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COLLECTING TEARS: LACHRYMATION AND EMOTIONS IN THE *TAIPING COLLECTANEA*

ZUO YA 左婭

The premodern Chinese textual tradition contains a deep and rich archive on lachrymose behaviors, a gem hidden in plain sight and awaiting the scrutiny of historians. Representations of wailing and weeping accreted across a wide spectrum of textual categories, from explicitly affective genres such as poetry to a range of non-aesthetic functional writings, including classics, histories, and political documents. The interest in lachrymosity became particularly prominent during the Song period (960–1279), a time when the cultural elite acted to incorporate lachrymation into their imagination of the socio-cosmic order. The *Imperial Collectanea of the Taiping [Xingguo] Era* (*Taiping yulan*, hereafter *Taiping Collectanea*), a monumental compendium in the Song and of all times, demonstrated this interest in a characteristically encyclopedic way.[1]

In recent decades scholars have produced illuminating analyses of the *Taiping Collectanea* with a focus on its political implications. Emperor Taizong (r. 976–997), the second emperor of the Song dynasty, commissioned the project while unifying the empire through military and political maneuvers.[2] The *Taiping Collectanea* was intended as a cultural testimonial corroborating the monarch's ongoing efforts at empire-building, and the compendium effectively projected an encompassing and unitary world picture.

In this article, I focus on lachrymation and emotions, two interlocked subjects that occupied a prominent place in the Taiping taxonomy and yet have not drawn much attention from modern scholars. I argue that these subjects, somewhat unusual to modern eyes, assumed critical roles in sustaining the socio-cosmic order, and I demonstrate how the *Taiping Collectanea* articulated these roles through the curation of historical sources. Lachrymation was a complex phenomenon, a physiological fact endowed with social and cosmic significance to consolidate the Confucian communal order and connect the human to the supramundane. The multifaceted existence of crying relied on a specific phenomenology of emotion which straddled the human and the cosmos. By illuminating the

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* I would like to thank Justin Tiwald for his support while I was drafting this article. My gratitude also goes to the editor Kai Vogelsang and the anonymous reviewer for their insightful comments.

1 For a general introduction to the encyclopedia, see Guo 1971, 7–51. For a more recent comprehensive study, see Zhou 2008.

2 Johannes L. Kurz reveals the ways in which the encyclopedia facilitated the imperial project of unifying regional cultures. See Kurz 2001, 289–316 and Kurz 2003.

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political, social, and cosmic stakes of tears and feelings, the *Taiping Collectanea* put forth a robustly positive appraisal of the emotions, which marked a special moment in the history of premodern Chinese thought. The current study of lachrymation illuminates the importance of the emotions as a key component of premodern Chinese cultural discourse and urges modern scholars to honor this historical status by taking emotions seriously.

1 Crying in the *Taiping Collectanea*

The *Taiping Collectanea* allocated generous space and attention to the topic of lachrymation. The compilers devised seven sections covering a range of key terms describing the act of crying, including *yi lei* 洟淚 (mucus, tears),[3] *ku* 哭 (wailing), *qi* 泣 (weeping), *bei* 悲 (sadness), *tí* 啼 (bawling), and *tì* 涕 (tears/mucus).[4] The seven sections brought together a total of 175 items of quotation on crying and tears.

Some contextual information is necessary to put the cluster of tears in perspective. The *Taiping Collectanea* was essentially a classified catalogue of the universe. It had a taxonomy that intended to "enclose myriad phenomena extensively" (包羅萬象), as Emperor Taizong proudly announced.[5] On the primary level, the myriad phenomena were organized into fifty-five "parts" (*bu* 部), ranging from august Heaven to small insects.[6] Each part was then broken down into more detailed subjects, and each subject identified by a key term. To each key term, the compilers attached relevant citations culled from a large repertoire of texts from ancient classics to writings of the bygone Tang Dynasty.

The seven sections on crying belonged to the "Part on the Human" (人部), which had 233 subjects in total. While allocating a section to the human was conventional in encyclopedias, the *Taiping Collectanea* included an unprecedentedly wide range of topics in this section. The "Part on the Human" was the largest among all fifty-five categories. Compared with its counterpart in the *Classified Compilation of Literary Writings* (*Yiwen leiju*, hereafter *Classified Compilation*), a Tang encyclopedia the Taiping compilers followed as an example, the size of the section quadrupled from fifty-seven to 233 subjects.[7] The attention the compilers paid to lachrymation was part of the larger project of understanding the human in greater detail. The seven sections on lachrymation were by no means a meager allocation when viewed in context. In fact, the total of 175 items placed

3 *Taiping yulan* (hereafter TPYL) 387, 5b–7a.
4 TPYL 487, 1a–8b.
5 TPYL, preface, 3a.
6 For an introduction to all categories, see Guo 1971, 18–22.
7 *Yi wen leiju*, 311–672. For the connection between the two texts, see Zhou 2008, 398–411.

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lachrymation high on the rank of visibility. By comparison, "filial piety" (*xiao* 孝), a key human quality and a highly privileged topic included 133 items.[8]

The compilers also granted more space to lachrymation than to any other emotion or emotional behavior. The *Taiping Collectanea* invested serious interest in the emotions and put on display an unrivaled array of feelings/emotional behaviors. The compendium included sixteen kinds of emotions/emotional behaviors, which, again, significantly surpassed the selection of seven in the *Classified Compilation*. Among the sixteen, only two—"laugh" (*xiao* 笑) and "weeping" (*qi*)—were inherited from the *Classified Compilation*; the other fourteen represented new work the Taiping compilers created from the ground up.[9] Amid this great boom of emotions, crying stood out as a privileged species with a coverage greater than any other feelings. For example, the emotional behavior which customarily appeared first—"laugh"—had a section of 74 items, distinctively smaller than the lachrymation cluster.

The prominence of crying in the *Taiping Collectanea* was also unique in the genre of *leishu* 類書 (collectanea of categorized knowledge, or encyclopedia for short). Among all extant Tang encyclopedias, only a few included lachrymation, and each of these presented only one key term. The *Classified Compilation* contained a section on "weeping,"[10] and the *Collection of Classified Matters by Mr. Bai for Training of Excellent Memory* (*Bai shi liu tie shi lei ji*, hereafter *Collection by Mr. Bai*), had one section under the title "wailing" (*ku*).[11] The *Taiping Collectanea* increased not only the number of key terms, but also the size of each section. For example, the "weeping" section clearly piggybacked on the precedent in the *Classified Compilation*, but it augmented the content by 40% (from 29 to 40 items).

The enlarged coverage of lachrymation in the *Taiping Collectanea* was an intended development rather than growth by natural accumulation. The Song encyclopedia followed its Tang counterparts by hundreds of years and surely drew on a larger repertoire of writings. But the substantial expansion did not come from the inclusion of newer (Tang) texts, but rather from a wider gleaning of older texts. For example, the "wailing" section in the *Collection by Mr. Bai* cited only one item from the classic *Zuo Commentary* (*Zuo zhuan*), while the *Taiping Collectanea* featured six.[12] The *Taiping Collectanea* also incor-

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8 TPYL 412, 413, and 414.

9 The "laugh" and "weeping" sections in the *Taiping Collectanea* each had twenty-two items in common with the *Classified Compilation*, a major overlap which shows continuity between the two compilations.

10 *Yiwen leiju* 35, section 19.

11 *Bai shi liu tie shi lei ji* 19, section 21.

12 *Bai shi liutie* 19, 9a; TPYL 487, 2a–b.

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porated a series of pre-Tang texts absent from the *Collection by Mr. Bai*, e.g., the *History of the Han* (*Han shu*) and the *History of the Jin* (*Jin shu*), to name a few. Clearly, the Song compilers examined a greater number of texts in order to retrieve tears from the past.

The special interest the *Taiping Collectanea* held in lachrymation remains distinctive even in comparison with later encyclopedias. A model of the genre, the collectanea had an enduring influence in shaping encyclopedias in subsequent ages, and the coverage of lachrymation became part of its legacy. On the one hand, more encyclopedias included lachrymation as a cultural category. In late imperial times, crying had a place not only in colossal mainstream compendia, but also in specialized encyclopedias, such as the *History of the Dressing Case* (*Lian shi* 奩史), a compilation specifically targeting women readers.[13] On the other hand, none of the extant late imperial texts presented coverage as generous as the *Taiping Collectanea*'s, although many followed the Taiping practice of including multiple key terms. For example, the *Classified Repository of the Tang* (*Tang lei han*), a sixteenth-century compilation meant to reorganize Tang encyclopedias, incorporated "weeping" and "wailing" as two separate sections.[14] The *Classified Repository of Deep Mirror* (*Yuan jian lei han*), the most celebrated encyclopedia in the eighteenth century, likewise maintained both "weeping" and "wailing."[15] It seems that the *Taiping Collectanea* initiated a campaign to enhance the presence of lachrymation in cultural taxonomies by putting forth a maximized representation.

Before going into the details, let me make two notes on how some critical characteristics of the *Taiping Collectanea* will play out in the current study. The first concerns the epistemological orientation of the text, i.e., that it favored "matters" (*shi* 事) over "belles-lettres" (*wen* 文).[16] A "matter" likely stood for a description of an object or a narrative of a story, among other units of knowledge with a stand-alone presence and some cultural quotability. What it means for this article is that the collectanea provided a repertoire of social narratives rather than literary prose on crying.[17] Lachrymation had long remained a motif in poetry, but in the *Taiping Collectanea* it was primarily a socio-cultural "matter," a non-aesthetic component of human society. This particular feature makes the compendium an illuminating source for a historical study of emotions in contrast to an analysis of the affective language.

13 *Lian shi* 31.
14 *Tang lei han* 130.
15 *Yu ding yuan jian lei han* 267.
16 For a discussion of the shift from *wen* to *shi* in middle-period encyclopedias, see Zhou 2008, 67–69.
17 For example, among the forty items in "weeping" thirty-eight were narratives and only the final two quotations concerned literary prose.

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The second note concerns how I use the *Taiping Collectanea* as a historical source. The text was by definition a collection of older documents, and thus featured a voice that constantly negotiated between tenth-century editorial considerations and writings from the past. This textual feature makes it possible for the current project to balance between the rigor of a case study and the breadth of a longue-durée observation. For one thing, the encyclopedia affords a controlled environment designed on the consensus of a specific group of compilers in one particular historical moment, thus setting down some definite lines to follow in textual analysis. For another, the compendium enabled and compelled a discussion with historical depth, as it constantly set a specific subject against its long-term diachronic development. A study of lachrymation on the basis of the *Taiping Collectanea*, as I will demonstrate, draws on a deep textual tradition and broad intellectual landscapes relevant to the long history from antiquity to the Song.

2 Crying on Display

The display of lachrymation in the *Taiping Collectanea* involved a number of curatorial considerations which revealed the multifaceted identity of crying as a cultural "matter." First, the compilers distinguished between tears as a bodily fluid and tears as a social, emotional behavior. The distinction manifest itself most clearly in the apparent overlap between the sections "mucus, tears" (*yi lei*) in Chapter 387 and "tears/mucus" (*tì*) in Chapter 488. "Mucus, tears" contained but one entry on *yi* 洟 (mucus) but many more quotations involving *tì* 涕 (tears/mucus); as a result, the collectanea technically had two sections on *tì*. It is likely that the compilers placed *yi* in the title of the first section as a stand-in for *tì* to avoid a conspicuous overlap with the section in Chapter 488. The co-existence of the two sections was by no means an editorial mishap but rather a deliberate plan to present tears in its two valences. The section "mucus, tears" appeared among a cluster of bodily fluids, such as "sweat" (*han* 汗) and "spittle" (*tuo* 唾), and "tears/mucus" followed "weeping" and "bawling" as one of multiple terms describing crying as a behavior.

In the "mucus, tears" section, the Taiping compilers used a thoughtful design to emphasize the somatic quality of tears. In the pre-Song archive, accounts on the physiological nature of tears were far less common than narratives on their social presence; thus, the bodily-behavioral bifurcation was more a new initiative by the Song compilers than a summary of existing literature. The Taiping editors bookended the section with sources that highlighted the bodily associations of tears; despite the brevity of the two entries, they demonstrated a key theme in the physiological imagination of tears, namely, the source of this bodily fluid.

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The opening item was a lexical definition of the term *yi*, a citation from the *Discussing Pictographs and Explaining Characters* (*Shuo wen jie zi*). It tied the bodily fluid to the key orifices by glossing *yi* as the "fluid of the nose" (*bi ye* 鼻液).[18] The inclusion of *yi* in a section mainly on *tì* was a reminder that *tì* was polysemous and possibly stood for fluids from the nose (mucus) and the eyes (tears).

The concluding entry of the section was a citation from the *Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor: Essential Questions* (*Huangdi neijing su wen*), the classic which laid the theoretical foundation for Chinese medicine. Quoting the *Inner Canon* was not a surprising choice, because medical treatises had a vested interest in considering tears as a physiological thing. The citation stated:

> 肝液為淚
>
> The fluid of the liver is tears.[19]

The first and final items jointly explained the origin of tears in the human body. Tears were associated with the liver, a claim embedded in a scheme connecting bodily fluids to organ systems. In the *Inner Canon*, the five *yin*-organs—the heart, lungs, liver, spleen, and gall bladders—were said to give rise to five bodily fluids, respectively: sweat, nasal mucus (*ti*), tears (*lei*), saliva (*yan* 涎), and spittle.[20]

The foundation of the scheme resided in the belief that all bodily fluids stemmed from the same source before diverging as various manifestations. The general repertoire of liquid in the human body, known as the *ye*-fluid (液), was sourced from the human consumption of water and grains. The fluid then acquired a more concrete form in accord with the specific function it served or the bodily orifice through which it exited.[21] For example, as the last item in the "mucus, tears" section demonstrated, the primary fluid became tears upon entering the sphere of the liver system. Also, fluid became tears as it dropped out of the eyes, but would transform into nasal mucus if released from the nose, a point implicated in the first item. The process of fluid transformation took many possible directions. Thus, tears were not a localized phenomenon; they belonged to the grand circulation of liquid which lubricated and nourished the entire human body.

The Taiping editors made other thoughtful arrangements to guard the space for displaying tears as bodily matter. They placed an editorial note at the top of the section

18 TPYL 387, 5b.
19 TPYL 387, 7b.
20 For an analysis of this version of the five fluids, see Unschuld 2003, 121.
21 For an introduction to this system, see Zuo 2020, n.p.

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"mucus, tears," stating that "most (social) affairs related to 'tears' (*lei*) are in section 'weeping,'" (淚事已多見在泣篇), a reminder to readers that the current section was not the only one on tears and yet presented a necessary (physiological) view of the topic.[22] The compilers also kept the overlap of materials between "mucus, tears" and "tears/mucus" to a minimum to emphasize the separate, distinctive identities. Besides a small share of common content (four items), the two sections diverged in drawing on different genres. "Mucus, tears" included a great number of quotations from the so-called Masters' writings and anthologies, while "tears/mucus" built the majority of its content on historical treatises. Due to the general rarity of bodily discussions of tears, citations included in "mucus, tears" were not always more physiological than behavioral compared with citations from historical genres. Nevertheless, by establishing two sections the editors staged the conspicuous appearance of tears in two valences.

