

The Analysis of Chinese Character

Xue*學 from the *Confucian Analects

Module Code: SICH4005

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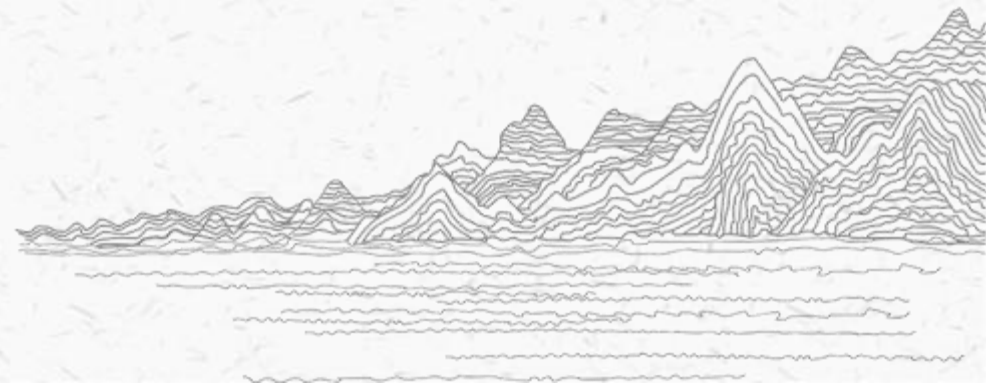
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I. Introduction

Learning is extremely important for everyone.

Confucian said, 'is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application?'



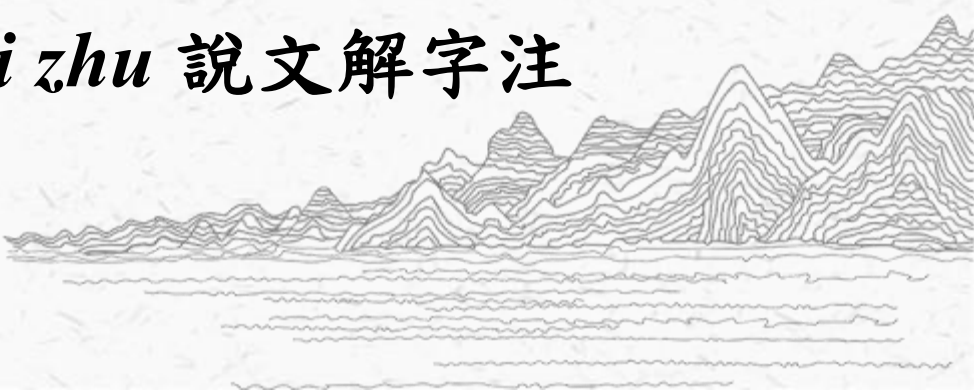


II. Analysis

1. The character *xue* 學 is the abbreviated phonetic of the character *xiao* 敎.

(學，篆文敎省)

——*Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注



2. The two characters are independent but cognate

The character *xue* 學 is different from the character *xiao* 敎. Some classical literary work false rumour *xiao* 敎 as *xue* 學. Regarding *xue* 學 as *xiao* 敎 is wrong.

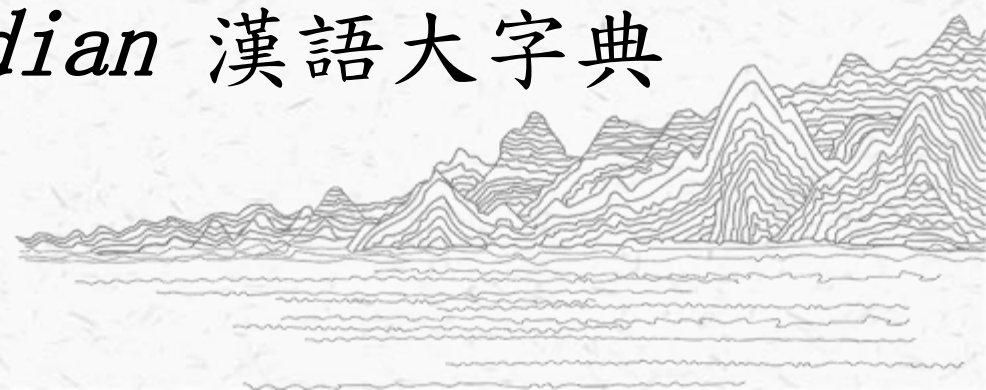
—— *Zhengzitong* 正字通



In the ancient times, the character *xue* 學 has both 'teach' and 'learning' two meanings.(古教、學原為一字)

Later the character *xue* 學 and *xiao* 教 are divided into two characters.

——*Hanyu dazidian* 漢語大字典



The original meaning and extended meanings of *xue* 學

Original meaning: Enlightenment (覺悟也)

The Oracle bone inscription of 學 is a stylized character composed of two main parts: a top part resembling a person with arms raised, and a bottom part resembling a person with arms outstretched.

