Private Love and Public Duty: Images of Children in Early Chinese Art

WU HUNG

A child who died in A.D. 170 is portrayed on a relief stone, originally part of an offering shrine but reused in a later tomb (Fig. 1). The picture is divided into two registers. The child appears on the upper frieze, sitting on a dais in a dignified manner, and his name, Xu Aqu, is inscribed beside him. Three chubby boys are walking or running toward him; clad only in diapers, their tender age is also indicated by their zongjiao hairstyle: two round tufts protrude above their heads. They appear to be amusing their young master; one boy releases a bird, another pulls a goose, while the third boy drives it from behind. The theme of entertainment is continued on the lower register on a grander scale: two musicians are playing a qin zither and a windpipe; their music accords with the performance of a male juggler and a female dancer. With her sleeves swirling, the dancer is jumping on top of large and small disk drums, beating out varying rhythms with her steps. A eulogy in the Han poetic style called zan is inscribed beside the relief:

It is the 31st year of the Han,
The third year since our emperor [i.e., Emperor Ling] ascended the throne.
In the third month of wuwu,
On the fifteenth day of jiayin,
We express our grief and sorrow
For Xu Aqu our son.

You were only five years old
When you abandoned the glory of the living.
You entered an endless night
Never to see the sun and stars again.
Your spirit wanders alone
In eternal darkness underground.
You have left your home forever;
How can we still hope to glimpse your dear face?

Longing for you with all our hearts,
We came to pay an audience to our ancestors;
Three times we increased offerings and incense
Mourning for our deceased kin.
You did not even recognize your ancestors,
But ran east and west, crying and weeping.
Finally you vanished with them,
While still turning back from time to time.

Deeply moved, we, your father and mother...[inscription damaged]
To us all delicacies have become tasteless.
Wan and sallow,
We have exhausted our savings [to build your shrine and make offerings],
Hoping your spirit will last forever.
...[inscription damaged]
Visitors,
When you come here and see dust on this grave,
Please sweep it without delay.
Your kindness will make the deceased happy.

This carving occupies a special position in Han art. While most figurative images engraved on funerary monuments are part of illustrations of didactic stories from historical texts, this engraving is a portrait of a real, contemporary child. The parents of Xu Aqu ordered the carving to be made as an expression of their grief over the death of a five-year-old boy, and in the eulogy they speak directly to their son. This eulogy, which assumes the parents’ point of view, may be read together with another poem in a Han yuefu collection. In this poem an orphan appeals to his departed father and mother:

To be an orphan,
To be fated to be an orphan,
How bitter is this lot!

When my father and mother were alive
I used to ride in a carriage
With four fine horses.
But when they both died,
My brother and my sister-in-law
Sent me out to be a merchant.

I didn’t get back till nightfall,
My hands were all sore
And I had no shoes.
I walked the cold earth
Treading on thorns and brambles.
As I stopped to pull out the thorns,
How bitter my heart was!
My tears fell and fell
And I went on sobbing and sobbing.
In winter I have no greatcoat;
Nor in summer thin clothes.
It is no pleasure to be alive.
I had rather quickly leave the earth
And go beneath the Yellow Springs.
I want to write a letter and send it
To my mother and father under the earth,
And tell them I can’t go on any longer
Living with my brother and sister-in-law.5

In a broader sense, both poems—the Xu Aqu eulogy and the yuefu poem (which must have been written by an adult in imitation of a child’s voice)—express a kind of intimate love and a consequent fear: a child, once he had lost his parents’ protection, became extremely vulnerable. In the underground world he (or his soul) would be surrounded by dangerous ghosts and spirits; in the human world he would be subject to ill treatment, especially from those relatives who had no direct blood relationship with him but who were entrusted with his care; he would be helpless and lonely. Such anxiety about the security of one’s children, specifically one’s male children, seems to have heightened during Han times. Similar expressions are rarely found in pre-Han art and literature.

We may attribute this psychological crisis to China’s transformation into a family-oriented society. Textual and archaeological evidence reveals that the basic social unit became increasingly small “nuclear families” comprised of a married couple and their unmarried children.6 Encouraged by the Qin (221–207 B.C.) and Western Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 8) governments, this type of family soon became prevalent throughout the newly united country.7 Although the official policy was somewhat modified in the Eastern Han (A.D. 25–220) and the “extended family” was promoted as an ideal model, the result was a more integrated residential pattern, not the elimination of the nuclear family as the essential social unit.8 In fact, numerous instances of family struggles over property are reported in Eastern Han historical documents and are depicted in art and literature. Tension between families within a large household thus actually appear to have increased during this period.

From this social reality emerged the belief that only the bond between parent and child was reliable; all other kin and nonkin relationships were to be treated with suspicion. But the problem was that the parent/child tie was inevitably challenged and conditioned by death. When a child died young, his soul would enter eternal darkness. In trying to protect and nourish him, his parents would have to rely on religious means. Thus Xu Aqu’s father and mother constructed an offering shrine for their son and entrusted him to the family’s ancestors. But when parents were about to die, the problem would become far more serious and practical: who would take care of their orphaned children when the parents died?

The hardship faced by a child whose mother had died was especially easy. Parents had to ensure their child would not be supplanted by a stepmother, relative, friend, or even a servant. If their existence were these agents depended on their physical strength; the problem was to cast them off as a serious “duty.” Not only was family itself an important theme in the carved stones, but the carving, the emphasis on the family, could not be ignored.

**THE ORPHAN**

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Sun’s winter clothes were already old, his mother’s own son wore better. He asked him to drive. The horseman lashed him and hit him again. His father stopped there to relax. But the son would not yield. Then his father looked for a reason.

**Once a child’s father died, the child threaten an orphan’s life.**

Jiang Zhangxun had the misfortune of having a stepmother... who was not kind. Zhangxun was aware of this, so he built a thatched shack luxuriantly, and local people stopped there to relax. One day, they liked food and stopped. She then attempted to poison him. At that moment, Zhangxun was roused senselessly. After his stepmother then sighed, she said she was a crime to intend to...
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China's transformational and archaeological evidence became increasingly small ed couple and their unmar-

THE ORPHAN IN DIDACTIC ILLUSTRATIONS

The hardship faced by the orphan described in the yuefu poem quoted earlier is reiterated in the story of Min Sun (Fig. 2). The original tale is recorded in various versions of the Biographies of Filial Sons (Xiaozhi zhuan). It is said that after Sun’s mother died his father remarried a woman who persecuted him:

Sun’s winter clothes were all filled with reed catkins, but his stepmother’s own son wore clothes filled with thick cotton. Sun’s father asked him to drive. The winter day was cold, and Sun dropped the horsewhip. When the stepmother’s son drove, he managed everything well. The father was angry and interrogated him, but Sun kept silent. Then his father looked at the two sons’ clothing and understood the reason.

