

Calling in Sick during the Reign of Gongsun Shu

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Calling in sick to get out of work is a time-honored practice, and something of an art form in and of itself. Early and medieval Chinese texts are full of instances of individuals claiming illness to either excuse themselves from current positions, or to avoid appointments to office, a practice firmly situated in the rhetoric of reclusion. This paper focuses on several cases contained in Chang Qu's 常璩 (ca. 291–ca. 361) *Huayang guo zhi* 華陽國志 (Records of the States South of Mount Hua, compiled ca. 350 CE) of men who made medical excuses to reject appointments offered by Gongsun Shu 公孫述 (d. 36 CE), the self-proclaimed emperor of the Shu region. I will examine these anecdotes with an eye toward understanding primarily their historiographical significance. Moreover, this paper is not an effort to compile a comprehensive history of illness and public service, nor a detailed examination of the medical science behind the illnesses used to avoid work; its focus is narrow and specific. How did the persons narrated by Chang Qu use illness to avoid service under a particular ruler, and what underlying messages might we glean from Chang's own telling of these stories?

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF CALLING IN SICK IN EARLY AND EARLY MEDIEVAL CHINA

Early imperial historical sources indicate that claiming illness to avoid service and other responsibilities was not uncommon.¹ Sima Qian's (c. 145–86 BCE) 司馬遷 *Shiji* 史記 contains thirty-eight mentions of persons “claiming illness” (*cheng bing* 稱病); Ban Gu's 班固 *Hanshu* 漢書 contains twenty-six instances of the same term; and Fan Ye's 范曄 *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 contains twenty-eight references to “claiming illness” and an additional twelve to “pleading illness” (*tuo bing* 託病). Chen Shou's 陳壽 *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 only makes mention of three persons “claiming illness” and one person “pleading illness.” A quick survey of these references shows significant change over time in the deployment of medical excuses.

References in *Shiji* to Warring States period personages and events show the excuse being used by members of the ruling elite to shirk responsibility and protect themselves from potential harm. For example, *Shiji* fascicle 33 notes, “in the fourth year [of Duke Zhao] [538 BCE], King Ling of Chu (r. 540–529 BCE) held a meeting with feudal lords at Shen, but Duke Zhao [of Lu 魯] claimed illness and did not attend” [昭公]四年，楚靈王會諸侯於申，昭

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1. Li Jianmin has identified over two hundred cases of Han dynasty political figures using illness as an excuse to leave office or avoid taking it all together; Li Jianmin 李建民, “Han dai ‘yibing’ yanjiu” 漢代「移病」研究, *Xin shixue* 12.4 (2001): 1–24.

公稱病不往.² Similarly, *Shiji* fascicle 37 notes, “in the sixth year of Duke Xiang’s reign (538 BCE), King Ling of Chu gathered together the feudal lords; but Duke Xiang claimed illness and did not attend” 襄公六年，楚靈王會諸侯，襄公稱病不往.³ In both cases, the rulers of the weaker state of Lu claimed illness to avoid attending covenant meetings called by the ruler of a stronger state, Chu.

Sima Qian’s narrative of Western Han history also contains anecdotes in which person-ages deployed claims of illness to avoid contact with powerful superiors. Two such cases involve Han Emperor Gaozu 高祖 Liu Bang 劉邦 and his former trusted aides. *Shiji* fascicle 92 records, “[Han] Xin, knowing the King of Han [Liu Bang] was in awe of and detested his abilities, constantly claimed illness and did not appear in court or follow [in processions]” [韓]信知漢王畏惡其能，常稱病不朝從。⁴ Similarly, the *Shiji* fascicle 93 account of the King of Yan 燕, Lu Wan 盧綰, reads, “Gaozu sent an emissary to summon Lu Wan, but he claimed illness [and did not come]” 高祖使使召盧綰，綰稱病。⁵ Noting that two other high-ranking nobles not related to the Liu clan had just been executed—Han Xin and Peng Yue 彭越⁶—Lu Wan excused himself on grounds of illness a second time and “everyone in his entourage went into hiding” 其左右皆亡匿。⁷

By the Eastern Han, the practice of claiming illness to avoid duty (and potential harm) trickled down the social hierarchy and became a standard feature of the rhetoric of reclusion and a form of political protest.⁸ In particular, both the *Hanshu* and *Hou Hanshu* accounts of various powerful politicians contain frequent references to scholar-officials claiming illness to be excused from or to avoid service. The usurpation of power and the throne by Wang Mang 王莽 in 9 CE led to a number of scholar-officials rejecting appointments or leaving office on grounds of illness. For example, Chen Xian 陳咸 rejected a summons to serve as grandee in charge of brigands (*zhang kou daifu* 掌寇大夫) by “excusing himself on grounds of illness” 謝病, while Dai Zun 戴遵 “claimed illness and returned to his hamlet” 稱病歸鄉里 after Wang Mang claimed the throne.⁹ This trend continued throughout the Eastern Han, especially as powerful courtiers and military officers controlled a succession of young, weak Han emperors. For example, Fan Ye’s *Hou Hanshu* notes the matters of Yang Hou 楊厚, who “steadfastly claimed illness and asked to retire” 固稱病求退 to avoid the general-in-chief Liang Ji 梁冀, who held sway at the court of Emperor Huan 桓帝 (r. 146–167) until his execution in 159.¹⁰ Yuan Zhu 袁著 “changed his surname, and later pleaded illness and faked his own death, binding cattails to form [the shape of a] man and buying a coffin to

2. *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959) [hereafter cited as *SJ*], 33.1539; tr. William H. Nienhauser et al., *The Grand Scribe’s Records* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1994–2016) [hereafter cited as *GSR*], 5.1: 154. This and other translations from *Shiji* are based on *GSR*, but modified in some cases. Items in square brackets are added by myself.

3. *SJ* 37.1598; *GSR* 5.1: 254.

4. *SJ* 92.2628; *GSR* 8: 96.

5. *SJ* 93.2638; *GSR* 8: 123.

6. For Peng Yue, see *SJ* 90.2591–95.

7. *SJ* 93.2638; *GSR* 8: 123.

8. For two detailed studies of reclusion in early and early medieval China, see Aat Vervoorn, *Men of the Cliffs and Caves: The Development of the Chinese Eremitic Tradition to the End of the Han Dynasty* (Hong Kong: Chinese Univ. Press, 1990), and Alan J. Berkowitz, *Patterns of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2000).

