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Essentials in the Understanding of the Development of Philosophy in Pre-Qin Times

The Mingjia (名家, School of Names) is a notional grouping of philosophers first recorded as such in the *Shiji* 史記. Their identifying feature was a concern with linguistic issues particularly involving the correct use of names. The group, as listed in the *Han Shu* 漢書, comprised seven men living between the sixth and third centuries BCE. Only four of these men—Deng Xi 鄧析, Yin Wen 尹文, Hui Shi 惠施, and Gongsun Long 公孫龍—have extant writings attributed to them, and in three of these there are issues of authenticity. Nevertheless, it is an important group for an understanding of the development of

pre-Qin philosophy as the men themselves and the concepts they explored feature prominently in the writings of the other schools.

The present volume contains four parts: (1) the extant writings of the four men; (2) all significant references to them in other works up the fourth century CE; (3) other significant writings on the topics up to that time; and (4) four appendices on specific issues concerning the school.

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