Once a child’s father had also died, a stepmother might even threaten an orphan’s life. Such a calamity is the subject of pictures illustrating the story of Jiang Zhangxun:

Jiang Zhangxun had the style name Yuanqing. He lived with his stepmother... who was an immoral woman and hated him. Zhangxun was aware of this and went to his father’s tomb yard, where he built a thatched shack and planted many pine trees. The trees grew luxuriantly, and local people often rested in their shade. Even travelers stopped there to relax. Because of this his stepmother hated him even more. She put poison into the wine Zhangxun drank, but he did not die. She then attempted to kill Zhangxun with a knife at night, but Zhangxun was roused suddenly from sleep and again did not die. His stepmother then sighed, saying: “He must be protected by heaven. It was a crime to intend to kill him.”
The mother wept sadly. The minister heard her reply and believed, but now you rejected it. She replied: "The younger son is the wife's son. When his father was alive, he raised him well and looked after him. You receive a trust from a promise, how can you forget? Moreover, to kill the older is to be revenged upon the younger."

The underlying theme of both picture-stories can be summarized by a quotation from Yan Zhitui's *Family Instructions for the Yan Clan* (Yanshi jiaxun): "The second wife is certain to maltreat the son of the previous wife." Ironically, in both stories it was an orphan's unconditional obedience and submission to cruelty that finally saved him. Min Sun's obedience won back his father's love, and Jiang Zhangxun's piety finally moved and reformed his immoral step-
mother. But the one-sided nature of these solutions highlights an important feature of Han didactic art: a human relationship, which by definition involves at least two parties, must be approached from at least two angles. Correspondingly, Han pictorial stories often provide a number of solutions to a problem by approaching it from various perspectives. For example, many narratives and their illustrations on Han monuments propagate the virtue of loyal ministers and assassins who carry out their masters' orders, while other stories and illustrations emphasize the virtue of magnanimous rulers who pay respect to their subjects. As in the cases cited above, an orphan's difficulties might be avoided through the child's own and often extremely painful effort. A far better solution, however, was to induce the stepmother to act virtuously and fulfill her assigned duty. Thus another group of carvings suggests that instead of being a destructive force, the ideal stepmother was supposed to protect the orphan, even at the cost of sacrificing her own sons. In such a case she would be admired as an "exemplary woman," and her illustrated biography would be displayed on mortuary monuments to the public.

One such example is the Righteous Stepmother of Qi (Qi Yijimu) (Fig. 3). In the picture, a murdered man is lying on the ground; an official on horseback has come to arrest the criminal. The woman's two sons, one kneeling beside the corpse and the other standing behind it, are both confessing to the murder. According to the story recorded in the Biographies of Exemplary Women (Lieni zhuan), the official could not decide which brother he should arrest. The mother, portrayed in the picture at far left, was finally required to make the decision and surrender one of her sons:

The mother wept sadly and replied: "Kill the younger one!" The minister heard her reply and asked: "The youngest son is usually the most beloved, but now you want him killed. Why is that?" The mother replied: "The younger son is my own; the older son is the previous wife's son. When his father took ill and lay dying, he ordered me to raise him well and look after him, and I said, 'I promise.' Now, when you receive a trust from someone and you have accepted it with a promise, how can you forget such trust and be untrue to that promise? Moreover, to kill the older brother and let the younger brother live would be to cast aside a public duty for a private love; to make false one's words and to forget loyalty is to cheat the dead. If words are meaningless and promises are not distinguished [from nonpromises], how can I dwell on this earth? Although I love my son, how shall I speak of righteousness?" Her tears fell, bedewing her robe, and the minister related her words to the king.
category of “public duties: one is the Public-Spiritual Virtuous Aunt of Liang
It is said that the Public-Spiritual Aunt was a woman who had two boys working
in the fields. When they were out gathering straw, one of the boys dropped one child while

Fig. 3. Story of the Righteous Stepmother of Qi. Wu Liang Shrine carving. (a) Ink rubbing (Rong Geng 1936:19a–20a). (b) Reconstruction (Feng Yuntao and Feng Yunyuan, “Shi suo,” 3.34–35).

Here we find the opposition between “private love” (sia) and “public duty” (gongyi): the stepmother was praised for her fulfillment of her “duty”—loyalty and righteousness—and she was given the honorable title “Yi” (righteous). But in order to fulfill her duty she had to give up her own private “love.” In one sense a stepmother, though called a “mother,” was not so different from the more distant relatives or even the servants of the orphan, whose responsibility, as we find in carvings on Han funerary monuments, also fell into the

Fig. 4. Story of the Public-Spiritual Aunt. Wu Family Shrine. From E. C. Krupp, septentrionale (Paris: Impressive...
category of “public duty.” Two pictures illustrate such righteous relatives: one is the Public-Spirited Aunt of Lu (Lu Yigujie); the other, the Virtuous Aunt of Liang (Liang Jiegujie).14

It is said that the Public-Spirited Aunt met an enemy when she and two boys were working in the fields. Pursued by cavalrmen, she dropped one child while escaping with the other (Figs. 4a–b). When

Fig. 4. Story of the Public-Spirited Aunt of Lu. (a and b) Wu Liang Shrine carving. Ink rubbing and reconstruction (Rong Geng 1936:36a–38a; Feng Yunpeng and Feng Yunyuan, “Shi suo,” 3.50–53). (c) Carving on the Front Wu Family Shrine. From E. Chavannes, Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1913), vol. 2, pl. 49, no. 104.
she was finally caught, the commander discovered that the child she had cast aside was actually her own, while the other was the son of her brother. The commander inquired:

“A mother always loves her son, and her love is deep in her heart. Today, you put him from you and carried the son of your brother. How is that?”