After presenting tears in terms of human physiology, the Taiping compilers carved out another categorical space and displayed lachrymation as a social behavior. They assembled a series of synonyms, *ku*, *qi*, *tí*, *tì*, and developed each into an independent section. This time, the neighboring categories of crying included two kinds. One consisted of other emotions or emotional behaviors, such as "anger" (*nu* 怒), "resentment" (*yuan* 怨), and "pride" (*jiaoman* 驕慢).[23] The other presented negative social conditions that often provoked affective responses, such as "poverty" (*pin* 貧), "hunger" (*e* 餓), and "farewells" (*bieli* 別離).[24]

This placement suggests at least two editorial understandings of crying in social contexts. First, lachrymation was primarily an emotional behavior, hence its juxtaposition with a range of feelings and affective behaviors. More specifically, most citations selected by the Taiping compilers present what we call genuine emotional crying, an indication of their assumption that the act of crying opened a transparent window onto the emotional state that provoked it. In other words, the value of lachrymation partly resided in its simple, unobstructed, and public connection to emotions. Apparently, the editors believed that the propriety of lachrymosity depended on an accurate match between a weep-inducing emotion and the act of crying. In the event of a mismatch, tears would cease to be what they were and turn into something recognizably different.

The belief in the coherence between emotion and lachrymation was well reflected in the few cases of improper crying included in the collectanea. For example, a citation from the *History of the Song* (*Song shu*) related that a minister contrived to wail at the

22 TPYL 387, 5a.
23 TPYL 483, 490.
24 TPYL 484–5, 489.

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funeral of an imperial consort so as to gain the emperor's favor.[25] The narrator exposed the hollow emotive core of the minister's actions in a knowing, reprimanding tone. In another story from *Master Han* (*Hanzi* 韓子), Zichan 子產 (d. 522 BCE) was able to identify a woman as the murderer of her late husband, because he discerned the lack of grief in her crying.[26] In both cases, lachrymation devoid of a matching feeling was depicted as detectable if not completely obvious. In other words, the Taiping compilers were surely aware that crying as a gesture was open to manipulation. They saw genuine emotional lachrymation as the only proper type of crying and ruled out "crocodile tears" as another matter with palpable differences.

The taxonomic placement of crying in the *Taiping Collectanea* also suggested its social mooring, i.e., primarily in negative situations. Indeed, the cluster on lachrymation was surrounded by negative emotions (e.g., anger) or undesirable conditions (e.g., poverty). The compilers kept positive emotions/emotional behaviors such as "laugh" and "happiness" (*xi* 喜) far removed, about a hundred chapters ahead of lachrymation.[27] Crying is a possible response to a wide range of emotions, from sadness to joy, from distress to pride, a multivalence recognized in historical and contemporary understandings across the world. The Song times, too, produced records on "positive" tears, such as those of joy, gratitude, and aesthetic pleasure.[28] But the Taiping compilers chose to highlight one among the many dimensions of lachrymation in the social profiling of the behavior.

The negative aura around tears likely arose from the most "official" and visible function of lachrymation in society, wailing in mourning. Indeed, among the various affective antecedents of lachrymation, grief (*ai* 哀) stood out as the dominant emotion. At death rituals (*sang li* 喪禮), grief was seen as the overarching affective order, with lachrymation a mandatory act. Death rituals were staged as public events with elaborate rules for wailing. Before, during, and after a funeral, a person in a certain relationship to the dead (e.g., son and father, wife and husband, subordinate and superior at work) was expected to cry a certain number of times, at certain moments and locations, and in certain manners. The wailers were also supposed to coordinate crying with particular physical acts, such as leaping (both genders), baring the chest (men), and beating the chest (women).[29] The detailed choreography of lachrymation rehearsed familial and social roles in order to make these relationships publicly visible. That grief and negative emotions alike became

25 TPYL 487, 5b.
26 TPYL 487, 7a.
27 TPYL 391, 467.
28 For a few examples of joyful or grateful tears, see Zuo 2021, 50–53.
29 These stipulations appeared in many ritual texts. See, for example, *Liji zhengyi*, 64.2153–54.

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the dominant context of crying reflects the social importance and conspicuity of mourning rituals.

An examination of wailing at death rituals also reminds us that the association of lachrymation with negative conditions was not a condemnation of the action itself. Lachrymation as a response to an unfortunate situation could serve as a coping strategy able to lift people up from suffering. Indeed, crying enjoyed a prominent status in the *Taiping Collectanea* due to its positive implications, a point I will elaborate in the sections to follow.

In addition to these general taxonomic framings of lachrymation, the Taiping compilers also paid close attention to intricacies internal to the phenomenon, particularly the semantic differences in describing crying as a behavior. The encyclopedia included an elaborate lineup of tear-related terms. Among *ku*, *qi*, *tí*, and *tì*, *tì* (mucus/tears) was primarily a noun, while *ku* (wailing), *qi* (weeping), *tí* (bawling) were verbs addressing different aspects of lachrymation.

Ku, "wailing," arguably the most prominent term in the family, led the biggest section of seventy items. The prestige of the word derived partly from its designation of crying at death rituals. Its etymological root in ceremonies rendered *ku* a more public action with an emphasis on the acoustic effect of lachrymation.[30] At the time of the *Taiping Collectanea*, however, the connection between *ku* and death rituals had become much diluted. Forty-six entries in the "wailing" selection mentioned crying at funerals or in the event of death, and the remaining twenty-four items involved lachrymose events in other diverse social contexts.

Qi, "weeping," the second largest section, comprised forty entries. The word *qi* could be a noun or verb. As a noun it referred to tears, the bodily fluid, and, correspondently, the verbal use of the word focused on the fluid rather than other aspects of crying. *Qi* thus primarily signified a quiet release of tears; it rarely appeared in the context of mourning rituals where vocal crying was standard behavior.

But the distinction between *ku* and *qi* should not be overstated. In the case of *ku*, the emphasis on the acoustic did not exclude the release of tears. To the contrary, ceremonial wailing was meant to be accompanied by tears, which served as crucial material proof of one's grief.[31] In contexts beyond rituals, it was practically difficult to separate the sound

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30 These two characteristics are among a list of features of *ku* in Christoph Harbsmeier's comparison of *ku* and *qi* on the basis of classical sources. See Harbsmeier 1999, especially 317, 332–374.

31 For example, Kongzi discussed *chu ti* 出涕 (release of tears) as a sign of emotional depth in funerary wailing. See *Liji zhengyi*, 9.274–275.

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of crying and the flow of tears, as they often occurred simultaneously to a crier. As a result, in sources beyond the scope of rituals, materials gathered under the rubric of *qi* shared much in common with materials in the section on *ku*. In sources included in the *Taiping Collectanea*, the later the time period, the less pronounced the distinction between *ku* and *qi*.

Tí, bawling, the most specific term in the group, presented the smallest section, with eleven items. The concept denoted lachrymation of creatures presumably lesser than a normative human. While *ku* and *qi* often transpired as moral acts associated with human dignity, *tí* was a demeaning term which emphasized the animalistic qualities of crying. The eleven criers in this section included children, midgets, animals (apes and pigs), and women. The writers—elite males—believed that although women might sometimes be capable of meaningful lachrymation, they were much more likely to cry mindlessly due to sheer weakness (e.g., fear). For example, in an account from the *History of the Han*, the imperial harem and female attendants bawled in the event of a fire, a lachrymosity presented as nothing but background noise to the emperor's actions.[32]

In a way, the marginal case of *tí* sheds light on the existence of a lachrymose mainstream. Mindless, animalistic bawling draws attention to its opposite, i.e., meaningful lachrymation expressing proper human values. The various lachrymose materials under *ku*, *qi*, *tì*, and so forth thus came together in a normative world where wailers and weepers cried according to shared values and purposes. In the following section, I will explore this world.

3 Crying Humans

Crying was appropriate for whom? And on what occasion, in what manner, and for what purpose? The way in which the *Taiping Collectanea* exhibited tears suggested that a certain social order informed the propriety of lachrymation. In this section, I discuss the social norms associated with crying under the rubric of "lachrymose community."[33] I argue that the distinctive values regarding lachrymation constituted a communal order, a system which covered a wide range of social sectors, pertained to diverse socio-political activities, and operated on the basis of key Confucian interpersonal relationships.

To start with, the lachrymose community was meant to be inclusive from a top-down perspective held by the ruling elite. The wailers and weepers featured in the Taiping se-

32 TPYL 488, 6b.

33 The term is inspired by Barbara H. Rosenwein's pioneering use of "emotional community." See Rosenwein 2006.

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lection represented a wide range of social sectors. Even some marginal groups, such as those prone to mindless bawling, would be admissible if they consciously participated in accord with elite expectations.

Those who built and maintained the order were, unsurprisingly, the socio-political elite, and they stood out as the most prominent weepers. First come the cultural giants in the Confucian canon. Kongzi launched the "wailing" section with copious crying at his student's death and made numerous lachrymose appearances at mourning rituals.[34] Master Zeng, a disciple of Kongzi, was another representative figure in the discussion of crying etiquette for mourners (TPYL 487, 2a, orig. *Liji*). It is no surprise that Kongzi and his intellectual lineage assumed a leading role in lachrymation, because the Confucian classics (e.g., *the Classic of Rituals* stipulated the original prescriptions for death rituals and remained the canonical source of interpretations in subsequent times.

Political authorities constituted another prominent class of criers. The group was led by the founding fathers of Chinese civilization, such as Yu the Great, a legendary sage king, and King Wen of Zhou, the architect of ideal government. Yu was said to have become tearful after meeting a convict, and he explained the reason as follows:

> 堯舜之民皆以堯舜之心為心，今吾為君，百姓皆以其心為心，是以痛之。
>
> The people in the ages of Yao and Shun all took the hearts of Yao and Shun as their own hearts. Today, with me as the ruler, the people just take their own hearts as their hearts. This is why I am agonized.[35]

Yu's tears came from his critical self-assessment as a ruler. In comparing himself to Yao and Shun, the prior sage kings, Yu recognized their superiority, such that people shared the same "heart" with the kings. That is, Yao and Shun governed on the foundation of ideal harmony between the ruler and his subjects. The encounter with the convict reminded Yu that much discord remained in his regime, hence his agonizing, shameful tears. Yu's story showcased how and why rulers typically lachrymated: often they shed tears to address a public audience and convey a value judgment on a situation concerning rulership. In this case and many others, the ruler's lachrymose expression signaled a merit of his own, e.g., being humble, caring, and self-reflective. Following the steps of the founding fathers, rulers in almost every subsequent period shed similar tears, including warlords in the unravelling of the Zhou order and emperors of the Han and Sui dynasties.

34 TPYL 487, 1a, orig. *Liji*. For other examples of Kongzi's crying, see TPYL 487, 2b and 3a; 488, 7b–8a; for his comments on other people's lachrymose behaviors, see TPYL 487, 1b; 487, 8a; 488, 1a,

35 TPYL 488, 3b–4a, orig. *Shuo yuan*.

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They likewise lachrymated for reasons germane to their ruling responsibilities: over the death of subjects, the sight of people's suffering, or the vicissitudes of the battlefield.

Numerous members of the government joined kings and emperors in the lachrymose choir, ranging from famous ministers to minor bureaucrats. Following the example of a conscientious ruler, a loyal minister, too, would incline toward tears as a way to express troublesome concerns. For example, Xu Qing 許慶 (ca. 100s–200s), a local inspector who grew up as a commoner in poverty, discussed politics with friends to the point of bursting into tears. He lamented prevalent nepotism at court and the withdrawal of capable ministers, and, at one point, he collapsed to the ground and cried dolorously.[36]

The establishment elite did not cry alone. Tears also seeped into the margins of the political elite, enveloping not only those who made the rules for crying, but also those who rebelled against them. A subgroup of weepers who stood out in the Taiping selection were the famously anti-establishment cultural elite in the Six Dynasties, often described as creating "scenes" with behaviors ostensibly against ritual protocols. One of them, Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210–263), admired a young woman but never became officially acquainted with her. Upon her death, Ruan Ji showed up uninvited at her funeral and wailed dramatically in front of her astonished family.[37] Another man, Sun Chu 孫楚 (d. 293), imitated donkey brays at the funeral of his good friend Wang Ji 王濟 (fl. 3rd c.) to pose as a soulmate who truly understood Wang in contrast with other, superficial mourners.[38]

These marginal behaviors constituted a subculture attached to the mainstream, not a different emotional regime, however. Unlike mindless howling, the deviant tears aimed to be meaningful, and the messages they conveyed piggybacked on the ritual framework (albeit with an ironic twist). The subculture was committed to the same moral project of forging meaningful human relations, and it did so through ameliorating the current system. In the two examples above, the deviant criers tried to relax overly rigid hierarchical distinctions (e.g., that between men and women in Ruan Ji's case) via performing personal quirks or gestures of spontaneity. We could characterize a move like this as the fusion of Daoist therapeutics with Confucian values, a major intellectual shift often attributed to the Six Dynasties.[39]

The lachrymose community also looked to include political elites outside China, and this "inclusion" was one way in which China—the self-professed center of civilization—

36 TPYL 487.3a–b, orig. *Hou Han shu*.
37 TPYL 487, 5b, orig. *Jin shu*.
38 TPYL 487, 8b, orig. *Yu lin* 語林. For more analysis of this anecdote, see Chen 2011, 11–12.
39 For a philosophical analysis of the synthesis of Confucianism and Daoism, see Lo 2014, 425–447.

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sought to transform its "barbaric" neighbors.[40] After the nomadic Xiongnu lost a war to Han China, according to a Han source, Xiongnu chieftains would weep at the sight of Mount Yin, a geographical landmark they surrendered to the Han.[41] The account was imbued with Han imagination, as tear shedding was a common motif in Han accounts of military generals who faced defeat.[42] The narrative lumped the Xiongnu elite into the Han emotional community and had them articulate their subordination in the affective language of the Han, flaunting a domination that fused the conquest of land with that of feelings.

Beyond elite men, other social actors were allowed into the lachrymose community if they cooperated in fulfilling the elite imagination of meaningful lachrymation. In different degrees, the structures that framed meaningful lachrymation could temporarily eclipse the social, physical, and gender demarcations that separated the margins from the mainstream.

