

However nebulous the ethnic identity of Manchu might have been to the women poets anthologized here, this volume is a very welcome addition to the growing body of women's poetry from late imperial China. Idema's fine translation makes accessible once again the rich lives, experiences and feelings of poets long forgotten by history.

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*Between History and Philosophy: Anecdotes in Early China*, edited by Paul van Els and Sarah A. Queen. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2017. Pp. ix + 376.

When first learning Classical Chinese in the era after it ceased to be a formal language of education, the texts where we are most likely to begin, at the sweet spot presenting manageable challenges of vocabulary and grammar but yet still meaningful and interesting, are likely anecdotes. Little does the student suspect how central these intriguing ingots of narrative are to the textual world we are entering.

This volume is the first book-length Western language study of anecdotes in early China, the fruit of a workshop held in Leiden in 2013. The editors are to be commended for taking on a topic that is central to the textual and intellectual legacy of early China, yet challenging to grasp. Because of their ubiquity, brevity, and flexibility, anecdotes as a form have seldom been the center of scholarly attention. When judged from the perspective of European-based standards of philosophy or history, anecdotes are devalued: not as serious as deductive argument for philosophy, and less credible and more trivial than other kinds of historical narrative for history. As this book amply demonstrates, anecdotes formed a shared corpus deployed by multiple writers to divergent ends, undermining the divide between history and philosophy.

The introduction by the two editors carefully defines the anecdote in the Western context, then considers the particular traits of the Chinese tradition. I would have liked to see the discussion of the overlap of "anecdote" with varying Chinese terms in footnote 7 moved to the main body of the text. Despite the constant use of anecdotes themselves, as the editors note there is no consistent application of any term for anecdotes in traditional Chinese literary criticism. In modern criticism the term most used is *yuyan* 寓言, but that further confuses matters because it is often considered equivalent to "fable" or "parable." This problem with the commensurability of terms makes descriptions of the unique features of the Chinese anecdote tradition seem circular. "In terms of the *dramatis personae*, early Chinese anecdotes appear to be somewhat more accommodating than their counterparts in other literary traditions, where short stories about unnamed people, animals, and so on, are more likely to be categorized as jokes, fables, and so on, than as anecdotes." (p.9) Isn't that more accommodating nature precisely the result of differing terms and concepts in different

languages? (In practice the anecdotes discussed in detail in this book are primarily not those with non-human or nameless protagonists.)

The structure of the volume follows the divisions of history and philosophy suggested by the title, with the first section on anecdotes in argumentation and the third on anecdotes in history. The middle section “anecdotes and textual formation” forms a bridge between these two; instead of seeing what individual texts can tell us about anecdotes, it explores what anecdotes can reveal to us about texts, both philosophical and historical. Beyond this structure, the chapters in this volume can be divided into those raising a broad question (Goldin, appropriately the first chapter after the introduction); studies of a particular anecdote across multiple texts (Meyer, van Els); studies of a particular topic in anecdotes across multiple texts (Li); and those studying a particular text (Lee, Pines, Du, Queen, Schwermann, Krijsmann). Two of the chapters look at the anecdote tradition in negative, examining anecdotes in light of where they are not: Pines explores historiography without anecdote, and van Els the end of the anecdote tradition.

Each chapter, regardless of the differing focus, is supported by meticulous translations of primary texts. The range of coverage is impressive, including the most influential texts of multiple traditions, much less studied received texts, and recently excavated texts, from the Zhou through the Western Han. In one of the chapters, Mayer recommends a reading strategy, “To read one Warring States text, one must read all (available) Warring States Texts.” (86) The authors have followed this maxim. Each chapter stands alone, but the whole is also more than the sum of its parts.

The scholar most often cited who does not appear as a contributor to the book is David Schaberg, particularly *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Harvard University Press, 2002). It seems almost that this book begins with philosophy because Schaberg focused on historiography (at least for Mayer, p. 63) This book is also in dialogue with studies of anecdote and gossip in later traditions (Jack W. Chen and David Schaberg, editors, *Idle Talk: Gossip and Anecdote in Traditional China* (University of California Press, 2014).