“To save my own son is a work of private love, but to save my brother’s child is a public duty. Now, if I had turned my back on a public duty and pursued my private love, and if I had abandoned my brother’s child to die to save my own child, even if by good fortune I should have escaped, still my sovereign would not tolerate me; the officials would not support me; and my compatriots would not live with me. If that were the case, then I should have no place to harbor my body and no ground for my tired feet to tread upon. . . .”¹⁵

A new theme is introduced: not only did the aunt have to place “public duty” before her “private love,” but her sacrifice was also based on a practical concern about her own livelihood. The lesson of the story thus appears to be a mixture of both enticements and threats. Indeed, the unseen instructor of this lesson must have been the brother (or the social group he represented), who successfully transplanted his own fears into his sister’s heart. We may condense his instructions into a simple formula: those who fail to take care of his (orphaned) son will be held in contempt by the whole world, while those who fulfill this “public duty” will not only live in peace but will be rewarded by the king. Thus while one version of the picture-story highlights the theme of sacrifice (Figs. 4a–b), another version represents its happy ending (Fig. 4c): two ministers come to present gold and silk to the Public-Spirited Aunt, and the woman kneels to thank them for the king’s bounty. She is still holding her nephew in her arms, and her own son is jumping happily behind his glorious mother.

The woman’s frightened voice in this story gives way to a cry of horror in the tale of the Virtuous Aunt of Liang, another decorative motif of Eastern Han funerary monuments (Fig. 5). It is said that when the woman’s house caught fire, her son and her brother’s son were both inside the house. She wanted to rescue her nephew, but in her haste she picked up her own son. Upon discovering her error, she ran back into the fire and committed suicide. The following words are her final testament: “How can I tell every family in the state and let everyone know the truth? . . . I would like to cast my son into the fire, but this would violate the remark of a certain gentleman. . . .”¹⁶
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Fig. 5. Story of the Virtuous Aunt of Liang. Wu Liang Shrine carving. (a) Ink rubbing (Rong Geng 1936:17b–18b). (b) Reconstruction (Feng Yunpeng and Feng Yunyuan, “Shi su,” 3:32–33).

fire, but this would violate a mother's love. In such a situation I
cannot go on living.” The official version of the story concludes with
the remark of a certain “Noble Gentleman” (junzi): “The Virtuous
Aunt was pure and not debased. The Book of Songs says: ‘That great
gentleman would give his life rather than fail his lord.’ This could be
said of her.”16 By quoting this passage from one of the Confucian
classics, the aunt’s “public duty” toward her brother was compared to that of a minister to his lord.

These illustrations seem to support the argument that the didactic stories selected for mortuary monuments reflect people’s intense concerns about posthumous family affairs. Among such concerns as the chastity of widows and the relationships between various family members, the safety of surviving children was overwhelmingly important. Nevertheless, we must not associate anxiety about one’s progeny with purely personal or selfish concerns. The Confucian sage Mencius had announced several hundred years earlier that “Among the three sins of being unfilial, having no descendants is the greatest one.” Moreover, filial piety, as explained in the Classic of Filial Piety, was the most fundamental virtue of mankind. If a person had no descendants, his family line was broken and his ancestors could no longer enjoy offerings. What disaster could be greater than this in a family-centered society?

As mentioned earlier, within the context of Han funerary shrines, a common method to express posthumous concerns was to cite and illustrate the tale of a pertinent moral exemplar. The analogies that people drew did not necessarily coincide with reality; hagiographic tales only provided stereotypes, not real personages. Viewers of such pictures were expected to discern general parallels between themselves and a certain type. They would thus “identify” themselves with this type and follow the moral lesson it embodied. In addition to virtuous stepmothers and relatives, another such type was the loyal servant. A servant could play a considerable role in an orphan’s life (and in fact servants in some households were poor, distant relatives of the families they served). The epitome of the loyal servant during the Han was a man named Li Shan, a veteran servant in the family of a certain Li Yuan. Li Shan saved his young master from other “evil servants” and helped the boy recover stolen family property:

During the Jianwu era [A.D. 25–55], an epidemic broke out, and people in Yuan’s family died one after the other. Only an orphan, who was named Xu and had been born only a few weeks earlier, survived. The family had property worth a million cash. The maids and a manservant plotted to murder Xu and then divide his property. Shan was deeply sympathetic about the [bad fortune] of the Li family, but he could not control the situation single-handedly. So he secretly carried Xu and fled, hiding in the territory of Xiaqiu in the Shanyang district. He nursed the child himself and fed him with raw cow’s milk. He gave

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This event must have been recorded in the chapter on Li Shan in the Eastern Han official document known as the Classic of Filial Piety. It is also to be found in the eleventh-century reproduction of the classic, The Treasury of Filial Piety, in the Eastern Han official document known as the Classic of Filial Piety. It is also to be found in the eleventh-century reproduction of the classic, The Treasury of Filial Piety. This relation between the evil servant and the orphan.
a dry place to the child, while he himself stayed in a damp place. Although Xu was in his arms, he served the child as his elder master. Whenever something came up, he kneeled a long while before the child, reported on the matter, and then went to do it. The neighbors were inspired by his behavior, and all started to cultivate righteousness. When Xu reached the age of ten, Shan returned to the county to rebuild the household. He brought suit to the officials against the male and female servants, and all of them were arrested and put to death.19

This event must have created a sensation at the time: it was recorded in the chapter entitled “Distinctive Behavior” (“Duxing”) in the Eastern Han official history, was transformed into several folk-tale versions, and was illustrated on funerary monuments. One of these illustrations is still extant. Its surviving portion shows an evil servant who is pulling the infant out of a basket (Fig. 6a). A nineteenth-century reproduction of the carving reconstructs the missing part: Li Shan kneels by the child and raises his arms in a gesture of reverence (Fig. 6b). This engraving graphically highlights the opposition between the evil and loyal servant; but the focus is still the orphan.

