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On the Reliability of Dong Zhongshu's Civil Examination

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A document in the *Hanshu* 漢書 entitled “Xianliang Duice” 賢良對策, which is included in the biographic section on Dong Zhongshu has been regarded as Dong's reply to the questions asked of him by Emperor Wu on his imperial examination. But the authenticity of “Duice” has been questioned over doubts about its involvement with the so-called “establishment of Confucianism as state religion.”

To begin with, the mention of the tribe Kangju 康居 in the second part of “Duice” has been viewed as problematic on the grounds that the reference is not consistent with other descriptions indicating the date of “Duice,” thus bringing the authenticity of the whole second part into dispute. It has also been argued that despite the fact that there was a prescribed form for answers to imperial examination questions during the Han Period, some parts of “Duice” not only do not conform to that form, but also contain incoherent statements. Thus, doubts have been raised as to whether the whole “Duice” is the work of Dong Zhongshu.

However, the author of the present article feels that there are points in the above arguments which need to be reconsidered and has thus set about re-examining both “Duice” and the imperial examination questions posed by Emperor Wu in detail, and come to the following conclusions. First, although in the first part there certainly are places that do not conform to the answer format regarding imperial examination questions, this abnormality shows that the first part of “Duice” closely approximates to the answer which the emperor would himself read. Secondly, the third part of “Duice” presents no problems in terms of either content or form. Thirdly, the mention of the Kangju people

in the second part of “Duice” does not contradict other descriptions that indicate the date of the document; and finally, there is no reason why the content which has been judged inconsistent in the past should have been judged so.

In sum, it is highly probable that the extant version of “Duice” should be considered basically the work of Dong Zhongshu, and therefore the entire document, from which it is possible to grasp the very first system that Confucianists constructed in response to the imperial system, is extremely valuable in the study of Dong Zhongshu’s ideas and subsequent Chinese thought, institutions and culture.

An Essay on “Jia-He 6nian 4yue Dushishi Tang-Yu Bai Shousong  
Zhongwai-Gujuqian Shi”

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This article examines a wooden document entitled “Jiahe Liunian Siyue Dushishi Tangyu Bai Shousong Zhongwai-Gujuqian Shi” 嘉禾六年四月都市史唐玉白收送中外估具錢事, which is contained in volume four of the collection *Changsha-Zoumalou Sanguo-Wujian Zhujian* 長沙走馬樓三國吳簡竹簡 and concerns the private slave trade and the collection of the tax levied upon it called *zhongwai-gujuqian* 中外估具錢. The document, which was excavated from a well amongst a bundle of bamboo documents containing the names of buyers and sellers of slaves, the names and gender of each slave, the prices paid and the amounts of *zhongwai-gujuqian* levied, suggesting that the wooden document was attached as either an invoice or a report on the bundle.

*Zhongwai-gujuqian* was a prototype of *gu* 估, which was levied on the sale of slaves, domestic animals, and land in Jiangnan 江南 District during the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties Periods. During the Wu Period privately-owned slaves were registered on their owners’ household registers and could be traded like other assets. Upon learning the transaction the local public authority would levy a tax (*zhongwai-gujuqian*) on the sale price. Although the tax burden on the sale of slaves was heavier than that of other taxes, both