Paul R. Goldin’s chapter “Non-deductive Argumentation in Early Chinese Philosophy” makes an appropriate opening to the volume as a whole and the sub-section on anecdote and argumentation. He understands the use of anecdotes as illustrative examples as one manifestation of a general preference for non-deductive reasoning in the Chinese tradition. Scholars of comparative philosophy have often seen the relative (but as Goldin points out not total) neglect of deductive reasoning and systematic logic as a limitation, perhaps even excluding Chinese philosophy from being considered as philosophy at all. Goldin argues that the use of non-deductive reasoning was a choice, and one that demands more active participation from its audience.

The subsequent chapter, Andrew Seth Meyer’s “The Frontier Between Chen and Cai,” fits more closely with Goldin’s chapter than most other neighboring pairs of chapters in the book, also in dialogue with Greek philosophy. Meyer follows a particular anecdote, a moment Confucius was in a desperate situation that arousing

doubt and despair in his disciples, through multiple sources. He argues rather than simply being examples, anecdotes serve as thought experiments, means of thinking through philosophical problems, often acting simultaneously on multiple levels.

The third chapter, Ting-mien Lee's "Mozi as a Daoist Sage: An Intertextual Analysis of the 'Gongshu' Anecdote in the *Mozi*" centers on a particular anecdote in a particular text, but places that anecdote in a broad intertextual framework. Lee demonstrates that not only is there a rupture between the body of the anecdote and its ending, with the ending seeming to promote Daoist ideals incongruent for the *Mozi*, but that the different parts of the anecdote are belong to different discourse circles among Warring States texts. This serves as a transition from *Between History and Philosophy's* first section and the second section on textual formation, but actually seems more closely aligned with the latter.

Unique among the chapters in the volume, Wai-yee Li's "Anecdotal Barbarians in Early China" explores a theme rather than a particular anecdote. She shows how in addition to displaying attitudes towards cultural "others", these anecdotes explore important questions about the value and perils of cultural refinement and the potential for cultural change, whether Chinese adopting "barbarian" customs or the other way around. Anecdotal barbarians are shaped as much by the rhetorical context in which they are deployed as by any fixed ideas about them. Although discussing examples from both works defined as philosophy and as history, her emphasis shifts to the latter. Writing about barbarians allows viewing the center from the margin, which Li argues is more important than it might seem; for the case of *Shi ji*, "the shift of perspectives becomes something central to the whole enterprise of writing an impartial and comprehensive history." (139)

Appropriately, each of the three chapters in the chapter on text formation focuses on a single text. Moving to a work that not only contains anecdotes but is defined by them, Christian Schwermann argues that the *Shuo yuan* (Garden of Illustrative Examples) is a carefully constructed text, and that Liu Xiang rewrote and arranged his anecdotes to support his points. He makes the case that Liu is an author rather than merely a compiler through close reading of Liu's memorial presenting the work and the construction of an individual chapter.

In some ways similar to Lee's article on the *Mozi*, Heng Du shows that inconsistencies in *Han Feizi's* portrayal of Confucius, sometimes shown as an admirable figure and sometimes as an enemy, are not random, but follow patterns that shed light on the composition of the text. Structurally, anecdotes are concentrated in the middle section of the text, forming a transition between "univocal presentation of core Han Feizi teachings" and "polyphonic dialogues and debates." This position again underlines the importance and flexibility of anecdotes. The former section focuses on power struggles between rulers and ministers, with Confucius seen as an esteemed figure and rendered a mouthpiece for Han Feizi's ideas; the latter on disputes between rival schools, with Confucius as a rival.

In “The Limits of Praise and Blame: The Rhetorical Uses of Anecdotes in *Gongyangzhuan*,” Sarah A Queen takes on a text in which the study of anecdotes has been neglected in comparison with the *Zuozhuan*. She identifies “state service and restorative justice” as the central themes, but the concept of service differs from *Zuozhuan*, valuing ministerial subservience more than independence. She divides the exemplary figures into five kinds, and presents detailed examples of each. Anecdotes were used not arbitrarily, but allow more complexity in the presentation of the extreme cases of exemplary or deplorable behavior. Her concluding section is entitled “Anecdote as Historiographical Muse,” and I would like to better understand what she means by muse.

