

Shijing 詩經 (Classic of Odes)

By Pak-ka Parker Chan, University of Oxford

Entry tags: Yellow and Yangzi Rivers Region, Excavated text, Early Chinese text, Confucian Classics, Haihunhou bamboo strips, Anhui University bamboo strips, Shanghai Museum bamboo strips, Fuyang bamboo strips, Text, Religious Group, Early Chinese Traditions, Canonical texts

The Shijing 詩經 (Classic/Book of Odes/Songs) is the earliest Chinese poetry anthology, contains 305 odes from the early Western Zhou (eleventh century BC) to the middle of the Spring and Autumn period (sixth century BC). There are also six other sheng 笙 (reed pipe) odes listed in the table of contents with only titles. It has long been called Shi 詩 (Odes) or Shisanbai 詩三百 (Three Hundred Odes) until receiving the title of Shijing after its canonisation in the Western Han dynasty. After the canonisation, Shijing had long been a part of the study of Confucian classics instead of literature, for nearly two millennia until the end of the imperial era. The Shijing is divided into four main sections: (1) guo/bangfeng 國/邦風 (airs of the states), xiaoya 小雅 (minor court hymns), daya 大雅 (major court hymns), and song 頌 (eulogies). Feng includes 160 odes from the 15 groups of the odes of the states. Ya 雅 includes 31 major and 74 minor odes of the states. Song includes 40 odes. Shijing's prosodic pattern is dominantly (ca. 92%) a four-syllable line. There is a close relationship between the Shijing and performance in early China. These odes served originally as word texts for chanting, performing with instruments, singing, and singing to the accompaniment of dancing. The differences in musical features are regarded as a base of the division of the sections. Feng has generally been defined as local airs, bearing musical features of various geographical regions. Ya was also defined as proper, the music of the central states. Song was music used exclusively for sacrificial offerings in ancestral temples. A few of the odes include the names of the composers. Some pieces are attributed to historical figures, but most of the odes are anonymous. The content of the pieces included the voices from a variety of backgrounds, ranging across men and women, commoners and nobles, farmers and soldiers. The topics range from daily life (courtship, marriage, agriculture) to royal activities (battles, feasts, sacrifices). There were two theories on how the odes were collected but neither of them is confirmed: (1) The Han dynasty historical record Hanshu 漢書 (History of Han) claims that the Zhou court had an office known as the caishi zhi guan 采詩之官 (ode collecting office), which was charged with collecting odes from various parts of the Zhou empire by recording odes sung by people. (2) The Guoyu 國語 (Discourses of the States) and the Liji 禮記 (Records of Rites) state that the officials and musicians presented odes (composed by themselves or collected from various places) to the court. Despite the theories, it is certain that the odes had gone through a process of polishing, arrangement, and editing therefore the current form is somewhat uniform in form and language. During the early Han dynasty, there were three interpretative lines of filiations of Shijing study enjoyed positions at the Imperial Academy and imperial patron, namely Lu 魯, Qi 齊, and Han 韓. Another line of filiations, the Mao tradition received such status only briefly under Emperor Ping (r. 1 BC-6). There is no decisive evidence showing the differences between the lines, instead, the lines shared some common grounds: (1) attempted to assign individual odes, or group of odes, to specific historical circumstances; (2) attributed to the odes a secondary layer of meaning in the more spiritual realm of ethical and political philosophy. Despite the long period of being out of power, the Mao Shi 毛詩 and its attached daxu 大序 (major preface) and xiaoxu 小序 (minor preface) became the orthodox interpretation and recension of the text after Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) wrote the Mao Shi zhuan jian 毛詩傳箋 (A Commentary on the Mao Shi). The Mao tradition eventually eclipsed all other three interpretative lines so that their interpretations and recensions of the Shijing have not survived except in fragments. The Qi tradition had died out during the third century and Lu the early fourth. The Han tradition has one work escaped from vanishing - Han Shi waizhuan 韓詩外傳 (Outer Commentary on Han Interpretative Line of Filiations to the Odes) - was no longer being taught at least before the sixth century. The recension and interpretative texts of the Mao tradition later became mandatory texts for imperial examinations. That is, the transmitted version of the Shijing after the Han dynasty became confined to a sole interpretative

