

7. Orality and Ritualized Teaching, Part Two

7.1 The Teaching Setting

Mark Edward Lewis describes the teaching situation discernible in the *Analects* as follows:

As for the *Lun yu*, the most important single-feature is that the "enunciatory scene" portrayed in the text ... is one in which the author is a recorder of words attributed to an authoritative figure, either Confucius or a leading disciple. ... The communication situation that this mode of enunciation mimics is the act of teaching. ... In the case of the *Lun yu* this textual strategy may at first have directly reflected a historical reality of disciples seeking to preserve what they remembered of an inspiring teacher. However, in the later strata, written by men who had never known the master, the perpetuation of this form cannot be explained as a reproduction of any lived, historical reality. Moreover, when the *Mencius* and the *Mozi* begin to produce longer and more elaborate discourses resembling essays, they are still textually enunciated as addresses by the master to an audience of presumed disciples, or a dialogue with a named interlocutor recorded by a silent disciple/witness. No early texts explain the significance of this insistence on simulating the teaching scene in the enunciation of the text, probably because this procedure was taken for granted and would have lost its *raison d'être* had anyone acknowledged it.¹

Lewis goes on to explain the rationale for adopting this setting by resorting to the argument that the master only derives his authority from the presence of disciples, and "what made the words worth listening to was the fact of their having been heeded by others, and that fact was proven only in the re-enunciation of the teaching scene."² It seems to me that an easier, Ocam-like solution would be to find the source of authority in the master qua master, for, after all, pupils sought him out because of his inherent authority; to them he was their guide in ritual matters, which was the key to moral cultivation and success in office. The

¹ Mark Edward Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 57.

² Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China*, 58.

teaching situation was not merely a hoary setting sanctioned by the idealization brought about by the passage of time, it was the actual process through which information was imparted in an intellectual lineage made up of masters and disciples. Far from not daring to acknowledge the teaching scene, it was taken for granted as the very basis of master-disciple relationships, a scene repeated over time in the course of the oral transmission of classical learning.

Wiebke Denecke is equally reluctant to credit the reality behind the image of the teaching situation. Instead, she grants authority to the transcriptions of disciples who purposely framed their records in scenes of instruction:

The choice to represent the master in conversation with his rapt entourage profoundly shaped the meaning of Confucius' teachings. When framed in pithy scenes of instruction by his disciples' transcriptions of his words and actions, simple declarative sentences are transformed into words of wisdom and bodily gestures into ritual acts. Confucius becomes a charismatic master figure, confirmed in his authority in equal measure by the loving admiration of his disciples and by his own strategic downplaying of his wisdom. This disjunction—between master's authority and the disciple's authorship of episodes that showcase his authority—enhanced Confucius' charismatic stature.³

If disciples transcribed Confucius's words and actions into a text, then the authority of the "message" of the text originates in the person of the speaker and actor, not the transcribers, notwithstanding their rhetoric of presentation. For, as Michael Nylan queries, "Does the authority of a text once written down significantly differ from what it was when it was only available in an oral version?"⁴ At least in the case of Confucius, obviously not. And given Confucius's self-proclaimed role as teacher, it is reasonable to take the description of a teaching situation based on the format of conversation or catechism at face value, not ascribe it to the "choice" of later transcribers as a narrative frame. The statistics cited earlier amply demonstrate the basis of the *Analects* in an oral context.

Given that I take descriptions of such teaching situations seriously, it is

³ Wiebke Denecke, *The Dynamics of Masters Literature: Early Chinese Thought from Confucius to Han Feizi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2010), 92.

⁴ Michael Nylan, "Textual Authority in Pre-Han and Han (review of *Writing and Authority in Early China*, by Mark Edward Lewis)," *Early China* 25 (2000): 205–58; 218n19.

reasonable to explore the physical environment. Where, we may ask, did Confucius teach his students? Robert Eno could get no farther than establishing a generic study group, in which students followed a Ruist teacher in mastering "a broad set of traditional ritual formulas, known as *li*," of which Confucius' following was the prototype.⁵ This group was a social entity, never grounded in any particular location, whether indoors, outdoors, humble or highborn. E. Bruce Brooks rather discerns a pattern of changing physical settings throughout the *Analects*, commencing in the earlier strata of the *Analects* with outdoor meetings or meetings in the homes of disciples, then shifting in later strata to meetings in Confucius's house, which seems to grow more opulent over time.⁶ I cannot discern this progression, as the *Analects* is seldom specific as to the physical settings of Confucius's enunciations, conversations, or catechisms. The *Family Sayings of Confucius* does identify Que Quarter 闕里, where Confucius lived, as the site where he taught his students.⁷

The physical locations of all communication settings, as introduced in the first or second lines, break down as indicated in the following list; keep in mind these are not limited to Confucius. (If a location appears later in the verse, especially after the initial utterance, then chances are this textual interpolation is for clarification; I therefore discount it.)

Geographic locations: 5.22, 15.2, in Chen; 7.14, in Qi; 9.5; 11.21, in Kuang; 13.9, traveling to Wey; 14.39, playing chimes in Wey; 17.3, traveling to Wucheng.

Disciples in attendance: 5.26; 11.24.

Receiving a visitor: 14.25.

In audience: 6.28; 14.21; 19.22; 19.23.

Received in audience: 15.42.

At a sacrifice: 3.12.

At a sickbed: 8.3; 8.4; 9.12.

On the road: 17.1.

Staying overnight with someone: 14.38.

Out of 495 verses, only 22 of them introduce the physical setting. The setting, then, betrays few clues as to the concrete environment in which teaching took place. Given this hint, we are probably justified in regarding many of the questions that prompted an enunciation (read "answer") as having been elided as often as the concrete setting.

⁵ Eno, *The Confucian Creation of Heaven*, 53–55.

⁶ E. Bruce Brooks, "The State of the Field in Pre-Han Text Studies," *Sino-Platonic Papers* 46 (July 1994): 1–66; p. 38.

⁷ Kongzi jiaoyu, 9.89.

The circumstances surrounding the posthumous compilation of the sayings of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), the so-called *Conversations of Master Zhu Arranged Topically* (*Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類), are relevant here, as explained by Daniel K. Gardner:

The reader too should keep in mind that the text is not a record of formal lectures or sustained philosophical exposition but rather of conversations, or perhaps, more accurately, of bits and pieces of conversations strung together by an editor years after Chu passed away; many comments thus lack the context necessary to make full sense of them, and the referents used in them are not always as clear to the reader as they surely were to the hearer. Moreover, in reading Chu Hsi's remarks to students, we do not see the gestures or hear the inflection in the voice that gave meaning, and sometimes even life, to the remarks.⁸

In addition to linguistic, cultural, and historical contexts, the conventions of the catechism are also generally missing in this work. Yet Wing-tsit Chan reminds us that this compilation consists of some four thousand conversations between Zhu Xi and his disciples, and that, although on a few occasions students submitted written questions, on the whole “the questions and responses occurred at random.”⁹ Even in this conversation-rich environment, the apparatus of the catechism is not generally discernible, yet it was the very foundation of these numerous exchanges. Likewise, in the *Analects*, the mechanism of the catechism lies equally low. And just like in the *Conversations of Master Zhu, Arranged Topically*, instead of linguistic referent, cultural context, or historical background, what we find in the *Analects* are lone enunciations and isolated pronouncements of doctrine or judgment; instead of the physical setting we find the physical actions or movements associated with teaching. Therefore, instead of the body language of communication, we get the gestures of ritual deportment; the terminology of motion then affords a new focus of inquiry.

7.1.1 Performative Ritual

In this and the following sections, I examine two actions associated with teaching: sitting and standing. But at this point it will be salutary first to examine why these movements should be considered ritual in nature as well as functional

⁸ Daniel K. Gardner, *Chu Hsi Learning to be a Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu, Arranged Topically* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 86.

⁹ Wing-tsit Chan, *Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200): New Studies* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 106.

in purpose.

The background to our discussion is the general theory of ritual as performance. Many types of ritual theories may be applied to the nature of the ancient Chinese teaching setting, including such foci as action, aesthetics, cognition, communication, ethology, praxis, relationality, and semiotics.¹⁰ Michael Ing considerably narrows the theoretical field down to a particular ritual paradigm. In his study of the failure of ritual in the *Records of Ritualists*, he adopts a two-part theoretical approach to the nature of ritual: one is the performed rite as public ceremony, classified under “restrictive theories of *li*” since such rites are restricted to “the performance of named ceremonial circumstances distinct from everyday affairs.”¹¹ On the other hand, “expansive theories of ritual” that go beyond the “specific occasions of ceremony” include the common elements of everyday actions.¹² It is this latter approach, in the form of performative theory, that will prove most fruitful for examining the ritual aspects of Confucius’ teaching settings.

Performative theory is valuable precisely because it does not depend on either the consciousness of the participants as being engaged in ritual activity or the nature of the activity as being necessarily religious. And it focuses attention on what happens in the ritual, not the significance that adheres to it.¹³ The definition of ritual by R. A. Rappaport is germane here: “The term ritual [denotes] the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers.”¹⁴ Günter Thomas explains that the meaning of ritual is not discernible in the “participants’ intentions” or even “in the ritual itself,” but in the difference this ritual makes in the subsequent

¹⁰ Recent work on these theories of ritual is introduced in the third part of Jens Kreinath, Jan Snoek, and Michael Stausberg, eds., *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

¹¹ Michael David Kaulana Ing, *The Dysfunction of Ritual in Early Confucianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 21, 22.

¹² Ing, *The Dysfunction of Ritual in Early Confucianism*, 22.

¹³ In recent North American scholarship, the new term *performativity* is in common use to refer to that brand of ritual theory indebted to J. L. Austin’s thought of “doing things with words”; while *performance* is increasingly used by feminist and poststructuralist scholars. For the use of *performativity* in socially constructed acts such as rituals, see the discussion by Ronald L. Grimes, “Performative,” in *Theorizing Rituals*, 390–94.

¹⁴ R. A. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 24.

"communication process."¹⁵ In the case of the ancient Chinese, an overt awareness of participating in a ritualized teaching setting was obviated due to the sublimation of ritual into the background of social reality; it was a given part of the worldview and hence not foregrounded by unnecessary comment or analysis. D. I. Keertzer summarizes the nature of ritual viewed in these terms as follows:

Ritual action has a formal quality to it. It follows highly structured, standardized sequences and is often enacted at certain places and times that are themselves endowed with special symbolic meaning. Ritual action is repetitive and, therefore, often redundant, but these very factors serve as important means of channeling emotion, guiding cognition, and organizing social groups.¹⁶

From the point of view of performative ritual, it is true that it is almost impossible to distinguish ritual from social action, as Dietrich Harth asserts.¹⁷ If this is so, then our task is to discern the sequenced and repetitive, standardized and formalized, aspects of a social activity to take account of its ritual nature. This includes repetitive actions in the sublime realms of annual courtly ceremonies, festive seasonal holidays for the black- or gray-headed folk, and even the diurnal drudge of the anonymous individual at home.

The shift in attention in research over the last four decades from ritual structures to performance and its contexts naturally has led to closer attention to ritualized motions and the settings of dramatic performance in the ancient world. Work by Eva Stehle and Bruno Gentili and the volume edited by Dimitrios Yatromanolakis and Panagiotis Roilos are fine examples of this trend.¹⁸ A concomitant refocus from the overly religious to the quotidian and profane was

¹⁵ Thomas Günter, "Formative," in *Theorizing Rituals*, 321–43, 355–56; cf. p. 325: "Quite often even practitioners cannot give a reasonable account of the meaning of their acts."

¹⁶ D. I. Keertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 9.

¹⁷ Dietrich Harth, "Ritual and Other Forms of Social Action," in *Theorizing Rituals*, 17–36; p. 17.

¹⁸ Eva Stehle, *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece: Non-Dramatic Poetry in Its Setting* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977); Bruno Gentili, *Theatrical Performances in the Ancient World: Hellenistic and Early Roman Theatre* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1979); Dimitrios Yatromanolakis and Roilos Panagiotis, eds., *Greek Ritual Poetics* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2005).

an inevitable and welcome development.¹⁹ But a closer focus is still possible, and indeed necessary. This is the micro level of the costume, the pose and individual gestures. Indeed, although Lévi-Strauss privileged words (in the form of myth) over ritual (as acts), he still recognized the importance of ritual gestures: "The value of the ritual as meaning seems to reside in instruments and gestures: it is *paralanguage*. The myth, on the other hand, manifests itself as a *metalanguage*."²⁰ Concerning the ancient classical world of the West, work by Claude Calame, Peter Jackson, and Barbara Kowalzig are representative in this narrowly focused area.²¹ It is with this theoretical understanding and authorization that I confidently set out to examine the separate motions of sitting and standing in Confucius's teaching settings in the *Analects*, which are repetitive and sequenced, and certainly seem to be standardized and formulized.

7.1.2 Sitting in Service

The various associations of the key term *ju* (居) in the *Analects* provide an important ingress on the process of teaching. These meanings range from "to be at," "to dwell," "to occupy an office," "to be out of office (and dwell at home)," "to claim (by trying to 'occupy' the credit for accomplishing something)," "to be in retirement," "to remain or pass time," "to be at ease at home," and "to sit." The two most relevant examples follow, translated by Legge:

Analects 7.4: "When the Master was unoccupied with business, his manner was easy, and he looked pleased" 子之燕居，申申如也，夭夭如也。²²

Analects 17.8: "The Master said, 'You, have you heard the six

¹⁹ For this hitherto neglected arena of ritual performance, see Richard Schechner and Mady Schuman, eds., *Ritual, Play, and Performance: Readings in The Social Sciences/Theatre* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), Part Three: "Ritual Performance in Everyday Life"; Sally F. Moore and Barbara G. Myerhoff, eds., *Secular Ritual* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1977).

²⁰ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, vol. 2 (London: Allen Lane, 1977), 66.

²¹ Claude Calame, *Poetic and Performative Memory in Ancient Greece: Heroic Reference and Ritual Gestures in Time and Space* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2009); Peter Jackson, "Retracing the Path: Gesture, Memory, and the Exegesis of Tradition," *History of Religions* 45 (2005): 1–28; and Barbara Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods: Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

²² The binome *yanju* *?enskah 燕居 of 7:4 is more commonly expressed by the cognate *xianju* *firenska 閒居, as will be apparent later.

words to which are attached six becloudings?' You replied, 'I have not.' 'Sit down, and I will tell them to you.'" 子曰: "由也, 女聞六言六蔽矣乎?" 對曰: "未也。" "居! 吾語女。"

Confucius at leisure and inviting a student to sit were apparently the prerequisites for teaching to commence.

This combination of free time and a student at hand is a frequent occurrence in the early literature, as in probably the most notable teaching situation orchestrated by Confucius (or later editors), the opening passage of the *Classic of Filial Piety*:

Zhongni was resting, and Zengzi was in attendance. The Master said, "The former kings had an essential way that was the ultimate in virtue; they used it to make the world follow obediently to cause the people to be harmonious and friendly with each other, and superior and inferior to be without discord. Do you know this way?" Zengzi arose from his mat and said, "I am not clever, how am I good enough to know it?" The Master said, "As for filial piety, it is the root of virtue. It is the source of my teachings. Resume your seat, and I will tell you about it."

仲尼居, 曾子侍。子曰: 先王有至德要道, 以順天下, 民用和睦, 上下無怨。汝知之乎。曾子曰, 參不敏, 何足以知之? 子曰: 夫孝, 德之本也, 教之所由生也。復坐, 吾語汝。²³

The technical terminology requires some analysis.

First "to be at rest." In his now lost *Register of Categories of Mr. Zheng* (*Zhengshi mulu* 鄭氏目錄), Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (AD 127–200), offers the following explanation of the binome *xianju* (閒居) in a similar context.²⁴ Remember that

²³ *Xiaojing zhengyi* 1.1a–b. The traditional view of this text is described by Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849): "Zengzi was from Nanwucheng, the state of Lu. Zengzi was 46 sui younger than Confucius; Confucius felt that he [Zengzi] was able to master the way of filial piety, so he imparted to him his learning and [he] composed the *Classic of Filial Piety*" 曾子魯南武人城人。孔子以爲能通孝道, 故授之業作孝經。Ruan Yuan, *Zengzi shipianzhu* 曾子十篇注釋, in *Zhongguo zixue mingzhu jicheng zhenben chubian, Rujia zibu* 中國子學明著集成珍本初編儒家子部, vol. 23 (Taipei: Zhongguo Zixue Mingzhu Jicheng Bianyi Jijinhui, 1979), 269 (1a).

²⁴ For this and related terminology discussed below, see Shen Wenzhuo 沈文倬, "Cong jiaguwen, jinwen de yixie xiangxing wenzi shuo guren de zuo" 从甲骨文金文的一些象形文字说古人的坐, *Zhongxue Jingxue* 4 (2009): 35–48; see esp. p. 39ff. He is

Zheng Xuan's fundamental point of departure in commentating on the classics is to isolate ceremonial contexts and gloss ritual terminology:

Naming "Confucius was at rest" praised him for not being weary and not too familiar. To withdraw and relax to avoid others is called "to be at rest." 名孔子閒居者, 善其無倦而不褻, 退燕避人曰閒居。²⁵

From the context of most of the occurrences of this formula in the *Records of Ritualists* and the *Family Sayings of Confucius*, it is clear that Confucius was withdrawing from formal interactions with rulers and officers but not from interaction with his disciples. This is explained by Qian Mu as "to be at ease (*an* 安); to withdraw from court and dwell is called to be at ease" 安也; 退朝而居曰燕居。²⁶ Qiao Yifan's understanding is similar: "To withdraw from the public but not avoid others while being out of office" 燕居即退公不避人而處也。²⁷ Confucius was energetic enough to teach his disciples, yet, even if at home, still maintained a degree of ritual decorum, since he was not too formal. In the context of the teaching setting that commences the *Classic of Filial Piety*, Zheng Xuan explains the term *ju* as "to be at": it "means to be at the lecture hall" 居居講堂。²⁸ This is of course not a linguistic gloss but a contextual interpretation. In his *Subcommentary on Zheng's Commentary on the Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing Zhengzhu shu* 孝經鄭注疏), Pi Xirui adds that "'lecture hall' is the same as 'classroom'" 講堂即學堂. Though interesting, this comment is irrelevant since he does not help us understand how Zheng Xuan arrived at his view of the term.

Next, "to be in attendance." Zengzi was in attendance (*shi* 侍). This was a commonplace term for the faithful service of a disciple in waiting upon a master. Zheng Xuan explains it simply as "one of lower status being at the side of one of higher status is called 'being in attendance'" 卑在尊者之側曰侍. Wang Zhao 汪照 (ca. 1725–1805), links the term to education in his *Supplements to the*

particularly strong on graphic analysis and describing the various activities associated with the teaching setting, but does not place these activities in a ritual context other than to mention the aspect of respect shown to those of higher station.

²⁵ Fang Xiangdong 方向东, *Da Dai Liji huijiao jijie* 大戴礼记汇校集解, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2008), 1.2n2.

²⁶ Qian Mu 钱穆 (1895–1990), *Lunyu yaolue* 論語要略, Wanyou wenku huiyao ed. (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1965), 61.

²⁷ Qiao Yifan 喬一凡, *Lunyu tongyi* 論語通義 (Taipei: Zhonghua, 1983), 7.102.

²⁸ Chen Tiefan 陳鐵凡, *Xiaojing Zhengzhu jiaozheng* 孝經鄭注校證 (Taipei: Guoli Bianyiguan, 1987), 1.

Commentary on the Records of Ritualists of Dai the Greater (*Da Dai Liji zhubu* 大戴禮記注補) (preface dated 1805): “‘To be in attendance’ is to assume the duty on the right and left (of a master) to inquire about instructions concerning the Way” 侍, 承事左右問道訊.²⁹ According to this view, “to be in attendance” meant to have the master’s ear and the freedom to pose a theme of instruction by way of a pointed question.

An example is Zixia’s inquiring about the meaning of a verse in the *Poems*:

Confucius being at home at leisure, with Zixia by his side, the latter said, “With reference to the lines in the *Book of Poetry* ... , ‘The happy and courteous sovereign, is the father and mother of the people’; I beg to ask what the sovereign must be, who can be called ‘the parent of the people?’” Confucius said, “Ah! the parent of the people! He must have penetrated to the fundamental principles of ceremonies and music, till he has reached the five extreme points to which they conduct, and the three that have no positive existence, and be able to exhibit these all under heaven; and when evil is impending in any part of the kingdom, he must have a foreknowledge of it—such an one is he whom we denominate ‘the parent of the people.’

孔子閑居，子夏侍。子夏曰：“敢問詩云：‘凱弟君子，民之父母’，何如斯可謂民之父母矣？”孔子曰：“夫民之父母乎，必達於禮樂之原，以致五至，而行三無，以橫於天下。四方有敗，必先知之。此之謂民之父母矣。”³⁰

Zheng Xuan amplifies his explanation of the meaning of the formula “Confucius was at rest” already quoted by adding the following phrase to tailor it to this specific situation with Zixia:

Here he specifically deals with one disciple in attendance and explains for him the poem. His name is recorded so that he may be imitated.

猶使一子侍，為之說詩，著其氏言可法也。³¹

This scenario also worked with several students in attendance:

Zhongni “being at home at ease,” with Zizhang, Zigong, and

Yan You by him, their conversation went on from general matters to the subject of ceremonies. The Master said, “Sit down, you three, and I will discourse to you about ceremonies, so that you may rightly employ them everywhere and in all circumstances.” Zigong crossed over [Zi-zhang’s] mat, and replied, “Allow me to ask what you mean.” The Master said, “Respect shown without observing the rules of propriety is called vulgarity; courtesy without observing those rules is called forwardness; and boldness without observing them is called violence.” The Master added, “Forwardness takes away from gentleness and benevolence.”

仲尼燕居，子張、子貢、言游侍，縱言至於禮。子曰：“居！女三人者，吾語女禮，使女以禮周流無不遍也。”子貢越席而對曰：“敢問何如？”子曰：“敬而不中禮，謂之野；恭而不中禮，謂之給；勇而不中禮，謂之逆。”子曰：“給奪慈仁。”³²

Confucius probably intentionally set up the specific learning situation instead of it just being the spontaneous reaction to a question posed by Zengzi. This is the view of the Sui classicist Liu Xuan 劉炫 (ca. 546–613):

Confucius himself composed the *Classic of Filial Piety*; it was not a response from Zeng Shen inquiring about the topic. ... At the time, the foundations of moral conduct, filial piety and brotherly kindness, were hidden and not manifest. During this age the Master’s fate was on its downward side, the rites had collapsed and music had degenerated, and the teachings of names (and their proper ritual places) was about to be lost; this moved his sagely heart. Therefore, since disciples had the practice of posing questions, and Ruist masters had the duty of teaching and instructing, he fabricated the words of Zengzi in order to praise the rites through his responses. Thus it was not the case that Zengzi had actually posed this question.

孔子自作孝經本非曾參請業而對……當代孝悌德行之本隱而不彰夫子運偶禮樂崩壞名教將絕，特感聖心。因弟子有請問之道師儒有教誨之義，故假曾子之言以為對揚之體，乃非曾子實有問也。³³

²⁹ Cited in Fang Xiangdong, *Da Dai Liji huijiao jijie*, 1.2, n. 3.

³⁰ *Liji zhengyi*, 51.1a–b; James Legge, trans., *Li Chi Book of Rites*, ed. Ch’u Chai and Winberg Chai, 2 vols. (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1967), 2:278.

³¹ *Liji zhengyi*, 51.1a.

³² *Liji zhengyi*, 50.15b–16a; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:270.

³³ Liu Xuan 劉炫 (546–613), *Guwen Xiaojing shuyi* 古文孝經述義, in *Han-Wei yishu*

Confucius set up the teaching situation because of his concern to transmit the proper etiquette of filial conduct, given that morals and the rites were in danger of disappearing. He could do this because such a practice as pupils inquiring of masters, and masters imparting instructions was already an inherent part of the educational culture. But, Liu continues, if this were truly a spontaneous question from Zengzi, then Zengzi should have asked about every pericope (*zhang* 章) and Confucius should have responded to each question.

This account in the *Classic of Filial Piety* is particularly detailed; these actions should be considered to be ritualized given the explanation of ritual mentioned previously. But it may also have been inspired by a ritual precedent, for it includes such elements as an oral declamation, purposeful movement, and then more oral recitation. This would be reminiscent to later readers of the formulaic prayers or sacrificial ceremonies recorded on Zhou bronze inscriptions or *Shijing* poems. Martin Kern has isolated Mao 209, "Thorny Caltrop" (*Chuci* 楚茨), as an example of an ancient "performance text" that includes the speeches of several participants in the sacrifice whose responses to each other are still discernible in the text;³⁴ we may also presume some choreographed movement that is not mentioned. Perhaps, then, such conversations cum movements like standing and sitting evoked some ritual associations with antiquity in the minds of the participants in the teaching setting.

7.1.3 The Rite of Standing

As the opening passage of the *Classic of Filial Piety* cited previously reminds us, the act of standing often was part of the formal setting of the catechism, as pupil Zixia stood up to receive the Master's instructions, then was invited to resume his seat. A similar scenario is found in the *Records of the Ritualists*:

Binmou Jia rose up, left his mat, and addressed Confucius, saying, "On the long-continued warning [of the drum] in the

chao 汉魏遗书钞, ed. Wang Mo 王謨 (1731–1817), *Jinxi Wangshi Zikanben* 金溪王氏自刊本 ed., (1798), reproduced in Zhong Zhaopeng 钟肇鹏, *Guji congcan huibian* 古籍丛残汇编, 7 vols. (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, 2001), 5:817–30; p. 820.

³⁴ Martin Kern, "Shi Jing 詩經 Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of 'Chu ci' 楚茨 (Thorny Caltrop)," *Early China* 25 (2000): 49–111. A traditional study that also recognizes the roles of different speakers in this record of a ritual enactment is by Ling Tingkan 凌廷堪 (1757–1809), "Shi Chuci kao" 詩楚茨考, in *Jiaolitang wenji* 校礼堂文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2006), 117–19.

"Wu", I have heard your instructions 聞; but let me ask 問 how it is that after that first delay there is another, and that a long one?" The Master said, "Sit down, and I will tell you."

賓牟賈起，免席而請曰：“夫武之備戒之已久，則既聞命矣，敢問：遲之遲而又久，何也？”³⁵

The phrase "left his mat" (*mianxi* 免席) parallels the *bixi* (避席) of the *Classic of Filial Piety*. Standing was a required component in rituals, as evidenced in the *Ceremonials and Rituals*. For instance, a public ritual conducted by the director (*sizheng* 司正) required the guests to "return to their seats" (*fanzuo* 反坐) after "rising up in response" (*xingdui* 興對). According to Zheng Xuan, after the guests resumed their seats, the director withdrew and stood at the western corner of the room.³⁶ "Standing" is also associated with listening in the *Records of Ritualists*, "Quli shang," where it records that "a lad ... must stand straight and square, and not incline his head in hearing" 童立必方正不傾聽.³⁷

Standing is also closely associated with the process of learning after it has been initiated:

When sitting by his side, and the teacher puts a question, (the learner) should not reply till (the other) has finished. When requesting (instruction) on the subject of his studies, (the learner) should rise; when requesting further information, he should rise. When his father calls, (a youth) should not (merely) answer "yes," nor when his teacher calls. He should, with (a respectful) "yes," immediately rise (and go to them).

侍坐於先生：先生問焉，終則對。請業則起，請益則起。父召無諾，先生召無諾，唯而起。³⁸

Among the tatami tactics sketched in this chapter of the *Records of Ritualists* are how far a student should keep his mat from that of his teacher, what to do when visitors arrive on the scene, or how to react when a master yawns while seated on his mat, and the like. Further teachings on standing as part of the ritual of learning are also included. For instance, "when one is sitting in attendance on another of superior character or rank ... if the superior man put a question on a new subject, he should rise up in giving his reply" 侍坐於君子，君子問更端則起而對。³⁹

³⁵ *Liji zhengyi* 39.9a–9b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:122.