MOTHER AND CHILD

Although each of these stories concludes with a happy ending, the very act of depicting such stories on funerary monuments reveals a deep suspicion toward the intended viewers. The unspoken premise was that although “public duty” sounded glorious and might occasionally be carried out by relatives or servants, it was preferable to rely on direct kin, primarily parents themselves, whenever possible. This understanding was formulated in A.D. 79 in the Eastern Han official document known as the Proceedings from White Tiger Hall (Baihu tong). Here the relationship between natural parents and children was considered one of the Three Bonds, while “paternal uncles, brothers, clan members, maternal uncles, teachers, and friends” were called the “Six Strings” (liujin). The text states: “The major relations are the Bonds, and the minor relations are the Strings.”20 Scholars have also proposed that during the Han various kin relationships were classified into two distinct systems: the first was a linear paternal line including the nine generations of a family from the great-great-grandfather down; the second included three
indirect kin groups—paternal relatives, maternal relatives, and inlaws. The last group was considered most distant and unreliable. The Classic of Filial Piety teaches that “the connecting link between serving one’s father and serving one’s mother is love.” Correspondingly, the care provided for one’s children was also to be based on love, or in Mencius’ words, “family feeling.”

The concept of “parents,” however, is also a generalization: a father and mother were from different families and, logically and practically, must have had divergent and even conflicting concerns. The old question about a child’s security thus surfaced again, but this time posed by the father to the mother. Specifically, was a mother’s love toward her (husband) many mothers in old China housewife, betrayed their brothers and nephews (i.e., fathers). Such anxiety is reflected in a story named Feng Yan in which a crime, including having interesting, however, that mare proved a tragedy in nerable: “Since antiquity, it is a disaster to have one’s house disaster has befallen me.”

Feng’s statement also is household as well as his regulation by a woman.” Even would then be brought relation to have had a solid base when a woman was widow forced her to remarry. In relationships resurfaced and even in a sense, had been born a widow in the husband’s lifetime—honoratio rhetoric of the words, her “private love interpreted as a “duty” or “right” of the Excellent, a widow who remarrying, best exemplifies Noble Gentleman says: “I am true as the bright sun. Gaoying was a widow from beauty and praiseworthy leaving her widowed early of Liang strove among the her. The King of Liang betrothal gifts. Gaoying was live in widowhood to raise her given them enough attention but I have fortunately sought my hand. I have twice having gone forth to
love toward her (husband’s) sons forever trustworthy? Had not many mothers in old Chinese lore, from an empress to an ordinary housewife, betrayed their husbands’ families by bringing their own brothers and nephews (i.e., their own paternal relatives) to power? Such anxiety is reflected in a letter by an Eastern Han gentleman named Feng Yan in which he bitterly accuses his wife of multiple crimes, including having “destroyed the Way of a good family.” It is interesting, however, that according to Mr. Feng his personal nightmare proved a tragedy to which all members of his sex were vulnerable: “Since antiquity it has always been considered a great disaster to have one’s household be dominated by a woman. Now this disaster has befallen me.”

Feng’s statement also implies that if a man’s wife outlived him, his household as well as his young children would inevitably be “dominated by a woman.” Even worse, she might remarry and his children would then be brought to another household. This concern appears to have had a solid basis: according to numerous Han accounts, when a woman was widowed, her own parents often advised or even forced her to remarry. In these cases, her own paternal family relationship resurfaced and overpowered her marital relationship, which, in a sense, had been broken by the husband’s death. To keep the widow in the husband’s household to take care of his children, the time-honored rhetoric of “public duty” was again employed. In other words, her “private love” toward her children had to be reinterpreted as a “duty” or “fidelity” (xīn) to her deceased husband. Liang the Excellent, a widow who destroyed her face to avoid the danger of remarrying, best exemplifies this virtue. Remark ing on her story, the Noble Gentleman says: “Liang was chaste, decorous, single-hearted, and pure. The Book of Songs says: ‘You thought I had broken faith; I was true as the bright sun above.’ This could be said of her.”

Gaoxing was a widow from the state of Liang. She was glorious in her beauty and praiseworthy in her conduct. Though her husband died, leaving her widowed early in life, she did not remarry. Many noblemen of Liang strove among themselves to marry her, but no one could win her. The King of Liang heard of this and sent his minister with betrothal gifts. Gaoxing said, “My husband unfortunately died early. I live in widowhood to raise his orphans, and I am afraid that I have not given them enough attention. Many honorable men have sought me, but I have fortunately succeeded in evading them. Today the king is seeking my hand. I have learned that the principle of a wife is that once having gone forth to marry, she will not change over, and that she
will keep all the rules of chastity and faithfulness. To forget the dead and to run to the living is not faithfulness; to be honored and forget the lowly is not chastity; and to abandon righteousness and follow gain is not worthy of a woman." Then she took up a mirror and knife, and cut off her nose, saying, "I have become a disfigured person. I did not commit suicide because I could not bear to see my children orphaned a second time. The king has sought me because of my beauty, but today, after having been disfigured, I may avoid the danger of remarrying." Thereupon, the minister made his report, and the king exalted her righteousness and praised her conduct. He restored her liberty and honored her with the title Gaoxing.  

Liang’s testimony—that she must remain a widow to raise the orphans—is similar to the speech given by the Righteous Stepmother of Qi, in which she emphasizes the importance of keeping her “promise” to her deceased husband to raise his orphan. Indeed, once a wife had lost her husband, her conduct and morality were no longer judged on the grounds of being a good mother but with reference to her chastity and faithfulness. The difference between a widowed natural mother and a widowed stepmother had thus largely disappeared: they both bore the liability of keeping their “promises” to their dead husbands to bring up his sons. In fact, a widowed mother was approached not so differently from relatives and servants, since the virtue they shared was classified as “loyalty.” We have read that the Virtuous Aunt of Liang was praised for her faithfulness to her brother, alluded to as her “lord,” and that Li Shan served the infant orphan “as his elder master.” The moral typically applied to a widow vis-à-vis her deceased husband was exactly same: "A loyal minister does not serve two lords, neither may a faithful widow marry a second husband.”  

A widowed mother, however, differed from other guardian figures of the orphan in the demonstration of her fidelity: she was often forced to display some extreme proof, such as self-disfigurement, as testimony to her virtue. Liang’s example is not necessarily fictional; plenty of similar instances can be found in historical accounts. Women who disfigured themselves (by cutting off their hair, ears, fingers, or noses) were usually widowed mothers who were forced by parents or paternal relatives to remarry. Three such model widows named Peng Fei, Wang He, and Li Jin’er are presented in a single paragraph in the Records of the Huayang Kingdom (Huayangguo zhi), which concludes with this observation: “They all brought up their sons and fulfilled their public duty.”  