Often the tears of commoners became noteworthy because they provided testimonials to the performance of the ruler. The subjects of a regime frequently cried when they suffered from tyranny, but they also shed grateful tears to support a sagacious ruler. For example, after Yang Hu 羊祜 (221–278)—a general of the Western Jin dynasty—died, numerous commoners and soldiers mourned him with abundant tears.[43] This moment of lachrymosity was unusual because the weeping commoners had been subjects of the Wu kingdom (229–280), a regime which lost its independence to the Jin because of Yang's military conquest. That is, Yang demonstrated such moral strength and competence as a ruler that even colonized subjects found him admirable to a tear-worthy extent. If anything, this narrative presents a most dramatic rhetorical strategy in connecting lachrymation to the quality of government. The commoners' tears paralleled those shed by a ruler (such as Yu the Great), as if the ruler and subjects communicated in the same affective language over the same concerns. But this lachrymose dialogue was essentially one-sided; as shown in the case above, the commoners' tears spoke much more about the character of the ruler than about themselves.

Similarly, women were not natural members of the lachrymose community, but they could strive to participate. The ruling elite stated clear reasons for opposing the inclu-

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40 For a detailed study of this view in early China, see Di Cosmo 2002.

41 TPYL 487.3b, orig. *Han mingchen zou* 漢名臣奏.

42 Among many other examples, several quotations in the Taiping selection featured Han generals weeping because of defeat. For example, see TPYL 488, 6a, orig. "Yu Su Wu shu" 與蘇武書 by Li Ling 李陵 (d. 74 BCE).

43 TPYL 488, 3a, orig. *Jin shu*.

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sion of women: the female gender was susceptible to animalistic, mindless bawling, and women often cried to manipulate.[44] Women might shed meaningful tears, however, if they consciously took part in the social relations stipulated by men and facilitated elite males in broadcasting their moral messages.

Some powerful elite women lachrymated in ways similar to their male counterparts. Lady Wen, the widow of King Wen (r. 689–677 BCE) of the Chu Kingdom, provided a good example. The chief minister of the Chu, Ziyuan 子元 (d. 664 BCE), intended to seduce Lady Wen after the passing of the king. To get her attention, he shook clappers to the rhythm of the *wan* dance next to her palace. Hearing the music, Lady Wen started to weep. In tears, she chastised Zichan for using this dance for his despicable purpose, because the late king had originally employed the tune to train his troops.[45] Lady Wen wept as a virtuous wife and a conscientious ruler; her tears showed her deep concern for the well-being of the regime, just as in the case of Yu the Great.

In a way, Lady Wen cried to protest moral wrongs, which was not a privilege exclusive to women of her status. Some women from less elite or even commoner backgrounds behaved similarly and were duly recognized in historical writings. The wife of Wang Yan 王琰 (ca. 200s), an official in the Eastern Han (25–220), cried hard when Wang received a major promotion at work, because she believed that he would subsequently start taking concubines.[46] Her tears certainly expressed worries specific to the female gender and the wifely role, but the narrative did not trivialize them as the whining of a jealous wife. Instead, her tears voiced a necessary caution in defense of mutual loyalty between spouses, a message the male author tacitly endorsed and delivered in non-ironic language.

Another famous example is the story of the maiden Meng Jiang 孟姜, a commoner who brought down the Great Wall with her tears in a protest against the First Emperor of the Qin dynasty. The tale circulated from antiquity through the Song in many different versions.[47] The Taiping editors only cited the pre-Tang iterations, where the woman had not yet acquired the name Meng Jiang and lived in an earlier time as a subject of the Qi state (1046–221 BCE). The woman's husband died in a war between Qi and the state of Ju in 549 BCE and was one of many Qi soldiers whose corpses were built into a monument wall by the Ju people.[48] His wife came to mourn him and released ferocious

44 A good example of such a judgment is TPYL 488, 3b, orig. *Kong cong zi* 孔叢子.
45 TPYL 488, 1a–b, orig. *Zuo zhuan*.
46 TPYL 487, 8b, orig. *Wei wen dian lun* 魏文典論.
47 TPYL 487.8a, orig. *Lie nü zhuan*; 487.7a, orig. *Mengzi*. For the history of various versions of the tale, see Idema 2008, particularly 5–7.
48 The citation in the section on *ku* did not specify what the wall was, and a more elaborate quotation in "Virtuous Women" (*yifu* 義婦) provided the details. For the latter item, see

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tears, which eventually crumbled the wall and freed her husband's body from confinement. After properly burying her man, the wife committed suicide. Her forceful crying was a pronouncement of extreme grief and wifely chastity, qualities integral to her gender; nevertheless, her actions censured the brutality of warfare, a moral value embraced by women and men alike.[49]

In addition to its broad sphere of influence over various social classes, the lachrymose community also included highly diverse social contexts, albeit with a focus on government. As some of the earlier examples demonstrate, the causes of tears ranged from personal misfortunes, such as spousal infidelity, to major socio-political incidents, such as the downfall of a dynasty. In this varied landscape, some contexts outweighed others in importance, and matters related to government stood out as a clear majority. Many tears were shed over military failures, in worries about policy making, and amid political turbulence. Even in cases where people teared up for personal reasons, e.g., when the Qi soldier's wife cried for her late husband, their tears often implicated the government. A number of reasons account for the focus on government. To start with, the ruling elite was a primary class of weepers and they co-opted other social actors to lachrymate in line with their goals and interests. Also, the *Taiping Collectanea* was commissioned by an emperor who identified himself as the primary reader of the book.[50] The editors, who were also bureaucrats, naturally gravitated to matters that served the interests of the monarch and the imperial government.[51] In addition to political reckoning, a philosophical reason played a role, as emotions provided important cosmological clues for good government, a point I will elaborate in Section VI.

Besides its extensive presence, the lachrymose community evinced a strong communal nature by pivoting on social relations. In many narratives people shed tears for the sake of a relationship, e.g., between parent and child, or ruler and minister. A few central motifs emerged in this class of narratives: a filial child wailing for a deceased parent, a caring elder crying for a dead youth, an accountable ruler tearing up for the subjects, or a loyal underling weeping to a superior.

The close connection between lachrymation and social relations has at least two implications. The first concerns the immediacy of the role of tears. The authors often fore-

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TPYL 422, 7b–8a.

49 In the later iterations of the tale, this message morphed into a protest against the tyranny of the First Emperor of the Qin, as the "corpse wall" turned into the Great Wall. Again, it was a moral lesson not limited to women only. See Idema 2008, 7–20.

50 TPYL, preface, 1a–2b.

51 For a brief introduction to leading Taiping compilers, see Guo 1971, 11–17.

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grounded tear-shedding as a critical part of the enactment of a relationship, not simply as an auxiliary detail in the background. That is, the release of tears was a highly desirable, if not the optimal, course of action to bring relationships to completion. As such, lachrymation claimed a practical significance in fulfilling cardinal social relations. Second, the focus on human relations presented lachrymation as a moral act. The perceived service of tears in lubricating social relations made crying part of the ethical codes that structured the community. Lachrymation was highly instrumental in facilitating the Confucian cardinal relationships, hence the exalted connection between tears and essential moral qualities such as filial piety and political loyalty.

The extensive presence and the moral orientation of the lachrymose community gave rise to its final characteristic, that it was normative in nature. A system of values was clearly in place to provide guidance for lachrymation, aiming to facilitate the imperial government in overseeing a wide spectrum of social sectors. The system pivoted on a few cardinal relations conventionally known as the backbone of the Confucian social order, and it underscored certain moral values grafted onto these structures. To be sure, not all assessments of tears are conspicuously ideological. In some cases, people teared up at imminent danger or in sadness, and crying conveyed nothing more than an appropriate reaction (e.g., TPYL 488, 4b, orig, *Lun heng*). A sense of "fit" was also a value, however; a timely and proper action joined other more explicit moral considerations in structuring a community where one detail fitted with another in coherence.

The lavish attention the ruling elite devoted to lachrymation came in support of a political agenda, that they could exercise power by controlling the emotions of their subjects. Most explicitly, the release of filial and loyal tears served to reinforce the top-down hierarchies that buttressed the imperial system, and tears lubricated the interactions between the ruling and the ruled to make the system endurable.

The bio-political reach into people's lachrymose behaviors could also be an exercise of control in a more general sense. As William Reddy points out, for every political regime and cultural hegemony, a normative management of emotions is indispensable. Habituating the subjects to a set of emotional norms allows the ruling elite to align the affective dispositions of the ruled with the purposes of the regime.[52] Thus, the making of a lachrymose regime was part of an effort to submit the entire population to a sweeping dominion, an ambition the newly founded Song dynasty certainly held; the textualization of it in the *Taiping Collectanea* helped to deliver the agenda onto the emperor's desk.

The argument for political control, however, is the beginning rather than the conclusion of my inquiry. Indeed, affective control may serve the ruling elite in some utilitarian

52 See Reddy's discussion of "emotional regimes" in Reddy 2001, particularly 124–130.

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way across cultures and times. Such "universal" instrumentality, however, may emerge for widely different reasons from culture to culture. In the Song case, as I will explain, the elite's attention to lachrymation was driven by specific cosmological beliefs, which requires us to go beyond the political and plumb the cosmic depths. While it is true that lachrymation was a conspicuously human act, the entirety of the phenomenon exceeded human terms and operated throughout an extensive cosmic sphere. In the following section, I will explore this suprahuman aspect of lachrymation.

4 Crying beyond the Human

While tears indeed flowed down the human face and wailing arose from the human chest, lachrymation was perceived to have an ontological force independent from the human, an intriguing phenomenon well on display in the *Taiping Collectanea*. The autonomous potency of tears, as I show in this section, rendered a weeper somewhat "powerless," exerted a material impact surpassing human physical capacity, and enabled a connection to beings and realms beyond the mundane.

It is not an outlandish idea that one should feel a sense of helplessness when it comes to crying. The Chinese conceived of the issue as framed by the tension between wailing and ritual protocols. That is, the human could not fully manage crying even with the assistance of rituals, the finest cultural instruments mankind had created. The Taiping compilers firmly endorsed this idea by assigning an ontological primacy to lachrymation over mourning rituals.

The compilers delivered this message via multiple deliberate designs. First was a categorical line they drew between rituals and lachrymose experiences. The "wailing" section, which the current article discusses at length, was distinctively *not* a collection of ritual protocols; instead, much of its content showcased personal stories of lachrymose experiences. Crying etiquettes appeared in the sections on mourning rituals, which constituted a separate part of the collectanea.[53]

Second, the "wailing" section mainly featured weepers who deviated from—rather than complied with—rituals. The centrality of the deviant wailer became clear at the very beginning of the section, where the compilers placed a dozen citations from the *Classic of Rituals*. Personal stories of lachrymation constituted the majority of this selection, and almost all individuals cried in ways that diverged from putative rules. Although some ritual prescriptions appeared in the mix, they fulfilled a secondary role in annotating the personal stories and clarifying how the criers deviated from particular rules.

53 The "Part on Rituals" (禮儀部) encompassed *juan* 522–562.

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For example, the first two items together demonstrated how Kongzi broke the rule regarding the location of wailing. The opening entry related that Kongzi cried for his deceased disciple, Zilu, at "the middle of the court" (中庭), a spot in front of the entrance stairway of an ancestral temple.[54] His choice of location was actually a mishap, which would become apparent in light of the following item. The second quotation introduced the specific locations where one should cry based on the nature of the relation to the deceased, a set of rules also announced in the name of Kongzi. According to this system, one should wail for a teacher in the middle of the court.[55] But Zilu was Kongzi's student, so Kongzi cried at an obviously wrong location.

But the first account was by no means accusatory of Kongzi; instead, it strongly invited readers to admire him as a caring master worthy of utmost respect. The remainder of the narrative included further details for the same purpose. When Kongzi bowed to visitors who came to mourn Zilu, he again contradicted the ritual protocol associated with his seniority, but in doing so he evinced his gut-wrenching grief. Zilu had suffered a violent death: the enemies who executed him turned his corpse into minced meat. Hearing this, Kongzi fell into a profound sadness, and for the rest of his life he refused to touch minced meat. The master's grief was unassuageable.[56]

Another story of a departure from ritual protocol occurs in the last two items of the *Classic of Rituals* quotations. The first recorded a conversation between Zeng Shen 曾申 and his father Master Zeng (Zeng Can 曾參). The son asked whether there was a "regular voice" (常聲) in which one wailed for deceased parents.[57] To this question, the following item—also a quotation from the *Classic of Rituals*—provided a straightforward answer. In mourning rituals, people with different relationships with the dead were instructed to make different wailing sounds. Those who were the most closely related (e.g., children to parents or wife to husband) were expected to cry as if they were "departing and not returning" (往而不反), that is, a breathless paroxysm of howling.[58] Other relatives would follow graduated rules ranging from crying less ferociously to not having to cry at all. Thus, the official ritual protocols had a ready answer for Zeng Shen.

But in the first item, Master Zeng responded to the question without citing established rules. Instead, he asked back rhetorically, "what regular voice could it possibly have when a baby loses its mother?"[59] The master clearly disapproved of the idea that in every sit-

54 TPYL 487, 1a.
55 See Kong Yingda's annotation in *Liji zhengyi*, 8.233.
56 TPYL 487, 1a.
57 TPYL 487, 2a.
58 TPYL 487, 2a.
59 TPYL 487, 2a.

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uation one had to follow a fixed rule, and he invoked the hypothetical case of a baby to challenge it. A baby would inevitably cry in an unrestrained way, as it was incapable of performing cultivated forms. It would be absurd, as Master Zeng implied, to discredit the baby's tears because the crying did not conform to certain rules. In the profoundly sad situation of losing a parent, the sheer release of tears was more important than any particular form it might take.

In both cases, the recalcitrant wailers valued lachrymose experiences over rituals, a point scholars have analyzed from multiple perspectives.[60] I wish to highlight the emphasis on the primacy of crying, which rendered rituals (and one's intentionality) ontologically secondary. In these accounts, crying was first and foremost something that happened to the human. Each wailer—Kongzi or the baby—cried with a sense of helplessness. The baby represented an extreme case of vulnerability, in which tears simply flooded out. On the other end of the spectrum stood Kongzi, who, with all his knowledge of rituals and having in fact made many of the rules, lapsed into wailing at the wrong location and with a similar sense of powerlessness. For Kongzi, lachrymation was neither a choice nor an involuntary act, but something in-between. An overwhelming urge to cry might have come upon him, and Kongzi chose not to resist it despite his ability to do so. His lachrymose moment layered a variety of voluntary and involuntary states, the fusion of which might defy any effort to clearly demarcate them.

Kongzi's example conveyed that human management of lachrymation was possible and necessary, but with notable limitations. The main issue resided in an ontological hiatus between human control and lachrymose happenings, i.e., that the latter stood somewhat above and beyond the reach of the former. Kongzi was not commended because he rebelled against the ritual codes by choice—a reading too modernist for the original context—but rather because he acknowledged the secondary status of human (ritual) management and allowed the ontological force of lachrymation to carry him along. The role Kongzi played in establishing the argument on the limits of rituals was intriguing and effective. The texts (including the original *Classic of Rituals* and the collectanea) deployed the sage to use his authoritative voice on both sides, as if he was simultaneously making and breaking rules. The apparent contradiction compelled the reader to imbibe ritual protocols without losing sight of the broader ontological structures which conditioned the meaning of rituals.

