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A Translation of Verse 9 Chapter 6 (Yongye 雍也 6:9)

of the *Analects of Confucius* 論語 and Its Selected Annotations

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Word count: 1,375

Respected provost, Miss Deng, good afternoon. My name is Ruxin Zhang and I would like to share with you my translation of Verse 9 Chapter 6 of the *Analects of Confucius* 論語 and Its Selected Annotations.

The presentation will be divided into five parts. The first part is 'Original Text and Translation of Verse 9 Chapter 6 of the *Analects of Confucius*', the second part is 'Original Text and Translation of the Annotation of Verse 9 Chapter 6 in *Lunyu Jiangyao* 論語講要', the third part is 'Original Text and Translation of the Annotation of Verse 9 Chapter 6 in *Sishu Zhangjujizhu* 四書章句集注', the fourth part is 'Commentary', And finally, I will share with you 'Conclusion '.

Let's start with the first part.

1. Original text and translation of verse 6:9 of the *Analects of Confucius*

1.1 Original text

季氏使閔子騫為費宰。閔子騫曰：「善為我辭焉。如有復我者，則吾必在汶上矣。」[1]

1.2 Translation

[1] Cheng Shude 程樹德, *The Collected Commentaries of The Analects of Confucius* 論語集釋(Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1990), p.490-491.

Ji Shi appointed Min Ziqian as the fief steward of *bi* 費. Min Ziqian said to the messenger, 'Please help me to politely decline, if he recruits me again, I must be on the north side of the *Wen River* 汶河.'

Now let's move on to the second part.

2. Original text and translation of the annotation of verse 6:9 in *Lunyu jiangyao* 論語講要

2.1 Original annotation – Part A

費，古注讀密，然山東當地人皆讀費之本音。孔安國注：「費，季氏邑。季氏不臣，而其邑宰數叛，聞閔子騫賢，故欲用之。閔子不欲為季氏宰，語使者曰，善為我作辭說，令不復召我也。復我者，重來召我也。去之汶水上，欲北入齊也。」[2]

2.2 Translation of Part A

The character *bi* is pronounced *mi* 密 in the ancient annotation, but the natives of Shandong read the original pronunciation of the character *bi*. Kong Anguo annotated that *bi* was Ji Shi's fief. Ji Shi did not follow the Dao of ministers, so the steward of his fief also betrayed him repeatedly. Ji Shi heard that Min Ziqian was very capable and virtuous, he wanted to appoint him. Min Ziqian did not want to be the steward of Ji Shi, so he told the messenger that please help me politely decline so that Ji Shi will not recruit me again. If Ji Shi recruits me again, I

[2] Li Bingnan 李炳南, *The Jiangyao of The Analects of Confucius* 論語講要(Wuhan: Changjiang Literature Press, 2019), p.90.

will go to the north side of the *Wenshui River* 汶水 and I will enter *the state of Qi* 齊國 from the north.

2.3 Original annotation – Part B

孔子為魯司寇時，閔子騫曾為費宰，孔子辭去，閔子騫亦辭去。後以三家不聽魯君之命，而費邑之宰亦叛季氏，是以季氏使閔子騫為費宰。然閔子不願遂季氏之私，故辭之，且堅告使者，如再來召，則吾必不在家，而在汶河之上矣。汶河東北是齊國，在汶上，意謂避至齊國也。儒者去就，於此可見其概焉。[3]

2.4 Translation of Part B

When Confucius served as minister of justice in *the state of Lu* 魯國, Min Ziqian was the fief steward of *bi*. After Confucius resigned, Min Ziqian also resigned. Later on, because the three scholar-bureaucrat families did not obey the orders of the monarch of *the state of Lu*, and the fief steward of *bi* also betrayed Ji Shi, so Ji Shi appointed Min Ziqian as the fief steward of *bi*. However, Min Ziqian did not want to satisfy his selfishness, so he refused. And he told the messenger firmly that if Ji Shi came to recruit me again, I must not be at home, but on the north side of *the Wen River*. The north-east of *the Wen River* is *the state of Qi*, and to be on the north side of *the Wen River* means to leave for *the state of Qi*. The character of a Confucian scholar can be seen in his choice of whether to become an official or not.

Now let's move on to the third part.

[3] Li Bingnan 李炳南, *The Jiangyao of The Analects of Confucius* 論語講要, p.90.

3. Original text and translation of the annotation of verse 6:9 in *Sishu zhangjujizhu* 四書章句集注

3.1 Original annotation – Part A

閔子騫，孔子弟子，名損，費，季氏邑。汶，水名，在齊南魯北竟上。閔子不欲臣季氏，令使者善為己辭。言若再來召我，則當去之齊。程子曰：「仲尼之門，能不仕大夫之家者，閔子、曾子數人而已。」[4]

3.2 Translation of Part A

Min Ziqian was a disciple of Confucius and his first name was s*un* 損. *bi* was the fief of Ji Shi. *Wen* is the name of the river, which is on the border between the southern part of Qi and the northern part of Lu. Min Ziqian did not want to be the vassal of Ji Shi and he asked the messenger to decline politely for himself. He said that if Ji Shi recruited me again, I would leave here and go to *the state of Qi*. Cheng Zi said that among the disciples of Confucius, Min Ziqian and Zeng Zi were among the few who could refuse to be official in the scholar bureaucrat's families.

