

# Understanding Through Traces

Graphic  
Communication  
Design

Design:  
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Through  
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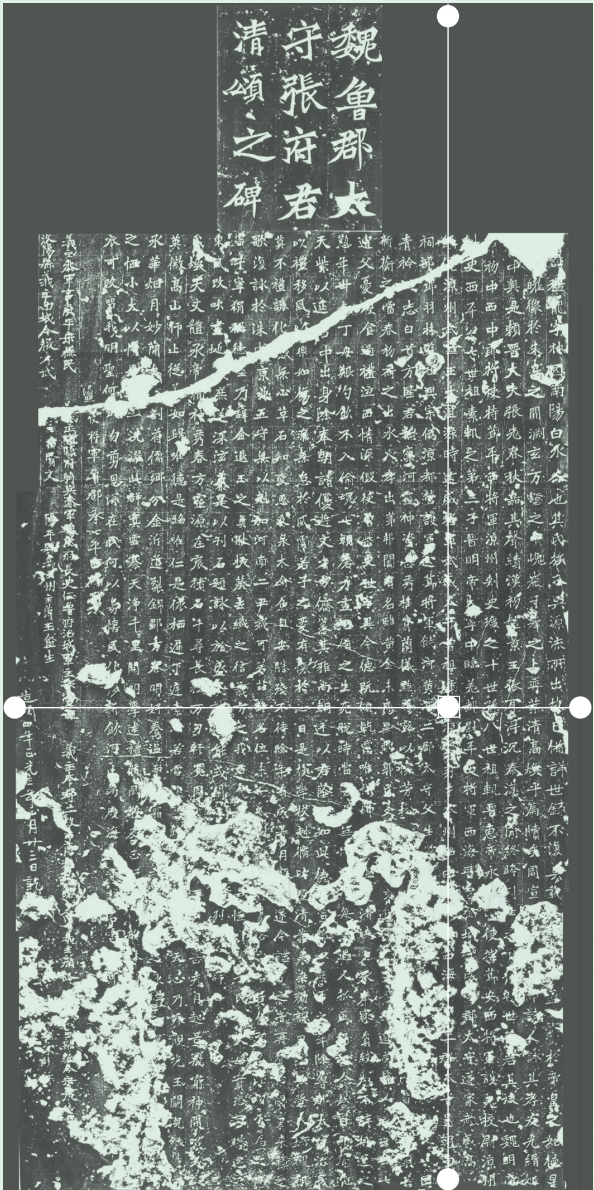
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# Understanding Through Location

This page visualizes the position of a weathered character on the Zhang Menglong Stele. The meaning of the word is shaped not only by its form, but by its context—both spatial and textual.



05

23

wěi  
偽

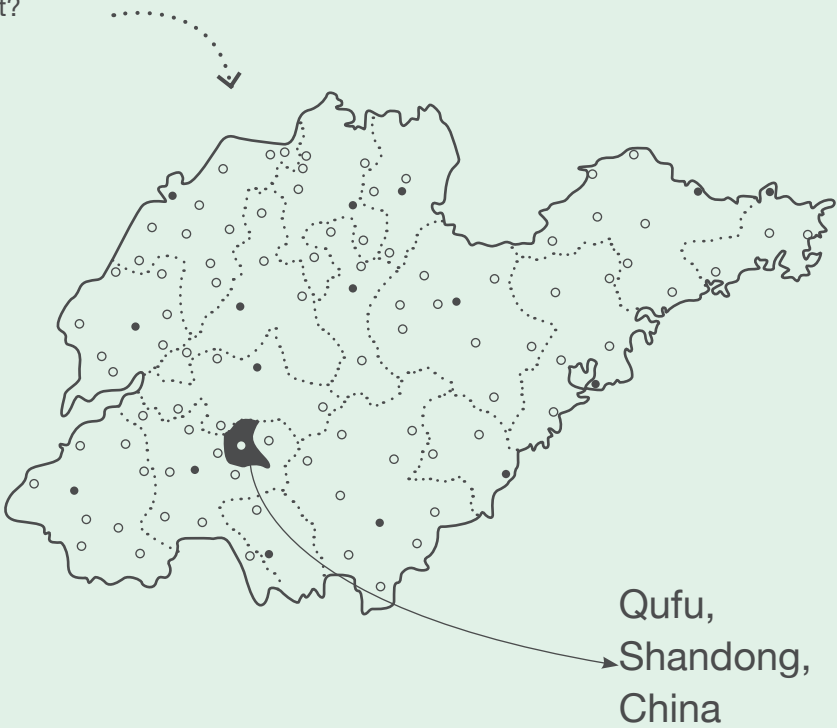
**Original Meaning**  
The character “偽,” meaning false, artificial, or constructed



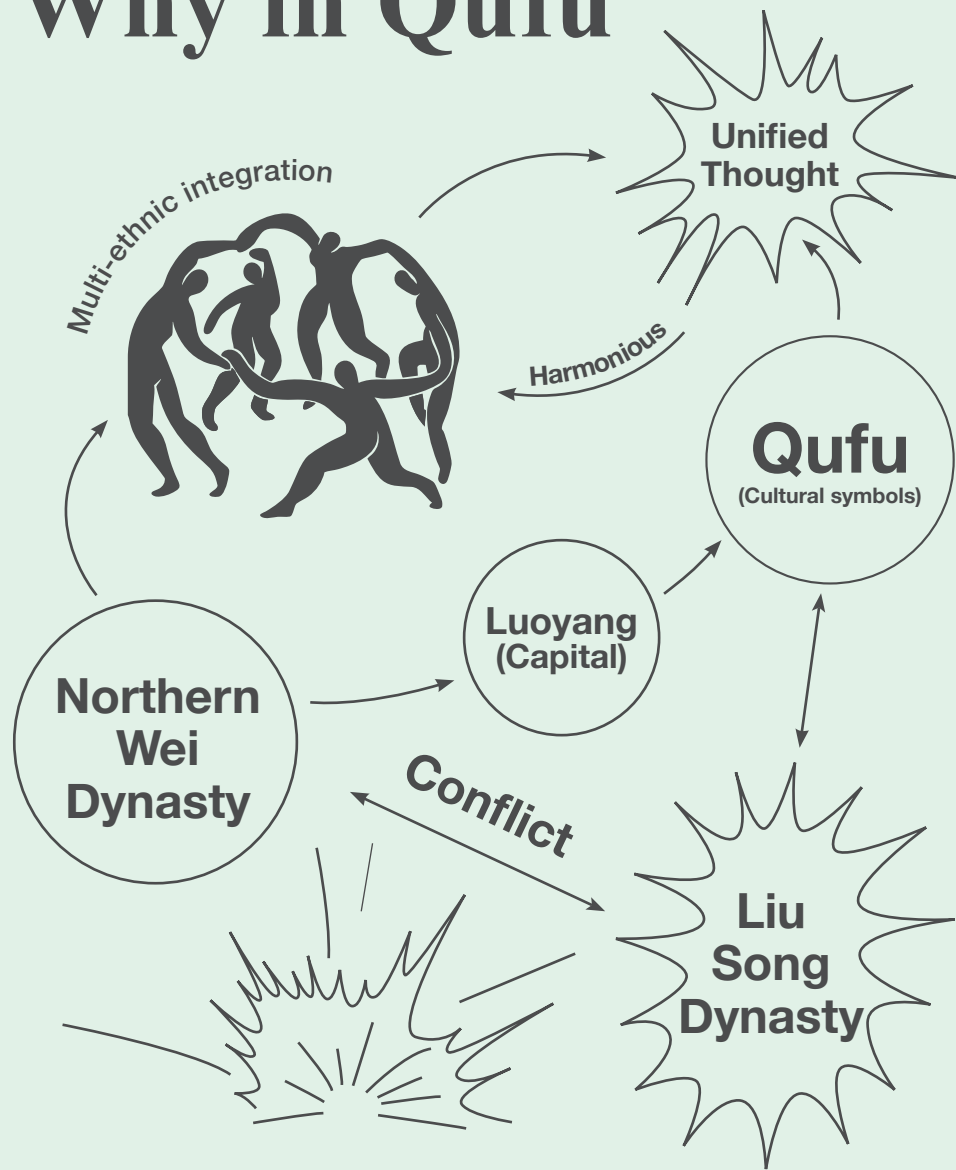
**Meaning in context**  
“偽涼” (False Liang) — a historical term used to refer to local regimes considered illegitimate by central dynasties.