60 Kongzi shed recalcitrant tears in the *Classic of Rituals* and the *Analects*, a phenomenon noticed by a number of scholars. Most analyses focus on emotional authenticity/spontaneity. For example, see Galvany 2012, 15–42 and Virág 2017, 37–47.

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Indeed, humans were somewhat powerless when it came to crying. The two examples above—particularly that of Master Zeng—discussed how the release of a crying sound would resist deliberate management. From a practical point of view, it might be even more difficult to control the flow of tears. The somewhat autonomous force of tears was a popular theme in writings, and the *Taiping Collectanea* afforded a good number of examples. Fei Ziyang 費子陽 (ca. 400s BCE) once described how he "could not stop the tears" (涕淚不可禁也) when he worried about the imminent demise of the Zhou dynasty.[61] Li Ling 李陵 (d. 74 BCE), a once esteemed Han dynasty general in wars against Xiongnu, described that "tears streamed down without my awareness" (不覺淚下) after he was taken captive by the enemies.[62] From these descriptions emerged a motif, i.e., that tears would overwhelm human intentionality and follow their own course.

Besides its resistance to human management, lachrymation could also be a material force out there in the world and exert an impact independent from the human.[63] A popular conceptualization, as we see in and beyond the Taiping selection of writings, was that crying *did* things to the world. Somewhat comparable to electrical power, the lachrymose force was invisible to human perception and yet capable of causing substantial material consequences. One prominent example is how the woman of Qi brought down a wall with her tears. That is, a person's wailing had the potency to demolish a tough material object. The heft of a wall far surpassed the physical capability of the woman (or any individual human), so its crumbling must have resulted from a causal agent other than the individual herself. Indeed, the massive material consequence of lachrymation in this instance signaled an awesome force above and beyond the human.

Modern readers should not dismiss the force of lachrymation as mere metaphor because of the hyperbolic orientation of the story. The belief in palpable, material effects of lachrymation permeated deep into socio-political imaginations and led to serious attempts to harness it. In several examples, crying became a weapon in military confrontations because of its perceived brute aggression. Fu Deng 苻登 (343–394), the ruler of the Former Qin, led ten thousand soldiers to attack Yao Chang 姚萇 (330–393), the general who usurped the regime and founded the latter Qin. Fu and his troops "wailed in a unified voice towards [Yao's camp]" (同聲向哭).[64] After meeting with his strategists, Yao and his army fought back with the same armament—a bout of wailing. The two sides

61 TPYL 387, 6a, orig. *Shizi* 尸子.
62 TPYL 488, 6a, originally from "Yu Su Wu shu".
63 Ann McLaren notices this phenomenon and frames it as "supernatural efficacy." See McLaren 2010, 49–77, cited 58.
64 TPYL 487, 8a, orig. *Qin shu* 秦書.

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afflicted each other with aggressive lachrymation, fighting on a battleground where crying was the one and only weapon.

To be sure, the details of such an instance should always be subject to the test of factuality, as textual representation is never transparent onto reality. What is at stake here is the implication of comparing lachrymation to assault weaponry, a testimonial to a strong belief in the power of crying. Even if the "crying war" idea remained imaginative only, the historical conditions that made such imagining plausible would still contrast starkly with the notion of crying as exclusively a sign of weakness and resignation.[65]

The autonomy of the lachrymose force was also evident in its ability to traverse the human and suprahuman spheres. As shown in many examples, mundane human experience was inadequate to contain the power of tears. In multiple stories in the "wailing" section, crying floated clairvoyant messages beyond a lay person's cognitive reach. For instance, Shu Zhe 叔輒 (?–521 BCE) wailed at the occurrence of a presumably inauspicious solar eclipse, a ritual act which would supposedly summon divine support to mitigate potential ill fortune. Hearing Shu Zhe cry, Shusun Ruo 叔孫婼 (?–517) concluded that Shu Zhe was about to die; likely he detected something such as a waning vitality from the sound of wailing. Indeed, Shu Zhe died a month later.[66] The story revealed the supramundane potency of lachrymation on two different counts. For one, wailing voiced a plea for celestial solace, the purpose Shu Zhe subjectively embraced. For another, tears also presaged his imminent death, a message the lachrymose force channeled without Shu Zhe's awareness.

Shu Zhe's invocation of divine support through wailing was one example of a category of rituals intended to connect the human to divine beings via lachrymation. Political authorities since antiquity had relied on group wailing as a means to reach higher beings, particularly when the regime was in crisis. Herein crying met rituals again, and in this case it is even clearer that rituals played a secondary role to lachrymation. The ceremonies provided formal structures along which the lachrymose force sprang up to connect with deities and spirits.

The collectanea cited a story of Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE–23 CE), the usurper of the Han empire and ruler of a short-lived Xin dynasty. The incident happened when Wang's regime verged on collapse. Facing imminent demise, Wang turned to the last resort, a massive wailing ritual performed by himself and his subjects. The text described the ceremony as follows:

65 For further methodological deliberation on the use of accounts on crying as historical sources, see Zuo 2021, 37–39.
66 TPYL 487, 2b, orig. *Zuo zhuan*.

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> 莽自知敗，乃率群臣至南郊，陳符命本末，仰天搏心大哭。諸生小民會旦夕哭，為設飧粥，甚悲哀及能诵策文者除以为郎，至五千余人。
>
> Knowing that he would be defeated, Mang led a group of ministers to the Southern Suburb, where he presented objects which symbolized the Mandate [of Heaven] and the chronicles [of his regime], facing Heaven, beating his chest, and wailing loudly. Confucian scholars and commoners gathered to wail from morning to night. [For this wailing crowd], [the court] prepared meals and congee and offered promotions in rank to those who were compellingly sad and able to recite sacrificial texts. [They promoted] as many as over five thousand people.[67]

Above is a truncated version cited in the *Taiping Collectanea*. In the original *History of the Han*, the text explained in greater detail that the organized wailing addressed Heaven, the deity which conferred or revoked the mandate to rule.[68] Having exhausted all possible human measures to save his dynasty, Wang turned to the ultimate divinity for help.

Although modern scholars have yet to pay much attention to these non-funerary wailing rituals, the practice in fact maintained a considerable presence in classical writings. In the foregoing narrative, Wang Mang was inspired by precedents in Confucian classics to organize the ritual. Indeed, the *Rituals of the Zhou* (*Zhou li*), one classic cited in Wang's story, stipulated that the female shaman officials (*nü wu* 女巫) were supposed to "sing, wail, and thereby to plead" (歌哭而請) when the state was in a grave crisis.[69] As explicated in official commentary by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), singing and wailing were to move "spirits and deities" (*shenling* 神靈) with "grief and sadness" (*bei'ai* 悲哀).[70] Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648) elaborated the "spirits and deities" as "Heaven and Earth, mountains and rivers, and the altars of ancestors" (天地山川社稷).[71] The *Discourses of the States* (*Guo yu*) mentioned that the subjects of a regime should wail for three days in catastrophes such as "drying up of a river or collapse of a mountain" (川涸山崩).[72] Wailing to deities was not a most common ritual procedure, but it remained as an option in the event of utmost emergency.

In many ways, lachrymation operated beyond the human reign. As implied in some sources, such an ontological stature derived from an autonomous system which allowed

67 TPYL 487, 3a, orig. *Han shu*.
68 For example, the "sacrificial texts" were supposed to "plead to Heaven" (*gao tian* 告天). See *Han shu*, 69.4187.
69 *Zhou li zhengyi*, 50.2077.
70 *Zhou li zhengyi*, 50.2077.
71 *Zhou li zhengyi*, 50.2077–78.
72 *Guo yu ji jie*, 11.384.

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human participation and yet did not rely on the human for its existence. A good example for observing this system is the story of Tang Qu 唐衢 (fl. 810s), who had an intriguing reputation for being "good at wailing" (*shan ku* 善哭). Tang was swift in responding to a sad situation with profuse tears:

> 見人文章有所傷嘆者，讀訖必哭，涕泗不能已。
>
> Whenever he saw something sorrowful in others' writings, he would wail as soon as he finished reading. Tears and mucus came down in ways he could barely control.

He was also effective in getting others to cry:

> 每與人言論，既相別，發聲一號，音詞哀切，聞之者莫不淒然泣下。
>
> Whenever he talked with others and was about to part ways, he would voice a howl, the sound of which was so sorrowful that anyone who had heard would let down dolorous tears.[73]

Modern psychology would explain Tang's behaviors by describing him as an emotionally sensitive person, adding that emotions can be contagious between individuals. But no subjectivity-centered vocabulary truly captures the nuances in the phrasing of the story. The author characterized Tang's adeptness in crying not so much as a performance centered on his own person, but rather as a masterful participation in a network of established mechanisms. Sorrow provoked tears, and howling stirred more sadness; the swim of occurrences enveloped individuals, who weaved in and out and charted their own orbits. Tang immersed himself in the system so deeply that his participation was seamlessly in accord with its workings. When he encountered a state of sorrow, he plunged in and let out the duly provoked tears without delay. Submerged in sadness, he deftly invited others to join him by releasing a persuasive wail.

In sum, despite its conspicuous associations with human life, crying was consistently linked to suprahuman qualities. The extramundane potency and cosmic reach attributed to the lachrymose force compels further inquiry into a possible underlying system. A thorough investigation is in order in the following section.

5 Crying and the Phenomenology of Emotion

In this section, I connect all foregoing observations of lachrymation into a unified picture by clarifying a phenomenology of emotion endorsed in the *Taiping Collectanea*. I

73 TPYL 487, 6a, orig. *Tang shu*.

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demonstrate that the bodily, social, and suprahuman aspects of lachrymation fit together in a grand order of cosmic movement—a system also known as emotion.

Let's take stock of the observations I have made thus far. First, lachrymation was a key human experience and involved distinct physiological processes. The *Taiping Collectanea* made special arrangements to recognize tears as a bodily fluid. Second, crying was a prominent social behavior. Over time, the ruling elite's effort to regulate lachrymation developed into a communal order encompassing diverse social sectors, wide-ranging activities, and various moral values. Third, despite extensive societal management, lachrymation had an ontological prowess beyond the human reach. Not only did crying sometimes happen to a person in a way that made him feel powerless, it also had a material impact independent of human intentionality and physicality.

In the broad view, lachrymation appeared to exist on several levels. It was anchored in human physiology but at the same time held a material sway beyond the human body. It seemed to have emerged from one's intentionality and yet operated autonomously in a much broader realm. This extensive and autonomous system was that of the emotions.[74] Indeed, the multitudinous existence of crying derived its ontological complexity from emotion. In the following, I elucidate the phenomenology of the emotions as the basis of an integrative reading of lachrymation.

A phenomenological analysis of emotion in premodern China depends to a great extent on the proper handling of controversies over the term *qing* 情, an umbrella term for feelings such as joy (*xi* 喜), anger (*nu* 怒), liking (*hao* 好), and disliking (*wu* 惡).[75] *Qing* has remained the subject of a decades-long debate among scholars who intend to translate it into modern languages. While it stands for "emotion," the word also routinely refers to "reality," an "objective" denotatum seemingly far removed from "subjective" feelings. More accurately speaking, *qing* branched into two families of significations, one concerning "how things are"[76] (e.g., reality, basic facts, and underlying factors) and the other

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74 While there can be different ways of conceptualizing "emotion" in premodern Chinese contexts, I build the current discussion on sources about *qing* 情 and particular feelings included in its purview. For reflections on ways in which we conceive emotion in Chinese thought and coordinate Chinese sources with conceptual specifics of the English term "emotion," see Eifring 2004, 1–36 and Virág 2017, 8–9.

75 According to Zong-qi Cai, *qing* did not become the umbrella signifier of the specific feelings until the fifth century BCE. See Cai 2020, 401–406. The earliest text I employ in the current discussion is the *Liji*, which clearly identified the connection between *qing* and particular feelings. See note 121. Most other sources I use are of medieval provenance and comply with this established connection.

76 Virág 2017, 6.

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conveying affectivity (e.g., feelings, inclinations, and dispositions).[77]

As the debate developed, some scholars stuck with the "one meaning" model while others found no grounds for reducing diverse significations of *qing* into one unified meaning.[78] The term indeed is best translated as "feelings" in some contexts and "reality" in others. Nevertheless, the bifurcation did not necessarily split *qing* into two unrelated homonyms. Instead, *qing* was a polysemous word with "a broad semantic range,"[79] and the multiple layers of its meanings were supposed to "vibrate together."[80]

Scholars have made efforts to identify the interconnectedness between the two aspects of *qing*. Halvor Eifring points to a Wittgensteinian "family resemblance" between the different meanings of *qing* and perceives their unity as a matter of "cultural perception."[81] Brian Bruya connects the bifurcating significations from a cosmological point of view, arguing that *qing*, a flow of "responses of experience in the world," could be a fact or an emotion, depending on the perspective.[82] Along a similar cosmological line, Ling Hon Lam suggests that *qing* should be considered as a realm, a "field of cosmological energies" that "underlay and traversed the internal-external division" in reference to an individual.[83] Lam frames his argument mainly as a reconsideration of the locus of emotion, positing that the *qing*-realm enveloped a person instead of belonging to his subjective interior.[84] In other words, the multivalence of *qing* is a natural outcome of its original cosmological setting, and the disparity between an objective reality and subjective emotion is a distortion by modern dualism.

My consideration of the phenomenology of emotion is inspired by previous scholars in three ways. First, from an intellectual-historical point of view, it is necessary to investigate interrelations among the significations of *qing* instead of treating the emotion-*qing* and reality-*qing* as categorically demarcated. Second, although the entire semantic spectrum

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77 For a detailed survey of all specific meanings of *qing* in the early period, see Harbsmeier 2004, 69–148. For an in-depth survey of the concept, see Cai 2020.

78 Some early participants in the debate are committed to the "one meaning" model. For example, A.C. Graham argues that *qing* consistently meant "what is essential/genuine" until the Song, when the term shifted to connote "passions." See Graham 1986, 59–65. Chad Hanson argues that "reality feedback" is the one unified meaning of *qing*. See Hansen 1995, 183.

79 Puett 2004, 42.

80 Eifring 2004, 19.

81 Eifring 2004, 10.

82 Bruya 2001, cited 151.

83 Lam 2018, cited 24, 60.

84 Lam 2018, 21.

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of *qing* may not fit into one unifying theme, I believe in the existence of broader phenomenological structures—historically situated themes—which traversed the conspicuous boundaries between the different meanings of *qing*. Third, I agree that a cosmological approach presents a promising way to identify such broad themes.

In the following, I introduce a phenomenological theme of the emotions presented in the *Taiping Collectanea*. It is one example of the broad themes that offered a new, coherent understanding of the emotions and bridged the subjective-objective divide in a cosmological sense. In this scheme, *qing* was an order of *qi* movement that permeated the interface between human and cosmos and suffused both realms in one continuous process. Emotion, therefore, was simultaneously a cosmic force emerging from the profound depths of the universe and a particular feeling manifest in human experience.

