

Trinity Saint David

<i>Student Name:</i> Jinshu Zhu	
<i>Module Code:</i> SIHE 4002 <i>Module title:</i> Cultural Memory of Tang China	<i>Student number:</i> 2512218
<i>For completion by marker:</i> <i>Comments:</i>	

AI Acknowledgement

☐ **I have not used AI in my assignment**

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

☒ **I have used AI in my assignment**

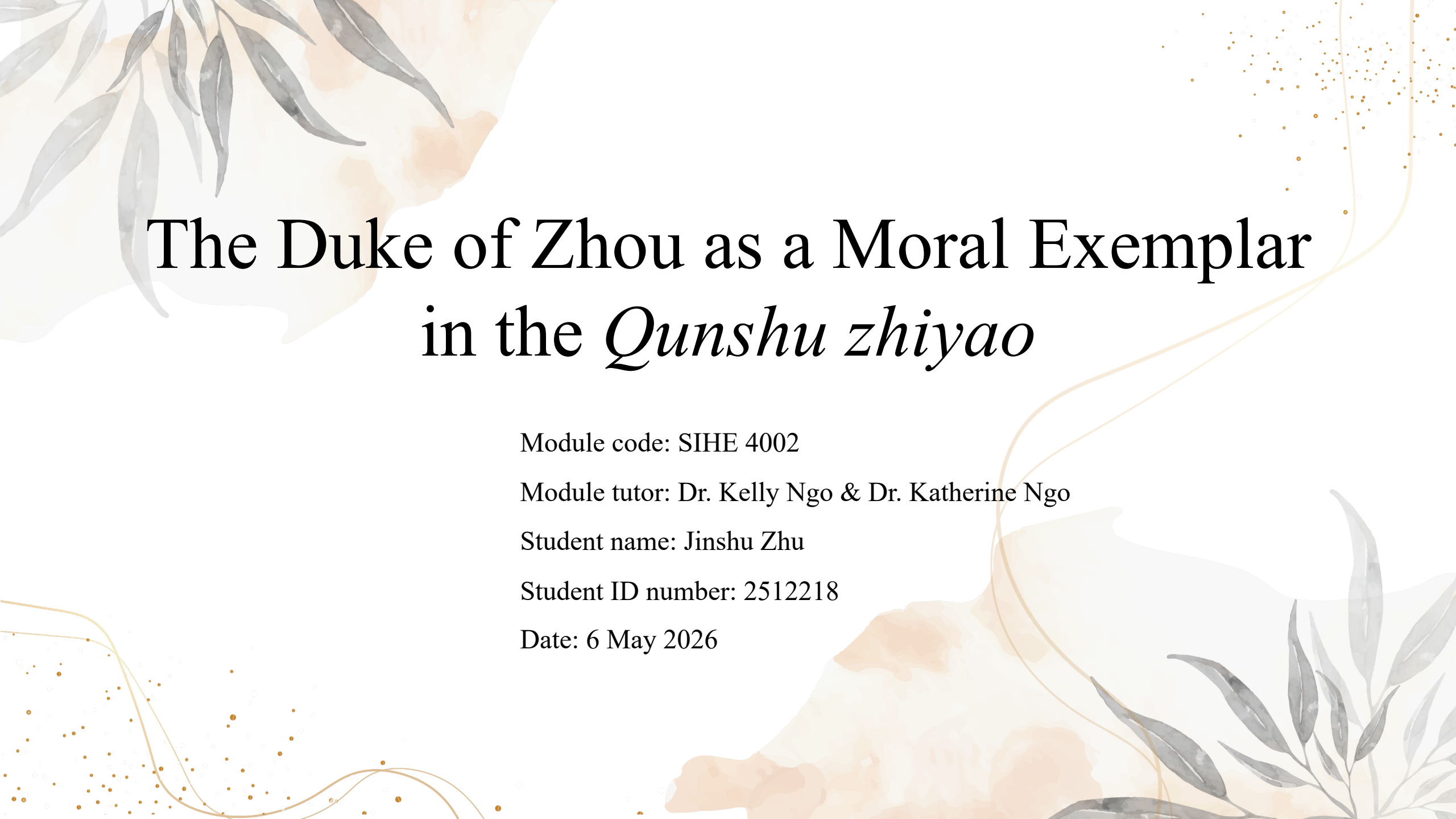
During the preparation of my coursework, I used artificial intelligence tools(AI) in a limited, transparent, and ethical way, in line with the University's AI usage policy. Below is a detailed record of when and how I used AI.