## Location of The Stele

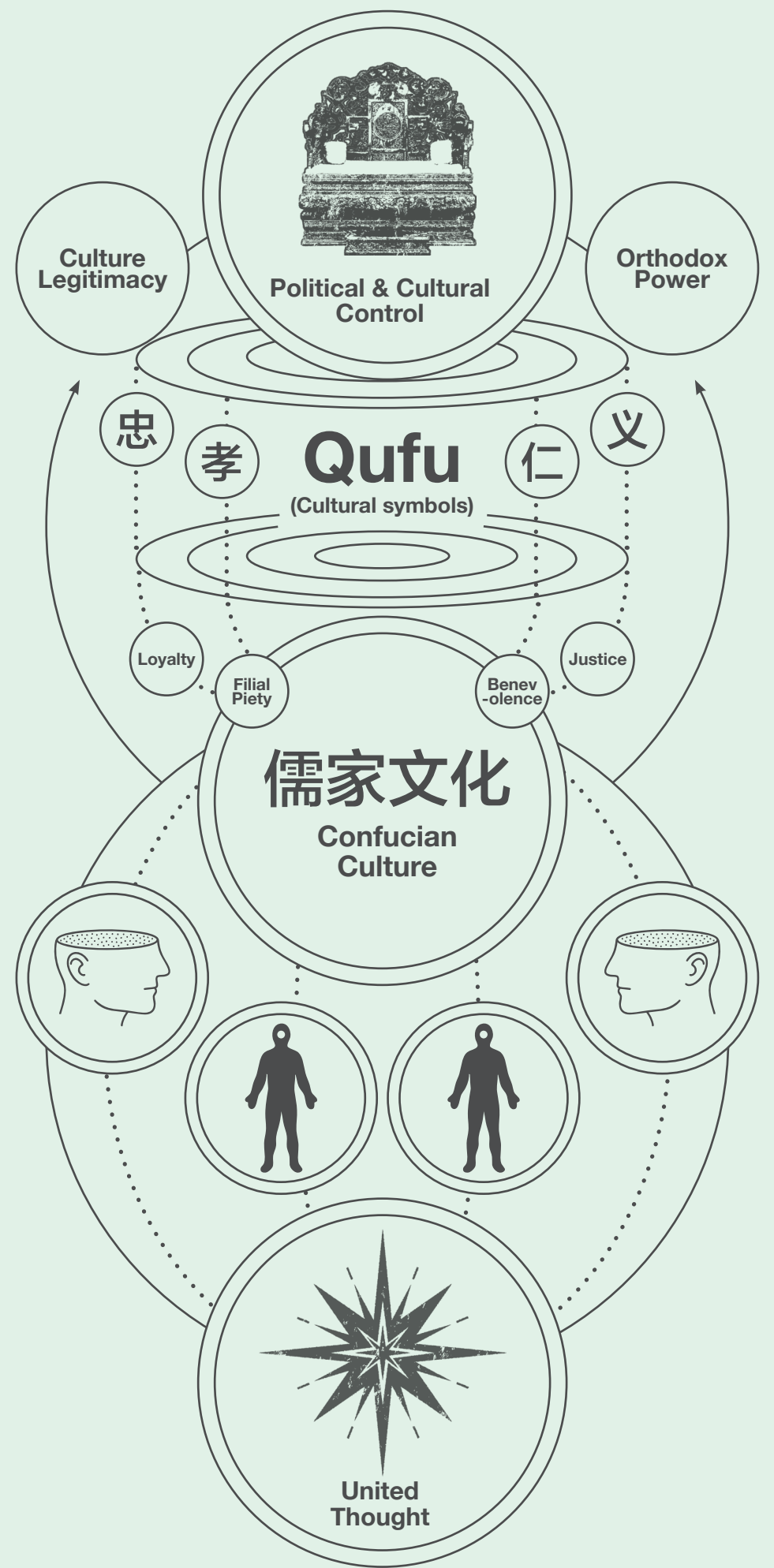
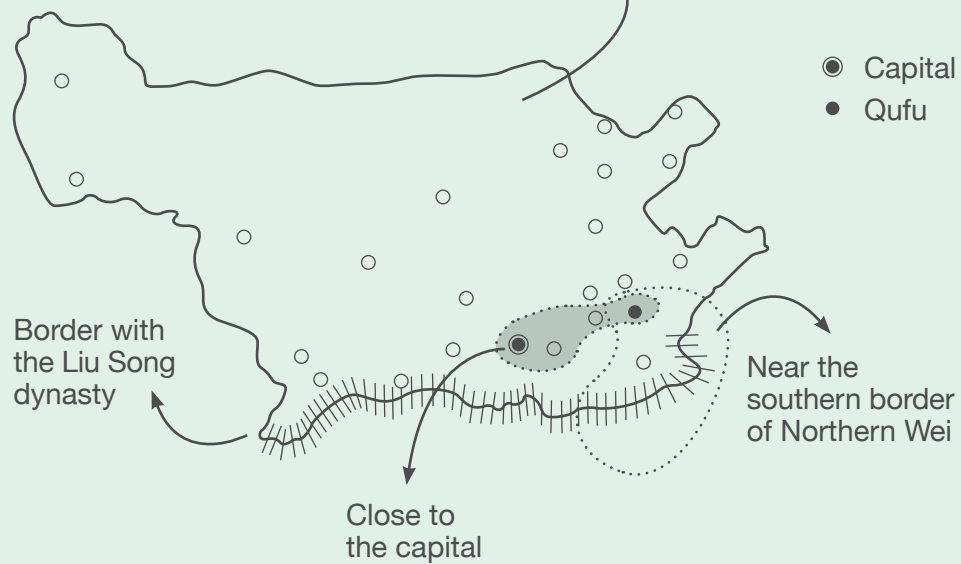
If the placement of a character determines its meaning, does the placement of the stele shape the way I interpret it?