Widows’ disfigurement was self-immolation. Incidents during the Han, but as I have said because she had to take self-execution had to be she had to remain function disfigurement becomes evident in Yan’s letter. Here he blantly behavior but also for her But after her husband’s death useless and even danger she would become more hood. Thus Liang the Excellent I may avoid the danger of remarrying, that the illustrator chose the moment of her “sitting off” (Fig. 7). In the picture, the left, and the king’s mother for Liang’s answer. A few lines represent the king’s betrothal, holding a knife in the left.

Fig. 7. Story of Liang the Excellent. Wu Liang Shrine carving. (a) Ink rubbing (Rong Geng 1936:33a-35a). (b) Reconstruction (Feng Yunpeng and Feng Yunyuan, “Shi suon,” 3:46-47).
Widows’ disfigurement must be understood as a kind of symbolic self-immolation. Incidents of widows’ suicide were not uncommon during the Han, but as Liang testified, she did not commit suicide because she had to take care of her husband’s children. Her self-execution had to be performed symbolically, since in actuality she had to remain functional as a nursing mother. Women’s self-disfigurement becomes even more alarming when we consider Feng Yan’s letter. Here he blames his wife not only for her scandalous behavior but also for her slovenliness and lack of female refinement. But after her husband’s death, a woman’s beauty would have become useless and even dangerous. By removing such dangerous features she would become more “trustworthy” and secure in her widowhood. Thus Liang the Excellent says: “After having been disfigured, I may avoid the danger of remarrying.” It is not coincidental, therefore, that the illustrator of her story on the Wu Liang Shrine chose the moment of her “symbolic suicide” as the subject of the illustration (Fig. 7). In the picture, a chariot drawn by four horses halts on the left, and the king’s messenger stands beside the chariot waiting for Liang’s answer. A female servant acts as an intermediary to present the king’s betrothal gifts to the widow. The famous beauty is holding a knife in the left hand about to cut off her own nose, while

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Fig. 7. Story of Liang the Excellent. Wu Liang Shrine carving. (a) Ink rubbing (Rong Geng 1936:33a–35a). (b) Reconstruction (Feng Yunpeng and Feng Yunyuan, “Shi suo,” 3.46–47).
the mirror she holds in her right hand brings the theme of disfigure-
ment into sharp focus.

FATHERS AND SONS, ADULTS AND CHILDREN

By examining these pictures, we have gradually established the narra-
tive vantage point from which the myth of “public duty” toward
children was created: it was determined by the “father.” Significantly,
a father is never depicted on Han funerary monuments as taking care
of his son, nor is his responsibility to a motherless orphan referred to
as a kind of “public duty.” The reason may be simple: he was the
invisible instructor behind all these moral lessons. He did not need
public exhortations to “public duty” because for men, in the institu-
tion of the patriline, private love coincided with public duty. For
women, private love and public duty were antithetical, and the
former had to be sacrificed to the latter (as demonstrated by all the
female exemplars discussed earlier). The figures who are portrayed
as devoting their lives to orphans were virtuous widows, step-
mothers, sisters-in-law, and loyal servants, because from the view-
point of the husband/brother/master, these individuals were all un-
trustworthy: the widow naturally wishes to find a second home; “the
second wife is certain to maltreat the son of the previous wife”;
“sisters-in-law are the cause of many quarrels”; and servants com-
monly scheme against their masters. The hagiographic stories were
illustrated on funerary monuments to prevent these dangers, not to
reward good individuals.

A maxim in the Confucian classic, Master Zuo’s Commentaries on
the Spring and Autumn Annals (Chunqiu Zuoshi zhuan), typifies this
anxious view: “If one be not of my kin, one is sure to have a different
heart.” Who could be closer kin to a son than his father? The rela-
tionship between a son and his father differed radically from all other
relationships including the mother/son relationship: the son bore his
father’s surname and continued his father’s family line. In other
words, the father identified himself with his son and considered the
son to be his incarnation. Moreover, in a patrilineal family the father/
son relationship was repeated generation after generation as indi-
cated by the repetition of the family surname. A man was often
simultaneously both a father and a son, a situation that again dif-
fered fundamentally from one’s relations with mother, wife, relatives,
friends, and servants who all belonged to or came from “other fami-
lies.” Such a patrilineal moral code to sustain it—when represented in a family
therefore all filial paragons.

Generally speaking, filial piety and respect for parents: “The essence of
honor and obey one’s parent reverently after the death of one’s
parents is that throughout one’s whole life, one identifies oneself as a child.
“Child” requires explicating at least two different definitions of age. Normally when a
person is considered an adult, and a special term is used to mark his coming of age:
tongzi, meaning simply “the son of the elder tong from tong. For example,
lies." Such a patrilineal chain demanded and produced a specific moral code to sustain it—namely, xiao or filial piety. Male heroes, when represented in a family context on funerary monuments, were therefore all filial paragons.

Generally speaking, filial piety is the virtue of a child toward his parents: "The essence of this primal virtue is none other than to honor and obey one's parents while they are alive, to sacrifice to them reverently after their death, and to adhere to their guidance throughout one's whole life." By practicing filial piety one thus identifies oneself as a child. But to understand this point, the term "child" requires explication. We find that in early imperial China at least two different definitions of "child" coexisted. The first is based on age. Normally when a man reached the age of twenty he was considered an adult, and a special "capping ceremony" (guanli) was held to mark his coming of age. Before this age he was called a tong or tongzi, meaning simply "child." Some texts further separate you from tong. For example, the Li ji (Record of Rites) says: "The first

Fig. 8. The ages of man. Woodcut print. Le Propriétaire des Choses by Bartholomaens Anglicus, French, 1482. From A. Schorsch, Images of Childhood (New York: Mayflower Books, 1979), fig. 11.
ten years in one's life are study."36 A similar category of Chinese proverbs about French woodcut print dat- ing from the late 15th century to the late 16th century symbolizing four stages of life: the walking child (with a hobbyhorse), the young man, and the aged scholar.37

Another definition of filial piety is that there are no relationships; as a popular saying goes, "As long as your parents are alive a son is always a boy, and a father is always a man, should remain a boy." Rather, the way to cultivate the child's virtue is to "be a good boy.""38

"One does not use the word filial piety because one fears this will alienate parents like Elder Laizi can heart."39