I acknowledge the use of the following AI tools during the preparation of my work:

1.ChatGPT (<https://chatgpt.com>)

Date: [20/4/2026 –6/5/2026]

Purpose: Searching for relevant literature, summarising, translating, organizing oral expression.



The Duke of Zhou as a Moral Exemplar in the *Qunshu zhiyao*

Module code: SIHE 4002

Module tutor: Dr. Kelly Ngo & Dr. Katherine Ngo

Student name: Jinshu Zhu

Student ID number: 2512218

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Historical Duke of Zhou

周 公 像

Duke of Zhou (Ji Dan, c. 1094–1033 BCE)

- Great statesman
- Moral exemplar
- A model of Confucius

But this is not what we see in the *Qunshu zhiyao*



The *Qunshu zhiyao*

(群書治要, also named *Governing Principles of Ancient China*, the essentials)

- Collection of essential readings from sixty-eight sources
- Commissioned by and for the Emperor Taizong of Tang (598–649)
- Completed in 631
- One of the earliest Chinese anthology of political and classical texts

The aim of this work is to educate the ruler

The materials are **selected and reshaped** for a practical purpose.
The emperor reads not for knowledge, but **for action**.

Checklist

Main point

Duke of Zhou in the Essentials is selected and reshaped as a **moral exemplar**.

Method

Comparison. (To compare the original and edited text resources about the duke of Zhou in the *documents* {*shangshu* 尚書} and the *qunshu zhiyao*.)

Exemple

Focus on one article – *Wuyi* (無逸, Against Luxurious Ease)

Final discussion

The educative effect

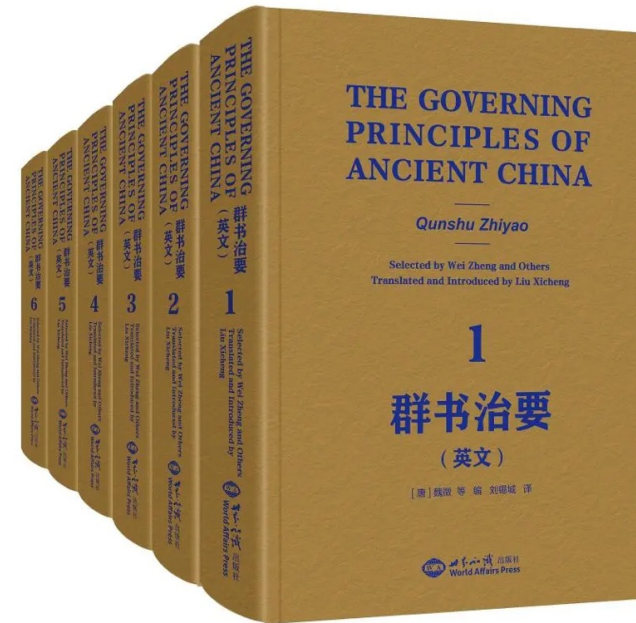
Comparison work

The *Documents* (original text)



In the *documents*, **15 articles** related to the duke of Zhou. 12 of them were written by the duke of Zhou, and 3 of them were about him.

The *qunshu zhiyao* (selected text)

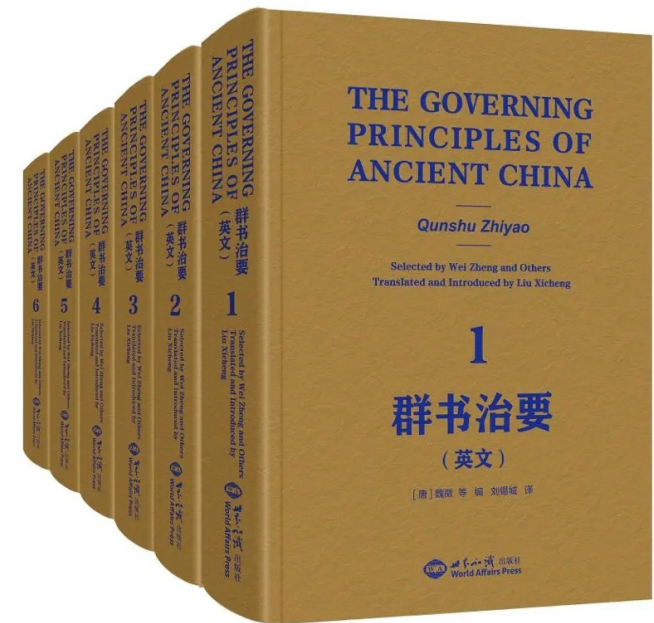


In the *qunshu zhiyao*, the excerpts related to the duke of Zhou were selected from **8 original articles**.

