

# The Way of Tang and Yu (Tang yu zhi dao 唐虞之道)

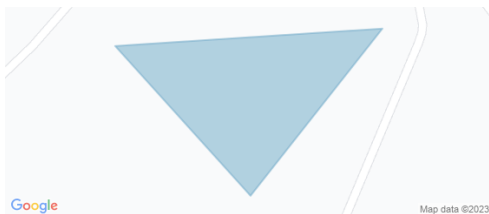
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The Tangyuzhidao 唐虞之道 (The Way of Tang and Yu) is a bamboo text of twenty-nine strips that was part of a collection of such texts excavated from a tomb (Guodian Tomb One) near the village of Guodian 郭店 at Jingmen 荆門 in Hubei 湖北 province in 1993. The tomb itself was closed around 300 BCE and would have been located on the outskirts of Ying 郢, the capital city of the state of Chu 楚. The Tangyuzhidao cannot be definitively associated with any specific philosophical school in the Warring States period and is striking for constituting the only known argument to hereditary rule in Chinese history. According to the text, the only proper way to rule is for sage rulers to abdicate the throne to other sages when they become too old to rule effectively. In other words, rulership should not be transmitted through hereditary lineages but from one worthy ruler to another at a certain point in the ruler's life (age 70). The text illustrates this idea with the legend of the sage-king Yao 堯 (referred to by his lineage name Tang 唐) abdicating the throne to the sage-king Shun 舜 (referred to by his lineage name Yu 虞). The "Way of Tang and Yu" is thus the way of abdication and this phrase, which is first line phrase of the text, is used by the editors of the Guodian texts to refer to the text as a whole. The basis for the text's argument is the idea that the ruler (the "Son of Heaven" tianzi 天子) is necessary for the "natural order" (ming 命) to be harmonized. A good ruler is thus equivalent to the sun and the moon, essential to the flourishing of the world as a whole, and able to encourage the service of worthy individuals so that society is governed by sages at every level. The text further argues that abdicating the throne is thus a sign that sages do not seek to monopolize the benefits of rule for themselves but are genuinely concerned with the welfare of all. As a result, it defines abdication as the fullest expression of both "benevolence" (ren 仁) and "rightness" (yi 義). The text further links these two virtues to the practices of "loving one's kin" (ai qin 愛親, a practice that is part of the virtue of "filial" piety" xiao 孝) and "honoring worthies" (zun xian 尊賢) respectively and thus denies that there is any possible breach of kinship obligations in the practice of abdication. Although the text exhibits some parallels with other texts, including both Confucian and Mohist works, its argument is unique and its discovery sheds light on the types of arguments that the Mengzi 孟子 and Xunzi 荀子 were responding to when they offered their defenses of hereditary rule.



Date Range: 325 BCE - 278 BCE

Region: Guodian Tomb One

Region tags: China, Hubei Province

Guodian Tomb One is located near the village of Guodian 郭店 at Jingmen 荆門 in Hubei 湖北 province. It was excavated in 1993.

## Status of Readership:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists

## Sources and Corpora

## Print Sources

Print sources used for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Guodian Chu mu zhujian 郭店楚墓竹簡, ed. Jingmen shi Bowuguan 荊門市博物館 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1998), 39-41; 157-159.

## General Variables

### Materiality

#### Methods of Composition

- Written

- Inked
  - with Ink

#### Medium upon which the text is written/incised

- Bamboo

Notes: The Tangyuzhidao is written on twenty-nine bamboo strips with clearly preserved characters. However, seven of the strips do exhibit some damage (Allan 2015, 85).

#### Was the material modified before the writing or incising process?

- Physical preparation

Notes: Bamboo stalks would have been cut into sections and then into strips, upon which the text was written. The strips were bound before being tied with cords.

#### Was the text modified before the writing or incising process?

- Other [specify]: Unknown

Notes: No information is available on this point.