³⁶ *Yili zhushu* 15.11a–11b.

³⁷ *Liji zhengyi* 1.24a; Legge, *Li Chi*, 1:70.

³⁸ *Liji zhengyi* 2.9b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 1:75.

³⁹ *Liji zhengyi* 2.11a; Legge, *Li Chi*, 1:76.

The verb “to stand” (*li* 立), as found in the *Analepts*, perhaps carried with it some ancient associations from early Zhou ritual. An inscription on the “Ci ding” (此鼎) illustrates this particular usage: “It was the seventeenth year, twelfth month, after the growing brightness, *yimao* [day 52]. The king was in the Yi Palace of the Zhou Kang Palace. At dawn the king approached the grand chamber and assumed position. Supervisor of lands Maoshu at the right of Ci entered the gate and stood in the center of the hall.”⁴⁰ The phrase “stood in the center of the hall,” (*li zhongting* 立中廷), orients the location of standing in a ritual context. The phrase “assumed position” (*jiwei* 即位) is actually written “assumed a standing position” (*jili* 即立). The same orthography is used in the “Qiu Wei gui 裘衛簋”: “The King was at Zhou. [He] approached the grand chamber and assumed position 即立. Nanbo entered and at the right of Qiu Wei entered the gate and stood in the center of the hall.”⁴¹ This orthography is generally assumed to be a matter of the graph *li* 立 being a loan for *wei* 位, as in this phrase from the Old Text version of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*: “The Duke assumed the [standing] position 公即立.”⁴² In its earliest occurrences, perhaps the position it referred to was the standing position of participants in ritual as much as it did to the sitting position of the lord on his throne. The variation between *li* 立 and *wei* 位 is interesting in the context of standing carrying a ritual denotation. We should not forget that when first meeting Duke Ai, Confucius is described as “ascending the ancestral hall and standing in attendance 升堂立侍.”⁴³

A passage from the *Analepts* is relevant to this discussion of the easy alternation between *wei* and *li*; the phrase in question is “passing the vacant place of the prince”:

When he entered the palace gate, [Confucius] seemed to bend his body, as if it were not sufficient to admit him. When he was standing, he did not occupy the middle of the gateway; when he passed in or out, he did not tread upon the threshold. When he was passing the vacant place of the prince, his countenance

⁴⁰ Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, 80.

⁴¹ Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, 85.

⁴² *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhengyi*, “Jiaokanji” 校勘記, appended to *juan* 5, 1a. For modern scholarship on the question of loan graphs for this character, see Chou Fakao 周法高 et al., eds., *Jinwen gulin* 金文詁林, 16 vols. (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1994), 12:6194; Wang Haigen 王海根, *Gudai Hanyu tongjiazhi da zidian* 古代汉语通假字大字典 (Fuzhou: Fujian Renmin Chubanshe, 2006), 645.

⁴³ *Liji zhengyi* 51.7b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:283.

appeared to change.

入公門，鞠躬如也，如不容。立不中門，行不履闕。過位，色勃如也。⁴⁴

In a piece entitled “*Lunyu guxun xu*” 論語古訓序, Ruan Yuan endorses a reading that combines the two terms, parsing the phrase *guowei* 過位 not as referring to the position of the prince but to a minister: “This position then is the position taken by the minister standing in the middle of the court” 此位乃中廷臣立之位。⁴⁵

A different sense of “to stand” is found elsewhere in the *Analepts*. In the famous autobiographical encapsulation by Confucius in *Analepts* 2.4, he uses the verb “to stand” in the sense of “being established”: “The Master said, ‘When I was fifteen I set my resolve upon learning; at thirty I was established’” 吾十有五而志於學，三十而立。The *Zhonggong* 种弓 bamboo text contains an interesting expansion of the wording of “to be established” that closely links “being established” with learning and then with applied moral conduct. The dialogue between Confucius and one of his disciples named *Zhonggong*, strips 6, 23b, and 23a, read in the reconstructed order suggested by Chao Fulin, yields the following: “Learning is the foundation; it is the means by which one is established in life. ... As for conduct, if it accords with meekness for one day, in one day you will be established in goodness, and what you have studied will reach its fulfillment” 學，本也。所以立生也。夫行，順柔之一日，一日以善立，所學皆終。⁴⁶ In *Analepts* 16.13, Confucius directly connects study with learning the rites, as told to his son Boyu 伯魚: “If one does not study the rites, then one will have no means to be established” 不學禮無以立。Chen Mengjia 陈梦家 (1911–1966) interprets this line in the context of the rites: “This indicates that one would not know in which position to stand when participating in a ritual.”⁴⁷ This demonstrates that

⁴⁴ *Lunyu* 10.4; James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 5 vols. (1895; repr., Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), 1:228–29.

⁴⁵ Chen Hongsen 陳鴻森, “Ruan Yuan *Yanjingshi yiwen jicun*, 2” 阮元學經室遺文輯存二, *Dalu zazhi* 103, no. 2 (2001):38–48; p. 48.

⁴⁶ Chao Fulin 晁福林, “Shang Bo jian *Zhonggong shuzheng*” 上博簡仲弓疏証, *Kongzi yanjiu* 孔子研究 88, no. 2 (2005): 4–16; p. 5; the first reconstitution of this text out of a welter of scattered bamboo strips was established by Li Chaoyun 李朝远, in *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhangguo Chu zhushu* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書, ed. Ma Chengyuan 馬承源, 9 vols., (Shanghai: Guji Chubanshe, 2001–2012), 3:261–83.

⁴⁷ Chen Mengjia, *Shangshu tonglun*, 157.

being established in life refers to knowing how to take one's place in a society that is shot through with ritual obligations in daily family and social life, including the proper places to stand or positions to take.⁴⁸

A final teaching situation from the *Family Sayings of Confucius* illustrates most of the points raised earlier, including Confucius's initially not responding to a question that he deemed unworthy:

Confucius was at ease, and Zeng Shen was in attendance. Confucius said, "Shen, the gentlemen of today can only get to hear about the words of the scholars and grandees. As for the words of gentlemen, they rarely hear them. How sad! If I use the position of a ruling king to orally instruct them, then they will be able to transform all-under-heaven without even leaving their doors." Zengzi rose, descended from his mat and responded, saying: "May I presume to ask what are the words of a ruling king?" Confucius did not respond. Zengzi said, "Attending you while you are at ease makes it hard for me to respond; this is why I presume to ask." Confucius still did not respond. Zengzi appeared timid yet respectful. He gathered his robes about him and withdrew. He turned his back on his mat and stood there. After a while, Confucius sighed, regarded Zengzi and spoke to him, saying: "Shen, may I clearly tell you the way of a ruling king?" Zengzi said, "I do not presume to be worthy. Please allow me to learn according to that which I have heard."

孔子閑居，曾參侍。孔子曰：“參乎！今之君子，唯士與大夫言聞也。至於君子之言者，希也。於乎！吾以王言之其出不戶牖而化天下。”曾子起，下席而對曰：“敢問何謂王者言？”孔子不應。曾子曰：“侍夫子之閒也難，是以敢問。”孔子又不應。曾子肅然而懼，捫衣而退，負席而立。有頃，孔子歎息，顧謂曾子曰：“參！女可語明王之道。”曾子曰：“非敢以為足，請因所聞而學焉。”⁴⁹

One incident recorded in the *Records of Ritualists* illustrates the need for a student

⁴⁸ But Ban Gu has a more simple explanation of the term “to be established”: the fifteen-year period between the ages fifteen and thirty was just enough time to master the *Five Classics* if three years were spent on each classic. Hence, the term should be understood as “to establish one's learning” (*lixue* 立學). *Hanshu* 30.1723. Other authorities, both for and against, are cited by Cheng Shude, *Lunyu jishi*, 3.1126.

⁴⁹ Kongzi jiaoyu, “Wangyan jie” 王言解, 1.4.

to stand up at the end of a lesson. Chapter 29, “Confucius at Ease” 孔子閑居, is entirely devoted to a lengthy exposition by Confucius on several topics, including the role of the sovereign as parent of the people, the “Five Extreme Points” (*wuzhi* 無至), the “Three Lacking Things” (*sanwu* 三無), and “Five Starting Points” (*wuqi* 五起), and the like, liberally illustrated by quotes from the *Poems*. Zixia was very inspired by Confucius's enlightening instructions:

Zixia rose up with a sudden joy, and, standing with his back to the wall, said, “Your disciple dares not but receive [your instructions] with reverence.”

子夏蹶然而起，負牆而立曰：弟子敢不承乎！⁵⁰

We must assume that rising up at the conclusion of the lesson was more than an outburst of enthusiasm; if not, it would have been a breach of decorum. Ultimately, then, in order for a pupil to assume his standing in a ritualized society, he must first stand up and engage in a conversation with a master and sit down to hear his teachings; he then stands up again to seek clarification and then resumes his seat for more instruction. Finally, he stands up and gets on with putting these teachings into practice.

The eight traditional components of ritual—one or more performers; an audience; a location; purpose; meaning, subject matter, and content; temporal span; actions; and foods and/or paraphernalia used in the performance—are all present in Confucius's teaching settings described in the *Records of Ritualists* and other early works. There should be no question, therefore, of analyzing these settings from the perspective of ritual nature and purpose.⁵¹

7.2 Harmonizing Orality and Textuality

In *Analects* 1.4, Zixia includes among those aspects of his daily conduct that he examines himself thrice each day on whether or not he has repeated what has been transmitted 傳不習乎. An early sound gloss preserved by Zheng Xuan deriving from the Lu version of the *Analects* says that this graph should be pronounced as *zhuan*, indicating that it should be read as a noun, yielding the word “commentary” out of an earlier meaning of “what was transmitted.”⁵² Of course

⁵⁰ *Liji zhengyi* 51.7b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:283.

⁵¹ For these eight components, see Joyce Marcus, “Rethinking Ritual,” in *The Archaeology of Ritual*, ed. Evangelos Kyriakidis (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, 2007), 43–76; p. 48.

⁵² Nevertheless, Zheng Xuan preferred to follow the “ancient text” (*guben* 古本)

what a teacher has transmitted orally can be considered a “commentary,” whether it is transcribed or not.

Speech and the written word are associated in another way by Zengzi in *Analects* 12.24: “The gentleman associates with friends because of texts, and uses these friends to aid in the development of his own humaneness” 君子以文會友，以友輔仁。The thrust of this passage is that one must both study the ancient classics and then discuss and debate them with friends to aid in moral development. The *Garden of Sayings* (*Shuoyuan* 說苑), compiled by Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–76 BC), includes a comment on this passage that captures the essence of Master Zeng’s remarks: “Having worthy teachers and excellent friends at his side, and the *Book of Odes*, *Documents*, *Ritual*, and *Music* spread out in front of him—few indeed ever abandon the Way and go bad in such an environment” 賢師良友在其側，詩書禮樂陳於前，棄而為不善者，鮮矣。⁵³

The difference between an oral utterance and the written text that preserves it is only the difference in the medium employed to transmit the “message” and how permanent a record it forms. In fact, Confucius’s assertion that he “transmits but does not create” (*shu er bu zuo*) may be parsed to reflect different physical media of the same intellectual message as he was willing “to transmit” via speech but not “create” by writing. In the medieval commentarial tradition, sometimes the linkage is reversed to mean “to create through transmittal” (*zuoshu* 作述), thus effacing the differences in media. This is illustrated by classical commentator Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010) apropos the formation of one early classic: “As for the *Classic of Filial Piety*, it is what Confucius created through transmittal” 夫孝經者，孔子之所述作也。⁵⁴ Kong Anguo’s 孔安國 (fl. 156–74) preface to the *Documents* is described by Lu Deming 陸德明 (556–627) as being composed in the same fashion: “This is what Mr. Kong created through transmittal concerning the age in which the *Documents* originated, and the course of him turning this narration into a commentary. Hence it has been passed down and I explain it. Now I add sound glosses according to the old pronunciations” 此孔氏所作述尚書起之時代，并敘為注之由，故相

version of the *Lunyu* just as he did in every other instance of textual variation; see Wang Guowei 王國維, *Guantang jilin* 觀堂集林, 2 vols. (1959; repr., Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2004), 1:170.

⁵³ Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–76 BC), *Shuoyuan* 說苑 (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue, 1985), 16.430; Edward Slingerland, trans., *Confucius Analects, With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003), 137.

⁵⁴ See Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010), “*Xiaojing zhushu xu*” 孝經注疏序, 1a.

承講之。今依舊為音。⁵⁵

The Guodian bamboo document entitled “Xing” 性, quoted in chapter 4, includes an interesting reading relevant to our purpose here. The graph employed for “arts” (*shu* 朮), referring to the early classics, is the Chu orthography that later was specialized as “to transmit” (*shu* 述).⁵⁶ Although the principle of homographic writing through loan characters certainly still obtained when this text was composed, and the word in question is obviously used here as “arts,” it would not be too far-fetched to understand the term as conveying a secondary meaning of “the transmitted arts/classics.” And there was no distinction between the physical “edition” of the written text verses the oral “message” of the classics. The act of transmittal was the key activity, not the medium of transmission.

In a recent work that stresses the supremacy of the written word over the oral utterance, *Writing and Authority in Early China*, Mark Edward Lewis interprets aspersions in the *Analects* against glibness (*ning* 佞) as negativity toward speech in general. It is true that it is better to be reticent and sparse in one’s words, as the *Analects* concedes.⁵⁷ But the problem with being *ning* is that it aggrandizes the self rather than educates others. Actually, based on their phonetic similarities, the opposite of *ning*, **nieng* “glibly claiming to be ren,” is to actually be *ren* 仁 **hjen*; so the actual contrast is between false words and true actions in the sphere of humaneness. Besides, Confucius endorsed the use of *wen* 文 and *wenci* 文辭 in speech, implying a place for elevated and polished language, so there is nothing inherently wrong with being loquacious. Graphically, the relationship between the two antonyms *ren* and *ning* was demonstrated by Ruan Yuan, who also showed how anciently they were close semantically as well.⁵⁸ So

⁵⁵ Lu Deming 陸德明 (550–630), *Xinjiao suoyin Jingdian shiwen*, 1:36 (3.1a).

⁵⁶ Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodui* 郭店楚簡校讀記 (Beijing: Daxue Chubanshe, 2002), 106.

⁵⁷ Lewis, *Writing and Authority*, 84; see p. 394n18, for the quotes from the *Analects* at the base of Lewis’s argument.

⁵⁸ He claims that before the Shang dynasty there was no graph for either *ren* or *ning*; they were only invented sometime between the Shang and Zhou periods. Instead, the graphs *ren* 壬 and 任 were used for both homophonous words (an orthography for *ning* that is still discernable in the received text of the *Documents*, i.e. 4.18a for 壬 and 3.19b for 任). Since *ren* 仁 and *ning* 佞 were similar graphically, merely differing in the addition of the *nü* 女 element, these two graphs were often borrowed for each other. See Ruan Yuan, *Yanjingshi ji*, 4 (HQJJ ed., 6:8176). In keeping with this line of thought, though derived from the work of David Nivison, not Ruan Yuan, Slingerland translates these two words as meaning originally “noble in form”

there is no “problem of language” built into the *Analects* as claimed by Lewis (except for the problem all post-modernist readers see in deriving meaning from texts). And it is certainly not true that “the entire structure of the *Analects* problematizes language,”⁵⁹ except on the level of hermeneutics for later readers—that is not the problem of the text.⁶⁰ Rather, the structure of the *Analects* privileges language, as it is made up of the enunciation scene, the catechism or dialogue in oral teaching situations. David Schaberg’s work on the oral sources, rhetorical devices, and narrative strategies of the speeches in the *Zuozhuan* and the *Guoyu*, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*, although of a narrower compass, is a welcome corrective to Lewis’s otherwise intriguing and valuable study centered on the written text.

In the bamboo strip manuscript *Confucius’ Discourses on the Poems* (*Kongzi shilun* 孔子詩論) the first paragraph preserves a line that mentions “embellished language” *wen* 文, reminiscent of the *wenci* 文辭, semi-translated by David Schaberg as “words of *wen*,” found in *Zuo’s Commentary* and *Discourses of the States*.⁶¹ Another reading of this line, admittedly secondary, is that “the text does not obscure speech” (*wen wang yin yan* 文亡隱言),⁶²

and “noble in speech,” reflecting their ultimate approximation; *Confucius Analects*, 2 in connection with *Lunyu* 1.3. Initially then, *ning* was a benign loquaciousness that turned negative when it went inward to promote the self. See also *Erya*, 2.17a for other graphic variants of *ning*.

⁵⁹ Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China*, 84.

⁶⁰ A recent attempt at mediating between Confucius’s negative as well as positive views on language is Wu Xiaoming 伍曉明, “Zi yu wu yan”—*Lunyu* zhong de lunbian yu Kongzi dui ‘yan’ de taidu” 子欲無言—論語中的論辯與孔子對言的態度. *Hanxue yanjiu* 26, no. 1 (2008): 1–34.

⁶¹ According to David Schaberg, “Sima Qian’s use of the term [*wen*] confirms that among the literate classes of his age it denoted literary or rhetorical elegance, usually in the service of Confucian ideas. The term is linked with Confucius and his composition of the *Chunqiu*, in the writing of which the sage “made its words [*ci*] and *wen* concise”; the traditions connected with the *Chunqiu* had first to be transmitted orally because they contained “words of *wen* [*wenci*] with statements of praise and blame”; David Schaberg, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 86.

⁶² Ma Chengyuan 馬承源, ed., *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chuzhushu* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書, 9 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 2001–2012), 1:123. Li Xueqin 李學勤 prefers to read *yan* as *yi* 意; see “Tan *Shilun* ‘shi wang yin zhi pian’” 談詩論詩亡隱志章, in *Zhongguo gudai wenming yanjiu* 中國古代文明

indicating that the speech behind a recorded text is still apparent to the reader.⁶³ And since most texts were accessed through chanting, the verbal basis of a text was all the more pronounced.

7.3 The Oral Associations of the Title *Lunyu*

In *Zuo’s Commentary*, Confucius expresses a sentiment related to the *Kongzi shilun* passage quoted previously, which I translate with the secondary meanings revealed:

Confucius heard it, and spoke to Zigong, saying: “An old record has it that speech is sufficient for conveying the intention; a text is sufficient for conveying speech. If one does not speak then it is hard to know one’s intention; and if speech is not recorded in a text, then it will not circulate very far.”

仲你曰：志有之，言以足志，文以足言，不言難以知其志。

言之無文，行而不遠。⁶⁴

The etymology of the title *Lunyu* underscores the oral element in exegesis. Xu Shen’s 許慎 (ca. 58–147) *Shuowen jiezi* glosses the word *lun* 論 as *yi* 議 or “to deliberate.” For some reason, this reading has been neglected in favor of either Liu Xi’s 劉熙 (b. ca. AD 160) paronomastic gloss in the *Shiming* 釋名 (followed by Zheng Xuan) of *lun* 倫, “human relations,” and by extension the “principles of human relations (*lunli* 倫理), or the reading of *lun* as “selecting” or “editing,” a

研究 (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2004), 255–62. The majority of modern commentators of this passage follow the reading of *yan*; see Liu Xinfang 劉信芳, *Kongzi shilun shuxue* 孔子詩論述學 (Hefei: Anhui Daxue Chubanshe, 2003): 107–9.

⁶³ The plausibility of this translation is supported by a passage from the *Zhouyi zhengyi* 7.31a: “The Master said, ‘The creation of the images by the sages was to fully express their intentions; they set up the hexagrams to fully express the truth or falsity of things; they attached line readings to them to fully express their words’” 子曰：聖人之立象以盡意，設卦以盡情偽，繫辭焉以盡其言。Rao Zongyi 饒宗頤 explains that the “Xici” as a document (*wen*) is hence equivalent to the word *text* (*wen*) in the *Kongzi lunshi*. Other commentators prefer to read *wen* as “literary polish” or “polished speech” (*wencai* 文采). See the authorities cited at Liu Xinfang, *Kongzi shilun shuxue*, 106–9.

⁶⁴ *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, “Xianggong,” year 25. Also recorded, with slight variations, in *Kongzi jiaoyu*, “Zhenglun jie” 正論解, 9.96–97. See discussion by Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849), *Yanjingshi ji* 7.32b (HQJJ ed.), “Wenyan shuo” 文言說.

later definition expounded by Huang Kan 皇侃 (488–545) (alongside other etymologies) that currently enjoys wide acceptance.⁶⁵ Xu Shen further interprets *yu* 語 as *lun* 論, and *yi* 議 as *yu* 語, clear indications that he believed that the same type of oral activity was being described by these three words.⁶⁶ A variant reading of the *Shuowen* preserved in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 glosses *lun* as *nan* 難, as in “to dispute” (“to trouble by asking difficult questions”).⁶⁷ But elsewhere Xu Shen reserves this interpretation for another crucial term, that of *yu* 語; he states that “when deliberation *lun* 論 turns disputatious it is called *yu* 語” or “debate” 論難曰語.⁶⁸ In light of these etymologies, verified by numerous textual examples collected by Yu Qun,⁶⁹ the correct English rendering of the title of the *Lunyu* is “Deliberations and Debates.”

It is important to recall that the three earliest editions of the *Analects* recorded in the various Han bibliographical monographs are only referred to as *Lun*, not *Lunyu*: the *Old Deliberations* (*Gu Lun* 古論), the *Qi Deliberations* (*Qi Lun* 齊論), and the *Lu Deliberations* (*Lu Lun* 魯論). Makeham notes that Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (ca. 179–104 BC) also refers to the *Analects* as the *Deliberations* in his *Luxuriant Dew from the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋繁露.⁷⁰ But since these texts are called merely *lun*, it is possible that this was the earliest designation for these versions of the *Lunyu* before the full name first surfaced around 140 BC.⁷¹ The “deliberations” then were the records, par

⁶⁵ Huang Kan’s understanding of the word *lun* is treated by John Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators: Chinese Commentators and Commentaries on the Analects* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 89–91. For other historical and modern attempts to gloss *lun*, see Yu Qun 余群, “*Lunyu* shuming xinjie—jian yu Ao Jing xiansheng shangque” 论语书名新解—兼与敖晶先生商榷, *Kongzi yanjiu* 95 (2006): 121–26; Yu Qun ultimately opts for Xu Shen’s original gloss of *lun* as “deliberation” and illustrates how it fits most usages of the word in early texts when used as a verb.

⁶⁶ A variant gloss on the word *yi* “deliberation” is preserved by Wang Yun 王筠 (1784–1854), *Shuowen judou* 说文句读 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1988), 5.9a, that of *mou* 謀, which again introduces the element of difficulties, for Xu explains it as “pondering over difficulties” 慮難曰謀.

⁶⁷ For all of these different glosses, see Gui Fu 桂馥, *Shuowen jiezi yizheng* 说文解字义证 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1998), 7.21a.

⁶⁸ *Shuowen jiezi yizheng*, 7.11b. Gui Fu preserves a variation of this early gloss on *yu*: “Responding to difficult points is called debate” 答難曰語.

⁶⁹ Yu Qun, “*Lunyu* shuming xinjie.”

⁷⁰ As discussed by Makeham, “The Formation of the *Lunyu* as a book,” 12n46.

⁷¹ Makeham, “The Formation of the *Lunyu* as a book,” 13.

excellence, of the oral exchanges of the Master; the addition of the word “debates” (*yu*) merely completed the pleonasm.

The course of how Zuo Qiuming 左丘明 (556–451 BC) instructed his disciples is very relevant to the combination of oral exegesis and written commentary. Ban Gu describes him as having “deliberated” (*lun*) over his basic matter before recording it down in the form of a commentary to insure the accurate transmission of his exegesis:

In ancient times kings had hereditary offices for scribes. Any action of a lord had to be recorded; this insured that he would be circumspect in his speech and actions, and honor the instituted model. The Scribe of the Left recorded speech, and the Scribe of the Right recorded events. Events formed the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and speech formed the *Documents*. All the emperors and kings were the same. After the decline of the house of Zhou, the records became scattered and incomplete. ... Qiuming feared that his disciples would each follow their own opinions and thereby lose the true meaning; hence he deliberated over his basic matter before composing his commentary. He clarified that the Master had not orally explained the classics based on empty words.⁷² The great men whom the *Spring and Autumn Annals* disparaged were contemporary rulers and ministers who possessed authority and influence. These facts were all incorporated in the commentary to cover them up in the book [*Spring and Autumn Annals*] and not promulgated, avoiding difficulties with contemporaries. By the end of the age, they were circulated via oral explanations; hence there resulted the commentaries of Gongyang, Guliang, Zou, and Jia. Among these four specialists, the Gongyang and Guliang commentaries were set up in the official academies; but the Zou commentary lacked a master, and the Jia commentary had no written text.

古之王者世有史官，君舉必書，所以慎言行，昭法式也。左史記言，右史記事，事為春秋，言為尚書，帝王靡不同之。周室既微，載籍殘缺……丘明恐弟子各安其意，以失其真，故論本事而作傳，明夫子不以空言說經也。春秋所貶損大人當世君臣，有威權勢力，其事實皆形於傳，是以隱其書而不宣，所以免時難也。及末世口說流行，故有公

⁷² The passage, starting with “Qiuming feared” is based on *Shiji* 14.509, where the original reads for the last sentence: “Hence he followed Confucius’ historical record and in every respect deliberated over his words” 故因孔子史記具論其語。

羊、穀梁、鄒、夾之傳。四家之中，公羊、穀梁立於學官，
鄒氏無師，夾氏未有書。⁷³

The first entry in chapter 1 of the *Analects*, “Xue’er,” is emblematic of the oral exegete, for the three elements it contains—study, like-minded colleagues, and the gentleman—are all mentioned in the commentary to *Changes*, Hexagram 58, “Dui” 兌, a hexagram associated with speaking: “THE IMAGE. Lakes resting one on the other: / The image of THE JOYOUS. / Thus the superior man joins with his friends / For discussion and practice” 象曰麗澤。兌，君子以朋友講習。⁷⁴ According to modern specialist Tang Wenming, the opening statement in the *Analects* then is an exegetical comment (*shujie* 疏解) on Hexagram 58.⁷⁵ It would be interesting indeed to identify other passages of the *Analects* that are alluding to, reflecting on, or resonating with earlier classical texts in this sort of oral exegesis.⁷⁶

Many other instances of the importance of orality in conjunction with the teaching and transmitting of classical learning are evident, some obvious and some subtle. Earlier, I cited a passage from the *Analects* to indicate that textual exegesis was carried on as oral exegesis. *Analects* 5.13 reads: “Zigong said, ‘The textual expositions of the master can be heard, but the master’s words about human nature and the way of Heaven cannot be heard.’” The verb in this passage “to be heard” (*wen* 聞) was used formulaically instead of the normal “The Master said,” in several of the newly recovered Confucian texts from the ancient state of Chu; it took the formulation of “It has been heard that” (聞之曰).⁷⁷ This formula

⁷³ *Hanshu* 30.1715.

⁷⁴ *Zhouyi zhengyi* 6.9b; Wilhelm, trans., *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 224.

⁷⁵ See Tang Wenming 唐文明, “Lunyu ‘Xue’er” pian shouzhong Yi jie” 论语学而篇首章易解, *Kongzi yanjiu* 62 (2000): 121–22; p. 121. The connection between *Analects* 1.1 and hexagram 58 was noticed earlier by Yang Shuda 楊樹達 (1885–1956), *Lunyu shuzheng* 論語疏證, in *Lunyu* (SBYJ ed.), 3.2488.

⁷⁶ Feng Yu-lan regards *Analects* 13.22 as a comment on Hexagram 32; see Feng Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 1, *The Period of the Philosophers: From the Beginnings to Circa 100 BC*, trans. Derk Bodde, 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 1:65.