9. *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965) [hereafter cited as *HHS*], 46.1548; 83.2772–73.

10. *HHS* 30A.1049–50. Yang Hou’s request was granted by the emperor.

send off for burial” 著乃變易姓名，後託病偽死，結蒲為人，市棺殯送。¹¹ Kong Rong 孔融 “pleaded illness and returned to his home” 託病歸家 to avoid serving He Jin 何進。¹²

Li Jianmin’s study of Han dynasty political figures finds several recurring themes in the deployment of medical excuses to leave or avoid public service. He notes that claims to illness were common during the Han because they were socially acceptable methods for officials to navigate unequal social power relationships, often allowing the less powerful figures to get what they wanted (usually, out of a work assignment) or express dissatisfaction with the status quo. For these claims to work, however, a confirmation of illness was generally required. Numerous examples show a representative of the state, including the emperor himself, calling on the “sick” official (*wenbing* 問病), often with food, medicine, supplies, and even an attending physician to aid in the recovery. Visits to the “sick” took the form of a role-play in which the superior-visitor acted as if the subordinate’s illness was real, while knowing full well that the claim was most likely an excuse. Not a small number of these visits resulted in near miraculous cures, allowing the “sick” official to return to duty. Finally, Li notes that illness was often deployed as a show of humility, and could be used to launch oneself to a higher, more prestigious appointment.¹³

We might rightly question how to properly read these sorts of accounts: as historical events or historiographical tropes? The illnesses cited are frequently vague, and in many cases, the powerful figures being avoided did not directly challenge the excuses. Moving from the dynastic histories to a local record, however, we begin to see a somewhat different pattern emerging, especially in accounts of the reign of the regional warlord-emperor Gongsun Shu.

HUAYANG GUO ZHI: THE CASE OF GONGSUN SHU

Fascicles 5–9 of Chang Qu’s *Huayang guo zhi* present the histories of various separatist regimes in southwest China, including Gongsun Shu’s state of Dacheng 大成 (25–36 CE), the administration of Liu Yan 劉焉 (d. 194) and his son Liu Zhang 劉璋 (d. 219), Liu Bei 劉備 and Liu Shan’s 劉禪 state of [Shu] Han 蜀漢 (221–264), and the Li family’s state of Cheng-Han 成漢 (302–352). Chang Qu’s self-stated intent in these fascicles was to incorporate local historical records into the broader official accounts of the area, thus providing local perspectives on imperial issues involving his home region. It is his treatment of Gongsun Shu’s brief rule that interests us here.

The matter of Gongsun Shu is not treated in any degree of detail in Ban Gu’s *Hanshu*. Rather, the earliest account of his activities is found in the surviving fragments of Liu Zhen’s 劉珍 *Dongguan Han ji* 東觀漢記.¹⁴ Chang Qu’s account marks the second-earliest extant record of Gongsun Shu, and both the *Dongguan Han ji* and *Huayang guo zhi* narratives serve as the basis for Fan Ye’s now-official biography in *Hou Hanshu* fascicle 13.¹⁵

Chang Qu’s treatment of Gongsun Shu is brief, totaling 1,409 characters, and is divided into two sections: the first outlining Gongsun Shu’s rise and fall, and the second addressing

11. *HHS* 34.1184.

12. *HHS* 70.2263.

13. Li Jianmin, “Han dai ‘yibing’ yanjiu,” *passim*; especially 19–20. For a study on illness and office-holding in Ming-Qing China, see He Bian, “Too Sick to Serve: The Politics of Illness in the Qing Civil Bureaucracy,” *Late Imperial China* 33.2 (2012): 40–75.

14. Liu Zhen (d. ca. 127), *Dongguan Han ji* (Ji’nan: Qi-Lu shushe, 2000), 23.228–30.

15. *HHS* 13.533–45.

the fate of local scholars, officials, and recluses after his demise. The following is a brief synopsis of the *Huayang guo zhi* account of Gongsun Shu.

Initially dispatched by Wang Mang to administer “Daojiang” 導江 (Wang Mang’s new name for Shu commandery), Gongsun Shu’s administration of the area was said to have been “harsh, and the common folk did not act contrary” 政治嚴刻，民不為非.¹⁶ After Wang Mang’s death, Liu Xiu 劉秀 (Emperor Guangwu 光武) claimed the Han throne in Henan. In Chengdu, Gongsun Shu dreamed that a man said to him, “*Ba si zi xi*, twelve is the limit” 八子系，十二為期, a simple form of glyptomancy resulting in the graphs *gong* 公 and *sun* 孫. Gongsun Shu told these words to his wife, who replied by quoting Kongzi 孔子, saying, “If in the morning one hears the Way, and if that evening he dies, that would be fine. So what of twelve years?” 朝聞道，夕死尚可，何況十二乎.¹⁷ That summer, in the fourth month, a dragon emerged in front of the precinct hall and was regarded as an auspicious omen. Gongsun Shu then proclaimed himself emperor, taking the state-title Dacheng 大成 (Great Perfection), and established the first year of the Longxing 龍興 (Dragon Arises) period (25 CE). Considering Wang Mang to have ruled by the virtue of yellow, he followed the color cycle and ruled by the virtue of white. Because he rose up in the west, he took the element of metal.¹⁸ His aides frequently urged him to submit to Liu Xiu, but he refused, instead allying with Wei Ao 隗囂 of Tianshui 天水 commandery.¹⁹ Gongsun Shu and Liu Xiu exchanged epistles filled with prophetic barbs, each citing prophecy to support his own claim to the throne. Chang Qu notes that Gongsun Shu’s “lasciviousness and indulgence were excessive” 淫恣過度.²⁰ He was defeated in battle by Liu Xiu’s general Wu Han 吳漢 and killed. Wu Han’s troops then plundered Chengdu. In general, Chang Qu’s account follows the outline of the earlier *Dongguan Han ji* account; however, the *Huayang guo zhi* and *Dongguan Han ji* narratives contain details not included in the other, supporting Chang Qu’s intent of supplementing previous historical accounts of the affairs of the southwest.