### Location

#### Is the text stored in a specific location?

[Note at which point in time, for reference, if known; select all that apply]

- Yes

- Tomb
  - Yes

↳ Cemetery  
– Yes

↳ Temple  
– No

↳ Shrine  
– No

↳ Altar  
– No

↳ Devotional marker  
– No

↳ Cenotaph  
– No

↳ Church  
– No

↳ Mosque  
– No

↳ Synagogue  
– No

↳ Triumphal Arch  
– No

↳ Monument  
– No

↳ Mass Gathering Point  
– No

↳ Cave(s)

– No

↳ Hilltops

– No

↳ Other natural sanctuaries

– No

↳ Boundary markers or lines

– No

↳ Domestic contexts

– No

↳ Library/archive

– No

↳ Specify

– Specify: Guodian Tomb One

Notes: This tomb was excavated in 1993 and is located near the village of Guodian 郭店 at Jingmen 荆門 in Hubei 湖北 province. It appears to have been part of the cemetery district of the city of Ying 郢, the capital city of the state of Chu 楚. The tomb itself conforms to patterns of other Chu tombs and consists of a vertical shaft surmounted by a tomb mound and contains an "outer coffin" (guo 槨) or burial chamber and an "inner coffin" (guan 棺). In addition to the collection of bamboo texts, the tomb also contained some grave goods such as weapons, walking sticks, musical instruments, combs, and eating utensils. It also contains the corpse of the tomb occupant, who was likely a member of the lower aristocracy. Because the tomb suffered an attempted looting, it cannot be said with absolute certainty that no items or bamboo strips are missing from it (Allan 2015, 37-46).

Is the location where the text stored accompanied by iconography or images?

– No

Is the area where the text is stored accompanied by an-iconic images?

– No

## Production & Intended Audience

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## Production

Is the production of the text funded by the polity?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Despite the known provenance of the text, there is no information is available regarding issues of production or intended audience.

Is the text considered official religious scripture?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: However, its unique position of abdication in contrast to the widespread acceptance and defence of hereditary rule would seem to make this unlikely.

Written in distinctly religious/sacred language?

– No

Notes: The text is written in Classical Chinese and would, presumably, have been accessible to any literate person of the time.

## Intended Audience

What is the estimated number of people considered to be the audience of the text

This should be the total number of people who would serve as the intended audience for the text.

– Field doesn't know

Notes: No information is available on this point.

Does the Religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The text cannot be reliably associated with any particular philosophical school or group and so this question is impossible to answer (Allan 2015, 82-85; 101-102).

Are there clear reformist movements?

(Reformism, as in not proselytizing to potential new conservative, but "conversion" - or rather, reform - to the "correct interpretation"?)

– Yes

Notes: The text cannot be reliably associated with any particular philosophical school or group and so this question is impossible to answer (Allan 2015, 82-85; 101-102).

Is the text in question employed in ritual practice?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: No information is available on this point.

Is there material significance to the text?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: No information is available on this point.

## Context and Content of the Text (Beliefs and Practices)

### Context

Is the text itself accompanied by art?

– No

Are there multiple versions of the text?

– No

Is the text part of a collection of texts?

– Yes

Notes: The Tangyuzhidao is part of a collection of texts discovered in Guodian Tomb One in 1993.



Is there a sense of canonization?

– No

Notes: Although it is difficult to say for sure why the texts were chosen for entombment, it is likely that they don't represent a canon but rather works of special significance to the deceased. They also likely reflect his identity and likely occupation as a teacher (Allan 2015, 45-46).



Is the text part of a series of volumes?

– No

Notes: The Guodian texts have been published as a modern series of volumes, but there is no such sense in their own time.

If the text is not explicitly scripture, is it part of another important literary tradition?

– Yes



Cultural with religious implications?

– Yes



Behavioral literature?

– Yes

Notes: The text explicitly advocates abdication as a behavioral norm and also mentions specific

virtues, discussed in more detail below.

## Other

–Other [specify]: Abdication Texts

Notes: The Tangyuzhidao is a philosophical text that makes the case for abdication as the most virtuous way to rule and to pass on the throne. As a philosophical work, it is similar to other texts of the Warring States period. But, as an advocate of abdication, it is unique within the larger tradition (Allan 2015, 79-80). Thus, while it is here referred to as an "abdication text," it is in fact the only representative of such an imagined genre.

## Content

Is the text - or does the text include - a ritual list, manual, bibliography, index, or vocabulary? (Select all that apply)

–Other [specify]: None of the above

Are there lineages or a single lineage established by the text?

– Yes

Does the lineage involve establish a chain of authority?

– Yes

Notes: The lineage in question is one of kingship and thus intimately connected with authority.

Is the lineage defined by concrete cycles or measures of time?