Elder Laizi was a native of modern Shanxi province, whose parents were still alive. He always wore multicolored clothes to show his respect for his parents even when his feet were not bound. He was afraid to sit down lest he hurt his feet. Afraid to sit down lest he sit down stiffly to the ground and fall down. Elder Laizi would not use the word filial piety unless he was absolutely sure that it would not hurt his parents. It was said that Elder Laizi's parents were still alive when he was seventy and his children were all grown up. One day, his parents were sitting on a bench in the park. Elder Laizi was sitting on the ground as usual, reading a book. His parents asked him: "I did not see you sitting down yesterday. Today, why do you sit down?" Elder Laizi answered: "Yesterday, when I was reading the book, I was reading the book. But today your strength does not allow me to sit down." You ask why you sit down,"40

From Confucius' point of view, the son named Bo Yu, whose image appears on monuments (Fig. 10), would be considered filial piety despite his advanced age. The son was a model filial piety, allowed to sit down and even to fall down. At seventy, Bo Yu was still able to sit down willingly whenever he made a mistake. His mother was sitting beside him and asked him: "I did not see you sit down yesterday. Today, why do you sit down?" To his mother he replied: "Today, I was sitting down because I was not able to sit down when I offended you and you asked me to sit down. But today your strength does not allow me to sit down."41

Fig. 9. Story of Laizi. Wu Liang (1956:7a–8a). (b) Reconstructed Beware (Chavannes 1913: vol. 2, pl. 107).
ten years in one's life are called you. After this age one begins to study.” A similar categorization existed in medieval Europe: a French woodcut print dated to 1482 (Fig. 8) includes four figures symbolizing four stages of childhood: the infant (tied in its cradle), the walking child (with an early walker), the playing child (with hobbyhorse), and the young student (wearing the long robe of a scholar).

Another definition of “child” is based not on age but on family relationships; as a popular Chinese saying goes: “As long as his parents are alive a son is always a boy.” This does not imply, as a modern person may imagine, that the son was treated by his parents as their “baby boy.” Rather, it means that the son, though a grown-up man, should remain a boy—that is, he should behave like a child and cultivate the child’s virtue of filial piety. The epitome of such “elderly boys” is Laizi, whose image was a favorite motif on Han funerary monuments (Fig. 9):

Elder Laizi was a native of Chu. When he was seventy years old, his parents were still alive. With the ultimate filial piety, he often wore multicolored clothes to serve his parents food in the main hall. Once he hurt his feet. Afraid to sadden his parents, he made himself tumble stiffly to the ground and bawled like an infant. Confucius remarked: “One does not use the word ‘old’ when one’s parents are getting old, because one fears this will make them grieve about their elderliness. A person like Elder Laizi can be called one who does not lose a child’s heart.”

From Confucius’ point of view, another famous “elderly boy” named Bo Yu, whose image also frequently appears on funerary monuments (Fig. 10), would be less filial than Elder Laizi because he, though a paragon, allowed his mother to become aware of her elderliness. At seventy, Bo Yu was still willing to be beaten by his mother whenever he made a mistake. But one day he wept and his mother asked him: “I did not see you weep when I punished you before. Why do you cry today?” To his mother’s surprise he answered: “Before, when I offended you and you beat me with the stick, I often felt pain. But today your strength could not make me feel pain. That is why I

Fig. 9. Story of Laizi. Wu Liang Shrine carving. (a) Ink rubbing (Rong Geng 1936:7a–8a). (b) Reconstruction (Feng Yunpeng and Feng Yunyuan, “Shi suo,” 3.22–23). (c) A scene on the seventh stone of the Front Chamber (Chavannes 1913: vol. 2, pl. 49, no. 104).
We can thus argue that “portraiture” at all, as a “representation, instance” in these carvings, the figures range from five years old (Laizi and Bo Yu), ageless child. While a young (and had to be) young had to be morally unshakable. The latter, the “child-man” —like their “portraits”, What remains in these portraitures shown under the lineal society of Han are more “public” than the other removed from the whole universe. The first principle of heaven, conduct for the people, he had in a certain society, symbol of the most fundamental the whole population. On Han funerary art are depicted very figure portraits of relatives, and servants portrayed nourishing an child when a child was labeled he had in a certain society, symbol of the most fundamental society. In the second century B.C., through a recruitment process for being “filial and and moral” local officials to the throne. However, that the chosen was only morally distinguishable, not a description of reality.
We can thus argue that the images of these men-children are not "portraiture" at all, an artistic genre defined by Richard Delbrükel as "the representation, intending to be like, of a definite individual." In these carvings, the figures' physical likeness is vitiated to serve their moral content. To understand this method of representation we need only compare all nine filial sons "portrayed" on the famous Wu Liang Shrine. From textual sources we know that these men's ages range from five years old (see Zhao Xun, Fig. 12) to seventy years old (Laizi and Bo Yu), but in the pictures they are almost indistinguishable. Most of them kneel before their parents—a standard gesture of respect and submission. What these images depict is a particular species created by Han Confucian ideology that we may call the "ageless child." While a physically old filial son had to pretend to be young (and had to be represented as young), a filial son who really was young had to be mature enough to be insistently virtuous and morally unshakable. The former category is the "man-child" and the latter, the "child-man." The heroes' individuality is entirely omitted—like their "portraits," which have become simply tokens of ideas. What remains in these pictures is their morality, which, in the patriarchal society of Han China, was promoted as the foundation of the whole universe. The *Classic of Filial Piety* teaches: "Filiality is the first principle of heaven, the ultimate standard of earth, the norm of conduct for the people." It is hardly possible to imagine anything more "public" than the duty of filial piety—or anything that is further removed from private family love.

On Han funerary monuments, real children and "ageless children" are depicted very differently. The former are mostly nameless creatures shown under the protection of virtuous mothers, stepmothers, relatives, and servants; the latter are famous paragons who are portrayed nourishing and protecting their parents. Furthermore, when a child was labeled "filial," even if he was only five years old, he had in a certain sense gained adulthood; he had become both a symbol of the most fundamental moral principle and an exemplar for the whole population. As this notion gained acceptance, a whole group of child-men emerged in both fiction and reality. For example, it is well known that from the time of Emperor Wu of the second century B.C., the Han government regularly selected officials through a recruitment system. People who had acquired reputations for being "filial and incorrupt" (*xiaolian*) were recommended by local officials to the throne on a regular basis. It is less well known, however, that the chosen ones included young boys who were not only morally distinguished but also well versed in the Confucian
classics. They were honored with a special title: “Tongzi Lang,” or “Boy Gentleman.”

