Good Days and Bad Days: Echoes of the Third-Century BCE Qin Conquest in Early Chinese Hemerology

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This article presents an in-depth study of a constellation of interrelated texts transmitted in three Chinese *rishu* 日書 ("daybook") manuscripts dating from the third to first centuries BCE. All of the manuscripts have an archaeologically verified provenance in the central Yangtze river valley region of the former Warring States kingdom of Chu, and taken together they reveal in unusual detail the effects, both intentional and possibly unintentional, of Qin assimilation policies after the transfer of authority beginning with the conquest of the Chu capital in 278 BCE. These effects are shown to reverberate for millennia in China's rich tradition of hemerology and related technical arts, and by doing so, they weave a surprising human tapestry connecting nameless diviners, minor officials of the early empire, the First August Thearch of Qin, Mongols, Manchus, and others. Methodologically, it is suggested that despite the idiosyncratic nature of these manuscripts, productive analysis of structural elements remains possible and worthwhile.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, hand-in-hand with China's rapid economic development, an unprecedented level of archaeological activity has added new detail to our understanding of early Chinese history and, in some cases, has even overturned longstanding elements of the familiar narrative controlling that past. Of particular value in this ongoing process have been discoveries of early Chinese manuscripts, because such discoveries allow ancient texts to speak to us directly, circumventing the layers of editorial manipulation and copyists' errors that tend to accumulate in transmitted texts, or restoring texts that have not been seen in any form for millennia. My focus in this article will be on one important text type among the archaeologically recovered Chinese manuscripts, that of the hemerological manuals known as *rishu* 日書 or "daybooks." These practical handbooks appear to have been popular in the late Warring States, Qin, and Western Han Periods (ca. fourth to first centuries BCE).[1] Primarily concerned with the selection of auspicious times—and avoidance of inauspicious ones—for a wide variety of activities such as marriages, funerals, travel, trade, and finding lost items, daybooks have no transmitted counterparts, and thus provide a fresh perspective on early Chinese culture and society.

I would like to express thanks to *JAOS* editor Antje Richter and two anonymous readers whose insightful comments have improved this article. Any remaining shortcomings are, of course, my own responsibility.

1. For surveys of recently excavated daybooks and related manuscripts, including brief indications of their contents and provenance, see Huang Ruxuan 黃儒宣, Rishu *tuxiang yanjiu* 《日書》圖像研究 (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2013), 2–19; Pian Yuqian 駢宇騫, *Jianbo wenxian gangyao* 簡帛文獻綱要 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2015), 301–10; and Donald Harper and Marc Kalinowski, eds., *Books of Fate and Popular Culture in Early China: The Daybook Manuscripts of the Warring States, Qin, and Han* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

Daybooks are replete with passages representing rather mechanical, calendrically based divination systems, and only rarely do they include narrative sections of any length. For this reason, despite the prevalence and apparent importance of the texts, it can be challenging to make use of them as historical evidence. However, even a cursory examination of their contents will confirm that they were also more than simple almanacs, i.e., calendars with appended hemerological information. The latter have an ephemeral quality because they become obsolete at the end of the calendar's coverage period (e.g., a year), whereas daybooks typically presented omens in terms of generalized months and days—quantities that could apply to any year, and thus did not pin the text to a particular year.[2] In this way, they had the potential to become "texts with a history," and several examples of dual manuscript discoveries deriving from the same archaeological context suggest that one text was indeed largely a copy of the other with certain updates and omissions to keep the text relevant to its owner's needs after years, perhaps decades, of use.[3]

In the following pages, I will consider the evolution of one significant passage common to several daybooks from the same geographical region in order to illustrate some of the ways that these texts reflect a changing social environment in the period from the late Warring States era to the early Western Han dynasty. As each manuscript has an archaeologically verified provenance in the central Yangtze River region that was once the heartland of the powerful state of Chu, while at the same time, as a group, they range diachronically over a span of approximately two centuries, the texts testify to the cultural complexity and inevitable contradictions resulting from the Qin conquest of northern Chu in 278 BCE and subsequent attempts by the Qin authorities to assimilate Chu traditions.[4] From the perspective of manuscript studies, this work also demonstrates a degree of coherence among the initial passages of typical daybook manuscripts. As I have argued elsewhere, although the distinct sections of a daybook can, and often do, function independently from one another, they also tend to be arranged in a manner that encourages cross-reading and thereby supplements a reader's immediate search for hemerological data with relevant contextual information.[5]

PART I: KONGJIAPO AND THE "INSPECTION DAYS" TEXT

In March 2000, a relatively well-preserved daybook manuscript was found in tomb 8 at the cemetery site of Kongjiapo 孔家坡 on the outskirts of Suizhou 隨州, Hubei. The tomb appears to have belonged to a minor official named Bi 辟, who worked at the end of his life as an "armory supervisor" (*ku sefu* 庫嗇夫) in the bureaucracy of the Western Han empire

2. An analogous case in our own calendar system might be a statement declaring something like "Tuesdays in February are auspicious for marriage." The statement could apply to any year, and even a leap year for which February 29th might coincide with a Tuesday would present no difficulty.

3. For more on texts with a history, see Martin Kern, "Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of Textual Variants and the Modes of Manuscript Production in Early China," *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 4.1–4 (2002): 145–48. The most important cases of multiple daybook manuscripts being discovered together include two manuscripts excavated from tomb 11 at Shuihudi 睡虎地 in Yunmeng 雲夢 county, Hubei (hereafter SHD-A and SHD-B), and two manuscripts excavated from tomb 1 at Fangmatan 放馬灘, near Tianshui 天水 city, Gansu (hereafter FMT-A and FMT-B).

4. The conquest of the Chu capital, Ying 郢, and the establishment of Nan jun 南郡 ("Southern Commandery") are recorded in the *Qin benji* 秦本紀 (Basic Annals of Qin) chapter of *Shiji* 史記. See *Shiji*, comp. Sima Qian 司馬遷 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013), 5.266.

5. Harkness, "Cosmology and the Quotidian: Day Books in Early China" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Chicago, 2011), 107–9.

and died in 142 BCE.[6] Among the 478 reconstructed slips of the Kongjiapo daybook (hereafter KJP), a short but important passage appears on slips 108–110.[7]

> 臨日：正月上旬午，二月亥，三月申，四月丑，五月戌，六月卯，七月子，八月巳，九月寅，十月未，十一月辰，十二月酉，帝以此日開 108 臨下降央（ 殃 ），不可遠行 、畬（ 飲 ）食 、歌（ 歌 ）樂 、取（ 聚 ）眾 、畜生（ 牲 ），凡百事皆凶 。以有為，不出歲，其央（ 殃 ）小大必至 。以有為而109 遇雨，命曰央（ 殃 ）蚤（ 早 ）至，不出三月，必有死亡之志 。凡舉事，苟毋直（ 值 ）臨日，它雖不吉，毋大害 。以生子不110

> Inspection Days:[8] In the first ten-day period of the first month—a *wu* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the second month—a *hai* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the third month—a *shen* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the fourth month—a *chou* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the fifth month—a *xu* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the sixth month—a *mao* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the seventh month—a *zi* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the eighth month—a *si* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the ninth month—an *yin* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the tenth month—a *wei* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the eleventh month—a *chen* day;
> (In the first ten-day period) of the twelfth month—a *you* day.
>
> The Thearch uses these days to begin 108 his inspection of those below and send down misfortune. One may not travel far afield, eat, drink, sing, make music, or gather people or domestic animals. All manner of affairs are inauspicious. If one engages in any activity, then within a year greater or lesser misfortune will certainly arrive. If one engages in some activity and also 109 encounters rain, this is named "misfortune arrives early." Within three months there will certainly be the record of a death. In general, for any undertaking, if the day is not an Inspection Day, then even if the time is not auspicious, there will be no great harm. (For example) if a child is born, it will not . . . 110

In part, the interest of this short passage stems from the fact that of all the many prohibited days to be found in the daybooks, these could be described as the worst of the worst. Not only are they highly inauspicious for all manner of activities, but the reader is told that, by contrast, other bad days will bring "no great harm" as long as they do not happen to coincide with Inspection Days. The rationale for prohibiting these particular days also has a number of unusual aspects, for example, the restriction of the time in which one might encounter these days to the first ten-day period of every month and the attribution of their problematic

6. The late Warring States, Qin, and Han era bureaucratic title *sefu* 嗇夫 ("supervisor") is studied on the basis of both transmitted and excavated documents in Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭, *Gudai wenshi yanjiu xintan* 古代文史研究新探 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1992), 430–523.

7. *Suizhou Kongjiapo Han mu jiandu* 隨州孔家坡漢墓簡牘, ed. Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖北省文物考古研究所 and Suizhou shi kaogu dui 隨州市考古隊 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2006), 75 and 140. Throughout this article, manuscript slip numbers will be included in the English translations for the reader's convenience. In some cases, due to differences of syntax between Chinese and English, the placement can only represent a best approximation. In some cases, slip numbers may also be modified by the following notation: r ("recto"), v ("verso"), or a superscript number indicating a distinct register of text on the slip.

8. The graph *lin* 臨 (here "inspection") at the head of this passage is incomplete on KJP slip 108 due to physical damage to the manuscript. Nevertheless, the remaining portion compares exactly with the same graph as it appears at the head of slip 109, and given that the later name for these days was invariably *linri* 臨日, it is reasonable to assume that the graph has been well identified. Donald Harper has pointed out that as the top margin of slip 108 is missing, there might well have been another title that applied to the passage as a whole. Harper and Kalinowski, *Books of Fate and Popular Culture in Early China*, 126.

character to activity of the Thearch.[9] There is even a meteorological component to the passage in that, as bad as these days are, rain will exacerbate their harm to the point of implying certain death within a matter of months.