# Why in Qufu

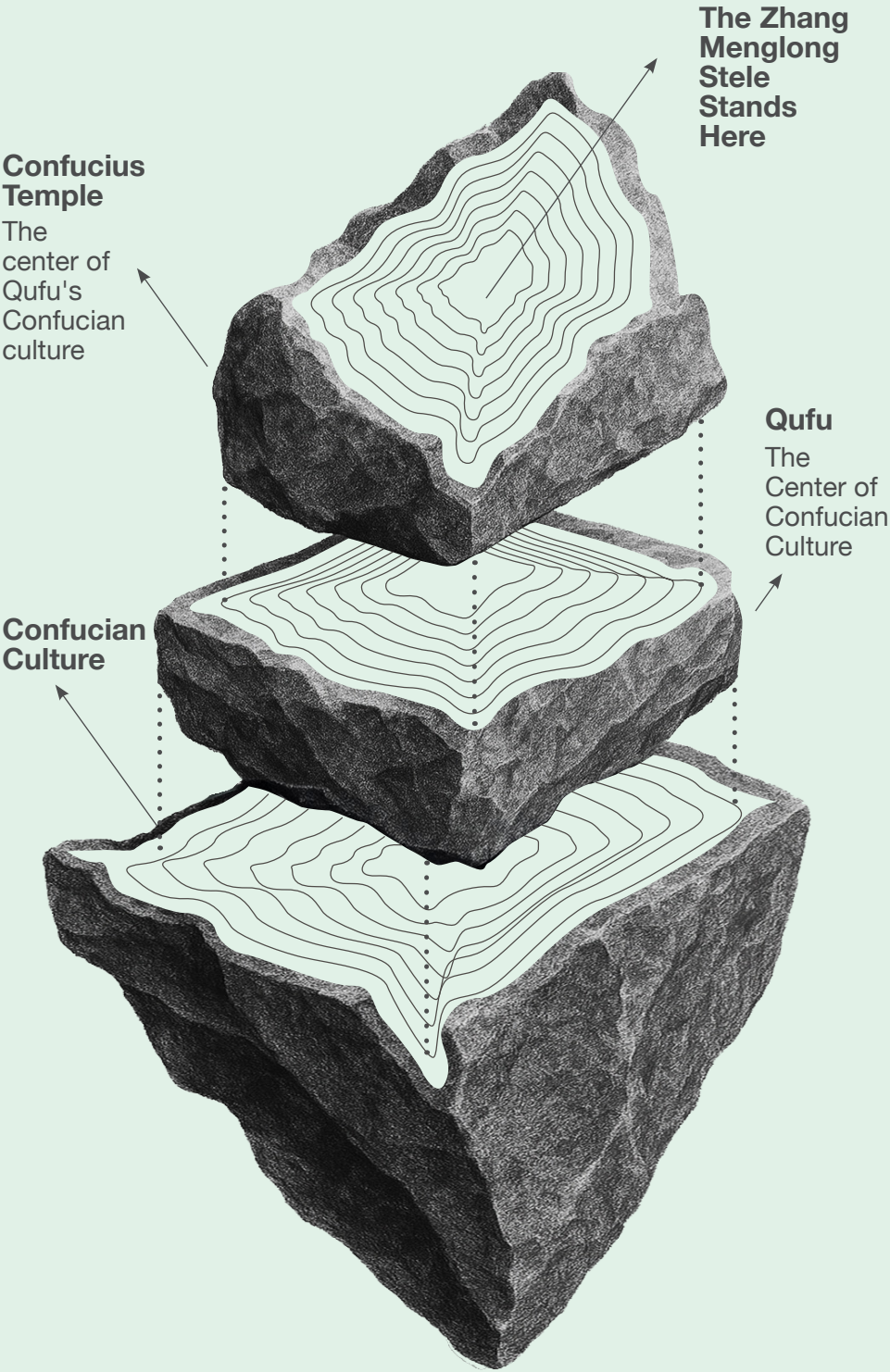


## Map of Northern Wei

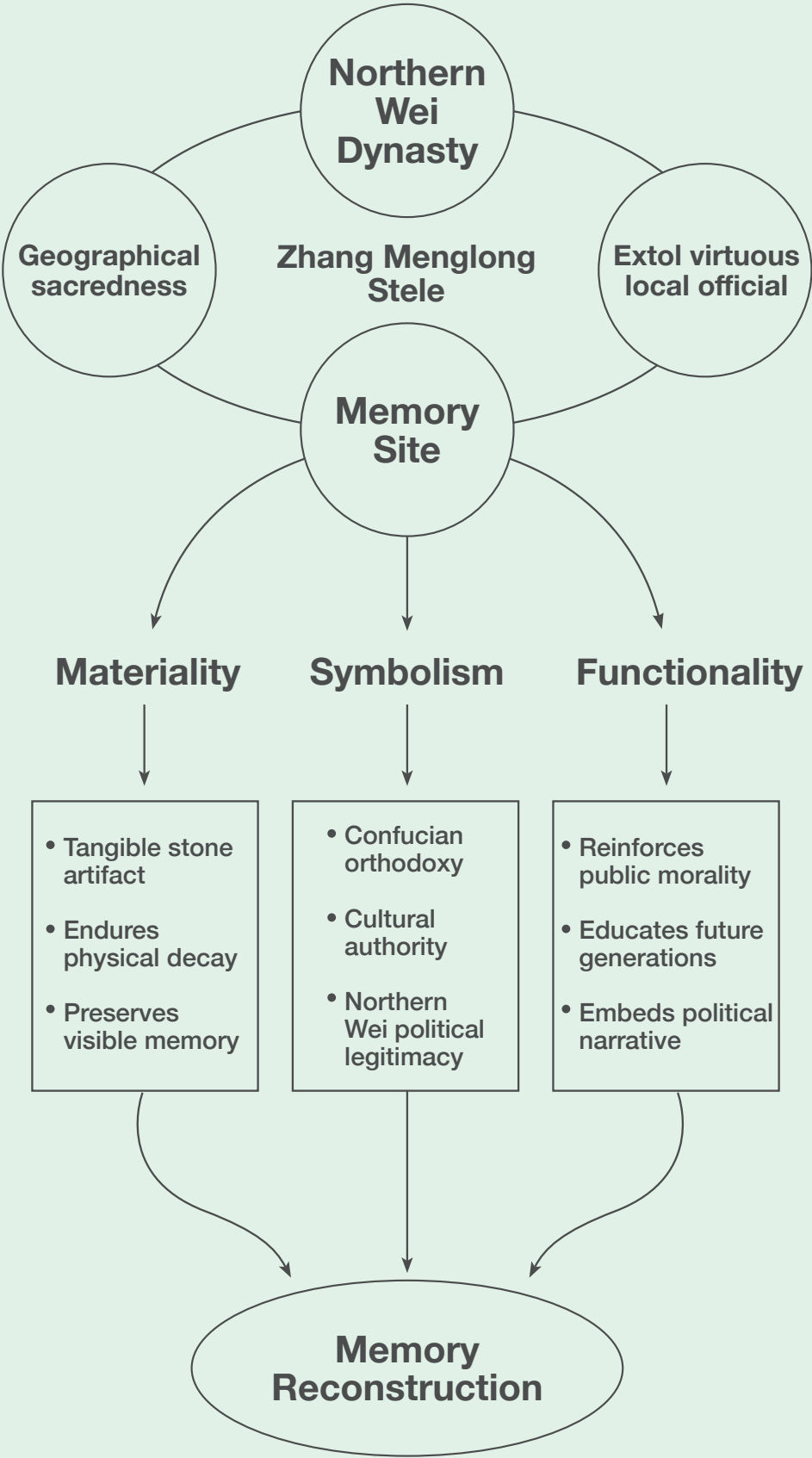




# The Center Within the Center



By placing a monument at the spiritual center of Confucian culture — the center within the center — the regime sought to anchor its authority in the moral and cultural legitimacy of tradition.



The Zhang Menglong Stele transmits memory through its enduring physical presence, ritual practices, and the continual recitation of inscriptions. By embedding itself within the sacred geography of Qufu, it aligns political authority with local Confucian values, materializing ideals of governance and reinforcing imperial legitimacy.

# Understanding Through Material

My first impression of this stone



● Category

01 Physical

02 Temporal

03 Symbolic

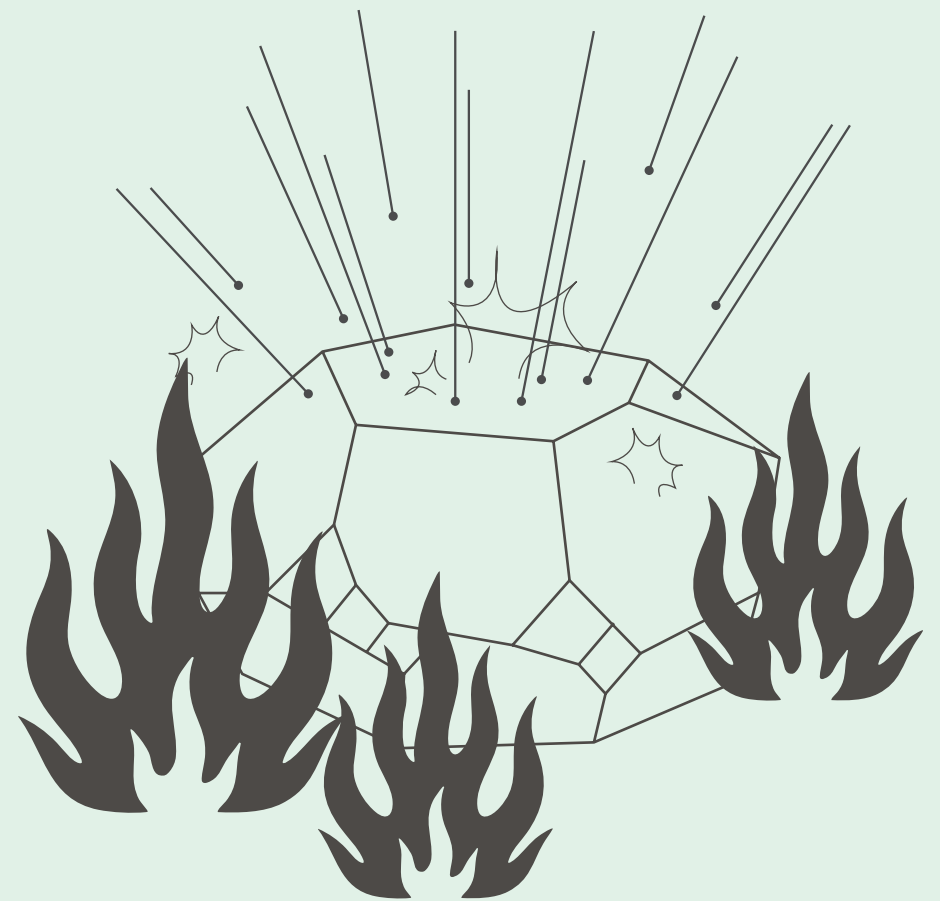
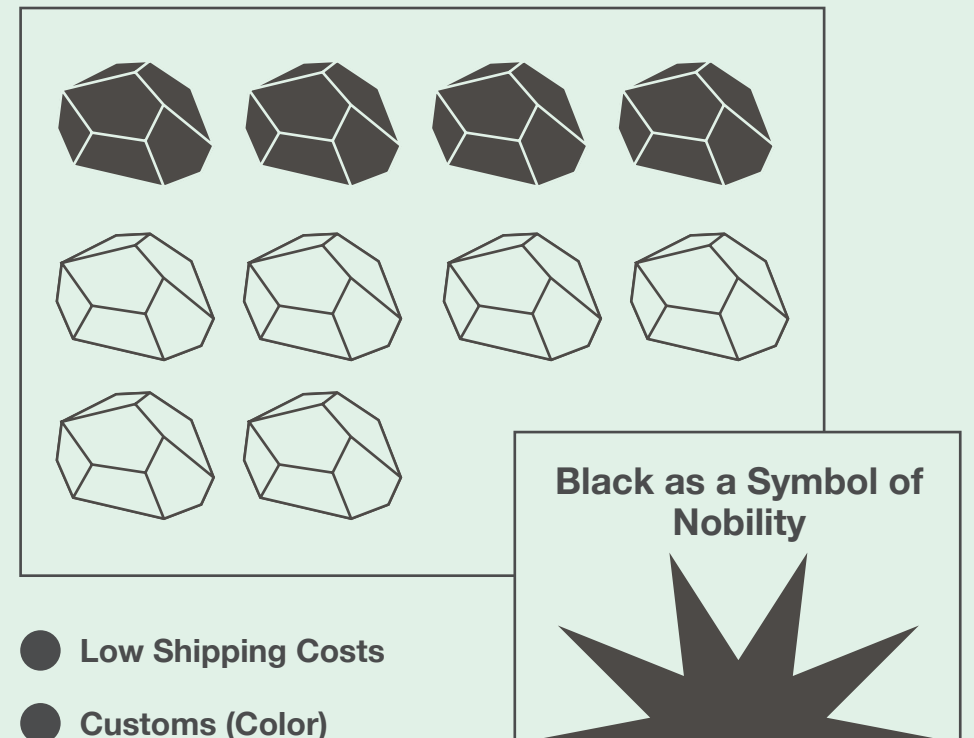
● Inquiry

○ Why bluestone?

○ What are the characteristics?

○ Why a stele?

The province where Qufu is located produces 40% of the nation's bluestone.



It does not burn and can withstand high temperatures without damage. Its dense surface also offers good protection against rain and moisture.