– Yes

Notes: The sage-kings that are mentioned in the text, Yao and Shun, are each associated with their own reign period, which may be considered a concrete measure of time. As well, the text specifies that, in the past, sage-kings "ruled all-under-heaven at fifty, and at seventy passed on the government" thus establishing a concrete measure of 20 years for the reign of any given sage-king (Allan 2015, 122).

How is the lineage established?

–Other [specify]: Abdication

Notes: The focus of the text is an argument for abdication as a superior alternative to hereditary rule, articulated through a general discussion of an idealized past and the legend of Yao passing on the throne to Shun. As a result, it establishes a vision of a morally superior lineage of kings in the past in contrast to the hereditary rulers of the present (Allan 2015, 114-117).

Does the text express a formal legal code?

– No

Formulating a specifically religious calendar?

– No

## Beliefs

Is a spirit-body distinction present in the text?

– No

Notes: The text makes a very brief mention that, during the reign of a sage-king, "gods and ghosts all obey" (Allan 2015, 130). While this could be interpreted as indicating a spirit-body distinction, it seems more likely that it reflects a division between living humans and spirits, without implying that humans necessarily possess spirits themselves.

Is belief in an afterlife indicated in the text?

– Yes



Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group?

– No

Notes: The mention of "gods and ghosts" makes it likely that the text's authors conceived of some sort of afterlife, but no further information is provided (Allan 2015, 130).



Is the temporality of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group?

– Field doesn't know



Is there debate in the interpretation of the language of the afterlife?

– Field doesn't know

Is belief in reincarnation in this world specified in the text?

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses indicated in the text?

– No

Does the text indicate if co-sacrifices should be present in burials?

– No

Does the text specify grave goods for burial?

– No



Are formal burials present in the text?

– No

Are there practices that have funerary associations presented in the text?

– Yes

Notes: The text very briefly mentions that sages "serve the ancestral altars of their kin and teach the people about filial piety," suggesting some sort of sacrificial practice (Allan 2015, 124). However, the text presents these practices as pedagogical in nature and intended primarily to teach the common people proper virtues, such as filial piety.

↳ Do these practices take place at tombs/burial sites?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Do these practices take place for the veneration OR worship of the dead?

– Yes

↳ For the worship of a deceased person(s)?

– I don't know

↳ For the worship of a deified human?

– I don't know

↳ For the worship of a deceased hero?

– I don't know

↳ For the veneration of a deceased person(s)?

– I don't know

↳ For the veneration of a deified human?

– I don't know

↳ For the veneration of a deceased hero?

– I don't know

Are supernatural beings present in the text?

– Yes

↳ A supreme high-god is present

– Yes

Notes: The text refers to heaven (tian 天), which is both the sky and the high god of the time, Shang Di 上帝. However, the text offers very little description of this deity and presents it simply as one component of the cosmic order that requires the sage to flourish (Allan 2015, 107-108). Many of the following questions are marked as "Field doesn't know" to indicate the lack of information that the text provides.

↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic or described in anthropomorphic terms

– No

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld)

– No

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god)

– No

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god

– No

↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites

– Yes

Notes: It is possible that Shang Di was the progenitor of the elites and thus ancestor of the lineages (Allan 2015, 151-152).

↳ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites

– No

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good

– Field doesn't know

↳ Other features of the supreme high god

–Specify: It is presented as the partner of earth (di 地) and one component of the larger, cosmic order (Allan 2015, 124).

- ↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world
  - Field doesn't know
  - Notes: There is some indication that the high god may be aware of, or at least respond to the sage-king. The text states that "the gods and ghosts all obey, and the sky and earth assist him" (Allan 2015, 130). However, this point is unclear.
- ↳ Has deliberate causal efficacy in the world
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Indirect causal efficacy in the world
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Exhibits positive emotion
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Exhibits negative emotion
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Possesses Hunger?
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can be hurt?
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can be tricked?
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can be imprisoned?
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Is it permissible to worship supernatural being other than the high god?
  - Yes
  - Notes: The variety of sacrificial acts referenced by the text would seem to suggest that one is not required to worship the high god exclusively (Allan 2015, 124).
- ↳ The supreme high god possesses/exhibits some other feature
  - Specify: It is presented as the counterpart to earth (di 地) and one component of the larger, cosmic order (Allan 2015, 124).

↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Does the text make communication with supreme high-god possible?  
– Field doesn't know

#### Previously human spirits are present

– Yes

Notes: The text briefly mentions that sages "serve the ancestral altars of their kin" and that sages are served by the "gods and hosts" (Allan 2015, 124; 130). These comments would seem to suggest the present of previously human spirits, but the text provides no description of them. All of the following questions are marked as "field doesn't know" to indicate the lack of information in the text.

↳ Human spirits can be seen  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world  
– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is some indication that previously human spirits may be aware of, or at least respond to the sage-king. The text states that "the gods and ghosts all obey, and the sky and earth assist him" (Allan 2015, 130). However, this point is unclear.

↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Human spirits have memory of life  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion

– Field doesn't know

↳ Human spirits communicate with the living

– Field doesn't know

## Non-human supernatural beings are present

– Yes

Notes: As mentioned above, the text makes brief references to heaven and the gods and spirits. It also states that sages "serve the mountains and rivers," which may indicate the spirits of mountains and rivers. It would thus seem that non-human supernatural beings are present, but no information is given about them (Allan 2015, 124; 130). Most of the following questions are answered as "Field doesn't know" to indicate the lack of information that text provides.

↳ Supernatural beings can be seen

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings can be physically felt

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is some indication that non-human supernatural beings may be aware of, or at least respond to the sage-king. The text states that "the gods and ghosts all obey, and the sky and earth assist him" (Allan 2015, 130). However, this point is unclear.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings communicate with the living according to the text?

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion

– No

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion

– No

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature

– Specify: Obedience

Notes: When the sage-king harmonizes the cosmic order, supernatural beings support and serve him (Allan 2015, 130).

Does the text attest to a pantheon of supernatural beings?

– No

Notes: The text mentions heaven and earth, gods and ghosts, and also "mountains and rivers" (which may mean the spirits of mountains and rivers), but there is no suggestion that these various entities are organized into a pantheon (Allan 2015, 124).

Are mixed human-divine beings present according to the text?

– No

Is there a supernatural being that is physically present in the/as a result of the text?

– No

Are other categories of beings present?

– Other [specify]: No other categories.

Does the text guide divination practices?

– No

## Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present in the text?

– No

Notes: As mentioned above, the text presents a vision of a cosmic order, which includes Heaven, gods, and ghosts, that must be harmonized by the sage (Allan 2015, 107-108). Within this scheme, there is no mention of supernatural monitoring.

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment in the text?

– No

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards in the text?

– No

### Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present in the text?

– No

Is an eschatology present in the text?

– No

### Norms & Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the text?

– Yes

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious text?

– Yes

Notes: This is true only to a limited extent. The text's argument rests on a contrast between the right way to pass on the throne (abdication by the good to the good) and the wrong way to pass on the throne (hereditary rule). The former is considered the action of a sage, while the latter is the more widely practiced method of the text's contemporary period, thus yielding a weak distinction between conventional and moral practice (Allan 2015, 79-80; 131). As well, abdication is linked to the proper functioning of the cosmic order, because a sage is necessary for the cosmos to be harmonized and abdication from the good to the good is the only means of ensuring that the ruler is always a sage (Allan 2015, 104-110)

↳ What is the nature of this distinction?

– Weakly present

↳ Are specifically moral norms prescribed by the text?

– Yes

↳ Specifically moral norms are implicitly linked to vague metaphysical concepts

– No

↳ Moral norms are explicitly linked to vague metaphysical entities

– No

↳ Linked to impersonal cosmic order (e.g. karma)

– Yes

Notes: Abdication by the good to the good is the only way to ensure that the ruler is always a sage. As the sage-ruler is necessary for the proper functioning of the cosmos, abdication is thus an essential element in maintaining the cosmic order (Allan 2015, 104-110).

↳ Linked in some way to an anthropomorphic being

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked explicitly to commands of anthropomorphic being

– No

Notes: While the text does use the term ming 命, which in other contexts refers to the commands and sanction of the high god, it does so with the meaning of the "celestial order" and focuses more on an impersonal, natural order (Allan 2015, 104-110).

↳ Specifically moral norms are have no (sic: have no?) special connection to the metaphysical

– No

↳ Moral norms apply to (select all that apply)

– Only one class of society

Notes: Although the text does mention a number of different virtues (discussed below), its primary value of abdication applies only to rulers.

Are there centrally important virtues advocated by the text?

