

Greek divination have much to learn from each other. It is particularly striking that in both cases there is a history of dissonance between received textual traditions and archaeology. How to combine the use of archaeological and textual sources is clearly an important methodological issue for both. Equally striking are the very different methods used and questions asked. (p. 83)

After reading *Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece*, I am convinced that “scholars of Chinese and Greek divination have much to learn from each other.” Nevertheless, I am also convinced not only that these two forms of divination used “very different methods,” but that they were also based on very different understandings of humans’ relations with the spirit world. Although aspects of both divinations “by nature” and “by technical expertise” can certainly be found in China, there is a third aspect—examined above—that may be even more constitutive of Chinese divination. For want of a better word, it might best be termed “moral.” In China, divination had more to do with humans than with the gods, and “madness”—divine or otherwise—rarely entered into the practice. For divination to be successful, it was important for the consultors first to make up their own minds and then to affirm to the spirits that what they were seeking was proper. As Jao Tsung-i said, “In performing divination, the ‘will’ was a very important prerequisite.” This does not mean that divination in early China was “secular” in any Weberian sense. It was surely religious, but religious in a different sense from that seen in ancient Greece. If this difference does nothing more than to “parochialize” the two traditions, Professor Raphals will still have contributed a very great service to the study of both early China and ancient Greece.

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Birth of an Empire: The State of Qin Revisited. Edited by Yuri Pines, Gideon Shelach, Lothar von Falkenhausen, and Robin D. S. Yates. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2014. Pp. xii + 395. \$39.95.

Edited volumes present reviewers with particular challenges. Unlike the monograph, the edited volume is a miscellaneous creature. Patched together from the efforts of diversely motivated parties, edited volumes lack sustained argumentation. To employ a change of metaphor, one should regard the edited volume as a *bricolage* rather than an engineering project. Its values lie arguably not in the coherence of the creator’s

vision as much as the rich mixture of disparate elements and cacophony of styles. In this regard, *Birth of an Empire* is no exception. What the four distinguished editors of the volume put forth is *not* a new narrative of the Qin. By their own admission, they proffer an assortment of contrasting, even contradictory, perspectives on how to study the Qin past (p. 33).

The four editors open with a general introduction, which provides a succinct summary of the goals of the volume: to revisit the Qin, a formative period in “Chinese” civilization (the scare quotes are theirs, not mine). Such a re-evaluation, the editors explain, is overdue, in light of the palaeographical and archaeological revolution of recent decades.

The first part, falling under the aegis of Lothar von Falkenhausen, includes two information-packed essays by the archaeologists Zhao Huacheng 趙化成 and Teng Mingyu 滕銘予 translated from Chinese. It is Falkenhausen who advances the more provocative interpretation of the material record in what he bills as an introduction to the archaeological discussion. As he argues, the archaeological record tells a different story from the received view of the Qin or the rhetoric of the First Emperor. Far from being radical innovators or barbaric upstarts, the Qin rulers “operated very much within the Zhou system.” As point of fact, the Qin rulers were nothing less than the guardians of the Zhou ritual orthodoxy extolled by the very men, the “Confucians,” who would later take it upon themselves to excoriate the Qin (p. 46). Besides revealing the flaws of received wisdom about the Qin (and by this, Falkenhausen must be referring to later Han-dynasty scholars such as Jia Yi 賈誼), the archaeological record exposes the pitfalls of more recent approaches, which emphasize rupture over continuity and regional heterogeneity over cultural unity. Falkenhausen denies the existence of a distinctive Qin culture. The ritual vessels and assemblages found in Qin tombs are largely indistinguishable from those found elsewhere in the North China plains, and as such, constitutes “at most a variant (or, more technically, a *regional phase*) of what, for want of a better term, we may call the archaeological culture of Zhou civilization” (p. 39). With its emphasis on *longue durée*, Falkenhausen’s essay stands in relief to that of Gideon Schelach, which suggests underlying causes behind the sudden collapse of the Qin polity. Inspired by the work of eminent theorists as James C. Scott and Norman Yoffee, Schelach, an archaeologist, draws upon the extant textual record, particularly Sima Qian’s 司馬遷 *Shiji* 史記, for his thought experiment. Schelach’s is an overtly revisionist piece. As one would expect of any good social scientist, he is clear about which views he hopes to overturn, namely, the “traditional” explanations in the ancient and recent literature, all of which represent a variation on Jia Yi’s indictment of the Qin, which chalk up Qin’s sudden collapse to the personal failings of princes. As Schelach explains, such explanations treat the Qin as “sui generis, an accident that should be