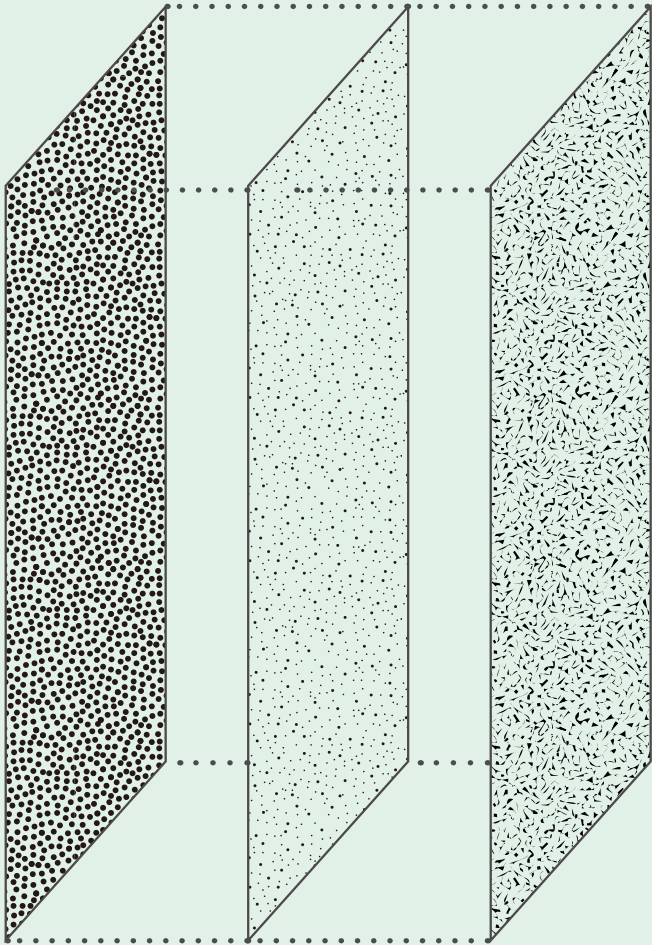


# Characteristics of Bluestone

**Basal Layer**  
Dark, more impurities

**Middle Layer**  
Coarser, with veins

**Surface Layer**  
Smooth, uniform



## Carving Tools



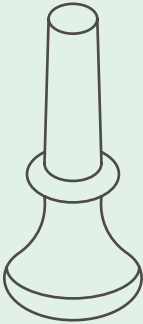
Flat Chisel



Point Chisel



Needle Chisel

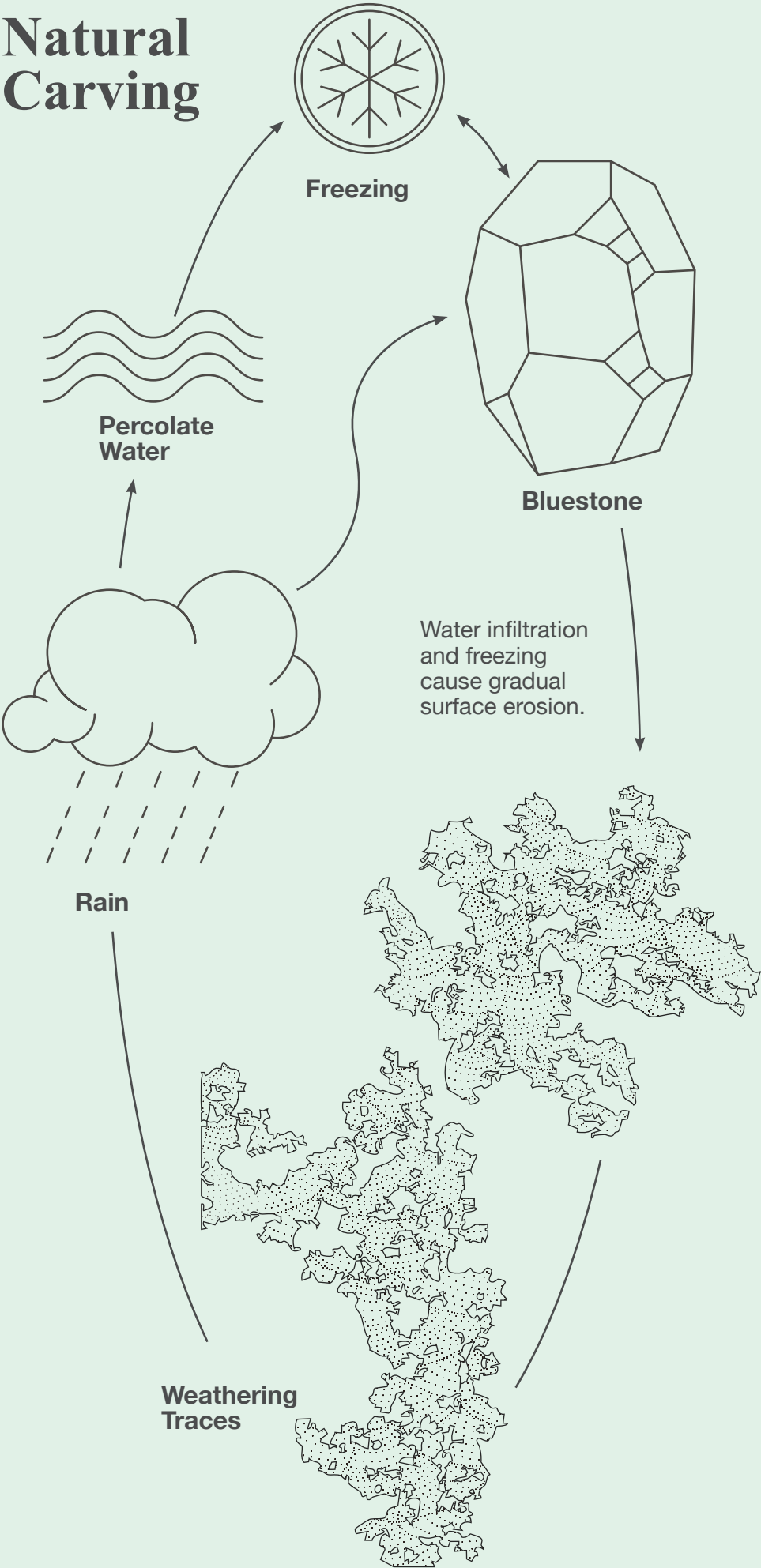


Carver's Mallet



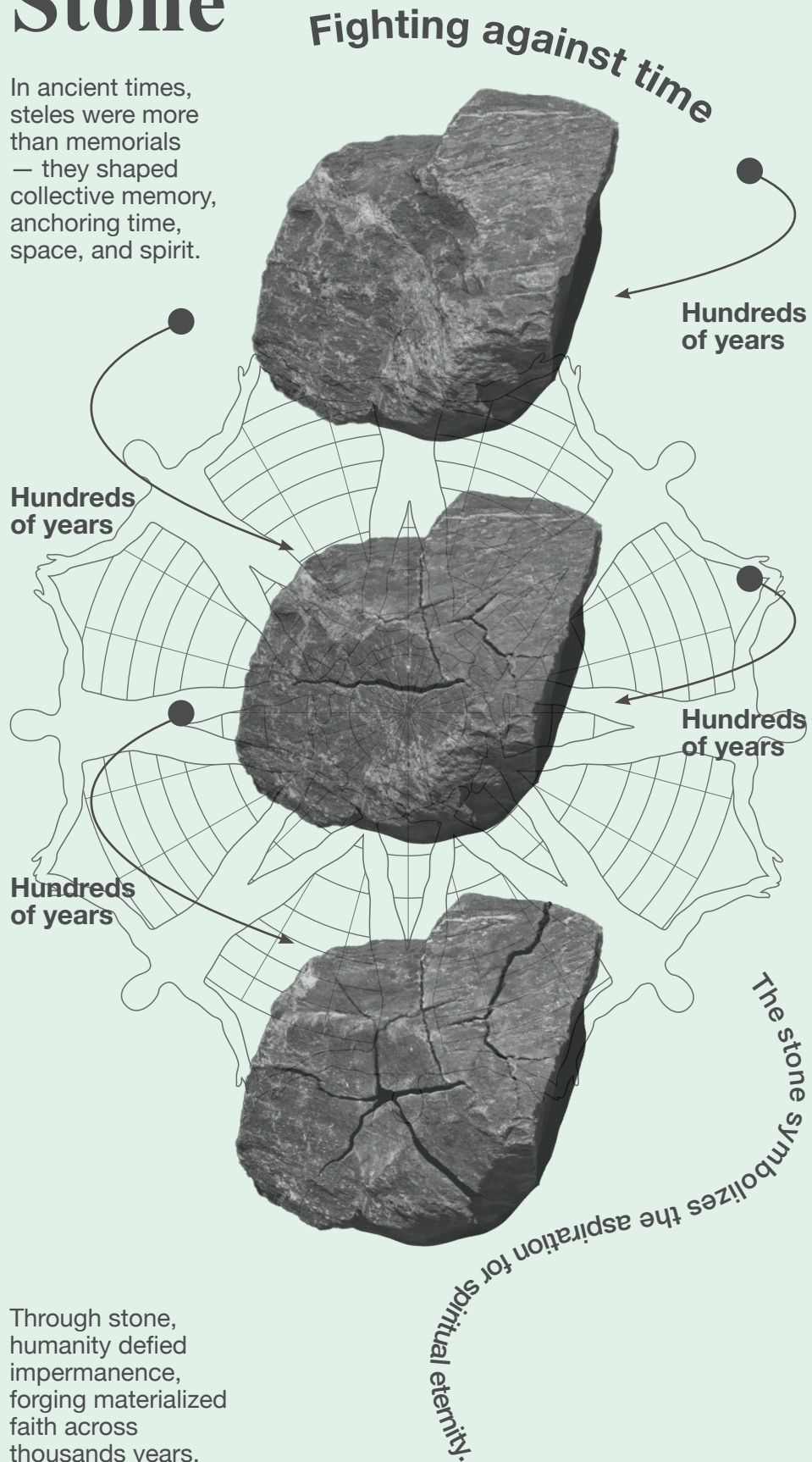
Tooth Chisel

## Natural Carving

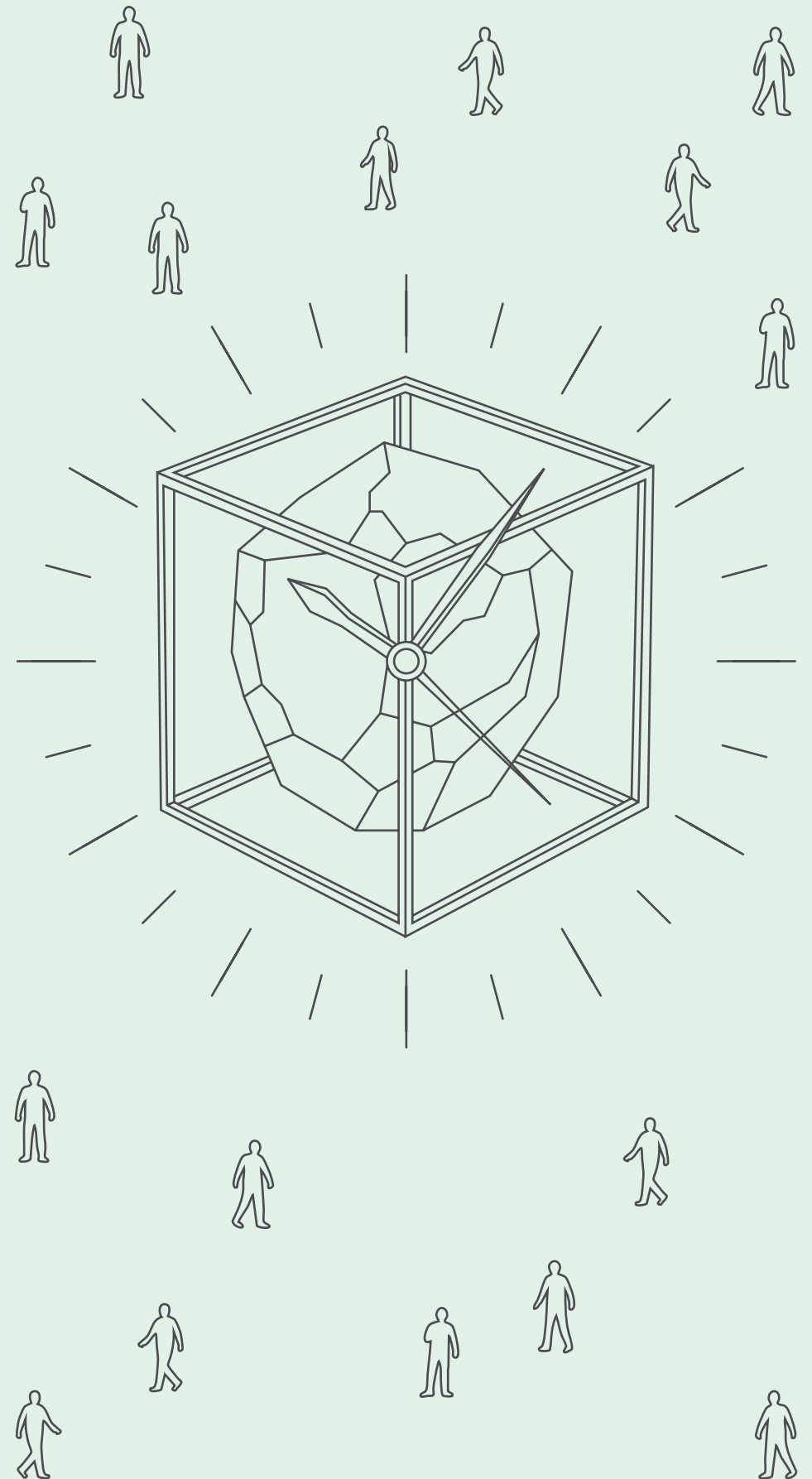


# The Cultural Psychology of Stone

In ancient times, steles were more than memorials — they shaped collective memory, anchoring time, space, and spirit.



A stele is the crystallization of fixed time, space, and spirit.





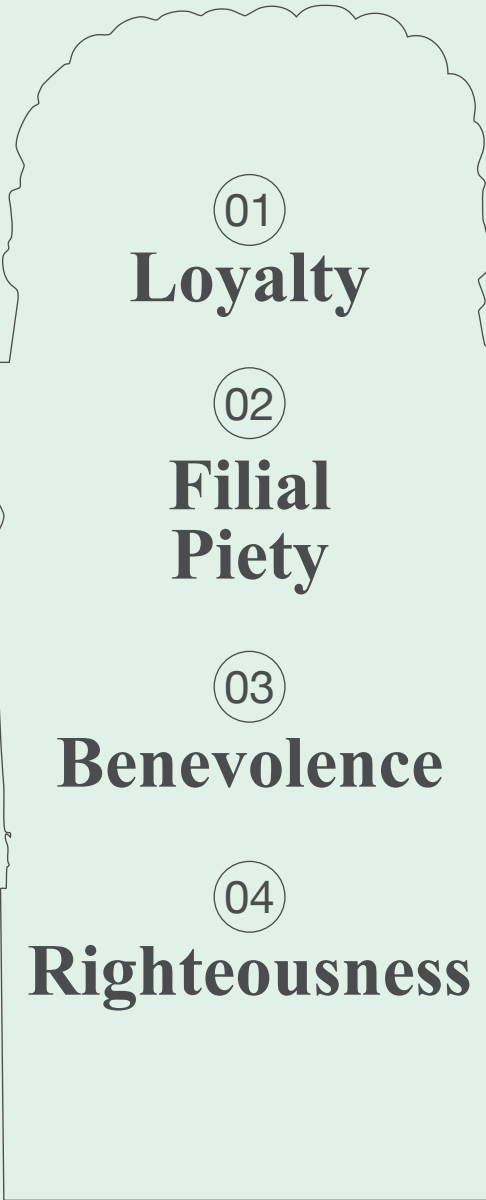
# Understanding Through Fragments



The Core Idea of  
Zhang Menglong Stele

## Summary

Through the careful reading of the fragmented remains of the stele, I found that its core content still revolves around the fundamental Confucian