Following this narrative, Chang Qu shifts his attention to the newly restored Han court’s efforts to honor and recruit local worthies of the southwest after the death of Gongsun Shu. Posthumous honors were bestowed upon those who lost their lives during Gongsun’s reign, and those who had fled were rewarded and offered official appointments. Chang Qu concludes, “because of this, the western lands were at peace, and there were none who were not like ducks among pondweed [i.e., delighted] 於是西土宅心，莫不鳧藻.²¹ Thus concludes Chang Qu’s narrative of Gongsun Shu’s regime; the fascicle continues with an account of the rule of Liu Yan and Liu Zhang. I will address Chang Qu’s treatment of Gongsun Shu in the fascicle 5 encomium below. Now, let us go back and examine more closely the relationship between Gongsun Shu and the local worthies of “Daojiang.”

GONGSUN SHU AND THE LOCAL WORTHIES OF “DAOJIANG”

After proclaiming himself emperor of Dacheng, Gongsun Shu summoned a number of local scholars to serve in his administration. While it is unknown how many accepted his

16. *Huayang guo zhi jiaobutuzhu* 華陽國志校補圖注, ed. Ren Naiqiang 任乃強 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1987) [hereafter cited as *HYGZ*], 5.330.

17. See *Lunyu* 4.8: “The master said, ‘If one hears the Way in the morning, in the evening one could die content.’” 孔子曰：朝聞道，夕死可矣。

18. *HYGZ* 5.330–31.

19. For Wei Ao, see *HHS* 13.513–32.

20. *HYGZ* 5.331.

21. *HYGZ* 5.337. This is in contrast to Chang Qu’s own position of waiting for a job under the Eastern Jin after his role in the surrender of Cheng Han.

appointments, at least seven individuals are said to have rejected the summons, with varying results.

Three men refused to serve, offering no excuses. Qiao Xuan 譙玄, appellative Junhuang 君黃, served Emperors Cheng 成 (r. 33–6 BCE) and Ai 哀 (r. 6 BCE–1 CE) as grandee remonstrant and consultant (*jianyi daifu* 諫議大夫), but left office and returned to Ba after Wang Mang took the throne. Later, he refused a summons from Gongsun Shu. Angered by Qiao's refusal, Gongsun Shu dispatched an envoy bearing poisoned alcohol to fetch the reluctant scholar. Qiao reportedly laughed at the envoy and received the poison, upon which Qiao Xuan's son, Qiao Ying 譙瑛, kowtowed and offered the envoy eight million cash to obtain a pardon for his father.²² Fan Ye expands this account to note that the envoy accepted the bribe and Qiao Xuan fled and hid himself in the wilds, later dying, apparently of natural causes, in 36 CE.²³

We see a similar pattern in the cases of Wang Hao 王皓 and Wang Jia 王嘉, both of Jiangyuan 江原 prefecture in Shu commandery. Wang Hao, appellative Zili 子離, served as prefect of Meiyang 美陽,²⁴ but left his post and returned to Shu when Wang Mang took the throne. Later, Gongsun Shu sent an envoy to appoint Wang Hao to office. Wang Hao thereupon slit his own throat and had his head presented to the envoy. Gongsun Shu was “ashamed and angry, so he executed [Wang Hao's] wife and son” 述慚怒，誅其妻子。²⁵ Likewise, Wang Jia, appellative Gongqing 公卿, left office and returned to Shu upon Wang Mang's accession. Gongsun Shu preemptively imprisoned Wang Jia's wife and son, and then dispatched an envoy to appoint him to a post. Having already heard of Wang Hao's death, Wang Jia sighed and said, “I'm next” 吾後之哉, then killed himself. Gongsun Shu also killed his wife and son.²⁶ Fan Ye adds additional dialogue to his account of Wang Hao and Wang Jia, but the basic plot remained unchanged.²⁷

From the cases of Qiao Xuan, Wang Hao, and Wang Jia, it seems that while Gongsun Shu was interested in bringing noted recluses into his service—a sign of a sage ruler—he was not so concerned with how these worthies were obtained. The dispatch of an envoy with poison to appoint Qiao Xuan and the preemptive detainment of the wife and son of Wang Jia would seem to indicate that Gongsun Shu was already aware of how his calls to serve would be received by the local worthies, as well as hints at his desperation to secure the services of these men. Whether or not these accounts are historically accurate, from a historiographical perspective, they do not reflect well upon Gongsun Shu.

While the three individuals discussed above offered no excuses for their refusals, four others claimed illness to avoid service in Gongsun Shu's administration. In the first of these cases, Li Ye 李業, appellative Juyou 巨遊, of Zitong 梓潼 prefecture in Guanghan 廣漢 commandery, “as a youth, held to his pure ambitions” 少執志清白,²⁸ that is, declined to take office. In the matter of one such appointment, Chang Qu reports,

The grand administrator Liu Xian admired his reputation and appointed him to serve in the bureau of merit ten times, but Li Ye did not report. Liu Xian became angry and wanted to kill him. Li Ye turned himself in at the jail. Liu Xian released him.

22. *HYZ* 1.17.

23. *HHS* 81.2667–68.

24. Meiyang prefecture was located approximately twenty-five kilometers east of present-day Fufeng, Shaanxi.

25. *HYZ* 10A.538.

26. *HYZ* 10A.538.

27. *HHS* 81.2670.

28. *HYZ* 10C.611.

太守劉咸慕其名，召為功曹，十命不詣。咸怒，欲殺之。業徑入獄。咸釋之。²⁹

Hou Hanshu notes that Li Ye served as a gentleman at court during the Yuanshi 元始 period (1–6 CE), a detail not mentioned in *Huayang guo zhi*.³⁰ Additionally, *Hou Hanshu* reports that “when Wang Mang acted as regent, Li Ye left office due to illness, closed his gate, and did not respond to the summonses from the province or commandery” 會王莽居攝，業以病去官，杜門不應州郡之命。³¹ It is unclear in this instance whether Li Ye was actually ill, though he had himself carried to the door on his sickbed to meet an envoy bearing an official summons. That additional calls to serve were tendered would seem to indicate that the provincial and commandery officials were unconvinced that Li Ye was suffering from an actual illness. Later, after Gongsun Shu took control of the region, he also summoned Li Ye to serve as an erudite. The *Hou Hanshu* account says, “Li Ye was chronically ill and did not get up” 業固疾不起。³² Returning to the *Huayang guo zhi* account, we read,