Before delving into the details of this phenomenology, let me first clarify the concept *qi* and how I conceive the cosmology based on it. Emotion was the *qi*, a claim certainly not limited to the current phenomenological scheme, as the *qi* was the fundamental concept accounting for existence in general. The entire universe, including all particular things in its fold, was by nature the *qi*. The identification of emotion as the *qi* consistently appeared in a series of classical texts, such as the *Zuo Commentary*, *Nature Derives from Decree* (*Xing zi ming chu* 性自命出, ca. 300 BCE), *Classic of Rituals*, and *Xunzi*, all key sources repeatedly cited by modern scholars in emotion studies.[85]

The *qi* often invoked the image of an omnipresent circulating force—comparable to air or electricity—sweeping across the world to make things, propel processes, and uphold structures. This visualization must be complemented with an understanding of the ontological multiplicity *qi* stood for.[86] In the matrix of *qi*, the texture and dynamics of the world emerged as a whole, energy and matter permeated each other, substances and processes collapsed into one. It was in this inter-modal sense that *qi* was at once everything and the foundation of everything.

It would be misleading to consider the *qi* cosmos as a holistic hodgepodge, however. Many scholars treat the *qi* as a homogenous materiality, which reduces its ontological complexity into a simple role of being a substance and trivializes its function in structuring the universe. The *qi* cosmology had distinctive ontological claims and stipulated a

85 For a systematic discussion of these texts with a focus on the connection between the *qi* and emotion, see Ren 2019, especially 68–85, 122–150, and 167–186. Scholars have also noticed the *qi-qing* connection in their piecemeal discussions of some of these texts, see Puett 2004, 45 and Harbsmeier 2004, 116.

86 A number of scholars center ontological complexity in their definitions of *qi*. For example, see Sivin 1987, 46 and Kaptchuk 2010, 46–48.

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world with clear structures. In what follows, I explicate some of these claims using evidence from the *Taiping Collectanea*, as the Song compendium faithfully reproduced the canonical *qi* cosmology in its curation of old texts. All these ontological points will resurface in my analysis of the emotions as parts of an essential backdrop.

First, the *qi*-based cosmos was structured with varied, graduated depths. At the most fundamental level was the "Original *Qi*" (*yuan qi* 元氣), the primordial substance, structure, and propelling force of everything, and on the surface resided the "ten thousand things" (*wanwu* 萬物), objects and processes accessible to sensory perception. Between foundation and surface resided a series of deep patterns, in which myriad mundane things moved along and found their normative "well-placed-ness."[87] The classical articulation of the structure of the *qi* cosmos took the form of a "historical" narrative on cosmic birth. In this narrative, the cosmos started as an inarticulate, profound force of *qi*, drew out grand patterns such as *yin*, *yang* and the Five Processes, acquired first tangible forms such as Heaven and Earth, and eventually gave birth to a world inhabited by humans and things with concrete forms.[88] Each and every stage of this scheme was made of, structured, and propelled by the *qi*. A tangible thing, such as a wooden chair, was constituted with the *qi*, and so were the deep orders, such as the Five Processes, which were the patterns of *qi* movement beyond sensory reach.

The differentiation of depth was critical to the *qi* cosmos as a way to delineate its structure. The deep orders ranged from the unfathomable *yinyang,* the Five Processes, to the more tangible forms (*xing* 形), and continued to include those which came after the emergence of forms, such as moral norms, ritual propriety, and emotion—the central topic of this article. A deep order differed from a mundane, concrete thing in two senses. It usually claimed a non-local—if not a universal—presence, and it mainly served as a structure responsible for the placement of myriad things.

One issue to clarify is the relationship between the structure of the *qi* cosmos and its textual articulation, i.e., the narrative on cosmic birth. While the former was supposed to be an eternal characteristic, the latter, somewhat jarringly, narrated a terminal event (like the expansion of the universe in the Big Bang theory). The chronological narrative, nevertheless, was a strategy to delineate a structure of sequential depths; and it should not be understood literarily as an evolutional process in which each stage vanquished and replaced the former phase. While the deep orders and concrete things might have come into existence one after another at the time of cosmic birth, all components in the scheme maintained a constant presence in the contemporary universe. The original *qi*

87 Cheng 1979, 262.
88 For a systematic introduction to the scheme, see Zuo 2018, 40–44.

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remained beneath the structures and things as their fundamental origin, and the deep orders, too, continued to buoy things under the sensory façade.

The *Taiping Collectanea* foregrounded this cosmological narrative as the foremost component of the book. The section "Original *Qi*," which appeared at the very beginning of the encyclopedia, presented various iterations of the narrative. The following two examples (among many others) demonstrated how the primordial *qi* gave rise to deep orders (e.g., Heaven and Earth) and myriad things:

> 天地者，元氣之所生，萬物之所自焉。
>
> The so-called Heaven and Earth were generated by the original *qi* and are whence the ten thousand things came.[89]
>
> 清輕者上為天，濁重者下為地，衝和氣者為人。故天地含精，萬物化生。
>
> The clear and light [*qi*] ascends to become Heaven; the murky and heavy [*qi*] descends to become Earth; the blended and moderate [*qi*] makes humans. Thus, Heaven and Earth contain essences [essential *qi*], and the ten thousand things transform and generate.[90]

The *Taiping Collectanea* also reproduced the narrative by simulating the cosmic sequence in the overarching framework of the book. The compendium devoted its first three parts to Heaven, "Orders of Time" (*shi xu* 時序), and Earth, followed by fifty-one categories from emperors to legal codes, from humans to animals. At the head of the "Part on Heaven" was the aforementioned section "Original *Qi*," which described the generative process leading to the existence of Heaven. The part on the "Order of Time" introduced essential orders in which the *qi* moved, such as the Five Processes. After a thorough introduction to the *qi* and the premier structures it upheld, the collectanea took a deep plunge into the "ten thousand things" in the remaining fifty-one parts.

The *qi* cosmology is not merely a description of an "abstract" movement of *qi* insulated from the material universe it sustained; instead, this ontology provides a historical perspective on understanding particular entities and processes when we consciously resist unexamined modern ontological assumptions. For the current study, I highlight four key implications the cosmology has in guiding my analysis of emotion. First, the *qi* did not generate any individuated thing with a permanent substance. As such, my attempt to analyze emotion as *qi* does not single out emotion as the only subject for redefinition while leaving the rest of the world untouched in anachronistic phenomenological representation, i.e., that emotions as *qi* belonged to the inside or outside of a self-contained,

89 TPYL 1, 1a, orig. *Li tong* 禮統.
90 TPYL 1, 1a, orig. *San wu li ji* 三五曆紀.

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individuated human body. Instead, it calls for systematic rectification of ontology, a revisionist reading of everything in light of the *qi*. As I will demonstrate later in detail, my task is to analyze how one *qi* movement—emotion—intersected with other local *qi* structures (such as the organ systems, which by definition differ from organs as physical objects in anatomical terms).[91]

The second ontological feature of the *qi*-based cosmos was its focus on "generativity" (*sheng* 生). The term *sheng* turned up in both quotations discussed above and a total of ten times in the section "Original *Qi*." It was "transforming and generating" (*huasheng* 化生), the activity at the heart of and responsible for every thing. In other words, the *qi* might be free flowing, yet with a constant overall orientation: to produce and reproduce. The *qi*-based cosmos was essentially about ceaseless life and vitality.

The third characteristic was a ladder of differentiated significances based on *qi* constitutions. In this cosmic scheme, any entity after/below the original *qi* would have a value in accord with its *qi* constitution, an idea well known to scholars of Chinese thought. The second source I cited above provides a good example for this belief. As the quotation asserted, different types of *qi* generated different entities, and the distinctions in the *qi* types led to hierarchical values imputed to these things. Heaven, the product of clear and light *qi*, stood as the foremost, overarching structure in the world with clear suprahuman qualities. Earth, made of murky and heavy *qi*, remained subordinate to Heaven and yet constituted the indispensable other half of the world. The two asserted a status higher than that of anything appearing later, i.e., the ten thousand things. Humans, the condensation of blended and moderate *qi*, belonged to the myriad things and yet stood out as an exceptional subset marked by a special mention in the quotation. This example also indicated that the deep orders and concrete things differed in significance. Heaven and Earth as an overarching order of reality, for instance, was comprised of premium grades of *qi* and outweighed everything else in its fold in ontological import.

It is worth emphasizing that interdependence was central to the *qi*-based cosmos despite its hierarchical features, which constitutes the fourth feature of the cosmology. Between the *qi*, deep orders, and concrete things was intimate interdependence rather than ontological partition. On the one hand, a physical object was not cut off from the fundamental *qi* nor the deep patterns; instead, it was "made thick with" both.[92] The nonsegregation between the *qi* and things was the reason why the reality of any particular thing always went beyond the sensory level and reached deep into the patterned move-

91 Charlotte Furth calls them "basic systems of visceral functions" to highlight such a difference. See Furth 1999, 23.

92 Lundy 2012, 23.

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ments of the *qi*.[93] On the other hand, the *qi* depended on each and every emerging thing for its continued generativity, and all deep orders relied on concrete things for their manifestation. In addition, the original *qi* as well as the deep cosmic patterns became knowable and relevant to the human via the medium of myriad things. Thus, concrete things (including humans themselves) held an indispensable epistemic value for understanding the cosmos and human participation in it.

Now let's return to the emotions. The *qi*-based world picture provides essential backdrop for understanding the phenomenology of the emotions, which I organize into five key propositions. First, emotion was essentially a deep order, and thus second, it constituted part of the cosmic framework. Third, the existence of emotion straddled a cosmos-wide movement and a human phenomenon, and to follow, as the cosmic-sized *qing* permeated human existence, it did so via a body-wide network of vital organs (instead of a single locus, such as the heart). And lastly, emotion was simultaneously life and a primary manifestation of human vitality.

To start with, emotion was an exceptional kind of *qi*; it stood as a deep order and was supposed to exceed the mundane world. The *Taiping Collectanea* included numerous quotations to demonstrate this point, and a most explicit account was from *the Comprehensive Discussions in the White Tiger Hall* (*Baihu tong*, hereafter *White Tiger*), a Han text the Taiping compilers seemed to particularly favor:

> 始起先有太初，然後有太始，形兆既成，名曰太素。混沌相連，視之不見，聽之不聞，然後剖判。清濁既分，精曜出布，庶物生。精者為三光，粗者為五行。五行生情性，情性生汁（協）中，汁（協）中生神明，神明生道德，道德生文章。
>
> Initially there was the Grand Primordium, which morphed into the Grand Inception. Once the forms came into being, it (the Grand Primordium / Grand Inception) took on the name the Grand Simplicity. In chaos [all was] connected. [One] looked but could not see, listened but could not hear. Afterwards, [the chaos started to] divide and differentiate. The clear and the murky [*qi*] parted, the essential luminaries came forth, and various things emerged. The refined was the Three Lights (the sun, moon, and stars), and the crude was the Five Processes. The Five Processes generated emotion and nature; emotion and nature generated harmony and the mean; harmony and the mean generated the numinous and the illustrious; the numinous and the illustrious generated the Way and moral power; the Way and moral power generated cultural forms.[94]

93 Hence the secondary status of sensory knowing. See Zuo 2018, particularly 44–46.
94 TPYL 17, 3b. Note that the passage was marked as from the *Yue ji* 樂記, which was a mistake. See Yu 2020, 45.

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The passage was yet another iteration of the cosmic birth theme. According to it, the world started with a few preliminary states of the *qi* (e.g., Grand Primordium, Grand Inception, and Grand Simplicity) and continued with the emergence of celestial and mundane things as soon as the original *qi* started to "divide and differentiate." The author listed an array of deep orders that brought structure to the world, such as the Five Processes (on the deep end) and moral codes (on the surface, human end). Most notably, the one order which immediately followed the Five Processes was *qing*/emotion (coupled with *xing*/nature), which preceded all essential norms in the human realm (e.g., morality and cultural forms).

There is no doubt that emotion as a deep order specifically concerned the human; and the fact that it simultaneously bore on and exceeded the human rendered it a representative human fact in human-cosmos correlations, a point widely seen in writings from the classical through the Song times. The Taiping compilers was obviously invested in this idea and cited numerous versions of it. For example, in the "Part on the Heaven" (天部), a citation from *Master Wen* (*Wenzi* 文子) stated:

> 天愛其精，地愛其平，人愛其情。天之精，日月星辰雷霆風雨也；地之平，水火金木土也；人之情，思慮聰明喜怒也。
>
> Heaven likes its essence, Earth likes its evenness, and humans like their emotions. The essence of Heaven lies in the sun, moon, stars, thunder, wind, and rain. The evenness of Earth lies in Water, Fire, Metal, Wood, and Earth. The emotions of the human include thinking, illuminated senses, joy, and anger.

In this Heaven-Earth-human comparison, *qing* was placed in parallel with the Five Processes (the deep structure attributed to Earth) as well as celestial bodies and weather vagaries (essential patterns of Heaven). Similarly, *Huainanzi* stated that "Heaven has wind, rain, chill, and heat; similarly, the human has taking, giving, joy, and anger" (天有風雨寒暑，人亦有取與喜怒).[95]

The second proposition on the emotions is a natural extension of its role as a deep order, that is, a critical feature of emotion was its structuring effect. The classical articulation of this point was to link the emotions to a variety of other cardinal cosmic patterns. It is well known that the number of specific emotions varied from four, five, six, to seven in different formulas, and such a disparity was often the result of different pairings with other cosmic structures. For example, four feelings were correlated with the four *qi* arising from the cardinal directions; five feelings corresponded with the Five Processes, and

95 TPYL 360, 5a.

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six emotions were associated with the six pitch-standards (*liu lü* 六律).[96] As such, the presence of *qing* was constantly articulated as a patterned distribution of *qi* in the cosmos; to put it in another way, emotion was part of the cosmic framework.

Thirdly, emotion was simultaneously a cosmic-sized movement and a human phenomenon, a feature closely correlated with its status as a deep order of the universe. The entrance of the emotion-*qi* into the human body did not turn it into a smaller, insulated phenomenon; the cosmos-wide circulation of *qi* remained continuous with the burst of particular human feelings, in a way similar with the ocean and rivers connected to it. The *Taiping Collectanea* cited the *Book of the Zhou* (*Zhou shu*) to demonstrate this point in the case of "happiness" (*xi*):

> 人有五氣，喜氣內畜，雖欲隱之，陽喜必見，喜色油然以出。
>
> The human has five *qi*. As the *qi* of happiness accumulates inside a person, even when he wishes to hide it, the *yang* aspect of happiness will inevitably manifest. The happy countenance will spontaneously show.[97]

This passage described how a person could barely contain the *qi* as it sprang out in its *yang*, aggressive aspect. In other words, the happy feeling remained part of its larger cosmic presence after extending into the human, and the human, while hosting the materialization of happiness (the happy countenance), did not have full control of the cosmic process. Such happiness sprang forth from the cosmic depths and via the human as a "relay station,"[98] a point most forcefully articulated by Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179–104):

> 四氣者，天與人所同有也，非人所能蓄也，故可節而不可止也。
>
> The four *qi* (happiness, anger, grief, and joy) were something Heaven and the human share. They were not something the human could contain. Thus, one can monitor (the four feelings) but cannot stop them.[99]

In other words, the emotions moved between the human and the cosmos and held a continuous presence permeating both realms.