From the perspective of modern scholars grappling with the various hemerological systems presented by daybook manuscripts, another aspect of the Inspection Days presents an initial puzzle, namely that in later periods, many centuries after daybooks themselves no longer circulated, the same day type continued to have hemerological significance but somehow became auspicious. Inspection Days became good days! The most influential source to take this position was the encyclopedic Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) compendium of hemerological knowledge, *Qinding xieji bianfang shu* 欽定協紀辨方書 (Imperially Commissioned Treatise on Harmonizing Temporal Cycles and Distinguishing Directions, hereafter XJBFS), which explicitly defends its support for understanding these days as good days.[10] The relevant passage is quoted here in its entirety:

> 《樞要曆》曰：「臨日者，上臨下之義也。其日忌臨民、訴訟。」《曆例》曰：「臨日者，正月午、二月亥、三月申、四月丑、五月戌、六月卯、七月子、八月巳、九月寅、十月未、十一月辰、十二月酉。」曹震圭曰：「臨者，上臨於下也，是陽建之使臣奉上命以授百官者也。建陽之月在三合前辰，是臨於文官官符也。建陰之月在三合後辰，是臨於武職白虎也。」按：三合前辰為定日，三合後辰為成日。定、成，三合固吉。陽順而前，陰逆而後，是為陰陽得位，其義尤吉。即配年方而論，定日為官符，建前第四辰也。成日為白虎，建後第四辰也。官符為文，白虎為武。陰後而陽前，左文而右武也。陽月前左取官符，陰月後右取白虎。別名之為臨日。蓋陰陽不得其位則官符、白虎皆為害於人，陰陽各得其位官符、白虎皆為人除害者也。是宜為臨民受訟之吉占。乃《樞要曆》以為忌者，蓋誤也。[11]
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> The *Pivotal Essentials Calendar* states, "Inspection Days mean superiors inspect inferiors. On such days it is forbidden to inspect the people or bring a lawsuit against someone." The *Calendrical Precedents* states, "Inspection Days: *wu* in the 1st month, *hai* in the 2nd month, *shen* in the 3rd month, *chou* in the 4th month, *xu* in the 5th month, *mao* in the 6th month, *zi* in the 7th month, *si* in the 8th month, *yin* in the 9th month, *wei* in the 10th month, *chen* in the 11th month, *you* in the 12th month." Cao Zhengui states, "Inspection refers to superiors inspecting inferiors. This is the Yang Establisher's envoy receiving the mandate from on high and conveying it to the myriad officials. In the odd months, (the envoy) is at the first branch of the triad; this is an inspection of the civil official's Official Tally. In the even months, he is at the last branch of the triad; this is an inspection of the military officer's Tiger Emblem."[12] Editor's note: The first

9. Attributions to the Thearch are rare but not unknown in the KJP manuscript; see slip 269 帝毀丘之日 ("the day the Thearch destroyed the hill") and slip 397 帝啟百蟲口日 ("the day the Thearch opened the mouths of the myriad insects") where different prohibitions are linked to otherwise unknown legends. See *Suizhou Kongjiapo Han mu jiandu*, 91 and 104.

10. The compilation of this encyclopedic work was commissioned by the young Qianlong 乾隆 Emperor (r. 1735–96) to rationalize and standardize the sometimes contradictory received literature on hemerology and related arts. The book was submitted for review in 1739 and includes a preface written by Qianlong himself as well as a memorial explaining the editorial principles adopted by the project committee, which was headed by the emperor's uncle, Prince Yunlu 允祿 (Aisin Gioro Yinlu 愛新覺羅胤祿). It should be noted that Inspection Days in the context of XJBFS differ somewhat in their significance from those of the earlier daybooks, the emphasis of the omens having shifted from everyday life to the official inspection of civil and military administrative offices. The formal definition of the days, however, is consistent across the ages except for the fact that XJBFS and its sources no longer restrict these days to the first ten-day "week" of every month.

11. XJBFS, SKQS edn., 6.6b–7b.

12. My translation of 建陽之月 and 建陰之月 ("In the odd/even months . . .") in the quotation from Cao Zhengui is based in part on a summary of this line that appears in the memorial submitted to Emperor Qianlong upon completion of XJBFS. There the editors write "Inspection Days: In the odd months take the first branch of the triad; in the even months take the last branch of the triad" 臨日：陽月取三合前辰，陰月取三合後辰. Note that the

> branch of the triad corresponds to a *ding* ("Settle") day, and the last branch of the triad corresponds to a *cheng* ("Achieve") day. Settle days and Achieve days are consistently auspicious in the triad. *Yang* complies and leads; *yin* opposes and follows. This is *yin* and *yang* taking their proper places, and the implication is particularly auspicious. In terms of their correspondence with the year's orientations, Settle days are the Official Tally, and they are the fourth branch before the *jian* ("Establish") branch; Achieve days are the Tiger Emblem, and they are the fourth branch after the Establish branch. The Official Tally represents civil office; the Tiger Emblem represents military command. *Yin* behind and *yang* in front; civilian matters on the left and military affairs on the right. Prior to the *yang* month, the left takes up the Official Tally; after the *yin* month, the right takes up the Tiger Emblem. Called by another name, these are the Inspection Days. Now when *yin* and *yang* do not take their proper places, the Official Tally and the Tiger Emblem are both harmful to people, but when *yin* and *yang* each take their proper places, the Official Tally and the Tiger Emblem both eliminate harm. This is an auspicious divination indicating that it would be appropriate to inspect the people or hear a lawsuit. Thus the *Pivotal Essentials Calendar* seems to be mistaken when it takes (these days) as avoidance days.

The Qing dynasty editors of the XJBFS take pains to defend their conclusion that Inspection Days were misclassified by earlier collections of hemerological information such as the *Pivotal Essentials Calendar*, and they are able to find some classical support for their position from exegetical authorities like Cao Zhengui.[13] The essence of their argument is that the same pattern of significant days considered here as Inspection Days can be regarded in the light of two other hemerological classification schemes, and in both cases the result is unambiguously positive. The two schemes are known as *jianchu* 建除 ("Establish and Remove") and *sanhe* 三合 ("Triads of Branches") respectively, and to understand the editorial logic of the Qing scholars, it will be necessary to look at them briefly. The effort is worthwhile because while recent archaeological evidence suggests that the Qing editors may not have correctly understood the original nature of Inspection Days, they were indeed prescient in their observation that such days were intended to complement this particular additional hemerological data.

Jianchu ("Establish and Remove")

The *jianchu* system is one of the most commonly found systems of general hemerology transmitted by daybooks in the late Warring States, Qin, and Western Han periods. It generally had pride of place on the initial slips of a manuscript, and by applying to a broad range of activities, it functioned as the natural first place to engage with the text.[14] A user with certain specific activities in mind might later seek more refined understanding of the *jianchu* omens by consulting other, topically focused hemerological schemes, but in many cases, the

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chen 辰 ("branches") in this context are simply the multivalent ordinals known elsewhere as *dizhi* 地支 ("earthly branches"). They can be interpreted in either a spatial or a temporal sense. *Qinding xieji bianfang shu zouyi* 欽定協紀辨方書奏議, SKQS edn., 26b.

13. Cao Zhengui (d. 1282) was a diviner and calendrical expert of the early Yuan dynasty (1271–1368). He was the author of a text called *Lishi mingyuan* 曆事明原 (Clarifying the Origins of Calendrical Matters), which is quoted in XJBFS, but ironically, he is best known to historians for having failed to divine the corruption and abuses perpetrated by Kublai Khan's finance minister, the Persian Muslim Ahmad Fanakati, for whom Cao had cast many horoscopes. After Fanakati's crimes came to light posthumously, Kublai Khan had his corpse exhumed and fed to the dogs outside the northern gate of the new dynastic capital, today's Beijing. For his complicity, Cao himself suffered execution by "peeling," after which his skin was put on public display. See *Yuanshi* 元史, SKQS edn., 205.1b–6b.

14. Apart from KJP, published daybook manuscripts that begin with variant forms of the *jianchu* system include the two manuscripts found in tomb 1 at Fangmatan; the two manuscripts found in tomb 11 at Shuihudi; and one manuscript found in tomb 56 at Jiudian 九店 in Jiangling 江陵 county, Hubei.

jianchu system itself probably would have sufficed to determine if a given day was appropriate for travel, marriage, sacrifice, or some other activity. Moreover, the system could also be used in reverse; i.e., if one were planning a particular activity, one could work backwards from omens favorable to that activity to find auspicious days for the implementation of those plans.

The application of the *jianchu* system is straightforward and entirely mechanical. For each month of the lunar calendar, twelve labels or "day names" are paired with the twelve branches in their natural sequence (the name "*jianchu*" is derived by combining the first two labels in this series).[15] The omens associated with each label are then attached to these pairings in a kind of index so that for any given day of any month, one could first consider the branch value of that day's place in the sexagenary cycle, then note the *jianchu* label associated with that branch, and finally read the omens associated with that label. It is noteworthy that in describing what particular omens were paired with particular days, no rationale is given for why such pairings were considered appropriate. In the following analysis, I will make brief reference to the underlying logic of the system as part of my larger argument, but a common user of a daybook text in Qin or Han times had no actual need for such information (other than perhaps to satisfy natural curiosity).[16] If one could take on faith the cultural consensus that the *jianchu* system provided useful information, then one could use the system to glean that information without knowledge of the system's underlying principles.

In the following passage, we see the *jianchu* system as it appears on the first twenty-four slips of the KJP manuscript.[17]

建除：正月：建寅，除卯，盈辰，平巳，定午，執未，破申，危酉，成戌，收亥，開子，閉丑。1[1]
二月：建卯，除辰，【盈】巳，平午，定未，執申，破酉，危戌，成亥，收子，開丑，閉寅。2[1]
三月：建辰，除巳，盈午，平未，定申，執酉，破戌，危亥，成子，收丑，開寅，閉卯。3[1]
四月：建巳，除午，盈未，平【申，定酉，執戌，破亥】，危子，成丑，收【寅，開】卯，閉辰。4[1]
五月：建午，除未，盈申，【平酉，定戌，執亥，破子，危丑，成寅，收卯】，開辰，閉巳。5[1]

15. The labels are sometimes referred to as the "12 *jianchu* spirits," but I avoid that term as possibly anachronistic here.