Gongsun Shu appointed him several times, but Li Ye did not respond. Gongsun Shu was angry and dispatched the [officer for] dependencies Yin Rong 尹融 to take poisoned alcohol to force him [to take office]. Li Ye laughed and said, “My reputation cannot be destroyed. My body can be killed, but I will not be disgraced.” Thereupon, he drank the poison and died. Gongsun Shu was ashamed to have killed a good gentleman, so he bestowed one million cash [on Li Ye’s family]. Li Ye’s son, Li Hui 李翬, went into hiding and would not accept [the money]. 公孫述屢聘，不應。述怒，遣鴻臚尹融持毒藥酒逼之。業笑曰：「名不可毀，身可殺，不可辱也。」遂飲藥死。述恥殺善士，賜錢百萬。子翬，逃匿不受。³³

Here, we see striking similarities to the cases of Qiao Xuan, Wang Hao, and Wang Jia, in that Gongsun Shu was willing to coerce individuals into public service, often resulting in rejection by suicide. We also see the exchange of cash, though in the case of Li Ye, payment was offered to the family to compensate for Li Ye’s death (as opposed to Qiao Ying ransoming his father, Qiao Xuan, from forced suicide). Again, it is unclear whether Li Ye suffered from a real ailment, despite Fan Ye’s later claim. The facts of the matter, however, are ultimately irrelevant: Gongsun Shu did not believe the claim and was willing to force the worthy into service, ill or not. Interestingly enough, Li Ye’s death is the only instance in which Gongsun Shu demonstrated any regret for the results of his heavy-handed recruitment tactics. Chang Qu’s early account of Li Ye makes no mention of illness, only that he held firm to his pure intent and never accepted public office. In this regard, the rhetorical messages of the *Huayang guo zhi* and *Hou Hanshu* accounts are quite different. Chang Qu presents Li Ye as a lifelong recluse; while Fan Ye adds Li Ye to the list of officials who left posts at the Han court to protest Wang Mang’s seizure of power. The two historians’ narratives diverge in the details of Li Ye’s early life, and only come together again in the matter of his rejection of Gongsun Shu’s appointment. It is unclear what additional sources Fan Ye may have consulted in order to add the details missing from Chang Qu’s earlier account.

The next case illustrates not only a more specific claim to illness, but the lengths one might go to in order to make that claim convincing. The *Huayang guo zhi* biography of Fei Yi reads,

Fengjun withdrew from the world: Fei Yi, appellative Fengjun, was a man of Nan’an. During the time of Gongsun Shu, he lacquered his body in order to cause sores and, feigning madness,

29. HYGZ 10C.611.

30. See HYGZ 10C.611; HHS 81.2668–69.

31. HHS 81.2669.

32. HHS 81.2669.

33. HYGZ 10C.611.

hid from the world. After Gongsun Shu was crushed, he served as administrator of Hefu. The people of Shu sang of him, saying,

奉君遯世。費貽，奉君，南安人也。公孫述時，漆身為厲，佯狂避世。述破，為合浦守。蜀中歌之曰：

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Pure and dutiful, utmost humane, | 節義至仁 |
| Fei Fengjun | 費奉君 |
| Did not serve in a chaotic age, | 不仕亂世 |
| Did not shun a bad reputation. | 不避惡名 |
| He cultivated himself in Shu, | 脩身於蜀 |
| Recording his name was sufficient. ³⁴ | 紀名亦足 |
| His descendants became an aristocratic family. | 後世為大族。 ³⁵ |

The *Hou Hanshu* account follows closely that of *Huayang guo zhi*, omitting the popular song and adding a brief comment that after feigning madness, Fei Yi “fled to a remote mountain for over ten years” 退藏山藪十餘年。³⁶

Fei Yi’s actions immediately bring to mind the case of the famed assassin Yu Rang 豫讓. Both the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 and *Shiji* accounts of Yu Rang note that after failing in his initial attempt to kill Viscount Xiang of Zhao 趙襄子 to avenge the death of his former patron Earl Zhi 知伯, Yu Rang “lacquered his body in order to cause sores” 漆身為厲.³⁷ Both Pei Yin’s 裴駘 (fl. 438) *Shijie jijie* 史記集解 and Sima Zhen’s 司馬貞 (ca. 656–720) *Shiji suoyin* 記索隱 gloss *li* 厲 as *lai* 賴. Furthermore, Sima Zhen notes,

As for *lai*, it is a severe ulcer. Lacquer is toxic and contact with it causes ulcers and swelling, and it resembles leprosy. Therefore, Yu Rang painted his body with lacquer to cause himself to look as if he had leprosy.

賴，惡瘡病也。凡漆有毒，近之多患瘡腫，若賴病然，故豫讓以漆塗身，令其若癩耳。³⁸

Thus, Fei Yi’s drastic actions make his claim of illness not only believable, but real. Lacquer in its natural state turns things blackish in hue. Moreover, it is highly toxic. Liquid lacquer is produced from the sap of the *Rhus verniciflua* tree, a relative of the poison oak. Its fumes can cause difficulty breathing, throat swelling, blood in the urine, kidney failure, burning and pain in the nose, ears, eyes, lips, and tongue, severe abdominal pain, bloody stools, burns and holes in the esophagus, bloody vomiting, fainting, low blood pressure, coma, stupor, and brain damage. Physical contact with the substance can cause burns, irritation, and necrosis of the skin and underlying tissues.³⁹ In a discussion of the hazards of lacquer to the artisans who produced lacquerware during the Han, Anthony Barbieri-Low notes early efforts to treat lacquer exposure and poisoning by means of exorcisms as well as medicines, one of which promised to inoculate the worker for the rest of his life. Barbieri-Low also notes that in contemporary Japan, lacquer workers eventually become hyposensitized to the substance.⁴⁰ The *Huayang guo zhi* anecdote offers no evidence that Fei Yi had developed

34. This reading takes *ji* 紀 as an alternate for *ji* 記.

35. *HYGZ* 10B.583.

36. *HHS* 81.2668.

37. *SJ* 85.2520; *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1985), 18.597; J. I. Crump, tr., *Chan-kuo ts'ue*, rev. ed. (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, Univ. of Michigan, 1996), 279.