3.3 Original annotation – Part B

謝氏曰：「學者能少知內外之分，皆可以樂道而忘人之勢。況閔子得聖人為之依歸，彼其視季氏不義之富貴，不啻犬彘。又從而臣之，豈其心哉？在聖人則有不然者，蓋居亂邦、見惡人，在聖人則可；自聖人以下，剛則必取禍，柔則必取辱。閔子豈不能

[4] Zhu Xi 朱熹, *The Variorum of the Four Books* 四書章句集注(Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1983), p.86.

早見而豫待之乎？如由也不得其死，求也為季氏附益，夫豈本心哉？蓋即無先見之知，又無克亂之才故也。然則閔子其賢乎？」[5]

3.4 Translation of Part B

Xie Shi said that if learners could understand a little the difference between the inner mind and outer things, they would be happy to stick to the Dao of sages and abandon power. Moreover, Min Ziqian had the sage as his basis, and he regarded Ji Shi's unrighteous wealth as common as dogs and pigs. If he served Ji Shi and became his vassal, was it his true mind? This is not the case for sages, living in troubled countries and coming into contact with people of bad character are no problem for sages. For those who do not attain the status of sages, their integrity will lead to disaster, and their weakness will lead to insult. How could Min Ziqian not understand and take precautions in advance? Like Zhong You could not acquire a peaceful end, Ran Qiu help Ji Shi increase his income, is this their true mind? It is probably because they did not have the wisdom to foresee the results in advance, and they did not have the ability to put down the rebellion. In that case, Min Ziqian was probably wise and capable.

Now let's move on to the fourth part.

4. Commentary

For this oral presentation, because the original text involves relevant historical background knowledge. Therefore, before I prepared this oral presentation, I first learned about the life of Confucius and the historical background, as well as the personality traits and life experiences

[5] Zhu Xi 朱熹, *The Variorum of the Four Books* 四書章句集注, p.86-87.

of his disciples. In my opinion, this is very helpful for me to understand the original text later. Specifically, I learned that Confucius attached great importance to *the Rites of the Zhou* 周禮. Therefore, in *the Analects of Confucius*, for Ji Shi's behavior, Confucius said, '八佾舞於庭，是可忍也，孰不可忍也。[6]' and '嗚呼！曾謂泰山，不如林放乎？[7]' In *the Analects of Confucius*, Confucius also said, '不義而富且貴，於我如浮雲。[8]' Moreover, when Confucius served as minister of justice in *the state of Lu*, he took a measure called *duosandu* 墮三都, which was aimed at weakening the power of the three scholar-bureaucrat families. As a disciple of Confucius, Min Ziqian was also one of the twenty-four filial person, and even Confucius affirmed his filial piety. Such a filial person would have followed the teachings of his teacher and would have been loyal to his monarch. Confucius also praised him in *The Records of the Historian* 史記, '不仕大夫，不食汙君之祿。[9]'

When I begin to prepare this oral presentation, I begin by repeating the original text, as well as the relevant annotations in *The Lunyu jiangyao* 論語講要 and *The Sishu zhangju jizhu* 四書章句集注. In addition, I will also refer to the interpretation of this sentence in *The Lunyu jiangji* 論語講記. Nevertheless, I will also encounter some difficulties in understanding the original text. At that time, I will use the web of handian 漢典 to check the meaning of Chinese characters. When the character has more than one meaning, I will bring them into the original text and compare it respectively, to find the most appropriate meaning.

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[6] Cheng Shude 程樹德, *The Collected Commentaries of The Analects of Confucius* 論語集釋, p.175.

[7] Cheng Shude 程樹德, *The Collected Commentaries of The Analects of Confucius* 論語集釋, p.194.

[8] Cheng Shude 程樹德, *The Collected Commentaries of The Analects of Confucius* 論語集釋, p.600.

[9] Han Zhaoqi 韓兆琦注釋, *The New translation of The Records of the Historian* 新譯史記(Taipei: San Min Book Co. Ltd., 2008), p.2879.

In the process of translating the original text into English, I also use Oxford Dictionaries and Bing to help me choose the most appropriate words or phrases. However, I still encountered some parts that I could not understand. For example, in the translation of '然則閔子其賢乎？[10]' This sentence is an interrogative sentence, which should be intended to express doubt. But before this sentence, the author compares Zhong You and Ran Qiu with Min Ziqian, the purpose should be to affirm and praise Min Ziqian. Therefore, I feel confused when I translated this sentence, which I think is difficult to understand.

Now let's move on to the last part.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, although the original text looks very simple, it seems to have no deep meaning and philosophy. But through the research, we can find that Min Ziqian showed us an example of a good student and a good Confucianist. The reason why he can do this is not that he did it deliberately, but because he has filial piety as the solid foundation. From him, I feel the backbone and demeanor of a Confucian, and these are what we should learn.

This is my presentation, if there is any mistake in the content, any suggestions and advice would be appreciated, thank you very much.

[10] Zhu Xi 朱熹, *The Variorum of the Four Books* 四書章句集注, p.86-87.

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