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96 For examples of four, five, six, and seven, see respectively my discussions of the *Chunqiu fanlu*, *Zhou shu*, *Baihu tong*, and *Liji* in this section and the next. For an example of a match with the six pitch-standards, see *Baihu tong shu yi*, 8.382.

97 TPYL 467, 6b.

98 Lam 2018, 21.

99 *Chunqiu fanlu yi zheng*, 11.330.

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The fourth proposition has to do with the concrete way in which the emotions pertained to the human. As a result of its cosmic presence, *qing* came to lodge and manifest in the human body in an analogously extensive and structured way. As the current phenomenological scheme stipulated, the emotion-*qi* permeated the human body via its multiple pillars, that is, the five *yin*-organs including the heart, lungs, liver, spleen, and kidneys. *Qing*, therefore, was a body-wide phenomenon instead of a regional occurrence insulated in a centralized site of cognition-conation (such as the heart).

In allocating sections to all major bodily organs, the *Taiping Collectanea* demonstrated its endorsement of a body-wide distribution of the emotions. Not a single item in the section on the heart prescribed an exclusive association between the heart and emotions.[100] In sections on the liver, lungs, spleen, and kidneys, the collectanea cited the *White Tiger* for a scheme which distributed emotion and nature to the five *yin*-organs.[101] Take one citation on the liver as an example:

> 肝者，木之精也，主仁，仁者不忍，故以膽斷焉。是以仁者必有勇也。肝膽異趣，何以知相為府也？肝者，木之精也，木之为言牧也，人怒无不色青目脈张者，是其效也。
>
> The liver is the essence of Wood. It is the master of benevolence. The benevolent one is compassionate, and thus has to rely on the gall bladders to be assertive. This is why a benevolent one must also have valor. The liver and the gall bladders are different in character, and how do we know that they complement each other? The liver is the essence of Wood. Wood (pronounced as *mu*) is just like shepherding (also pronounced as *mu*). When one is angry, he always turns dark in the countenance and widens his eyes, which are the effects [of the liver shepherding the gall bladders].[102]

The basic tenet of the passage, titled "emotion, nature" (*qing xing* 情性), was to stipulate how the six feelings (emotion) and five moral dispositions (nature)—the basic endowments the human received from Heaven—were distributed across the human body. The six feelings were happiness, anger, grief, joy, liking, and disliking (*xi*, *nu*, *ai*, *le*, *ai* 愛, *wu*), and the five moral "constants" (*chang* 常), benevolence, rightness, propriety, intelligence, and trustworthiness (*ren* 仁, *yi* 義, *li* 禮, *zhi* 智, *xin* 信).[103] The central nexus of the theme was the five *yin*-organs, via which the feelings (six cosmic *qi*) and moral values (five cosmic *qi*) erupted as human phenomena. As mentioned in the quotation

100 TPYL 37, 1a–6b.
101 TPYL 376, 6b, 8a, 8a, and 8b.
102 TPYL 376, 10a.
103 *Baihu tong shu yi* 8.382–383.

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above, "benevolence"—a moral value—and "anger"—a feeling—, were associated with the liver. By the same principle, the lungs corresponded with rightness and joy, the kidneys with intelligence and liking, the heart with propriety and disliking, and the spleen with trustworthiness and two feelings, grief and joy.[104]

The Taiping compilers cited the entire distribution system by including each correlation in the section on the correspondent organ. Their interest in the scheme is noteworthy for multiple reasons. First, as I will show in Section VII, the compilers deliberately avoided discussing emotion-nature metaphysics, arguably the most popular philosophical debate related to emotion since antiquity. The *White Tiger* passage on emotion and nature was nearly the only exception in the entire collectanea. Second, to modern scholars familiar with the entire historical discourse on emotion and nature, the *White Tiger* chapter seems an outlier for presenting a series of unusual arguments.[105] It sidelined the heart—the conventional host of feelings—in distributing emotion and nature to multiple organs. Most strikingly, it stipulated that emotion was still—*jing* 靜—, while nature was "generating" (*sheng* 生) and thus in motion, a reversal of the classical prescription of a moving emotion and tranquil nature. The reason presented in the *White Tiger* had to do with the cosmic origin of emotion: the essence *qi* (*jing* 精) was tranquil—*jing*—in

104 Two issues are worth notice here. For one, some other historical texts (such as *Wuxing dayi* 五行大義, cited as a commentary on the *White Tiger* passage, *Baihu tong shu yi*, 8.382) linked the six emotions to the six *yang*-organs instead of the five *yin*-organs. This was an incorrect reading of the *White Tiger* scheme. The six emotions did not simply correspond with the six *yang*-organs just because they shared the same number. As shown in the quotation above, the five *yin*-organs functioned as the core of the system, to which the six feelings and six *yang*-organs were respectively attached, a relation also affirmed in the *Inner Canon*'s presentation of the system, which I will discuss next.

For another, the *White Tiger* passage foregrounded the five moral dispositions and presented complete formulae for their organ connections, while mentioning the feeling-organ correlations in less systematic ways. I have reconstructed the results above via some deduction. One essential clue is that emotions and the *yin*-organs were respectively correlated with the cardinal directions (East, South, West, North, Upper, and Lower). The emotion-organ connections reconstructed from this link were consistent with the direct stipulations in the passage, such as the liver reference I cited above.

105 As I will argue in Section VII, it did not start as an outlier but became marginalized due to the rise of the argument favoring nature over emotion. Also, the *White Tiger* was known as a collage of contemporaneous Confucian texts rather than an original work. The arguments it presented stood for a host of different texts, which should not be reduced to one singular voice. For a detailed study of the composition of the *White Tiger*, see Chou 2012, 27–31.

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nature, and emotion (*qing*) was consequently still because it came from the essence *qi*.[106] I will revisit this point in my discussion of the *Inner Canon* below to demonstrate that it was a critical phenomenological argument rather than a phonetic wordplay.

For sure, the *Taiping* compilers favored the *White Tiger* for one good, straightforward reason—to highlight the feeling-organ connections—a crucial component of their phenomenological construal of emotion. Some readers may question how substantial these correlations might be, as Han texts such as the *White Tiger* were known for a heightened interest in incorporating everything into a correlative cosmos. But the emotion-organ connection was not a quirky argument restricted to the Han cosmologists; the theme enjoyed a systematic interpretation in medical texts such as the *Inner Canon*. In the following, I provide a fuller view of the scheme with further evidence from the *Inner Canon*.

First, the *Inner Canon* completely endorsed the concept that the emotions were essentially patterned cosmic *qi* and that they devolved into particular feelings via the five *yin*-organs.[107] The text nicely summarized the entire process in one statement:

> 天有五行，御五位以生寒暑燥濕風，人有五藏，化五氣，以生喜怒悲憂恐。
>
> Heaven has the Five Processes, which occupy five positions to generate cold, heat, draught, humidity, and wind. The human has five *yin*-organs, which transform the five *qi* and generate joy, anger, sadness, melancholy, and fear.[108]

To follow, the *Inner Canon* specified *how* the cosmic *qi* erupted into feelings with the facilitation of the *yin*-organs, a detail that substantiated the emotion-organ connection discussed in the *White Tiger*:

> 五精所並：精氣並於心則喜，並於肺則悲，並於肝則憂，並於脾則畏，並於腎則恐。是謂五並，虛而相並者也。
>
> When the five essence [*qi*] come to join [and what they generate]: when the essence *qi* joins the heart it generates joy; the lungs, sadness; the liver, melancholy; the spleen, fear;

106 *Baihu tong shu yi*, 8.381.

107 In its scheme, the *Inner Canon* referenced the particular feelings only (e.g., joy and anger) and did not employ *qing* as an umbrella term for them, as pointed out by Angelika Messner, in Messner 2006b, 43. But given all other striking parallels, there is little doubt that the *Inner Canon* scheme was the same as that in the *White Tiger*. Assuming that the *White Tiger* (given its later dates) inherited the idea from the *Inner Canon*, the different use of the term *qing* in the *Inner Canon* certainly did not deter later authors from wedding the scheme to the subject they explicitly labeled as *qing*.

108 *Huang di nei jing su wen jiao zhu* (hereafter *Su wen*), 19.803.

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> and gall bladders, fright. The so-called five conjoinings, they are [processes in which] a void is joined [by essence *qi*].[109]

In a way, the *Inner Canon*'s attention to delineating somatic processes turned the emotion-organ correlation into a physiological connection.

Based on this account, one can discern a slight distinction between *qing*, the deep order, and particular feelings, the "things" that appeared as part of human physiology. The latter could be perceived as a constituent or a tensed property of the former, but no evidence shows that such a distinction would effect an ontological separation. In an interdependent dynamic, feelings derived from *qing*, and *qing* depended on specific feelings to manifest as a human phenomenon. As I will show in the next section, numerous historical writings accredited a special visibility to *qing*; that is, the observer did not intend to separate the visibly salient feelings from the deep order which buoyed them. The two were of one existence, demonstrating a particularly intimate interdependence.[110]

As a side note, the passage also identified the emotion-*qi* specifically as the "essence *qi*," which again matched the *White Tiger* argument on the equivalence between *qing* (emotion) and *jing* (essence). Calling the emotion-*qi* the essence *qi* was another way of acknowledging its status as a deep order. Moreover, it linked emotion to vitality, a point I will elaborate next.

The fifth and final proposition of the Taiping phenomonology was that emotion was closely connected to life—that is, generativity on a cosmic scale or the vitality of a human. An important clue for identifying the emotion-life link resided in the aforementioned essence *qi*. The affinity between the essence *qi* and cosmic generativity was a prominent idea widely present in the textual tradition and celebrated in the *Taiping Collectanea*. The *Chronicle of the Three [Emperors] and Five [Thearchs]* (*San wu li ji*), which I cited earlier in this section, stated that "Heaven and Earth contain essences [essence *qi*], and the ten thousand things transform and generate," linking the essence *qi* directly to the ceaseless generative movements across the universe. The *Inner Canon*, again, provided detailed insight into the process by which the heavenly essence *qi* transformed into earthly life:

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109 *Su wen* 7.335

110 As a comparison, an object (such as the sun), by claiming the Fire quality, was interdependent with the Five Processes (a deep order) in the same ontological realm. But such an ontological equity did not lead to a sameness warranting the conceptual/semantic interchangeablity we witness in the case of *qing* and particular feelings. It would be absurd to equate the sun with Fire in the way in which joy was identified with *qing*.

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> 地者，所以載生成之形類也。虛者，所以列應天之精氣也。形精之動，猶根本之與枝葉也。
>
> Earth is what holds up the forms and kinds that have been generated. Void is what corresponds with the essence *qi* of Heaven. The interaction between forms and essences is just like that between branches and roots.[111]

That is, the essence *qi*, coming from Heaven, instilled an animating force into localized *qi* structures—forms—, and the latter relied on the former to finally become things with life.

Notably, the characterization of *xu* (void) is precisely how the *Inner Canon* described the formation of the feelings, a process of "conjoining" (*bing* 並) where the essence *qi* slid into "voids" in the five organ systems. This clue helps us to gain a complete understanding of the process that involved the *qing*/essence *qi*, human life, and particular feelings. The essence *qi* flushed into the human via his various "forms," particularly the organ systems, and instilled sustained vitality. The feelings were the lively things bursting forth as soon as the essence *qi* joined the trajectories of the five *yin*-organs. Thus, emotion was simultaneously life and the primary manifestation of life, something that occurred with great visibility as the cosmos met the human.

As further evidence shows, the Taiping compilers were committed to the connection between emotion and life even outside their work on the collectanea. The proposition that emotion was a special order of *qi* manifesting human life[112] appeared in writings by a number of editors. For example, Li Fang 李昉 (925–996)—a leading member on the editorial board—wrote as follows:[113]

> 夫人皆有血氣之禀，七情之動。
>
> So every human has the endowment of blood and *qi* as well as the movements of the seven emotions.[114]

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111 *Su wen* 19.828–29.

112 Ulrike Middendorf discusses earlier formulations of this argument in classical sources and calls *qing* in the particular context a "dynamic concept," which I find apt. See Middedorf 2008, 135.

113 Johannes Kurz argues that a number of the famous compilers might not have performed the actual editorial work, which is an insightful observation. See Kurz 2007, 50. However, it is reasonable to assume that leading figures like Li Fang were responsible for establishing the project's guiding principles, despite their possible absence from day-to-day management. In the current case, we should certainly take into consideration Li's philosophical take on emotion given the rich representation of the emotions in the collectanea.

114 *Quan Song wen*, vol. 3, 47.162.

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Here Li referenced three fundamental facts of the human in parallel, "blood" (*xue* 血), *qi*, and the emotions. Both *qi* and "blood" were body-wide *qi* movements responsible for life and vitality. *Qi* was a localized version of the general *qi* that concentrated on circulating within the human body, and blood was another energy-matter that sustained and nourished human life.[115] Li put emotion in juxtaposition with *qi* and blood, confirming its status as another animating agent permeating human existence. Xu Xuan 徐鉉 (916–991), also a *Taiping* compiler, asserted the relation between emotion and vital energy as follows:

> 人之所以靈者，情也；情之所以通者，言也。
>
> The emotions are those by which the human is lively; and words are those by which emotions are thoroughly communicated.[116]

According to Xu, emotions were expressive vehicles of "liveliness" (*ling* 靈), just as words articulated emotions. The term *ling* denoted vitality of a fine quality and with expressive strength, a signification best manifest in the expression "that which encloses liveliness" (*han ling* 含靈), a reference to the human and human life.[117] In Xu's framing, emotions opened a window onto the ever-surging cosmic generativity running through the human form.

In sum, the *Taiping Collectanea* presented the existence of emotion in five characteristics. Emotion was essentially a special kind of cosmic *qi*—a deep order—and it exerted a structuring effect on the universe. *Qing* came to pertain to the human (e.g., devolving into particular human feelings) as a continuous part of the cosmic-sized *qi* movement. This cosmic *qi* permeated the human via the vital organs and asserted a body-wide presence, and emotion therefore fused the human with life and vitality. The last point brings the reasoning full circle to the first proposition, that emotion was a privileged deep order precisely because it stood for the central orientation of the cosmos: ceaseless generativity. Taken together, emotion straddled human vitality and cosmic depth, permeating freely the interface between the human and the cosmos. The locus of emotion was one that seamlessly fused the local with the universal. Harking back to my earlier discussion of

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115 On the distinction between the general *qi* and the regional *qi* (within the human), see Kaptchuk 2010, 46–47. Note that this blood is not the same with the red fluid defined as blood in biomedicine. See Kaptchuk 2010, 41–43.

