Shanhai jing (The Book of Mountains and Seas) and the God creation Movement During the Warring states Period

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For the most part, the strange tales and myths contained in The Book of Mountains and Seas are not the remnants of prehistoric culture, but a new synthesis of contemporary cultural elements. The legends and stories in the Confucian classics provided the raw materials for the myths in The Book of Mountains and Seas. The ancient Chinese were not deeply religious and their culture was based on realism. An expression of this in peoples' personal lives was the desire for longevity, riches, honor and many sons and grandsons. During the Warring States period the nobility indulged in more creature comforts than their predecessors, they took pains to stay in good health and tried every means to prolong life. Under such circumstances, alchemists created religious myths surrounding historical figures in order to win the trust of the nobles, thus giving rise to a god creation movement during this period. The alchemists played a leading role in this movement and took copies of their tales with them when they sold their techniques for obtaining longevity to the princes and nobles. The Book of Mountains and Seas is a collection of just such tales.
The Philosophers of the Warring States. This is the currently selected item. During the Warring States Period of Chinese history, from 475 to 221 BCE, what we now think of today as China was divided into seven competing nations. The fiefs that had grown in importance during the end of the Zhou Dynasty had now become states of their own. Taoism is a religious movement emphasizing personal liberty and individualism whereas Confucianism more strongly emphasizes submission, whether that be to one's elders (filial piety) or the state. In the context of a western moral system of values, Taoism seems much more benevolent but Confucianism may have been more beneficial to the Warring States Period by introducing a philosophical system in which order was prioritized over liberty. The Classic of Mountains and Seas or Shan Hai Jing, formerly romanized as the Shan-hai Ching, is a Chinese classic text and a compilation of mythic geography and myth. Versions of the text may have existed since as early as the 4th century BC, but the present form was not reached until the early Han dynasty a few centuries later. It is largely a fabulous geographical and cultural account of pre-Qin China as well as a collection of Chinese mythology. The book is divided into eighteen sections; it