⁷⁷ This formula occurred every time a new topic was broached in the bamboo text known as *Congzheng* 從政; in other words, it corresponded to a new verse; it also is found in the *Ziyi* 緇衣 text from Chu as well as the same text excavated at Guodian 郭店 as well as in the received version of the “Ziyi” chapter in the *Records of Ritualists*. For a discussion of this formulaic phraseology, see Yang Chaoming 楊朝明, “Shang-Bo zhushu *Congzheng* pian yu Zisizi” 上博竹書從政篇與子思子, *Kongzi yanjiu* 88 (2005): 17–24; pp. 19–20.

is reminiscent of *Analects* 19.17 and 18, both of which commence with the formula “I heard it from the master” 吾聞諸夫子. It is notable that some disciples recorded the fact that Confucius had spoken, emphasizing speech as act, while others noted what they had heard, emphasizing speech as message. Another dichotomy inherent in language of the period, noticed by Yan Ruoku 閻若璩 (1636–1704), was the prominent use of the word *yan* 言 before the Qin/Han period in preference to words normally understood as *wen* 文, highlighting the oral aspect language over its written manifestation.⁷⁸ And a dim reflection of the early dialectic of the catechism is possibly found in the later commentarial genre of the *yishu* 義疏, or “Elucidation.” The *Yishu* is regarded by some as deriving from the record of the lectures of masters or of public debates between a master and a designated interlocutor. Traditionally viewed as a “subcommentary” on an earlier commentary, the earliest surviving *yishu* is Huang Kan’s *Elucidation of the Meaning of the Analects* 論語義疏.⁷⁹

The famous autobiographical distillation of Confucius’s own progress through study and moral development recorded in *Analects* 2.4, itself depended on oral exegesis: “At sixty my ear accorded.” According to Zheng Xuan’s gloss, this meant that “When his ears heard the words, he then realized their subtle meanings” 耳聞其言，而知其微旨。⁸⁰ Mencius himself depended on this intelligence of the listener to be persuaded by the rhetoric of the orator as he was praised at being good at debate; this skill was necessary to counteract heterodox theories currently challenging Confucianism:

I also wish to rectify men’s hearts, and to put an end to those perverse doctrines, to oppose their one-sided actions and banish away their licentious expressions;—and thus to carry on the work of the three sages. Do I do so because I am fond of disputing? I am compelled to do so.

我亦欲正人心，息邪說，距詖行，放淫辭，以承三聖者；豈好辯哉？予不得已也。⁸¹

⁷⁸ *Sishu shidi* 四書釋地 (HQJJ ed.), 1:240 (4.36b).

⁷⁹ For an introduction to this work and the provenance and purpose of this genre, see Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators*, 86–89.

⁸⁰ Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200), preserved by He Yan at *Zhengping ban Lunyu jijie* 正平版論語集解 (SBYJ ed.), 1:5. For a modern discussion of the phrase “the ear accorded,” see Wang Yong 王勇 and Wu Changcheng 吳長城, “‘Ershun’ zhongjie pingyi ji wo jian” 耳順眾解評議及我見, *Kongzi yanjiu* 62 (2000): 123–24.

⁸¹ *Mencius* 3B9; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 2:284.

Apparently, being disputatious is not due to the man but to the nature of the task. Mencius concludes that "being able to refute Yang Zhu and Modi through debate makes one a disciple of the sage" 能言距楊墨者，聖人之徒也。⁸² By utilizing his skills in the realm of oral discourse, Mencius followed the earlier example of the Sage in explaining the classics to students, then transmitted them (*shu*) to latter ages by writing his teachings down in the form of highly polished, readable dialogues.

In the cultural milieu of the Guodian manuscripts, hearing had developed into a prominent part of the process of moral self-cultivation. The *Five Conducts* is particularly expressive in this regard. Witness the final passage (28), as pieced together by Holloway:

Those that hear the way and are happy are those that like humanity. Those that hear the way and are awed by it are those who are fond of righteousness. Those who hear the way and are reverent are those who are fond of the rites. Those who hear the way and are musical are those who like virtue.

聞道而悅者，好仁者也。聞道而畏者，好義者也。聞道而恭者，好禮者也。聞道而樂者，好德者也。⁸³

Holloway explains the connection between hearing and morality as follows:

Moral cultivation involves rhetoric. Hearing the way from others helps morality to form within us. Instead of being inborn like human nature, morality has to first develop internally and then become manifest externally through changes in our bodies and our voices. Part of the propagation of morality to others involves their observing and hearing outwardly manifest ethical signs. Hearing the words and recognizing the appearance of a morally superior individual is part of developing sagacity and wisdom. Of these two manifestations, the auditory is privileged as the higher level of attainment.⁸⁴

7.4 The Making of a Scholastic Lineage

The term *sishu* 私淑, important in the transmission of the legitimate

⁸² Mencius 3B9, my translation.

⁸³ Jingmenshi Bowuguan 荆门市博物馆, ed., *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹簡 (1998; repr., Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 2005), 151; Holloway, *Guodian*, 139.

⁸⁴ Kenneth W. Holloway, *Guodian: The Newly Discovered Seeds of Chinese Religious and Political Philosophy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 9.

Confucian line, literally means "to privately cultivate"; it is used by Mencius, who said, "Although I could not be a disciple of Confucius himself, I have endeavored to cultivate my virtue by means of others who were."⁸⁵ Through this line of thinking, virtually all commentators on the classics were linked backwards to the Master through a lineage of classical scholars who were all busy cultivating themselves on the basis of earlier scholars. As Ruan Yuan frames it, "Scholars over a hundred generations have all taken Kongzi as their model" 百世學者皆取法孔子矣。⁸⁶ Zhu Xi sets a tangible example as he incorporates this veneration into a daily rite, for according to the biographical obituary (*xingzhuang* 行狀) composed by his student and son-in-law Huang Gan 黃幹 (1152–1221), in the early morning "he would worship at the family shrine and then bow before the portrait of Confucius. He would then withdraw to his study."⁸⁷ The descendants of Yan Hui, Zengzi, and Mengzi, according to Kong Demao, a seventy-seventh generation descendant of Confucius, in her oral history of life in the Confucian mansion during the first half of the twentieth century, were called the "sages's descendants."⁸⁸ She explains that they were officially regarded as members of the extended clan; "their relationship with the Kong family was like that between the low ranking and high ranking households of a single clan."⁸⁹ They had substantial privileges and responsibilities in that they accompanied the head of the clan to the capital to visit the emperor and to perform the rites at the national academy and had local ritual responsibilities at Qufu.⁹⁰ The adoption of the descendants of Confucius's two favorite disciples and his most influential intellectual inheritor into the clan was therefore much more than a literary-scholarly conceit or pro forma gesture. Furthermore, it reinforces our interpretation that scholastic lineages mirrored genealogical lineages.

We have already seen how lineages of disciples, the system of the so-

⁸⁵ Mengzi 4B22; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 2:328. Chapter 10 will treat this concept in depth.

⁸⁶ *Yanjingshi ji* 1.7b (HQJJ, ed.) 6:8150.

⁸⁷ Wing-tsit Chan, *Zhu Xi*, 4. For some more formal instances of Zhu Xi sacrificing to Confucius as the head of his "intellectual lineage" along the lines of an imagined ancestral cult, see Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, "Zhu Xi's Prayers to the Spirit of Confucius and Claim to the Transmission of the Way," *Philosophy East and West* 54 (2004): 489–513.

⁸⁸ Kong Demao, *In the Mansion of Confucius' Descendants: An Oral History by Kong Demao and Ke Lan* (Beijing: New World Press, 1984), 22. A group picture of the descendants of Yan Hui, Zengzi, and Mencius is included among the numerous photographs that grace the book.

⁸⁹ Kong Demao, *In the Mansion of Confucius' Descendants*, 22.

⁹⁰ Kong Demao, *In the Mansion of Confucius' Descendants*, 22.

called “regulations from a specialist” (*shifa*), evolved into schools of “lineage specialists” (*jiafa*), members of the same intellectual lineage who devoted themselves to the same text or same hermeneutic framework of classical exegesis.⁹¹ This notion of an exegetical lineage finds its theoretical inspiration in the *Records of Ritualists*, “Zhongyong” 中庸: “Zhongni handed down [the views] of Yao and Shun as if they had been his ancestors, and elegantly displayed [the ways] of Wen and Wu, taking them as his model” 中尼祖述堯舜，憲章文武。⁹² We may even link the practice of composing commentaries to the mindset of honoring ancestral lineages by transmitting over time, not messages from texts, but the virtue and great deeds of the ancestors. *Records of Ritualists*, “Jitong” 祭統, explains this in depth:

The tripods [at the sacrifices] had inscriptions on them. The maker of an inscription named himself, and took occasion to praise and set forth the excellent qualities of his ancestors, and clearly exhibit them to future generations. ... By the one panegyric of an inscription benefit accrues to the ancestors, to their descendant and to others after them. Hence when a superior man looks at an inscription, while he admires those whom it praises, he also admires him who made it.

In this way the superior men of antiquity panegyricized the excellent qualities of their ancestors, and clearly exhibited them to future generations, thereby having the opportunity to introduce their own personality and magnify their states. If descendants who maintain their ancestral temples and the altars to the spirits of the land and grain, praised their ancestors for good qualities which they did not possess, that was falsehood; if they did not take knowledge of the good qualities which they did possess, that showed their want of intelligence; if they knew them and did not transmit them (by their inscriptions), that showed a want of virtue—these are three things of which a superior man should have been ashamed.

夫鼎有銘，銘者，自名也。自名以稱揚其先祖之美，而明

⁹¹ For exegetical lineages during the Qing, which provide the clearest examples, see Benjamin Elman, *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship: The Ch'ang-chou School of New Text Confucianism in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) and Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

⁹² *Liji zhengyi* 53.12b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:326.

著之後世者也……夫銘者，壹稱而上下皆得焉耳矣。是故君子之觀於銘也，既美其所稱，又美其所為。。。古之君子論譏其先祖之美，而明著之後世者也。以比其身，以重其國家如此。子孫之守宗廟社稷者，其先祖無美而稱之，是誣也；有善而弗知，不明也；知而弗傳，不仁也。此三者，君子之所恥也。⁹³

In this manner, a commentary, whether oral or written, transmitted the “excellent qualities” of the founding master of the exegetical lineage, both in terms of his personal moral actions as well as his views on the classics.

The inscription that functioned as a commentary was cast inside cherished bronze vessels. The ubiquitous image of ritual vessels in rites large and small, with and without inscriptions, also carried other associations, and may have played a symbolic as well as a functional role.⁹⁴ In fact, function, image, sound, and symbol all certainly combined to produce an effect on participants and observers of ritual ceremonies. Edward Shaughnessy notes the homophony between the terms *ding* 鼎 *tinx “tripod” and *zheng* 政 *tjinh “to govern,” and their essential affinity through belonging to the same word family.⁹⁵ This suggests a chain of associations commencing with “tripod,” leading to “to govern,” then to “correct the self,” *zheng* 正 “to correct” being essentially the same word as “to govern.”⁹⁶ The sounds of bronze bells signify ritual performance. Together with jade chimes, these sounds are called “ritual signifiers” by Holloway; when heard by Mencius they suggested the beginning and ending of cultivating wisdom and sagacity.⁹⁷ Therefore, when Sima Qian records that the Yellow Emperor established his administration and devised his sacrificial system so that the “myriad states were at peace,” he conveniently obtained a “precious tripod” (*baoding* 寶鼎) that confirmed his right to govern by “correcting” the age and people.⁹⁸

⁹³ *Liji zhengyi*, 49.18b, 19a, 20a–b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2.251, 252, 253.

⁹⁴ See Herbert Fingarett, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1972), 73–74, for a discussion of the imagery of ritual vessels.

⁹⁵ Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, 105n53.

⁹⁶ William G. Boltz rather posits an old Chinese reading of *ding* that links it phonetically with the word *zei* 賊 “to slay” or *ze* 則, which contains the suggestive element of a knife. See Boltz, “Three Footnotes on the *Ting* 鼎 ‘Tripod,’” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 110 (1990): 1–8. His translation of *ding* as “to slay (in a sacrificial sense)” does link the word with the process of governing through ritual sacrifice.

⁹⁷ Mencius 5B1; Holloway, *Guodian*, 72.

⁹⁸ *Shiji* 1.6.

Back to scholastic genealogy. The veneration accorded Confucius as the ultimate “ancestor” of all exegetical lineages was itself reproduced in master-disciple relationships over time. But just as masters such as Zhu Xi and Ruan Yuan took Confucius as their exemplar, so too did disciples imitate the task of compiling the words of their masters. One instructive example was already mentioned; Wang Yinshi recorded the teachings of his father, Wang Niansun, in his *Jingyi shuwen*. Another notable instance is Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735–1815), who venerated his senior colleague, Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–1777), by compiling Dai’s private, conversational teachings that had not made it into any of his own works. These thirty-six sayings, mostly introduced formulaically with “The Master said” (*xiansheng yan* 先生言) are reminiscent of the *Analects* in that they contain direct quotes, descriptions, and anecdotes about contemporary classicists, books, study methods and accomplishments, and so on. Number two reads, “Yan Ruoku was capable of research but was incapable of composing essays; Gu Yanwu’s essays were superior.” 閻百詩能考核而不能做文章；顧亭林文章較勝。 Number nine: “In order to learn one must first read the *Rites*; to read the *Rites* one must know how to learn the Sage’s intentions in ritual” 為學須先讀禮，讀禮要知得聖人禮意。 Number eleven: “Zheng Xuan’s learning is all found in his *Annotations of the Three Ritual Texts*; it should be esteemed equally with the three ‘Commentaries’ on the *Chunqiu*.” 鄭康成之學，盡在三禮注，當與春秋三傳並重。 And twenty-nine:

When the Master was young, he studied ancient prose. He selected ten chapters from the Wang edition of the *Shiji*. The first one was the “Basic Annals of Xiang Yu,” then the “Connected Traditions of the Lord of Xinling,” then the “Monograph on Commodities.” I do not remember the other titles. He profoundly clarified the subtleties of their structures, purport, and diction. Master Zheng Bingye 鄭炳也 (fl. 18th century) borrowed it to read. I have heard that the Minister of Revenue Kong [Guangsen 孔廣森 (1751–1786)] used it to teach his eldest son Bocheng 伯誠. Although Bocheng has died, the book still remains.”

先生少時，學為古文，摘取王版史記中十篇，首項羽本紀，有信陵君列傳、貨殖傳，其他題記憶不清，皆密密細字，評其結構、用意、用筆之妙。鄭炳也先生曾借讀。今聞孔

戶部以此授長子伯誠為讀本，伯誠雖亡，書猶在也。⁹⁹

The conversational tone, personal insights, comments on others, and common themes of study and learning are all of a piece with the *Analects*.

7.5 Conclusions

“Confucius was not employed as an official so he withdrew and edited the *Poems*, the *Documents*, the *Rites* and the *Music*” 孔子不仕，退而脩詩書禮樂。¹⁰⁰ How many displaced ministers still loyal to defunct dynasties has this precedent guided? But more importantly, how many generations of classical scholars have labored over the moral application of the classics as they followed the example of Confucius? This example included transmitting what they learned from their own masters and striving to exemplify, both in their words and in their actions, the moral conduct codified by Confucius, the first classical commentator.

Studying the *Poems*, like Confucius’s son Boyu, one learns to speak in classical parlance; and learning how to conform to the rites means learning how to behave appropriately and morally. Persuasive speech and moral praxis form the basis of the life and scholarship of a classicist. Zhu Xi quotes Fan Zuyu 范祖禹 (1041–1098) in his comments on *Analects* 11.5 that “speech is the outward form of praxis, and praxis is the substance of speech” 言者行之表，行者言之實。¹⁰¹ And as Confucius says, “An old record has it that ‘Words are sufficient to convey the intention, and literary polish is sufficient to convey words.’ If one does not speak, who will know of one’s intention, and if words lack polish/texts, then they will not circulate very far” 仲尼曰：志有之：言以足志，文以足言。不言，誰知其志？言之無文，行而不遠。¹⁰² Ultimately, it is in the conduct of a classicist that we can perceive his moral fiber. And since these classicists are long dead, their moral conduct is only revealed in the will embodied in the commentaries they composed. In fact, such was their virtue, that they were almost compelled to comment, whether orally or through writing, to express their virtue, as taught by Confucius in *Analects* 14.5: “Those who possess virtue must speak”

⁹⁹ These sayings are appended to Duan Yucai’s *nianpu* of Dai Zhen, and they preface Duan’s biographical notice *xingzhuang* of his master; see *Dai Zhen wenji* 戴震文集, ed. Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1980), 247–51.

¹⁰⁰ *Shiji* 47.1914.

¹⁰¹ *Lunyu jizhu* 6.2b.

¹⁰² *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, “Xianggong,” 25th year, 36.14a.

有德者必言。¹⁰³ He Yan 何晏 (ca. 190–249) explains that “virtue cannot be contained within, hence it must be expressed through words” 德不可以億中，故必有言。¹⁰⁴ This is reminiscent of Aristotle’s offhand remark in his *Rhetoric* that personal goodness can be revealed by the speaker.¹⁰⁵ Earlier, Xunzi remarks that

Though one models himself after the example of the Ancient Kings, is in accord in his actions with the requirements of ritual and moral principles, and is a partisan of learning, but nonetheless is not fond of advocating the truth [literally “not fond of speaking”] and does not take enjoyment in it, he certainly is no true scholar. Hence the gentleman’s relation to advocating the truth is such that his innermost mind loves it, his actions find peace in it, and his joy is in approving it. Thus, the gentleman must engage in discriminations [literally “debating”]. Every man without exception is fond of discussing what he finds to be good, but this is especially so with the gentleman.

法先王，順禮義，黨學者，然而不好言，不樂言，則必非誠士也。故君子之於言也，志好之，行安之，樂言之，故君子必辯。凡人莫不好言其所善，而君子為甚。¹⁰⁶

Finally, since Confucius did not leave his specific exegesis in writing other than that embodied in the classics he edited or composed, his disciples were dependent on his oral exegesis for their own education and specific curriculum to pass on to their own disciples, as noted by Zigong: “If you, master, do not speak, then what

¹⁰³ The opposite also seems true, that evil words lead to evil actions; cf. *Mengzi* 3B9: “Again the world fell into decay, and principles faded away. Perverse speakings and oppressive deeds waxed rife again” 世衰道微，邪說暴行有作; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 2:281.

¹⁰⁴ *Lunyu zhushu* 14.1b. For the meaning of *Lunyu* 14.1b, in terms of Chinese literary history, that writings reflect the moral character of the writer, see Wu Fu-sheng, “Style is the Man 文如其人: A Critical Review,” *Tamkang Review* 25 (Autumn 1994): 1–34.

¹⁰⁵ “It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness [ethos] revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion,” Rhys Roberts, trans., *Rhetoric* (New York: Modern Library, 1954), 1356.

¹⁰⁶ *Xunzi* 3.5.53; John Knoblock, trans. *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works, Volume I, Books 1–6* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 1:208.

will we lowly students transmit” 子如不言，則小子何述？¹⁰⁷ His disciples, and classicists ever after, also followed Confucius’s example when he asked about the rites when visiting the ancestral temple in Qufu; such an inquiring attitude set the model for all later classical research, for classicists asked of texts what a word means, a ritual object signifies, a name identifies, or a passage imports.

¹⁰⁷ *Analects* 17.19, my translation. A specific example of Confucius “speaking” and a disciple “transmitting” is the text of the *Daxue*, at least according to Zhu Xi, who remarks, “The proceeding chapter of classical text is in the words (yan 言) of Confucius, handed down (shu 述) by the philosopher Zengzi. The ten chapters of explanation (zhuan 傳) which follow contain the views of Zengzi and were recorded by his disciples”; *Sishu jizhu* 四書集注 (Taipei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1980), 2b; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:360. For Zhu Xi’s editorial interventions in the text of the *Daxue*, see Daniel K. Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh: Neo-Confucian Reflections on the Confucian Canon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Council on East Asian Studies, 1986), 34–37, and the discussion in Chapter 8 of Part Two.

8. Disciples: Faithful Transmission

8.1 Masters and Disciples

Confucius was the pivot, either as author or editor, through which many ancient canons were transmitted over time via the offices of his disciples and their followers. In the technical terminology of French philosopher Alain Badiou, Confucius in his ritualized teaching settings was the "institution" which gave rise to the "philosophy" of Confucianism. The central element in this formulation was the process of "transmission."¹ "Badiou's own intellectual disciples encapsulate this formulation simply as "Without an institution, no transmission; without transmission, no philosophy;" yet they mine it to a great depth for far-reaching significance:

If philosophy itself institutes nothing but the void of an address, the transmission of a philosophy requires its disciples to invent new modes of thinking adequate to supporting the singularity of this empty address; these disciples work to transform the emergence of this void address into letters, into marks that subsist and can circulate along routes and through places that previously would have found these marks unthinkable and/or unacceptable. And these letters can only move as conflict, as antagonism, as committed incomprehension: a philosophical disciple doesn't really know (though he or she may desperately want to know), and knows that, though he or she can never know they know, they must place their names and bodies behind the work of their own obscure enquiries. The disciple often demands that the master be the One, even as he poses the master the most infuriating problems, induces the master to cover himself further, to drape the possibility that the garment might gape to reveal ... what? The nothing beneath? Disciples must *force* something, illegitimately, into being.

Yet it is not publicity at which such disciples and the institutions aim, but *inscriptions*, knotted, difficult, forever being done, undone, redone. It is only by such means that a philosophy becomes what it is—in transformed institutions by which it can

¹ Alain Badiou, "What Is a Philosophical Institution? Or: Address, Transmission, Inscription," in *Conditions* (Paris: Scuil, 1992), 83–89.

encounter *other* philosophies. ... It is in such institutions-in-process—‘truth bodies’, perhaps, in the language of Badiou’s new book *Logiques des mondes*—that disciples read, translate, re-edit the texts of the master; squabble about the philosophy in question; relate it to classical problems in the history of thought; relate it to other philosophies; to the world as they find it transfigured in the unprecedented dark light of these new little letters, etc.²

The rest of this work will probe some of these issues. Most prominently, of course, is the issue of the reception of Confucius’ “letters,”—the classics as textbooks—and how reception had to come through what Hal Sarf terms “theoretical education,” a course that naturally led, in the case of Confucians, to the formation of schools or “institutions” that preserved, interpreted, and proselytized their own unique brands of “philosophy.”

Sarf explains this type of education as follows:

The learning process that some persons receive from charismatic masters of wisdom which leads their ceasing to be ordinary students to become disciples and adherents I call theoretical education—a form of education that should be separated from a less transformative type of digesting knowledge, namely, that of being intellectually influenced. ... Theoretical education involves the master, or his chief followers, socializing persons to be adherents of a teaching that entwines with their intellectual and emotional identities, and further, is often accompanied by the disciples congregating in schools, sects or cults of like-minded “friends” to provide mutual support and reinforcement for their shared ideas that mark themselves as different from “outsiders” who are not party

² Paul Ashton, A. J. Bartlett, and Justin Clemens, “Masters & Disciples: Institution, Philosophy, Praxis,” *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* 2, no. 1–2 (2006): 1–8; pp. 3–4. A recent article on Kang Youwei 康有为 (1858–1927) conveniently crystalizes the process of invention and transformation sketched above by Ashton, Bartlett, and Clemens that a disciple undergoes on his way to becoming an independent master in his own right. In the case of Kang, this process is characterized by Wang Mingde 王明德 as initially one of scholarly absorption from Kang’s master Zhu Ciqi 朱次琦 (1807–1881), and ultimately as creatively reforming traditional Confucianism; locally, this led Kang to propel the academic tradition in Lingnan to new heights. See Wang Mingde 王明德, “Shilun Kang Youwei de xueshu chuancheng” 试论康有为的学术传承, *Shenzhen Daxue xuebao (Renwen Shehui Kexue ban)* 27, no. 1 (2010): 132–37.

to their special wisdom. Theoretical education is the process of “disciplining.”³

The process of “disciplining,” as a specialized species of socialization, should reinforce our understanding of the importance that ritual played in master-disciple transmission, a theme that was explored in depth above. Here we analyze certain disciples of Confucius and the roles they played in transmitting his “philosophy,” broadly conceived.

8.2 Passing the Mantle

Sima Qian once summarized the Master’s career as a teacher: “Confucius taught the *Poems*, *Documents*, rites and music. It seems that he had around 3,000 disciples, and seventy-two had personally mastered the Six Arts.” 孔子以詩書禮樂教，弟子概三千焉，身通六藝者七十有七人。⁴ *The Historian’s Records* mentioned seventy-two of these advanced disciples by name.⁵ After culling this work and the *Family Sayings of Confucius*, Kuang Yaming compiled a précis for thirty-one disciples and provided the names and regional derivations for sixty-four more, thus identifying ninety-five followers of the Master.⁶ A more narrow selection of the most outstanding among them, called the “Ten Sagacious Ones of the Confucian Followers” 孔門十哲 is found in *Analects* 11.2: “Those known for virtuous conduct: Yan Yuan (521–481 BC), Min Zi Qian (536–487 BC), Ran Bo Niu 冉伯牛, and Zhong Gong. Those known for eloquence: Zai Wo and Zigong. Those known for political skill: Ran You 冉有 and Ji Lu. Those known for textual learning: Zi You and Zi Xia.” 德行：顏淵，閔子騫，冉伯牛，仲弓。言語：宰我，子貢。政事：冉有，季路。文學：子游，子夏。⁷ Because the focus of this work is on Confucian classical scholarship and its transmission, our focus in this chapter will be on two of these

³ Hal Sarf, *Masters and Disciples* (Berkeley, CA: Center for Humanities and Contemporary Culture and Regent Press, 2002), 67–68.

⁴ *Shiji* 47.1938.

⁵ *Shiji* 67.2185. Oddly enough, seventy-six disciples were named in a section entitled “Enumerating the 72 disciples of Zhongni” 七十二弟子解 in *Kongzi jiaoyu*.

⁶ Kuang Yaming 匡亞明, *Kongzi pingzhuan*, 321–32. Zhu Yixun 朱彝尊 (1629–1709) comes up with the total figure of 134, 33 direct disciples, and 101 looser followers; consult his *Kongzi menren kao* 孔子門人考 for the former number, and *Kongzi dizi kao* 孔子弟子考 for the latter number (both CSJC chubian 初編, ed. [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1985]).

⁷ Edward Slingerland, *Confucius Analects, With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003), p. 112, v. 11.3.

masters who are credited with major roles in this process—Zengzi and Zixia. A third disciple who figured prominently in the transmission of classical learning, Zisi, will be the subject of Chapter 9.

Confucius taught at least two generations of disciples, one generation only slightly younger than himself and one junior generation. It was this junior generation that became masters in their own rights and began the “elaboration” of Confucianism.⁸ Yet it is precisely for this particular age, extending from the death of Confucius and to the era of Mencius that, according to Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1618–1682), “historical writings are deficient or lost, those who investigate antiquity are hazy about it” 史文闕軼，考古者為之茫昧。⁹ Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝 cites *Mencius* 5B11 as recording one possible reason for the paucity of historical records from this period: “The feudal lords all got rid of their records, hating that they implicated them” 諸侯惡其害己也，而皆去其籍。¹⁰ Whatever the reason for this scarcity of contemporary documentation, to assess the roles played in the transmission of Confucian learning by the leading disciples of the period, we must depend largely on tradition rather than on a variety of transmitted texts. And tradition is not necessarily reliable. The remarks of Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705–1755) regarding the looseness of technical terminology employed during the Eastern Han dynasty are applicable to this early period as well:

Those who receive direct instruction are called disciples. Those who receive instruction from disciples are followers; these are the words of Master Ouyang (Xiu) in his “Postface to an Inscription at the Confucian Temple.” But during the Eastern Han, what was meant by followers is different from followers in the line of transmission of the classics.