tradition: the Mao Shi. The transmitted Shijing was preserved only intact in the interpretative tradition of Mao. This was the only case where this happened amongst the Five Classics and the much later Wujing zhengyi 五經正義 (Corrected Meanings of Five Classics) compiled by Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648) in Tang dynasty and Thirteen Classics (shisan jing 十三經) in Ming dynasty. The following listed some major excavated manuscripts for the study of Shijing. The sequence arranged chronologically to the estimated date of texts: (1) the Anhui University 安徽大學 obtained a collection of ancient manuscripts dated ca. 330 BC. Among the collection there is a set of written Shi, making it the earliest version of Shijing by now. The slips of the Anhui Shi manuscripts are all numbered consecutively at the tail of the front side of the slips, from 1 to 117. As 24 slips are missing today, a total of 93 slips remain, carrying 57 odes. All of the odes are from the guofeng, thus the Anhui Shi has slightly more than one-third of the 160 odes of the 'Airs of the States' of the transmitted Shijing. Anhui Shi demonstrated a geographical western bias of the states. Not one of the eastern states and only one of the central states of the transmitted guofeng is present in the Anhui Shi. The sequence order of the states also differs remarkably from the received Shijing. See Dirk Meyer and Adam C. Schwartz, *The Songs of Royal Zhōu and Shào: Shī 詩 of the Ānhuī Warring States Manuscripts* (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming). (2) the Shanghai Museum acquired in Hong Kong a large collection of Warring States period (ca. 300 BC) texts written on bamboo strips. One work, titled "Kongzi Shi lun" 孔子詩論 ("Confucius' Discussion of the Odes") by the editors from the museum, contains what purports to be Confucius' interpretation of certain Shijing pieces. The Shi lun is, for now, the earliest discussions of the odes which differ fundamentally from all other transmitted and excavated interpretations. See Ma Chengyuan 馬承源, ed., *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001). (3) two versions of the "Ziyi" 緇衣 ("Black Robes") text which has a number of Shijing citations. One from Guodian 郭店 (Hubei province) and dated ca. 300 BC, the other again in the Shanghai Museum. "Ziyi" is a chapter of the transmitted Liji 禮記 (Records of Rites). The citations and interpretations from such manuscripts play a vital role in comparing them with the numerous citations of Shijing in early China. See Martin Kern, "The Odes in Excavated Manuscripts," in Martin Kern, ed., *Text and Ritual in Early China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 149-193. (4) two versions of the "Wuxing" 五行 ("Five [Forms of] Conduct") which has a number of Shijing citations. One from Guodian, the other with an elaborating commentary from Mawangdui 馬王堆 tomb no. three near Changsha 長沙 (Hunan province; tomb closed 168 BC). See Martin Kern, "The Odes in Excavated Manuscripts," in Martin Kern, ed., *Text and Ritual in Early China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 149-193. (5) in a tomb at Shuanggudui 雙古堆 (Fuyang 阜陽, Anhui province; tomb closed 165 BC), 65 odes from the guofeng and 4 odes from xiaoya written on 170 wooden strips were discovered. The fragments contain many variants that cannot be found from the transmitted interpretative lines of filiations. This version of Shijing is important particularly for the study of interpretative lines as it is dated at the time that interpretative traditions were flourishing and started to secure their imperial positions. See Hu Pingsheng 胡平生 and Han Ziqiang 韓自強, eds., *Fuyang Han jian Shijing yanjiu 阜陽漢簡詩經研究* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988). (6) over 1200 broken bamboo slips of Shi were retrieved from the main burial chamber of the archaeological site of the Mausoleum of Marquis of Haihun (Haihunhou 海昏侯) near Nanchang 南昌 (Jiangxi province; tomb closed 59 BC). Compared to the findings listed above, the preservation condition of such a set is worse. The original sequence is lost and many characters are damaged. Given the extent of the damage, the arrangement of the slips is inevitably confined under the shadow of the transmitted Mao recension. Despite the adverse condition, the discovery is phenomenal for the study of Han interpretative traditions as the only recorded Shi teacher of the Marquis of Haihun was a teaching master of the Lu interpretative line of filiation. The Haihun Shi is thus being regarded as the first and complete recension of the long lost Lu Shi. See Zhu Fenghan 朱鳳瀚, *Xihan Haihunhou Liu He mu chutu zhujian Shi chutan 西漢海昏侯劉賀墓出土竹簡《詩》初探*, *Wenwu* 6 (2020): 63-72. (7) the Xiping Stone Classics 熹平石經 carved in the Eastern Han (175) include the Lu recension of the Shijing. See Ma Heng 馬衡, *Han shijing jicun 漢石經集存* (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1957).