116 *Quan Song wen*, vol. 3, 21.7.

117 For a clear example that linked *hanling* to human life, see a statement by Kong Zhiyue 孔志約 (fl. 650s) cited in Tang Shenwei 唐慎微 (fl. 1080s–1090s), *Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi zhenglei beiyong bencao* 重修政和經史證類備用本草 (hereafter *Zhenglei bencao*), 28.

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the debate on *qing*, the current phenomenological scheme of emotion indeed bridged the objective-subjective discrepancy and tied the two aspects of *qing* into one. The deep order *qing* was an essential reality of the cosmos, and *qing* as particular feelings erupted via structures specific to a human.

To complete my characterization of the Taiping phenomenology of the emotions, let me address a question readers may have, i.e., how this phenomenology would account for a common-sense understanding of the emotions, namely that emotions are one's affective/cognitive responses to stimuli in the external world.[118] In all fairness, the stimulus-response model is not only the basic assumption about emotion in modern psychology; it also shaped many narratives of affective events in the premodern Chinese textual tradition. A considerable number of accounts cited in the *Taiping Collectanea* described crying as a response to an outside stimulus, such as the death of a family member or an imminent dynastic crisis.

I hold that the current phenomenological construal does not have to contradict the stimulus-response model, as evidenced by their co-presence in the *Taiping Collectanea*. The causes of an emotional occurrence involved both the *qi* movement and an external stimulus. In light of Aristotle's differentiation of causality, the *qi* movement would be the formal cause of emotion, "the pattern according to which the thing or process is as it is;" and an outside stimulus would be an efficient cause, the agent that moved the thing or process forward.[119]

The new phenomenology certainly suggests a more complex way to understand the stimulus-response mechanism. We should no longer consider the "response" as a single, isolated event springing forth from one's subjective interior. Instead, what answered to the stimulus was the series of *qi* movements, including the surge of the essence *qi* and its flush into the organ systems. The sequence of movements occurred in the breadth and depth of the entire cosmos and generated some most perceptible consequences via the human body.

The coordination of the two mechanisms also reminds us that the person who emoted should not be considered as a passive recipient of cosmic energy, despite his role as a "relay station" of ripples in the universe. Insofar as we keep in mind that *qi* made no self-contained entities, we should not put the person and the cosmos in a rigid dichotomy as if they were constantly competing for agency. In the universally interdependent *qi*-cosmos, the profound depth of the essence *qi* depended on the local structures of the

118 Angle and Tiwald 2017, 90.

119 Willard J. Peterson applies Aristotle's quadruple classification of cause in accounting for the diversity of causality in premodern Chinese thought. See Peterson 1991, cited 188.

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human (organ systems and so forth) to erupt into generativity. An emotional event was essentially a sequence of *qi* movement in flux, with the cosmos and the human as two indispensable and intersecting structures. A feeling was thus constantly universal and personal at the same time.[120]

To conclude this section, let me tie the phenomenological discussion of emotion back to my previous consideration of crying and tears. The two subjects are mutually illuminating within the world of the *Taiping Collectanea*. The phenomenological scheme provides an elevated view of lachrymation and makes sense of a number of the ontological traits in my earlier observation.

First, the locus of emotion would account for the ontological force of lachrymation, i.e., the sense of powerlessness one experienced when crying, the brute force flaunted by wailing, and the marvelous connection lachrymation enabled between the human and suprahuman realms. All of these find explanations in the special positioning of emotion. One could be overwhelmed by an urge to tear up in response to upsetting news because the outside stimulus had set off a whole sequence of *qi* movements rooted in the depths of the cosmos. In other words, tears resulted as some cosmic vibrance emerged from profound depths and surfaced on an individual's face. The human felt "overwhelmed" because he did not have full control of this cosmic-sized process.

The connections between emotion and the cosmic depths invested lachrymation with the force of the suprahuman. In those tales on crying to Heaven and other higher beings, the "upward" reach to the celestial was simultaneously an "inward" plunge into the deep cosmic patterns, a trip following the reverse order of cosmic birth, in which one started with things in concrete forms, crossed the arch of Heaven and Earth, swam along patterns underlying the sensory façade, and eventually returned to the unfathomable origin. The emotions provided the human with glimpses into the journey into the deep, thereby gaining access, perhaps, to clairvoyant knowledge or to the ear of a deity.

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120 On a related note, the new model I propose here is also capable of characterizing emotion in interaction with greater accuracy. A good example is the story of Tang Qu (section IV), who was "good at wailing" and able to provoke others' tears. In a subjectivity-centered Cartesian model, this can be explained as a matter of emotion contagion, where one subject's psychological state stimulates that of another. In the new model, the two lachrymose events can be seen as the localizations of the same cosmic sweep in two distinctive and yet contiguous settings, one following another. The latter conceptualization better explains why these two events would affect each other in the first place, that is, the casual link that made the "contagion" possible was their shared mooring in the same *qi* movement.

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6 The Visibility of the Emotions and Crying

The inquiry into the phenomenology of the emotions also sheds light on another important question the *Taiping Collectanea* raises: why did the emotions receive so much attention from the socio-political elite? Why did emotions become a subject of intense, normative observation, as in the case of lachrymation? Towards the end of Section III, I question any culture-specific reason for the bio-political reach into the emotions in premodern China other than the universal desire for control shared by political authorities across the world. The clarification of the Taiping phenomenology of the emotions indeed points to a more specific impetus behind the keen interest in emotions: namely that emotion bore a special visibility which bespoke cosmic truth and thereby provided indispensable guidance for policymakers.

The visibility of human feelings was well established in the Confucian classics, and, unsurprisingly, generously cited in the *Taiping Collectanea*. The display of emotions often appeared as a precept to the ruler, indicating that people's feelings were something political authorities should see first and deal with immediately. The most systematic articulation of this idea came from the passage "Li yun" in the *Classic of Rituals*. The document explicated why rituals were critical to statecraft, a reasoning which centered on emotions. It asserted that the ruler should pay foremost attention to people's *qing*, i.e., "joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and desire" (*xi*, *nu*, *ai*, *ju*, *ai*, *e*, *yu* 慾),[121] and employ rituals as instruments to handle them.

The classic articulated the special status of emotion as follows:

> 故聖人做則，必以天地為本，以陰陽為端，以四時為柄，以日星為紀，月為量，鬼神以為徒，五行以為質，禮義之為器，人情以為田，四靈以為畜。
>
> Thus, when the sage king is making fundamental rules, he must take Heaven and Earth as the foundation, *yin* and *yang* as the extremes, four seasons as the handles, the sun and stars as gauges, the moon as measurement, ghosts and spirits as followers, the Five Processes as the substance, rituals and value judgements as implements, human feelings as the field, and the four spirits as his service animals.[122]

The passage stated how a sage king should establish guidelines for government and identified the things to which he should pay special heed—Heaven and Earth, alternating *yin* and *yang*, the Five Processes, celestial bodies, ghosts and spirits, people's feelings,

121 *Liji zhengyi*, 30.915.
122 *Liji zhengyi*, 31.929.

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and rituals. The characterization of emotion stood out in an intriguing way. All other beings in the sequence were described as references or instruments for the sage's work, for example, the seasons as the "handles" and sun and stars as the "gauges." Emotion, however, was likened to "the field," a recipient of the sage's labor, and was further paired with ritual, yet another "implement" the sage employed to work on the "field" of the emotions. In other words, despite *qing* was placed among other deep orders (e.g., *yinyang* and the Five Processes) as "cosmic references" for the sage's work in building an ideal government, emotion was at the same time part of this work—a foremost subject the sage king should address as he looked to organize human society following cosmic principles. This point was further confirmed in the next statement:

> 以天地為本，故物可舉也。以陰陽為端，故情可睹也。
>
> Taking Heaven and Earth as the foundation, [the sage king] could uphold things; holding on to *yin* and *yang* as the extremes, [the sage king] could witness [people's] feelings.[123]

Relying on epistemic guides such as Heaven and Earth and *yinyang*, the sage would perform such tasks as "upholding things" and "witnessing feelings." It is clear that *qing* stood as an object of the sage's work, a target that required special attention from him.

Furthermore, people's feelings—before anything else—were supposed to be "witnessed" by the sage king, and by implication, they constituted a most exemplary of human phenomena to be in such witness. In other words, emotion was highly visible, an argument which enjoyed great currency from the classical through the Song times. The *Taiping Collectnanea* took notice of it by including the foregoing *Classic of Rituals* statement as well as numerous similar statements, displaying them in crucial parts such as "emperors and kings" and "rituals" (e.g., TPYL 76, 2b; 522, 2b). The thesis was equally familiar to early Song scholars beyond the collectanea. For example, Ouyang Xiu made a case for the visibility of emotions while discussing the *Book of Changes*:

> 聖人急於人事者也。[...] 聖人，人也，知人而已。天地鬼神不可知，故推其跡；人可知者，故直言其情。
>
> The sage kings are urgently concerned with human affairs. [...] The sages are humans, and they only know about humans. Since Heaven, Earth, ghosts, and spirits are unknowable, [the sages] speculate by examining their vestiges. Humans are knowable, so [the sages] speak straightforwardly about their (humans') feelings.[124]

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123 *Liji zhengyi*, 31.931.
124 *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 76.1109.

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Ouyang Xiu employed a slightly different conceptual framework focused on "knowability" (*kezhi* 可知). If many things were "unknowable" to humans, such as Heaven and Earth, spirits and ghosts, and if the first example of what humans actually knew was *qing*, then emotions had a unique epistemic value.[125] Given the stipulation that it could not access higher beings, "knowing" should be a narrowly defined cognitive capacity—likely akin to sensory perception—and valued mostly for its immediacy.[126] Ouyang's construal implied that emotions were accessible and easily attainable by the most straightforward cognitive effort.

In light of the phenomenology of the emotions I explicated, it should be clear that the visibility of the emotions had full cosmological backing. In fact, all the statements above consistently implicated the placement of the emotions as an intermediary structure which straddled the cosmos and the human, something that enjoyed the status of a cosmic pattern as well as a most representative thing on the human horizon. This characterization was a corollary of the locus of emotion, i.e., flowing freely through the human-cosmos interface and extensively permeating both realms.

The cosmological visibility of the emotions made them a primary concern of government for convincing reasons. From the ruler's point of view, emotions provided highly accessible clues to great depths; they constituted an instrument aptly conjoining the expedient with the important. This reasoning was the implicit framework of many concrete narratives on emotion in quotidian contexts. Consider a few examples from my discussion of lachrymation in Section II. Tears and the emotions embodied in tears indeed served as evidence in evaluating government performance, and the shedding of tears was staged as a public event impossible to ignore. A commoner's agonizing tears over the ruler's injustice could shatter a wall, and the grateful tears of subjects in response to a ruler's magnanimity could become a defining moment in his career. The ruler also shed tears in assessing his capacity to rule. Moreover, emotional lachrymation was always poised to reveal something deep and beneath the surface, such as a cardinal relationship, a moral value, or general societal harmony. Tears exemplified the combination of a splashing visibility and a constant orientation to the depths.

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125 The passage was his commentary on the hexagram "modesty" (*qian* 謙), and Ouyang glossed what he called *qing* as "disliking excess and liking modesty" (惡盈而好謙). *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 76.1109.

126 Ouyang was not suggesting that humans had no access to these higher beings, for the obvious reason that the *Book of Changes*—the subject of his commentary—was all about cosmic patterns beyond the sensory. His focus here was to define the boundary of "knowing" as one specific kind of cognition. That humans could not access greater cosmic patterns via the senses only was a common argument.

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The issue of visibility also helps make sense of the generous representation of lachrymation and tears in the *Taiping Collectanea*. In fact, visibility might very well be the reason why crying stood out as the most discussed topic among the entire family of emotions/emotional behaviors. The conspicuity of crying was hard to deny, as the striking aural effects and the release of bodily fluid easily registered in people's perception. The narratives on social lachrymation often pivoted on the alarming effect of crying.

The perceptual salience of lachrymation was perhaps both cause and effect of the elaborate ritual management of tears and crying. As the *Classic of Rituals* stipulated, the most critical instrument for human government resided in rituals, and rituals applied most immediately to emotions. But all emotions were not featured equally in rituals. In fact, sadness and lachrymation were perhaps the only affective mode that received systematic, explicit address, likely due to their experiential notability. The mourning rituals in various ways augmented this salience and elevated it to the level of a spectacle: groups of mourners took turns to voice wailing sounds, a bold soundscape accentuated with physical exertions such as leaps and chest beating. Lachrymation was a befitting example of visibility, made even more so through ritual management.

7 The *Taiping Collectanea* and a Positive View of Emotion

With its rich investment in lachrymation and human feelings, the *Taiping Collectanea* marked a special moment in the history of the emotions, with a broader implication that links the current article to key themes in premodern Chinese thought. For much of premodern Chinese history, the mainstream philosophical stance on emotion was characterized by skepticism, the view that feelings were either an outright disruption of moral goodness or a conditionally beneficial factor needing vigilant regulation. The *Taiping Collectanea*, in contrast, presented a robustly positive assessment of emotion from a different perspective.

Recently, a number of scholars have made insightful discoveries which reveal the diversity of opinions eclipsed by the mainstream skeptical paradigm.[127] Zong-qi Cai points out an alternative, positive reading of the emotions in the contexts of music and poetry.[128] In her revisionist reading of classical thinkers, Curie Virág suggests that the emotions were seen as important "sources of true understanding of the world."[129] She pitches

127 For a general survey of scholarship on and beyond the mainstream model, see Messner 2012, 897–898.
128 Cai 2020.
129 Virág 2017, 4.

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the argument for epistemic significance at the personal level, identifying emotion as "the authentic disclosure of a person's inner state."[130] Stephen Angle and Justin Tiwald observe that neo-Confucian scholars used "emotion" and "human emotions" (*renqing* 人情) differently; while viewing the former with a constantly vigilant eye, they portrayed "human emotions" as something inevitable, healthy, and a necessary foundation for conceiving good policies.[131]

The positive assessment of emotion in the *Taiping Collectanea*, as I see it, had some overlap with the views above and yet presented a distinctive line of reasoning. This favorable stance on emotion depended on three particular conditions. First, it valued emotion for its phenomenological and epistemic significance; second, the scheme took the sociopolitical sphere rather than the person as its main context. And third, in presenting the thesis, the *Taiping Collectanea* largely bypassed the mainstream metaphysical debate on emotion and moral nature.

Let me elaborate by comparing the Taiping scheme to the mainstream paradigm and other appraisals of emotion. The first and second points together show that emotion was valued for its capacity to manifest. Emotion was important phenomenologically due to its embeddedness in cosmic depth; therefore, feelings evinced some kind of cosmic truth, affording a valuable epistemic source for mankind. The power of the emotions to divulge is recognized in all aforementioned positive views on emotion, i.e., in the association with expressive cultural genres such as music and poetry (Cai), in the windows opened onto one's interior depth (Virág), and in the value for policies directed at collective social conditions (Cai, Angle, and Tiwald).