Such Confucian prodigies, indeed the parents’ dream-boys, were symbolized by fictional characters and represented in art. Xiang Tuo, a child of extraordinary wisdom and learning, was said to have been a teacher of Confucius himself. His image, often positioned between Confucius and Laozi, regularly appears on funerary monuments. In one representation of this theme (Fig. 11), while the small boy is shown holding a pull-toy, the two masters are gazing at him instead of evincing any interest in each other. As Audrey Spiro has remarked on this image, “the child is meant to be seen, not as an opponent, but as a Confucian prodigy, ready to discourse on the highest subjects.”

Michel Soymié, moreover, has noted a tomb inscription found in Shandong dated to A.D. 179 that laments the premature death of a boy named Feng Sheng. The inscription states that the child had memorized the whole Classic of Poetry and the ritual canon. Indeed, so great was his learning that he was called a second Xiang Tuo.

There were also children who instead of being known for their

Fig. 11. Xiang Tuo with Confucius and Laozi. Eastern Han, 2nd century A.D. Excavated in 1978 at Songshan, Jiaxiang, Shandong province. Ink rubbings. (a) W. 66 cm. (b) W. 68 cm. From Shandong Provincial Museum and Shandong Cultural Relics and Archaeology Institute, Shandong Han hua-xiangshi xuanji (Ji’nan: Qilu shushe, 1982), pls. 186, 188.

mastery of the Confucian conduct. Zhao Xun (Fig. 13) is said to have been a model of filial piety since he was five years old. His reputation spread far, and his personal conduct was an example for Eastern Han literati. Yuan Gu (Fig. 13), who won the highest honors in the imperial examinations, was often entreated by his acquaintances to enter into a filial son:

When Yuan Gu’s grandfather wished to send him to study, he entreated them piteously. They replied, “What are you going for? We carried the grandfather through the heat and arduousness and criticized him for it!”

and Gu became a “genuinely filial son.”
mastery of the Confucian classics were distinguished by their moral conduct. Zhao Xun (Fig. 12) had consistently demonstrated his filial piety since he was five years old and thus “became well known, and his reputation spread far.” He was finally promoted by the emperor himself to be a royal attendant. The most interesting figure illustrated on Eastern Han funerary monuments, however, was the boy Yuan Gu (Fig. 13), whose filial piety transformed his vicious father into a filial son:

When Yuan Gu’s grandfather was old, his parents detested the old man and wanted to abandon him. Gu, who was fifteen years old, entreated them piteously with tears, but his parents did not listen to him. They made a carriage and carried the grandfather away and abandoned him. Gu brought the carriage back. His father asked him, “What are you going to do with this inauspicious thing?” Gu replied: “I am afraid that when you get old, I will not be able to make a new carriage, and so I have brought it back.” His father was ashamed and carried the grandfather back and cared for him. He overcame his selfishness and criticized himself. He finally became a “purely filial son” and Gu became a “purely filial grandson.”

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*Fig. 12. Story of Zhao Xun. Wu Liang Shrine carving. Ink rubbing (Rong Geng 1936:23b).*
In this study I have the children’s images depicted have found is an essential appeal to his father’s love” was often associated with parents (especially the mother) and even with a social responsibility to society at large. Although mured, the most common funerary monuments in loyalty of a stepmother’s chastity of a widowed woman, executed on a memorial stone are played to the public, as emphasized by inscriptions “We are stating clearly within the four seas: ... do not ignore them.”

The general social and ideological dictates and dismisses any individual’s distinction children and figures on the Xu Aqu carving exception: the “portrait” master receiving an audience. As the adult figure, Xu's “portrait” is an image—as if the memory type of public art, and expressed in the eulogy language of funerary monuments.

The characters in this story belong to three generations. Yuan Gu’s father violated filial piety in his treatment of his own father, while Yuan Gu demonstrated his extraordinary filial piety not only by rescuing his grandfather but, more importantly, by reforming his father. The moral lesson of the illustrated story is twofold: the father’s behavior is criticized; but as a filial son, Yuan Gu cannot outspokenly criticize his father. Instead he employs a rhetorical method called feng, or remonstration, which conveys criticism indirectly through the use of metaphors and analogies. The key element in his rhetoric is the carriage, the rectangular shape near Yuan Gu’s right hand, depicted purposefully in the center of the scene. By bringing back the carriage the boy hints at the parallel between his own relation with his father and his father’s relation with the grandfather. The implication is clear: although the father is now in control, in time he may well become a victim of his own model. In fact, Yuan Gu makes no attempt to prove the universal nature of filial piety nor does he advise his father to follow this moral law. What he does is to
appeal to his father’s concerns about his own security and well-being. And he succeeds.

**Conclusion**

In this study I have tried to decipher the messages conveyed by children’s images depicted on Han funerary monuments. What we have found is an essential paradox. Clearly the concept of “private love” was often associated with a child’s relationship to its natural parents (especially the mother), while “public duty” was required from a child’s stepmother, relatives, and servants. Upon closer investigation, however, it is equally clear that even one’s relationship with one’s own children or parents would eventually become a social responsibility bound by moral obligations assigned by society at large. Although “private love” was sometimes murmured, the most common themes of pictorial representation on funerary monuments are those associated with “public duty”—the loyalty of a stepmother, aunt, friend, or servant; the fidelity and chastity of a widowed mother; and the filial piety of a son. Executed on a memorial shrine or pillar gate, these pictures were displayed to the public, and their didactic function was again emphasized by inscriptions engraved alongside, such as the following: “We are stating clearly to people of virtue and kindheartedness within the four seas: Please regard these [pictures and] words and do not ignore them.”

The general social and moral implication of these carvings contradicts and dismisses any artistic representation of individuality, that is, an individual’s distinctive features and personality. The images of children and figures on funerary monuments are thus symbols—“a particular [that] represents the more general”—which index people’s mutual and conventional responsibilities in a community. Even the Xu Aqu carving (Fig. 1)—the image of a “real” child—is not an exception: the “portrait” is based on a standard image of a male master receiving an audience and enjoying musical and dance performances. As the adult figures are replaced by children in this carving, Xu’s “portrait” is again transformed into an idealized “public” image—as if the memory of the child could only survive in the stereotype of public art, and the parents’ love for their son, so vividly expressed in the eulogy, could only be expressed in the generic language of funerary monuments.
Notes

I want to express my thanks to Anne Behnke Kinney and Kenneth DeWoskin for their comments on this chapter. The issue of “public duty” in Han art is also a central topic of Martin Powers’ important book, Art and Political Expression in Early China (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). Since Powers’ book appeared after the completion of this essay, interested readers should consult his work.