Date Range: 700 BCE - 1911 CE

Region: Early and early imperial China

Region tags: Asia, East Asia, China

Core area of early and early imperial China

Status of Readership:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources and Corpora

Print Sources

Print sources used for understanding this subject:

– Source 1: Mao shi zhushu 毛詩注疏. Shisanjing zhu shu 十三經注疏. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2013.

– Source 2: Wang Xianqian 王先謙. Shi sanjia yi ji shu 詩三家義集疏. (typeset edition with punctuation) Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2014.

– Source 3: Ho Che-wah 何志華 (He Zhihua) and Chan Hung-kan 陳雄根 (Chen Xionggen), eds. Xian Qin liang Han dianji yin Shijing ziliao huibian 先秦兩漢典籍引《詩經》資料彙編 (Citations from the Shijing to be found in Pre-Han and Han texts). Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2004.

Notes: Complete translations that became standard references: James Legge, The She King or The Book of Ancient Poetry. Volume 4 of The Chinese Classics. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879 [1871]; Bernhard Karlgren, tr. The Book of Odes. Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities 16-17 (reprint 1950).

Reference: Hong Zhanhou 洪湛侯. Shijing xue shi 詩經學史 (A History of the Study of the Shijing). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002.

Reference: Xia Chuancai 夏傳才. Shijing yanjiu shi gaiyao 詩經研究史概要. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1982 (2007 supplementary edition).

Reference: . Shijing xue da cidian 詩經學大辭典. (Xia Chuancai 夏傳才, Ed.) Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2014.

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Reference: Takezoe Kōkō 竹添光鴻. Mōshi kaisen 毛詩會箋. Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2012 [Tokyo: Takezoe Rishin, 1920].

Reference: Wang Liqing 王禮卿. Si jia shi zhi huigui 四家詩旨會歸. Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 2009.

Reference: Yeh Kuo-liang 葉國良 (Ye Guoliang). "Shi sanjia shuo zhi jiyi yu jianbie" 《詩》三家說之輯佚與鑑別. Jingxue celun 經學側論. Hsinchu: National Tsing Hua University Press, 2005, 81-112.

Reference: Michael Nylan. The Five "Confucian" Classics. Yale University Press. isbn: 9780300130331.

Reference: Cheng Junying 程俊英 and Jiang Jianyuan 蔣見元. Shijing zhu xi 詩經注析. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991.

Reference: Jiang Guanghui. "A Modern Translation of Confucius's Comments on the Poetry (Kongzi Shilun)".

Reference: Jiang Wen 蔣文. Xianqin Qinhan chutu wenxian yu Shijing wenben de jiaokan he jiedu 先秦秦漢出土文獻與《詩經》文本的校勘和解读. Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2019.

Reference: Dirk Meyer and Adam Craig Schwartz. "Songs of the States: Zhōu South The Ānhuī Warring States-manuscripts".