The unequivocal positivity ascribed to emotion in the Taiping formula was also greatly predicated on a deliberate attempt to keep the system clear of the skeptical thesis which favored moral nature over emotion. Emotion and nature—the two basic endowments the human received from Heaven—came together as a dichotomous pair in moral psychology as early as the classical period. Discussions of the emotion-nature binary appeared in the *White Tiger*, a text generously cited in the *Taiping Collectanea*, as well as in writings by Zhuangzi and Xunzi, *Nature Derives from Decree*, and many other classical texts.[132] As I mentioned in Section V, except for the *White Tiger*, most texts shared a consistent formula which regarded nature as tranquil and emotion as in constant flux. While not all

130 Virág 2017, 37.

131 Angle and Tiwald 2017, 94. Note that *renqing* could be multivalent in varied social contexts, and here Angel and Tiwald, as I do, focus on the specific contexts of policy making. For a discussion of *renqing*'s multivalence, see Santangelo 2005, 405.

132 *Zhuangzi ji shi* 9b.1005; Xunzi, *Xunzi ji jie* 17.434–5; *Guodian chujian jiaoshi*, 88–106.

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classical texts distinguished nature as superior to emotion on such basis, the binary had gradually assumed a hierarchical relationship, where nature stood for moral perfection while emotion potentially distracted humans from maintaining this goodness.

The skeptical view of emotion achieved its mainstream status vis-à-vis other (more neutral) arguments perhaps around the ninth century, when Li Ao 李翱 (774–836) famously dismissed emotion as a perversion of nature.[133] The ninth through the thirteenth centuries witnessed the maturity of the scheme and its entrenchment in neo-Confucian moral psychology. The hierarchical distinction between nature and emotion deepened as a perception of their ontological disparity became prevalent. Nature maintained its direct and privileged access to Heaven; it grounded human norms with natural patterns received from Heaven and was consistently characterized with qualities that signified an "objective" normativity (e.g., being constant and tranquil). Emotion, in contrast, increasingly receded from its original link to Heaven, relegated to an indirect connection mediated by nature. This line of reasoning also located emotion in the heart, the cognitive-conative function conspicuously associated with an individual person.[134] As such, emotion gravitated to the person, reduced to a "subjective" presence embedded in human thinking and doing.[135]

In a way, the emotion-nature metaphysics in the middle period had turned emotion into an object of assessment (good or bad), and assigned nature to an evaluative role in grounding standards of assessment. Despite the fact that not all scholars judged emotion negatively, the role of emotion necessarily became limited. Even those who intended to rescue emotion from condemnation built their theses on the basis of the nature-emotion hierarchy, albeit with some creative adjustments. For example, Zhu Xi made the case for emotion as an expression of nature and a source of motivation for people to realize the goodness embedded in nature. He removed the stillness-motion contrast and re-defined nature and emotion as two cognate conditions of the heart.[136] Despite Zhu's effort to equalize the apparent status of the two, it is clear that emotion still relied on nature for its significance, and the reverse was not true.

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133 For historical significance of Li Ao's argument, see Angle and Tiwald 2017, 92.

134 The heart was associated with cosmic beings, too, such as Heaven and the *dao*. The point here is that the philosophical use of the term primarily served to construct a program of self-cultivation oriented towards the person.

135 My extrapolation of the *qing-xing* metaphysics is based on Curie Virág's analysis of a series of Song thinkers and the summary by Angle and Tiwald. See Virág 2007, 68–74; Angle and Tiwald 2017, 90–95. The subject-objective contrast comes from Angle and Tiwald 2017, 93–94.

136 This is a summary of Curie Virág's analysis, see Virág 2007.

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The concept of emotion as "subjective" and limited contrasted with the portrait of emotion in the Taiping formula, where it claimed a public, all-pervasive, and unmediated access to the cosmos and evinced cosmic truth as a uniquely privileged epistemic source.[137] It should be obvious that by leaving out the mainstream emotion-nature skepticism the Taiping compilers helped to make their case. The encyclopedia not only refrained from including any citation of the skeptical thesis, but also left hardly any place for metaphysical ruminations on the nature-emotion dyad. Most strikingly, the compilers did not devote an independent section to either nature/*xing* or emotion/*qing*. The collectanea included some citations on nature, such as in the preface to the "Part on the Human,"[138] but it invested little in curating sources that linked nature metaphysically to emotion. Likewise, the text presented a rich range of emotions and emotional behaviors but allotted no special space to discuss the umbrella term, *qing*.[139] The classical statements on the cosmological visibility of *qing*, which I analyzed earlier, appeared in the "Part on Emperors and Kings" rather than in an independent section on *qing*. The compilers generously cited the *White Tiger*, which examined nature and emotion together in a metaphysical discussion. But the *White Tiger* made no hierarchical distinction between nature and emotion in their peculiar formula, and the Taiping compilers cited the

137 Although not spelled out in historical discussions, a connection existed between the two formulas. In the Taiping presentation, emotion earned its cosmic centrality through a privileged association with the *qi*. The *qi* was also a key component in the emotion-nature scheme, and it claimed a fundamentally normative status that put it in competition with concepts like *xing*. On the one hand, the concepts tasked with signifying normativity, such as nature (and later, *li* 理 [coherence]), were supposed to exceed the *qi*, which was often reduced to a homogenous materiality in this dichotomous relationship. On the other hand, no normative pattern could be ontologically separate from the material base of reality, and, more important, the *qi* was perceived by many to buoy the ultimate norm—generativity—which was its inherent directionality. The tension had generated centuries-long debates on the relationship between nature and *qi*, such as the contested definition of *qizhi zhi xing* 氣質之性 (lit. nature of *qi* constitution, that is, nature as *qi*), and the controversy over two natures (i.e., nature of *qi* versus nature of some higher normativity). For these arguments and debates, see Angle and Tiwald 2017, 62–69. In other words, the fundamental status of *qi* in the current discussion of emotions could be an equally truthful claim in the emotion-nature thesis, which made it at least theoretically plausible to integrate the two lines of conceptualization.

138 Especially in the section "dao de" 道德 (*dao* and moral power). For some examples, see TPYL 403, 1a and 3b.

139 No evidence shows that the compilers of the collectanea rejected the relationship between *qing* and particular feelings, which had become conventional long before this time.

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text mainly for the organ correlations—and placed the quotations in sections on organs accordingly.

The Taiping compilers' deliberate omission of mainstream nature-emotion metaphysics can be further confirmed by intertextual evidence. Admittedly, the tenth century was not yet the heyday of the nature-emotion debate, which did not occur until a century later. Also, the *Taiping Collectanea* was a curation of pre-Song sources so it was not tasked to register the most contemporary intellectual trends. Even so, the book broke with clear precedents by not including the two concepts, which appeared in critical ancient Confucian and Daoist texts (such as *Xunzi* and *Zhuangzi*, which the collectanea generously cited for other topics). By ruling out this issue, the collectanea deviated from Tang encyclopedias known as its editorial models. The *Collection by Mr. Bai*, for instance, included a section titled "*qing xing*" (emotion, nature), where the compiler culled from Confucian classics and *Zhuangzi* an assemblage of statements on *qing*, *xing*, or *qing-xing* coupled together.[140] Among these sources, the two concepts varied and were not yet confined to a uniform binary metaphysics, but they were certainly deemed important enough as analytical components of classical self-cultivation schemes. To exclude this well-established topic, the Taiping compliers had to first ignore some renowned classical sources and then diverge from key precedents in the encyclopedia genre; the concurrence of the two "omissions" almost certainly resulted from deliberate consideration. As evidenced in a range of mutually reinforcing choices, the Taiping compilers drew a clear line separating their construal of emotion from the mainstream paradigm.

The Taiping formula of emotion enriches and rectifies the current historiography on emotions in important ways. First, it reminds us of the existence of a positive assessment of emotion beyond the mainstream skepticism toward feelings. Notably, this view was not a singular case limited to the *Taiping Collectanea* or its own living moment. Any view presented by the encyclopedia was necessarily an accumulated stance, as the text was a collection of sources representing the course of two millennia. Certainly, the Taiping compilers engaged in a selective curation, but the elements constituting it spanned the entirety of Chinese history up to the Song. The Taiping view of emotion thus straddled two temporalities, the specific time stamp of the tenth century and the millennia-long endurance of a vast historical discourse.

Second, the perceived value of emotion in this scheme was oriented to the ruler's gaze. And, unsurprisingly, the *Taiping Collectanea*, a text intended for the reigning emperor as its primary audience, took this position systematically. It is perhaps no exaggeration

140 *Bai shi liutie* 8, 79a.

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to say that emotion was "placed at the heart of the political"[141] in the Taiping view, a clear reminder for modern historians of the significance of emotion as a serious subject of scholarship.

More specifically, the extensive invocation of feelings in politics reminds us of the semantic intricacies of *qing*, which can be easily lost in translation. The frequency in which *qing* turned up in political discourse was striking, and in many cases it asserted the importance of emotion as a standard for successful government. In the context of rituals, typically, the ruling elite emphasized that rituals should "embody the emotions" (*ti qing* 體情),[142] "resemble the emotions" (*mao qing* 貌情),[143] and "befit the emotions" (*yuan qing* 緣情).[144] It is now clear that the primacy assigned to emotion in the ritual-emotion dyad was not just a matter of evincing sincerity or spontaneity; it came from a greater concern on the part of the ruler to manage his subjects in accord with cosmic harmony.

In addition, the ruling elite often spoke about "not divesting [people of their] emotions" (不奪情), which meant not forcing officials to return to work before they had finished the term of mourning.[145] Technically this was an injunction not to violate a ritual protocol, hence, more accurately, "not divesting [one of] rituals;" nevertheless, the phrase highlighted emotion in its construction. The expression emphasized the importance of emotion in government from yet another perspective: the ruler should respect the feelings of those who executed the imperial power in his behalf in return for a smoothly running bureaucracy.

The aforementioned *qing* phrases, together with *renqing* and a few others, were common expressions in political diction throughout the premodern era. Examined in sufficient context, they indisputably all carried a focus on affectivity and should be read as "emotions/feelings." But if used conventionally with scant contextualization, the terms may well be misread as "reality," i.e., as recommendations that the ruler heed to the basic conditions of the people. This is not a small possibility for a modern reader who does not often associate formal political discourse with talk of feelings. However, to read affectivity out of these expressions would be enormously misleading and would gloss over the fact that politics was indeed imbued with emotion in premodern China.

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141 Berlant 2005, n.p.

142 Remark by Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756), *Quan Tang wen*, 25.173b.

143 Remark by Emperor Xuanzong, *Quan Tang wen*, 32.214a.

144 *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 96.1461. The three phrases above were consistently prevalent from the classical through the middle period. Here I focus on citing government documents in the middle period. For similar classical examples, see Harbsmeier 2004, 85.

145 For one among many examples, see *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 97.1491. The expression *duoqing* was so popular that it had its own section in the *Taiping Collectanea*. See TPYL 546.

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The Taiping model of emotion also throws light on the plurality of conceptualizations of emotion and their largely peaceful co-existence. The Taiping formula consisted of classical elements as old as those constituting the mainstream emotion-nature thesis, and some of these arguments persisted through the unravelling of premodernity. For instance, "human emotions" (*renqing*) remained a yardstick by which one assessed the validity of a policy, a line of reasoning prevalent in late imperial political discourse. Take the largest late imperial compendium, the *Four Treasures* (*Siku quanshu*), for example. The eighteenth-century compilers invoked *renqing* and its evaluative status at least a dozen times in the bibliography they composed for the *Four Treasures*.[146] The physiological aspect of this phenomenology of emotion enjoyed lasting currency, too. According to Angelika Messner, the idea that emotion was *qi* movement remained unchallenged well into the seventeenth century, if not later. The emotion-organ connections continued to feature prominently in late imperial encyclopedias and played a part in writings on the emotions.[147]

That is, despite being less popular as a topic of intellectual debate, the positive appraisal of emotion endured as long as the nature-emotion dialectic persisted. These different framings co-existed in a growing discursive mélange and rarely engaged one another in direct conflict. The peaceful co-presence perhaps had to do with the diverging orientations of the two themes. The Taiping model mainly took a top-down ruler's perspective, whereas the nature-emotion dialectic focused on the vantage point of an introspective self. In the former system, the positive assessment centered the overall, cosmological existence of emotion and did not necessarily engage the specific ocurrences of feelings in normative ways. The emotions themselves could have come from undesirable antecedents (e.g., sad tears at a funeral), or generated negative effects in empirical contexts (e.g., embarrassing other guests at a funeral). But as a group, feelings remained valorized for their phenomenological and epistemic values. These two views could bear on a single emotional event without contradiction. For example, the local inspector Xu Qing cried angry tears when discussing politics (a case I discussed in Section III), an emotional outburst which revealed certain deep ills in the world he inhabited (thus positive on the cosmological level), but at the same time his outburst might disturb his process of moral growth (negative on the personal level).

The co-existence of the different frameworks also reminds us of the diverse ways in which the emotions could be construed. Emotion increasingly belonged to the personal self in the development of nature-emotion metaphysics; nevertheless, this concept did

146 For example, see *Qinding siku quanshu zongmu*, 33.49b, 88.13a, 187.19a–b.
147 See Messner 2006a, 91–109.

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not challenge the association between emotion and *qi*, which firmly maintained emotion in its cosmic-sized presence. An inclusive view of the multitudinous discourse on emotion suggests that feelings in the Chinese imagination could never be as narrowly "subjective" as they are in Cartesian dualism. They might gravitate to serve the personal self, but would also—in a more eternal sense—flow boundlessly as part of the cosmic sweep.

Conclusion

The abundant tears gathered in the *Taiping Collectanea* diffused widely through the fabric of premodern Chinese culture. The compendium included a generous range of lachrymose behaviors and presented them as a prominent part of its cultural taxonomy. Many tears burst with salient socio-political meanings, and together they constituted a lachrymose communal order in which the elite and commoners, men and women, jointly contributed to seeking order and meaningful relationships. In addition, crying bore a heft beyond human society. It took hold of and overpowered a person; it emitted a material force capable of crumbling a wall; and it impelled human pleas up to divine ears.

The multifaceted existence of lachrymation bespoke the phenomenology of emotion, another topic the *Taiping Collectanea* engaged with attentiveness. Emotions permeated the human and the cosmos, moving in and out of the human body as an agent of life and vitality. Their borderless and pervasive existence granted tears a suprahuman ontological force and a privileged status as cosmic references for the governing elite.

Indeed, the *Taiping Collectanea* marks a special moment in the history of the emotions. The encyclopedia showcased and valorized feelings in their broad cosmological roles, asserting a uniquely positive appraisal of emotion against mainstream skepticism. While well known in other ways, the *Taiping Collectanea* also illustrated a world shimmering with feelings and tears.

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