1. Nanyang Museum, “Nanyang fxiang Dong-Han Xu Aqu muizhi hua-xiangshi,” Wenshu 8 (1974):73–75. As the excavators have demonstrated, the tomb is not Xu Aqu’s grave; the carving was reused as a building stone by fourth-century builders. For the practice of reusing early stone carvings in later tombs, see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine: The Ideology of Early Chinese Pictorial Art (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989).

2. In a letter to the author, Ellen Laing identified this second bird as a goose because “children playing with a goose” remained a popular motif in later Chinese art.

3. Such entertainment scenes are common in Eastern Han pictorial art and are discussed in Kenneth J. DeWoskin, ”Music and Voices from the Han Tombs: Music, Dance and Entertainments During the Han,” in Lucy Lim, ed., Stories from China’s Past (San Francisco: Chinese Culture Center, 1997), pp. 64–71.

4. For a discussion of the definition of “portrait” in the Chinese context, see Audrey Spiro, Contemplating the Ancients (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 7–11. In this study I use the term in a stricter sense—not for fictional or mythological figures based on texts (which I call “illustration”), but only for images representing real personages.


6. For textual information, see Ch’u T’ung-ts’u, Han Social Structure (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), pp. 8–9. Unlike pre-Qin cemeteries, which usually belonged to large clans or lineages, Western Han funerary sites were small and often included tombs for members of an individual family. A representative of this type of cemetery is the famous Mawangdui site whose three graves belonged to the first Marquis Dai named Li Cang, his wife, and one of their sons; the second Marquis Dai was not buried in this cemetery. Another product of the same social transformation was the “single-pit tomb” containing the corpses of a deceased couple, which became popular during the Western Han. See Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Xin Zhongguo de kaogu fxiang be yanjiu (Beijing: Wenshu chubanshe, 1984), pp. 413–415; Wang Zhongshu, Han Civilization, trans. K. C. Chang (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 175–177.

7. During the Qin, Western Han, and Eastern Han, the idea of “extended families” was based on a common belief in the延续 of the family as well as a common practice of adoptions, see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, pp. 19–20.

8. Eastern Han “extended families” took their names from the ancestors who lived with him, see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, p. 19.


10. This story is related to the tale of the story see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, p. 25.


15. LNZ, p. 65; O’Hara, The Position of the Study see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, p. 25.

16. LNZ, p. 70; O’Hara, The Position of the Study see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, p. 25.


18. Besides the loyal service praised in the Biography of the Martyr rather than some others

7. During the Qin-Western Han period a law required families with two or more adult sons living at home to pay double taxes. For textual sources and the impact of this law, see Ch’u, Han Social Structure, pp. 8–9.

8. Eastern Han authorities periodically established models of such “extended families” based on Confucian morality: in one place a scholar who lived with his paternal relatives and whose whole family held its property in common for three generations was highly praised. See Ch’u, Han Social Structure, p. 301; Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, pp. 32–37.


10. This story is recorded in a version of the Biographies of Filial Sons housed in Tokyo University. For a full English translation and discussion see Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, pp. 291–292.


14. The story of the Public-Spirited Aunt of Lu is illustrated on the Wu Liang Shrine and, according to textual information, also on Li Gang’s shrine, which is no longer extant. The story of the Virtuous Aunt of Liang is depicted on the Wu Liang Shrine and on the Front Shrine in the Wu family cemetery. See Wu Hung, The Wu Liang Shrine, pp. 256–258, 262–264.


18. Besides the loyal servant Li Shan discussed later, a wet nurse is praised in the Biographies of Exemplary Women because she became a martyr rather than surrender the orphaned heir of the state of Wei. See LNZ, p. 69.


28. These examples are collected in Yang, *Handai hunsang lishu kao*, pp. 56–57.


31. I want to thank the anonymous reader who offered this penetrating view when commenting on a draft of this chapter.


33. Ibid., p. 10.


36. Li ji, in Ruan Yuan, *Shisanjing zhushu*, p. 1232.


43. Spiro, *Contemplating the Ancients*, p. 31.


47. This passage is from the inscription on the An Guo Shrine, which also describes scenes on the memorial hall, including “personages of filial piety, excellent virtue, and benevolence.” See Li Falin, *Shandong Han hua-xiangshi yanjiu* (Ji’nan: Qilu shushe, 1982), p. 102.


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**GLOSSARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Character</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>duxing</td>
<td>distinctive behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>feng</td>
<td>remonstration</td>
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<tr>
<td>gongyi</td>
<td>public duty</td>
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<tr>
<td>guanli</td>
<td>capping ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td>junzi</td>
<td>noble gentleman</td>
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<tr>
<td>liuji</td>
<td>the Six Strings</td>
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<td>sangang</td>
<td>the Three Bonds</td>
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<tr>
<td>siao</td>
<td>private love</td>
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<tr>
<td>tong</td>
<td>child</td>
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<td>tongke</td>
<td>boy’s exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>tongzi lang</td>
<td>boy gentlemen</td>
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<tr>
<td>xiao</td>
<td>filial piety</td>
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<tr>
<td>xiaolian</td>
<td>filial and incorrupt</td>
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<tr>
<td>xin</td>
<td>fidelity</td>
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<td>xuanju</td>
<td>election</td>
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The Chinese-American understands facetiously that he or she had been brought up among his own children in America. He challenges the idea of the feudal indoctrination, the behavior toward one's parents. His ambivalence is far more ambivalent involved in comparisons of the years of the Bill of Rights and the quicksand where far better people have walked. Instead, I propose to look at children, selected from an an Account of Tales of the Wang family, the sponsorship of a printer (modern Nanjing).

The children who appear to be of aristocratic families, but stories tell us something about children's behavior and about children's behavior of grown-ups. The time frame is from the Han (A.D. 25–220), which was a critical passage, and ending with the period based in Jiankang, southern China. He émigré families from the situation after the fall of Luoyang.