virtues: Loyalty, Filial Piety, Benevolence, and Righteousness. These virtues form the central framework of the inscription, celebrating moral excellence and ideal governance.



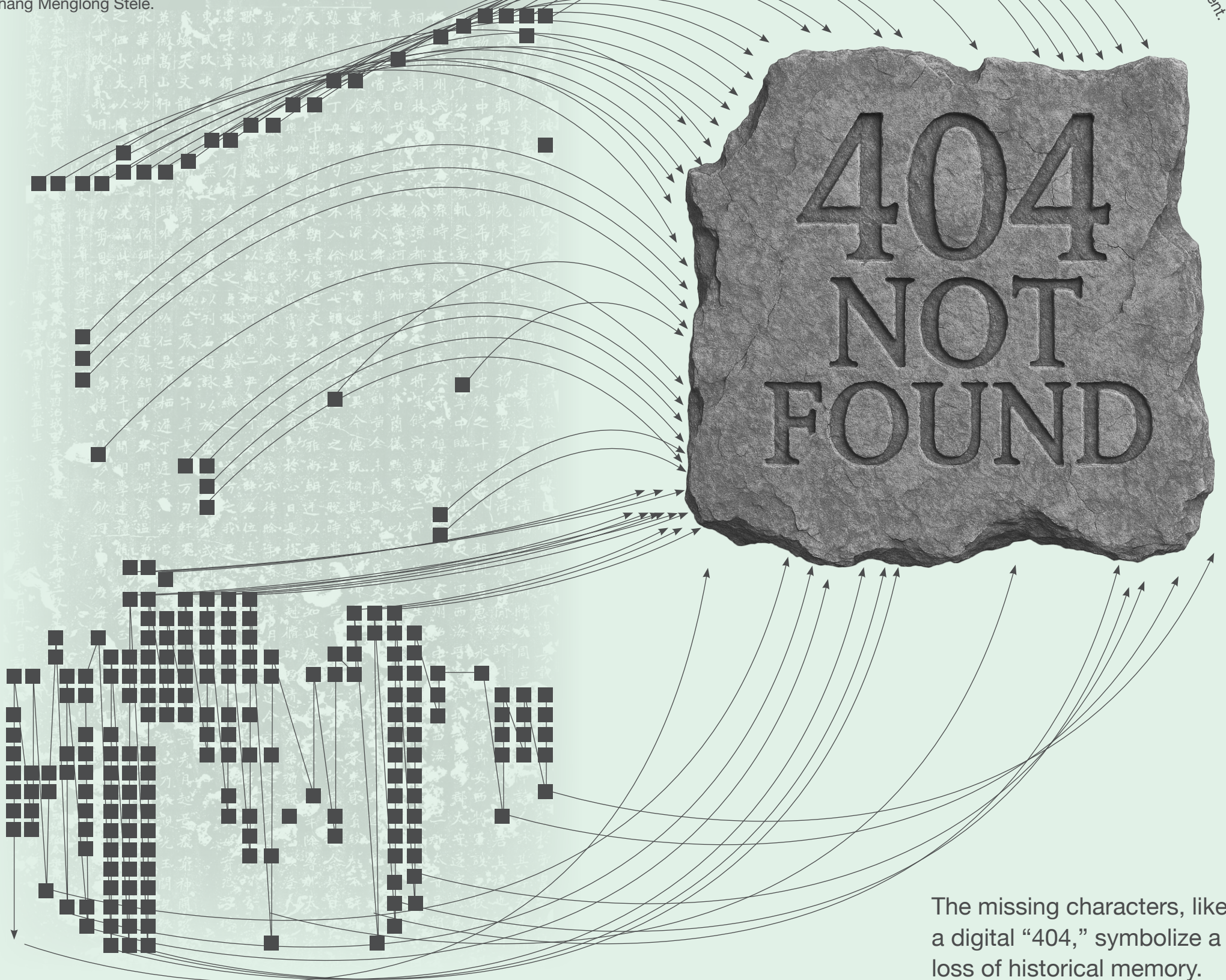
- |                          |                       |                       |                         |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 01                       | 02                    | 03                    | 04                      |
| ● Devotion to Governance | ● Mourning Rites      | ● People-Centric Rule | ● Integrity in Office   |
| ● Upholding Rule of Law  | ● Unwavering Care     | ● Moral Influence     | ● Ethical Governance    |
| ● National Service       | ● Exemplary Filiality | ● National Devotion   | ● Commitment to Justice |



# Original Inscription

This page visualizes the weathered sections of the Zhang Menglong Stele.

With erosion obscuring parts of the inscription, we can no longer access its full content.