Comparison work

The selected texts in the *Qunshu zhiyao* are from 8 original articles:

- The Announcement to [Prince] Kang 康誥
- The Announcement about Drunkenness 酒誥
- **Against Luxurious Ease 無逸**
- The Charge to Cai Zhong 蔡仲之命
- The Numerous Regions 多方
- The Establishment of Government 立政
- Jun Chen 君陳
- The Charge to [the Duke of] Bi 畢命



The Finding from Comparison work

Tendency:

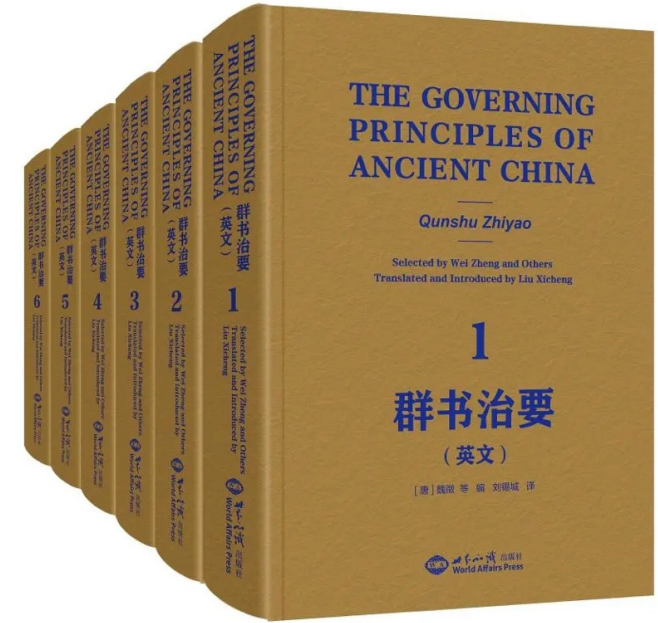
political achievements → largely omitted

moral instruction → emphasised

Moral themes (extract from these excerpts about the duke of Zhou) :

- Vigilance and caution
- Respect for ancestors
- Frugality and diligence
- Humility and self-restraint
- Tolerance and moderation to punishment
- Caring for the people

The records of the duke of Zhou's political achievements were basically omitted, but the moral instructions were left.



Against Luxurious Ease 無逸

- Almost fully included in the *Essentials*
- Important for moral instruction from the duke of Zhou
- This article is addressed to a ruler, and functions as guidance for governance.

Key Sentences:

“To understand the hardship of people's toil in the field.”

知稼穡之艱難

“To know what the people rely on.”

知小人之依

—volume 8 in the *Qunshu zhiyao*

These sentences reveal the mindset behind to be good ruler.

This Empathy & equal regard are not easy. Able to put their foot into others' shoes is why the former exemplary kings can apply the **benevolent governance** 仁政. Also, this mindset is the central **prerequisite** for avoiding luxurious ease.

Educational Effect of Moral Exemplars

Since the situations and proper conduct are never fixed. Learning from exemplars does not mean copying their actions, but understanding and internalising their moral mindset.

Process:

- Selection → emphasising moral instruction
- Moral exemplar → catch their mindset → internalization = **education**

Effect for the ruler:

Empathy & equal regard for the people

→ Avoiding luxurious ease 無逸

→ Benevolent governance 仁政

Moral governance begins with empathy

Once this mindset has been internalised, it can be applied to different situations. This is the successful process of education and a real educational effect on emperors.

Overview

1. Question

How is the Duke of Zhou reshaped in the Essentials?

2. Approach

Compare original texts and edited version

Focus on *Wuyi*

3. Finding

The Duke of Zhou is reshaped as a moral exemplar. His moral instruction is emphasised.



Thank You for Your Attention!

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