38. *SJ* 82.2520 n. 1.

39. “Lacquer Poisoning,” Medline Plus, National Institute of Health/U.S. National Library of Medicine, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002794.htm> (accessed Feb. 1, 2020).

40. Barbieri-Low, *Artisans in Early Imperial China* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2007), 100–101.

immunity to the lacquer's poison through prolonged exposure. As such, Fei Yi's actions likely caused physical symptoms sufficient to avoid work.

While Fei Yi's exposure to the lacquer could have actually caused "stupor" and "brain damage," his claims to madness should not be taken at face value. Pleading insanity to avoid political service had canonical and historical foundations. For example, in *Lunyu* 18 we find mention of two early worthies who claimed madness to avoid service: the Viscount of Ji 箕子 and Jie Yu 接輿, both of whom are mentioned in later sources as having let down their hair, feigned madness, and refused to serve.⁴¹ Moreover, in the *Shiji* account of Fan Sui 范雎, Fan tells the King of Qin, "the Viscount of Ji and Jie Yu lacquered their bodies [to form sores] as if leprous and let their hair down as if mad, but without any benefit to their lords" 箕子、接輿 漆身為厲，被髮為狂，無益於主。⁴² The *Huayang guo zhi* biography of Fei Yi strongly echoes Fan Sui's account of the Viscount of Ji and Jie Yu in both their self-mutilation and feigned madness. Finally, *Shiji* also notes that the second son of Wei Xian 韋賢, Wei Xuancheng 韋玄成, "feigned madness" in order to avoid investiture as marquis.⁴³ In all of these cases these individuals employed what Laurence Schneider has called "tactical madness"⁴⁴ to avoid various forms of public service. Fei Yi's claims should be seen in a similar manner, and as part of this rhetoric of reclusion.

The manner in which Fei Yi's actions were perceived in his own time remains open to some discussion. Despite the traditions of worthy madmen like the Viscount of Ji and Jie Yu, Fei Yi's acts of self-harm and feigned insanity may have left him open to criticism. The popular song recorded in the *Huayang guo zhi* account quoted above says, "Fei Fengjun / Did not serve in a chaotic age, / Did not shun a bad reputation." It is unclear what the "bad reputation" here may refer to, though I suspect it applies to his "tactical madness," of which painting himself with lacquer was a key element. At any rate, Fei Yi is fortunate to have survived his efforts to make himself appear unfit for duty, and as both *Huayang guo zhi* and *Hou Hanshu* note, he returned from hiding after the death of Gongsun Shu and took office under the restored Han, his body intact and reputation enhanced.

Two additional persons offered specific medical excuses to avoid serving Gongsun Shu. The cases of Feng Xin 馮信 and Ren Yong 任永 are remarkably similar, and may either be based on a single historical episode or be separate applications of the same rhetorical trope. Chang Qu presents both cases in fascicle 10B, but not consecutively; Fan Ye treats them together in a single anecdote. Here, I will present their accounts separately, then discuss the implications of their stories together.

The *Huayang guo zhi* account of Feng Xin reads:

The invited gentleman lived in reclusion: Feng Xin, appellative Jicheng, was a man of Qi [prefecture]. The commandery thrice recommended him as filially pious and incorruptible, the province recommended him as a flourishing talent, the court appointed him ten times, and official carriages repeatedly came to fetch him, but he declined. In the time of Gongsun Shu, he pleaded green-blindness. His maidservant acted licentiously in front of him, but it was as if he did not see it. When Gongsun Shu was defeated and killed, he did not venture out due to old age.

41. On the Viscount of Ji, *Han shi waizhuan* notes that he "thereupon let down his hair, feigned madness, and departed" 遂解髮伴狂而去; *Han shi waizhuan jinzhuzhu jinyi* 韓詩外傳今註今譯 (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1972), 6.233; James Hightower, tr., *Han shih wai chuan: Han Ying's Illustrations of Didactic Application of the Classic of Songs* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1952), 191.

42. *SJ* 79.2407; *GSR* 7.237. The matter of lacquering is not found in the *Shiji* accounts of either the Viscount of Ji (*SJ* 3.108) or Jie Yu (*SJ* 47.1933).

43. *SJ* 96.2686; *GSR* 7.1: 229.

44. Laurence Schneider, *A Madman of Ch'u* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980), 14–15.

徵君肥遯。馮信，字季誠，鄆人也。郡三察孝廉，州舉茂才，公府十辟，公車再徵，不詣。公孫述時，託目青盲，侍婢姦其前，陽不覺。述敗，卒以年老不出。⁴⁵

Here, we see this local worthy declining over a dozen appointments from the local and regional government prior to Gongsun Shu's takeover. Afterward, though not explicitly stated in Chang Qu's narrative, he declined additional summonses from Gongsun Shu by claiming to be blind. Such was his devotion to the claim that he was able to overlook his maidservant's illicit behavior. Chang Qu makes no mention of Feng Xin ever recovering his eyesight or recanting his claim of blindness, but rather concludes with Feng Xin maintaining his lifelong seclusion.

The *Huayang guo zhi* account of Ren Yong contains a number of parallel elements to that of Feng Xin:

Master Ren was enlightened: Ren Yong, appellation Junye, was a man of Bodao [prefecture]. He was skilled in the calendrical arts. During the time of Wang Mang, he pleaded green-blindness. During the time of Gongsun Shu, he was repeatedly appointed [to office], but he did not report. His son drowned in a well, and though he saw it, he did not speak. His wife acted licentiously in front of him, and though he was facing her, he did not appear unusual. After Gongsun Shu was pacified, Ren Yong then said, "The world is now at peace, my eyes have become clear." His wife committed suicide. Emperor Guangwu appointed him, but because of his old age, he did not report. Then he died.