君讳猛龙，字神囧，南阳白水人也。其氏族分兴，源流所出，故已备详，世录不复具载。□□□□盛，蓊郁于帝皇之始，德星氏。中兴是赖。晋大夫张老，《春秋》嘉其声绩。汉初赵景王张耳，浮沉秦汉之间，终跨列士之赏。擢干世□君其后也！魏明帝景初中西中郎将、使持节、平西将军、凉州刺史琬之十世孙。八世祖轨帝永兴中使持节、安西将军、护羌校尉、凉州刺史、西平公。七世祖素。帆之第三子；晋明帝太宁中临羌都尉、平西将军、西海晋昌金城武威四郡太守。遂家武威。高祖钟，信凉州武宣王大沮渠时，建威将军、武威太守。曾祖章，伪凉举秀才，本州治中从事史，西海乐都二郡太守。还朝尚书祠部郎、羽林监。祖兴宗，伪凉都营护军、建节将军、饶河黄河二郡太守。父生乐，□□□□□□□□□□归国青衿之志，白首方坚。君体禀河灵，神资岳甚秀，桂质兰仪。点弱露以怀芳；松心□节，□□□□□□□□成。自□□朗若新蘅之当春，初荷之出水。入孝出第，邦间有名。虽黄金未应，无惭郭氏友朋。□□交游□□□□超遥蒙筭人表，年廿七，遭父忧。寝食过礼，泣血情深。假使曾、柴更世，宁异今德？既倾乾覆，唯恃坤慈。冬温夏清，晓夕承奉。家贫致养，不辞采运之勤。年卅九，丁母艰。勺饮不入，偷魂七朝。罄力尽思，备之生死。脱时当宣尼无愧。深叹每事过人。孤风独起，令誉日新，声驰天紫。以延昌中出身，除奉朝请，优游文省；朋侪慕其雅尚。朝廷以君荫望如此，德□宣畅。以熙平之年除鲁郡太守。治民以礼，移风以乐；如伤之痛，无怠于夙宵；若子之爱，有怀于心目。是使学校克修，比屋清业。农弃劝课，田织以登。入境观朝，

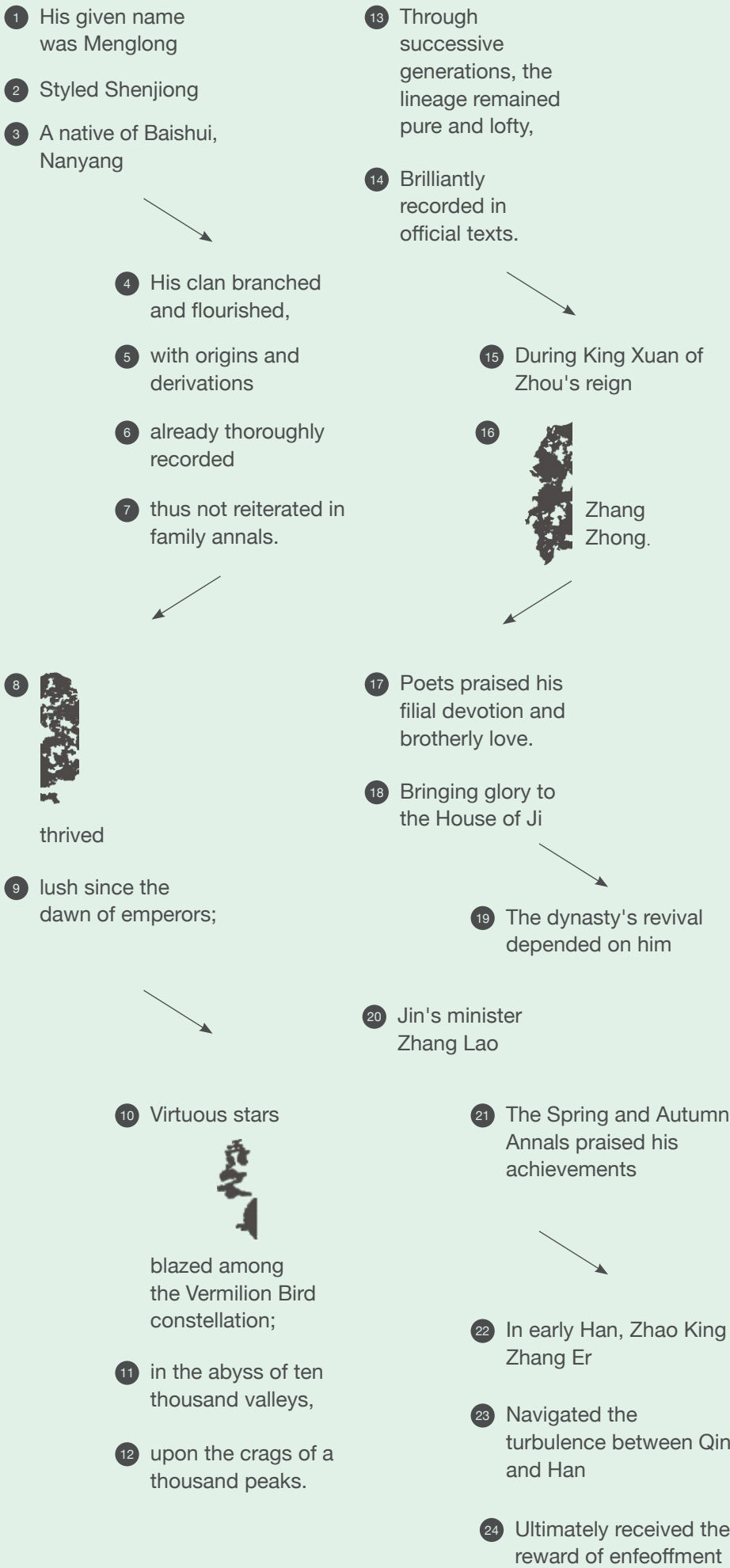
莫不礼让。化感无心，草石如变。恩及泉水，禽鱼自安。胜残不待，历年有成。期月而已。遂令讲习之音，再声于阙里；来苏之歌，复咏于洙中。京兆五守。无以剋加；河南二尹，裁可若兹。虽名位未上，风□□□且易俗之□。黄侯不足比功。宵鱼之感，密子宁独称德？至乃辞金、退玉之贞耿，拔葵去织之信义，方之我君今犹古也！《诗》云：‘恺悌君子，民之父母。’实恐韶曦迁影，东风改吹，尽地民庶，逆深兹慕。是以，刊石题咏，以旌盛美。诚文能式，闾鸿□庶，扬休烈□。其辞曰：

氏焕天文，体承帝胤。神秀春方，灵源在震。积石千寻，长松万刃。轩冕周汉，冠盖魏晋。河灵岳秀，月起景飞。穷神开照，式诞英徽。高山仰止，从善如归。唯德是蹈，唯仁是依。栖迟下庭，素心若雪。鹤响难留，清音遐发。天心乃眷，观光玉阙。浣绂紫河，承华烟月。妙简唯□，剖符儒乡。分金沂道，裂锦邹方。春明好养，温而□霜。乃如之人，寔国之良。礼乐□□□□□□□□□□恤，小大以情，洗濯此群。云褰天净，千里开明。学建礼修，风教反正。野畔让耕。林中□□□□□□□□□□□□□□衣可改，留我明圣。何以勿剪，恩深在民。何以鳧情，风化移新。饮河止满，度海迷津。勒石图□，永□□□□□。

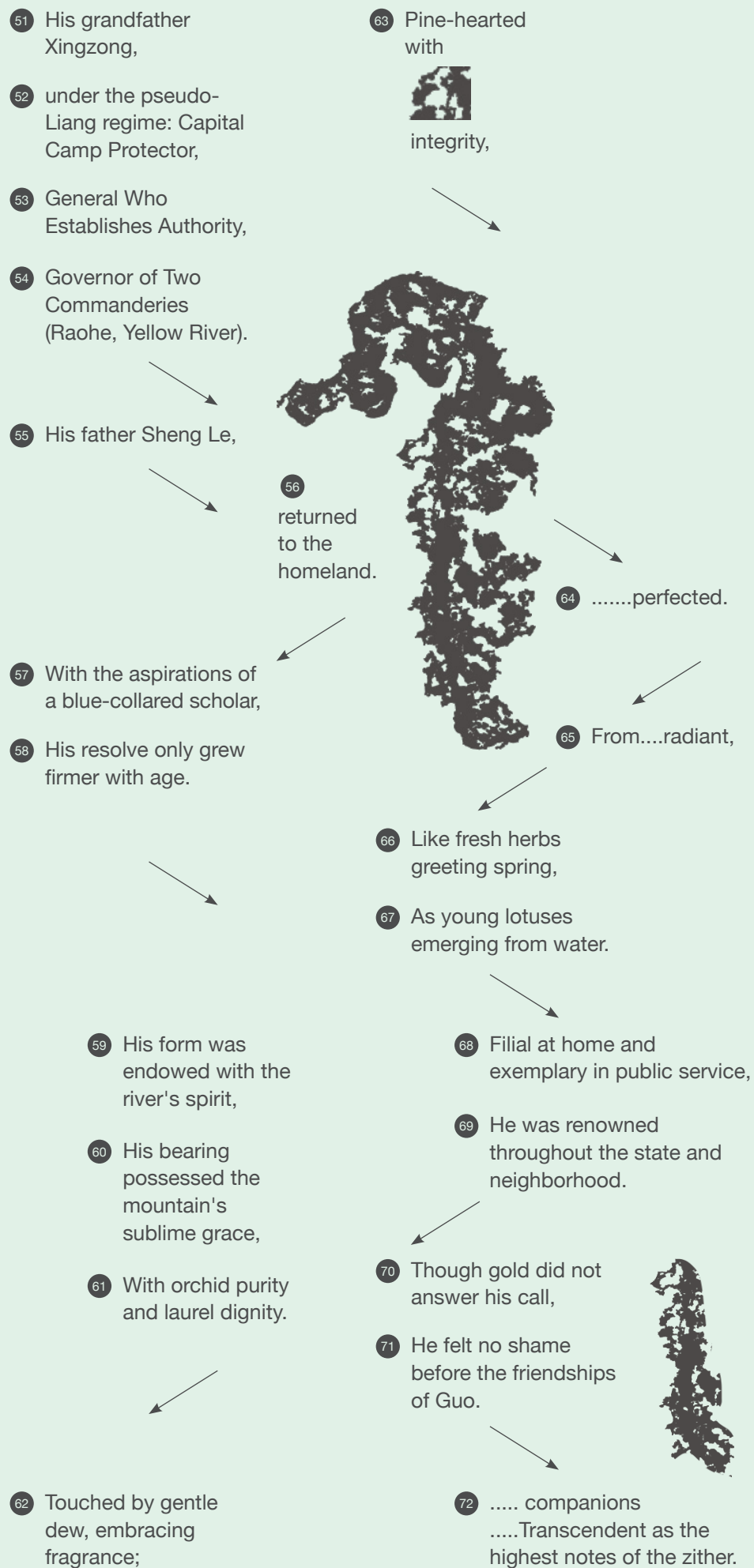
……荡寇将军，鲁郡丞北平□□□。

参军事广平宋抚民。义主骧府骑兵参军骧威府长史征鲁府治城军主□□□。义主本郡二政主簿□□□。义主颜路。义主离狐令宋承愬。汾阳县义主南城令严孝武。义主□贤文。……阳平县义主，州主簿王盆生。