– Yes

↳ Honesty/trustworthiness/integrity

– Yes

Notes: The text notes that "if someone rules the people yet is not arrogant, when he finally becomes king over all-under-heaven, [the people] will not doubt him" (Allan 2015, 127). The ideas of trustworthiness and integrity can also be seen as implicit within the virtues of loyalty and rightness mentioned below.

↳ Courage (in battle)

– No

↳ Courage (generic)



– No

↳ Compassion/empathy/kindness/benevolence

– Yes

Notes: Humaneness (ren 仁), sometimes translated as benevolence, is one of the central virtues of the text (Allan 2015, 119; 125).

↳ Mercy/forgiveness/tolerance

– Yes

Notes: Insofar as this could be considered part of humaneness.

↳ Generosity/charity

– Yes

Notes: Insofar as this could be considered part of humaneness. Benefiting others and not oneself is considered the zenith of humaneness (Allan 2015, 119).

↳ Selflessness/selfless giving

– Yes

Notes: Benefiting others and not oneself is considered the zenith of humaneness (Allan 2015, 119).

↳ Righteousness/moral rectitude

– Yes

Notes: Along with humaneness, rightness (yi 義) is one of the text's most important virtues (Allan 2015, 119; 125).

↳ Ritual purity/ritual adherence/abstention from sources of impurity

– Yes

Notes: There is no suggestion of ritual purity or abstention from source of impurity. However, the text does place a high value on proper ritual practice (Allan 2015, 124; 127).

↳ Respectfulness/courtesy

– Yes

Notes: The text states that the "sages serve heaven above and teach the people deference" (Allan 2015, 124).

↳ Familial obedience/filial piety

– Yes

Notes: Both Yao and Shun are described as loving their kin and being filial and the text states

that filial piety is the "peak of humaneness" (Allan 2015, 125).

↳ Fidelity/loyalty

– Yes

Notes: The text describes Shun as being "greatly loyal" when he served as minister to the sage-king Yao (Allan 2015, 121).

↳ Cooperation

– No

↳ Independence/creativity/freedom

– No

↳ Moderation/frugality

– No

↳ Forbearance/fortitude/patience

– Yes

Notes: Sages are described as awaiting their time to rule without resentment and without attempting to force its arrival (Allan 2015, 130-131).

↳ Diligence/self-discipline/excellence

– Yes

Notes: The text states that Shun "did not give himself up to pleasure" and that he was "diligent in his filial piety" (Allan 2015, 131; 125)

↳ Assertiveness/decisiveness/confidence/initiative

– No

↳ Strength (physical)

– No

↳ Power/status/nobility

– Yes

Notes: The text states that when Shun was king he was "regal" (jun 君) and that he used "majestic awe" (wei 威) to rule (Allan 2015, 121;

↳ Humility/modesty

– Yes

Notes: The text repeatedly stresses that sages in general, and Shun in particular, are not arrogant (Allan 2015, 127; 131)

↳ Contentment/serenity/equanimity

– Yes

Notes: Sages are described as awaiting their time to rule without resentment and without attempting to force its arrival (Allan 2015, 130-131).

↳ Joyfulness/enthusiasm/cheerfulness

– No

↳ Optimism/hope

– No

↳ Gratitude/thankfulness

– No

↳ Reverence/awe/wonder

– Yes

Notes: The text states that sages "serve the mountains and rivers according to the seasons and teach the people reverence" (Allan 2015, 124).

↳ Faith/belief/trust/devotion

– No

↳ Wisdom/understanding

– Yes

Notes: This is implied in the virtue of "sagacity" (sheng 聖) (Allan 2015, 119).

↳ Discernment/intelligence

– Yes

Notes: This is implied in the virtue of "sagacity" (sheng 聖) (Allan 2015, 119).

↳ Beauty/attractiveness

– No

↳ Cleanliness (physical)/orderliness

– No



Other important virtues

– Yes

Notes: The practice of the good abdicating to the good is the central concern of the text and could be considered a virtue. It is also considered the fullest expression of virtues such as sagacity, selflessness, and humaneness (Allan 2015, 119). The text also mentions the virtue of being "fraternal" (di 弟) (Allan 2015, 124).

## Advocacy of Practices

Does the text require celibacy (full sexual abstinence)?

– No

Does the text require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence)?

– No

Does the text require castration?