任公開明。任永，字君業，樊道人也。長歷數。王莽時託青盲。公孫述時累徵，不詣。子溺井中死，見而不言。妻淫於前，面而不怪。述平，乃曰：「世適平，目即清。」妻自煞。光武徵之，以年老不詣，卒。⁴⁶

In this case, Ren Yong's claims of blindness predated the Gongsun Shu regime, but his ruse continued throughout it. Like Feng Xin, he reported suffering from a particular type of blindness. Additionally, he was also able to ignore dramatic events that were said to have taken place in his presence. The matter of his son drowning in a well immediately calls to mind Mengzi's famous argument about human nature and man's innate compassion.⁴⁷ If Ren Yong was faking blindness and failed to act to save his son from the well, he would be regarded as inhumane (and inhuman) by Han classicist standards. Yet his actions were viewed positively by Chang Qu, Emperor Guangwu, and later by Fan Ye. While the matter of Ren Yong's wife contains the same general plot element as in the story of Feng Xin's maidservant, the drama is intensified by casting the female character as Ren's wife. Her violation of both Han law and morality make Ren's lack of reaction even more powerful. Nevertheless, the episodes of the sexual indiscretions of Feng Xin's maid and Ren Yong's wife raise an interesting question: What were these women thinking? There is no mention in the anecdotes of Ren or Feng losing other senses—hearing, for instance—thereby making the women's activities both brazen and detectable. As such, we ought to take these narrative details as rhetorical tropes rather than historical incidents. Regardless, in this anecdote, Ren Yong is either truly blind or is sufficiently motivated to maintain the ruse while two of his closest family members suffer or betray his trust. Ren Yong's recovery of his eyesight is presented in a miraculous manner, linked to the Han notions of correlative cosmology. Once the affairs in the political world had been restored to normal, the natural world, including Ren Yong's eyes, was also restored to normal. His final refusal to serve Emperor Guangwu

45. *HYZ* 10B.564.

46. *HYZ* 10B.583.

47. See *Mengzi* 2A6; *Mengzi zhushu* 孟子註疏, in *Shisan jing zhushu* 十三經註疏, comp. Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 3b.26–27.

was based on the fact of his old age and not upon a claim to illness. Chang Qu verifies this characterization by noting that he died shortly thereafter.

Before looking further at the implications of these two cases, let us briefly turn to Fan Ye's telling of their stories. Appended to the biography of Li Ye, examined above, the *Hou Hanshu* account of Ren Yong and Feng Xin reads:

At that time, there was Ren Yong, appellative Junye of Qianwei, and his fellow commandery-man Feng Xin. Both were fond of scholarship and broadly learned in antiquities. Gongsun Shu repeatedly appointed them to office and offered them high positions, but both pleaded green-blindness in order to avoid the troubles of the age. Ren Yong's wife acted licentiously in front of him but he concealed his feelings and did not say anything. He saw his son [fall] into a well, but he endured [this] and did not save him. Feng Xin's maidservant had sex in front of him. After they heard that Gongsun Shu had been executed, both washed and were able to see again, saying, "The world is now pacified, and my eyes are now clear." Those who acted licentiously killed themselves. Emperor Guangwu heard of them and appointed them, but both suddenly became ill and died.

是時隼為任永君業同郡馮信，並好學博古。公孫述連徵命，待以高位，皆託青盲以避世難。永妻淫於前，匿情無言；見子入井，忍而不救。信侍婢亦對信姦通。及聞述誅，皆盥洗更視曰：「世適平，目即清。」淫者自殺。光武聞而徵之，並會病卒。⁴⁸

The account largely echoes those of the *Huayang guo zhi* with two notable exceptions: first, the manner in which their blindness was cured. Here, Fan Ye adds the element of washing to effect the cure. Second, Fan Ye notes the suicide of Feng Xin's maidservant, paralleling that of Ren Yong's wife.⁴⁹

Let us now turn our attention to the details of Feng Xin and Ren Yong's purported ailments. Both claimed to suffer from *qingmang* 青盲, or green-blindness. In common usage, the term *qingmang* seems to refer to a variety of different ailments, including cataracts, glaucoma, and color blindness.⁵⁰ The earliest efforts to distinguish between various types of blindness can be seen in several Tang dynasty texts. Commenting on Mao 242, "Lingtai" 靈臺, Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648) writes,

Meng and *sou* are both names for blindness; they describe degrees of blindness. As for *meng*, this speaks of those whose blindness is total and who can see nothing. Thus, we know that they have pupils but cannot see. This is called *meng* (purbblind); it is what is now called *qingmang* (green-blindness). The *meng*-blind have pupils, whereas the *sou*-blind do not. Thus, speaking of those who do not have pupils, they are called *sou*. Their blindness (*gu*) is not much different from the *meng* who have pupils. Thus, Master of Agriculture Zheng Xuan commented on the "Spring Officials *gumeng* [the blind]," saying, "Those without pupils are called *gu*, and those with pupils but without sight are called *meng*. Those with eyes but without pupils are called *sou*."

48. *HHS* 81.2670.

49. As a brief aside, Feng Xin's maid and Ren Yong's wife are the only two women of the nearly sixty treated in *Huayang guo zhi* who are portrayed as immoral or otherwise unvirtuous. All of the other women in *Huayang guo zhi* are paragons of chastity, filial piety, or wisdom. *Hou Hanshu* contains one additional account of persons claiming blindness to avoid serving Wang Mang. Gao Xu 高詡 and his father both "claimed blindness" 稱盲 and fled to avoid service. After Emperor Guangwu secured the throne, Gao Xu accepted an appointment to serve as a court gentleman and erudite, eventually holding the post of grand minister of agriculture for thirteen years; *HHS* 79B.2569. While beyond the scope of this paper, also note the case of Du Wei 杜微, who claimed to be deaf in order to avoid serving in Liu Bei's administration; *SGZ*, 42.1019, and *HYGZ* 10C.613–14.

50. See Jürgen Kovacs and Paul U. Unschuld, trs., *Essential Subtleties on the Silver Sea: The Yin-Hai Jing-Wei, A Chinese Classic on Ophthalmology* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1998), 349 n. 1.

矇矇皆無目之名。就無目之中以為等級。矇者言其矇矇然無所見。故知有眸子而無見。曰矇。即今之青盲者也。矇有眸子則矇當無。故云無眸子曰矇。其瞽亦有眸子矇之小別也。故春官瞽矇注鄭司農云：無目矇謂之瞽有目矇而無見謂之矇。有目而無眸子謂之矇。⁵¹

Here, Zheng Xuan outlines an Eastern Han conception of categories of blindness, based on the physical condition of the eye. Kong Yingda equates Zheng Xuan's category of *meng* (pupils but no sight) with the term *qingmang*.