造颂四年正光三年正月廿三日讫。







103 In the Xiping era,  
he was appointed  
Governor of Lu  
Commandery.

104 He governed with ritual,  
 105 Transformed customs  
through music;  
 106 Feeling the people's  
pain as his own,  
 107 Never lax from  
dawn to dusk;

108 Loving them as  
his children,  
 109 Holding them in  
heart and mind.

110 Thus schools  
were restored,  
 111 Every household  
cultivated purity.

112 Farmers were  
encouraged in  
sericulture,  
 113 Fields and looms  
prospered.

114 Entering his territory,  
observers saw  
 115 None lacking courtesy  
and deference.

116 His transformation  
touched even the  
unmindful—  
 117 Grass and stones  
seemed to change.

118 His grace reached  
springs and trees,  
 119 Birds and fish dwelt  
in peace.

120 "Subduing cruelty  
needed no wait";  
 121 "Harvests came in  
years of dearth"

122 In mere months, it  
was done.

123 Thus lecture halls  
echoed again  
 124 In Confucius'  
hometown;  
 125 Songs of revival  
 126 Resounded along the  
Zhu River.

127 Five Governors of  
Jingzhao  
 128 Could not surpass him;

129 Two Magistrates  
of Henan  
 130 Barely matched  
his deeds.

131 Though his rank never  
reached the highest,

132 his influence...  
and transformed  
customs...

133 Marquis Huang  
could not match his  
achievements.

134 The "nocturnal fish"  
moved by his virtue,  
 135 Could Mi Zi alone  
be called virtuous?

136 As for refusing gold  
and returning jade—his  
unwavering integrity,

138 uprooting sunflowers  
and abandoning  
weaving—his steadfast  
righteousness,  
 139 compared to our lord, the  
present equals antiquity!

140 The Book of Songs  
declares:  
 141 Kindly lord,  
 142 the people's parent.

143 Truly we fear  
the sun's shadow  
may shift,  
 144 the east wind may  
change course,  
 145 and all the people of  
this land,  
 146 overwhelmed with  
longing, will weep.

147 Therefore,  
 148 we engrave this  
stone with praises,  
 149 to proclaim his  
glorious virtue.

150 May these sincere  
words establish a  
model,  
 151 clarify the great  
for all people,  
 152 and proclaim his  
brilliant



153 The inscription reads:

154 His clan shines in  
celestial patterns,

155 His form bears  
imperial lineage.



156 Divine grace graces  
the spring quarter,

157 Numinous source  
dwells in thunder.



158 Stones piled a thousand  
fathoms high,

159 Pines stretching ten  
thousand blades tall.



160 Chariots and crowns of  
Zhou and Han,

161 Canopies and caps of  
Wei and Jin.



162 River's spirit,  
mountain's splendor,

163 Moon rising,  
light soaring.



164 Exhausting divinity,  
revealing radiance,

165 Thus was born his  
heroic emblem.



166 High mountains  
inspire awe,

167 Following goodness  
like returning home.

168 Only virtue he trod,

169 Only benevolence  
he embraced.



170 Dwelling humbly in  
lower courts,

171 Pure heart like snow.



172 The crane's cry  
cannot linger,

173 Yet its pure tone  
resonates afar.



174 Heaven's will  
showed favor,

175 Beholding splendor at  
jade towers.



176 Washing ribbons in  
purple streams,

177 Basking in moonlit  
glory.

178 Exquisitely selected,  
only



179 Receiving tally in  
Confucian land.



180 Sharing gold by Yi  
River's way,

181 Dividing silks in  
Zou's region.

182 Gentle yet

frost.



183 Such a man  
as this,

184 Truly the  
state's finest.



185 Ritual and  
music



Compassionate



186 Treating all  
with empathy,

187 Cleansing this  
multitude.



188 Clouds part,  
sky clears,

189 A thousand  
miles brighten.



190 Schools  
established,  
rites perfected,

191 Customs  
return to  
righteousness.

192 Fields yield to plows.

193 In the woods



194 Even garments  
may change,

195 But our enlightened  
sage remains.



196 Why not prune?

197 His grace runs deep  
among the people.



198 Why do ducks rejoice?

199 Customs transform anew.



200 Drink from the river  
but stop when full,

201 Crossing seas, the  
ford eludes.



202 Carving stone to depict...

203 Forever...



This concludes the content  
of the Zhang Menglong  
Stele inscription.

# Understanding Through Imagine



## Zhang Menglong

- **Courtesy Name:** Shenjiong
- **Origin:** Baishui, Nanyang
- **Era:** Northern Wei Dynasty
- **Status:** Former Governor of Lu Commandery
- **Estimated Birth:** Late 5th Century
- **Estimated Death:** Circa 520 CE

Exact dates unknown; deduced based on official career timeline and stele erection year (522 CE).

### Keywords:



Family Heritage



Moral Virtue



Loyalty and Fellowship



Justice and Governance



Cultural Legacy

### Summary:

Menglong Zhang was a virtuous official of the Northern Wei Dynasty, known for his unwavering loyalty, deep filial piety, and benevolent governance. As Governor of Lu Commandery, he revitalized education, improved social customs, and left a lasting moral legacy.

## Family Heritage

### Zhang Huan

Western General of the Household, Governor of Liangzhou, General Who Pacifies the West

### Zhang Gui

General Who Pacifies the West, Protector of the Qiang, Governor of Liangzhou, Duke of Xiping

### Zhang Su

Commandant of Linqiang, General Who Pacifies the West, Governor of Four Commanderies

### Zhang Zhong

General Who Establishes Might, Governor of Wuwei

### Zhang Zhang

Aide to the Governor, Governor of Two Commanderies, Director of the Ministry of Rites, Commander of the Imperial Guards

### Zhang Xingzong

Capital Garrison Commander, General Who Builds Honor Governor of Two Commanderies

### Zhang Shengle

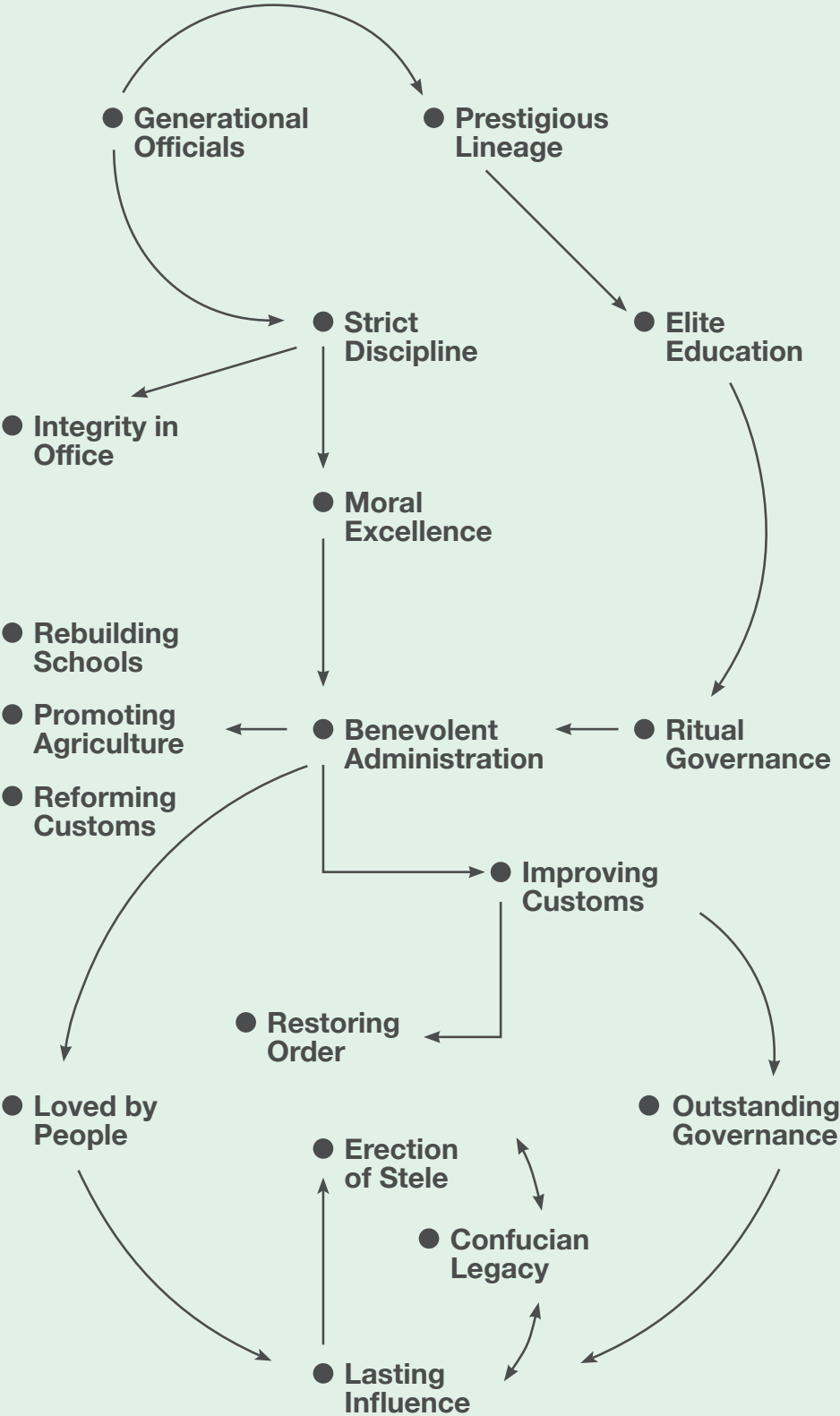
Commandant of Linqiang, General Who Pacifies the West, Governor of Four Commanderies

