lu Gong, in the end, ^{gave his} daughter to Gaozu. Lu Gong's daughter later gave birth to Gaozu's successor, Xiao Hui 孝惠. See HS1A.3. For Lu Gong see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, 422.

⁹² The Qin emperor is said to have commented that in the Southeast there appeared a force of the Son of Heaven [emperor], ^{and} traveled east in order to suppress his rise to power. However, as the sources state, Gaozu absconded to the Mang Mountains and Dangling marshes, preventing the Qin emperor from locating him. See HS1A.8.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ On one occasion when Gaozu was traversing a path at night while drunk, one of his men reported seeing a large serpent ahead of them. Gaozu, in a moment of hubris, hacked the snake ^{in two parts} and continued on his way. Later, after several *li*, he stopped to rest and recover from his drunkenness. Meanwhile, an old man arrived at the place where Gaozu had ^{divided} the serpent and encountered an old woman weeping. She informed the old man that her son, the son of the White God, ^{had been sliced by the son of the Red God.} The old man later recounted what he had heard to Gaozu, who ^{in turn} was delighted by the news. It may thus be surmised that the dragon that impregnated Gaozu's mother was none other than Gaozu's father. On this basis, the Han took the color red as its sign. See HS1A.7. The alignment of the Five Stars occurred when Gaozu arrived at Bashang 霸上. ^{The account of the alignment told in the *Hanshu* states that on the occasion of his arrival at Bashang, Gaozu was presented with the imperial seal and other objects symbolic of the Qin's reign. Some acknowledge this date as the beginning of the Former Han} Winter 207 B.C.

what Huai Yin [Han Xin] and Liu Hou [Zhang Liang] called Heaven's transmission was not [received] by human strength.

歷古今之得失，驗行事之成敗，稽帝王之世運，考五者之所謂，取舍不厭斯位，符瑞不同斯度，而苟昧於權利，越次妄據，外不量力，內不知命，則必喪保家之主，失天年之壽，遇折足之凶，伏鈇鉞之誅。英雄誠知覺寤，畏若禍戒，超然遠覽，淵然深識，收陵，嬰之明分，絕信，布之覬覦，距逐鹿之瞽說，審神器之有授，毋貪不可幾，為二母之所笑，則福祚流于子孫，天祿其永終矣。

‘If one calculates the gains and losses of the past and present, examines the successes and failures of human affairs, inquires into how the generations of kings have devolved, and looks into [the features] of five signs [of Gaozu's Mandate] discussed above; if one is ^{disregards} unmindful of the occupation he should not occupy, if the contract of the *Rui* does not manifest as it did [for Gaozu], and if he ignorantly vies for gain, recklessly transcends his rank, outwardly does not measure strength, and inwardly does not understand the Mandate, he is certain to be a ^{father} pater familias who has lost the household he should have protected. He will lose the long life allotted to him by Heaven, encounter the calamity of a ‘broken legged [cauldron],’ and be executed while bowed down before the axe. If a brave man has sincere knowledge and perspicacity, is awed by [Heaven's] calamities and warnings, if he has exceptional foresight and profound understanding, if he receives the enlightenment of Wang Ling and Chen Ying, rejects the blind ambitions of Han Xin and Ji Bu, distances himself from the deer chase [analogies] of the unreasonable persuaders, is judicious regarding who has received the spiritual vessel, and if he does not covet that which he cannot attain in such a way as to incur [even] the ridicule of two women (i.e., Wang and Chen's mothers), then fortune and auspiciousness will flow to his sons and grandsons, and Heaven's prosperity will be with him to his final day.’

知隗囂終不寤，乃避墜於河西。河西大將軍竇融嘉其美德，訪問焉。舉茂材，為徐令，以病去官。後數應三公之召。仕不為祿，所如不合；學不為人，博而不俗；言不為華，述而不作。

Ban Biao knew that Wei Ao would not awaken to this, so he fled to Hexi.⁹⁵ The general in chief at Hexi, Dou Rong, admired Ban Biao's fine virtue and thus consulted with him. Biao was recommended as an abundant talent and made the prefect of Xu, but he left his office on the pretence of illness.⁹⁶ He later responded to several summonses from the three excellencies. He did not serve in office to

⁹⁵ Hexi 河西 was located in modern Gansu 甘肅.

⁹⁶ Xu 徐 was one of the ~~the~~ administrative regions 州 located in modern Shandong 山東.

earn a salary, and so he never experienced disagreement. He did not pursue studies on account of others, and so his learning was vast and uncommon. His speech was not flowery, and he transmitted without producing [new works].⁹⁷

有子曰固，弱冠而孤，作幽通之賦，以致命遂志。其辭曰：

Ban Biao had a son called Gu. Ban Gu was orphaned when he was young, and so he wrote his “Rhapsody on Communicating with the Hidden” in order to express his fate and follow his desire. The text says: ~~an~~ - I have not formulated this properly. ~~For an an~~ ~~an exhaustive annotation and~~
For a translation and exhaustive annotation, see _____

⁹⁷ The last four lines of this passage are in parallel structure.