The third section, “Anecdotes and History”, includes the two chapters that deal with excavated texts and thus form another pair that fit together well. Yuri Pines argues in “History without Anecdotes: Between the *Zuozhuan* and the *Xinian* Manuscript” that our sense of the overwhelming importance of anecdotes may be skewed by the texts that has survived. He presents the *Xinian*, an excavated text that he persuasively dates to Chu in the early fourth century BCE, as another model: history that is informative rather than entertaining or didactic. Rather than having a moral message, this text would provide a small circle of people in power the information they needed about how the current situation emerged in order to make policy decisions. This kind of history has a shorter expiration date than the anecdote-studded texts we know better, as it is of little use beyond an immediate context.

Rens Krijgsman’s “Cultural Memory and Excavated Anecdotes in ‘Documentary’ Narrative: Mediating Generic Tensions in the *Baoxun* Manuscript” also explores the differences between anecdotes and another mode of remembering the past, the “documentary” 書 genre. The documentary genre presents itself as “the actual authoritative past” rather than, like anecdotes, flexible versions of it. The *Baoxun* manuscript, which Krijgsman translates here in full, attempts to incorporate both of these genres. Krijgsman argues that this reflects the Warring States transition between what Jan Assmann describes as a ritual and textual modes of cultural memory. His subject is thus the opposite of the practical but ephemeral history discussed by Pines.

In “Old Stories No Longer Told: The End of the Anecdote Tradition in Early China” Paul Van Els shifts the understanding of “Anecdotes and History” to the history of anecdotes, and forms an appropriate ending for the volume. The first part of the chapter, similar to earlier chapters, studies multiple versions of a particular anecdote, Duke Wen of Jin’s siege of Yuan, each text using the anecdote to a different purpose. However, the following section looks at what happens to the anecdote after the Western Han, when it appeared only a handful of times, and then in only fragmentary form. Speculating on the reasons for this decline, Van Els points to a more critical view of history, with greater emphasis on accuracy. The older corpus of anecdotes is succeeded by a new corpus and new practices, culminating in *Shishuo xinyu*. This discussion of endings made me realize that the book never discussed beginnings of the anecdotal tradition.

Both readers with interest in anecdotes in general and those concerned with early Chinese philosophy and history will benefit from reading this volume. Anecdotes are not only between history and philosophy, but also beyond both. Although as Van Els points out new versions of these anecdotes are seldom created after the Western Han, they survive as allusions and frequently reread texts. From my own perspective as a student of later Chinese narrative, I am intrigued by the role of anecdote in its development. If factuality isn't the most crucial concern about anecdotes, does this change our arguments about fictionality in the Chinese tradition?

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*Record of the Listener*, by Hong Mai and translated by Ellen Zhang. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2018. Pp. xliii + 116. \$16.00 (paper).

Ellen Zhang's partial translation of Hong Mai's (1123-1202) short-narrative collection, *Record of the Listener* (Yijian zhi, hereafter the *Record*), is ideal for classroom use. A hundred stories that Zhang has selected grant the reader a virtual eye-witness view on everyday life in twelfth century China. Undergraduate and graduate students studying Chinese anthropology, religion, social and literary history may easily access these valuable primary sources thanks to Zhang's translation. Established scholars writing in English might also find it convenient to quote from her selections.

Hong Mai was a statesman and historian whose life spanned most of the tumultuous twelfth century. It is little wonder, therefore, that scholars researching Song dynasty (960-1279) China have used his 207-chapter (originally 420) *Record* as a primary source with increasing frequency. A search of the China Knowledge database yields a list of over three hundred and fifty Chinese language articles and theses focusing on this important text, most of them having been produced in the previous ten years, whereas the Bibliography of Asian Studies database produces fourteen results. The *Record's* popularity among scholars is not unfounded. Hong Mai spent most of his life listening to, swapping and recording paranormal, uncanny and news-worthy stories that address matters ignored by standard historical works.

Hong was especially interested in the popular religious beliefs of his time. Accordingly, his *Record* includes topics such as ghostly hauntings, omens, dreams, destiny, Daoist and Buddhist practices, alchemy, the cult of immortality, karmic retribution and the like. With the sensibility and literary style of a historian, he recorded what he and his contemporaries considered genuine paranormal phenomena, often weighing its plausibility with the logic of received tradition. What distinguishes Hong's collection is his penchant for verifying reported facts, amending spurious accounts, and citing sources while claiming historical reliability; other collectors of strange events seldom went to such lengths. Yet Hong's eclectic taste and predilection for quantity