受業者為弟子，受業於弟子為門生，是歐陽公跋孔廟碑中語。但東漢之所謂門生與經傳稱門人者不同。¹¹

⁸ Cho-Yun Hsü, “The Unfolding of Early Confucianism: The Evolution from Confucius to Hsün-tzu,” in *Confucianism: The Dynamics of Tradition*, ed. Irene Elber (New York: MacMillan, 1986), 23–37; p. 26.

⁹ Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), *Rizhi lu jishi*, juan 13.1a.

¹⁰ Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝, “Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue” 郭店楚簡與早期儒學, in *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue* 郭店楚簡與早期儒學, ed. Pang Pu 龐朴 et al. (Taipei: Taiwan guji Chubanshe, 2002), 1–11; p. 1.

¹¹ Quan Zuwang, “Da Shi Xueting lun Kongmen menren dizi tiezi” 答史雪汀論孔門人弟子帖子, in *Jieqiting ji waibian* 鮚埼亭集 外編 (SBCK *chubian* ed.), 955b–56b.

With this general caveat in mind, we proceed to examine Confucius’s most important disciples and the issue of the transmission of the classics.

Certain of the leading disciples founded the first scholastic lineages of classical scholars based on their claims of succession from Confucius. Instead of describing early Confucianism as a school, I prefer to adopt Michael Nylan’s terminology. As she explains, “I prefer to translate the term *jia* [家] as ‘scholastic line’ rather than as ‘school’ in order to emphasize an analogy to the family line. Both terms imply an unbroken line of transmission from master to disciple but *jia* suggests the potential for cross-fertilization between adherents of *jinwen* and *guwen* texts and traditions, in contrast to ‘school’, which suggests exclusivity.”¹² Cross-fertilization could occur naturally through shifting alignments of personal allegiance and joint intellectual aims, which Anthony Grafton identifies as the twin tokens of Renaissance schools.¹³ For instance, in the previous quote, we see that later classicists viewed themselves as part of a scholastic “ancestral model” (*zongfa* 宗法), along the lines of a genealogical pedigree, so the analogy of a line or lineage as proposed by Nylan is entirely justified. In the terminology of Wan Sitong 萬斯同 (1638–1702), the Confucian “ancestral school” (*zongpai* 宗派) extended all the way from Confucius to Wan’s own day; his extensive charts are peopled with conveyors of this unbroken chain through each dynasty.¹⁴

Debate after the Zhou centered on the notion of “true succession,” that is, which of two later worthies inherited Confucius’s mantle of patriarchal sage of the tradition: the idealistic Mencius or the rationalist Xunzi.¹⁵ This problem of inheritance will be addressed in chapters 10 and 11. At present, the *ex post facto* intellectual abstraction of “true succession” is much less important than the concrete realities of the scholastic lineages that formed around the ideas and texts that Confucius taught.¹⁶ In other words, my present concern is with inheritance

¹² Michael Nylan, “The Chin Wen/Ku Wen Controversy in Han Times,” *T’oung Pao* 80 (1994): 83–145; p. 86.

¹³ Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship. Volume I: Textual Criticism and Exegesis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 7.

¹⁴ Wan Sitong 萬斯同, *Rulin zongpai* 儒林宗派 (Taipei: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1979).

¹⁵ See John Williams, “Confucius, Mencius, and the Notion of True Succession,” *Philosophy East & West* 38 (1988): 157–71.

¹⁶ As Lin Qiping 林啟屏 has shown, reexamining Confucius’s disciples and their images in the recently excavated manuscripts is intimately related to the current concern for re-evaluating the nature of early Confucian thought. This discussion of textual transmission then is not so far removed from intellectual concerns as it may seem. See Lin Qiping 林啟屏, “Gudai Ruxueshi zhong de Zigong” 古代儒學史中的子貢, *Wen yu Zhe* 7, no. 12 (2005): 97–124.

and transmission: the roles played by disciples in physically passing along the message of the Master, either orally or in writing.

Han Feizi 韓非子 (ca. 280–233 BC) recorded that after the death of Confucius, Confucius's disciples diverged into eight separate schools of classicists (*ru* 儒), although there is no evidence that these schools lasted long enough to turn into formal lineages. These were the Ruist schools of Zizhang 子張, Zisi 子思, Mister Yan 顏氏, Mister Meng 孟氏, Mister Qidiao 漆雕氏, Mister Zhongliang 仲良氏, Mister Sun 孫氏, and Mister Yuezheng 樂正氏.¹⁷ Zhou Yutong 周予同 (1898–1981) cites Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) in explaining that Zixia is absent from this list due to the reluctance of Han Feizi to admit that his own school of legalism had descended from the original school of Zixia.¹⁸ Zhou Yutong also adds the interesting insight that this divergence among disciples occurred because of their differing interpretations of the classics.¹⁹

A more expansive interpretation of Han Feizi's declaration is made by modern scholar Wang Bo 王博, who views the fact that the eight schools were isolated by Han Feizi as merely a demonstration of the internal fragmentation and richness of Confucianism in the centuries after the founder's death, and that the number need not be taken literally since these eight schools were not necessarily even contemporaneous with each other. With this mindset, Wang interprets the schools of Mister Meng and Mister Sun as referring to the schools of Mengzi and Xunzi. Finally, Wang points out several influential disciples who were not included by Han Feizi, such as Zengzi, Zixia, Ziyou, and Zigong.²⁰ In fact, the three disciples who merit specialized treatment by Wang Bo are Zengzi, Zizhang, and Ziyou 子遊 (b. ca. 506 BC).²¹ In this, Wang Bo is following the lead of Xunzi, who also isolates a trio of the most influential disciples, with Zixia replacing Zengzi.

In his "Contra Twelve Philosophers" 非十二子 chapter, Xunzi 荀子 (ca. 312–230 BC) obliquely indicates the existence of three separate Confucian

¹⁷ Han Feizi 韓非子集注, "Xianxue" 顯學 (ZZJC ed.), 351.

¹⁸ Zhou Yutong 周予同, *Zhou Yutong jingxueshi lunzhu xuanji* 周予同經學史論著選集 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 813. Each of the eight heads of schools are discussed on pp. 808–811 in the same work.

¹⁹ Zhou Yutong, *Zhou Yutong jingxueshi lunzhu xuanji*, 808.

²⁰ Wang Bo 王博, "Xian-Qin juan" 先秦卷, in *Zhongguo Ruxueshi* 中國儒學史, ed. Tang Yijie 湯一介 and Li Zhonghua 李中華 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011), 141–42.

²¹ For discussion on Zengzi, see Wang Bo, "Xian-Qin juan," 142–55; for Zizhang, see 153–93, for Ziyou, see 194–209.

schools in the course of condemning twelve early philosophers "whose doctrines and influence," according to John Knoblock, "he regarded as dangerous to society."²² Zisi and Mencius were included among the twelve, but only because their teachings had been corrupted by the admixture of the Five Process (*Wuxing* 五行) theory, explains Knoblock, following a line of thought proposed by Arthur Waley.²³ In the course of targeting certain disciples—namely Zizhang, Zixia, and Ziyou 子遊—Xunzi grants them separate standing as independent schools. He criticizes them as "base classicists" (*jian Ru* 賤儒) and characterizes them as follows:

Their caps bent and twisted, their robes billowing and flowing, they move to and fro as though they were a Yu or a Shun—such are the base Ru of Zizhang's school. Wearing their caps in perfectly correct form, maintaining their expression in perfect equanimity, they sit there all day long as though they were about to gag on a bit, but say nothing—such are the base Ru of the school of Zixia. Evasive and timorous, disliking work, lacking integrity, shameless, interested only in food and drink, they insist that "a gentleman naturally should not engage in manual labor"—such are the base Ru of the school of Ziyou.

弟陀其冠，神禪其辭，禹行而舜趨：是子張氏之賤儒也。正其衣冠，齊其顏色，嗛然而終日不言、是子夏氏之賤儒也。偷儒憚事，無廉恥而奢飲食，必曰君子固不用力：是子游氏之賤儒也。²⁴

Jiang Guanghui contributes a new angle on the issue of early Confucian schools by isolating three early masters as representing major facets of Confucius's widespread activities. These schools centered on promulgating his thought, transmitting his scholarship, and exemplifying his moral praxis: Ziyou represents the "Enlarging the Way school" (*hongdaopai* 宏道派) that spread his teachings, Zixia represents the "Transmitting the Classics School" (*chuanjingpai* 傳經派) that preserved and passed down his oral teachings on the classics, and Zengzi represents the "Enacting and Exemplification school" (*jianlupai* 踐履派) that embodied his moral precepts in the daily lives of school members.²⁵ Because the focus of this work is on Confucian classical scholarship and its transmission,

²² John Knoblock, trans., *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works. Volume I, Books 1–6* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 212.

²³ Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 215.

²⁴ Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 229.

²⁵ Jiang Guanghui, "Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue," 2–4.

our focus in this chapter will be on two of these masters who are credited with major roles in this process—Zengzi and Zixia.

8.3 Two Faithful Transmitters

In terms of the actual transmission of texts and lineages of interpretation, two disciples are credited by tradition with playing crucial roles in this regard: Zengzi and Zixia. Zisi 子思, Confucius's grandson, is also credited with a significant role in the transmission of texts and has traditionally been considered to be a disciple of Zengzi.²⁶ This formulation was succinctly articulated by the late Qing scholar Chen Yushu 陳玉澍 (1888 *juren*), who compiled a useful "chronological biography" (*nianpu* 年譜) of Zixia:

I once mentioned that without Zengzi, there would have been no Song learning studies of the Way; without Bushang [Zixia] there would have been no Han learning classical studies. Those who spoke of studies of the Way among Song-learning advocates had to commence with Zisi and Mencius, and traced their source back to Zengzi. Those who spoke of the studies of the classics among Han-learning advocates had to commence with Mao, Gongyang, and Guliang, and traced their source back to Buzi [Zixia]. For this reason, Confucius was the founding progenitor of both Song learning and Han learning, and Zengzi and Buzi were the great patriarchs of Song and Han learning respectively.

吾嘗謂無曾子則無宋儒之道學無卜子則漢儒之經學宋儒之言道學者必由子思孟子而溯源於曾子漢儒之言經學者必由荀毛公穀而溯源於卜子是孔子為宋學漢學之始祖而曾子卜子為宋學漢學之大宗也。²⁷

Given the common ancestry of both Song and Han learning in the person of Confucius, scholarly differences were harmoniously reconciled through family feeling, a sentiment that prevailed more pervasively during both Han and Qing periods than modern scholarship acknowledge in the debate

²⁶ For Zisi's true status as a disciple of Ziyi, not Zengzi, see chapter 9. Other disciples credited with transmitting one or another of the various classics are introduced by Zhou Yutong, *Zhou Yutong jingxueshi lunzhu xuanji*, 817–18.

²⁷ Chen Yushu 陳玉澍, "Buzi nianpu" 卜子年譜, in *Xian-Qin zhuzi nianpu* 先秦諸子年譜, 5 vols. (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, 2004), 3:687–751.

between the schools.²⁸

Confucius was not only the "founding progenitor" of the different approaches to classical learning and application as represented by the Han and Song camps, in many aspects he was the living exemplar par excellence of classicists in general. Chapter 1 noted Confucius's role in setting the path of classical scholarship in the direction of discovering and applying the moral lessons of the classics. Another precedent set by the Master was his example of transmitting (*chuan* 傳) the teachings of his scholastic/intellectual lineage to later generations. In chapter 1, the operative word was *shu* 述, which implied transmission in the oral sense. For this chapter, the word in question is *chuan* (*djwǎn), "to transmit," in its nominal form of *zhuan* (*tjwǎn), or "what is transmitted." *Zhuan* is also the earliest term for "commentary." In the present work, it will also be occasionally translated as "interpretation," "teachings," or the like. Kong Yingda explains Confucius's early example of a transmitter or author of a commentary as follows: "The *Changes* have 64 hexagrams, divided into two sections, Part One and Part Two. By the time of Confucius, he further composed a *Commentary to the Changes* in ten sections as wings to complete it. Later generations called that which Confucius had composed a commentary, and the basic text the classic." 易有六十四卦分為上下二篇。及孔子又作易傳十篇以翼。成之後世謂孔子所作為傳，謂本文為經。²⁹ The *Hanshu* "Yiwenzhi" clarifies the fact that, at least in the case of the *Chunqiu*, Confucius's commentary at this time was in the form of oral teachings transmitted to Zuo Qiuming.³⁰ Indeed, in its verbal use, the word *chuan* is glossed by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) as "what one receives from one's teacher" 傳謂受之於師。³¹ The later history of classical scholarship will consist largely of the composing of commentaries to both explain and disseminate an individual interpretation of some aspect of the

²⁸ Nylan, "The Chin wen/ku wen Controversy in Han Times," describes Han period scholarship in terms of non-exclusive use of sources that are hard to align in rigid Old Text or New Text camps. For retroactive creation in late Qing of this so-called ancient factional struggle for contemporary political reasons, see Hans Van Ess, "The Old Text/New Text Controversy: Has the 20th Century Got it Wrong?" *T'oung Pao* 80 (1994): 146–70.

²⁹ *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*, 42.2a.

³⁰ *Hanshu* 30.1715. Because "Zuo Qiuming feared that Confucius' disciples would lose the truth by following their own interpretations, he discussed basic events and composed a commentary, clarifying that the Master did not speak in vain when he explained the classic." 丘明恐弟子各安其意，以失其真，故論本事而作傳，明夫子不以空言說經也

³¹ *Sishu jijie*, "Lunyu," 1.2b.

classics as well as to identify with the original commentator—Confucius himself.

Of the three disciples, paramount among the notable seventy-two for their roles as transmitters, Zengzi and Zixia took the lead, just as among the leaders of the early Christian disciples, Peter, James, and John, only the first two vied for primacy, with Peter eventually winning out in later tradition. This was, however, a theological, not a historical, conclusion. The truth was probably something different. According to Robert Eisenman, “James ended up ignored, an ephemeral figure on the margins of Christianity, known only to aficionados. But in the Jerusalem of his day in the 40s to 60s CE, he was the most important and central figure of all—the Bishop or ‘Overseer’ of the Jerusalem Church.”³² It is evident that James’s fraternal relationship with Jesus as his half-brother had to be downplayed “because of the developing doctrine of the supernatural Christ and stories about his miraculous birth.”³³ Here I make no attempt to analyze the relative prominence of Zengzi and Zixia, focusing, rather, on their roles in the transmission of separate textual traditions.

8.4 Zengzi

Master Zeng was named Zeng Shen 曾參 (505–435 BC), styled Ziyu 子輿 (505–436 BC); he was younger than Confucius by forty-six years and hailed from Nanwucheng 南武城 in the state of Lu. He is mentioned in the *Analects* sixteen times in fourteen verses, chiefly in conjunction with the concept of filial piety.³⁴ According to the *Da Dai Liji*, Confucius praised Zengzi for cultivating

³² Robert Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus* (London: Penguin Books, 1996), xvii. Witness W. H. C. Frend: “When he went to Jerusalem in 48, Paul knew of Peter, James, and John as the three ‘Pillars’ (Gal. 2:9). ... On his previous visit in c. 39, it was to James and Peter that he reported. Peter, as the first witness of the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15:5), was at first spokesman and leader but sometime in the AD 40s, James emerged as undisputed ruler of the church. How and why are not known,” *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 88. The same forces that brought about James’s historical obscurity probably conspired to obscure the reasons for his rise. And just as James’s relation to Paul was obscure, so too was Paul’s relationship to Peter ambiguous, according to Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (New York: Dorsett Press, 1967), 18.

³³ Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus*, xvii.

³⁴ These verses are listed in Wang Bo, “Xiang-Qin juan,” 144–45. For an introduction to Zengzi along traditional lines, with the addition of his importance as being the putative author of many of the newly excavated bamboo documents dating from the Qin and Han periods, see Dong Zhi’an 董治安, “Lun Zengzi” 论曾子, *Wen, shi, zhe* 1 (1993): 27–34, 83. Most exhaustively is Wang Ruigong 王瑞功, ed., *Zengzi zhi* 曾子志 (Jinan: Shandong renmin Chubanshe, 2009).

filial piety as the first manifestation of virtue: “Confucius said, ‘Filial piety is the commencement of virtue; brotherly kindness is the ordering of virtue; trustworthiness is the pervasiveness of virtue; and loyalty is the corrective force of virtue.’ Surely Shen is a middling master with four virtues indeed!” He thus praised him in this way” 孔子曰，孝，德之始；弟，德之序；信，德之厚；忠，德之正也。參也中夫四德者矣哉。以此稱之。³⁵ Also of note is his attention to self-cultivation, as in his first appearance in *Analects* 1.4: “Daily I examine my conduct three times: In my planning for others am I loyal? In my interactions with friends am I trustworthy? As for what I transmit, do I practice it myself?” 曾子曰：吾日三省吾身：為人謀而不忠乎？與朋友交而不信乎？傳不習乎？ Five contiguous verses, *Analects* chapter 8, verses 3 through 7 represent his sayings. Among them is the following famous encapsulation of the difficulty of the Confucian way: “Zengzi said, ‘Knights cannot help but be broad and resolute; the duty is heavy and the way is long. Taking humaneness for your individual duty, isn’t this indeed heavy? Does it not stop until death? Isn’t this indeed distant?’” 曾子曰：士不可以不弘毅，任重而道遠。仁以為己任，不亦重乎？死而後已，不亦遠乎？ He was also notable for intuiting the “single thread” of loyalty and reciprocity (*zhongshu* 忠恕) the *learning* of the mind that was later developed by Mencius. Zhu Xi quoted a Mister Xie 謝氏, saying: “The learning of the various disciples all derived from the Sage himself. Afterwards it diverged more and more and lost even more truths. Only the learning of Zengzi exclusively utilized the mind to look within oneself; hence there were no errors in his transmission. Viewing Zisi and Mencius we can observe this now.” 諸子之學皆出於聖人。其後愈遠而愈失其真。獨曾子之學專用心於內。故傳之無弊。觀於子思孟子可見矣。³⁶

A chronological biography devoted to Zengzi was compiled by the late Qing scholar Feng Yunyuan 馮雲鵬, published in 1832.³⁷ It is convenient but not very comprehensive. The bare bones of a life distantly derived from Yu the Great 大禹 are presented with little illustration. Born in 505 BC, Zengzi began studying with Confucius at age thirteen. From the beginning, he became known for his

³⁵ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 6.110.

³⁶ Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Sishu jijie*, “Lunyu jije,” 1.2b–3a. For more of Zhu Xi’s views of Zengzi, see Chen Fengyuan 陳逢源, “Zhu Xi lun Kongmen dizi—yi Sishu zhangju jizhu zhengyin wei fanwei” 朱熹論孔門弟子——以四書章句集注徵引為範圍, *Wen yu Zhe* 8, no. 6 (2006): 297–300.

³⁷ Feng Yunyuan 馮雲鵬, “Zengzi nianpu” 曾子年譜, in *Xian-Qin zhuzi nianpu* 先秦諸子年譜, 4:1–4; see also Wang Ruigong, *Zengzi zhi*, 32–36.

constant inquiry concerning the way of giving ease to one's parents: "He would rise during the night five times to check on the state of his parents' clothing and to adjust their pillows" 每夕五起視衣之厚薄枕之高卑. Three years later, at the behest of his father, Zengzi followed Confucius to Chu to continue his studies with Confucius. After returning to Lu, he served Confucius for ten years during the course of his studies. At the same time, he worked tilling his fields in order to support his parents. Confucius praised him as embodying in his conduct the four virtues of filial piety, fraternal kindness, sincerity, and loyalty. In 481 BC, Confucius felt that Zengzi was ripe for the reception of his full teachings on filial piety:

Confucius commented that, based on Zengzi's devotion to the path of filial piety, he would compose the *Classic of Filial Piety* and transmit it to him. At the time Zengzi was 24. Confucius said that he was able to penetrate the Dao, so he transmitted to him his interpretations on the "Single Thread." At this time Zengzi was 25. Therefore, he was the latest to follow Confucius in his wanderings, and the earliest to become enlightened. At that time Zisi was barely six years old. The Sagely Patriarch commanded him to follow Zengzi in study. By the time Confucius died, he was 26, and his learning was a great accomplishment.

孔子謂以其志存孝道作經。授之時年二十有四。謂能通乎道授以一貫之傳，年已二十有五矣。故從孔子遊最晚，聞道最蚤。子思年甫六歲，聖祖命之從學。及孔子沒年二十有六學乃大成。³⁸

For more exemplary stories, the *Family Sayings of Confucius* compiled by Wang Su is a convenient source. Much of it was culled from earlier histories and collections of anecdotes; indeed, a good deal was also copied either from parent chapters in the *Records of Ritualists* or from a source common to both this source and the latter source.³⁹ Works attributed to Zengzi include two chapters in the *Liji* called "Zengzi asks questions" 曾子問. His inquiries have to do with the proper

³⁸ Feng Yunyuan, "Zengzi nianpu," 4:3.

³⁹ On the question of the relationship between the *Liji* and the *Kongzi jiayu*, see Robert P. Kramers, *Kong Tzu Chia Yu: The School Sayings of Confucius* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1950), 181–85. While a complete translation was finished in 1915 by Richard Wilhelm, it was many years before published with a forward by Wilhelm Helmut; see *Kongfutze Schulgespräche (Gia Yü)* (Düsseldorf-Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1961).

procedures and rites to follow in mourning, for instance after the death of a lord when a young heir is born soon afterwards, when one's parents die when one is engaged to be married, when a fiancée dies. None of these questions deal with Zengzi's signature issues of self-cultivation and filial piety; rather, they read merely as prompts to allow Confucius to expound on these issues.⁴⁰

8.4.1 The Zengzi in Eighteen Sections

The most important extant source for Zengzi's teaching are ten sections (seven *pian*, plus one long section divided into three parts), distributed over two *juan*, included in another early ritual anthology compiled perhaps towards the end of the Eastern Han, the *Records of the Ritualists of Dai Senior* (*Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記).⁴¹ These sections are "Zengzi Establishes His Enterprise" (*Zengzi lishi* 曾子立事), "Zengzi Traces the Foundation of Filial Piety" (*Zengzi benxiao* 曾子本孝), "Zengzi Establishes Filial Piety" (*Zengzi lixiao* 曾子立孝), "Zengzi on Great Filial Piety" (*Zengzi daxiao* 曾子大孝), "Zengzi on Serving Parents" (*Zengzi shi fumu* 曾子事父母), "Zengzi's Words of Restraint" (*Zengzi zhiyan* 曾子制言, comprising three sections), "Zengzi Falls Ill" (*Zengzi jibing* 曾子疾病), and "Zengzi on Heaven's Roundness" (*Zengzi tianyun* 曾子天圓).⁴² A recent translator of the *Da Dai Liji*, Benedykt Gryn timer, considered these ten sections as representing an integral work that circulated separately along the lines of the *Mengzi* before being incorporated in the *Da Dai Liji* and becoming lost as an integral work sometime during the Qin.⁴³ Perhaps this integral work was the same as a work recorded in the *Hanshu* "Yiwenzhi," entitled the *Zengzi in Eighteen Sections* 曾子十八篇.⁴⁴ Eight sections could easily have dropped out over the

⁴⁰ *Liji* 18.1a–26a, 19.1a–23b.

⁴¹ On the authorship and date of compilation, see Jeffrey K. Riegel, in Loewe, *Early Chinese Texts*, 456–59. Despite the late date of compilation, these texts attributed to Zengzi seem quite early linguistically.

⁴² Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, *juan* 4, 5; Fang Xiangdong 方向东, ed. *Da Dai Liji huijiao jijie* 大戴礼记汇校集解, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2008), 1:415–616.

⁴³ Benedykt Gryn timer, *Les Écrits de Tai L'ancien et Le Petite Calendrier des Xia* (Paris: Adrien Masisonneuve, 1972). The contents of these ten remaining sections are summarized on pp. 16–22, with the direct translations appearing on pp. 74–113.

⁴⁴ *Hanshu* 30.1724. Zhang Lei 张磊, *Da Dai Liji Zengzi shipian yanjiu* 大戴礼记曾子十篇研究, (master's thesis, Qufu Normal University, 2009) concludes that the portions of Zengzi's original work that Dai De selected for inclusion in his

ages. This decade of instructions was closely annotated by Ruan Yuan in his *Zengzi zhushi* 曾子註釋.⁴⁵ Numerous quotes that were not preserved in these ten sections can be found in such works as the *Mencius* [three original quotes], *Xunzi* [five original quotes, plus one quote that is found in the ten sections], *Lüshi chunqiu* [two original quotes, plus three overlapping ones], and sundry works from the Han period. Following I introduce these separate sections according to the importance of their individual themes to Zengzi's thought.

Section 1, "Zengzi Establishes His Enterprise," stresses self-cultivation—so much so that an unnamed edition lists an alternate title of this section as "Zengzi on Self-cultivation (*Zengzi xiu* 曾子修)." At several points it is reminiscent of some of Zengzi's statements from the *Lunyu* cited above, specifically regarding self-cultivation and study. First, "Zengzi said, 'The gentleman works on what he hates [in himself], seeks out his excesses, strengthens wherein he is incapable, rids himself of private desires, and engages in rightness. In this he may be termed learned.'" 曾子曰：君子攻其惡，求其過，彊其所不能，去私慾，從事於義，可謂學矣。⁴⁶ Note the association of learning with moral cultivation, a theme he carried on from Confucius. Second, Zengzi emphasized study, saying, "The gentleman loves to study each day. He acts in a timely manner; he does not avoid what is difficult, nor does he follow what is easiest, but goes wherever rightness is. Mornings he takes up his enterprise, and evenings he examines his thoughts until the end of his days. This, too, can be termed maintaining his enterprise." 君子愛日以學，及時以行，難者弗從，唯義所在，日且就業，夕而自省思，以致其身，亦可謂守業矣。⁴⁷ In section 2, "Zengzi Traces the Foundation of Filial Piety," Zengzi stresses that to mourn one's parents is the chief duty of the filial son.⁴⁸ In section 9, "Zengzi Falls Ill," he connects filial piety to study: "I have never seen one in whom love of learning is brimming over and yet who does not grieve"; he continues by comparing teaching to the nurturing action of a concerned parent: "I have never seen one who was as fond of teaching as feeding a sick child." 吾不見好學盛而不衰者，吾不

anthology of ritual works were edited into 10 chapters; but when Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–06 B.C.) edited the copy of Zengzi's work in the imperial archives, he shaped it into 18 chapters.

⁴⁵ Ruan Yuan 阮元, *Zengzi zhushi* 曾子註釋 (HQJJ ed.), 5:6572–89. For a translation of this work, see Richard Wilhelm, *Das Buch Dseng Dsi* (Henna: Diederichs, 1930).

⁴⁶ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou* 4.69.

⁴⁷ Cf. Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 4.69, 4.94.

⁴⁸ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 4.80. According to Grynepas, *Les Écrits de Tai L'ancien*, this section was originally part of a commentary on the *Xiaojing*.

見好教如食病子矣。⁴⁹ All told, to Zengzi a filial son was one who was eager to learn and to teach so that he himself and his students would be better able to serve the family. We see an even broader application of the concept of filial piety in section 4, "Zengzi on Great Filial Piety," where the concept is applied to being reverential and respectful in office, loyal to the liege, trustworthy to friends, and brave in battle.⁵⁰

It is noteworthy that in this "Zengzi on Great Filial Piety" we see the beginnings of a "scholastic lineage" of four generations, traceable to Confucius:

Yuezheng Zichun injured his foot while descending from the hall. After his injury had healed, he still would not emerge after several months, and still bore an expression of worry. A disciple from among his following said, "Master, your injured foot is healed now, yet for several months you have not come out, and you still bear a worried expression. Why is this?" Yuezheng Zichun said, "What a good question! I heard the following from Zengzi, who heard it from the master, saying. ..."