– No

Does the text require fasting?

– No

Does the text require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods)?

– No

Does the text require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations?

– No

Does the text require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of adults?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of children?

– No

Does the text require self-sacrifice (suicide)?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of property/valuable items?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of time (e.g. attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.)?

– No

Notes: The text does, however, present the sacrificial practices of the sage-kings as important acts of pedagogy, thus implying that it values those practices and individuals' attendance at them (Allan 2015, 124).

Does the text require physical risk taking?

– No

Does the text require accepting ethical precepts?

– Yes

Does the text require marginalization by out-group members?

– No

Does the text require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household)?

– No

Does the text require participation in large-scale rituals?

– No

Notes: The text does, however, present the sacrificial practices of the sage-kings as important acts of pedagogy, thus implying that it values those practices and individuals' attendance at them (Allan 2015, 124).

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present as indicated in the text?

– No

Does the text employ fictive kinship terminology?

– No

Does the text include elements that are intended to be entertaining?

– No

Does the text specify sacrifices, offerings, and maintenance of a sacred space?

– Yes

↳ Are sacrifices specified by the text?

– Yes

↳ Animal sacrifice?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Human sacrifice?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there self-sacrifices specified by the text?

– No

↳ Are there material offerings present?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is attendance to worship/sacrifice mandatory?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is the maintenance of the place regulated by the text?

– No

## Institutions & Production Environment of Text

### Society & Institutions

Society of religious group that produced the text is best characterized as:

– A state

Notes: The text dates from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE), a time after the Zhou dynasty when multiple, centralizing states engaged in constant warfare with one another (Allan 2015, 11-15).

Are there specific elements of society that have controlled the reproduction of the text?

– Other

Notes: Unknown

Are there specific elements of society involved with the destruction of the text?

– Other

Notes: Unknown. However, the Qin empire is said to have burned books and suppressed teachings that it considered problematic for its rule. Given the text's opposition to hereditary rule, it is not impossible that it or others like it were actively suppressed by the Qin state (Allan 2015, 117)

## Welfare

Does the text specify institutionalized famine relief?

– No

Notes: While the text does not comment specifically on any kind of institutionalized welfare, its discussions of good rule would seem to suggest that a sage-ruler would care for the people and so would address any such issues.

Does the text specify institutionalized poverty relief?

– No

Does the text specify institutionalized care for elderly & infirm?

– No

Other forms of welfare?

– No

## Education

Are there formal educational institutions available for teaching the text?

– Field doesn't know

Are there formal educational institutions specified according to the text?

– No

Does the text make provisions for non-religious education?

– Yes

Notes: The text describes, in very general terms, how sage-rulers and their ministers used practices such as ritual and music to instruct the populace and cultivate proper virtues (Allan 2015, 124; 127).

Does the text restrict education to religious professionals?

– No

Does the text restrict education among religious professionals?

– No

Is education gendered according to the text?

– No

Is education gendered with respect to this text and larger textual tradition?

– Yes

Notes: While it is generally thought that women were not educated during the Warring States, that does not necessarily mean they were officially prohibited from becoming so. There is evidence to suggest that some women did become educated, or, at least, literate (Allan 2015, 55-58).

Does the text specify teaching relationships or ratios? (i.e.: 1:20; 1:1)

– No

Are there specific relationships to teachers that are advocated by the text?

– No

Are there worldly rewards/benefits to education according to the text specified by the text itself?

– Yes

## Bureaucracy

Is bureaucracy regulated by this text?

– No

Notes: [Brief mention of ministers under sage-king Yao]

## Public Works

Does the text detail interaction with public works?

– No

Notes: [Brief mention of Yu, Yi, and Hou Ji]

## Taxation



Does the text specify forms of taxation?

– No

## Warfare

Does the text mention warfare?

– Yes

Notes: The text mentions that "military arms" were used by the sages to bring order to the world (Allan 2015, 127).



Does the text dictate how to control an institutionalized military?

– No



Does the text restrict/advocate for participation in exogenous military organizations?

– Yes



Does the text celebrate/bemoan protection/subjugation by an exogenous military force?

– No

## Food Production

Does the text mentioned food production/disbursement?

– No

Notes: However, the text briefly mention that Hou Ji, a minister of Shun, brought "the earth under control" to provide for the people (Allan 2015, 127). Hou Ji was the inventor of agriculture.