studied to prevent the recurrence of similar accidents in the future, but which does not lend itself to broader generalizations” (p. 114). One of these, the proposition that Qin fell because of ambitious public works projects that sapped the population of its life energy, receives scrutiny from Schelach. According to Schelach, the public works projects—the notorious erecting of the Walls, the emperor’s unprecedented building of a mammoth mausoleum, and the construction of the highways and transportation canals—were not in themselves sufficient to cause political collapse (p. 137). On the contrary, Schelach counters that a more robust view of collapse requires considering the ways in which the “pressure created by one subsystem” affected other subsystems. To this end, he introduces a contrast between tightly integrated and fuzzy systems. Whereas the former extract resources more efficiently, the latter are “flexibly attuned to compelling local conditions” and thus stable. Building upon this distinction, Schelach proposes that the collapse of Qin owes much to the state’s “attempt to create a hyper-precise system, coupled with increased pressure on the extraction of human and natural resources, led the low-level bureaucratic units to severely malfunction and finally brought about the collapse of the entire political system” (p. 134).

In a second part, Yates deftly tackles the difficult job of teasing out the thematic connections between different essays on Qin state and society: a technical discussion of the palaeographical evidence for a Qin system of household registers by Hsing I-tien 邢義田, a picture of the stark class differences in religious mentality painted by Poo Mu-chou 蒲慕州, and Yates’s own subtle treatment of slavery in the early imperial period. As he explains, all three of these essays complicate (rather than overturn) received wisdom, with its emphasis on the “socioeconomic transformation and radical political reforms, which brought into existence an unprecedentedly powerful, centralized, and hierarchically organized bureaucratic state that replaced the loose polity of the preceding aristocratic age” (p. 141). At the same time, all three of these papers support the notion of general historical continuity advanced by Falkenhausen in the first section: here, continuity between Zhou and Qin (Poo), and between Qin and Han (Hsing, Yates). Poo posits that Qin religion represented an outgrowth of an older religious mentality hailing from Shang and Zhou times, one that treated “world and human affairs as a fixed structure” and evinced an “opportunist and amoral mentality” (p. 205). Hsing presents a picture of the emergence of the household registry system in Qin and Han, and Yates uncovers the gradual shifts in state policy on slavery.

The final section, led by Yuri Pines, represents a sharp break with the previous chapters. Here, the essays address the question of whether the Qin saw themselves as ushering a new paradigm in governance, or the end of history. It opens with Pines’s long introduction, a historiographical survey that seeks to expose the roots of received wisdom. Pines’s survey begins predictably with the accounts left behind by the Han