Reference: Martin Kern undefined. "The Formation of the Classic of Poetry". (Mutschler Fritz-Heiner undefined), *The Homeric Epics and the Chinese Book of Songs: Foundational Texts Compared*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2018, 39-71.

Reference: Edward L. Shaughnessy. "The Origin and Development of Western Sinologists' Theories of the Oral-Formulaic Nature of the Classic of Poetry".

Reference: Xu Jianwei 徐建委. "Shi de bian ci yu Mao shi de xingcheng" 《詩》的編次與《毛詩》的形成 (The Compilation of The Book of Poems and the Formation of Mao's Poems).

Reference: . Fuyang Hanjian Shijing yanjiu 阜陽漢簡詩經研究. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988.

Reference: Zhu Fenghan 朱鳳瀚. "Xihan Haihunhou Liu He mu chutu zhujian Shi chutan" 西漢海昏侯劉賀墓出土竹簡《詩》初探 (An Interpretation of the Bamboo Slips with the Content of the Book of Poetry Unearthed from the Tomb of Liu He, Marquis Haihun of the Western Han Dynasty).

Reference: David R. Knechtges , Shih Hsiang-ling. Shi jing 詩經 (Classic of songs). (., David R. Knechtges , Chang Taiping, Ed.), *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese Literature: A Reference Guide*. Leiden: Brill, 2014, pp. 904-915.

Online Corpora

Relevant online Primary Textual Corpora (original languages and/or translations)

- Source 1 URL: CText 中國哲學書電子化計劃: ctext.org/book-of-poetry/zh
- Source 2 URL: Scripta Sinica 漢籍電子文獻資料庫: hanchi.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/
- Source 2 Description: corpus of the Thirteenth Classics
- Source 3 URL: CHANT 漢達文庫: www.chant.org
- Source 3 Description: requires access

General Variables

Materiality

Methods of Composition

– Written

Notes: Oral tradition played a prominent role in the composition. Oral transmission coexisted as well. It is still under debate whether the odes were transmitted mainly in oral form in early China.



– with Ink

Medium upon which the text is written/incised

– Bamboo

– Wood

↳ Species

– Specify: unknown.

Was the material modified before the writing or incising process?

– Physical preparation

Notes: Bamboo and wood were cut into strips of uniform size.

Was the text modified before the writing or incising process?

– Other [specify]: Excavated evidence shows that (1) the anthology had been largely stable in its content, internal order of stanzas and lines, and possibly even wording by around 300 BC; (2) the writing of the odes was not yet standardized by the mid-second century BC.

Location

Is the text stored in a specific location?

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

– No

Notes: This answer is only limited to the written texts, given the existence of a strong oral tradition regarding the Odes. In light of the excavated texts, it seems that the Odes was widely transmitted instead of limited to storage in a specific place.

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

Production

Is the production of the text funded by the polity?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Little is known about the production of the Odes prior to its canonization as one of the five classics during the Western Han dynasty. Early records attributed the Odes to Confucius but merely praising him as a (prominent) editor. Other theories include the Zhou dynasty ruler sent officials to collect odes from states are not conclusive and constantly challenged by new evidence.

– Yes

Notes: After the Odes was canonised, there established officials selected by the mastery to the Odes. The transmission thus can be regarded as enjoying official support, recognition, and being accepted as official learnings.

↳ Are the authors/copyists/engravers paid by the polity?

– Yes

↳ Does the polity provide financial support to religious infrastructure involved with textual production?

– Yes

↳ Are the leaders of the polity and the religion the same figure?

– Yes

↳ Are political officials involved in the support of textual production?

– Yes

↳ Are political officials and religious officials otherwise overlapping institutional networks?

– Yes

↳ Does the polity enforce religious observance according to text or texts?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is the polity legal code derived from religious text(s) in question?

– No

Notes: From Han dynasty onwards, political discourse involved lots of canonical texts including the Odes. Most of the time it was used as a tool to support what the proposer claimed instead of deriving a legal code.

↳ Is preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax exemption) present in the polity to support the text(s)...