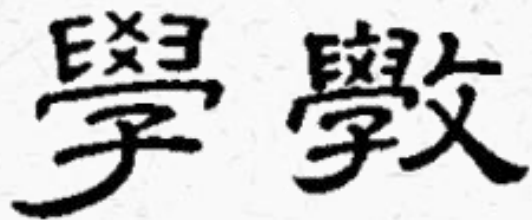
Oracle bone
inscription 甲骨文

The Jin wen inscription of 學 is a more complex character, featuring a top part with a cross-like shape and a bottom part with a person-like figure.

Jin wen 金文

The Seal script of 學 is a highly stylized character, with a top part that is a square with a cross inside, and a bottom part that is a person-like figure.

Seal script 篆文

The Clerical script of 學 is a more recognizable character, with a top part that is a square with a cross inside, and a bottom part that is a person-like figure.

Clerical script 隸書

The Regular script of 學 is the most modern and standard form of the character, with a top part that is a square with a cross inside, and a bottom part that is a person-like figure.

Regular script 楷書

Word Card - 學

學

本義：覺悟也。從教，𠂔，𠂔，尚矇也。
臼聲。學，篆文數省。《說文注》P128

學

引申義：接受教育而覺悟（學習義）
《論語》例句：「學而不思則罔，思而不學則殆。」



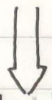
模仿義

《墨子》例句：「貧家而學富家之衣食多用，則速亡必矣。」



所學之成果

例詞：「學問」、「學識」、「百家之學」



學科

例詞：「文字學」、「心理學」、「科學」



學習的人

例詞：「學人」、「學者」



學習的地方

古代：「太學」

現代「學校」

III. Annotations by Scholars in Different Dynasties

1. Enlightenment

It is said in *Baihutong* 白虎通 that the character *xue* 學 means enlightenment (*jue* 覺). To come to know something unknown is enlightenment.

——*Lunyu zhushu* 論語注疏



2. To model others

The character *xue* 學 means to model those good examples. It is true that human's nature are all positive, but the younger generation should have good examples to model. If they can regard those exemplary people as their role model and then they will be influenced by them and become a good person finally.

——*Sishu jizhu* 四書集注

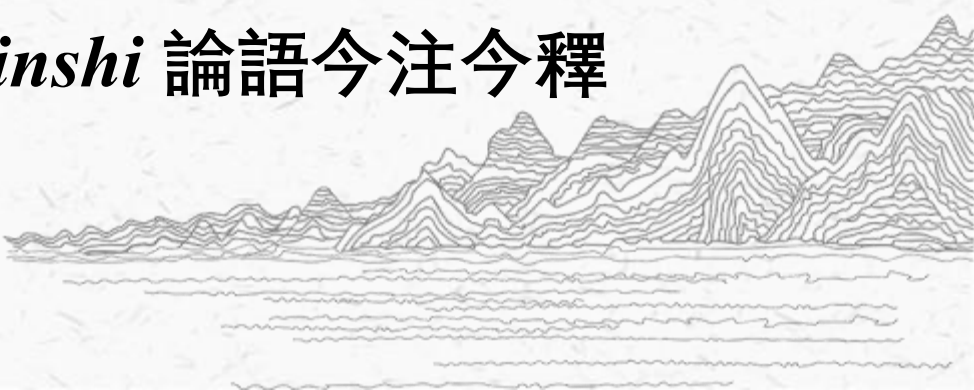




3. Learning

The character *xue* 學 here refers to learning the principles of self-cultivation and learning the knowledge which will bring benefit to the world.

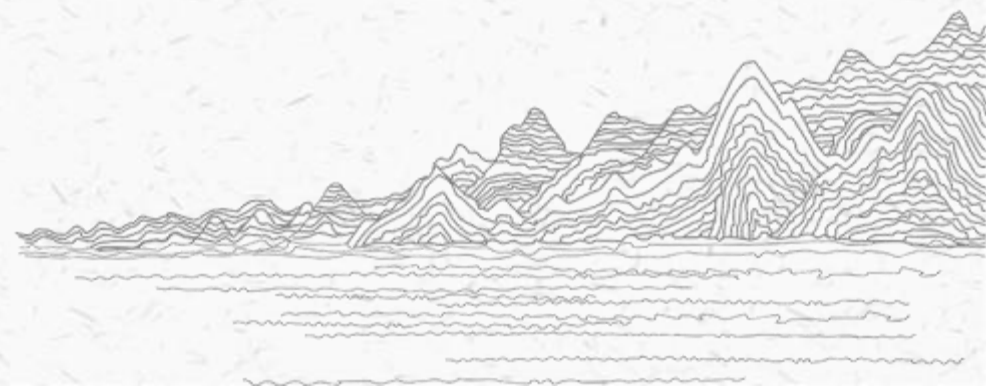
——*Lunyu jinzhu jinshi* 論語今注今釋





IV. Conclusion

- The definition of characters *xue*學 here is to learn a certain subject, or a certain way to improve self-cultivation.
- Only through constant review and practice of what we have learned can we understand its essence, then we can use them to help others and contribute to the world.





Thank you

for listening