Two other Tang texts provide additional details on the condition of *qingmang*. Chao Yuanfang's 巢元方 *Zhubing yuanhou lun* 諸病源候論 (comp. 610 CE) attributes the condition to the essence and breath of the five viscera having risen to the eye, and notes, significantly, of the patient's eyes, "their outward appearance is not abnormal, they are only unable to see things. This is what is called green-blindness" 故外狀不異，只不見物而已。是之謂青盲。⁵² Wang Tao's 王濤 (ca. 670–755) *Waitai miyao* 外台秘要 contradicts Chao Yuanfang, identifying *qingmang* as a cataract—an ailment with visible symptoms.⁵³

The most significant aspect of the Han and Tang descriptions of *qingmang* is that the eyes, and in particular, the pupils, appear completely normal. As such, Feng Xin and Ren Yong were able to claim a form of blindness with no external symptoms, making their claims both believable and unimpeachable by medical examination. Moreover, the gradual onset of *qingmang* could allow an individual with no prior ophthalmological ailments or obvious injury to the eye plead blindness to avoid duty.

Two cures for *qingmang* are mentioned in early and medieval texts. The earliest such cure is mentioned in the commentary to the *Hou Hanshu* chapter on the Southern Man 南蠻, which notes the presence of a "numinous ram that can cure poisons" 有靈羊，可療毒 in Minshan 汶山 commandery. Citing the *Bencao jing* 本草經, Li Xian 李賢 records, "crumbled ram horn tastes salty but is not poisonous. It is used to cure green-blindness, act against venomous insect poisons,⁵⁴ expel evil spirits, calm the mind and breath, and strengthen tendons and bones" 零羊角味鹹無毒，主療青盲、蠱毒，去惡鬼，安心氣，彊筋骨。⁵⁵ Chao Yuanfang offers the following cure for *qingmang*: "On the eighth day of the first month bathe and the blindness will be removed" 正月八日沐浴，除目盲。⁵⁶ Perhaps not coincidentally, the cure for Ren Yong and Feng Xin's green-blindness was simply washing their eyes, though no specific date of the bathing was given in the *Hou Hanshu* account. Again, the belief in such a simple cure for an ailment with no external symptoms provided a tidy resolution for the men claiming to be afflicted with *qingmang*. In short, *qingmang* was the perfect excuse, provided the individuals were able to act the part of their newly claimed condition. It appears to have been the extraordinary lengths that Feng Xin and Ren Yong went to in order to maintain their claims of blindness that garnered the respect of their contemporaries and later historians.

51. *Mao shi zhushu* 毛詩注疏, in *Shisan jing zhushu*, 16.581a.

52. Chao Yuanfang, *Zhubing yuanhou lun* (Beijing: Renming weisheng chubanshe, 1991), 28/13.787.

53. Wang Tao, *Waitai miyao* (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1987), 21.22b–25a; see translation in Kovacs and Unschuld, *Essential Subtleties*, 39–40.

54. The term *gudu* is also used to refer to general poisons, as well as harmful magic spells.

55. *HHS* 86.2858, and n. 3.

56. Chao Yuanfang, *Zhubing yuanhou lun*, 28/13.787.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

If we take, for a moment, the anecdotes about Gongsun Shu and the worthies of Shu at face value—that is, as records of actual historical events—then a major question arises. Why did Gongsun Shu allow some worthies to decline his appointments, but force others to commit suicide? For those who simply snubbed Gongsun Shu by refusing to report to duty, the ruler applied pressure, forcing Wang Hao and Wang Jia to commit suicide, and Gongsun Shu attempted to do the same to Qiao Xuan. Even Li Ye's claims of some unspecified illness resulted in pressure from Gongsun Shu, leading to another suicide. In these cases, no excuses or vague excuses were insufficient to sway the ruler into permitting the worthies to remain out of office. Only with the deployment of specific medical ailments as excuses were the summoned individuals allowed to decline appointments. Why was this the case? In the matter of Fei Yi, his claims of insanity were augmented by an act of self-injury: painting his body with toxic lacquer, resulting in visible burns and irritation of the skin (and perhaps other physical symptoms). Had Gongsun Shu sent an envoy to pressure Fei Yi (and there is no textual claim that he did), the ruler's agent would have seen a man clearly injured and unpresentable at court. The excuses of Ren Yong and Feng Xin were less self-destructive and even more brilliant. By claiming green-blindness, with its lack of external symptoms, the pair of worthies did not need to mutilate their bodies in order to avoid service; however, the need to maintain the ruse in the face of family tragedy and betrayal required emotional sacrifices in order to see through to the end. For Gongsun Shu, vague excuses appear to have been taken as falsehoods, while claims of specific medical ailments were accepted. Again, there is no record of Gongsun Shu sending envoys to either verify the medical excuses or apply pressure on these men.

Taken at face value, these anecdotes illustrate Gongsun Shu's strong desire to recruit worthies into the service of his regime, as well as his lack of scruples about how these talents were obtained. Moreover, they show that for a number of men, death was preferable to service in Gongsun Shu's administration. While not completely rejecting the possible historicity of these anecdotes, given their formulaic nature we should be somewhat skeptical of the details of these matters.

From a historiographical perspective, we see common tropes and repeating plot elements across the anecdotes about Gongsun Shu's attempted recruitment of worthies in Shu that raise questions about the role of these stories in the overall rhetorical project of the *Huayang guo zhi*. As noted earlier, Chang Qu's intent for the middle fascicles of *Huayang guo zhi* was to apply local sources in order to add local perspectives to national history. His account of the matters of Gongsun Shu's rise and fall does just that. It echoes the main events found in *Dongguan Han ji*, and supplements that record with a summary of efforts to commemorate, reward, and recruit the worthies of Shu after Gongsun Shu's demise. It reads,

The Han [court] sought out recluses to display their loyalty and dutifulness. Gongsun Shu's officials Chang Shao⁵⁷ and Li Long,⁵⁸ who loyally admonished [Gongsun Shu] and vented their anger until they became ill and died, were recognized by reburial and honored as officers of the Han. Wang Hao⁵⁹ and Wang Jia⁶⁰ of Shu commandery, and Li Ye⁶¹ of Guanghan [commandery], who slit their throats and died with purity, were recognized [with plaques] on their village gates.