樂正子春下堂而傷其足，傷瘳，數月不出，猶有憂色。門弟子問曰：夫子傷足瘳矣，數月不出，猶有憂色，何也？樂正子春曰：善如爾之間也。吾聞之曾子，曾子聞諸夫子曰：⁵¹

The remainder of the quote from Confucius is derived from the Master's oral teachings about filial piety; since Yuezheng Zichun had allowed himself to injure his person—his body being a legacy from his parents—he could not be fully filial; this was the source of his worry. Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) explained in an annotation the process that we may define as lineage formation: "Yuezheng Zichun was a disciple of Zengzi. Zengzi heard something from the master; [Yuezheng Zichun] orally transmitted the words that Zengzi had heard from Confucius." 樂正子春，曾子弟子。曾子聞諸夫子，述曾子所聞於孔子之言。⁵² Incidentally, the fact that a disciple of Zengzi's disciple Yuezheng Zichun is mentioned demonstrates that these ten sections of Zengzi's teachings (or the original eighteen, for that matter) had not been composed by Zengzi himself;

⁴⁹ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 4.98.

⁵⁰ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 4.83. For Zengzi's application of the concept of filial piety as the basis of government, see Zhong Zhaopeng 钟肇鹏, "Zengzi xuepai de xiaozhi sixiang" 曾子学派的孝治思想 *Kongzi yanjiu* 2 (1987): 50–59.

⁵¹ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou* 4.85.

⁵² Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 4.85, cf. Zheng Xuan's comments, which differ slightly, on the parallel passage at *Liji* "Jiyi" 祭義, 48.8a.

rather, they had been compiled by his own disciples or students of his disciples in the same manner that the *Analects* had been compiled. A wry observation by Luo Jun 羅竣 (1874–1932) is appropriate to keep in mind given the ambiguities of ancient authorship. He notes that much of what is contained in the various masters was not originally composed by them. He defines the natural process of authorship as that of a core concept in circulation that becomes attributed to a particular ancient authority, which gradually becomes supplemented by later layers of accretion in the process of oral transmission and written transcription.⁵³

Zengzi's role as transmitter of Confucius's teachings is praised by Zhu Xi in his commentary to *Analects* 1.4: "Zengzi said, 'I daily examine myself, whether in planning for friends I am not trustworthy; whether in interacting with like-minded friends I am not trustworthy, and whether I do not practice what is transmitted?'" 曾子曰：吾日三省吾身：為人謀而不忠乎？與朋友交而不信乎？傳不習乎？Zhu Xi explains Zengzi's merits in the following paragraph already quoted in part above:

The learning of the various disciples all came from the sagely one. Afterwards it diverged more and more widely from the truth the longer it was transmitted. Only the learning of Zengzi exclusively utilized his internal mind, hence it was transmitted without flaws. This can be seen in the learning of Zisi and Mencius. It is a pity that his fine words and virtuous conduct were not completely transmitted to the world; how can that which fortunately was preserved and not lost not be taken entirely to heart by scholars?

諸子之學皆出於聖人。其後愈遠而愈失其真。獨曾子之學專用心於內。故傳之無弊。觀於子思孟子可見矣。惜乎其嘉言善行不盡傳於世也。其倖存而未泯者學者其可不盡心乎。⁵⁴

Clearly it was the internalization of a master's teachings and its exemplification in the conduct of a disciple that defined successful transmission across generations.

8.4.2 The Classic of Filial Piety

As an exemplar of filial conduct, Zengzi earned the respect and trust of Confucius, who chose him to inherit his learning on filial piety. The wording of

Chen Yushu's "chronological biography" is indebted to the *Shiji*: "Confucius felt that he was able to master the way of filial piety, so he entrusted this enterprise to him. He (Zengzi) composed the *Xiaojing* and died in Lu." 孔子以為能通孝道，故授之業，作孝經。⁵⁵ Ban Gu explained that Confucius had orally transmitted or "set forth" (*chen* 陳) the way of filial piety for Zengzi, implying that Zengzi merely recorded these teachings.⁵⁶ This is the view that has been lent the most credence by tradition; however, other authors have been suggested, among them disciples of Zengzi, such as Yuezheng Zichun,⁵⁷ other disciples of Confucius, such as Zisi or Mencius, or even Mencius's disciples or anonymous pre-Qin or Han Ruists.⁵⁸ Given the vagaries of oral transmission and the malleability of a corpus as it is handed down through one generation of master/disciple to another, questions of ultimate authorship are perhaps moot. It is another reiteration of the old Homeric question and ultimately boils down to the problem of when an oral tradition was first *recorded*, not first *composed*. Yet modern translators have not been sensitive to this distinction, seeking instead to ground this text in the person of a particular author. In the West, Richard Wilhelm is perhaps the most alert to this issue, regarding it as an early work from the school of Zengzi, but denying it was literally composed by either Confucius or Zengzi.⁵⁹ Paul K.T. Shih's introduction to Mary Lelia Makra's translation places the composition sometime between the time of Mencius and the founding of the Han dynasty.⁶⁰ Ch'u Chai is probably most representative in his vagueness: "It has traditionally been ascribed to Tseng Tzu [Zengzi]. ... However, it was apparently a later compilation, though its content might have been gathered from the teachings of the Confucian

⁵⁵ *Shiji* 67.2205.

⁵⁶ *Hanshu* 30.1719.

⁵⁷ Nine of Zengzi's disciples, plus three of his own sons who studied under him, are documented at Luo Jun, *Zhuzi xueshu*, 134–37.

⁵⁸ For a comprehensive selection of traditional notices, see Wang Zhongwen 汪中文, ed. *Xiaojing zhushukao* 孝經著述考, *Shisanjing zhushukao* 十三經著述考 ed. (Taipei: Guoli Bianyiguan, 2003), 24–31, 39, and Chen Tiefan 陳鐵凡, *Xiaojingxue yuanliu* 孝經學源流 (Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan, 1986) 41–60. For modern assessments, see Zang Zhifei 臧知非, *Renlun benyuan: Xiaojing yu Zhongguo wenhua* 人倫本原：孝經與中國文化 (Kaifeng: Henan daxue, 2005), 2–11, and Boltz, in Loewe, *Early Chinese Texts*, 141–53.

⁵⁹ Richard Wilhelm, *Hiau Ging. Das Buch der Erhurcht* (Peking: Verlag Der Pekger Pappelinsel, 1940), 27.

⁶⁰ Mary Lelia Makra, trans. *The Hsiao Ching* 孝經, *Asian Institute Translations*, No. 2, with introduction by Paul K. T. Sih (New York: St. John's University Press, 1961), xi.

⁵³ Luo Jun 羅竣, *Zhuzi xueshu* 諸子學述 (1935; repr. Taipei: Heluo Tushu Chubanshe, 1974), 15.

⁵⁴ *Sishu jizhu*, "Lunyu jizhu," 1.2b.

school.”⁶¹ The most recent English translation, by Henry Rosemont Jr. and Roger T. Ames, follows Hu Pingsheng 胡平生 in crediting Zengzi’s students as the compilers of the work.⁶²

Modern Chinese scholars seem more sensitive to the exigencies of oral transmission. Jiang Boqian 蔣伯潛 (1892–1956) concludes that the *Xiaojing* was compiled by Ruist scholars after Confucius transmitted it through at least two generations.⁶³ After considering seven possible authors, from Confucius to Han classicists, Zhou Yutong also opts for the generation after the sage’s own disciples.⁶⁴

Fan Wenlan 范文瀾 (1893–1969) essayed to be more specific in his identification of authorship within the second generation of Confucian disciples. His reasoning is as follows: Zengzi is mentioned as “Master Zeng” in the opening section; however, Zengzi would not have written a work that praises himself so highly in the presence of Confucius—therefore, the work obviously postdates both Confucius and Zengzi. Next, Marquis Wen of Wei 魏文侯, or Wei Si 魏斯 (d. BC 396) is the earliest author or editor credited with composing this work; this book is referred to as the *Wei Wenhou Xiaojingzhuan* 魏文侯孝經傳.⁶⁵ The *Shiji* records that Wei Wenhou “had received the classical training of Zixia” 受子夏經藝.⁶⁶ With the evidence thus marshaled, Fan concludes that Wei Wenhou recorded the oral teachings he had received from Zixia.⁶⁷ This is an intriguing scenario, the validity of which hangs on the existence of this work by Wei Wenhou. The work is not mentioned in the earliest extant Chinese bibliography,

⁶¹ Ch’u Chai and Winberg Chai, *The Sacred Books of Confucius and Other Confucian Classics* (New Hyde Park, NY: University Press, 1965), 325.

⁶² Henry Rosemont Jr. and Roger Ames, *The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence: A Philosophical Translation of the Xiaojing* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 19. Hu Pingsheng 胡平生, *Xiaojing yizhu* 孝經譯注 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1999), 8. Hu decides that Zengzi’s disciple Yuezhang Zichun [Romanized by Rosemont and Ames as Lezheng Zichun] was the specific disciple who authored the *Xiaojing*.

⁶³ Jiang Boqian 蔣伯潛, *Shisanjing gailun* 十三經概論 (JXCS ed.), 406.

⁶⁴ Zhou Yutong, *Zhou Yutong jingxueshi lunzhu xuanji*, 298.

⁶⁵ *Beishi* 北史 72.2496, biography of Niu Hong 牛弘. Two editions that predate the version of Wei Wenhou lack any specific authorship, a generic *Xiaojing* and a *Guwen xiaojing* 古文, or “*Xiaojing* in ancient characters.” See Wang Zhongwen, *Xiaojing zhushukao*, 1, 61, 74.

⁶⁶ *Shiji* 44.1839; cf. *Shiji* 67.2203: “After Confucius died, Zixia dwelt in Xihe [in the state of Wei 魏], teaching and instructing; he was the master of Wei Wenhou.”

⁶⁷ Fan Wenlan 范文瀾, *Qunjing gailun* 群經概論, JXCS ed., 410.

“Yiwenzhi” of the *Hanshu*, but it is possible that it was included in one of the six *pian* attributed to Wei Wenhou.⁶⁸ The *Wei Wenhou Xiaojing zhuan* first appears in the historical record in 583 AD, in conjunction with a memorial to the throne concerning erecting an Hall of Brightness 明堂; it was presented by Niu Hong 牛弘 (545–610), the imperial librarian of the Sui dynasty. At that time, a massive search for books to send to the throne was underway, and Niu was in a position to have scanned the library holdings. He does not claim that the work was still extant; merely that it had been mentioned by Han period classicists. Niu’s biography reads: “These books [including the *Wei Wenhou Xiaojing zhuan*] are all lost; no one can obtain them for correction.” 其書皆亡，莫得而正。⁶⁹ Two fragments from this work are extant, having been culled from an essay by Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–92) and a sixth-century source (finished in AD 544), the *Qimin yaoshu* 齊民要術 of Jia Sixie 賈思勰.⁷⁰

Whether or not Wei Wenhou figured in the earliest lineage of transmission of the text, the present version is most likely a Han-period redaction based on earlier materials. The crux is well summarized by the most recent English translators, Rosemont and Ames:

In any event, little that is said in the *Classic of Family Reverence* [*Xiaojing*] is out of keeping with what we know of both Confucius and Master Zeng from the *Analects* and is

⁶⁸ *Hanshu* 30.1724.

⁶⁹ *Beishi* 72.2496. Bolt’s arguments against this theory are unconvincing for two reasons: first he ignores the statement in the *Shiji* that Wei Wenhou had received the learning of Zixia, which puts him in with the other disciples of Zixia of his generation; second, the fact that the word *zhuan*, meaning “commentary,” was not used during the Warring States period only means that it was adopted by the Han classicists who were accustomed to the term. Niu Hong’s biography only quotes his memorial to the effect that the work had been seen by Liu Xiang, Cai Yong, and others who would have naturally used the contemporary term, but by Niu’s time the works mentioned “were all lost, and cannot be obtained to be corrected.” Modern scholar Chen Hongsen 陳鴻森 rejects the attribution of an early commentary by Wei Wenhou on the general grounds that early authors were read into the tradition by latter readers, but this is an argument based on general historiographical, not specific historical, reasons; see Wang Zhongwen, *Xiaojing zhushukao*, 74–75.

⁷⁰ These fragments are preserved in Ma Guohan 馬國翰, *Yuhan shanfang jiyishu* 玉函山房輯佚書, 8 vols. (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling guji keyinshe, 1990), 4:168–69. Another fragment is preserved in Wang Mo 王謨, ed. *Zengding Han-Wei congshu* 增訂漢魏叢書 and other collectanea.

consistent with their conversations as they appear in the *Record of Rites* [*Liji*]. We thus surmise that the book in its present form very probably dates from the early Han period if not earlier, and thus has been read and studied by some eighty generations of Chinese students and scholars.⁷¹

The received version, included in the standard set of Thirteen Classics under the title *Orthodox Interpretation of the Classic of Filial Piety* 孝經正義, is prefaced by a royal introduction that had been compiled under the nominal hand of Tang Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (r. 712–756). Contrary to traditional understanding, this compilation was a rather slipshod, narrowly focused affair done by the circle of court scholars largely based on the scholarship of the previous dynasty.⁷² This edition is based on the New Text version of Zheng Xuan, whose commentary disappeared, as it could not compete with one enjoying imperial imprimatur.⁷³ An Old Text version in twenty-two sections had been discovered at the same time as the Old Text *Shangshu*, and was collated with the New Text version by Liu Xiang. It gained commentaries by Kong Anguo, Ma Rong, and Zheng Xuan, but this version was lost during the Liang dynasty (502–557).⁷⁴ The subcommentary by Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010) to the New Text version was a much more scholarly effort than that of the Tang court scholars.⁷⁵ Zhu Xi's restructuring of the text and editorial interventions, unlike his version of the *Daxue* to be discussed below, did not supersede this version.

⁷¹ Rosemont and Ames, *The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence*, 19.

⁷² See Chen Hongsen 陳鴻森, "Tang Xuanzong Xiaojingxu 'Ju liujia zhi yitong shiyi—Tang-Song guanxi zhushu zhi yi cemiao' 唐玄宗孝經序舉六家之異同釋疑—唐宋官修注疏之一側面," *Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Lishi Yuyan Yanjiusuo jikan* 64, no. 1 (1985): 35–64.

⁷³ Zheng Xuan's commentary on the *Xiaojing* has been reconstructed by Yuan Jun 袁鈞, preface dated 1795, Zhejiang Shuju ed., 1888, in one *juan*. A modern edition that takes into account four different *juan* of Zheng's commentary preserved among the Dunhuang manuscripts is Chen Tiefan 陳鐵凡, *Xiaojing Zheng zhu jiaozheng* 孝經鄭注校證 (Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan, 1987).

⁷⁴ See Ma Duanlin 馬端臨, *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考, "Jingji zhi" 經籍考 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng Chubanshe, 1985), 1:301–2 (*juan* 12). For concise treatments of the provenance of the New Text and Old Text versions, see Fan Wenlan, *Qunjing gailun*, 410–13, and Zhou Yutong, *Zhou Yutong jingxueshi lunzhu xuanji*, 276–79.

⁷⁵ For this and other commentaries to the *Xiaojing*, see J. H. Winkelman, in *A Sung Bibliography* (*Bibliographie des Sung*), ed. Etienne Balazs and Yves Hervouet (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1978), 48, and Boltz, *Early Chinese Texts*, 141–53.

The opening passage of the *Xiaojing* illustrates most fully the teaching situations set up by Confucius, as discussed previously. Recall that Zengzi was attending Confucius as he was resting. The ensuing lecture proceeds almost uninterruptedly. In eighteen short sections, in addition to his appearance in section 1 to set the stage, Zengzi only asks two questions (sections 8 and 15), and makes one reply (section 7). The theme of filial piety may be indebted to Confucius's teachings and Zengzi's later amplifications and illustrations put into the Master's mouth, but the format is a mere pro forma nod to the ancient catechism current with Confucius. And with tag endings of quotations for the majority of sections from the *Shijing* (ten sections) or *Shujing* (one section), which, according to Xing Bing, "summarize and complete the meaning" 以結成其義,⁷⁶ the work reads more like a philosophical treatise in the style of Xunzi than the transcription of an oral teaching exchange. In terms of format and stylistics, then, as it stands now this work cannot be considered a contemporary transcription of either an oral exchange or a lecture of Confucius. But as for formal behavior, it is faithful to the original Confucian ritualized teaching setting. Zengzi is thus considered a faithful inheritor of the Confucian legacy in terms of being the master of rites.⁷⁷

Concerning format, the Sui dynasty classicist Liu Xuan 劉炫 noted that Confucius set up this teaching situation because of his concern to transmit the way of filial conduct. He could do this because there was such a practice as pupils inquiring of masters, and masters imparting instruction. But, Liu continues, if this were a truly spontaneous question from Zengzi, then Zengzi should have asked about each section, and Confucius should have responded to each question.⁷⁸ Yet a certain macro section is evident, a division between introductory section 1 and sections 2 through 7, and 8 through 18. When Confucius begins his sermon in section 2, he covers the definition of filial piety on the level of the son of heaven. Sections 3, 4, 5, and 6 each cover the levels of the hereditary lords, ministers and high officials, lower officials, and commoners. While each of the first five sections concludes with a quote from the *Poems* (or in one case, the *Documents*), section 6 lacks such a

⁷⁶ *Xiaojing zhengyi* 1.16b.

⁷⁷ For more on his teachings on the rites, see Luo Xinhui 羅新慧, "Zengzi lixue sixiang chutan" 曾子禮學思想初探, *Shixue yuekan* 3 (2000), and Tso Hsiu-yen 卓秀嚴, *Zengzi lixue* 曾子禮學 (Taipei: Lantai Shuju, n.d.).

⁷⁸ Liu Xuan 劉炫, *Guwen Xiaojing shuyi* 古文孝經術義, in *Han-Wei yishuchao* 漢魏遺書鈔, ed. Wang Mo 王謨. Reproduced in vols. 3–6 of *Zhong Zhaopeng* 鍾肇鵬, ed. *Guji congcan huibian* 古籍叢殘匯編, 7 vols. (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, 2001), 5:820.

quote, perhaps because it concludes with a short summary in prose. Section 7 concludes this macro section with an extended comment by Zengzi.

Joachim Gentz has posited a “ritual” structure to early texts and their rhetorical argumentation; his prime example is the *Gongyangzhuan*.⁷⁹ In section 7 it is possible to discern a similar structure, a “commentarial” rhetoric, to this comment by Zengzi in section 7. As translated by Rosemont and Ames: “Master Zeng replied, ‘Incredible—the profundity of family reverence.’ The Master continued, ‘Indeed, family reverence is the constancy [*jing*] of the heavenly cycles, the appropriate responsiveness [*yi*] of the earth, and the proper conduct [*xing*] of the people.’” 曾子曰：甚義！孝之大也。子曰：夫孝，天之經也，地之義也，民之行也。 The translation is consistent with the thought of this section, and is accurate as far as it goes. But the subtext of this section is only discernible in Chinese, because of the use of specialized terms from the commentarial tradition. “Constancy” is *jing* 經, or “classic”; “appropriate responsiveness” is *yi* 義, or “interpretation”; and “proper conduct” is *xing* 行, or “moral or ritual application.” It is readily apparent to a traditional reader that the classical trio of canon, commentary, and moral conduct is encoded. In other words, a deliberate message is embedded in the text concerning the source of morality in the ancient classics, the explanation of morality that lies in the commentaries, and the practical application that completes the pragmatic use of these texts. A rhetoric of ritual is also evident at certain points. For example, section 4 stresses the trio of dress, speech, and conduct—the proper employment of such ritual appurtenances leading naturally to the safeguarding of the ancestral temples.

Section 8 initiates a new macro section with the same formula of “The Master said” that began section 2. This second macro section includes all of the remaining sections, as each commences with the same formula except for sections 9 and 15, which have Zengzi making further inquiries after an introductory “Zengzi said.” A “commentarial structure” is also visible in sections 12 and 13, as they both expand on terminology first utilized in section 1, the “essential way” of the “ultimate virtue.” Later editors recognized this self-referential language and reflected it in the titles that came to cap these sections: section 12 is titled “Expanding on the Essential Way” (*Guang yaodao* 廣要道) and section 13 is titled “Expanding on the Ultimate Virtue” (*Guang zhide* 廣至德).

⁷⁹ Joachim Gentz, “The Ritual Meaning of Textual Form: Evidence from Early Commentaries of the Historiographic and Ritual Traditions,” in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Martin Kern (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 124–48.

As for content, the first section maintains the broad application of filial piety, entirely in keeping with Rosemont and Ames’s rendering of *xiao* as “family reverence,” as already apparent in *Zhengzi shipian* mentioned previously. A new process of growth through filial service is revealed: “Now filial piety commences in serving one’s parents, reaches its midpoint in serving one’s lord, and culminates in establishing one’s person.”⁸⁰ In section 7, filial piety is the principle through which the son of heaven governs the world; in section 13 the attitude of filial piety is transformed upwards to one’s lord in the form of loyalty.⁸¹ In section 9, filial piety serves as the thread that binds all of the state sacrifices together, and in section 16 it governs the conduct of the lord in his ancestral temple conducting sacrifices.

Another section in the *Da Dai Liji* is attributed to Zengzi. Section 39, “Zhuyan” 主言, entitled “Wang Yan” 王言 in the *Kongzi jiayu*, presents a learning scenario similar to what we saw in the opening of the *Xiaojing*, with Confucius at ease and Zengzi sitting in attendance. Confucius even initiates the conversation on the way of enlightened lords/kings.⁸²

8.4.3 The Great Learning

Zengzi is also credited with recording the words of Confucius in the form of the *Daxue* 大學. This work was preserved in the anthology of ritual texts, the *Records of Ritualists*. Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032–1085) produced a restructured text called the *Daxue dingben* 大學定本 and apparently started the tradition that Zengzi’s disciples were the medium of recording Zengzi’s memory of the Master’s teachings.⁸³ Zhu Xi adopted this view of authorship, but according to Zhou Yutong, Zhu Xi arrived at this viewpoint independently, thus manufacturing the lie of Zengzi’s authorship to strengthen the standing of this text for use in the contemporary intellectual struggle.⁸⁴ Regardless, Zhu Xi was inspired by Cheng Hao’s work to examine the text more closely.

Zhu Xi regarded the text of the *Daxue* as a composite of an original classic (*jing*), consisting of section 1, which he supplemented with select passages from elsewhere in the work, and an extended commentary (*zhuan*) consisting of

⁸⁰ *Xiaojing zhengyi* 1.3a–3b.

⁸¹ On state rule through the concept of filial piety, see Zhong Zhaopeng, “Zengzi xuepai de xiaozhi sixiang,” 50–59.

⁸² Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 1.1–4.

⁸³ Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊, *Jingyikao* 經義考, 8 vols. (Taipei: Zhonghua Shuju, 1979), 156.1a.

⁸⁴ Zhou Yutong, “‘Daxue’ he ‘Liyun’” 大学和礼运, in *Zhou Yutong jingxueshi lunzhu xuanji*, 401–24.

the interpretations of Zengzi (sections 2 through 10). He declared, "To the right is the text of the classic in one section. It seems that it was the words of Confucius that were transmitted by Zengzi. His commentary was in ten sections, which are the interpretations of Zengzi that his own disciples recorded." 右經一張蓋孔子之言而曾子述之。其傳十章則曾子之意而門人記之也。⁸⁵ Zhu Xi hence produced an edition that reflected this internal structure, justifying this textual intervention on the authority of Cheng Hao and by the claim that the "old edition contained misplaced bamboo strips." 舊本頗有錯簡。⁸⁶ It is this restructured version, printed in 1190 with the preface dated 1189, that became the received version of this text, seminal in the emerging orthodoxy of Cheng-Zhu thought.⁸⁷

A sensible view of the question of authorship of the *Daxue* was expressed by Wang Zhong 汪中 (1745–1794), who remarked that there is no record of Zengzi being the author and that the works attributed to Zengzi such as the "Zengzi wen" chapter of the *Liji* or the "Zengzi lishi" section of Zengzi's "Ten Sections" in the *Da Dai Liji* are stylistically inferior to the *Daxue* and other chapters of the *Liji*.⁸⁸ As for the specifics of his argumentation, they apply to early texts in general and reflect an admirably clear-thinking outlook:

Today the division into classic and commentary presupposes the words of two speakers, yet in the beginning there was no correspondence. It definitely derived from one mouth, and seems not to explain the classic. If the intent was not to attribute these words to Confucius then the author's purpose would not have been respected; if Zengzi had not been cited in the text, then it would not have facilitated this attempt. It had to be handled like this before the author felt at ease. When the disciples recorded the words of Confucius, they always cited them as "The Master said," "the master spoke of it," "Confucius said," or "the master spoke, saying"; this was for the purpose of highlighting them. Today the *Great Learning* does not record what person said what words, so it is groundless to take them as the doctrine of Confucius.

⁸⁵ *Daxue zhangju* 大學章句 (Sishu jichu ed.), 1.2b.

⁸⁶ *Daxue zhangju*, 1.2b.

⁸⁷ For an overview of Zhu Xi's editorial work on the *Daxue*, see Daniel K. Gardiner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh: Neo-Confucian Reflection on the Confucian Canon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies, 1986), 27–45.

⁸⁸ Wang Zhong 汪中, "Daxue pingyi" 大學平義, in *Shuxue* 述學 (HQJJ ed.), 9a–9b (5:6540–41).

今定為經傳以為二人之辭而首末相應，實出一口，殆非所以解經也。意者不託之孔子則其道不尊而中引曾子則又不便于事，必如是而後安爾。門人記孔子之言必稱子曰、子言之、孔子曰、夫子之言曰以顯之。今大學不著何人之言，以為孔子義無所據。⁸⁹

The growing consensus of modern scholarship, according to Daniel Gardner, is that the text "dates from no earlier than the Qin period (221–206 BC) and no later than the reign of Han Wu-ti [Han Wudi] (14–87 BC)."⁹⁰ As for content, Zhu Xi's succinct evaluation in his prelude to chapter 1 is that "Mr. Cheng said that the *Daxue* was a transmitted work of Mr. Kong, and is the gate for beginning learners to enter into virtue. Even in these times we may see the order of the ancients in their learners just by relying on the fact that this work was preserved. Even the *Analects* and *Mencius* are secondary. Learners must study by means of this, and then will have almost arrived with no faults." 子程子曰：大學孔氏之遺書而初學入德之門也。於今可見古人為學次第者，獨賴此篇之存而論孟次之。學者必由是而學焉則庶乎其不差矣。⁹¹ This text had attracted the attention of Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) because of its usefulness as a Confucian source to counter certain metaphysical claims of Buddhism that were proving hard to combat. Passages such as the opening statement provided the spiritual basis for self-cultivation: "What the Great Learning teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to love the people; and to rest in the highest excellence 大學之道，在明明德，在親民，在止於至善。⁹² By the Song dynasty, the text had attracted sufficient attention to inspire Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) to extract it from its context in the *Liji* and to circulate it separately as the *Daxue guangyi* 大學廣義.⁹³ From then on, scholars began to pay it individual attention, culminating in the work of Zhu Xi.

James Legge notes a tradition attributed at second hand to Jia Kui 賈逵 (174–228), a notable classicist of the late Eastern Han period, that the original author was not Confucius but Confucius's grandson Kong Ji 孔伋, Zisi, the disciple of Zengzi: "When Kong Ji was living, and in straits, in Song, being afraid lest the lessons of the former sages should become obscure, and the principles of

⁸⁹ Wang Zhong, "Daxue pingyi," 9a–9b (5:6540–41).

⁹⁰ Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh*, 17.

⁹¹ *Sishu jizhu*, "Daxue zhangju," 1.1.a.

⁹² *Liji zhengyi* 60.1a; trans. Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:411.

⁹³ Zhu Yizun, *Jingyikao*, 156.1a; Huang Junlang 黃俊郎, ed. *Liji zhengyikao* 禮記著述考, *Shisanjing zhushukao* ed., 682.

the ancient sovereigns and kings fall to the ground, he therefore made the Great Learning as the warp of them, and the Doctrine of the Mean as the woof."⁹⁴ This theory never gained currency, but since Zisi had studied under Zengzi, it is certainly plausible.