16. In short, behind the *jianchu* scheme lies a system of beliefs about the orientation of the constellation *beidou* 北斗 ("Northern Dipper"; i.e., Ursa Major), which was understood as a kind of celestial dial. Directions were interpreted relative to a compass-like array of the twelve branches, with the first branch, *zi* 子, assigned the direction north, the second branch, *chou* 丑, assigned the direction north-northeast, and so on in clockwise order until the twelfth branch, *hai* 亥, was assigned the direction north-northwest. By observing the Dipper once per day (customarily at dusk), one could track an apparent annual rotation that shifted by approximately one directional branch per month. Thus for any given month, the direction indicated by the Dipper was labeled the *jian* ("Establish") orientation; its opposite was the *po* 破 ("Destroy") orientation; and labels were assigned to each intermediate orientation so that for any month, the *jianchu* labels assigned to that month signified positions to the front, back, right, and left of the dipper handle. As these orientations were indicated by the same system of multivalent branches that labeled calendar days of the sexagenary cycle, the essentially directional *jianchu* labels could then be given temporal significance by attaching the *zi*-direction *jianchu* label and its omen to *zi*-days, the *chou*-direction omen to *chou* days, and so on. For a more detailed and contextualized discussion of the *jianchu* system, see Harkness, "Cosmology and the Quotidian," 58–60 and 101–17.

17. In my translation, the information presented on slips 1^1–12^1 of the KJP manuscript has been rearranged in diagram form for clarity and convenience. By comparison with the Chinese text, the reader can confirm that the result is equivalent in terms of the assignation of *jianchu* labels to particular days.

Table 1. The KJP *Jianchu* System (slips 1–12)

	jian 建 Establish	*chu* 除 Remove	*ying* 盈 Plenty	*ping* 平 Level	*ding* 定 Settle	*zhi* 執 Seize	*po* 破 Destroy	*wei* 危 Peril	*cheng* 成 Achieve	*shou* 收 Receive	*kai* 開 Open	*bi* 閉 Shut
1st month	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑
2nd month	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅
3rd month	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯
4th month	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰
5th month	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳
6th month	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午
7th month	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未
8th month	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申
9th month	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉
10th month	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌
11th month	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥
12th month	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子

六月：建未，除申，盈酉，【平戌，定亥，執子】，破丑，危寅，成卯，收辰，開巳，閉午。6[1]
七月：建申，除酉，盈戌，平亥，定【子，執丑，破寅】，危卯，成辰，收巳，開午，閉未。7[1]
八月：建酉，除戌，盈亥，平子，定丑，執寅，破卯，危辰，成巳，收午，開未，閉申。8[1]
九月：建戌，除亥，盈子，平丑，定寅，執卯，破辰，危巳，成午，收未，開申，閉酉。9[1]
十月：建亥，除子，盈丑，平寅，定卯，執辰，【破】巳，危午，成未，收申，開酉，閉戌。10[1]
十一月：建子，除丑，盈【寅，平卯，定辰，執巳，破】午，危未，成申，收酉，開戌，閉亥。11[1]
十二月：建丑，除寅，盈卯，平辰，定巳，執午，破未，危申，成酉，收戌，開亥，閉子。12[1]
建日：可為大嗇夫、冠帶、乘車。不可以□□夫。可以禱祠，利朝不利莫（暮）。可以入人。13
除日：奴婢亡，不得。有癰病者，死。可以□□□。□言君子，可以毀除。可以飲藥（藥）。以功（攻），不報。14
盈日：可以築閒牢、□、宮室，入六畜、為嗇【夫。有】病者，不起，□□。15
平日：可以取（娶）婦、嫁女，. 16
定日：可以臧（藏）、為府、□、. 17
執日：不可以行，以是，不亡，必執入縣官。可以逐盜，圍，得。18
破日：可以伐木、壞垣、毀器。它毋可有為。19
危日：可以責、捕人、功（攻）□，射。20
成日：可以謀事、起眾、興大事。21
收日：可以入人、馬牛、畜產、禾稼。可以入室、取（娶）妻。22
開日：亡者，不得。可以請謁。言盜，必得。23
閉日：可以入馬牛、畜生（牲）、禾粟，居室，取（娶）妻，入奴婢，破隄（堤）。24

Establish Days: One may act as a senior supervisor, wear cap and belt, and ride in a carriage. One may not . . . . One may offer prayer and sacrifice; it is beneficial in the morning, not in the evening. One may bring in people (to the household or workplace).[18] 13

Remove Days: If a male or female slave escapes, he or she will not be caught. Those afflicted with fever will die. It may . . . . A gentleman may destroy and remove. One may take [lit., drink] medicine. If (this day is) used to attack, there will be no requital. 14

Plenty Days: One may build a corral or a pen, a silo, a house or a hall; (one may) bring in the six domestic animals or act as a supervisor.[19] Those with an illness will not rise . . .[20] 15

Level Days: One may take a wife or marry off a daughter . . . 16

Settle Days: One may store (items, crops, etc.), make an archive, . . . 17

Seize Days: One may not travel; if one does, then even if one did not abscond, one will certainly be detained and brought before the district magistrate. One may pursue a thief; by surrounding him, he will be caught. 18

Destroy Days: One may fell trees, tear down walls, and destroy vessels. No other action may be taken. 19

Peril Days: One may seek restitution, capture people, attack . . . and shoot (arrows). 20

Achieve Days: One may plan affairs, raise popular support, or start a major undertaking. 21

18. Liu Lexian 劉樂賢 notes that *ruren* 入人 ("bring in people") refers to buying slaves. See Liu, *Shuihudi Qin jian rishu yanjiu* 睡虎地秦簡日書研究 (Taibei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1994), 33; and *Suizhou Kongjiapo Han mu jiandu*, 130.

19. The six domestic animals are horses, cows, goats, chickens, dogs, and pigs. Chen Xuanwei 陳炫瑋, "Kongjiapo Han jian rishu yanjiu" 孔家坡漢簡日書研究 (M.A. thesis, National Tsing Hua Univ., 2007), 17.

20. Q*i* 起 ("rise") has the sense of "cure" or "be cured" of disease. See Liu, *Shuihudi Qin jian rishu yanjiu*, 34.

Receive Days: One may bring in people, horses and cows, smaller domestic animals, and grain. One may move into a (new) residence and take a wife.[21] 22

Open Days: An absconder will not be captured. One may request an audience with a superior. If one brings charges against a thief, (the thief) will certainly be caught.[22] 23

Shut Days: One may bring in horses and cows, smaller domestic animals, and millet. (One may) occupy a house, take a wife, bring in male and female slaves, and break a levee. 24

As an example of how the system functions, let us consider a day in the 1st month that coincides with the branch *wu*.[23] Reading from our chart, we see that such a day corresponds to the *jianchu* label *ding* "Settle," and from the index of such labels on KJP slips 13–24, we read that on Settle days, "One may store (items, crops, etc.), make a storehouse, ..." Although a lacuna in the manuscript cuts short our text, parallels from other manuscripts suggest that prayer and sacrifice on this day would also be appropriate.[24] The omens for Settle days are thus generally auspicious, and while not as all-encompassing as the omens for some other days of the cycle, there appear to be no prohibited activities or exceptional cases that might cause concern.

Returning now to our original topic of Inspection Days, we see that the above example has immediate significance because, by definition, *wu* days in the first month are Inspection Days.[25] Moreover, if the Inspection Days for the subsequent months are analyzed in terms of the *jianchu* system, a clear pattern emerges. In the case of the second month, for example, consider a *hai* day, which we can see is also an Inspection Day. The *jianchu* chart shows that this day corresponds to the label *cheng* "Achieve," and the omens for such days are subsequently provided on KJP slip 21. We read that "One may plan affairs, raise popular support, or start a major undertaking." Again, it would appear that these omens are generally auspicious, and in fact, it is easy to confirm that all Inspection Days correspond to the two *jianchu* labels Settle and Achieve. The pattern of their occurrence is illustrated in Table 2.

It is this phenomenon that the Qing dynasty XJBFS editors noted when they wrote that Cao Zhengui's analysis of the Inspection Days in terms of *yin* and *yang* amounted to saying that Inspection Days were all either Settle Days or Achieve Days. Settle Days were interpreted as having significance for civil affairs (perhaps in keeping with the archive omen), and they were noted as coming four branches in advance of the *jian* "Establish" label, meaning that if a given branch corresponds to the Settle label in one month, it will correspond to the Establish label four months later. Similarly, Achieve Days are described as having military significance and as coming four months after the Establish label. Both Settle and Achieve days are indeed "consistently auspicious," and despite the fact that the Qing editors worked without access to Han manuscripts, their observations are remarkably consistent with the data now available from such sources. At the same time, the formal layout of the Han manuscript strongly suggests precisely the exegetical approach that the Qing scholars advocated—that of

21. The expression "*ru shi*" 入室 can be interpreted as "move into a (new) residence." See *Suizhou Kongjiapo Han mu jiandu*, 130.

22. The phrase "*yan dao*" 言盜 means "bring charges against a thief." See Liu, *Shuihudi Qin jian rishu yanjiu*, 34.

23. This could be any one of the five *wu* days in the sexagenary cycle, namely *gengwu* 庚午 (day 7), *renwu* 壬午 (day 19), *jiawu* 甲午 (day 31), *bingwu* 丙午 (day 43), or *wuwu* 戊午 (day 55).