57. *HHS* 13.542.

58. *HHS* 13.542.

59. *HHS* 81.2670; *HYGZ* 10A.538; "List," 668.

60. *HYGZ* 10A.538; "List," 668; *HHS* 81.2670.

61. *HHS* 81.2668–70; *HYGZ* 10B.611.

Zhu Zun⁶² of Qianwei, who girded up his horse and died in battle, was honored as a general and had a shrine established to him. Fei Yi,⁶³ Ren Yong,⁶⁴ Feng Xin,⁶⁵ and others, who closed their gates and lived in pure reclusion, had official coaches specially recruiting them. Wen Qi⁶⁶ preserved dutifulness in Yizhou [commandery] and was given benefice as one of the various marquises. Dong Jun⁶⁷ practiced ritual propriety and illuminated the canonical texts, and was presented to serve as an erudite. Cheng Wu⁶⁸ and Li Yu⁶⁹ originally possessed talent and ability and were promoted and employed. Because of this, in the homes and hearts of the western lands, there were none who were not like ducks among pondweed.

漢搜求隱逸，旌表忠義：以述臣常少、李隆忠諫，發憤病死，表更遷葬，贈以漢卿官。蜀郡王皓、王嘉，廣漢李業，刎首死節，表其門閭。犍為朱遵，絆馬死戰，贈以將軍，為之立祠。費貽、任永馮信等閉門素隱，公車特徵。文齊守義益州，封為列侯。董鈞習禮明經，貢為博士。程烏、李育本有才幹，擢而用之。於是西土宅心，莫不鳧藻。⁷⁰

Turning to the individual biographical accounts of the figures named in the fascicle 5 encomium, we find anecdotes that flesh out that summary by detailing the virtuous actions of those men who declined to serve Gongsun Shu. Taken as a whole, Chang Qu offers a view of the Shu region as a home to loyal and moral gentlemen, willing to suffer rather than serve a usurping ruler. The stories of these men are analogous to the female chastity stories of *Huayang guo zhi*. In those accounts, young beautiful widows mutilate their bodies to make themselves unattractive to prospective husbands and to manifest their resolve to remain widows. Others commit suicide to avoid remarriage. In all of these accounts, the women define female chastity as loyalty to one husband—a view that was ahead of the general curve for such views in traditional China.⁷¹ The worthies who rejected Gongsun Shu by acts of self-mutilation (Fei Yi), suicide (Wang Hao, Wang Jia, and Li Ye), attempted suicide (Qiao Xuan), and deception (Ren Yong and Feng Xin) similarly embody loyalty by refusing to serve an illegitimate ruler. In these anecdotes, Chang Qu establishes gendered categories of virtuous conduct: loyalty for men and chastity for women. The actions of these male and female worthies are strikingly similar, as are the later commemorations of their virtues through posthumous titles, portraits, signs, and steles by the local and imperial governments. As such, Chang Qu presents the men and women of the Shu region as the utmost virtuous, even in times of political independence.

In contrast, Chang Qu paints Gongsun Shu as one of, if not *the*, worst ruler of the Shu region. His chapter-ending appraisal of Gongsun Shu reads,

The encomium says: Gongsun Shu taxed the resources of Daojiang and benefitted from the cruelty of Wang Mang. None of the common folk supported him, but he obtained Ba and Shu. He cheated Heaven and lied to man, and brought destruction upon himself. Yet inauspicious dreams announced his demise, and his time met the limit. If he would have offered himself and

62. *HHS* 13.533 n. 2, where his name is rendered as Song Zun 宋遵. Also see *HYZG* 10B.583; “List,” 698.

63. *HHS* 81.2668; *HYZG* 10B.583; “List,” 698.

64. *HHS* 81.2670; *HYZG* 10B.583.

65. *HYZG* 10B.564; “List,” 692; *HHS* 81.2670.

66. *HYZG* 10C.611; *HHS* 86.2846.

67. *HYZG* 10B.582; “List,” 698. Also see *HHS* 79B.2576.

68. *HHS* 13.537, 544.

69. *HHS* 79B.2582; 13.537, 541, 544.

70. *HYZG* 5.337.

71. See J. Michael Farmer, “Chastity, Suicide, Art, and History: Changing Conceptions of Female Remarriage in Early Medieval Shu,” in *Willow Catkins: Festschrift for Dr. Lily Xiao Hong Lee*, ed. Shirley Chan, Barbara Hendrischke, and Sue Wiles (Sydney: Oriental Society of Australia, 2014), 43–75.

submitted, perhaps he could have avoided [disaster]. He flaunted his foolishness and continued in his errors, what a stubborn fool!

譏曰，公孫述藉導江之資，值王莽之虐，民莫援者，得跨巴蜀；而欺天罔物，自取滅亡者也。然，妖夢告終，期數有極，奉身歸順，猶可以免。矜愚遂非，何其頑哉。⁷²

This appraisal makes no mention of the men who rejected his calls to serve. Chang Qu's depiction of recruitment of the worthies of Shu to Gongsun Shu's administration, presented in the later biographical fascicles of *Huayang guo zhi*, however, serves to paint Gongsun Shu in a most unfavorable light. His subversion of the traditional "calling on the sick" visits replaced the provision of the "sick" appointee with food, medicine, and occasionally a court physician with the presentation of poisoned alcohol and preemptive hostage taking in an effort to force the worthy into service. These acts speak to Gongsun Shu's lack of character, as does the fact that many of these individuals chose death rather than serve in his illegitimate administration. Although some did not commit suicide, they are depicted as also having suffered, either physically or emotionally, for their resolve. While I doubt that anyone really took Ren Yong and Feng Xin's claims of blindness at face value (other than the maid, the wife, and their lovers), were we to do so we would see an even more powerful rhetorical tool being used by Chang Qu. If these two men lost their sight when Gongsun Shu illegitimately claimed the throne and mysteriously regained it after his death, then their afflictions and cure were manifestations of the will of Heaven itself. If we read their accounts as two men dutifully maintaining claims of medical ailments in order to avoid serving an immoral and illegitimate ruler, then Ren and Feng take their places among the ranks of the worthy men of past and present ages, further reinforcing Chang Qu's main objective: depicting Shu as a cradle of loyal and worthy, chaste and filial men and women.

72. HYGZ 5.352.