### Zhang Menglong

Governor of Lu Commandery

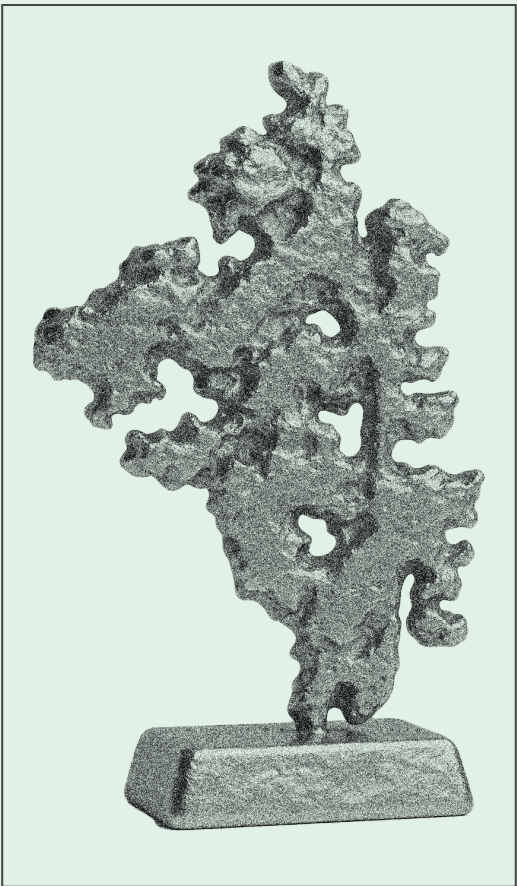
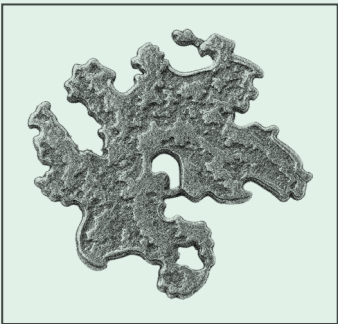
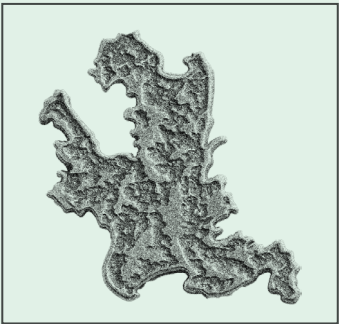


● Personal Experience



What shaped him?  
What earned him a stele?

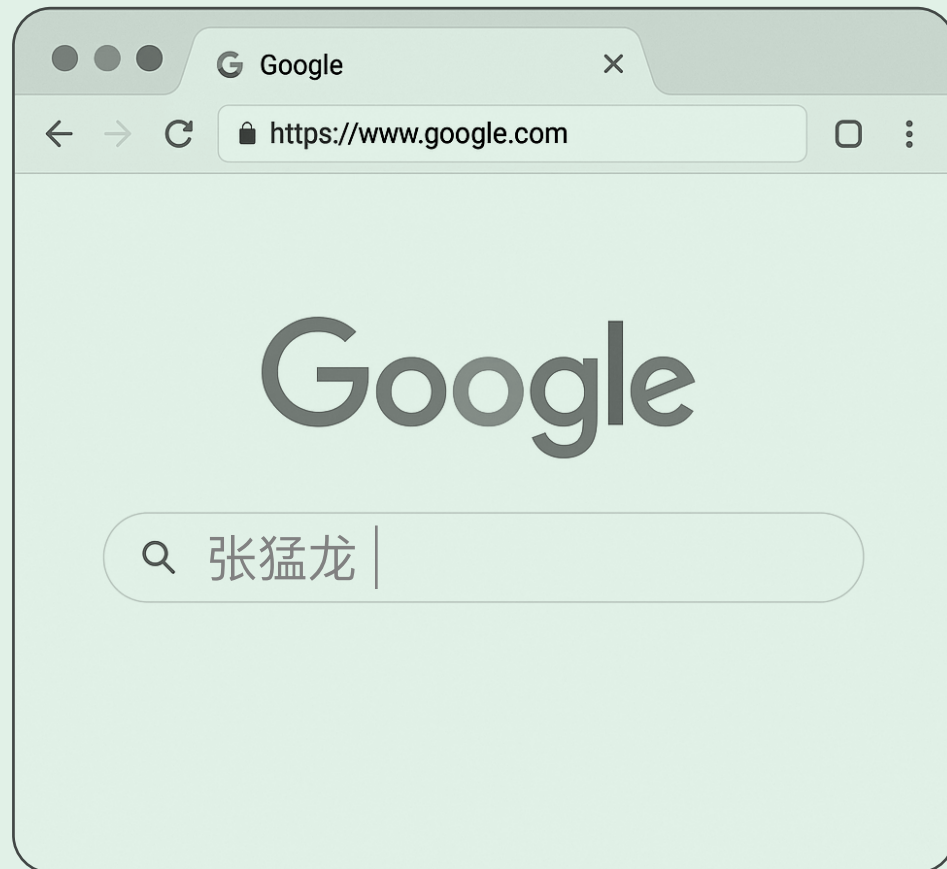
● Awards



Although we cannot know what was originally inscribed, these missing parts have become an integral aspect of its enduring honor. Inspired by this idea, I extracted their shapes and transformed them into commemorative pins and trophies.

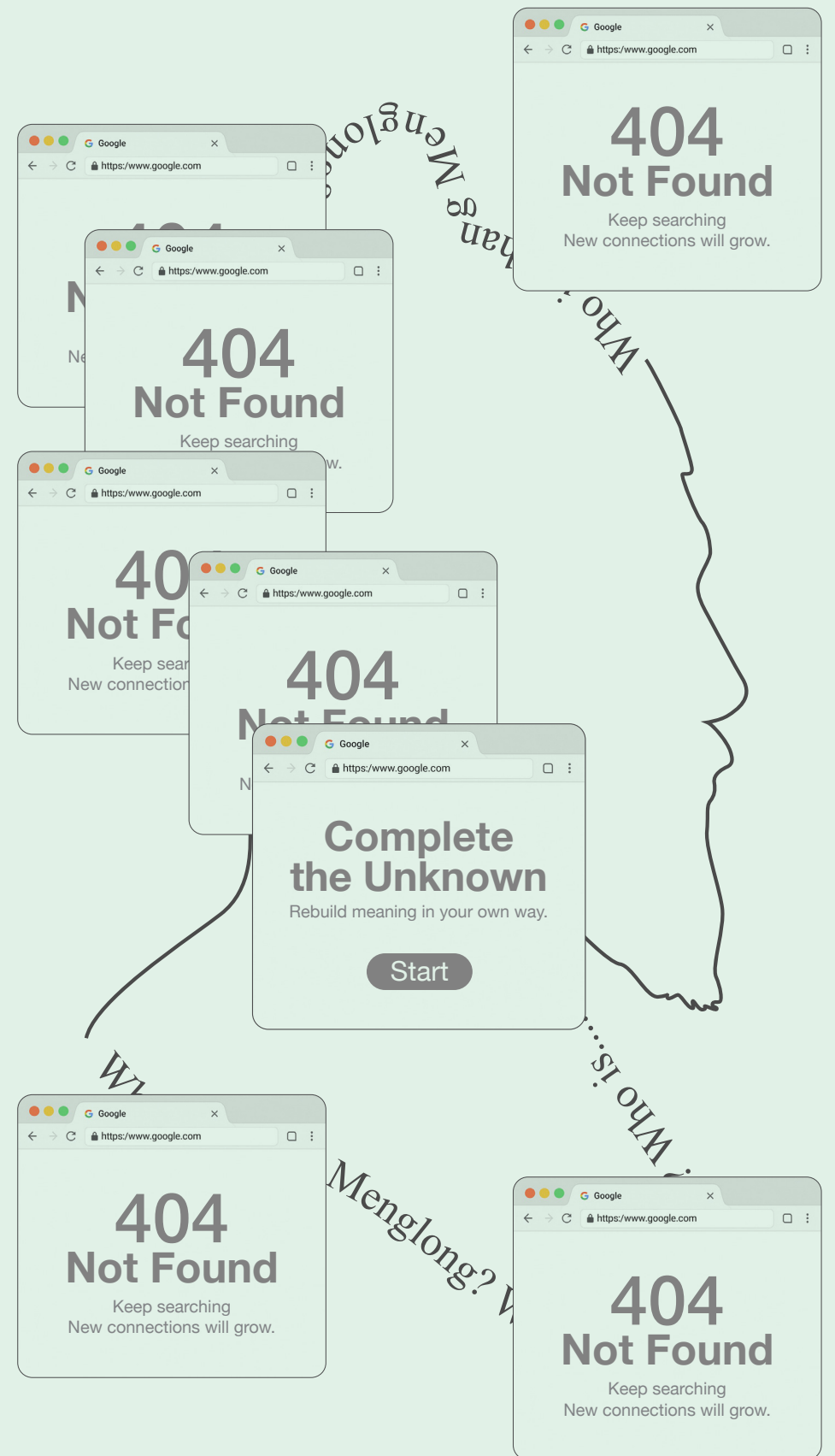
## • Missing Information

It has been centuries since the erection of the Zhang Menglong Stele. When I attempted to search for more information about Zhang Menglong online, I found that all that remains is this solitary monument. The fragmented inscriptions offer limited clues while opening an expansive space for interpretation.



## • Expansion in Thought

As time progresses and weathering deepens, the surviving information becomes increasingly scarce, and uncertainty continues to grow. Each act of subjective speculation and interpretation marks a new stage in the stele's ongoing growth — a growth that unfolds within the realm of thought.



Though we can never fully reconstruct Zhang Menglong's reality, this cultural trace continues to grow — not as a fixed memory, but as an evolving structure of thought, rebuilt through loss and imagination.