24. See SHD-A slip 18r, FMT-A slip 17, FMT-B slip 17 in *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian* 睡虎地秦墓竹簡, ed. Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian zhengli xiaozu 睡虎地秦墓竹簡整理小組 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1990), 90 and 183; and *Tianshui Fangmatan Qin jian jishi* 天水放馬灘秦簡集釋, ed. Sun Zhanyu 孫占宇 (Lanzhou: Gansu wenhua chubanshe, 2013), 5, 68–69; 16, 99–100.

25. In fact, by the stricter definition found in the daybook manuscripts, only *wu* days in the first ten-day period of the first month would be Inspection Days.

Table 2. Inspection Days Marked in the KJP *Jianchu* System

	jian 建 Establish	*chu* 除 Remove	*ying* 盈 Plenty	*ping* 平 Level	*ding* 定 Settle	*zhi* 執 Seize	*po* 破 Destroy	*wei* 危 Peril	*cheng* 成 Achieve	*shou* 收 Receive	*kai* 開 Open	*bi* 閉 Shut
1st month	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	***wu*** 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑
2nd month	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	***hai*** 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅
3rd month	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	***shen*** 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯
4th month	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	***chou*** 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰
5th month	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	***xu*** 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳
6th month	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	***mao*** 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午
7th month	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	***zi*** 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未
8th month	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	***si*** 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申
9th month	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	***yin*** 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉
10th month	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	***wei*** 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌
11th month	*zi* 子	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	***chen*** 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	*you* 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥
12th month	*chou* 丑	*yin* 寅	*mao* 卯	*chen* 辰	*si* 巳	*wu* 午	*wei* 未	*shen* 申	***you*** 酉	*xu* 戌	*hai* 亥	*zi* 子

understanding Inspection Days in terms of other, more general hemerological systems. This final point is further clarified by a quick look at the second complementary hemerological scheme mentioned above, *sanhe* or "Triads of Branches."

Sanhe ("Triads of Branches")

The *sanhe* scheme is another common component of both daybooks and later hemerological texts. Unlike the *jianchu* system, however, *sanhe* is simply a rearrangement of the naive correlative relations between the twelve branches and the five agents.[26] The results of this rearrangement can be used by other hemerological systems, but *sanhe* itself does not yield omens in currently known daybook texts. The system appears in the KJP manuscript on slips 103–104, which closely precede the "Inspection Days" passage.[27]

□生：
水：生申，壯子，老辰。木：生亥，壯卯，老未。103
火：生寅，壯午，老戌。金：生巳，壯酉，老丑。104
. . . Birth
Water: birth at *shen*, maturity at *zi*, old age at *chen*. 103[1]
Wood: birth at *hai*, maturity at *mao*, old age at *wei*. 103[2]
Fire: birth at *yin*, maturity at *wu*, old age at *xu*. 104[1]
Metal: birth at *si*, maturity at *you*, old age at *chou*. 104[2]

At first glance, the most notable aspect of this correlation scheme is that it describes the waxing and waning of each agent in terms of a lifespan, and these continuous developmental processes overlap to a significant degree.[28] For example, understanding the branches in their natural order, we see that when Fire reaches maturity at *wu* (calendrically associated with the fifth month), Metal has already been born (at *si* in the fourth month), and Wood has yet to die (at *wei* in the sixth month). Also, there are no correlations established with the agent Earth, which often has no fixed seasonal counterpart in the applied calendrical cosmology of the daybooks and simply gets left out.[29]

More subtly, the *sanhe* scheme can be a link between five-agents cosmology and hemerological systems involving the circumambulation of a spirit like the Thearch (or Cao Zhengui's Yang Establisher's envoy) through the course of the calendar year. The Qing editors seem to be aware of this fact when they claim that "The first branch of the triad corresponds to a Settle day, and the last branch of the triad corresponds to an Achieve day." Oddly, their

26. The five agents, also sometimes translated as "five elements" or "five phases," were Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. Each "agent" was correlated in standardized arrangements with a color, a compass direction, a season, a subset of the calendrical stems and branches, and any number of other qualities amenable to division into five parts. As an example of how the *sanhe* system rearranges the naive correlative relations between the twelve branches and the five agents, consider the branch *hai* 亥, which is "naively" correlated with the tenth month, the season winter, the agent Water, and most importantly for present purposes, the direction north. We can see via the *sanhe* scheme, however, that *hai* can also be associated with the birth of Wood, which lends the branch a different "derived" set of Wood-correlations, including the season spring and the direction east.

27. The same information appears again in the manuscript as annotation on a diagram called *riting* 日廷 ("day court"). See KJP slips 121–37.

28. The partial title, ". . . Birth," found in the KJP manuscript appears to refer to this metaphor of a life cycle. It is otherwise unknown and does not resemble later names for the same theory, e.g., "Triads of Branches."

29. The presence of Earth is introduced in the *sanhe* scheme found in the Western Han text *Huainanzi* 淮南子, but it complicates matters because twelve branches will not distribute as neatly among five agents as they will among four. In practice, while three branches are still associated with each agent, there is redundancy. The same branches (in different order) are assigned to the agents Fire and Earth. See *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋, ed. He Ning 何寧 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 269.

claim is demonstrably untrue. A *hai* day in the second month, for example, is one Inspection Day that corresponds with an Achieve day but represents the first—not the last—branch of the triad of Wood branches. Nevertheless, they were correct that the *sanhe* system is indeed a key for unlocking the mechanism at work in the determination of Inspection Days. This becomes apparent when the directional correlations of the Inspection Day branches are compared with those directional correlations derived not from the branches directly but from their associated *sanhe* agents as illustrated in Table 3.[30]

Recalling that the KJP "Inspection Days" passage explicitly links the quality of these days to circumambulation of the Thearch, we should not be surprised to find that the itinerary proceeds in an orderly counter-clockwise sequence through the cardinal directions, but the fact that this regular movement can only be discerned through the lens of the *sanhe* scheme and the physical proximity of the two passages in the Han manuscript strongly suggests that the exegetical strategy of the Qing editors was well founded.[31] Thus we arrive at the curious conclusion that the Qing scholars analyzing the nature of Inspection Days were essentially correct in their exegetical approach while at the same time, with the benefit of archaeologically recovered manuscripts, we can also demonstrate that their conclusions about the nature of these days were fundamentally flawed. The key to resolving this apparent contradiction lies in another pair of daybook manuscripts found just 100 km southeast of the Kongjiapo cemetery site.

PART II: SHUIHUDI

In fact, twenty-five years before the discovery of the KJP manuscript, two other manuscript witnesses of the "Inspection Days" text were already known in the form of the two daybooks excavated in December 1975 at the cemetery site of Shuihudi in Yunmeng county, Hubei.[32] Shuihudi tomb 11 belonged to a Qin legal official named Xi 喜, whose career spanned the final decades of the Warring States period. During those years, the Qin king was consolidating control over occupied land in the northern districts of what had been the region of the Chu capital prior to 278 BCE. Xi saw this process culminate in the establishment of the Qin dynasty in 221 BCE, at which point the Qin king took the new and unprecedented title of Qin Shihuangdi 秦始皇帝 ("First August Thearch of Qin")—now referring to himself by a variant of the same divine title we have already seen in the "Inspection Days" passage.[33]

Thus in 217 BCE when Xi died at approximately age forty-five and went to his grave with a cache of manuscripts, including two daybooks, he had lived and worked for most of his life in what might be called a colonial environment with inevitable tension existing between the

30. The standard directional correlations of the four relevant "agents" are Wood-East, Fire-South, Metal-West, and Water-North.

31. An example in received literature of the Thearch circulating through the cardinal directions in synch with the Dipper constellation to "inspect" the world below is found in the "Tianguan shu" 天官書 ("Treatise on the Heavenly Offices") chapter of *Shiji*, which states "The Dipper is the Thearch's carriage. It revolves in the center (as he is) inspecting and controlling the four directions. Dividing *yin* and *yang*, establishing the four seasons, harmonizing the five agents, moving the nodes of the tropical year, and fixing the temporal cycles—all these things are tied to the Dipper" 斗為帝車，運於中央，臨制四鄉。分陰陽，建四時，均五行，移節度，定諸紀，皆繫於斗. *Shiji* 27.1536.

32. These manuscripts are conventionally labeled the *jia* 甲 (A) and *yi* 乙 (B) manuscripts. This study is largely restricted to the former manuscript (SHD-A) with occasional reference to the latter (SHD-B) explicitly noted when appropriate.

33. The First August Thearch of Qin was, of course, also known for conducting inspection tours of his realm. These are described in the "Qin Shihuang benji" 秦始皇本紀 ("Basic Annals of the First Augustus of Qin") chapter of *Shiji* 6.307–31.

Table 3. Inspection Days Marked in the *Sanhe* System

	1st month	2nd month	3rd month	4th month	5th month	6th month	7th month	8th month	9th month	10th month	11th month	12th month
Inspection Branch	*wu* 午	*hai* 亥	*shen* 申	*chou* 丑	*xu* 戌	*mao* 卯	*zi* 子	*si* 巳	*yin* 寅	*wei* 未	*chen* 辰	*you* 酉
Direction of Inspection Branch	S	N	W	N	W	E	N	S	E	S	E	W
Triad Agent	Fire	Wood	Water	Metal	Fire	Wood	Water	Metal	Fire	Wood	Water	Metal
Derived Direction of Triad Agent	S	E	N	W	S	E	N	W	S	E	N	W

local Chu culture, diverse in its own right and shaped by centuries of independent development, and the relatively new administrative controls imposed by the Qin conquerors from the north. These tensions are reflected in the daybook texts themselves. For example, there was a discrepancy between the traditional Chu calendar and that of Qin. Both were lunar calendars that defined months as the period from one new moon to the next, but the two calendars named the months differently and appear to have started the year at different times.[34] Thus, in order to avoid confusion in the many daybook passages involving data about the months of the year, a well-known passage in SHD-A provides a convenient table to allow a reader familiar with the Chu system to convert dates for use in hemerological schemes that accord with Qin standards and vice-versa.