8.5 Zixia

In distinguishing between the relative merits of Zengzi and Zixia, Zhu Xi once perceptively clarified: "Zixia deeply believed in the sage, while Zengzi instead sought learning within himself." 子夏篤信聖人，曾子反求諸己。⁹⁵ Given this sense of loyalty to Confucius, Zixia was temperamentally more suited for faithful transmission of the Master's teachings, while Zengzi was more suited to expand on the Master's teachings with his own creative commentaries. Unlike Zengzi, who composed the *Zengzi in Eighteen Sections*, *Xiaojing*, and *Daxue*, Zixia is not credited with composing any specific commentaries [*zhuan*]. In fact, according to the thinking of Luo Jun, Zixia does not even merit consideration as one of the various masters [*zhuzi* 諸子], since a master must establish his own explanation independent from Confucius.⁹⁶ Yet Zixia's role in the process of transmitting the classics merits his attention in *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*.

Zixia was the style of Bu Shang 卜商 (b. 507 BC) from Wey 衛. He was forty-four years younger than Confucius and was mentioned nineteen times in the *Analects*. His admirable moral conduct is characterized in the *Records of Ritualists of Dai the Greater* as: "His learning was profound and his severity absolute. When he received or saw off guests he was invariably reverential; he befriended those above him and interacted with those below. His silver hands were as clean and honest as knife blades—such was the conduct of Bu Shang" 學以深，厲以斷，送迎必敬，上友下交，銀手如斷，是卜商之行也。⁹⁷ As the master of his own school, Zixia taught such worthies as Wu Qi 吳起 (440–381 BC) and Wei Wenhou. The *Historian's Records* highlights Zixia's career with three quotes from the *Analects*: first, *Analects* 3.8, where Zixia realizes that ritual

action merely adorns inner moral qualities, something that induced Confucius to admit that he can discuss the *Poems* with him;⁹⁸ second, *Analects* 6.13, where Confucius urges him to become a "Gentlemanly *Ru*, not a petty *Ru*" 女為君子儒，無為小人儒；and finally, *Analects* 11.15, where his timidity is contrasted with Zizhang's excessive exuberance. The chronological biography devoted to him by Chen Yushu, though lengthy, is not very revealing—mainly coordinating years in Zixia's life with what Confucius was doing at the time. The biography is useful for its claims that the *Shiji* statement that he was younger than Confucius by forty-four years should be seen as an error for thirty-three or thirty-four years, that the state of Wey 衛 had later been incorporated into Wei 魏, so either spelling is valid, and that when Zixia retired to Xihe to teach, his students numbered three hundred; other than these few sparse facts, however, the biography lacks substance. We must look elsewhere for details of his scholarship.⁹⁹

Hong Mai's 洪邁 (1123–1202) *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆 admirably sums up Zixia's contribution to the transmission of the classics as received from Confucius:

Of Confucius' disciples, Zixia has the only works among the classics. Although the miscellaneous remarks among his commentaries and records cannot be completely believed, still the essence is different from that of others. With regard to the *Changes*, he composed a commentary; with regard to the *Poems*, he composed a preface. And as for the learning of the Mao school of the *Poems*, one tradition holds that Zixia imparted his teachings to Gao Hangzi 高行子, and after four separate transmissions it reached Duke Mao, Junior 小毛公.

⁹⁴ Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:27. *Shiji* 47.1946 merely mentions that Zisi composed the *Zhongyong* when in straights in Song.

⁹⁵ *Sishu jizhu*, "Mengzi jizhu," 3.4b.

⁹⁶ "In general, all who constructed their own explanations by composing books that did not pass through Confucius's editorial work (*ding* 訂), belong to the class of philosophers with their own commentaries and records (*zhuanji*)." Luo Jun, *Zhuzi xueshu*, 93.

⁹⁷ Wang Pinzhen, *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 6.111.

⁹⁸ The ritual backdrop to Zixia's teachings, and indeed his mastery of ritual ceremony in general, is revealed by Tso Hsiu-yen 卓秀巖, "Zixia lixue" 子夏禮學, *Chenggong Daxue xuebao, shehui pian* 28 (1993): 41–59. Among Confucius' most prominent disciples, Zixia was notable for his emphasis on the mastery of ritual form; see You Ji 尤驥, "Kongmen dizi de butong sixiang qingxiang he Rujia de fenhua" 孔門弟子的不同思想傾向和儒家的分化, *Kongzi yanjiu* 30 (1993): 32–40.

⁹⁹ According to Zhao Lu, during the Eastern Han the relationship between Confucius and his disciple Zixia was regarded by Emperor Ming 明帝, Liu Zhuang 劉莊 (r. 58–75), as a political analogy for the ideal relationship between ruler and subject, and hence was a matter of historiography rather than classical scholarship. See Zhao, *In Pursuit of the Great Peace: Han Dynasty Classicism and the Making of Early Medieval Literati Culture* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2019), 89–97.

Another tradition holds that Zixia transmitted his teachings to Zengzi, and after five transmissions they reached Duke Mao, Senior 大毛公. As for the *Rites*, he composed the "Mourning Vestments" 喪服 chapter of the *Yili* 儀禮. Ma Rong 馬融 and Wang Su and many other classicists provided exegetical glosses and explanations for it.

As for the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, it has been stated that not a single word could have been added to his commentary;¹⁰⁰ it seems that he also made a contribution in this area. Gongyang Gao 公羊高 substantially received his learning from Zixia. As for Guliang Chi 穀梁赤, according to the *Fengsu tong* 風俗通¹⁰¹ he was among the disciples of Zixia. As for the *Analecs*, Zheng Xuan felt that it had been compiled and established by Zhong Gong 仲弓 and Zixia.

孔子弟子子夏於諸經獨有書，雖傳記雜言未可盡信，然要為與他人不同矣。於易則有傳，於詩則有序。而毛詩之學，一云，子夏受高行子，四傳而至小毛公；一云，子夏傳曾申，五傳而至大毛公。於禮則有儀禮喪服一篇，馬融，王肅諸儒多為之訓說。於春秋，所云不能贊一辭，蓋亦嘗從事於斯矣。公羊高實受之於子夏；穀梁赤者，風通俗亦云子夏門人。於論語，則鄭康成以為仲弓，子夏等所撰定。¹⁰²

Bi Yuan's 畢沅 (1730–1797) *Chuanjingbiao* 傳經表 only associates Zixia with transmitting the *Poems* and *Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*.¹⁰³ But given a tradition dating from the Latter Han period that links Zixia

¹⁰⁰ This statement is a paraphrase of *Shiji* 47.1944: "As for the composition of the *Chunqiu*, if it needed writing then he [Confucius] would write it, if it needed erasing then he would erase it. Disciples such as Zixia could not add a single word" 至於為春秋，筆則筆，削則削，子夏之徒不能贊一辭。Hong Mai transferred this passage to refer to Zixia and the fact that his disciples could not help him in his commentarial work.

¹⁰¹ In other words, the *Fengsu tongyi* 通義 of Ying Shao 應邵 (ca. 140 to ca. 203).

¹⁰² Hong Mai, *Rongzhai suibi wuji* 容齋隨筆五集 (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1966), 14.137. This entry is an expansion of a comment by Sima Zhen 司馬貞 (fl. 713) at *Shiji* 67.2203.

¹⁰³ Bi Yuan 畢沅, *Chuangjing biao*, *Congshu jicheng jianbian* 叢書集成簡編 ed. (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1965).

with composing commentaries on the *Poems*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Music*,¹⁰⁴ and this litany of works enumerated by Hong Mai, it is apparent that Zixia's contributions to the transmission of the classics and Confucius's interpretations were almost unparalleled. It is not until the later career of Xunzi that so many lines of classical schools will again converge in the person of a single classicist.

8.6 Zixia and the Genre of the Section and Line Commentary

Zixia's career as a transmitter of classical learning also reveals some insights into the actual commentarial process, its significance, and limitations. Lu Chun 陸淳 (fl. AD 750), *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli* 春秋集傳纂例, citing his teacher Master Dan (Dan Zhu 啖助, 724–770), explains the sometimes tenuous connection between the putative originator of a set of teachings and the end product when it finally gets recorded. His example is the interpretations of Zixia on the *Chunqiu*:

Danzi said, "Anciently, all of the analyses and explanations were imparted orally. Starting in the Han dynasty they were recorded into section and line commentaries. ... This is how we know that the interpretations of the three commentaries [on the *Chunqiu*] originally were orally transmitted. Later scholars then recorded them on bamboo strips and silk rolls and ascribed them to the authorship of an ancestral master. ... The *Gongyang* and *Guliang* at first were also imparted orally. Later persons distributed them about the text of the classic, matching the general meaning. Hence there were many unreasonable and erroneous places that contravened the main interpretive thread. Nevertheless, the essence was that which had been transmitted by Zixia."

啖子曰古之解說悉是口傳。自漢以來乃為章句……是知三傳之義本皆口傳。後之學者乃著竹帛而以祖師之目題之……公羊穀梁初亦口受。後人據其大義散配經文。古多乖謬失其綱統。然其大指亦是子夏所傳。¹⁰⁵

The genre of commentaries organized by sections and lines was indeed a Han dynasty development, as explained by Lu Chun. But given its widespread

¹⁰⁴ By one Xu Fang; see *Hou Hanshu* 44.1500 and the discussion that follows below.

¹⁰⁵ Lu Chun 陸淳, *Chunqiu jizhuan zuanli* 春秋集傳纂例 *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 ed., [https://zh.m.wikisource.org/zh-hant/春秋集傳纂例_\(四庫全書本\)](https://zh.m.wikisource.org/zh-hant/春秋集傳纂例_(四庫全書本)) 1. 4b, 5a, 5b. Incidentally, because of a Tang period taboo, Lu Chun is called Lu Zhi 質 in some Tang historical and biographical sources.

popularity during that period, the genre informed the contemporary scholarly mindset, and was hence easily read back into ancient history. Early in the Later Han dynasty, Xu Fang 徐防 (fl. AD 71) thus attributed the invention of the genre to Zixia to justify the compilation of *zhangju* commentaries for some classics, the recruitment of classicists through examination, and the establishment of an imperial academy. The *History of Later Han* explains the background to these proposals:

Fang regarded the Five Classics as deriving from the distant past, so the intentions of the sage were hard to discern. It was therefore suitable to create section and line commentaries for them in order to enlighten later learners. So he submitted a memorial to the throne, saying: "Your servant has heard that the *Poems*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Music* had been determined by Confucius, and that the creation and development of section and line commentaries started with Zixia. Afterwards, the various masters diverged apart, each holding to his different views. When Han succeeded chaotic Qin, the classics had been set aside and the institutions lost. The basic texts were preserved to a certain extent, but some lacked section and line commentaries."

防以五經久遠，聖意難明，宜為章句，以悟後學。上疏曰：臣聞詩書禮樂，定自孔子；發明章句，始於子夏。其後諸家分析，各有異說。漢承亂秦，經典廢絕，本文略存，或無章句。¹⁰⁶

Qian Mu's 錢穆 (1895–1990) definition of *zhangju* justifies Xu Fang's early attribution of the general practice, if not specific genre, to Zixia. Qian Mu brings the discussion back to just what a classical master did: when a classicist transcribed the oral teachings of his master into a written text, this naturally formed a section and line commentary. The existence of this commentary created a so-called "reading rules of a lineage" (*jiafa* 家法), the interpretation of a text handed down from intellectual generation to intellectual generation.¹⁰⁷ The lack

¹⁰⁶ *Hou Hanshu* 44.1500.

¹⁰⁷ Qian Mu, "Jiafa yu zhangju" 家法與章句, in *Liang-Han Jingxue jingwen pingyi* 兩漢經學今古文評議 (Taipei: Dongda Tushu Youxian Gongsì, 2003), 196–204. Zhang Baosan 張寶三, "Handai zhangju zhi xue lunkao" 漢代章句之學論考, *Taida Zhongwen xuebao* 台大中文學報 14 (2001): 35–76, views the formal development of the genre as an Eastern Han phenomenon associated with Modern Text masters, oriented toward interpretation rather than textual exegesis. Lin

of such a body of interpretive lore prevented the creations of a scholarly lineage. In the words of Qian Mu, "Having a section and line commentary meant the formation of a lineage of learning [*jiaxue* 家學]. ... The one who forms a lineage of learning then composes a section and line commentary to impart to disciples."¹⁰⁸ The lack of such a commentary disqualified the *Guwen Shangshu* 古文尚書 from being established as an official text with an academic specialist in the imperial academy of the Han.¹⁰⁹ The *Documents of Han* records that the existence of commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was originally due to oral transmission, including the *Gongyang's Commentary* and *Guliang's Commentary*. Interpretive lineages attributed to a Mister Zou 騶氏 and a Mister Jia 夾氏 did exist, but they were scholastically impotent given that the Zou lineage lacked a contemporary master, and the Jia lineage lacked its own text.¹¹⁰ And the Han school of *Shijing* exegesis survived until the Tang period, but then perished due to the lack of a master to inherit the tradition and pass it on.¹¹¹

8.7 Conclusions

In the broad sense of recording the oral teachings of Confucius, Zixia can fairly be regarded as the originator of the written commentary, known in the Han as the section and line form of commentary. More importantly, Zixia became the central figure in the transmission of Confucian teachings and Confucian classics. Of course, the issue is still open whether it was truly Zixia, his disciples, or later generations of disciples who first transcribed the oral teachings of the Confucius/Zixia school and functioned as the pivot in the process of transmission. Regardless, Zixia or an anonymous methodological counterpart, entirely fulfilled the role described by Alain Badiou that commenced this chapter: "Disciples read, translate, re-edit the texts of the master."¹¹² It will be left for Zisi to play the role of the second type of disciple, that of to "squabble about the philosophy in question; relate it to classical problems in the history of thought; relate it to other

Qingzhang 林慶彰, "Liang-Han zhangju zhi xue chongtan" 兩漢章句之學重探, in *Zhongguo jingxueshi lunwen xuanji* 中國經學史論文選集, 2 vols., ed. Ling Qingzhang (Taipei: Wen Shi Zhe Chubanshe, 2008), 1:277–97, likewise does not regard the genre as a transcription of the text for the sake of transmission but as a transcription of a master's oral interpretation of the meaning of a particular classic; like Zhang Baosan, he credits it to Modern Text masters of the Eastern Han Period.

¹⁰⁸ Qian Mu, "Jiafa yu zhangju," 196.

¹⁰⁹ Qian Mu, "Jiafa yu zhangju," 198.

¹¹⁰ *Hanshu* 30.1715.7

¹¹¹ Pi Xirui 皮錫瑞, *Jingxue lishi*, 287.

¹¹² Ashton, Bartlett, and Clemens, "Masters & Disciples," 4.

philosophies. ..."¹¹³ As we turn from Zixia to Zisi, we naturally turn from faithful transcription and transmission to incipient hermeneutics and the formation of philosophy.

9. Zisi and the Preparation for Hermeneutics

9.1 The Family Business

Kong Ji 孔伋, known historically as Zisi (480–402 BC), was the son of Kong Li 孔鯉 (Boyu 伯魚), who was himself the son of Confucius and who figures in the *Analects* at two points in conjunction with the importance of studying the *Poems*.¹ According to Neo-Confucian theory, Zisi was six years old when his education was entrusted by his grandfather Confucius to the care of Zengzi. Because of his role in transmitting the teachings of his grandfather, Kong Ji was accorded the title of “Transmitting Sage” (*shusheng* 述聖). The *Zisizi* 子思子, a work that may have been a compilation of his teachings, has been lost for centuries, but four chapters in the *Records of Ritualists* are traditionally ascribed to him. Zisi’s importance to the history of classical scholarship is summarized by Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), one of Zhu Xi’s intellectual forbearers, simply as being the central link between Confucius and Mencius in the transmission of the teachings of the mind: “This chapter [*Zhongyong*] then is the transmission of the method of the mind by the Confucian school. Zisi feared that given how long it had been, it might have diverged from the original. Hence he wrote it down into a document in order to impart it to Mencius.” 此篇乃孔門傳授心法。子思恐其久而差也。故筆之於書。以授孟子。²

But according to modern scholar Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝, Confucius’s disciple Ziyou 子遊 (b. ca. 506 BC), not Zengzi, was the true teacher of Zisi. There is no evidence in ancient sources for the attribution to Zengzi.³ A conversation between Zengzi and Zisi is preserved in the “Duke Tan” 檀弓 chapter of the *Records of Ritualists* where Zengzi addresses him by his name of Ji, indicating Zengzi’s seniority, but the ensuing conversation reads more like an exchange between equals than a master disciple-teaching scenario:

Zengzi said to Zisi, “Ji, when I was engaged in the mourning

¹ *Lunyu* 16.13; 17.10.

² Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), *Sishu jizhu* 四書集注, “*Zhongyong zhangju*” (Taipei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1980), 1a.

³ Ruan Tingzhuo 阮廷焯, *Xian-Qin zhuzi kaoyi* 先秦諸子考佚 (Taipei: Dingwen, 1980), 1–32; p. 6.

¹¹³ Ashton, Bartlett, and Clemens, “Masters & Disciples,” 4.

for my parents, no water or other liquid entered my mouth for seven days." Zisi said, "With regard to the rules of ceremony framed by the ancient kings, those who would go beyond them should stoop down to them, and those who do not reach them should stand on tip-toe to do so. Hence, when a superior man is engaged in mourning for his parents, no water or other liquid enters his mouth for three days, and with the aid of his staff he is still able to rise."

曾子謂子思曰：汲！吾執親之喪也，水漿不入於口者七日。子思曰：先王之制禮也，過之者俯而就之，不至焉者，跂而及之。故君子之執親之喪也，水漿不入於口者三日，杖而後能起。⁴

Apparently, the attribution to Zengzi as the master of Zisi was part of the attempt of Zhu Xi and other Neo-Confucians to construct a line of intellectual transmission that was in keeping with their ideas of "legitimate succession" (*daotong* 道統), a line deriving from Confucius to Zengzi to Zisi and on to Mencius at one remove. In the formulation of Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), the legitimate succession was as follows:

Yao transmitted it to Shun, Shun transmitted it to Yu, Yu transmitted it to Tang, Tang transmitted it to Wen and Wu and the Duke of Zhou. Wen and Wu and the Duke of Zhou transmitted it to Confucius, and Confucius transmitted it to Mencius. With the death of Mencius, it did not get to be transmitted. Xunzi and Yang Xiong selectively chose parts of it but were not skillful in this; they discoursed on it but were not detailed.

以是傳之舜。舜以是傳之禹。禹以是傳之湯。湯以是傳之文武周公。文武周公傳之孔子。孔子傳之孟軻。軻之死不得其傳焉。荀與揚也擇焉而不精。語焉而不詳。⁵

To support his contention that Zengzi was not the teacher of Zisi, Jiang Guanghui cites such early modern authorities as Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927), who denies that Zengzi was capable of imparting such intellectual depth to Zisi, and Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 (1868–1936), who indicates that the thought of Zengzi contained in the *Records of Ritualists of Dai Senior* was at variance with the

⁴ *Liji zhengyi* 7.6a–6b; James Legge, trans., *Li Chi Book of Rites*, ed. Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai, 2 vols. (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1967), 1:133–34.

⁵ Cited by Zhu Xi, *Mengzi jizhu*, "Mengzi xu" 孟子序, 2a.

Application of the Inner.⁶ But the most important bit of evidence is a quote from Xunzi that has been altered by modern editors to change the name of Zisi's master from Ziyou to Zigong:

To give their proposition a cloak of respectability and to win respect and veneration for them [some men] claim:

These doctrines represent the genuine words of the gentleman of former times. Zisi provided the tune for them, and Mencius harmonized it.

The stupid, indecisive, deluded Ru of today enthusiastically welcome these notions, unaware that they are false. They pass on what they have received, believing that, on account of these theories, Confucius and Zigong [Ziyou] would be highly esteemed by later generations. It is in just this that they offend against Zisi and Mencius.

略法先王而不知其統，猶然而猶材劇志大，聞見雜博。案往舊造說，謂之五行，甚僻違而無類，幽隱而無說，閉約而無解。案飾其辭，而祇敬之，曰：此真先君子之言也。子思唱之，孟軻和之。世俗之溝猶瞽儒、嚙嚙然不知其所非也，遂受而傳之，以為仲尼子游為茲厚於後世：是則子思孟軻之罪也。⁷

Modern editors of *Xunzi* emend the textual reference from Ziyou to Zigong because, according to John Knoblock, it is anomalous to name Ziyou here because Xunzi had criticized him earlier.⁸

Some sixty stray notices about Zisi's life and thoughts have been gathered by Ruan Tingzhuo; he distills the essence of these items into the following sketchy biographical notice:

Kong Ji's style was Zisi, he was a man of Lu. He resided in Wei. When his mother died he happened to be returning to Lu. Upon hearing about her death, he went to Wei from Lu and personally managed the affairs of mourning and burial. Once he was in

⁶ Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝, "Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue" 郭店楚簡與早期儒學, in *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue* 郭店楚簡與早期儒學, ed. Pang Pu 龐樸, et al. (Taipei: Taiwan guji Chubanshe, 2002), 1–11; p. 2.

⁷ *Xunzi jijie* 3.60; John Knoblock, trans., *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works, Volume 1, Books 1–6* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 224.

⁸ Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 303n50.

straights in Song and composed the *Application of the Inner*. Returning to Lu, he became the master of Duke Mu. He died when 82 years old. His learning emerged from Zengzi, and later informed the explanations of Mencius. That which he discoursed concerning cultivating the self and shepherding the people all allowed him to inherit the transmission of the legitimate lineage. ... After the death of Confucius the Ruists divided into eight schools. The Ruists of Zisi were quite numerous. Of those that may be identified, there are only two—Duke Mu of Lu and Duke Hui of Bi.

孔伋，字子思，魯人。居於衛。母死，適返魯，聞其赴，自魯至衛，親營喪葬。嘗困於宋，而作中庸。返於魯，為穆公師，卒年八十二。其學出於曾子，而下啟孟子說。所言修己牧民之道，皆能克紹宗傳……自孔子之死，儒分為八，有子思之儒，則門人甚眾，今可考者，僅魯穆、費惠二人而已。⁹

This last fact is attested by the Guodian manuscript called *Duke Mu of Lu asks Zisi* 魯慕公問子思¹⁰ and a passage in *Mencius*: “The duke Hui of Bi said, ‘I treat Zisi as my Teacher, and Yan Ban as my Friend. As to Wang Shun and Chang Xi, they serve me.’” 費惠公曰吾於子思，則師之矣；吾於顏般，則友之矣；王順、長息則事我者也。¹¹

The *Kong Family Master's Anthology* preserves many anecdotes about the life of Zisi. One of exceptional interest, noted by Legge, reveals an incident

⁹ Ruan Tingzhuo, *Xian-Qin zhuzi kaoyi*, 7. Many other episodes are added as interlinear notes that either confirm or contradict the events of his life. See further James Legge's review of early notices on the life of Zisi at *The Chinese Classics*, 5 vols. (1895; repr., Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), 1:36–43; Anne Cheng at Xinzhong Yao, ed., *RoutledgeCurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism*, 2 vols. (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 1:332–333, and an abbreviated synopsis at Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall, *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 146–48.

¹⁰ Jingmenshi Bowuguan 荆门市博物馆, ed., *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹簡 (1998; repr., Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 2005), 141; p. 23 includes a photograph of the original strips. See also Li Ling 李零, *Guodian Chujian jiaodui* 郭店楚簡校讀記 (Beijing: Daxue Chubanshe, 2002), 108–109.

¹¹ *Mencius* 5B3; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 2:377. For the names of several more disciples of Zisi, see Ruan Tingzhuo, *Xian-Qin zhuzi kaoyi*, 12.

with his grandfather. During the years of his boyhood, then, Zisi must have enjoyed some sort of interaction with his grandfather and received his instructions on occasion. It is related that one day, when he was alone with the sage, and heard him sighing, he went up to him, and, bowing twice, inquired what was wrong.

“Is it,” said he, “because you think that your descendants, through not cultivating themselves, will be unworthy of you? Or is it that, in your admiration of the ways of Yao and Shun, you are vexed that you fall short of them?” “Child,” replied Confucius, “how is it that you know my thoughts?” “I have often,” said Zisi, “heard from you the lesson, that when the father has gathered and prepared the firewood, if the son cannot carry the bundle, he is to be pronounced degenerate and unworthy. The remark comes frequently into my thoughts, and fills me with great apprehension.” The sage was delighted. He smiled and said, “Now indeed, shall I be without anxiety! My undertakings will not come to naught. They will be carried on and flourish.”

意子孫不脩，將忝祖乎？羨堯、舜之道，恨不及乎？夫子曰：爾孺子，安知吾志？子思對曰：伋於進膳亟聞夫子之教。其父析薪，其子弗克負荷，是謂不肖。伋每思之，所以大恐而不懈也。夫子忻然笑曰：然乎？吾無憂矣。世不廢業，其克昌乎！¹²

The key to self-improvement and the rectification of the age was the cultivation of the rites and music, something that Zisi claimed to have heard from his grandfather.¹³

Zisi was apparently viewed as a master of ritual, as several notices in the *Records of Ritualists* attest.¹⁴ Even the death of his mother served as a teaching moment for the flexibility allowed in some ritual situations:

When Zisi's mother died in Wei, Liu Ruo said to him, “You, Sir, are the descendant of a sage. From all quarters they look to you for an example in ceremonies; let me advise you to be careful in the matter. Zisi said, “Of what have I to be careful? I have

¹² *Kong congzi* 孔叢子, *Congshu jicheng chubian* 丛书集成初编 ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1985), “Jiwen” 記問, 1.29; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:37.

¹³ *Kong congzi*, 1.29.

¹⁴ Zisi appears sixteen times in the “Tan Gong,” chapter of the *Records of Ritualists*, all associated with ritual situations.

heard that when there are certain ceremonies to be observed, and he has not the necessary means for them, a superior man does not observe them," and that neither does he do so, when there are the ceremonies, and he has the means, but the time is not suitable; of what have I to be careful?"

子思之母死於衛，柳若謂子思曰：子，聖人之後也，四方於子乎觀禮，子蓋慎諸。子思曰：吾何慎哉？吾聞之：有其禮，無其財，君子弗行也；有其禮，有其財，無其時，君子弗行也。吾何慎哉！¹⁵

After reviewing numerous notices about Zisi, Legge concludes that "these instances may suffice to illustrate the character of Zisi, as it was displayed in his intercourse with the princes of this time. We see the same independence which he affected in private life, and a dignity not unbecoming the grandson of Confucius. It is with him, however, as a thinker and writer that we have to do."¹⁶

Zisi was honored posthumously in 1102 when he was ennobled as the Marquis of Yishui 沂水侯 and then enshrined in the Temple of Confucius in 1108. A final dignity was conferred in 1330 when his manes were posthumously awarded the title of the Transmitting Sage, Duke of the Kingdom of Yi 沂國述聖公.¹⁷ In terms of scholastic lineage, this title confirmed what scholars like Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728–1804) already knew, that "of the 72 disciples that came after Zhongni, only Mr. Zisi was able to inherit the transmitted doctrine" 仲尼已往七十子之徒，惟子思氏獨得其傳。¹⁸

9.2 The Application of the Inner

In accordance with the hoary theory that great stress induces literary inspiration, Sima Qian credits Zisi with authoring the *Application of the Inner* when in great trouble. The entire laconic entry on Zisi in the *Historian's Record* is as follows:

Boyu gave birth to Ji, whose name was Zisi. When he was 62,

¹⁵ *Liji zhengyi* 8.10b–11a; Legge, *Li Chi*, 1:151–52.

¹⁶ Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:42–43.

¹⁷ Thomas A. Wilson, in *Routledge Curzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism*, 2:565 translates this last title as "The Compliant Sage Duke of Yi."