– No

↳ Are religious specialists present/in charge of the production of the text or copies of the text?

– No

Is the text considered official religious scripture?

– No

Notes: While the Odes is among the most authoritative texts in the Chinese tradition and being accepted as official examination texts until the fall of imperial China, it is not sacred (i.e., connected with a god, or being dictated by one).

Written in distinctly religious/sacred language?

– No

Notes: Regarding the oral tradition, however, the Odes has long been attached to performing arts especially chanting.

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: The Odes was often performed during the Zhou dynasty. It was performed on various occasions especially diplomatic ones.

Does the Religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members?

– No

Are there clear reformist movements?

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

– No

Notes: Classical interpretation in Chinese history has always been rather flexible as Confucian classics were not sacred.

Is the text in question employed in ritual practice?

– No

Is there material significance to the text?

– No

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?

– Yes

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traditions as the only recorded Shi teacher of the Marquis of Haihun was a teaching master of the Lu interpretative line of filiation. The Haihun Shi is thus being regarded as the first and complete recension of the long lost Lu Shi. See Zhu Fenghan 朱鳳瀚, Xihan Haihunhou Liu He mu chutu zhujian Shi chutan 西漢海昏侯劉賀墓出土竹簡《詩》初探, *Wenwu* 6 (2020): 63-72. (7) the Xiping Stone Classics 熹平石經 carved in the Eastern Han (175) include the Lu recension of the Shijing. See Ma Heng 馬衡, *Han shijing jicun* 漢石經集存 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1957).

↳ Are multiple versions viewed as proper?

– Yes

Notes: The Odes was phonologically stable but orthographically fluid until at least the end of the Eastern Han dynasty. There were at least four recognisable interpretative traditions (or recensions) circulated during Han. There were attempts to unify the accepted traditions but none of them was proved successful.

↳ If multiple versions are proper, is there a differentiation among versions by any means?

– Yes

↳ Age of extant version of text?

– Yes

↳ Content of text?

– Yes

↳ Ritual purpose of text?

– No

↳ Is there debate about which version is proper?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There were discussions on classical interpretations in 51 BC and 79. Whether or not those were seeking to unify the interpretations or searching for a proper one is debatable. There were competitions among different traditions but apparently not (only) about the texts.

Is the text part of a collection of texts?

– Yes

↳ Is there a sense of canonization?

– Yes

Notes: The Odes was regarded as one of the Five Classics under the reign of Emperor Wu 武帝 (r. 141-87 BC) in the Western Han dynasty. It is noticeable that Chinese Classics were established via transmission and interpretation. The institutionalization of the Imperially

sanctioned and sponsored classicists, or Academicians (boshi 博士, literally 'broad scholar'), who provided the interpretations of the Classics, shows that the Classics and their affiliated interpretations were officially accepted. Hence, the Classics themselves were never 'established', rather they gained high status owing to the development of different lines of filiations of interpretations of the Classics between the Western (206 BC-9) and Eastern Han (25-220) dynasties.

↳ How is the authority established?

– Yes

Notes: The Odes was widely accepted and chanted among elites during Zhou dynasty. When it was canonised in the Western Han dynasty there existed three interpretative traditions and none of them was able to claim the sole authority. The Mao tradition appeared later than the establishment of the other three traditions. However, the authority was granted to Mao not earlier than the fall of the Eastern Han dynasty.

↳ Can the canon be altered or added to?

– No

Notes: The structure of the Odes was rather stable from late as the Warring States period. The interpretative traditions, however, were regarded as important components in the case of the Odes given the strong oral transmission tradition. Although the structure and stanzas of the transmitted Odes can largely be in correspondence with excavated texts, the orthographical feature of the transmitted Odes is under the Mao tradition. The Odes is the only case among the Five Classics only one of a Han dynasty interpretative traditions survived intact.

↳ Have major debates shifted the sense of the place of the text with respect to the larger canon?

– No

↳ Is the text part of a series of volumes?