十月楚冬夕，日六夕七〈十〉。64r[2]
十一月楚屈夕，日五夕十一。65r[2]
十二月楚援夕，日六夕十。66r[2]
正月楚刑夷，日七夕九。67r[2]
二月楚夏尸，日八夕八。64r[3]
三月楚紡月，日九夕七。65r[3]
四月楚七月，日十夕六。66r[3]
五月楚八月，日十一夕五。67r[3]
六月楚九月，日十夕六。64r[4]
七月楚十月，日九夕七。65r[4]
八月楚爨月，日八夕八。66r[4]
九月楚鬳〈獻〉馬，日七夕九。67r[4]
The tenth month / Chu's *dongxi*, six parts day and ten[35] parts night; 64r[2]
The eleventh month / Chu's *quxi*; five parts day and eleven parts night; 65r[2]
The twelfth month / Chu's *yuanxi*; six parts day and ten parts night; 66r[2]
The regulating month / Chu's *xingyi*; seven parts day and nine parts night; 67r[2]
The second month / Chu's *xiashi*;[36] eight parts day and eight parts night; 64r[3]
The third month / Chu's *fangyue*;[37] nine parts day and seven parts night; 65r[3]
The fourth month / Chu's seventh month;[38] ten parts day and six parts night; 66r[3]
The fifth month / Chu's eighth month; eleven parts day and five parts night; 67r[3]
The sixth month / Chu's ninth month; ten parts day and six parts night; 64r[4]
The seventh month / Chu's tenth month; nine parts day and seven parts night; 65r[4]
The eighth month / Chu's *cuanyue*; eight parts day and eight parts night; 66r[4]
The ninth month / Chu's *xianma*; seven parts day and nine parts night. 67r[4]

It is noteworthy that appended to each line is a ratio indicating the approximate proportions of day and night to be expected each month based on a division of the day into sixteen "hours." This oblique reference to the tropical year in an otherwise lunar calendar helps to

34. Qin months were simply numbered after the first month, which was known as *zhengyue* 正月 ("the regulating month"), but Chu months were, in most cases, known by names that appear to have represented a sacrifice appropriate to that month. The beginning of the Chu calendar year is a topic of some debate. For a summary and evaluation of the prevailing theories, see Guo Jue 郭玨, "Reconstructing Fourth Century B.C.E. Chu 楚 Religious Practices in China: Divination, Sacrifice, and Healing in the Newly Excavated Baoshan 包山 Manuscripts" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008), 191–209.

35. The graph *qi* 七 ("seven") is written where the text clearly requires *shi* 十 ("ten"). The interchange of these two graphs is a common scribal error in Chinese manuscripts.

36. In Warring States era Chu manuscripts such as the Jiudian daybook, this month is often called *xiayi* 夏尿, sometimes transcribed as 夏夷. See *Jiudian Chu jian* 九店楚簡, ed. Hubei sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖北省文物考古研究所 and Beijing daxue zhongwenxi 北京大學中文系 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999), 53 slip 78.

37. In Chu manuscripts, this month is often called *xiangyue* 享月. Ibid.

38. In Chu manuscripts, this month is often called *xiaxi* 夏𡉉, sometimes transcribed as 夏夕. Ibid.

indicate the months unambiguously, showing that by the Qin calendar, months eleven and five should contain the winter and summer solstices respectively, because the ratios of day to night are the most extreme in those months, and similarly months two and eight should contain the vernal and autumnal equinoxes because, in those months, day and night are balanced in equal proportions.[39] Perhaps most importantly, the chart also clarifies the potentially confusing relationship between the four numbered Chu months (seven, eight, nine, and ten) and their Qin counterparts (four, five, six, and seven).[40]

The calendrical problems associated with adapting Chu hemerology to Qin standards are nicely illustrated by text in the SHD-A manuscript constituting part of two separate passages that list prohibited days for tailoring clothes. The first passage, found among the first slips on the recto side of the manuscript, reads as follows:

衣：. . . 毋以楚九月己未台（ 始 ）被新衣，衣手□必死 。26r[2]
Garments: . . . On *jiwei* (day 56) in Chu's ninth month, do not put on new clothes for the first time; (otherwise) the maker will certainly die. 26r[2]

Clearly, the reference to the Chu calendar is made explicit precisely because the ninth month of that calendar is one of the numbered Chu months and therefore easily confused with the ninth month of the Qin calendar (the last month of autumn). In fact, as we have seen above, the proper correspondence would be with the sixth month of the Qin calendar (the last month of summer), and indeed, on the verso side of the same manuscript, we find another, partially redundant passage of clothing prohibitions.

衣忌：. . . 六月己未，不可以裁（ 製 ）新衣，必死 。115v
Garment Avoidances: . . . On *jiwei* (day 56) in the sixth month, one may not produce new clothes; (otherwise) one will certainly die. 115v

Here, a variant of the same day prohibition is indicated in an unmarked way under the assumption that the reference calendar is that of Qin. As a whole, we can thus begin to see that SHD-A is a manuscript reflecting its historical context at the confluence of two cultural traditions—those of Qin and Chu. At the same time, these traditions were not on an equal footing; the conquering Qin authority set the standards in technical subjects like calendrical theory and hemerology, and the technical knowledge of the conquered Chu people tends to appear through the filtering lens of a Qin editorial hand.[41]

An important example of the SHD-A manuscript mediating between the local Chu hemerology and new Qin standards involves systems of the *jianchu* type, and we will return to examine them in short order. First, however, it may be instructive to look at the SHD-A version of the now familiar "Inspection Days" text. Appearing on slips 127r–130r, it states:

行：凡且有大行 、遠行若飲食 、歌樂 、聚畜生及夫妻同衣，毋以正月上旬午，二月上旬亥，三月上旬申，四月上旬丑，五月上旬戌，六月上旬卯，七月上旬子，八月127r 上旬巳，九月上旬寅，十月上旬未，十一月上旬辰，十二月上旬酉 。凡是日，赤帝（ 帝 ）恒以開臨下民而降其英（ 殃 ），不可具為百事，皆毋（ 無 ）所利 。節（ 即 ）有為也，128r 其央（ 殃 ）不出歲中，小大必至 。有為而禺（ 遇 ）雨，命曰央（ 殃 ）蚤（ 早 ）至，不出

39. Of course, the hemerologists were using an idealized system, and in practice, intercalary months were necessary to maintain these relations between the lunar and solar calendars.

40. Readers who are troubled by the idea of numerically named months with a position in the annual sequence that does not correspond to the month's name should consider the familiar cases of September, October, November, and December.

41. The presentation of the manuscript in the Qin script is, of course, the most immediate evidence of where the new regional authority was to be found.

三月，必有死亡之志至。凡是有為也，必先計月中閒日，句（ 苟 ）毋（ 無 ）直赤啻（ 帝 ）臨日，它日雖 129r 有不吉之名，毋（ 無 ）所大害。凡民將行，出其門，毋（ 無 ）敢顧（ 顧 ），毋止。直述（ 術 ）吉，從道右吉，從左吝。少（ 小 ）顧（ 顧 ）是胃（ 謂 ）少（ 小 ）楮，吝；大顧（ 顧 ）是胃（ 謂 ）大楮，凶（ 凶 ）。130r

Travel: Whenever there is going to be major travel, a distant journey, or the likes of feasting, making music, gathering domestic animals, or sharing a garment between husband and wife, do not use (the following days):

In the first ten-day period of the first month—a *wu* day;
In the first ten-day period of the second month—a *hai* day;
In the first ten-day period of the third month—a *shen* day;
In the first ten-day period of the fourth month—a *chou* day;
In the first ten-day period of the fifrth month—a *xu* day;
In the first ten-day period of the sixth month—a *mao* day;
In the first ten-day period of the seventh month—a *zi* day;
In the first ten-day period of the eighth month 127r—a *si* day;
In the first ten-day period of the ninth month—an *yin* day;
In the first ten-day period of the tenth month—a *wei* day;
In the first ten-day period of the eleventh month—a *chen* day;
In the first ten-day period of the twelfth month—a *you* day.

On these days, the Red Thearch always begins his inspection of the people below and sends down misfortune. One may not engage in affairs of any manner; none will bring benefit. If one engages in some activity, 128r then its associated greater or lesser misfortune will certainly arrive within [a year]. If one engages in some activity and also encounters rain, this is named "misfortune arrives early." Within three months, there will certainly arrive the record of a death. For any undertaking, it is necessary first to calculate the day within the month. If it does not coincide with one of the Red Thearch's Inspection Days, then even if by other day(-selection schemes) 129r it would have an inauspicious name, there will be no great harm. Whenever a person is going to travel (on these days), upon exiting from one's gate, do not look back and do not stop. A straight road is auspicious. To the right of the way is auspicious; to the left are regrets. Taking a short look back is called a short standstill—regret; taking a long look back is called a long standstill—inauspicious.[42] 130r

At the outset, it is important to note that the passage quoted here bears more than superficial similarity with the KJP "Inspection Days" text. Indeed, the variation between the two textual witnesses is relatively minor, and they agree on all crucial points, including the definition of the prohibited days, the rationale for their inauspiciousness, the types of activities that must be avoided, and even the peculiar connection with meteorological conditions that can exacerbate the harm caused by engaging in prohibited activities. Nevertheless, several differences are noteworthy. These include:

1. The title: The title of this passage, *Xing* 行 ("Travel"), emphasizes movement, and although the relationship between texts and their titles is a loose one in daybook manuscripts, any particular title may help to clarify how that particular manuscript's user understood its contents.[43] Here, the focus on travel, which is mirrored in the text by the shifting movements of the Red Thearch, and the explicit temporal restriction to the first ten-day "week" of each month are reminiscent of texts like the "Nine-

42. Reading the graph 楮 as *zhu* 佇 following *Shuihudi Qin mu zhujian*, 201 n. 4.

43. See Yan Changgui 晏昌貴, "Kongjiapo Hanjian *rishu* de pianti yu fenpian" 孔家坡漢簡《日書》的篇題與分篇, *Jianbo* 2008.3: 243–50, on the topic of daybook texts and their titles. Note that the SHD-B variant of this text has no title.