¹⁸ Qian Daxin 錢大昕, *Qianyangtang wenji* 潛研堂文集 (SBCK *chubian* ed.), "Jibu," 97 (*juan* 17): 163–64.

he was in straights in Song. Zisi composed the *Zhongyong*.
伯魚生伋，字子思，年六十二，嘗困於宋。子思作中庸。¹⁹

A quote attributed to Zisi, preserved in the early Confucian anthology *The Kong Family Master's Anthology* 孔叢子, identifies the specific motivation that moved Zisi to compose this work, that of following sagely precedent:

Zisi said, "King Wen was in straights in Youli, and composed the *Zhou Changes*. My honored grandfather was in straights between Chen and Cai, and composed the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. I was in straights in Song—how could I not compose something? Therefore I compiled the *Application of the Inner* in 49 chapters."

子思曰：文王厄於紂里，作周易；祖君屈於陳蔡，作春秋。吾困於宋，可無作乎？於是撰中庸之書四十九篇。²⁰

It may have been a bold move to invoke some degree of sagehood by citing such precedence, but from the point of view of the scholarly transmission of classical learning, Zisi could rightly claim the mantle of his grandfather. On the other hand, Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) ascribes a more filial motivation to Zisi for composing the work: "to clarify and illuminate the virtue of his sagely grandfather" 昭明聖祖之德.²¹ Its purpose was manifestly commentarial, to "clarify and illuminate" not a text but the corpus of oral teachings of his grandfather.

The length of the text in the forty-nine chapters is worth noting here. The received version of the *Zhongyong* is obviously limited to a single chapter. But this work in forty-nine chapters (some medieval authorities say forty-seven chapters²²) is easily explained as the compilation later called the *Zisi*. The lead

¹⁹ *Shiji* 47.1946.

²⁰ *Kong congzi* 孔叢子, "Juwei" 居衛 (CSJC *chubian* ed.), 1.46. According to tradition, the *Kong congzi* was originally compiled by Confucius's descendant Kong Fu 孔鮒 (d. 208 BC), who was appointed an erudite by Chen Sheng 陳勝 (d. 208), the leader of the first rebellion against Qin. The work reads like a compilation of anecdotes about ancestors and traditions of family learning dating from the Han/Wei eras.

²¹ *Liji zhengyi* 52.1a.

²² Certain Tang and Song authorities describe the work as containing forty-seven chapters; it is unknown whether seven should be regarded as an error for nine or if nine should be taken as an error for seven. See the discussion by Deng Yi 鄧沂, "Zhongyong, Zisi, Zisizi—Zisi shu yuanliu kao" 中庸子思子思子思書源流考, in Pang Pu, et al. eds., *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue*, 75–83; pp. 76–77.

work, *Zhongyong*, lends its name to the entire anthology. The first official notice of the work of Zisi under his own name is the account in the bibliographical chapter in the *Hanshu* that records a *Zisi* in twenty-three chapters.²³ It is reasonable to suppose, with Deng Yi, that Liu Xiang edited this version based on the original work in 47 or 49 chapters, changing the title to reflect its authorship, not the name of the lead entry.²⁴ The final installation of this work is noted in the Sui and Tang bibliographies under a slightly modified title: the *Master Zisi* 子思子 in seven chapters.²⁵ The drastically reduced number of chapters undoubtedly reflects the fact that the work as a whole had been lost and that a recompilation of quotes culled from various sources and odd chapters preserved in the *Records of Ritualists* was reconstructed in seven chapters. When Shen Yue 沈約 (441–513) took note of the work of Zisi, he most likely only had access to the seven-chapter recompilation. His statement is as follows: “The ‘Application of the Inner,’ the ‘Record of Signposts’ (*Biaoji* 表記), the ‘Record of Dams’ (*Fangji* 坊記), and ‘Black Robe’ (*Ziyi* 緇衣), were all selected from the *Master Zisi*.”²⁶ According to Liang Tao, these four chapters all share stylistic similarities: all commence with the formula “The Master said” (only half of the paragraphs in the *Application of the Inner* do so) and all quote heavily from the *Poems* and other early classics.²⁷ This line of thinking leads us to a closer look at the related stylistics of these four chapters.

9.3 The Zisi Chapters in the Records of Ritualists

The first commonality is the most common introductory formula employed, namely “The Master said” (*Ziyue* 子曰), traditionally identified as Confucius. Wang Zhong 汪中 (1745–1794) expresses the traditional consensus on this matter in early Chinese literature:

When disciples recorded the words of Confucius, they necessarily described them as “The Master said,” “The master spoke about it,” “Confucius said,” “The master’s words were spoken”; this way, they made it clear. Now, the *Great Learning* does not attribute the words to anyone. Stating that they embody

²³ *Hanshu*, “Yiwen zhi,” 30.1724.

²⁴ Deng Yi, “*Zhongyong*, *Zisi*, *Zisizi*—Zisi shu yuanliu kao,” 77.

²⁵ *Suishu* 隋書, “Jingji” 經籍志, 34.997; *Tangshu* 唐書, “Jingji” 經籍志, 47.2024; *Xin tangshu* 新唐書, “Yiwen zhi” 藝文志, 59.1510.

²⁶ As quoted in the *Suishu*, “Yinyue zhi 音樂志,” 13.288.

²⁷ Liang Tao 梁濤, “Guodian Chujian yu Zhongyong gong’an” 郭店楚簡與中庸公案, in Pang Pu et al. eds., *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue*, 92–93.

the doctrine of Confucius is without foundation.

門人記孔子之言必稱子曰，子言之，孔子曰，夫子之言曰，以顯之。今大學不著何人之言，以為孔子義無所據。²⁸

Qian Daxin instead identifies the voice of Zisi behind this introductory formulation of “The Master said” and “the Master spoke about it.”²⁹

With certain reservations modern scholar Chen Tongsheng 陈桐生 agrees with Wang Zhong that it is Confucius who is being introduced. In the context of analyzing Confucius’s quotes in the “Confucius Discourses on the *Poems*,”—quotes that are also introduced by the familiar formula of “Confucius said”—Chen discusses the general veracity of such attributions in early literature. He agrees that it is possible, given the medium of oral transmission among generations of masters and disciples, that many of the early utterances of the master could have been handed down with a degree of accuracy and recorded at a later time. It is also likely, in some cases, that later thinkers borrowed the persona of Confucius to lend authority to their own pronouncements. Even so, he concludes, they would have to take into account the thought and style of the Confucius of the *Analects* in order to sound authentic. As such, they also have their value if not their historical validity.³⁰ With this dual perspective, we now turn to how this formula is used in the *Records of Ritualists* and the *Zisi* chapters, not necessarily as a marker of authenticity but of indication of structural commonality.

Confucius first appears as speaker in the *Records of Ritualists* in the second chapter, “Duke Tan”. He is asked a question concerning a matter of ducal succession by his disciple Ziyou: “Ziyou asked Confucius (about the matter), and he said, ‘Nay, [the rule is to] appoint the grandson.’” 子游問諸孔子，孔子曰：否！立孫。³¹ Confucius is identified by name 139 times in the *Records of Ritualists*. In the ten instances where he speaks in the “Duke Tan” chapter, he is identified by name as “Confucius said” (*Kongzi yue* 孔子曰). This pattern persists throughout the anthology; the occasional instance when he is introduced as “The Master said,” in Chinese either *ziyue* 子曰 or *fuzi yue* 夫子曰, is only after being

²⁸ Wang Zhong 汪中 (1745–1794), *Shuxue* 述學 (HQJJ ed.), 5:6541 (*juan* 2.9b).

²⁹ Qian Daxin, *Qianyantang wenji*, 97 (*juan* 17): 163–64.

³⁰ Chen Tongsheng 陈桐生, *Kongzi shilun yanjiu* 孔子诗论研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2004), 47–55; he also notes that it would be natural for slight variations in wording to slip in overtime as the “general meaning” of Confucius was passed down rather than his precise phraseology (p. 53n1).

³¹ *Liji zhengyi* 6.1a; Legge, *Li Chi*, 1:120.

formally introduced by name in a line or at the beginning of the chapter. The usual formulation uses the name Kongzi, but sometimes Zhongni is used. The generic “a Gentleman stated” (*Junziyue* 君子曰) is common, which at one point is explained as “it was the remark of a superior man of antiquity that” (*gu zhi junzi yue* 古之君子曰).³²

Throughout the entire anthology of the *Records of Ritualists*, Confucius is always introduced by name before being referred to by the shorthand formula of “The Master said.” But when we reach the set of four chapters associated with the authorship of Zisi, we abruptly encounter two new structural changes that prove exceptions to the general pattern. The first is a new formulaic introduction, and the second is a new way to refer to what The Master said.

The new formulaic introduction is “the Master spoke about it” (*Zi yan zhi* 子言之) or “the Master spoke about it, saying” (*Zi yan zhi yue* 子言之曰). This particular formulation appears in the initial pericopes (*pian* 篇) of three of these four chapters, not appearing in the “Application of the Inner,” and it appears eight times out of fifty-three pericopes in “Record of Signpost”: pericopes 1, 5, 10, 22, 26, 31, 32, and 49. Each time Legge renders the phrase “these were the words of the Master,” master is in the singular. This locution of *Zi yan zhi* had previously appeared three times in the *Records of Ritualists* outside of these Zisi chapters but always with the particular master identified to some degree: “Formerly the Master made some remarks to me, saying” 昔者夫子言之曰; “A superior man has said about the case” 君子言之曰; and Confucius saying, “According to what I have heard” 吾子聞之也.³³ When it appears in “Record of Dams,” “Record of Signposts,” and “Black Robe,” it lacks a particular identification, merely stating, “The Master spoke about it.”

Legge renders the formula as it first appears in the “Record of Dams” as “according to what the Masters said.” But in all subsequent pericopes that commence with “*Zi yue*,” Legge reverts to the singular for *Zi*: “The Master said.” And in every other instance of this full formula, Legge renders it as “these were the words of the Master.” Richard Wilhelm consistently translates both formulae in the singular: “Der Meister hat gesagt” and “Der Meister sprach.”³⁴ Jeffrey Riegel translates the formula as “the Master stated the doctrine for it.” Writing from the perspective of a Han dynasty provenance for the chapters compiled as

the *Records of Ritualists*, Riegel offers the following explanation of the locution:

The “Master” should be understood to be one of the prominent Han ritualists participating in the discussion. The *Ta Tai Li Chi* witness, however, reads 孔子曰 [Confucius said], mistakenly identifying him as Confucius. The “doctrine” is part of the dogma quoted from an early master [on occasion, Confucius himself] or formulated by the debate participant using the proper archaic syntax.³⁵

The Han provenance for many of these chapters is of course no longer tenable. It seems that the *Records of Ritualists of Dai the Greater* is correct in identifying Confucius as the “master.” Although Riegel asserts that these formulae “neatly divide the subjects of the debate,”³⁶ this division is not easily discernible, nor are discrete themes consistently treated within their separate divisions. It is true, however, that a hint of the introductory function of this formula is discernible in the *Records of Ritualists of Dai the Greater*. The chapter “Observations on Ritual” 禮察 contains a summary of the contents of the “Fangji”; the opening line of the summary is, “Confucius said, is not the way of the gentleman to be compared with a levee?” 孔子曰，君子之道，譬猶防與？³⁷ This corresponds to the same opening sentence in the “Record of Dams,” which commences with the formula “the Master spoke about it” (*zi yan zhi*) and then introduces a summary. Regardless of the actual relationship between these two formulae used to introduce the same passage in different works, our interest in the formula “the master spoke about it” is for the evidence it provides to group three of the four Zisi chapters together.

The new way to refer to what The Master said is the substitution of “the Master states/stated” (*ziyun* 子云) for the much more commonly employed *ziyue* in the “Record of Dams.” Pericopes 2 through 39 commence with this formula, which only occurs in the *Records of Ritualists* in this single chapter. We observe the same alternation in the “Application of the Inner” between “*yue*” and “*yun*” with “the Poems say” (*Shiyue* 詩曰) alternating with “the Poems state” (*Shiyun* 詩云). It is this latter formula that links the other Zisi texts with each other.

³² *Liji zhengyi* 6.1a; Legge, *Li Chi*, 1:120.

³³ *Liji zhengyi* 8.16a, Legge, *Li Chi* 1:156; *Liji zhengyi* 10.25b, Legge, *Li Chi* 1:197; *Liji zhengyi* 50.7a, Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:260.

³⁴ See, inter alia, Richard Wilhelm, *Li Gi: Das Buch der Riten, Sitten und Gebräuche* (1930; rpt., Berlin: Marixverlag, 2014), 183.

³⁵ Jeffrey K. Riegel, “The Four ‘Tzu Ssu’ Chapters of the *Li Chi*: An Analysis and Translation of the *Fang Chi*, *Chung Yong*, *Piao Chi*, and *Tzu I*” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1978), 175.

³⁶ Riegel, “The Four ‘Tzu Ssu’ Chapters,” 175.

³⁷ Fang Xiangdong 方向东, *Da Dai liji huijiao jijie* 大戴礼记汇校集解, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2008), 1:123; Riegel, “The Four ‘Tzu Ssu’ Chapters,” 321.

The “Shi Yun” formula occurs sixty-seven times in the *Records of Ritualists*, and forty-three of these times are in the four Zisi chapters: fourteen times in the “Record of Dams,” five times in the “Application of the Inner,” eight times in the “Record of Signposts,” and sixteen times in the “Black Robe.” This means that 64 percent of the time that this formula occurs is in these four Zisi chapters. The only other chapter with an equally dense occurrence of this formula is the “Great Learning,” which contains eleven instances. Thus, these five chapters contain fifty-four of the sixty-seven occurrences of this formula in the anthology—80 percent of the total. Nine other chapters also contain at least one instance of the formula, with “The Meaning of Sacrifice” 祭義 and “Confucius at Ease” containing two and “Record of Music” containing three. The density of this formula in the four Zisi chapters naturally groups them as a set of related texts, and the “Great Learning” should be added to this set. Chen Mengjia includes the *Classic of Filial Piety* on other grounds.³⁸ It is not known whether the introductory formula is present in the “Great Learning” because of shared authorial provenance or because of shared time of composition (presumably rather early), but structurally, the Zisi texts belong together.

It should be pointed out that the macrostructure of these pericopes invariably embodies the text/testator duality of *wen* 文 and *xian* 賢 found in the *Analects*. With the formulaic “The Master said,” Confucius is invoked as the testator *par excellence* as he pronounces on a topic with the *obiter dicta* of a master dispensing his unchallengeable wisdom to his receptive acolytes. Then he himself confirms the truth of his oral utterance by drawing on the unassailable prestige of a quote, most often from the *Poems*, the most authoritative text of the hoary canonical corpus.³⁹ I should think that the twin authorities of testator/text

³⁸ Chen Mengjia 陈梦家 (1911–1966) includes the *Classic of Filial Piety* because of its density of quotes from the *Poems* and *Documents*: “The ‘Record of Dams,’ ‘Record of Signposts,’ and ‘Black Jacket,’ all claim to transmit the words of Zhongni and frequently quote from the *Poems* and *Documents*. Their formats are similar to that of the *Classic of Filial Piety*.” 坊記、表記、緇衣皆稱述仲尼之言，常引證詩、書，其體例與孝經同；Chen Mengjia, *Shangshu tonglun* 尚书通论, 2nd ed. (1963; repr., Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1986), 29.

³⁹ Martin Kern notes that citing the *Shijing* was more authoritative than the less frequent practice of citing the *Shangshu*, and the prestige of these poetic quotes helped to insure the circulation of any manuscript that contained them. For an intriguing and sophisticated analysis of the use of quotations from these classics in the Chinese manuscript tradition, see Kern, “Quotation and the Confucian Canon in Early Chinese Manuscripts: The Case of the ‘ZI YI’ (Black Robe),” *Asiatische Studien* 59 (2005): 293–332.

in the living presence of the Master would have been too much of a constraint against the development of individual attempts at interpretation. A new freedom, both from the constraining charisma of Confucius and the limiting constrictions of the normal formula—introduction of Confucius, his oral pronouncements *cum* confirming quotations—would only come with the distance of passing generations.

As for Liang Tao’s observation that the four Zisi chapters belong together because of their common feature of dense quotation of the *Poems*, statistics bear this out. The *Poems* are mentioned or quoted 103 times in the *Records of Ritualists*; this does not include the occasional quote from the “Greater Elegantiae” or other sectional titles of the *Poems*.⁴⁰ In non-Zisi chapters, eighteen of these appearances are as the name of the classic and seventeen are as direct quotes from the *Poems*, bringing the total to thirty-five times or 34 percent. No single chapter includes more than one quote from the *Poems* except for “Record of Music” and “Confucius at Ease,” both of which include three quotes. The remaining sixty-eight instances of quotes appear in the four Zisi chapters together with the “Great Learning” for a total of 66 percent of the occurrences of the key word *Poems*. The breakdown is as follows: “Record of Dams,” fourteen times; “Application of the Inner,” fifteen times; “Record of Signposts,” eleven times; “Black Robe,” sixteen times; and “Great Learning,” twelve times. All of these instances, it should be mentioned, are direct quotations from the *Poems*. Again, the four Zisi chapters form a related group of texts that should include the “Great Learning” and the *Classic of Filial Piety*, which contains eleven quotes from the *Poems* and one from the *Documents*. These numbers confirm the impact of the immediate presence of Confucius on his auditors and the lingering presence of his charisma as they faithfully transmitted his teachings, both content and format.⁴¹

⁴⁰ The section title “Airs of the States” (*Guofeng* 國風) occurs three times in the *Liji*, all three in “Biaoji.” Section title “Minor Elegantiae” (*Xiaoya* 小雅) occurs one time in the “Yueji,” four times in the “Biaoji,” and two times in the “Ziyi.” Section title “Greater Elegantiae” (*Daya* 大雅) occurs once in the “Yueji,” once in the “Biaoji,” and three times in the “Ziyi.” It is evident that rarely does a text from the *Liji* cite one of these sectional titles, and then only twice with both occurrences in the “Yueji.”

⁴¹ Another commonality shared by these five chapters is the density of quotations from the *Documents*. According to Chen Mengjia’s tabulation, quotes from the *Documents* appear in the “Record of Dams” four times; “Record of Signposts,” three times; in “Black Robe” thirteen times; and in “Great Learning” seven times. Strangely enough, no quotes appear in the “Application of the Inner.” Quotations only appear in two other chapters in the *Records of Ritualists*, one in “Crown Prince

As an example of how one of these chapters quote the *Poems*, the following presentation analyzes the use of quotations from the *Poems*, *Documents*, and other early texts in the "Black Robe" from the angle of structure. The rhetorical appropriateness of quotes is not at issue here, except infrequently.⁴² The translation is that of Legge's rendition of the *Records of Ritualists*.⁴³

Pericope 1 provides a statement of the theme of the chapter with the formula "the Master talked about it" 子言之; the theme concerns service:

These were the words of the Master: "When the superior is easily served, his inferiors are easily known, and in this case punishments are not numerous [in the state]."

子言之曰：為上易事也，為下易知也，則刑不煩矣。

This service will take various forms, service rendered by inferiors to superiors, by ministers to rulers, and by the people to rulers.

In Pericope 2 Confucius provides two rare encapsulations of the interpretive thrust of entire poems, as already cited in chapter 4:

The Master said, "When (the superior) loves the worthy as (the people of old loved him of) the 'Black Robes,' and hates the bad as 'Xiangbo,' then without the frequent conferring of rank the people are stimulated to be good, and without the use of punishments they are all obedient to his orders. It is said in the 'Daya,' 'From Wen your pattern you must draw, and all the states will own your law.'"

子曰：好賢如緇衣，惡惡如巷伯，則爵不瀆而民作愿，刑不試而民咸服。大雅曰：儀刑文王，萬國作孚。

Pericope 3 contains a quote from the *Analects* that is incorporated into the speech

of King Wen" 文王世子 and three in "Record of Learning" 學記. This calculates to 87 percent of the citations being located in these four related chapters; Chen Mengjia, *Shangshu tonglun*, 26–28.

⁴² Wang Bo's analysis of the use of quotes from the *Poems* in the *Application of the Inner* is a salutary mixture of structural and rhetorical approaches. Incidentally, his purpose is to establish a link between the *Application of the Inner* and the Guodian manuscript "Chapter on the Five Processes" through structural and rhetorical similarities. See Wang Bo 王博, "Xian-Qin juan" 先秦卷, in *Zhongguo Ruxueshi* 中国儒学史, ed. Tang Yijie 汤一介 and Li Zhonghua 李中华 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011), 484–90.

⁴³ *Liji zhengyi* 55, 1a–19b; Legge, *Li Chi*, 2:352–64.

of Confucius with no introduction. The quote from the *Documents* is introduced with the locution "'Punishments of Fu' states" (*Fuxing yue* 甫刑曰), which is an alternate title of the chapter called "Punishments of Lü" 呂刑. In the first instance, the master is quoting himself; in the second, he is quoting a text. Pericope 4 is on theme, but does not contain any quoted classics. Pericope 5 cites Yu 禹 as an example of a leader in humane harmony with his people and cites lines twice from the *Poems* and once from "The Punishments of Fu" in illustration. Pericope 6 continues the theme and is also fortified with a quote from the *Poems*.

Pericopes 7 and 8 treat the theme of the unity of words and deeds, Pericope 7 concluding with a single quote from the *Poems* and Pericope 8 concluding with double quotes. Pericopes 9, 10, and 11 treat heads of state. Pericope 9 concludes with a quote from the *Poems*. Pericope 10 concludes with a quote from the *Documents* and a quote from the *Poems*. Pericope 11 concludes with a single quote from the *Poems*.

Pericope 12 introduces the theme of the gentlemen of the state along with the twin pairings of rulers and ministers, the lord, and the people. It concludes with two quoted lines from the *Poems*. Pericope 13 returns to the earlier theme of punishment. Confucius's teaching are confirmed by two quotes from the *Documents*, the final one being from the familiar "Punishments of Fu." Pericope 14 discusses the theme of ministers and the people; it does not quote a classic but instead includes a reference to the lost "Dying Charge of Duke She" 葉公之顧命. This figure was a contemporary of Confucius and frequently appears in the *Traditions of Zuo* between 532 and 475 BC; he also makes an appearance in the *Analects*.⁴⁴ Pericope 15 adds the element of the ruler to the earlier theme. It concludes with one quote from the *Poems* and one from the *Documents*.

Pericope 16 treats another triad, that of the petty man, the superior man, and the great man. It reveals the problems superior men and great men can contract from the people. It supports its conclusions with four successive quotes from the *Documents* with no intervening connections other than the "'XX' states." Pericope 17 discusses the relationship between the ruler and the people, concluding with one quote from the *Poems* and one from the *Documents*. Pericope 18 contains no quotes, as it treats service to a superior in the narrow scope of a single line. Pericope 19 returns to a normal length and a normal format as one quote from the *Documents* and one from the *Poems* conclude a discussion of words and deeds. Pericope 20 treats the gentleman–petty man duality with the clear structural format of the phrases, "It is only (*wei* 唯)...," "Therefore (*gu* 故)...," "For this reason" (*shigu* 是故)...," and "The *Poems* state" (*Shi* 詩云)...:

⁴⁴ See Riegel, "The Four 'Tzu Ssu' Chapters," 346–47.

The Master said, "It is only the superior man who can love what is correct, while to the small man what is correct is as poison. Therefore the friends of the superior man have the definite aims which they pursue, and the definite courses which they hate. For this reason, those who are near at hand have no perplexities of thought about him, and those who are far off, no doubts. It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, 'For our prince a good mate.'"

子曰：唯君子能好其正，小人毒其正。故君子之朋友有鄉，其惡有方；是故邇者不惑，而遠者不疑也。詩云：君子好仇。

To logical persuasiveness is added the even more convincing imprimatur of a classical quote.

The final five pericopes offer nothing new structurally. Pericope 21 briefly treats the relationship of friendship and profit, then concludes with a quote from the *Poems*. Pericope 22 is even shorter in dealing with an *obiter dictum* concerning the moral basis of kindness and also closes with a citation from the *Poems*. Pericope 23 uses the imagery of a chariot and a cloak to teach that things leave traces of use and wear, just as with words and deeds. The concluding quote from the *Poems* is relevant only because it mentions the wearing of clothes. Pericope 24 deals with the relationship between words and deeds, and is buttressed by three concluding classical quotes—two from the *Poems* and the final one from the *Documents*. Pericope 25 cites a saying from the "men of the south" concerning divination. One quote from the *Poems*, one from the *Documents*, and one from the *Changes* conclude this pericope and this chapter. This triple citation from the three earliest classics lends incontrovertible authority to this pericope and, indeed, to the entire chapter.

We see that quotations from the *Poems* and other early texts buttress the arguments of the text in nearly every pericope and are far from being mere ornaments to lend an archaic texture to the work. This chapter and the other related four chapters stand together as markedly different from the other chapters in the *Records of Ritualists* in both the density of references to the *Poems* and the fact that they are always quotes. Even if not demonstrating a common authorship in Zisi, these similarities in stylistics do indicate a common author or provenance.

But a closer look at the microstructures of these Zisi chapters reveals differences between them, differences that will open the way for the later development of hermeneutics by later thinkers. The most simple structure is embodied by the formula "The Master said," followed by his plain statement of doctrine or judgment, concluding with one or more clinching quotes from the *Poems* or *Documents* or, rarely, the *Changes*.

The "Black Robe" chapter uniformly exhibits this structure with no variation. Witness the following pericopes:

21. The Master said, "The superior man will not voluntarily remain to share in private acts of kindness not offered on grounds of virtue. In the *Book of Poetry* it is said 'They love me, and my mind will teach how duty's highest aim to reach.'" 子曰：私惠不歸德，君子不自留焉。詩云：人之好我，示我周行。

10. The Master said, "When [the ruler] above can be known by men looking at him, and (his ministers) below can have their doings related and remembered, then the ruler has no occasion to doubt his ministers, and the ministers are not led astray by their ruler. The "Announcement of Yin" says, 'There were I, Yin, and Tang; both possessed the same pure virtue.' It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, 'In soul so steadfast is that princely man, Whose course for fault or flaw we vainly scan.'"

子曰：為上可望而知也，為下可述而志也，則君不疑於其臣，而臣不惑於其君矣。尹吉曰：惟尹躬及湯，咸有壹德。詩云：淑人君子，其儀不忒。

These examples, typical for each entry in the "Black Robe," juxtapose a bald statement from the Master with a quote used as a clinching tag. There is no intervening explanation or introduction between the Master's pronouncement and the classical quote. Out of 25 pericopes in the "Black Robe," each of them follows this formulaic structure except for pericope 1, which is introduced by "the Master spoke about it," followed by the enunciation of the theme of this chapter, that of service: "These were the words of the Master: 'When the superior is easily served, his inferiors are easily known, and in this case punishments are not numerous [in the state].'" 子言之曰：為上易事也，為下易知也，則刑不煩矣。

In the "Record of Signposts," however, we see the use of a new structural element, that of a comment placed after a classical quote. This occurs twice within this pericope: the line "that was a humanity extending to many generations" 數世之仁也 is appended without introduction to a quote from the *Poems*; the line "that was a humanity extending [only] to the end of the speaker's life" 終身之仁也 is next appended to a different quote from the *Poems*. The next appearance of "the Master spoke about it," in Pericope 25, is the next occasion for a comment. Immediately after a short citation from the *Poems*, Confucius continues his discourse. It functions as a commentary on the quote. It further reveals a new perspective on Confucius as a teacher since he no longer is content to merely clinch his argument with a quote but must expand on his further teachings with

the quote in mind. Out of 53 pericopes in this chapter, these two are the only ones that contain this nascent form of commentary.

With the "Application of the Inner," we find the mature use of the comment; it is often introduced with the word "hence" (*gu* 故) to indicate comments that can be inferred from the quote. But this function only starts appearing with Pericope 17. After an initial statement of doctrine to open the chapter, the following nine pericopes merely adhere to the simple scheme of the "Black Robe." Pericope 12 initiates the use of the comment. After Confucius's doctrinal declamation on how the gentleman pursues the way, a quote follows from the *Poem* with an appended comment:

"The hawk flies up to heaven; the fishes leap in the deep." This expresses how this way is seen above and below. The way of the superior man may be found, in its simple elements, in the intercourse of common men and women; but in its utmost reaches, it shines brightly through heaven and earth.