victors, particularly Jia Yi, which Pines characterizes as a “masterfully balanced assessment of the Qin” (p. 230). He positions the roots of “anti-Qin propaganda” in the backlash against Emperor Wu’s 漢武帝 state activism (“it was much safer for the opponents of imperial activism to focus on Qin’s misdeeds than to criticize Emperor Wu and his successors directly,” pp. 230–31). He then traces the rise of twentieth-century re-evaluations of the Qin, evaluations provoked by the declining fortunes of the “imperial brand of ‘Confucianism’” and futile, if not laughable, attempts at national reconstruction (notably, the modernizing May Fourth Movement and a glorious Cultural Revolution). All this provides the backdrop of Hans van Ess’s essay, which questions the textual basis of all modern assessments, Sima Qian’s biography of the First Emperor in the *Shiji*. Van Ess proposes that readers ought to bear in mind that Sima Qian shaped the First Emperor after the image of Emperor Wu. As a result, van Ess suggests that the biography of the First Emperor tells us little *either* about Qin realities or Han valuations of the previous dynasty. Instead, that biography discloses Sima Qian’s sly criticism of a contemporary ruler. In contrast, Pines argues that the Qin stele inscriptions preserved in the same biography liberate modern interpreters from the biases of later sources insofar as they express the emperor’s self-image (p. 259). Though some readers may wonder about Pines’s claim that the First Emperor saw himself as a messiah, this reviewer found his reading of these well-known inscriptions stimulating. Admittedly, one should bear in mind van Ess’s admonitions that readers should think hard about whether the contents of the inscriptions, albeit carved in stone, are necessarily indelible. Still, Pines makes a persuasive case that the inscriptions evince a starkly different view of history than found in other works of political persuasion. For example, unlike the writings left behind by court persuaders, which frequently harken back to an exemplary, imitable past, the author of the inscriptions envisioned the Qin as the end of a long history of violence beginning in high antiquity, the start of a new era of peace. In this way, Pines argues that the stelae furnish proof of Qin innovation, the willingness of its rulers to self-consciously present themselves as breaking with past precedents and institutions. Building upon Pines by the final essay, Alexander Yakobson compares the legitimization strategies of Augustus, founder of the imperial Roman order, to those of the First Emperor. Yakobson suggests that in many ways the Qin represented the more iconoclastic of the two: it was ironically Augustus who took pains to present himself as the defender of the Republic, a custodian of tradition.

As my summary should make plain, the editors deserve enormous credit for presenting an interdisciplinary and multi-faceted look at the Qin period. Clearly, they went to great lengths to include contributions from scholars in Taiwan and mainland China, which had to be translated into English. In addition, the volume editors distinguish themselves in refraining from imposing intellectual uniformity.

Throughout the volume, the contributors were upfront but respectful about their disagreements with each other, particularly about the extent to which they regarded the Qin period in terms of continuity as opposed to change. All this bodes for the future—perhaps a more irenic and tolerant field? Finally, this reviewer appreciates the editors' willingness to include a contribution from a non-China specialist. Such a move reveals a praiseworthy willingness to engage voices and perspectives from outside of the China field, and a commitment to moving the study of early China out of the margins into the mainstream of academic discourse.

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Emperor Huizong. By Patricia Buckley Ebrey. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2014. Pp. xxix + 661. \$45.00/£30.00.

Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1126) has long held an anomalous position in Chinese historical memory. On the one hand he is acknowledged as a great artist and calligrapher, whose lavish patronage of the arts had a significant impact on art and culture. On the other, he has been condemned on a number of grounds: for his use of Cai Jing 蔡京 (1047–1126; later classified as a “nefarious minister”) and together with Cai enacting extreme purges of political opponents; for profligate spending, in part on reform policies deemed not to have been effective but even more on his “Flower and Rock Network” that collected and then transported huge rocks for his Royal Marchmount park (Genyue 艮岳); for his quixotic patronage of Daoism and persecution of Buddhism; and most of all for his disastrous war against the Jurchen which ended with the fall of Kaifeng 開封 and his captivity under the Jurchen. Since this marked the end of the Northern Song—though not of the Song dynasty—he has also been cast as the bad last emperor of a dynasty commonly judged to be the weakest of major Chinese dynasties.

In recent years Huizong and his reign have attracted the attention of a number of Western—primarily American—historians and their views have departed significantly from the judgements described above.¹ Patricia Buckley Ebrey's role in this development has been central. 2006 witnessed the publication of *Emperor Huizong and*

¹ In addition to the works cited in the text, mention should be made of Ari Daniel Levine, “The Reigns of Hui-tsung (1100–1126) and Ch'in-tsung (1126–1127) and the Fall of the Northern Sung,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 5 Part One: *The Sung Dynasty and Its* (Continued on next page)