Palaces" diagrams that accompany the *Xingde* 刑德 texts written on silk manuscripts found in the Western Han tombs at Mawangdui.[44] While the correspondence is not exact, and to fully describe the *Xingde* system would take us too far afield, it involves the circulation of several calendrical spirits through schematic "palaces," each of which is divided into ten cells. Progress through the palaces is fully determined by a complex application of five-agents theory, and among the spirits encountered in each palace are meteorologically significant ones such as Fengbo 風伯 ("Uncle Wind"), Leigong 雷公 ("Duke Thunder"), and Yushi 雨師 ("Master Rain").[45] Recalling that an encounter with rain has a multiplying effect on the inauspicious nature of Inspection Days, it begins to appear probable that the "Inspection Days" text derives from a late Warring States cultural milieu similar to that of the *Xingde* texts and characterized by the calendrically circumscribed movement of spirits through space, integration of five-agents theory in the ritual choreography of such movement, and ominous interactions with meteorological phenomena or the spirits who represent such phenomena.[46]

2. The name of the deity: One of the most interesting differences between the two variant texts lies in the name of the spirit conducting the inspection tour. Where KJP had simply the Thearch, we find in SHD-A a reference to Chi Di 赤帝 or "The Red Thearch." With the development of five-agents theory, each of the five color categories (Green, Red, Yellow, White, Black) was systematically paired with a corresponding Thearch that would then be associated with the correlated direction, season, and so on. The Red Thearch was the spirit of the south and fits in this way with the southern state of Chu. We can also recall that in our earlier discussion of Inspection Days viewed through the lens of the *sanhe* system, the circulation of the deity commenced each cycle in the south. There is a certain consistency between these implicit and explicit elements of the text suggesting that the later KJP variant reflects editorial efforts to universalize what had been a text more deeply rooted in the particularities of Chu traditions.
3. Miscellaneous details: Finally, the SHD-A text contains a small number of additional details that differ from those found in KJP. Among the prohibited activities specified in SHD-A, for example, we find the phrase 聚畜生 "gathering domestic animals" whereas the corresponding KJP text is 取（ 聚 ）眾、畜生（ 牲 ）"gather people or domestic animals." The effect is that the later KJP text renders a prohibition on ritual activity in SHD-A in a potentially more political light by proscribing any kind of coordinated mass gathering.[47] Liu Lexian has also noted the unusual prohibition on husband and wife sharing a "garment," which he suggests may refer to something

44. For a thorough study of these texts, see Marc Kalinowski, "The *Xingde* 刑德 Texts from Mawangdui," *Early China* 23–24 (1998–99): 125–202.

45. Kalinowski notes that these spirits also appear together in a *Chuci* 楚辭 poem describing a journey in the spirit world. Ibid., 180.

46. There are many variations on this theme in early Chinese technical literature. For example, the "Jiugong bafeng" 九宮八風 ("Nine Palaces, Eight Winds") chapter of *Lingshu jing* 靈樞經 describes the calendrically circumscribed annual procession of the spirit Taiyi 太一 ("Great One") through another scheme of nine palaces. In this case we read: "On the day when Great One shifts between palaces, Heaven is certain to respond with wind and rain. Wind and rain on that day is auspicious—the harvest will be good and the people at peace with little disease. Wind and rain before that day portend a deluge; wind and rain after that day portend drought" 太一移日，天必應之以風雨，以其日風雨則吉，歲美民安少病矣，先之則多雨，後之則多汗. *Lingshu jing*, SKQS edn., 11.17.

47. Of course, the addition or omission of a single graph might also be attributed to the vicissitudes of textual transmission in a manuscript culture. The point is that there is a pattern in the evidence pointing toward an editorial hand at work, not that any one piece of evidence is necessarily conclusive on its own merits.

like a blanket and thereby connote sexual activity.[48] And finally, and perhaps more conclusively, in the last sentence of the SHD-A passage, human travel or movement that would mirror the movement of the Red Thearch is treated in a sentence that has no counterpart in KJP.[49] Like the section title, it is probably best viewed as evidence for the way the user of SHD-A contextualized the "Travel" passage, since, on the one hand, this final sentence makes no explicit reference to the Red Thearch, but, on the other hand, it fills the blank space left at the end of the final slip supporting the "Travel" text and matches the sentence structure seen in that text.[50] It attaches omens to a spatial analysis of movement—saying, in essence, when travelling (on the prohibited days), "do not stop or look back, but to proceed straight ahead is auspicious; it is auspicious to the right of the way, but inauspicious to the left."[51] While the method of dividing space into four quadrants (front, back, left, and right) may be odd in the sense that it raises the possibility of auspicious activity on days that have already been described as uniformly inauspicious, it is quite typical of hemerological schemes derived from the apparent rotation of the Beidou 北斗 ("Northern Dipper") constellation.[52] These include, most prominently, the *jianchu* scheme, and once again, we are steered toward the kind of internal textual cross-referencing that suggests regarding the Inspection Days through the lens of the SHD-A *jianchu* scheme, or in this case schemes, because the SHD texts contain multiple, separate *jianchu*-like passages explicitly labeled as derivative of Qin and Chu variant traditions.

The Chu [Jian]chu System

The first thirteen slips on the recto side of SHD-A carry an important text titled simply Chu 除 ("Remove") but generally interpreted as [Chu]chu [楚]除 ("Chu-style Remove") on the basis of its contents and by contrast with the following text which is titled Qinchu 秦除 ("Qin-style Remove").[53] The top portion of these slips contains a table matching months, days, and the various *jianchu*-like labels with some important variations on the simple method described above for the KJP manuscript. The layout is as follows:

The first point to notice is that the index of the months on the rightmost column of the chart (slip 1 of the manuscript) begins with the eleventh month of the Qin calendar, a seemingly odd choice until we recall that the familiar Qin *jianchu* system (e.g., as seen in KJP)

48. Liu, *Shuihudi Qin jian rishu yanjiu*, 154 n. 1.

49. There is also no counterpart to this sentence in the otherwise parallel text of SHD-B.

50. In particular, the opening words of the sentence, 凡民將行. . . ("Whenever one is going to travel . . ."), resemble the format of several other sentences in the passage.

51. This admonition is rather similar in character to the much later XJBFS description of Inspection Days quoted earlier in which we were told, "*Yang* complies and leads; *yin* opposes and follows . . . *Yin* behind and *yang* in front; civilian matters on the left and military affairs on the right."

52. See *Huainanzi jishi*, 219, where we find "The handle of the Dipper is Minor Sui . . . Minor Sui generates in the southeast and kills in the northwest; it must not be faced, but it can be behind the back; it must not be to the left, but it can be to the right" 斗杓為小歲 . . . 小歲東南則生，西北則殺，不可迎也，而可背也，不可左也，而可右也.

53. Zhang Wenyu 張聞玉 first proposed that the partially visible marks directly above the title on slip 1r of SHD-A are part of the graph *chu* 楚. See Zhang, "Yunmeng Qin jian *rishu* chu tan" 雲夢秦簡《日書》初探, *Jiang Han luntan* 1987.4: 69. Most scholars have followed this interpretation, e.g., Li Jiahao 李家浩, "Shuihudi Qin jian *rishu* 'Chu chu' de xingzhi ji qita" 睡虎地秦簡《日書》「楚除」的性質及其他, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 70.4 (1999): 883–903, and Yan Changgui 晏昌貴, *Wugui yu yinsi: Chu jian suo jian fangshu zongjiao kao* 巫鬼與淫祀：楚簡所見方術宗教考 (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 59, but it is difficult to confirm on the basis of available photographs of the manuscript.

Table 4. SHD-A (slips 1r–13r) with Marked Inspection Days

13r	12r	11r	10r	9r	8r	7r	6r	5r	4r	3r	2r	1r
yong 甬	*cheng* 成	*gai* 蓋	*zuo* 坐	*kong* 空	*ning* 寧	*ping* 平	*bi* 彼	*xian* 陷	*jian* 建	*ying* 贏	*nuan* 濡	[Chu]chu [楚]除
hai 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	11th month, Dipper 斗
zi 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	12th month, Maid 須
chou 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	1st month, Camp[1] 營
yin 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	2nd month, Straddler 奎
mao 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	3rd month, Stomach 胃
chen 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	4th month, Net 畢
si 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	5th month, East[2] 東
wu 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	6th month, Willow 柳
wei 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	7th month, Spread 張
shen 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	*you* 酉	8th month, Horn 角
you 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	*xu* 戌	9th month, Base 氐
xu 戌	*you* 酉	*shen* 申	*wei* 未	*wu* 午	*si* 巳	*chen* 辰	*mao* 卯	*yin* 寅	*chou* 丑	*zi* 子	*hai* 亥	10th month, Heart 心
xiu 秀	*jue guang* 央光	[. . .]	*wai yin* 外陰	*wai hai* 外害	*wai yang* 外陽	*da* 達	*yin* 陰	*hai* 害	*jiao* 交	*yang* 陽	*jie* 結	
. . . (omen 12)	. . . (omen 11)	. . . (omen 10)	. . . (omen 9)	. . . (omen 8)	. . . (omen 7)	. . . (omen 6)	. . . (omen 5)	. . . (omen 4)	. . . (omen 3)	. . . (omen 2)	. . . (omen 1)	

1. This lodge is often labeled *shi* 室 (“House”). Here the full name *yingshi* 營室 (“Camp Headquarters”) appears to have been abridged to *ying* 營. Some scholars have also argued that *ying* alone can be understood as a combined form of the graphs *yinggong* 營宮 (“Camp Palace”). See *Qin jiandu heji* 秦簡牘合集, ed. Chen Wei 陳偉, vol. 4 (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2014), 137 n. 15.