詩云：鳶飛戾天，魚躍于淵。言其上下察也。君子之道，造端乎夫婦，及其至也，察乎天地。

In Pericope 17, the quote from the *Poems* is followed by the explanatory statement that "we may say therefore that he who is greatly virtuous will be sure to receive the appointment of Heaven" 故大德者必受命. In Pericope 27, two quotes from the *Poems* are introduced with a variation of "hence" (*gu*)—"it seems that" (*gai* 蓋); the use of this term suggests the author is drawing his own lesson from the quote, a clear step from clinching an argument to posing an interpretation. Out of thirty-three pericopes in this chapter, six use *gu* after a quote from the *Poems* to draw a conclusion from it; five of these instances occur in the final pericope, Pericope 33, with its six quotations from the *Poems*. Apart from these five examples of *gu*, commentaries are appended to quotes from the *Poems* (or in one instance, the *Documents*) four other times.

The "Record of Dams" demonstrates the fullest use of the commentary in its most complex form yet: twenty out of thirty-nine pericopes include some sort of commentary. The use of "hence" appears eleven times to draw an implication from a quote. Most interesting is the fact that only once is the quote from a classic; in the remaining instances, "hence" introduces an implication drawn from a statement of Confucius. An example is Pericope 4:

The Master said, "It is by the rules of ceremony that what is doubtful is displayed, and what is minute is distinguished, that they may serve as dykes for the people." Thus it is that there are the grades of the noble and the mean, the distinctions of dress, the different places at court; and so the people [are taught to]

give place to one another.

子云：夫禮者，所以章疑別微，以為民坊者也。故貴賤有等，衣服有別，朝廷有位，則民有所讓。

Confucius is also commented on without the benefit of the connecting term "hence," as in Pericope 6:

The Master said, "A ruler does not ride in the same carriage with those of the same surname with himself; and when riding with those of a different surname, he wears a different dress"—to show the people that they should avoid what may give rise to suspicion. This was intended to guard the people (from incurring suspicion), and yet they found that there were those of the same surname who murdered their ruler.

子云：君不與同姓同車，與異姓同車不同服，示民不嫌也。以此坊民，民猶得同姓以弑其君。

This new trend of commenting on any quote, now from Confucius even more than from a Confucian classic, indicates the increasing distance from the authority of the master. His pronouncements are no longer accepted as uttered, even with the confirming imprimatur of a classical tag. Perhaps the crux is linguistic distance, when the original statement may not have been understood or, most likely, the moral application was not immediately apprehended. These types of distance indicate a separation in time from the composition of the other members of the set. Nevertheless, the various structural elements that this chapter shares in common with the other Zisi chapters bespeak its rather early provenance.

The "Great Learning" chapter is also related structurally to the four Zisi chapters. Out of sixteen pericopes, it turns out that nine of them contain similar elements of commentary, and Pericopes 9 through 12 are themselves comments on the sorites in the syllogism of self-cultivation enunciated in Pericope 2. The developed form of commentary in this chapter is evinced in how separate comments are appended after each of the multiple quotation from the *Poems* or *Documents* and how the commentary is interwoven within the pericope, as in Pericope 4. Here an entire passage from the *Poems* is first cited to commence the pericope; then individual lines are revisited as they are quoted again and commented on individually. This advanced commentarial strategy is seen nowhere else in the Zisi chapters and is a marker of this chapter's late provenance in comparison with the Zisi set.

It is clear that in these chapters, Zisi or the members of his following at some later date are both faithfully transmitting the words of Confucius and slowly working out a mechanism to add their own understanding of his words and their own applications of quotes from the classics. Unfortunately, over time attention

has been paid exclusively to the content of these chapters at the expense of their internal structures. We see the same trend today as modern scholars attempt to make sense of newly excavated manuscripts and to assess their filiation to an assumed Zisi-Mencian intellectual lineage.

9.4 Doubting the Zisi Tradition

As with many early philosophical texts, the common modern stance has been to doubt the traditionally ascribed authorship; in this case, the authorship in question is that of Zisi. A central concern is one phrase in the work that seems to reflect the reality of Qin political unification:

Now over the kingdom, carriages have all wheels, of the-same size; all writing is with the same characters; and for conduct there are the same rules.

今天下車同軌，書同文，行同倫。⁴⁵

But the key word “now” (*jin* 今), small-seal style of 今, could just as easily be read as a graphic error for “supposing” (*ling* 令 令) or “if” (*ru* 如) 如, yielding a passage that does not record an historical event but that does express the hope for a future utopia.⁴⁶ Ignoring possible orthographic error, Wang Yinzhi cites his father as the authority to interpret the function of *jin* “now” as *ruo* 若 “if” in certain syntactic contexts.⁴⁷

Getting past the mindset of the post-Qin composition of the *Application of the Inner* and examining just the thought of the Guodian texts, much recent scholarship seems to demonstrate that eight of the eighteen Guodian texts should be linked philosophically with the *Application of the Inner* and hence to the

authorship of Zisi or at least his school.⁴⁸ Jiang Guanghui identifies the following works in this category: *The Way of Tang (Yao) and Yu (Shun)* 唐虞之道, *Black Robe* 緇衣, *Five Conducts* 五行, *Nature Emerges from Fate* 性自命出, *Misery and Success Depends on the Age* 窮達以時, *Duke Mu of Lu Asks Zisi* 魯慕公問子思, *Six Virtues* 六德, and the first half of *Chengzhi Hears About It* 成之聞之, which consists of twenty slips and is now known as *Seek Within the Self* 求己.⁴⁹ The last twenty slips of this text are now known as *Heaven's Constants* 天常 but do not seem to be related to Zisi.⁵⁰ Li Xueqin identifies five of the texts just mentioned plus one new text as deriving from Zisi: *Black Robe*, *Five Conducts*, *Chengzhi Hears About It*, *Nature Emerges from Fate*, *Six Virtues*, and one hitherto unmentioned, *Venerating the Rightness of Virtue* 尊德義.⁵¹

Another version of the Guodian *Five Conducts* manuscript was discovered at Mawangdui in 1973.⁵² It is untitled but divided into two halves: a “classic” (*jing* 經) portion and an “explanation” (*shuo* 說) portion. The Guodian version, titled “Five Conducts,” corresponds to the “classic” portion and confirms the early speculation of Pang Pu that it was the lost “Five Conducts” text. Both versions differ slightly in terms of order of certain passages and individual choice

⁴⁵ *Zhongyong* 29; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:424. A typical use of this phrase to argue for a Han dynasty provenance of this text is Liao Huanchao 廖煥超, “*Zhongyong* zuozhe xianyi” 中庸作者獻疑, *Kongzi yanjiu* 2 (1990): 16–21.

⁴⁶ See Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝, “Guodian Rujia yanjiu de cankao zuobiao” 郭店儒簡研究的參考座標, in *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue* 郭店楚簡與早期儒學, ed. Pang Pu 龐樸, et al. (Taipei: Taiwan guji Chubanshe, 2002), 13–23; pp. 19–20.

⁴⁷ See the discussion at Wang Yinzhi 王引之 (1766–1834), *Jingzhuan shici* 經傳釋詞 (HQJJ ed.), 7:9432. Zong Fubang 宗福邦, Chen Shirao 陳世瑤, and Xiao Haibo 蕭海波, eds., *Guxun huiyuan* 故訓匯纂 (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 2003), 81, cites two examples of this usage from the *Analects* and *Records of the Historian* respectively.

⁴⁸ For a sampling, see Li Xueqin 李學勤, “Jingmen Guodian jian zhong de Zisizi” 荆門郭店中的子思子, *Wenwu tiandi* 文物天地 2 (1998): 28–30 and “The Confucian Texts from Guodian Tomb Number One: Their Date and Significance,” in *The Guodian Laozi: Proceedings of the International Conference, Dartmouth College, May 1998*, ed. Sarah Allen and Crispin Williams, 107–11; Pang Pu 龐樸, “Kong Meng zhijian: Guodian Chu jian de sixiang shi diwei” 孔孟之問: 郭店楚簡的思想史地位, *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 中國社會科學 5 (1998): 88–95; Deng Jianpeng 鄧建鵬 “Chudi xinxingxue yu Guodian Rujia jian ji Zisi zhi xue nanzhuan tanxi” 楚地心性學與郭店儒家簡及子思之學南傳探析, in *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue*, ed. Pang Pu et al., 123–27.

⁴⁹ For these texts, see *Guodian Chumu zhujian*; Li Ling, *Guodian Chujian jiaodujin*. Note that chapter names are in quotation marks (e.g., “The Application of the Inner” in the *Records of Ritualists*), but independent works are italicized (e.g., *The Application of the Inner* as one of the Four Books, or one of the Guodian manuscripts).

⁵⁰ Jiang Guanghui, “Guodian Rujia yanjiu de cankao zuobiao,” 22–23.

⁵¹ Li Xueqin, “Jingmen Guodian jian zhong de Zisizi,” and “The Confucian Texts from Guodian Tomb Number One.”

⁵² Consult the exhaustive studies by Wei Ch'i-peng 魏啟鵬, *Jianbo Wuxing jianshi* 簡帛五行箋釋 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 2000) and Ikeda Tomohisa 池田知久, *Maōtai Kanbo hakusho Gogyōhen kenkyū* 馬王堆漢墓帛書五行篇研究 (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1993).

of diction, as noted by the editors of the Guodian version.⁵³ On this basis, Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall offer the following speculations:

The fact that two almost identical versions of the *Wuxingpian* have been recovered along with versions of the *Daodejing* would indicate a certain canonical status of this text within the tradition. Also, the pervasive use of differing loan characters in these texts—representing sounds first and then by context and inference, ideas—might imply that that they are part of an oral tradition that was written down from memory for the specific purpose of providing reading for the tomb occupant in the journey to the nebulous world beyond. In addition, rather direct linguistic and conceptual resonances between the *Wuxingpian* and the *Mencius* suggest that whoever produced the *Mencius* was aware of this earlier text.⁵⁴

Upon publication in 1998, the editors of the Guodian version cite the precedent of the Mawangdui silk manuscript as recording the same *Five Conducts* ascribed to the teaching of Zisi and Mencius and as condemned by Xunzi.⁵⁵ Not only is it commonly linked with the thought of Zisi, a recent examination goes so far as to attribute authorship of the “classic” section to Zisi and authorship of the “explanation” section to Mencius.⁵⁶ Some have expressed doubts about the

connection between the Guodian manuscripts and Zisi,⁵⁷ but Edward L. Shaughnessy certainly is not exaggerating when he describes the effort to link up many of the Guodian bamboo texts with the intellectual lineage of Zisi as being “the hottest topic in a ‘fever’ of Confucian studies in mainland China.”⁵⁸ A recent survey of the issue by Scott Cook perhaps offers the most valuable orientation: the evidence to associate a number of texts from Guodian with either the Zisi or Meng-Si tradition is “both tantalizing and substantial, but it cannot be regarded as in anyway conclusive.”⁵⁹

The precedent of the Mawangdui silk manuscript version of the “Five Conducts” being divided into classic and commentary affords a new perspective from which to view the *Application of the Inner*. Song dynasty iconoclast Wang Bo 王柏 (1197–1274) first pointed out that the *Application of the Inner* as currently constituted is not an integral text judging by how “its narrative thread is not consistent, it contains ideas it does not dare express, and doubts it does not pursue” 語脈時有交互，思而不敢言也，疑而不敢問也。⁶⁰ He concludes that the work was originally in two separate parts, and to support his conclusion, he points to a work recorded in the Ban Gu’s bibliography entitled *Explanations on the Application of the Inner* 中庸說 in two chapters. He regards both texts as referring to the same work: one in one chapter and one in two chapters.⁶¹ We may surmise that it was the clumsy conflation of these two chapters that caused the inconsistent content of the received version in one chapter. But given the precedent of the *Wuxing* classic and commentary, I prefer to regard the *Zhongyong shuo* as what it says it is: a collection of explanations of the original classic. Perhaps it was a different form or conflation, that of classic and commentary, that

⁵³ Jingmenshi Bowuguan, ed., *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹簡, 149. For a thorough exploration of this manuscript in Chinese, see Pang Pu 龐朴, *Buoshu Wuxingpian yanjiu* 帛書五行篇研究 (Jinan: Qi-Lu, 1980). For a modern translation and annotation in Chinese, see Li Ling, *Guodian Chujian jiaodui*. Kenneth W. Holloway translates the entire work as an appendix to his study of its thought in *Guodian: The Newly Discovered Seeds of Chinese Religious and Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 131–39.

⁵⁴ Ames and Hall, *Focusing the Familiar*, 141.

⁵⁵ *Guodian Chumu zhujian*, 149.

⁵⁶ Chen Lai 陳來, “Zhubo Wuxing pian wei Zisi, Mengzi suo zuo lun—jian lun Guodian Chujian Wuxing pian chutu de lishi yiyi” 竹帛五行篇为子思、孟子所作论——兼论郭店楚简五行篇出土的历史意义, International Confucian Network, 作论——兼论郭店楚简五行篇出土的历史意义, International Confucian Network, March 13, 2012, accessed April 17, 2012, <http://www.ica.org.cn/yanjiu.php?ac=view&id=7143>. Li Xueqin describes the “explanation” as being composed by later commentators, while Ikeda Tomohisa believes that it was contemporary with the “classic.” See Li Xueqin, “Jingmen Guodian jian zhong de Zisizi,” 7, and Ikeda Tomohisa 池田知久, “Guodian Chujian Wuxing pian yanjiu” 郭店楚簡五行篇研究, *Zhongguo zhixue* 中國哲學 20 (2000): 92–133, pp. 98–99.

⁵⁷ See, for example, Guo Qiyong 郭齐勇, “Guodian Rujia jian yu Mengzi xinxing lun” 郭店儒家簡与孟子心性论, *Wuhan Daxue xuebao* 武汉大学学报 5 (1999): 24–28. Kenneth W. Holloway points to an obvious weak point in this identification, the fact that much of what is taken as the thought of Zisi is indeed based on unproven tradition and modern speculation; see Holloway, *Guodian*, 45–52.

⁵⁸ Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 11.

⁵⁹ Scott Cook, *The Bamboo Texts of Guodian: A Study and Complete Translation*, 2 vols. (Ithaca, NY: East Asian Program, 2012), 1:123.

⁶⁰ Cited by Liang Tao from Zhang Xinzhen 张心徵, *Weishu tongkao* 伪书通考 (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 1998), 448.

⁶¹ See the extended discussion by Liang Tao 梁濤, “Guodian Chujian yu Zhongyong gong’an” 郭店楚簡与中庸公案, in *Guodian Chujian yu zaoqi Ruxue*, ed. Pang Pu et al., 85–113; pp. 87–90.

explains the current inconsistencies of the book.⁶² Based on thematic issues, modern scholar Liang Tao 梁濤 divides the work into two parts. One he calls the "Application of the Inner," consisting of sections 1 through 20, and a second that he calls "Making Illumination Sincere" 誠明, sections 21 through 33.⁶³ Tu Wei-ming also sees thematic divisions, this time in three sections: paragraphs 1 through 19 that concern the characteristics of a gentleman, the lengthy paragraph 20 that treats government, and paragraphs 21 through 33 that clarify the word "sincerity" (*cheng* 誠).⁶⁴

Zhu Xi also engages in textual tampering, following his notions of what the original work must have looked like; it was this version that became the orthodox received edition and that receives our attention now.

9.5 The Four Books Version of the Application of the Inner

The *Application of the Inner* has been at the core of the Confucian curriculum since Zhu Xi removed it from its place as chapter 31 of the *Records of Ritualists* and grouped it among the *Four Books*.⁶⁵ For this version, Zhu Xi reorders the text of this work according to his built-in mindset of the classic/commentary structure. Only the first section is the original classic, traditional teachings of the Confucian school; the remaining thirty-two sections are commentaries composed by Zisi, some original to him, some consisting of quotations of Confucius, Confucius's disciples, or ancient sages. Zhu Xi credits Zisi with two approaches to the creation of a commentary, one of which is a composition that independently establishes his own oral explanations to the text—his "words" (*yan* 言)—and one which is a compilation that faithfully transmits the "words" of Confucius.

For the former, Zisi's oral commentary, witness Zhu Xi's remarks are appended to the first section: "To the right is the first section where Zisi orally transmits the intentions of that which had been handed down to him in order to establish his own words. 右第一章子思述所傳之意以立言."⁶⁶ This effort to

⁶² Liang Tao, "Guodian Chujian yu Zhongyong gong'an," 87–90.

⁶³ Liang Tao, "Guodian Chujian yu Zhongyong gong'an," 87.

⁶⁴ Tu Wei-ming, *Centrality and Commonality: An Essay on Confucian Religiousness* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 17.

⁶⁵ On the compilation of the *Four Books* as a Neo-Confucian anthology, see Kōzi Sano 佐野公治, *Shisho gakushi no kenkyū* 四書學史の研究 (Tōkyō: Sōbunsha, 1988), 45–102.

⁶⁶ *Sishu jizhu*, "Zhongyong zhangju," 3a, first line of the paragraph.

strike out on an independent line of interpretation marks the beginning of the commentarial tradition in the history of classical scholarship, or it would if Zhu Xi's understanding of the structure of the original text is taken as the gospel truth. I previously said the same thing based on the internal structure of the four Zisi chapters, culminating in the "Record of Dams." Zhu Xi is on the right track but for the wrong reasons. Yet at the end of this paragraph, Zhu Xi draws back by shifting the focus back to faithful transmissions, as if fearing that he had gone too far: "It seems that in the following ten chapters Zisi cites the words of the Master in order to complete the meaning of this chapter" 其下十章蓋子思引夫子之言以終此章之意。⁶⁷

Concerning quotes from Confucius transmitted by Zisi, the *Kong Congzi* records an informative exchange between Duke Mu of Lu and Zisi. Duke Mu doubted the veracity of these quotes; Zisi's response explains the nature of the quotes:

Duke Mu of Lu spoke to Zisi, saying, "What you have written and recorded of the master's words some attribute as your words." Zisi said, "What your servant has recorded are the words of your servant's grandfather. Some I personally heard, and some I heard from others. Although they are not necessarily the precise wording, they do not miss the mark. So what is it that you are doubtful of?" The Duke said, "There is nothing wrong with the events recorded." Zisi said, "There is nothing wrong, so they match the meaning of your servants' grandfather."

穆公問子思曰，「子之書所記夫子之言，或者以謂子之辭。」子思曰，「臣所記臣祖之言，或親聞之者；有聞之於人者。雖非正其辭，然猶不失其意焉。且君之所疑者何？」公曰，「於事無非。」子思曰，「無非，所以得臣祖之意也。」⁶⁸

Three of the four texts in the *Records of Ritualists* ascribed to Zisi share a common structural element in that they commence with the formula "The Master said" or a close variant.⁶⁹ The *Application of the Inner* also liberally uses this formulaic opening in seventeen out of thirty-three paragraphs. Given that the *Five Conducts*

⁶⁷ *Sishu jizhu*, "Zhongyong zhangju," 3a, last line of the paragraph.

⁶⁸ *Kong congzi* 孔叢子, *Congshu jichen chubian* 叢書集成初編 ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1985), "Gongyi" 公儀, 1.51.

⁶⁹ The lack of this formulaic *incipit* is one reason that Kenneth W. Holloway denies any connection between the *Five Conducts* and Zisi. Holloway, *Guodian*, 49.

lacks any trace of this formula, Liang Tao concludes that this lack reflects a later stage in the growth of Zisi and his school; the early stage consisted of direct quotes and faithful transmissions of the teachings of Confucius, while the later stage consisted of mature and independent philosophical expositions, precisely what Zhu Xi termed “establishing his own words.”⁷⁰

The commentarial layering as isolated by Zhu Xi in his edition of the *Zhongyong* is complex yet instructive. Paragraph one consists of the teachings of Confucius, introduced without recourse to the formulaic introduction of “The Master said.”⁷¹ As Chengzi had earlier introduced this paragraph as deriving from the Confucian school, Zhu Xi does not contradict him but describes this paragraph as the “intentions” (*yi* 意) of what had been transmitted to him by tradition. In other words, Zisi represented the Confucian school as identified by Chengzi. But the following ten paragraphs (numbers 2 through 11) are described as quotes from Confucius cited by Zisi to plumb the meaning of paragraph one, an assertion repeated at the end of paragraph 11. Paragraph 10 actually commences with Zilu asking a question which Confucius proceeds to answer, prefaced by the customary formula “The Master said.”

At the end of paragraph 12, Zhu Xi explains that this section consists of the words of Zisi himself in order to “extend and clarify” (*shenming* 申明) the “intention” of the first paragraph concerning the fact that the way cannot be abandoned. He goes on to explain that the following eight paragraphs cite some random words from Confucius to clarify this. After paragraph 14, Zhu Xi explains that this section was the words of Zisi and that in the future, whichever paragraph lacks the formula “The Master said” consists of the words of Zisi.

Paragraph 20, according to our textual guide Zhu Xi, “cites the words of Confucius to maintain the thread from Shun the Great, Kings Wen and Wu, and the Duke of Zhou; they clarify the ultimate unity of what they transmitted” 此引孔子之言。以繼大舜文武周公之緒。明其所傳之一致。⁷² Interestingly, Zhu Xi notices the absence of the first half of the catechism combo—the question: “The text below again starts with ‘The Master said’; these are terms that need a response. But nowadays it lacks terms for the question even though it still employs the two words ‘The Master said.’ It seems that Zisi deleted extraneous verbiage in order to attach this paragraph to this chapter. But he did not delete enough, so nowadays this phrase of The Master said should be considered an interpolation. 其下復以子日起答辭。今無此問辭。而猶有子曰二字。蓋子思刪其繁文以

⁷⁰ Liang Tao, “Guodian Chujian yu *Zhongyong* gong’an,” 92–93.

⁷¹ Liang Tao, “Guodian Chujian yu *Zhongyong* gong’an,” 1b–2b.

⁷² Liang Tao, “Guodian Chujian yu *Zhongyong* gong’an,” 20b.

附於篇。而所刪有不盡者。今當為衍文也。”⁷³

Finally, paragraph 21 consists of the words of Zisi, which persist through the remaining twelve paragraphs of the *Zhongyong* that “reiterate the extension and clarification of the intentions of this paragraph.” 以反覆推明此章之意⁷⁴

9.6 Conclusions

Five chapters in the *Records of Ritualists* form a natural set of texts due to shared similarities of structure and stylistics. These include the four traditional Zisi chapters plus the “Great Learning.” The structural similarities are the various introductory formulae such as “Confucius said,” “The Master said,” “the Master spoke about it, saying,” and the like. The shared stylistics are the density of quotations from the *Poems* and the *Documents*. The *Classic of Filial Piety* does not share the same structural similarity as the other texts, at least not to the same degree, but it does share in the density of quotations from the two early classics. Therefore, it seems probable that these six texts all derive from a similar milieu. If we take the data seriously, the natural conclusion is that these texts reflect a primitive stage of Confucian doctrinal transmission. The authors were obviously more concerned with transmission over interpretation, with *shu* over *zuo*, and the texts are much different in argumentation from the majority of chapters in the *Records of Ritualists*. Some of these chapters differ in degree from the other chapters, which naturally reflects the development over time of methods of narrative structure and argumentation. The tradition that four of these texts were composed by Zisi and *Great Learning* and *Classic of Filial Piety* were composed by Zengzi seems more reasonable in light of the obviously early provenance of the chapters.

To close this chapter with the focus placed back on Zisi and his work of transmission, let me quote from the Song classicist Zhao Shunsun 趙順孫 (1215–1277): “Why was the *Application of the Inner* written? Master Zisi worried that the learning of the way would be lost in transmission, so he wrote it” 中庸何為而作也？子思子憂道學之失其傳而作也。⁷⁵ Though obscured in English translation, the sentence “Lost in transmission, so he wrote it” actually is a pun on the original program statement of Confucius and his immediate disciples, *shu er bu zuo*, “to transmit but not create” Due to their almost excessive reverence for the master, these disciples were even more motivated than Confucius to strictly

⁷³ Liang Tao, “Guodian Chujian yu *Zhongyong* gong’an,” 20b.

⁷⁴ Liang Tao, “Guodian Chujian yu *Zhongyong* gong’an,” 20b.

⁷⁵ Zhao Shunsun 趙順孫 (1215–1277), *Zhongyong zhuanshu* 中庸纂疏 (TZTJJ ed.), 15:81–119; p. 81.

transmit his teachings without attempting individual creation, for, as Lü Simian states, they revered Confucius even more than the classical texts that they taught.⁷⁶ Mencius records the panegyrics for the master voiced by two disciples in terms certainly worthy of an unparalleled sage:

Mencius replied, "Zai Wo, Zi Gong, and You Ruo had wisdom sufficient to know the sage. Even had they been ranking themselves low, they would not have demeaned themselves to flatter their favourite. Now, Zai Wo said, 'According to my view of our Master, he was far superior to Yao and Shun.' Zi Gong said, 'By viewing the ceremonial ordinances of a prince, we know the character of his government. By hearing his music, we know the character of his virtue. After the lapse of a hundred ages I can arrange, according to their merits, the kings of a hundred ages—not one of them can escape me. From the birth of mankind till now, there has never been another like our Master.' You Ruo said, 'Is it only among men that it is so? There is the Qilin among quadrupeds, the Fenghuang [phoenix] among birds, the Tai mountain among mounds and ant-hills, and rivers and seas among rain-pools. Though different in degree, they are the same in kind. So the sages among mankind are also the same in kind. But they stand out from their fellows, and rise above the level, and from the birth of mankind till now, there never has been one so complete as Confucius.'"

曰：宰我、子貢、有若智足以知聖人。汙，不至阿其所好。宰我曰：以予觀於夫子，賢於堯舜遠矣。子貢曰：見其禮而知其政，聞其樂而知其德。由百世之後，等百世之王，莫之能違也。自生民以來，未有夫子也。有若曰：豈惟民哉？麒麟之於走獸，鳳凰之於飛鳥，太山之於丘垤，河海之於行潦，類也。聖人之於民，亦類也。出於其類，拔乎其萃，自生民以來，未有盛於孔子也。⁷⁷

Given this worshipful mindset, understanding the texts was of secondary importance to transmitting Confucius's original teachings as something

⁷⁶ Lü Simian 呂思勉 (1884–1957), *Xian-Qin xueshu gailun* 先秦学术概论, in *Minguo congshu* 民國叢書 fourth vol, no. 1, ed. Zhou Gucheng 周谷城 (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian, 1992), 66. His precise words are: "It was only the Six Classics that were ancient works transmitted hand to hand, but what the disciples valued lay in Confucius's interpretations" 惟六經僅相傳古籍，而孔門所重，在於孔子之義。

⁷⁷ Mengzi 2A2; Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 2:195.

sacrosanct; this situation persisted until the intellectual atmosphere forced Confucians toward a more polemical stance in order to defend their founder and his school or, sometimes, to defend their own brand of Confucianism against competing persuasions. And as the personal magnetism of Confucius faded from memory over time, space was created for attention to be paid to the texts of the classics themselves. Thus, hermeneutics grew partly out of the need for explication-as-defense and partly out of the natural shift in attention from the founder and his hagiography to the school and its text-based curriculum.⁷⁸

The next two chapters will examine two later intellectual disciples, Mencius and Xunzi, who completed the transformation from transmission for preservation to creation as interpretation.

⁷⁸ I employ the term "hermeneutics" in the general sense of "interpretation," not in the technical sense that it later acquired of a systematized approach to interpretation inspired by a text but not necessarily based on it. For this technical sense and how it figured in medieval Chinese classical scholarship, see *A History of Chinese Classical Scholarship*, vol. 3, chap. 1, sect. 1.1.