– No

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

– Yes

↳ Cultural with religious implications?

– Yes

Notes: The Odes has been regarded as the headspring of Chinese poetry and is an important literary genre in the Chinese tradition.

↳ Behavioral literature?

– No

↳ Other

– Other [specify]: The Odes is part of the Five Classics.

Notes: The Five Classics were texts strongly associated with Confucius and the Confucian tradition and became foundational to the intellectual production of almost all Chinese empires.

Content

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

– Other [specify]: no.

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

– Yes

Notes: In the history of interpretative traditions of the Five Classics, the Odes is the only one transmitted with a name of a tradition after the Han dynasty. Other four Classics Zhouyi 周易, Shangshu 尚書, Liji 禮記, and Chunqiu 春秋 did not indicate a name of a line on the title. The transmitted Odes reflects the choice of characters of one of the interpretative lines. Excavated texts and transmitted versions of the Odes indicate there were orthographical variants between (or even within) interpretative lines. (One of the) orthographical interpretations of the Mao interpretative tradition is preserved in the transmitted version.

↳ Does the lineage involve establish a chain of authority?

– No

Notes: The establishment of authority depended on the establishment of Academicians (boshi 博士), an official elected by the mastery to the Five Classics. A classicist being accepted depended on his own ability instead of the master-student filiation.

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

– No

↳ How is the lineage established?

– Student-Teacher Relationship

Notes: Telling from historical records, it was not the master-student affiliations that produced the next generation Academicians, but the classicists who earned the posts of Academicians by their own ability in classical erudition.

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?

– Yes

Notes: There were clear indications of the ancestors (zu 祖) being able to listen and bless, but the Odes said nothing about the distinction of spirit and body.

↳ Spirit-Mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other parts?

– No

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body?

– No

↳ Other spirit-body relationship?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Within conceptions of the mind: are there distinct notions of psychological states or aggregates?

– No

↳ Do practitioners engage in debates about mind-body dualism?

– No

↳ Are debates framed in other ways?

– No

↳ Do practitioners distinguish between a corporeal body and an incorporeal soul or spirit?

– No

↳ Are there other sides or features of the debate?

– No

↳ What are historical mainstream and minority positions?

– No

Is belief in an afterlife indicated in the text?

– Yes

Notes: The Odes described ancestors (zu 祖) who could listen and bless and (the spirit of) King Wen being with the heaven (tian 天/di 帝).

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

– Yes

↳ Afterlife in specified realm of space beyond this world?

– No

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined "above" space?

– Yes

Notes: The supreme deity (shangdi 上帝) and ancestors (xianzu 先祖) were often regarded as closely related to the sky/heaven (tian 天).

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined "below" space?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Afterlife in "other" space?

– No

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

– No

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

– No

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

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses dicated 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?

– No

Are supernatural beings present in the text?

– Yes

Notes: Where 'being' is understood as 'entity'. These are heaven (tian 天), supreme deity (shangdi 上帝), and ancestors (xianzu 先祖) in the Odes. Heaven and supreme deity in pre-Qin China were more anthropomorphic deity who was thought to award and withdraw the mandate (ming 命) to rule to and from the ruling party. The text's cosmology was understood as a naturalistic one in which Heaven was an impersonal force within a larger, harmonious cosmos. There were in total over 200 stanzas of the Odes included either the character tian 天 (heaven) or di 帝 (supreme deity/emperor). Most of them existed at the court or noble related sections which were xiaoya 小雅 (minor court hymns), daya 大雅 (major court hymns), and song 頌 (eulogies) instead of the guofeng 國風 (airs of the states) section. Overall, both characters pointed to a notion of a supreme deity except some cases of di meant earthly emperor. In the Odes, tian 天 (heaven) included the concept of a naturalistic power, an anthropomorphic force, or a place where the supreme deity including the ancestors lived. Di 帝 (supreme deity) is comparatively simple as it mostly meant an anthropomorphic force.