2. This lodge is often labeled *jing* 井 (“Well”). Here the full name *dongjing* 東井 (“Eastern Well”) has been abridged to *dong* 東.

has a characteristic starting orientation that pairs the *jian* label with the branch *yin*, and, by arranging the Chu system in this manner, that particular element remains constant. Of course, other elements of the system have changed, creating the potential for confusion, and in the same way that the conversion table for translating between the calendars of Qin and Chu included ratios of daytime to nighttime for each month to disambiguate the intended lunation, we are here provided with references to the sidereal year for the same purpose.[54] In this case, the references are to asterisms among the twenty-eight *xiu* 宿 ("lodges") circling the ecliptic in a continuous band and marking the sun's apparent annual progress through the backdrop of fixed stars. Thus, the current scheme looks designed to help standardize traditional Chu hemerology in the new calendrical language of the Qin authorities.

As in the case of the KJP *jianchu* system, we find the list of twelve labels or "day names" running across the top row of the chart in such a way that for each lunar month (corresponding to a row of the chart), one and only one label is paired with each of the twelve branches. In many cases, the labels themselves appear to differ in name or order from those of the familiar Qin *jianchu* system, but several scholars have pointed out that more than half of the labels are, in fact, either the same or else merely represent different ways of writing the same word. For example, the labels *jian* 建, *ping* 平, and *cheng* 成 have exact equivalents in the Qin system, and the eminent paleographer Li Jiahao has assembled arguments showing that the SHD-A label *ying* 贏 derives from the miswriting of a word phonetically similar to the Qin label *bi* 閉, and similarly that *ning* 寧 was phonetically similar to the Qin label *ding* 定.[55] Analysis of this type has confirmed the early observation by Li Xueqin 李學勤 that "Although the Chu and Qin *jianchu* systems are different, we can see through the day names that they have a connection in their origin."[56]

For our current purposes, two labels from the Chu system are of particular interest because all of the SHD-A Inspection Days of the Red Thearch are matched with one or the other of these labels in the same way that KJP Inspection Days were all Settle or Achieve Days in that manuscript's *jianchu* scheme. As the shading in Table 4 indicates, these days in the Chu system were labelled *zuo* 坐 and *bi* 彼 days:

1. *zuo* 坐

   Recent studies based on excavated Chinese manuscripts written in the Chu script have shown a close relationship (often equivalence) between the graphs *zuo* 坐 and *wei* 危 when they represent the transcribed interpretation of earlier graphic forms (e.g., graphs in the Chu script). The connection is succinctly described by Chen Jian 陳劍, who writes, "the *zuo* 坐 ("sit"; OC *[dz]ˤo[j]ʔ) of ancient times was originally *gui* 跪 ("kneel"; OC *[g](r)ojʔ), and *wei* 危 (OC *[ŋ](r)[o]j) should be the original form of *gui* 跪. *Wei* 危 and *zuo* 坐 are closely related in terms of graphic form, phonetic value, and semantic value; it is very likely that the words are cognates and the graphs have a common origin."[57] It seems safe to conclude that the *zuo* 坐 days of the

54. In the calendrical science of the late Warring States period, there was still no recognized distinction between the tropical and sidereal years.

55. Li, "Shuihudi Qin jian *rishu* 'Chu chu' de xingzhi ji qita," 886. For a slightly different account of the same general argument (equivalent to Li's views regarding the above examples), see Liu Lexian, "Comparison of the Chu and the Qin Art of Selection: A Study Based on Excavated Documents," in *Time and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Xiaobing Wang-Riese and Thomas O. Höllmann (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009), 157.

56. Originally from Li Xueqin, "Shuihudi Qin jian *rishu* yu Chu, Qin shehui" 睡虎地秦簡日書與楚、秦社會, *Jianghan kaogu* 1985.4: 60–64, and quoted in English translation in Liu, "Comparison of the Chu and the Qin Art of Selection," 157 n. 15. On the basis of this historical connection, the Chu system is often described as a "*jianchu*" system despite the fact that here the *jian* 建 label has a different place in the series and there is no *chu* 除 label. In the following, I will refer to the system on SHD-A slips 1r–13r as "Chu [*jian*]*chu*" 楚[建]除 to reflect both the given title on slip 1 of the manuscript and an intended comparison with the Qin *jianchu* system.

57. Chen's analysis is quoted in Ji Xusheng 季旭昇, *Shuowen xinzheng* 說文新證 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 947. I have added the Old Chinese phonetic reconstructions from the updated online database

Chu *jianchu* system are the equivalent of the *wei* 危 ("Peril") days of the more familiar Qin *jianchu* scheme.

2. *bi* 彼
   In the relatively straightforward case of *bi* days, the closely corresponding graphic variants appearing in Qin *jianchu* schemes include *bi* 柀 (SHD-A) and *bi* 彼 itself (FMT-A, FMT-B), both of which correspond in the standardized system of KJP *jianchu* days with the graph *po* 破 ("Destroy"). Note that in Middle Chinese, the graph 柀 (normally "China fir" or *Cunninghamia lanceolata*) could also signify a verb meaning "disintegrate, collapse, fall apart, smash, destroy."[58] In all likelihood, this latter sense derives from the use of the graph in contexts where the word now commonly written *po* 破 was intended.

In sum, the anomaly of Inspection Days appearing auspicious when viewed through the lens of the KJP *jianchu* hemerology, where they uniformly corresponded with "Settle" and "Achieve" days, begins to seem more explicable when it is recognized that the taboo days corresponding to the travels of the [Red] Thearch are a form of Chu hemerology that has been adapted to Qin standards. Insofar as the SHD manuscripts will allow, we can see that these days in a Chu [*jian*]*chu* context were equivalent to the rather more ominous "Peril" and "Destroy" day categories. However, we are not quite finished with these days yet. To fully appreciate the importance of the SHD manuscripts, the bottom row of Table 4 must be explained.

As Li Jiahao has noted, the bottom row of Table 4 belongs in the matrix of days, months, and day labels depicted above rather than as part of a separately formatted omen index in the manuscript's lower register as it is usually depicted.[59] Each entry in this row represents one element of yet another series of day names, sometimes referred to as the *jieyang* 結陽 series after the first two elements in the list. Since the mechanics of this system function in the exact manner of the *jianchu* system, there is no need for redundant explanation here, but by placing these days in the same chart as the Chu [*jian*]*chu* days, a question does arise concerning the omens appearing on the lower portion of SHD-A slips 2r–13r. The format of the text suggests that these omens should apply to *both* series (and comparison with the SHD-B manuscript unambiguously confirms this impression), but from which series do they derive and what became of the omens from the other series? For example, a glance at the chart shows that the same days labeled as *bi* 彼 (破; "Destroy") days and *zuo* 坐 (危; "Peril") days can also be considered as *yin* 陰 ("Shade") days and *waiyin* 外陰 ("Outer Shade") days, respectively. The corresponding omens are as follows:

> 彼(破)... 陰日：利以家室。祭祀、家(嫁)子、取(娶)婦、入材，大吉。以見君上，數達，毋(無)咎。6r[2]
> Destroy/Shade Days: Beneficial for household and home. Offering sacrifice, marrying off a child, taking a wife, and bringing in materials are very auspicious. When meeting one's lord (on these days), one will get through after several attempts—no harm.

> 坐(危)... 外陰日：利以祭祀。作事、入材，皆吉。不可以之野外。10r[2]
> Peril/Outer Shade Days: Beneficial for offering sacrifice. Undertaking a task and bringing in materials are all auspicious. One may not go into the wilderness.

Clearly, the omens are a mixture of the good and the bad—not the unequivocally disastrous ones that might be expected given the Chu [*jian*]*chu* day names, not to mention their connection with Inspection Days. This could suggest that the omens we see here attached to

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of reconstructions based on William H. Baxter and Laurent Sagart, *Old Chinese: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2014). See http://ocbaxtersagart.lsait.lsa.umich.edu/.

58. Paul W. Kroll, *A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 15.

59. Li, "Shuihudi Qin jian *rishu* 'Chu chu' de xingzhi ji qita," 890. In fact, despite the necessity of dividing the written text in two parts to fit above and below the central binding cord of the manuscript, the entire text should be regarded as one contiguous whole.

both Chu [*jian*]*chu* days and the days of the *jieyang* series originated with the *jieyang* series alone. The implication would be that in SHD-A (and SHD-B) we see the Chu [*jian*]*chu* day names, but not necessarily in a context that conveys their original sense. In fact, given the more prominent placement of the Chu [*jian*]*chu* days across the top row of the chart, one might even suspect a sort of "bait and switch" ploy on the part of some scribal editor who shaped the presentation of the text. For confirmation, however, we must look at yet another, still older, daybook manuscript.

PART III: JIUDIAN

To date, the earliest known daybook manuscript is that discovered in the 1980s in tomb 56 of the ancient Jiudian cemetery located on a ridge of low hills northeast of the former Chu capital of Jinan 紀南 in modern Jiangling county, Hubei, and approximately 200 km southwest of Shuihudi.[60] Dated by archaeologists to the late fourth century BCE, or approximately half a century before the Qin invasion, the Jiudian daybook manuscript (hereafter JD) was the property of a tomb occupant whose burial context suggests he was either a commoner of relatively high standing or an aristocrat who had fallen on hard times.[61] Unfortunately, the manuscript was not well preserved. The thirty-five remaining intact slips and some 110 fragments that carry writing show traces of having been bound in mat form by three parallel binding cords, now completely disintegrated. Unlike many manuscripts on bamboo, writing begins at the top of each slip without allotting space for an upper margin (and thus leaving little or no space for section titles). The surviving text divides into fifteen sections, and most importantly for present purposes, it separately includes both the Chu [*jian*]*chu* (slips 13–24) and *jieyang* (slips 25–36) hemerological schemes.[62]

In recent years, both of these passages have been the subject of thorough research to determine their connections with later hemerology. In one of the most illustrative studies, Yan Changgui has compared the separate omen statements of both JD schemes with those of the combined series found in SHD-A to show unequivocally that the SHD-A omens derive from the *jieyang* series alone.[63] For the full presentation of evidence, the reader should consult his work, but as examples, let us consider the days of most immediate relevance to our study of prohibitions surrounding the Red Thearch. Following Yan's format, we present the omens in the following order: A = JD Chu [*jian*]*chu* omens, B = JD Chu *jieyang* omens, C = SHD-A combined system omens.