↳ A supreme high-god is present

– Yes

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

– Yes

↳ 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
 - Notes: Although in early China the kings or emperors were regarded as Son of Heaven (tianzi 天子), tianzi was not a genealogical term. The Son of Heaven was the one who gained the mandate of Heaven (tianming 天命) and regarded heaven as father and earth mother. In the Odes, there were no explanations or implications of the relationship between Son of Heaven and Heaven.

- ↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites
 - No

- ↳ 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: none.

- ↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world
 - I don't know
 - Notes: The fact that heaven is able to show the mandate might indicate it 'has knowledge' of this world, whatever it means.

- ↳ Has deliberate causal efficacy in the world
 - Yes
 - Notes: In the ode 'Jienanshan' 節南山 of the xiaoya 小雅, it says "Great Heaven, unjust, is sending down these exhausting disorders. Great Heaven, unkind, is sending down these great miseries." (James Legge, tr.) 昊天不傭、降此鞠訕。昊天不惠、降此大戾.

- ↳ Can reward
 - Yes

- ↳ Can punish
 - Yes

- ↳ Indirect causal efficacy in the world
 - No

- ↳ Exhibits positive emotion
 - Yes
- ↳ Exhibits negative emotion
 - Yes
- ↳ 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
- ↳ The supreme high god possesses/exhibits some other feature
 - Specify: none
- ↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living
 - Yes
 - ↳ In waking, everyday life
 - No
 - ↳ In dreams
 - No
 - ↳ In trance possession
 - No

↳ Through divination practices

– No

↳ Only through religious specialists

– No

↳ Only through monarch

– Field doesn't know

↳ Other form of communication with living

– Yes

Notes: Mandate.

↳ Does the text make communication with supreme high-god possible?

– No

Previously human spirits are present

– Yes

Notes: In total there were 31 examples of the character zu 祖 (ancestors) presented in the Odes. All of them were found in the stanzas of xiaoya 小雅 (minor court hymns), daya 大雅 (major court hymns), and song 頌 (eulogies) sections and none in guofeng 國風 (airs of the states) section. Such distribution made a lot of sense as ya 雅 also defined as proper and the nature of the section song 頌 was an anthology of the music used exclusively for sacrificial offerings in ancestral temples. In the Odes, although the ancestors were able to present blessings and punishments, paying tribute to ancestors was never about earning the rewards but showing filial piety and educating the receivers to maintain a morally correct life.

↳ Human spirits can be seen

– No

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt

– No

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world

– Yes

↳ Knowledge is restricted to a particular domain of human affairs

– Field doesn't know

- ↳ Knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Knowledge is unrestrict outside of sample region
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see you everywhere normally visible (in public)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Know basic character (personal essence)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Have other knowledge of this world
 - Specify: none
- ↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world
 - Yes
 - ↳ Human spirits can reward
 - Yes
 - ↳ Human spirits can punish
 - Yes

↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world

– No

↳ Human spirits have memory of life

– No

↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion

– No

↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion

– No

↳ Human spirits communicate with the living

– No

Non-human supernatural beings are present

– Yes

Notes: (Please refer to the question 'Are supernatural beings present in the text?')

↳ Supernatural beings can be seen

– No

↳ Supernatural beings can be physically felt

– No

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world

– Yes

↳ Knowledge is restricted to a particular domain of human affairs

– No

↳ Knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region

– No

↳ Knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region

– Field doesn't know

- ↳ Knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see you everywhere normally visible (in public)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Know basic character (personal essence)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight)
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Have other knowledge of this world
 - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world
 - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings can reward
 - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings can punish
 - Yes
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings communicate with the living according to the text?
 - No
- ↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world
 - Yes

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion
– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion
– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger
– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature
– Specify: none

Does the text attest to a pantheon of supernatural beings?
– No

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]: The Odes was praised by the Confucius of granting the receivers 'to become largely acquainted with the names of birds, beasts, plants, and woods'. (duo shi yu niao shou cao mu zhi ming 多識於鳥獸草木之名). There were over 250 types of animals and plants being mentioned in the Odes.

Does the text guide divination practices?
– No

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present in the text?
– No

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?

– No

Are there centrally important virtues advocated by the text?

– No

Notes: There are numerous virtues advocated by the text yet none of them is regarded centrally important in the Odes. Like many other texts existed in the similar time, virtues like ren 仁, xiao 孝, ti 弟, xin 信, yi 義 were mentioned in different sections. Due to the nature of the Odes being an anthology of songs instead of philosophical texts, the virtues were merely mentioned but not discussed. Therefore it is an obstacle to tell which virtues were regarded centrally important or advocated.

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

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)?

– Yes

Notes: Sacrifices to ancestors are fundamental for kings and families, and it is conceivable that some of these rituals happened privately.

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances?

– Field doesn't know

Does the text require participation in large-scale rituals?

– Field doesn't know

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?

– Yes

Notes: 'Qiyue' 七月 in guofeng 國風, 'Having offered in sacrifice a lamb with scallions.' (James Legge, tr.) 獻羔祭韭. 'Shengmin' 生民 in daya 大雅, 'We consult; we observe the rites of purification; We take southernwood and offer it with the fat; We sacrifice a ram to the Spirit of the path; We offer roast flesh and broiled: And thus introduce the coming year.' (James Legge, tr.) 載謀載惟，取蕭祭脂，取羝以軋。載燔載烈，以興嗣歲。

↳ Human sacrifice?

– No

↳ Are there self-sacrifices specified by the text?

– No

↳ Are there material offerings present?

– No

↳ 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: Feng 風 odes are believed to have origins from regional states while ya 雅 and song 頌 odes have more noble origins.

– A House Society

Notes: Odes had long been a performance art instead of a written classic to be mastered. To master the art of performing a teaching master is necessary. The transmission of learnings among teachers and students formed different interpretative line of filiations in Han dynasty. The Shijing, at least its orographic form, was therefore shaped and stabilised thanks to the proliferation of the lines. The transmitted Shijing bears the name of one of the interpretative lines in Han.

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

– An empire

Notes: Each empire by and large had great power on the production and reproduction of texts especially those regarded as classics (jing 經). The production of the official versions (like, a 'correct meaning' 正義 of texts) often further standardise the orthography and interpretation and overshadowed the other editions and explanations.

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

– An empire

Notes: The choice and preference of the empire and scholar officials caused different interpretative lines of filiations being lost in history.

Welfare

Does the text specify institutionalized famine relief?

– No

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?

– Yes

Notes: Starting with the Han empire the Shijing was canonised and taught in the Imperial Academy (taixue 太學). The capital itself has an imperial library that collects important existing texts. This was also true of the Qin empire, although little is known about it; most likely, some forms of official institutions existed during the Zhou dynasty as well.

Are there formal educational institutions specified according to the text?

– No

Does the text make provisions for non-religious education?

– No

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: Generally speaking, formal education throughout Chinese history was restricted to men. It does not matter the actual openness of the society, the fact is that throughout the history there were barely a handful of cases of female figures being recorded of showing an elite level mastery of literary knowledge.

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?

– No

Bureaucracy

Is bureaucracy regulated by this text?

– No

Notes: There are a few cases the Shijing mentioned about the king's servants (chen 臣).

Public Works

Does the text detail interaction with public works?

– No

Taxation

Does the text specify forms of taxation?

– No

Warfare

Does the text mention warfare?

– Yes

Notes: Several odes in the Shijing talk about warfare. See reference.

Reference: William S-Y. WANG. Love and War in Ancient China. City University of HK Press. isbn: 9789629372156.

- ↳ Does the text dictate how to control an institutionalized military?
– No
- ↳ Does the text restrict/advocate for participation in exogenous military organizations?
– No
- ↳ Does the text celebrate/bemoan protection/subjugation by an exogenous military force?
– No

Food Production

Does the text mentioned food production/disbursement?

– No

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