A: 凡敗(破)日，悖矍之日，不利以祭祀，聚眾，□去，徙家。JD 15[2]
B: 陰日，利以為室家，祭，取(娶)妻，家(嫁)女，內(入)貨，吉。以見邦君，不吉，亦無咎。JD 29
C: 彼(破)...陰日，利以家室。祭祀、家(嫁)子、取(娶)婦、入材，大吉。以見君上，數達，毋(無)咎。SHD-A 6r

60. For the full archaeological report on the excavation of tomb 56, see *Jiudian Chu jian*, 149–85.

61. Ibid., 163.

62. A new transcription has been published with both revisions and additions to the standard publications described here. See Chen Wei 陳偉 et al., *Chu di chutu Zhanguo jiance [shisi zhong]* 楚地出土戰國簡冊[十四種] (Beijing: Jingji kexue chubanshe, 2009), 301–33. The first twelve slips of the JD manuscript are anomalous and appear to show conversion ratios between different measures of various grains. Although no longer considered part of the daybook, earlier publications generally placed this short text at the head of the daybook manuscript. Hence, the JD *jianchu* passage begins on slip 13. Unfortunately, the surviving portions of the JD manuscript contain no equivalent of the "Inspection Days" text.

63. Yan Changgui, *Wugui yu yinsi*, 59–67.

A: All Destroy Days are perverse, anxious[64] days—not suitable for sacrifice to spirits and ancestors or assembling a crowd, . . . departure, or moving one's household. JD 15[2]
B: Shade Days: Beneficial for making home and household. Sacrifice to spirits, taking a wife, marrying off a daughter, and bringing in goods are auspicious. Meeting the sovereign of the state (on these days) is not auspicious, but nor is there any harm. JD 29
C: Destroy/Shade Days: Beneficial for household and home. Sacrifice to spirits and ancestors, marrying off a child, taking a wife, and bringing in materials are very auspicious. When meeting one's sovereign (on these days), one will get through after several attempts—no harm. SHD-A 6r

A: 凡坐（ 危 ）日，無為而可 。女（ 如 ）以祭祀，必又（ 有 ）三□ 。JD 19[2]
B: [外]陰日，利以祭，內（ 入 ）貨，吉 。以作卯事，不吉 。以遠行，舊（ 久 ）。是古（ 故 ）不利以行□ 。JD 33
C: 坐（ 危 ）. . . 外陰日，利以祭祀 。作事 、入材，皆吉 。不可以之野外 。SHD-A 10r
A: All Peril Days allow of no action at all. If used for sacrifice to spirits and ancestors, there will inevitably be three . . ..[65] JD 19[2]
B: [Outer] Shade Days: Beneficial for sacrifice to spirits. Bringing in goods is auspicious. Undertaking a *mao*-task is not auspicious. If travelling far afield (on these days), one will be away for a long time; for this reason, it is not beneficial to travel . . . . JD 33
C: Peril/Outer Shade Days: Beneficial for sacrifice to spirits and ancestors. Undertaking a task and bringing in materials are all auspicious. One may not go into the wilderness. SHD-A 10r

Comparison of the texts will reveal that in each case B and C are variant witnesses of the same text, while A is something quite different. Between B and C, for example, we find certain consistent but relatively minor differences in vocabulary usage. These include a preference in the JD *jieyang* text for using *ji* 祭 "sacrifice (to spirits)" and *huo* 貨 "goods" where SHD-A uses *jisi* 祭祀 "sacrifice (to spirits and ancestors)" and *cai* 材 "materials." Other nearly synonymous variants include *qi* 妻 (JD)/*fu* 婦 (SHD-A) for "wife" and *bangjun* 邦君 (JD)/*junshang* 君上 (SHD-A) for "sovereign." The only significant semantic differences arise in the omens for Outer Shade days, where we find the JD text isolating a particular type of undertaking, *maoshi* 卯事, as inauspicious where SHD-A broadly includes all undertakings in a list of auspicious activities and, along the same lines of providing greater specificity, the JD text elaborates on the rationale for an inauspicious travel omen—a problem of excessive duration—where SHD-A simply discourages distant travel without explanation.

In the end, Yan's comparative work is convincing. The SHD-A omens of the Chu hybrid hemerological scheme found on slips 1r-13r of SHD-A derive from the traditional *jieyang* omen series, and despite their more prominent placement at the head of each slip supporting the text, the Chu [*jian*]*chu* days exist there in name only, albeit holding their correct places relative to the Chu calendar and in many cases hinting at their auspiciousness (or lack thereof) through the choice of terms like "Destroy" and "Peril." It is our good fortune that the *jianchu* text from the JD manuscript restores to us the omens that do belong with this series, and with that recognition, the true consistency of the original "Inspection Days" text has also finally come to light. Read in more or less just the manner suggested by the Qing editors of XJBFS, but with the benefit of recently excavated manuscripts they had no opportunity to see, we find that far

64. When compared with photographs of JD slip 15, the graph *jue* 戄 appears to be well transcribed, but it is difficult to interpret. Li Jiahao reads the pair *canjue* 悋戄 as a borrowing for a word meaning "to till," which may make sense in context as "breaking the earth." See *Jiudian Chu jian*, 69–70 n. 46. However, Li's reading is not supported in Chen Wei et al., *Chu di chutu Zhanguo jiance*, 305, which I have followed in my more literal translation above. Now, the emerging connection with Inspection Days may suggest yet other alternatives for how the graph was understood. In particular, the similar family of graphs including *huo* 霍 ("the sound of birds startled by rain"), *shuang* 雙 ("a couple"), and *huo*/*shuang* 雟 (meanings of 1. "pouring rain" and 2. "a couple" respectively) connect nicely with the SHD-A Inspection Day omens regarding an encounter with rain and husband and wife "sharing a blanket," i.e., coupling.

65. Although one graph is missing at the end of the Chinese text, the suggestion of a negative outcome is clear from the preceding sentence.

from being days to "Settle" and "Achieve," Inspection Days are the most dangerous of days, unsuitable for any activity and accurately described by their proper names—Peril and Destroy.

CONCLUSION

The preceding study is structured around the mystery of how Inspection Days transformed from bad to good over the span of more than two millennia of Chinese intellectual history. The change was a radical one, and it did not go unnoticed by Chinese scholars. The editors of the great Qing compendium XJBFS felt obliged to note historical evidence of different opinions and justify their own conclusion that these days must have an auspicious quality. In doing so, they left an invaluable record of the exegetical strategy they employed when working with the technical texts transmitting Chinese hemerological theory, and although the benefit of newly excavated manuscripts allows us to correct some of their mistaken conclusions, their underlying approach to the material remains relevant. Indeed, it emerges from our analysis strengthened by its successful application to new manuscript contexts. The most important aspect of this exegesis was to interpret the Inspection Days not as an isolated hemerological system, but rather as one to be viewed through the more general lens of theory based on the apparent rotation of the Northern Dipper and the associative relations of the Five Agents, i.e., the *jianchu* and *sanhe* hemerological schemes, respectively.

In the course of tracing the Inspection Days through a series of excavated manuscripts all discovered in the central Yangtze River region corresponding to the northern territory of the former Warring States state of Chu, we moved diachronically from a Western Han manuscript (KJP) to a Qin-era manuscript (SHD-A) and ultimately to a Chu manuscript (JD) dating from before the third century BCE incursion into the area by Qin forces. In this manner, it was possible to highlight the concrete measures adopted by the Qin administrators charged with governing a population that had its own distinct cultural knowledge base, including technical knowledge of the calendar and associated hemerological practices. There can be little doubt that the intellectual realm of divinatory theory and closely related issues of religious rituals such as sacrifices to the spirits and ancestors were contested topics, and the Qin conquest crucially involved a policy of assimilation in the occupied territories. There were active attempts to tame the wild Chu spirits and cults, but standardization sometimes brought with it unexpected consequences. Ultimately, it was a combination of deliberate changes to the script, the calendar, and the pantheon of greater and lesser calendrical spirits underlying traditional hemerology that brought about a perhaps unintentional shift in the meaning of Inspection Days.

And finally, as the study of early Chinese technical traditions continues to be enhanced by the discovery of new manuscripts, it is hoped that this work might suggest a balanced approach toward their interpretation. On the one hand, a great deal of particularity and numerous idiosyncrasies characterize each individual manuscript. Readers and owners of texts shaped their contents in ways that are still being worked out, and complex transmission histories sometimes obscure whatever coherence may have originally existed in larger textual units. The simple notion of an author is not a concept that travels well from familiar modern texts to unfamiliar ancient ones. And yet . . . ancient texts still often reveal surprising elements of structure and editorial coherence despite the long odds, and as the scholars of the late imperial period understood, even when such structure is difficult to explain, neither can it be ignored. It is a remarkable feature of these technical texts that vestiges of structure can and do remain even after their purpose has become obsolete or has been long forgotten. When we are fortunate enough to find evidence that enables us to reconstruct earlier contexts, assembling the resulting picture has the potential to enhance our understanding of the fascinating world of early China.